

Ver 3/7/7  
NRHP 4/30/7

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

### NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

#### 1. Name of Property

historic name Keokee Store No. 1  
other names/site number Keokee High School Gymnasium; VDHR 052-0066; Darnell's Store

#### 2. Location

street & number County Road 606 not for publication N/A  
city or town Keokee vicinity N/A  
state Virginia code VA county Lee code 105 Zip 24265

#### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination    request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets    does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant    nationally    statewide X locally. (   See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] Date 5/20/07  
Signature of certifying official  
Virginia Department of Historic Resources  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property    meets    does not meet the National Register criteria. (   See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:  
   entered in the National Register  
   See continuation sheet. Signature of Keeper \_\_\_\_\_  
   determined eligible for the National Register  
   See continuation sheet. Date of Action \_\_\_\_\_  
   determined not eligible for the National Register  
   removed from the National Register  
   other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

U. S. Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

Keokee Store No. 1  
Lee County, VA

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property** (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property** (Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>  1  </u>	<u>  0  </u>	buildings
<u>  0  </u>	<u>  0  </u>	sites
<u>  0  </u>	<u>  0  </u>	structures
<u>  0  </u>	<u>  0  </u>	objects
<u>  1  </u>	<u>  0  </u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register   0  

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)   N/A  

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions** (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat:   Commerce   Sub:   store  

**Current Functions** (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat:   Education   Sub:   gymnasium  

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification** (Enter categories from instructions)

  Craftsman  

**Materials** (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation   stone    
 roof   asphalt    
 walls   stone    
 other   wood  

**Narrative Description** (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

U. S. Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

Keokee Store No. 1  
Lee County, VA

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria** (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations** (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance** (Enter categories from instructions)

Industry, Commerce, Education, Social History

**Period of Significance** ca. 1910-1954

**Significant Dates** ca. 1910; 1939

**Significant Person** (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) n/a

**Cultural Affiliation** n/a

**Architect/Builder** unknown

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file** (NPS)

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary Location of Additional Data**

U. S. Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

Keokee Store No. 1  
Lee County, VA

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: VA Department of Historic Resources

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreeage of Property approx. 1.2 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting Northing	Zone Easting Northing	Zone Easting Northing	Zone Easting Northing
A. 17 330620 4081427	B. 17 330688 4081415	C. 17 330668 4081356	D. 17 330597 4081372

See continuation sheets

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: W. Eugene Cox, Joyce Cox and Michael J. Pulice date July 2006  
street & number: 504 West Main Street telephone 423-753-2602  
city or town Jonesborough state TN zip code 37659

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps** A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.  
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs** Representative black and white photographs of the property.

**Additional items** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Lee County Board of Education, attention: Fred Marion, Superintendent of Schools  
street & number 5 Park Street telephone 276-346-2107  
city or town Jonesville state VA zip code 24263

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places**

**Keokee Store No. 1  
Lee Co. Virginia**

**Continuation Sheet**

---

**7. Summary**

Built in 1910, the Keokee Store Number 1, now a public school gymnasium, is located in the tiny community of Keokee, a former coalmining camp. The two-story, gambrel-roofed stone building has been altered both internally and externally from a community store into a school gymnasium. This major change took place in 1939. Alterations and modifications have continued through the buildings existence as a facility for athletic, educational, and entertainment activities as recent as 1954, when an industrial arts classroom and work shop was placed in the basement.

**Site Description**

The Keokee Store Number 1 is located on local Route 606 at a bend in the road where it meets Route 624 in the town of Keokee. The community lies in northwestern Lee County, the westernmost county in the Commonwealth of Virginia, less than one mile from Harlan County, Kentucky. Route 606 winds around the east, north and west sides of the building, leaving only a small grassy margin between the building and the road. On the south side of the building is an open space with a paved parking lot, and adjacent to the south is the Keokee Middle School.

**Building Description**

The building is a large 2-story, gambrel-roofed stone masonry structure that began as a company store but has since been adapted for use a gymnasium and was significantly altered from its original appearance, both internally and externally, in 1939. Although the exterior long sides of the building do not appear to have been significantly altered, the front and rear (east and west, respectively) have been covered over with vinyl siding. The building footprint is approximately 100 feet long by 65 feet wide. The structural walls are well over a foot thick. Two light-colored stone belt courses encircle the exterior walls. Along the perimeter of the foundation on the north side of the building is an open French drain.

The gym, located on the upper level, occupies the vast majority of space within the building and has the typical high-polish hardwood floor, and a performance stage at one end. The roof is supported by exposed steel trusses. The lower level is occupied by bathrooms, showers, locker rooms, and storage areas. At the east end of the building, which appears to have originally been the front of the building, is now a small, embanked two-story brick addition, with a poured concrete foundation and steel windows, which is entered through the upper level. The addition appears to date to the late 1950s or early 1960s. The solidity of the building led the U.S. Coast

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places**

**Keokee Store No. 1  
Lee Co. Virginia**

**Continuation Sheet**

**Section 7 Page 2**

---

and Geodetic Survey to place a bronze benchmark at the northwest corner of the building in 1953, with the elevation above sea level given as 2135 feet.

Based on an old photograph (a copy enclosed with this application), the vinyl on the front is covering a very large fan window made up of multiple 9-light sash separated by thick, dark-painted wooden mullions. Eight of the sash are wedge-shaped and have as few as one glass pane. It is difficult to determine from the photo whether the sash are fixed or hung. Surmounting the fan window, near the top of the gambrel end, is a much smaller window consisting of 4 tall, slender windows within a single frame, separated by wide, dark-painted wooden mullions—a total of 22 sash. At the base of the fan window was the deck roof of a one-story, three bay porch, supported by paired round columns. The porch roof had a somewhat simplified entablature, and a solid balustrade railing. The lower porch deck had a railing with very slender square or turned balusters. The front gambrel end is largely in-filled by the large and small windows, but the remaining wall surface around them is treated with what appear to be flush boards arranged in a diagonal pattern. They vary somewhat in shades of light and dark. To each side of the porch is a segmental-arched window consisting of two sets of six-over-six double-hung sash. Today, the entire original façade is covered with vinyl siding and the addition. The rear elevation is similarly covered, but without any additions, making it difficult to interpret how it looked during the company store period.

**Section 8 Page 3**

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places

Keokee Store No. 1  
Lee Co. Virginia

Continuation Sheet

---

## 8. Statement of Significance

### Summary and Justification of Criteria

The Keokee Commissary was built in 1910 by the Stonega Coke and Coal Company (formerly the Keokee Coal and Coke Company). Known thereafter as Keokee Store No. 1, the store was repaired in 1930; then closed by Stonega in 1932. The commissary's role was important as the central focus of the community and as a symbol of the company's dominance. In 1938 the Lee County School Board acquired the commissary, and in 1939 applied for Works Progress Administration funds to convert the store into Keokee Gymnasium. After 1939, the building was part of a strong educational emphasis that influenced the lives of many students. It is a rare surviving coalmining camp commissary from the earliest period of mining in the area, remaining in public school use as a gymnasium today. The property is nominated under Criterion A, in the areas of Commerce & Industry for its significance to the early mining industry in the area and to the Keokee community, and in the areas of Education and Social History for its important, beneficial role of housing the numerous athletic, educational, and entertainment activities that were held for the student body and the local populace. Its period of significance is from 1910 to 1954.

### Historical Background

Keokee (formerly Crab Orchard) is located on level to rolling hills in the mountains of the upper northeast corner of Lee County, Virginia, between Appalachia (Wise County) on the northeast and Pennington Gap on the southwest, a distance of about thirty miles. In June 1880, Crab Orchard had 128 heads of household with practically all engaged in farming.<sup>1</sup> This detailed look at the opening of a coal mine and associated community infrastructure against the larger background of coalfield development gives us a glimpse and better understanding of this larger pattern of our history.

By the 1890s, the development of the Appalachia coalfields in Southwest Virginia created boom times which dramatically increased the labor force. It was through this industrialization of a rural community and its transformation that Crab Orchard became a part of Appalachia's coal history. Local entrepreneurs and capitalists from the industrialized north seized the opportunity to meet the Nation's energy demands. Coal fueled the ships of the world, industry, and homes. Shifflett, in his book *Coal Towns*, states "southern Appalachian coal lay in remote, rugged, and unsettled areas from independent towns."<sup>2</sup> Crab Orchard was different and perhaps unique as it was not a

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places**

**Keokee Store No. 1  
Lee Co. Virginia**

**Continuation Sheet**

---

forested unsettled site but was a farming community having its own post office, which had opened in 1872.<sup>3</sup>

It was against this backdrop that the Inter-State Investment Company, Louisville, Kentucky, purchased property in Lee County as early as July 1892.<sup>4</sup> On September 22, 1905, they prepared a lease for lands in Lee County, Virginia, and Harlan County, Kentucky, to Charles Page Perin of New York City for coal mining and coke making that was to start January 1, 1906. As part of the lease, Perin was to build or “cause to be built” a railroad from the mining operation to connect with the Louisville and Nashville Railroad or the Virginia and Southwestern Railroad. This was to be completed before July 1, 1907.<sup>5</sup>

In January 1906, Perin incorporated the Keokee Coal and Coke Company in New York with himself as president.<sup>6</sup> On February 12, 1906, it was announced that the Black Mountain Railroad had contracted with the Callahan Construction Company of Knoxville, Tennessee, to build seventeen miles of railroad from the Pocket, near Pennington Gap, through Crab Orchard, to Imboden (another of Perin’s mines) in Wise County, Virginia.<sup>7</sup> In Crab Orchard in March 1906, Perin and some of his directors met with various contractors to discuss construction of the coke ovens and housing for employees.<sup>8</sup> Also in March construction for the Keokee Hotel began.<sup>9</sup> W. T. Coulter, architect, was in Crab Orchard with Perin in March and returned in April to lay out the town. Jerome Wells of Big Stone Gap was the chief engineer for Perin’s company, and he was also in Crab Orchard laying out the coke ovens, for which construction began on May 12, 1906.<sup>10</sup> In June 1906 Perin, as an individual, assigned his lease with the Inter-State Investment

Company to the newly formed Keokee Coal and Coke Company. He also negotiated an extension until July 1, 1908, for building the railroad.<sup>11</sup>

The Keokee Company, now in a major construction phase, worked against the clock as outlined in their lease. Speedy communication was essential, but they had a problem with their address. There were other post offices in the United States with the name Crab Orchard or with Crab in the address. As a result mail was misdirected, causing delays which affected the company’s efforts to get a railroad to the mine, begin a mining operation, and build a town. Perin had named his mining company after his wife, Keokee Henderson Page, and he requested a name change from Crab Orchard to Keokee from the post office department. This was approved and went into effect October 1, 1906.<sup>12</sup>

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places

Keokee Store No. 1  
Lee Co. Virginia

Continuation Sheet

---

In January 1907, the Keokee Company “bought out the store of E. M. Cooper & Son and built a temporary home for [a] commissary and . . . commenced selling to the people.”<sup>13</sup> By the latter part of October 1907, the Black Mountain Division of the Virginia and Southwestern Railway was completed.<sup>14</sup>

On January 25, 1908, the Keokee Company paid off its employees in gold. This marks the month, it is believed, that the mines started production.<sup>15</sup> In or about February 1908, the Keokee Depot was completed with R. S. Rader as depot agent.<sup>16</sup> In May 1908, the Keokee Hotel was completed and opened for business “under the management of Mrs. Gilmer.”<sup>17</sup> By August 1908 and perhaps before, Keokee had passenger railroad service via Appalachia from Bristol, Virginia.<sup>18</sup> In early August, C. P. Perin and his wife Keokee moved to her namesake village.<sup>19</sup>

In January 1909, school attendance had increased due to the influx of employees in the mining industry. The Keokee Company’s paternalism was evident when they furnished the “school buildings” with electric lights from the company power house.<sup>20</sup>

In December 1909, the officers of the Keokee Company voted to dissolve their corporation, which was approved at a stockholders meeting in January 1910.<sup>21</sup> At the March 2, 1910, annual meeting of the Stonega Coke and Coal Company in Camden, New Jersey, the company was authorized to enter into a contract with the newly formed Keokee Consolidated Coke Company and to purchase all their stock.<sup>22</sup> Subsequently, the board of directors met on April 19, 1910, and agreed to enter into a previously written agreement dated March 21, 1910, between the Stonega Coke and Coal Company, the Keokee Consolidated Coke Company, and The Virginia Coal and Iron Company. They also changed the by-laws of the Stonega Company, providing for fifteen directors instead of nine. Charles Page Perin was appointed as one of the directors.<sup>23</sup> On April 27, 1910, *The Big Stone Gap Post* announced an “Immense Deal” stating that the Stonega Coke and Coal Company acquired from the Keokee Consolidated Coke Company its entire holdings with about 9,000 acres of coal land. It was mentioned that the Keokee plant had 400 coke ovens.<sup>24</sup> On June 6, 1910, a deed was written by C. P. Perin, president of the Keokee Consolidated Coke Company, transferring their land to The Virginia Coal and Iron Company.<sup>25</sup>

The store that was bought in 1907 by the Keokee Company apparently became Keokee Store No. 2 when Stonega purchased the holdings of the Keokee Company. In 1910, the first annual report about the Keokee operations was prepared by Stonega and stated that “the new commissary, which was under process of construction at the time of the consolidation, was completed and put into operation about October 1. The building is commodious and comfortable. The original plan

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places

Keokee Store No. 1  
Lee Co. Virginia

Continuation Sheet

---

of making the upstairs balcony a show room was abandoned. This part of the building was fitted up with nice offices for the Superintendent, pay roll clerks and engineering department.”<sup>26</sup> This new commissary, centrally located in the community, became Keokee Store No. 1 under Stonega. The elegant building had a Gambrel roof, was reported to be built of native stone, and had large dormer windows. A spur railroad line ran through Gates Hollow to the rear of the store for merchandise delivery and possibly passengers. W. T. Coulter was the architect. Since 1880 when the population was 128 families, the demographics had changed so that in 1910 only a few people were engaged in farming, while the remainder were employed in the mining industry. The population of Keokee was 2,043 with several people from Austria and Italy.<sup>27</sup>

In March 1910, the Keokee Consolidated Coke Company began work on the high school building agreed upon two years earlier between the company and the superintendent of Lee County schools. The cost was estimated to be between \$10,000 and \$15,000.<sup>28</sup>

A five room house with bath was constructed for the store manager in 1913. In 1914, a post office booth was built at the commissary. A profitable ice machine was installed in 1915. Tragedy struck in 1916 when a dray wagon used for hauling and delivering groceries for the store ran over and killed a two and one half year old girl.<sup>29</sup>

The annual report of 1918 states that “Keokee No. 2 Store was originally a dwelling at the foot of Palmer Hill and was made into a store to accommodate those living in the vicinity a few years previous. The patronage increased so much that in the summer of 1918 authorization was given to build a new store sixty by forty-one feet. This store was built at the top of Palmer Hill and set back about 100 feet from the county road.” (This is one mile east of Keokee Store No. 1) Entering the double doors of the store patrons saw counters around the wall with groceries on the back right and dry goods on the left. A store room was partitioned off on the back right with double doors leading to an outside loading platform. On the left was the “butcher’s space,” and this room led to another ice room or “refrigerator.” The store had a basement to store potatoes and other stock that was perishable in freezing weather.<sup>30</sup>

Although the Keokee mine was producing little coal, the Stonega Company maintained the village. In 1919 at Keokee stores No. 1 and No. 2, the meat rooms were screened and fences in the vicinity of the stores were whitewashed.<sup>31</sup> Stonega also “repaired the school house.”<sup>32</sup> The Keokee Plant was idle much of the 1920s, but in 1926 the company “repaired [the] fence around [the] ball ground.”<sup>33</sup> In 1929 funds were allocated “to recondition the dwellings, hotel, theater, No. 2 store, colored church, and old machine shop. In 1930 the porch, roof, boiler plant and

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places

Keokee Store No. 1  
Lee Co. Virginia

Continuation Sheet

---

heating system of Keokee No. 1 Store were repaired.<sup>34</sup>

E. J. Prescott, writing in *The Virginia Coal and Iron Company*, said, “[in 1927] the Coke ovens, colliery buildings, and 178 dwellings located on that part of Keokee Colliery in Lee County, Virginia, [had] been abandoned, dismantled, or sold and removed, leaving thirty-four dwellings.”<sup>35</sup> Defining a closing date for the Keokee mines is not easy. The last date a large tonnage of coal was produced was in 1927, but through 1932 the company mined enough “domestic coal” for the use of the Keokee residents. No coal was mined in Keokee after 1933.<sup>36</sup>

In 1931, the Keokee store was last in sales out of eleven stores Stonega operated, with a total of \$19,848.76. J. J. Clarkston was the storekeeper and only full time employee at the store.<sup>37</sup> On May 23, 1932, Stonega Vice President J. D. Rogers wrote R. E. Taggart, vice president, in Philadelphia that he had been “keeping a rather close check” on revenue derived at the Keokee store. Taggart responded saying that when Stonega determined the operation of their collieries they would decide on the operation of the store. On June 22, 1932, the decision was passed on by Vice President Rogers requesting T. I. Adams, the manager of stores for Stonega, to “arrange to close [the] Keokee store permanently as of July 1, 1932, or as soon thereafter as possible.” Adams replied saying he would close Keokee Store No. 1 “permanently at the close of business July 2nd, 1932.”<sup>38</sup> It is not known exactly when the No. 2 Store closed, but presumably by mid-1932.

The 1932 annual report announced that on June 30 (*sic* July 2) the Keokee store would close and not be operated until additional mine employees were hired. The few employees living at Keokee and working at Imboden were served by truck from the Exeter Store.<sup>39</sup> The Keokee mines were idle during the 1930s, and in 1936 all the railroad steel and outside mine tracks were removed, thus effectively rendering the mines inoperable.<sup>40</sup>

On June 17, 1937, the Lee County School Board met in Jonesville and after convening left to visit the schools at Dryden, Deep Springs, Seminary, Keokee, Calvin, Johnsons Mill, and Robbins Chapel. Their purpose was to make a decision about locating high schools on the north and south sides of Stone Mountain. Dryden was selected for a high school on the south side. On the north side Calvin was selected to have six rooms with an auditorium and gymnasium, provided the site of the ball ground of five acres be deeded by the company with a right-of-way. Otherwise they were “to remove to Keokee for a site.”<sup>41</sup>

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places**

**Keokee Store No. 1  
Lee Co. Virginia**

**Continuation Sheet**

---

It is not recorded how the decision was reached to locate the high school at Keokee, but it appears the store's adaptability as a gymnasium, and the additional buildings that could be acquired, weighed heavily as a contributing factor in the board's selection. On March 15, 1938, a deed was written between The Virginia Coal and Iron Company, Stonega Coke and Coal Company, and the County School Board of Lee County, Virginia. For \$5,000 the Virginia Company conveyed to the school board two parcels of land in Keokee for school purposes.<sup>42</sup> One parcel was the former site of the Keokee Hotel and included a dwelling in the back of the lot from the earlier mining camp that would serve as the high school's Home Economics building. The second parcel contained the former Keokee Store No. 1.

In May 1938, the county board applied to the "Literary Fund" at Richmond, Virginia, for \$50,000 to construct a high school building at Keokee. The building was to be brick or frame construction with an auditorium and eight rooms at an estimated cost of \$75,000. Since it seemed to be a foregone conclusion that Keokee was to have a new high school, the Survey Committee, in a June 4, 1938, board meeting, was apparently oblivious to other board actions and strongly recommended that a high school building be erected in the Keokee or Calvin area. They added that no site had been made available for Calvin while Keokee had provided the site with the former company store which could be used for a gymnasium, plus a building for a Home Economics Cottage, and others (apparently one dwelling would become the principal's residence). In this meeting the board made application to the Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works for a grant to aid in financing the construction of the school building and gymnasium at Keokee. In a special school board meeting on August 24, 1938, the Federal Public Works grant for financing the school building at Keokee was discussed and they formally decided to build at Keokee.<sup>43</sup>

On November 24, 1938, the school board accepted the lowest bid for building the Keokee High School from Kingsolver Construction of Bristol, Virginia, in the amount of \$45,740.

On March 24, 1939, the school board met in a special session and passed a resolution to be sent to the Public Works Administrator in Atlanta "that they would not be able to complete the repair on the Keokee Gymnasium" under the grant. The resolution read "Whereas, the \$3,000 allocated for alteration of Keokee Gymnasium is found to be inadequate and that in order to make the necessary alterations suitable for use, it will require at least \$10,000 or a supplementary grant of 45% of \$7,000 additional funds needed to complete the project on Keokee Gymnasium."<sup>44</sup> It is assumed these additional funds were received.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places**

**Keokee Store No. 1  
Lee Co. Virginia**

**Continuation Sheet**

---

At the August 30, 1939, board meeting the local inspector of school buildings appeared before the board announcing that the Keokee High School building had been completed in accordance with all plans and specifications, and based upon this information the board accepted the school.<sup>45</sup> The new Keokee High School with grades one through twelve opened in the fall of 1939. The former commissary was successfully adapted into a gymnasium.

On December 24, 1945, major work on Keokee No. 1 mine was authorized which was part of a plan to open a colliery in Kentucky. This mine provided access from the Virginia side of the mountain for furnishing supplies and to transport employees. The Kentucky mine would be named the Glenbrook Colliery.<sup>46</sup> While this mining work was going on the Keokee girls in the former Keokee Store No. 1 gymnasium were on their way to winning the 1945 Lee County basketball championship.

In 1947, the Virginia Company conveyed its surface rights in Keokee to the Stonega Coke and Coal Company.<sup>47</sup> Stonega, on March 18, 1947, subdivided those lands at Keokee for a subdivision which was described on a plat dated April 26, 1946.<sup>48</sup> On the same day, Stonega conveyed the eighty lots contained in this plat to the Big Stone Gap Land Company.<sup>49</sup>

The 1947 annual report for Stonega summed up the purpose of these land transfers. Under the heading "Village of Keokee" it stated "The year witnessed the completion of 80 dwellings for mine workers, the majority [of] them have already been sold to men working at Glenbrook. These dwellings have complete interior bathrooms, individual septic tanks, and electrical wiring. The water system, including fire hydrants, and a 500,000 gallon steel storage water tank, was completed .... All this work was done under the supervision of the firm, W. K. Durham, architect, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania."<sup>50</sup> Work continued from late 1945 through 1947 for "the construction of the necessary facilities for the production of coal from this colliery [Glenbrook] ... and on May 7, 1947, the first High Splint Seam coal was loaded in an L & N Railroad car."<sup>51</sup>

For the 1948-1949 school year, three classrooms, a library, music room, and an office were added to the Keokee High School. In 1954 an industrial arts classroom with work shop was placed in the basement of the gymnasium.<sup>52</sup>

Keokee does not have the look of a mining town, and the commissary/gymnasium with its wonderful design contributed to that well planned town look. The commissary's role in the first company town (1910-1932) was important as the central focus of the community and as a symbol of the company's dominance. In the second company town (1947-present), the commissary

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places

Keokee Store No. 1  
Lee Co. Virginia

Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 10

---

building's most beneficial role was one of a strong educational emphasis that influenced the lives of so many students. Its secondary beneficial role was the numerous sports, educational, and entertaining activities that were held for the student body and the community at large.

Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Tenth (1880) U. S. Census, Lee County, Virginia (Washington, D.C: National Archives, n.d.).

<sup>2</sup> Crandall A. Shifflett, *Coal Towns Life, Work, and Culture in Company Towns of Southern Appalachia, 1880-1960* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1991) 33-34. Hereafter Shifflett, *Coal 'Towns*.

<sup>3</sup> Post Office Site Location Report, M 1126, Roll 615, Crab Orchard, Lee County, Virginia, November 1872. National Archives, Washington, D.C.

<sup>4</sup> Lee County, Jonesville, Virginia, Deed Book 28, page 168. Hereafter Deed Book.

<sup>5</sup> Westmoreland Coal Company Records, Stonega Coal and Coke Company, Accession 1765, Series II, Box 545, Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, Delaware. Hereafter Hagley Museum and Library.

<sup>6</sup> Accession 1765, Series II, Box 545, Hagley Museum and Library.

<sup>7</sup> *The Big Stone Gap Post*, Big Stone Gap, Virginia, Thursday, February 15, 1906, vol. 14, no. 6. Hereafter *The Post*.

<sup>8</sup> *The Post*, Thursday, March 15, 1906, vol. 14, no. 10.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, Wednesday, March 20, 1907, vol. 15, no. 12.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, Thursday, April 19, 1906, vol. 14, no. 14. *The Post*, Thursday, May 24, 1906, vol. 14, no. 19.

<sup>11</sup> Accession 1765, Series II, Box 545, Hagley Museum and Library. The Keokee Coal and Coke Company is hereafter referred to as the Keokee Company.

<sup>12</sup> *The Post*, Thursday, August 2, 1906, vol. 14, no. 29. *The Post*, Wednesday, September 26, 1906, vol. 14, no. 37.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, Wednesday, January 30, 1907, vol. 15, no. 5.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, Wednesday, October 30, 1907, vol. 15, no. 44. *The Post*, Wednesday, December 11, 1907, vol. 15, no. 50.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, Wednesday, January 29, 1908, vol. 16, no. 5.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, Wednesday, March 4, 1908, vol. 16, no. 10.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, Wednesday, May 27, 1908, vol. 16, no. 22.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, Wednesday, August 5, 1908, vol. 16, no. 32.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, Wednesday, August 26, 1908, vol. 16, no. 35.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, Wednesday, January 13, 1909, vol. 17, no. 2.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places

Keokee Store No. 1  
Lee Co. Virginia

Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 11

---

<sup>21</sup> Accession 1765, Series II, Box 545, Hagley Museum and Library.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Accession 1765, Series II, Box 197, Hagley Museum and Library.

<sup>24</sup> *The Post*, Wednesday, April 27, 1910, vol. 18, no. 17.

<sup>25</sup> Deed Book 51, page 172, May 3, 1911, date filed. The Virginia Coal and Iron Company is hereafter referred to as the Virginia Company.

<sup>26</sup> Accession 1765, Series II, Box 210, June-December 1910 Annual Report (for Keokee). Hagley Museum and Library.

<sup>27</sup> Thirteenth (1910) U. S. Census, Lee County, Virginia, roll 1633 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives, n.d.).

<sup>28</sup> *The Post*, Wednesday, March 30, 1910, vol. 18, no. 13.

<sup>29</sup> Accession 1765, Series II, Box 210, 1913 and 1914 Annual Reports, Hagley Museum and Library. Accession 1765, Series II, Box 211, 1916 Annual Report, Hagley Museum and Library.

<sup>30</sup> Accession 1765, Series II, Box 211, 1918 Annual Report, Hagley Museum and Library.

<sup>31</sup> Accession 1765, Series II, Box 211, 1919 Annual Report, Hagley Museum and Library.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Accession 1765, Series II, Box 213, 1926 Annual Report, Hagley Museum and Library.

<sup>34</sup> Accession 1765, Series II, Box 219, 1929 Annual Report, Hagley Museum and Library.

Accession 1765, Series II, Box 213, 1930 Annual Report, Hagley Museum and Library.

<sup>35</sup> E. J. Prescott, comp. *The Virginia Coal and Iron Company 1882-1945* (Big Stone Gap, Va.: n.p., 1946), 97-98.

<sup>36</sup> Accession 1765, Series II, Box 216, 1944 Annual Report showing coal tonnage produced (1914-1944). Hagley Museum and Library.

<sup>37</sup> Accession 1765, Series II, Box 347, Departmental Files, Store Department 1930-1936, Hagley Museum and Library.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Accession 1765, Series II, Box 214, 1932 Annual Report, Hagley Museum and Library.

<sup>40</sup> Accession 1765, Series II, Box 215, 1936 Annual Report, Hagley Museum and Library.

<sup>41</sup> 1937 Minutes of the Lee County School Board, Jonesville, Virginia, 63. Hereafter Minutes.

<sup>42</sup> Deed Book 97, page 159, June 7, 1938.

<sup>43</sup> 1938 Minutes, 84-85.

<sup>44</sup> 1939 Minutes, 120.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 133-134.

<sup>46</sup> Accession 1765, Series II, Box 219, 1945 Annual Report. Hagley Museum and Library.

<sup>47</sup> Deed Book 122, page 210, January 31, 1947.

<sup>48</sup> Deed Book 123, page 3, March 18, 1947.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places

Keokee Store No. 1  
Lee Co. Virginia

Continuation Sheet

Section 8.9 Page 12

---

<sup>49</sup> Deed Book 123, page 37, March 18, 1947.

<sup>50</sup> Accession 1765, Series II, Box 217, 1947 Annual Report, Hagley Museum and Library.

<sup>51</sup> Accession 1765, Series II, Box 219, 1947 Little Report for Keokee Plant, Hagley Museum and Library. Glenbrook closed in 1963.

<sup>52</sup> Keokee Extension Service, *Village of Keokee* (Privately printed, 1975), 35.

## 9. Bibliography

Alexander C. Morris to R. C. Ballard Thruston. Lee County Deed Book 28, p. 168.

*The Big Stone Gap Post*, Big Stone Gap, Virginia, issues of 1906, 1907, 1908, 1909, and 1910.

Crab Orchard, Lee County, Post Office Site Location Report, M 1126, Roll 615, November 1872, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

Keokee Consolidated Coke Company to Virginia Coal and Iron Company. Lee County Deed book 51, p. 172.

The Virginia Coal and Iron Company to Stonega Coke and Coal Company and the Lee County School Board. Lee County Deed Book 97, p. 159.

Keokee Extension Service. *Village of Keokee*, 1975.

Minutes of the Lee County School Board 1937, p. 63.

Minutes of the Lee County School Board 1938, p. 84-85.

Minutes of the Lee County School Board, 1939, p. 120 and 122-134.

Prescott, E. J., comp. *The Virginia Coal and Iron Company 1882-1945*. Big Stone Gap, Virginia, 1946.

Shifflett, Crandall A. *Coal Towns Life, Work, and Culture in Company Towns of Southern Appalachia, 1880-1960*. Knoxville, Tenn: The University of Tennessee Press, 1991.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places**

**Keokee Store No. 1  
Lee Co. Virginia**

**Continuation Sheet**

**Section 9 Page 13**

---

Stonega Coke and Coal Company to Recording Subdivision Description of Property "Village of Keokee." Lee County Deed Book 123, p. 3

Stonega Coke and Coal Company to Big Stone Gap Land Company. Lee County Deed Book 123, p. 37.

Tenth (1880) U.S. Census, Lee County, Virginia, Washington, D.C.: National Archives, n.d.

Thirteenth (1910) U.S. Census, Lee County, Virginia, roll 1633, Washington, D.C.: National Archives, n.d.

The Virginia Coal and Iron Company to Stonega Coke and Coal Company and the Lee County School Board. Lee County Deed Book 97, p. 159.

The Virginia Coal and Iron Company to Stonega Coke and Coal Company. Lee County Deed Book 122, p. 210.

Westmoreland Coal Company Records, Stonega Coke and Coal Company, Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, Delaware, Accession 1765, Series II, Boxes 197, 210, 211, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 219, 347, and 545.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places**

**Keokee Store No. 1  
Lee Co. Virginia**

**Continuation Sheet**

**Section 10, photo Page 14**

---

**10. Geographical Data**

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The boundary of the nominated resource is shown on the Keokee Quadrangle map and aerial map using four UTM points to define a site around the building itself. The UTM's are as follows: A. 17 330620 4081427 B. 17 330688 4081415 C. 17 330668 4081356 D. 17 330597 4081372.

**Boundary Justification**

The nominated parcel boundary includes the original store building/gymnasium and a small yard surrounding it at the crossroads of the Town of Keokee.

**Photographs**

Keokee Store #1 (DHR 052-0066)  
Lee County, Virginia  
Date: October, 2006  
Photographer: Michael J. Pulice

1. Keokee Store No. 1, exterior, facing north.
  2. Keokee Store No. 1, exterior, facing south.
  3. Keokee Store No. 1, side elevation, facing southwest.
  4. Keokee Store No. 1, interior, facing northwest.
  5. Keokee Store No. 1, exterior, facing northwest - undated historic photograph-  
photographer unknown.
-

STATES  
BY AUTHORITY  
ES BRANCH

KEOKEE QUADRANGLE  
VIRGINIA-KENTUCKY  
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC) 178-SW

4457 IV NE  
(APPALACHIA 178-NE)



4082  
EXETER 2.0 MI. APPALACHIA 7.2 MI.  
4081  
4080  
4079

KEOKEE  
STORE NO.1  
#052-0066  
LEE CO. VA

A. 17 330620E  
4081427N

B. 17 330688E  
4081415N

C. 17 330688E  
4081356N

D. 17 330597E  
4081372N

220 000 FEET VA.