

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Dunagan's Store
Other names/site number: J.E. Dunagan's Store; Dunagan's Grocery & Supply, WN 33
Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

2. Location

Street & number: 1748 Old Mill Springs Road
City or town: Monticello State: KY County: Wayne
Not For Publication: NA Vicinity: X

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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 at the following:

Level(s) of significance: ___ national ___ statewide X local
Applicable National Register Criteria: X A ___ B ___ C ___ D

Signature of certifying official/Title: Craig Potts/SHPO Date
_____ Kentucky Heritage Council/State Historic Preservation Office _____
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register
criteria.

Signature of commenting official: Date

**Title : State or Federal agency/bureau
or Tribal Government**

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

Number of Resources within Property

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

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Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

COMMERCE/TRADE — Specialty Store

COMMERCE/TRADE — General Store

GOVERNMENT – Post Office

Current Functions

VACANT / Commercial (planned adaptive reuse)

7. Description

Architectural Classification

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS/Commercial Style

Materials:

Principal exterior materials of the property:

Foundation: Concrete / Stone

Walls: Wood

Roof: Metal

Porch: Wood

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Narrative Description

Summary Paragraph

Dunagan's Store (WN 33) is listed on the National Register as a non-contributing building within the Mill Springs Battlefield Areas. That district was listed in 1993 (NRIS 93000001), and was expanded in 2009 (NRIS 08001121), with the Store within the 2009 boundary increase, in an area termed "Confederate Base of Operations South of the River" (see map below). Thus, this nomination proposes individual listing for a building that currently is on the National Register. The building was built in 1890, and is recognizable as a country store. The building retains exterior characteristics associated with rural commercial construction in Wayne County, including functional detailing, locally available materials, and a form adapted to commercial use along rural transportation routes. The nominated property includes approximately 1.2 acres and one contributing building.



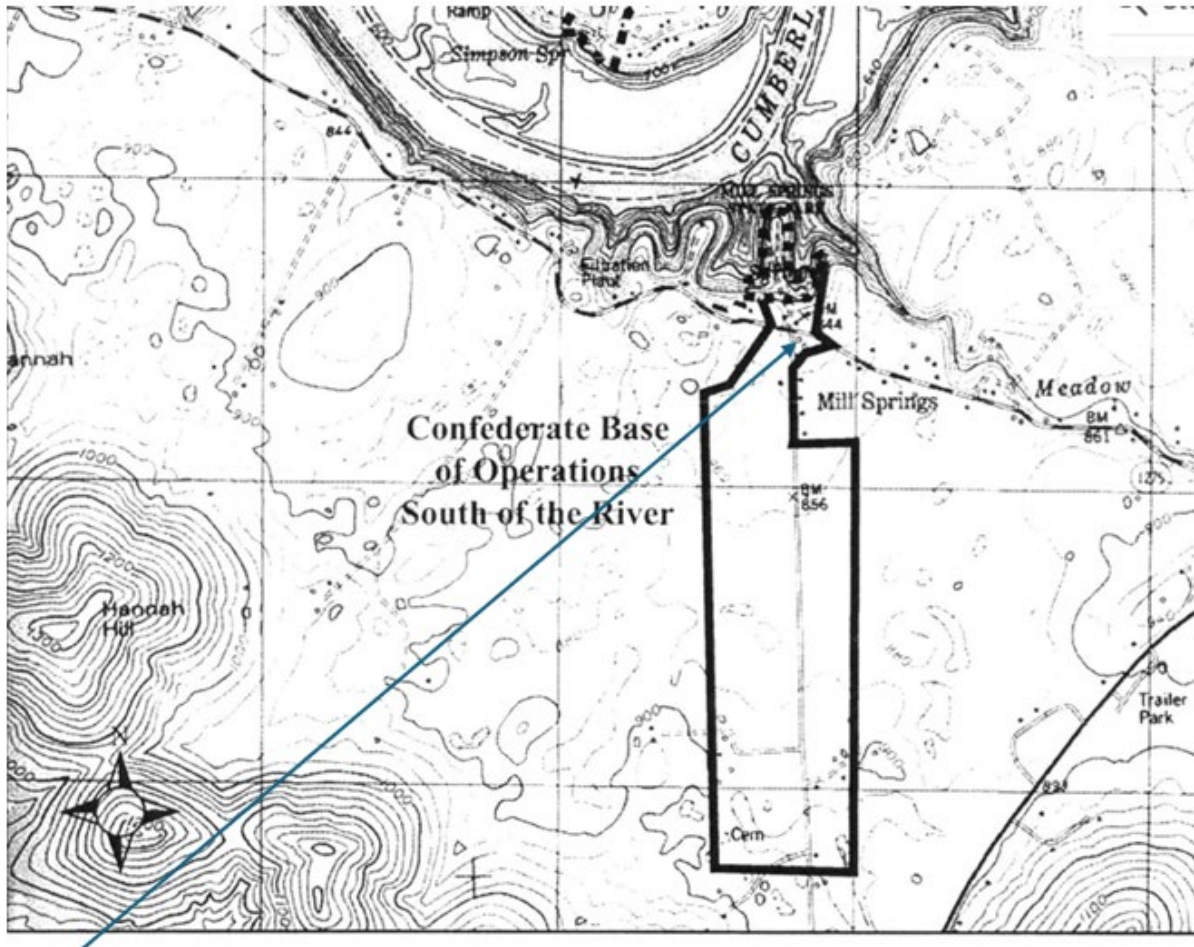
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Dunagan's Store, Wayne County, Kentucky **Latitude: 36.932120°** **Longitude:-**
84.779048°



Location of Dunagan's Store within Battle of Mill Springs Historic Areas (Boundary Increase), p. 96

Character of Site and Surroundings

The surrounding setting retains a rural character defined by open land, roadway visibility, and proximity to historic resources within the Mill Springs community. The property occupies a triangular parcel bounded by Old Mill Springs Road to the west, State Route 1275 to the north, and an unnamed connector road forming the eastern boundary. The lot is level and grass-covered with fewer than six deciduous trees. Gravel covers portions of the lot to the south and east of the building.

In 1935 the building was moved approximately one hundred yards to its present location. The move was accomplished using mule power. Since relocation, the building has remained in continuous use associated with this location and with commercial and community activity.

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Narrative Description

General features

Dunagan's Store sits in a triangular parcel of land bounded by three roads. Old Mill Springs Road forms the western boundary; State Route 1275 forms the northern boundary; an unnamed connector road between Old Mill Springs road and 1275 forms the east side of the property. The lot level, grass covered, and has is sparsely populated with fewer than six deciduous trees. Gravel covers the lot to the south and east of the store.

The store is a two-story wood-frame rectangular structure with exterior wood weatherboard siding and stands on a concrete foundation. The building is surmounted by a front-gabled roof on its east side. The building's rear (west) entry faces Old Mill Springs Road; the front (east) of the building faces the unnamed connector road. The roof ridge runs in an east-west line. The building has operable vinyl windows on its second floor; the original windows do not remain. Those are replacement one-over-one double-hung wood sash windows in most openings. The first floor spaces are lit by openings in the front and back sides, as well as by single fixed diamond-shaped windows on the north and south sides.

East (front) façade

The primary elevation is defined by a full-width shed-roof porch covered by modern sheet metal and supported by four simple square wood posts. The posts rest on the plank wood flooring of the porch. The east side has two ground level doors—a double door in the center and a single door near the building's southeast corner. Paired windows, covered with security metal bars, flank each side of the main door. Two windows light the upper floor. The false-front portion of the front façade has been covered with roofing metal.



Dunagan's Store: South and East Sides



East Side

North and South façades

The North and South sides of the building are nearly identical, both showing three windows in the upper level and the diamond-shaped window in the midpoint of the first floor's wall. The

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North side has three PVC plastic vent pipes emerging from the first floor wall and running up the wall and rising above the roof overhang. A star-quilt design is present on the north side but not on the south side. The south side has a single vent pipe that also rises to a point above the eave line without piercing the roof.



North Façade



South Facade

West façade

The West (back) side of the building is similar to the front of the building, but lacks the window openings on the first floor and the second entry door. The west doorway is centrally located on the side, and has double doors. The porch roof is similar, with metal covering and four-post support, but the porch floor is earth with a perimeter of stone blocks, on which the porch posts rest.



North and West sides



West (back) side

Interior Description

First and Second Floors

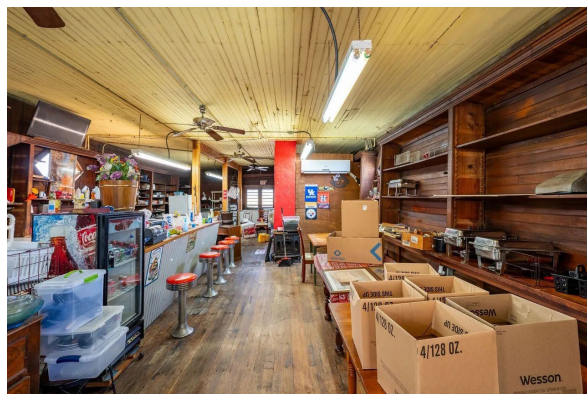
The interior of Dunagan's Store is organized around a large open commercial room occupying most of the first floor, a spatial arrangement typical of late nineteenth-century rural mercantile

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buildings. The primary entrance opens directly into this space, allowing unobstructed circulation consistent with retail use. The open plan permitted flexible placement of counters, shelving, and merchandise displays and accommodated both commercial transactions and informal gathering associated with daily store operations.

A rear doorway located on the west elevation remains functional but is infrequently used. The door provides access to the exterior facing the unnamed connector road and appears to have historically served as a secondary service entrance. The opening remains intact and operable, contributing to the continued legibility of circulation patterns associated with commercial use of the building.



Downstairs from Front Door



Downstairs Kitchen

Interior wall and ceiling surfaces consist primarily of exposed structural elements and finish materials installed during successive periods of use and maintenance. Evidence of commercial activity remains visible in the spatial configuration, including circulation patterns oriented toward the entrance and the absence of permanent interior partitions within the principal sales area. Open floor space near the entrance accommodated customer movement, while wall surfaces provided locations for shelving and storage associated with retail functions. Wooden display cases and storage counters remain present within the primary first-floor commercial space. Constructed of wood and positioned along interior walls and within the open sales area, these fixtures provided surfaces for the display and storage of merchandise associated with general store operations. The cases are utilitarian in design, emphasizing durability and accessibility for customers and store operators, and their placement corresponds to merchandising arrangements commonly found in rural general stores.

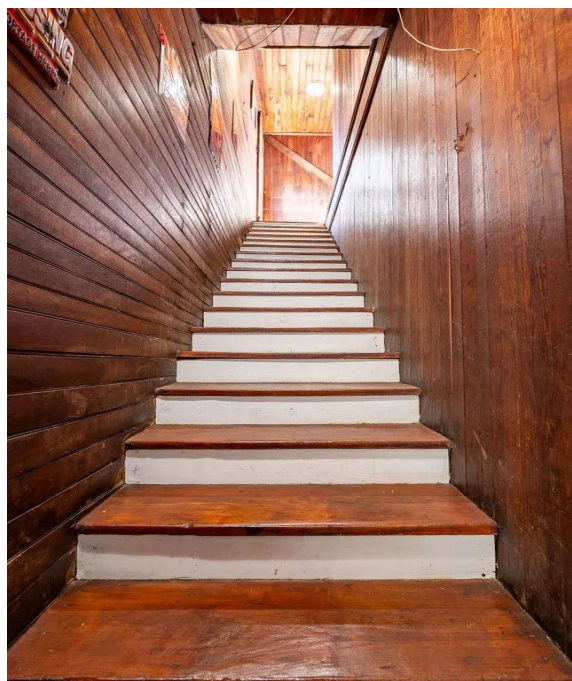
A staircase provides access to the second floor, which historically functioned as storage and ancillary space supporting the mercantile operation below. The upper level retains a largely open configuration with limited subdivision, consistent with its utilitarian purpose for storage of goods and supplies. Window openings on the second floor provide natural light and ventilation, a common feature in rural commercial buildings constructed prior to widespread electrification.

The second floor is divided into multiple rooms that are not internally connected, each accessed independently rather than through a continuous hallway. This arrangement corresponds to utilitarian upper-story spaces used for storage or ancillary purposes associated with commercial

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operations below. Interior finishes on the upper level are similarly simple in character, emphasizing function over ornamentation. A single bathroom was installed on the second floor during alterations undertaken in approximately the 1990s. The addition introduced modern plumbing fixtures within an existing room while leaving the overall spatial configuration of the upper level largely unchanged.



Stairs to Second Floor



Second Floor Bathroom

Interior finishes typical of late nineteenth-century rural commercial construction remain evident throughout the building. Flooring consists primarily of wood boards laid over a wood structural framing system designed for durability under heavy commercial use. Interior wall surfaces are composed of wood framing and wood sheathing materials common to vernacular construction of the period, with finishes applied or modified during later periods of occupancy. Ceiling heights on the first floor allow for ventilation and daylight distribution through window openings, contributing to interior environmental conditions appropriate for mercantile activity prior to modern climate control systems.

Taken together, the interior features of Dunagan's Store—including its open first-floor commercial space, wood flooring, wood wall construction, surviving wooden display cases, and utilitarian second-floor rooms—retain the physical characteristics associated with late nineteenth-century rural mercantile buildings. The arrangement of circulation space, merchandising areas, and storage rooms continues to express the functional organization required for general store operations serving agricultural communities and travelers. Later modifications, including finish updates and the installation of a bathroom on the second floor in approximately the 1990s, introduced modern amenities while leaving the overall spatial configuration and primary interior materials largely intact. The interior remains legible as a working commercial environment adapted over time to accommodate continued use.

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First Floor Plan



Downstairs from Front Door

Alterations

Interior alterations associated with continued occupancy and changing commercial needs have occurred over time; however, the overall spatial organization remains intact. The building retains a functional layout characteristic of rural general stores, where retail, storage, and service activities were accommodated within a single adaptable structure designed for long-term commercial use.

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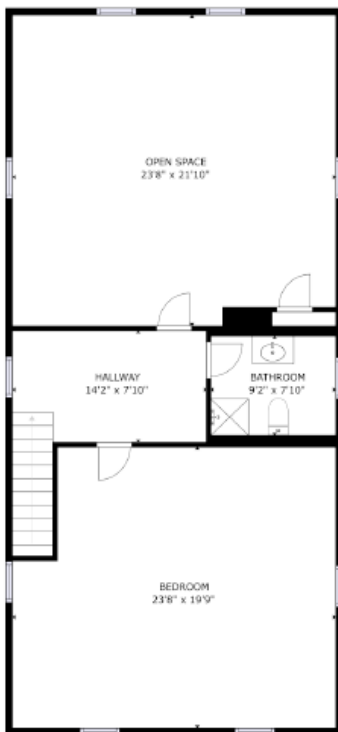
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Second Floor Room #1



Second Floor Room #2



In recent years, the building has been used as Dunagan's BBQ, a restaurant operating within the historic commercial space. Restaurant equipment associated with food preparation and service has been introduced into portions of the first floor; however, the overall interior layout and primary spatial organization of the building are largely unchanged. The open commercial room continues to define the principal interior space, and the placement of equipment has generally accommodated the existing plan rather than requiring substantial structural alteration.

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Modifications associated include the installation of a restroom on the first floor during alterations undertaken in approximately the 1990s. The restroom was constructed within the existing interior footprint and introduced modern plumbing fixtures while retaining the broader spatial configuration of the commercial area. A black-and-white linoleum floor covering was installed in the cooking and food preparation area to accommodate sanitary requirements associated with restaurant operations. This flooring treatment is limited to the preparation space and does not extend throughout the primary commercial room.

Additional interior modifications were undertaken during alterations in approximately the 1990s, including the installation of exposed electrical conduit, ceiling fans and fluorescent lighting fixtures within the first-floor commercial space. The ceiling fans were mounted to improve air circulation within the large open room, while fluorescent light fixtures were installed to provide supplemental illumination for continued commercial use. These features were added without substantial modification to the structural framing or overall spatial configuration of the building. The lighting and mechanical additions remain surface-mounted and reversible in nature, allowing the primary interior volume and historic construction materials to remain visible.

Changes to the Building since the Period of Significance

The following physical alterations have occurred since the end of the period of significance:

- Installation of sheet metal covering over the false-front parapet.
- Installation of replacement window units in some openings.
- Addition of PVC vent pipes on the north and south elevations.
- Installation of security bars on select first-floor windows.
- Routine maintenance and repair of porch roofing materials.
- Installation of interior restroom on first and second floors.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

- 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

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance

Commerce

Period of Significance

ca. 1935-1945

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Significant Dates

1935 (moved to present location)

Significant Person

NA

Cultural Affiliation

NA

Architect/Builder

Unknown

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Statement of Significance

Summary Paragraph

Dunagan's Store (WN 33), located in the Mill Springs vicinity of Wayne County, Kentucky, meets National Register Criterion A and Criterion Consideration B at the local level of significance within the historic context, "Rural General Stores in Kentucky and Wayne County, Kentucky, 1865–1945." Constructed in 1890, the building functioned continuously as a rural mercantile establishment and post office serving the surrounding agricultural community through the mid-twentieth century. It was moved in 1935 from its original site 100 yards away to its current location, where it continued performing its vital commercial service. During its Period of Significance in its current location, 1935–1945, Dunagan's Store operated as a primary center of commercial exchange, credit distribution, and postal communication within a dispersed rural landscape structured by river corridors and interior wagon roads. Its location at a transportation junction positioned it within established patterns of agricultural movement linking farms, milling operations, ferry crossings, and neighboring settlements. As a surviving example of a rural store that combined mercantile, service, and governmental functions within a single structure, the property retains sufficient integrity to convey its historic role as a focal point of economic exchange, communication, and community interaction within Wayne County's rural agricultural landscape.

Historic Context: Rural General Stores in Kentucky and Wayne County, 1865–1945

In Wayne County, geographic isolation and dispersed settlement reinforced reliance on country stores as local service centers (Collins 1874; Clark 1994). Rugged terrain, limited railroad access, and the predominance of small-scale agriculture discouraged centralized commercial development. Stores established near mills, river crossings, and transportation junctions became dependable destinations within daily travel patterns. These establishments formed interconnected nodes within Wayne County's decentralized commercial landscape, creating the conditions under which long-operating rural mercantile institutions such as Dunagan's Store could develop and sustain community relevance.

Following the Civil War, general stores became an essential component of economic life (Clark 1994; Kentucky Historical Society 2003). Dispersed agricultural households relied upon mercantile establishments for staple goods, tools, clothing, seed, hardware, agricultural implements, and household necessities unavailable through home production. In regions where farms were separated by considerable distance and transportation infrastructure remained limited, the general store served as the most accessible point of commercial exchange. These establishments linked small-scale producers to regional supply networks and provided continuity within an otherwise decentralized agricultural economy (Clark 1994).

The economic structure of rural Kentucky during the late nineteenth century reinforced the importance of these stores. Cash circulation in agricultural communities was often seasonal and irregular, tied closely to crop production and livestock sales (Hurt 1994). General stores

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commonly operated on credit systems aligned with agricultural cycles, allowing farmers to obtain goods throughout the growing season and settle accounts after harvest (Clark 1994; Hurt 1994). Storekeepers maintained detailed account ledgers and extended credit based on long-standing personal relationships, creating a system of mutual dependency between merchant and farmer. This credit-based exchange structure was fundamental to sustaining rural settlement patterns in counties such as Wayne, where industrial employment opportunities were limited.

General stores also functioned as intermediaries between local agricultural production and broader commercial markets. Merchants acquired goods through regional wholesalers and, in some cases, purchased surplus farm products for resale or shipment to larger markets (Clark 1994). In this way, the rural store operated as both a distribution center and a modest aggregation point within a wider commercial system. The presence of such establishments reduced the need for farmers to travel long distances to urban centers, reinforcing localized economic circulation.

The interior organization of general stores supported diverse commercial activities. Open floor plans allowed flexible placement of counters, shelving, and wooden display cases used for bulk goods such as flour, sugar, nails, dry goods, and hardware. Merchandise was often stored in barrels, crates, and bins, with goods measured and weighed at central counters (Kentucky Heritage Council; Clark 1994). Upper floors frequently served as storage areas for surplus inventory, seasonal merchandise, or agricultural supplies. This adaptable spatial arrangement allowed merchants to adjust inventory and layout in response to seasonal demand while maintaining a stable commercial environment.

Beyond retail activity, general stores served as centers of social interaction and information exchange (Clark 1994; Ayers 1992). In rural areas lacking formal civic buildings, the store functioned as a primary public space where residents discussed crop prices, political developments, weather conditions, and community matters. Newspapers delivered through postal systems were read and shared, and itinerant travelers often contributed regional news. These daily interactions reinforced social bonds among dispersed farm families and strengthened the store's role as a focal point of community life.

The integration of postal services into rural general stores further expanded their importance (Fuller 1972; U.S. Postal Service History Office). Many storekeepers served concurrently as postmasters, consolidating commercial and governmental functions within a single accessible structure. Regular mail delivery increased visitation frequency and strengthened the store's role within communication networks. The introduction of Rural Free Delivery (RFD) in the late nineteenth century altered patterns of mail distribution but did not eliminate the store's centrality as a gathering point in communities where travel remained structured by established roads and agricultural routines (Fuller 1972).

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, rural post offices formed a critical component of communication infrastructure across Kentucky and the broader American South (Fuller 1972; U.S. Postal Service History Office). In regions characterized by dispersed agricultural settlement and limited municipal development, the federal postal system provided one of the few consistent governmental presences in daily rural life. Sparse population density

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made the construction of standalone postal buildings impractical in many communities. As a result, federal authorities frequently designated existing commercial establishments—most commonly general stores—as official mail distribution locations (Fuller 1972). This arrangement integrated postal services into established patterns of rural travel and exchange, reinforcing the centrality of mercantile buildings within community life.

Mail-order commerce further strengthened the importance of rural postal networks during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Companies such as Sears, Roebuck and Company and Montgomery Ward relied upon reliable mail service to distribute catalogs and consumer goods directly to farm households (Fuller 1972). Rural residents could order clothing, tools, household furnishings, and agricultural equipment through the postal system, expanding access to goods beyond those stocked locally. The integration of catalog commerce into rural economies did not eliminate the need for local stores; rather, it operated alongside existing mercantile establishments, reinforcing the store's function as an intermediary and information hub.

By the mid-twentieth century, improved road systems, increased automobile ownership, and federal postal consolidation policies led to the discontinuation of many small rural post offices (Fuller 1972; U.S. Postal Service History Office). As postal functions were centralized or incorporated into larger regional facilities, the combined store-post office model that had characterized rural communication systems for decades began to decline. The closure of these small post offices marked the gradual dissolution of localized communication networks closely tied to country stores and signaled broader structural changes in rural commercial life.

Comparative Rural Stores in Wayne County

Rural mercantile establishments operated throughout Wayne County during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, forming a decentralized network of commercial service points serving surrounding agricultural populations. Because settlement in the county developed primarily through dispersed farmsteads across rugged upland terrain, commercial activity often emerged at crossroads communities where local transportation routes converged (Clark 1994; Hurt 1994). Stores in communities such as Zula, Parmleysville, and Delta supplied staple goods, clothing, hardware, agricultural tools, and household provisions to nearby farm families. These establishments frequently extended credit between planting and harvest seasons and functioned as gathering places where residents exchanged news and conducted everyday business (Clark 1994; Ayers 1992).

One such rural service center was Zula, an unincorporated community in western Wayne County located southwest of Monticello (approx. 36.76° N, -84.98° W). A post office operated in Zula from 1901 until 1975, demonstrating the community's role as a small commercial and communication center during the twentieth century (Rennick 2000; U.S. Postal Service History Office). Historical accounts document a general store operated by the Catron family that also housed the community post office and restaurant. The store served surrounding farm families who traveled to the community to purchase provisions, obtain mail, and exchange local news. The original store building is no longer standing.

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Parmleystown developed in southeastern Wayne County along the Little South Fork of the Cumberland River (approx. 36.68° N, -84.75° W). Historically known as Horse Hollow, the settlement developed during the nineteenth century as a small agricultural service community associated with river transportation and milling activity (Collins 1874; Rennick 2000). General stores in Parmleystown supplied groceries, dry goods, and agricultural supplies to farms located along the river valley and surrounding ridges.

Delta, located north of Monticello (approx. 36.86° N, -84.65° W), also supported a small rural store. A post office was established in the community in 1906 (Rennick 2000). As in many Kentucky communities, the Delta post office operated alongside a small mercantile establishment that supplied groceries and basic goods to nearby farm households. The historic store building in Delta has not survived, and the area today consists primarily of dispersed residences and agricultural land.

The Triplett Store developed along interior transportation routes connecting farms with Monticello and the Cumberland River corridor, State Route 790 today. The historic store building's location is not known, as Google Earth has no town named Triplett which can give a clue to the general historic location of the store. Like many rural stores across Kentucky, it also functioned as a gathering place where residents exchanged information about crop conditions and community affairs (Clark 1994; Ayers 1992).

The presence of stores in communities such as Zula, Parmleystown, and Delta demonstrates the geographic distribution of rural mercantile establishments across Wayne County during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Within this countywide network of rural commerce, Dunagan's Store remains the only surviving example in the Mill Springs vicinity that retains sufficient integrity to convey its historic function as a country store and post office serving surrounding agricultural communities. Its survival provides tangible evidence of the decentralized commercial landscape that historically supported Wayne County's agricultural economy.



Zula Store (Catron family store and post office)



Alexander's Store in Delta

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Store Name	Community	Approximate Location	Historic function	Current Status
Dunagan's Store	Mill Springs	KY-90 near Mill Springs	General Store & post office	Extant, high integrity
Catron Family Store	Zula	SW of Monticello (36.76° N, -84.98° W)	General Store, post office, restaurant	Demolished
Parmleysville General Store	Parmleysville	Little South Fork River (36.68° N, -84.75° W)	General store serving river valley farms	Demolished
Delta Community Store	Delta	North of Monticello (36.86° N, -84.65° W)	General Store and Post Office	Demolished
Triplett Community Store	Unknown Community	Unknown	General store serving local farms	Demolished

History of Dunagan's Store

Constructed in 1890, Dunagan's Store was established by James Edward "Jimmy" Dunagan as a rural mercantile enterprise serving the agricultural population of the Mill Springs vicinity (Wayne County Deed Records; Wayne County Tax Records). The building's location at a transportation junction placed it within established travel patterns linking farms, milling sites, river crossings, and neighboring settlements (Collins 1874; Clark 1994). Its placement was not incidental; rather, it corresponded to the practical requirements of rural commerce, where accessibility to wagon roads and regular traffic determined commercial viability (Clark 1994). From its earliest years, the store operated within this system of predictable agricultural movement and exchange.

Like many late nineteenth-century rural general stores, Dunagan's combined multiple economic functions within a single structure (Clark 1994; Hurt 1994). In addition to retail sales of staple goods, tools, and household necessities, the business operated in conjunction with blacksmith services that supported agricultural production (Wayne County Deed Records; Collins 1874). This combination of mercantile and service functions was typical of rural commercial enterprises that responded to the diverse needs of farm communities (Clark 1994). The store's open interior plan, wooden display fixtures, and upper-level storage areas accommodated these varied activities, allowing the building to serve as a flexible commercial environment capable of adapting to seasonal and economic change (Kentucky Heritage Council; Clark 1994).

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The designation of Dunagan's Store as the Mill Springs Post Office further expanded its importance within the community (U.S. Postal Service Postmaster Records; Fuller 1972). As both merchant and postmaster, the proprietor integrated commercial and governmental services within a single accessible location. Residents traveled to the store to obtain goods, collect mail, send correspondence, and exchange information (Fuller 1972; U.S. Postal Service History Office). The presence of postal services increased the frequency and regularity of visitation, reinforcing the store's role as a central point of daily interaction. In an agricultural county characterized by dispersed settlement and limited formal civic infrastructure, the store functioned as one of the few consistently accessible public spaces (Clark 1994). The continuity of operation under the Dunagan family for approximately sixty years distinguishes the property within the regional context (Wayne County Tax Records).

Within the broader Mill Springs cultural landscape, Dunagan's Store occupies a position linking agricultural production, Civil War memory, and twentieth-century rural commerce (National Park Service 2019). Its proximity to the Mill Springs Mill and the battlefield area situates the building within a layered historic setting shaped by movement, industry, and commemoration. The store's roadside orientation, scale, and continued presence maintain a tangible connection to travel patterns that have guided activity through the area for more than a century (Collins 1874; National Park Service 2019). As a surviving example of a rural general store that combined mercantile trade, postal service, and community gathering functions, Dunagan's Store provides direct physical evidence of the decentralized commercial systems that sustained Wayne County's agricultural population during the Period of Significance (Clark 1994; Kentucky Historical Society 2003).

While rural general stores were once common throughout Wayne County, few nineteenth- and early twentieth-century examples retain the combination of physical integrity, documented long-term operation, and dual mercantile and postal functions evident at Dunagan's Store. Many former country stores in the region were demolished, substantially altered, or converted to residential or agricultural uses during the mid-twentieth century as commercial activity centralized and transportation patterns shifted (Clark 1994; Kentucky Historic Property Survey Files). In contrast, Dunagan's Store preserves its historic spatial organization, roadside orientation, and association with agricultural commerce and postal service throughout the Period of Significance.

Evaluation of the Significance of the Dunagan's Store within the Historic Context Rural General Stores in Kentucky and Wayne County, 1865–1945

Rural general stores historically occupied a central position within the economic and social life of agricultural communities throughout Kentucky and the broader rural South. Located within small settlement clusters or crossroads communities serving surrounding farms, these establishments provided essential goods and services to households whose livelihoods were tied to agricultural production. In addition to supplying groceries, dry goods, tools, and agricultural implements, country stores frequently operated as post offices, informal credit centers, and gathering places where residents exchanged information about crops, livestock, and local affairs. Historians of rural commerce have

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emphasized that such establishments functioned as critical institutions within agricultural communities, linking farm households with local systems of trade and exchange (Clark 1994; Hurt 1994; Jakle and Sculle 1999).

During the twentieth century, the number of rural general stores declined dramatically as patterns of commerce shifted and retail activity increasingly concentrated in larger towns. Improvements in distribution networks and the consolidation of retail businesses reduced the economic viability of small community stores that had once served localized agricultural populations (Jakle and Sculle 1999; Kentucky Heritage Council 2017). As these establishments closed, many of the buildings that housed them were demolished, abandoned, or altered beyond recognition. Consequently, intact examples of historic rural mercantile buildings have become increasingly rare across Kentucky's rural landscape.

Because of this widespread loss, extant rural general stores possess significant historical value as tangible resources that illustrate the commercial systems and social relationships that characterized agricultural communities during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Buildings such as Dunagan's Store preserve the architectural form and historic location associated with small community mercantile establishments that once served nearby farm households. When considered within the broader context of Wayne County's rural store network—including former store locations in communities such as Zula, Parmleysville, Delta, and the community the Triplett Store served—Dunagan's Store stands as an important example of the rural mercantile landscape that once supported the county's agricultural economy. Of the ones that are compared in this analysis, it is the closest one to two major transportation corridors: State Route 90 and the Cumberland River.

Those two transportation systems gave it an important commercial role in its immediate area, as it could serve two functions. First, it provided goods that could be sold at the retail level. However, its proximity to the River enabled it to serve as a distribution center for goods that might have come easily via river. The Cumberland River connected much of south central Kentucky to Nashville and river ports on the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. Mill Springs was near the end of the navigational part of the Cumberland River, and only accessible by boat during high water periods of the year.

Evaluation of the Integrity Between the Significance of Dunagan's Store and Its Physical Status Today

Dunagan's Store meets National Register Criterion A, which emphasizes the property's association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history, specifically within the context of rural commerce, social interaction, and community development in Wayne County, Kentucky. As such, an evaluation of integrity must consider the physical characteristics that convey these historic associations. The aspects of integrity most critical to Dunagan's Store are location, setting, design, and materials; the retention of these qualities supports the property's continued integrity of association with its historic function as a rural general store and post office.

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Dunagan's Store retains integrity of **location** and **setting**. The building sits at a rural transportation junction, a defining characteristic of country stores that depended on accessibility to surrounding agricultural communities. The triangular parcel bounded by Old Mill Springs Road, State Route 1275, and the connecting roadway continues to display historic patterns of movement and exchange described within the Period of Significance. The surrounding landscape retains its rural character, with open land, limited development, and proximity to historic resources associated with the Mill Springs community. This continuity of setting reinforces the building's historic role as a focal point within a dispersed agricultural landscape, where stores functioned as essential nodes of commerce, communication, and social interaction.

The property also retains integrity of **design** and **materials**. Dunagan's Store preserves its historic two-story, wood-frame form, open interior commercial layout, and spatial organization characteristic of late nineteenth-century rural mercantile buildings. The large open first-floor sales area, second-floor storage spaces, wood flooring, and surviving wooden display cases continue to convey the functional arrangement necessary for general store operations. These features indicate the building's historic use as a flexible commercial environment accommodating retail activity, storage, and community gathering. While some alterations have occurred—including replacement windows, installation of metal roofing elements, and the addition of modern mechanical and plumbing systems—these changes do not substantially alter the building's overall form, layout, or material character. Many of these modifications are reversible or limited in scope and do not obscure the building's historic construction or spatial organization.

Interior features further support the property's integrity. The continued presence of open circulation patterns, utilitarian upper-level storage rooms, and surviving commercial fixtures reinforces the building's historic function. The interior remains legible as a working mercantile space, allowing contemporary observers to understand how goods were displayed, stored, and sold within a rural general store setting. Even with the introduction of restaurant-related features during later use, the primary spatial configuration remains intact and consistent with its historic commercial purpose.

Because Dunagan's Store retains integrity of location, setting, design, and materials, it also retains integrity of **association**. The building continues to convey its historic role as a rural general store and post office serving the agricultural population of the Mill Springs vicinity during the Period of Significance. Its physical characteristics, combined with its continued presence within a largely intact rural landscape, allow it to effectively illustrate the patterns of commerce, communication, and community interaction that defined rural life in Wayne County. Accordingly, the property possesses sufficient integrity to support its eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A.

Dunagan's Store
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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Ayers, Edward L. *The Promise of the New South: Life After Reconstruction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1992.

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Rennick, Robert M. Kentucky Place Names. University Press of Kentucky, 2000.
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U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). *National Map Viewer*.

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Wayne County, Kentucky. Deed Records.

Wayne County, Kentucky. Tax Assessment Records.

Wayne County Historical Society. Local history materials and archival collections relating to Mill Springs and rural commerce.

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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 # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): WN 31, WN 32

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property 1.2 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 36.932120° | Longitude: -84.779048° |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |

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Or
UTM References

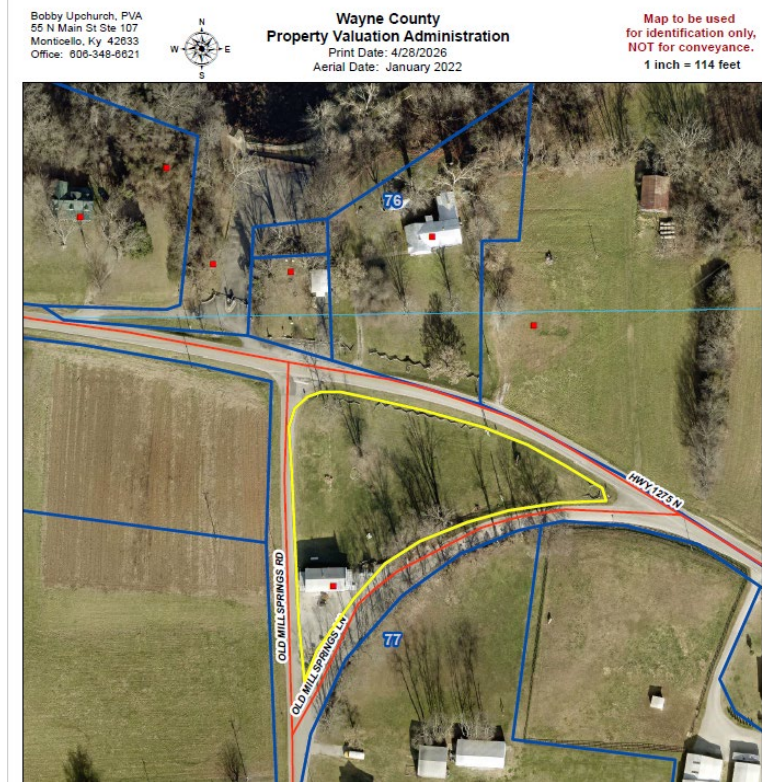
Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

Verbal Boundary Description

The area proposed for listing is a 1.21 acre area as defined by the Wayne County Property Valuation Administrator, defined by parcel/map number 076-90-01-003.00. The proposed listing is a triangular area bound by Kentucky State Highway 1275 to the north, Mill Spring Gap of the Ridge Road to the west and Old Highway 90 to the southeast. The plat is attached for reference.



The area proposed for National Register listing is outlined in yellow.

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Boundary Justification

The area proposed for listing in the National Register is the entire property boundary. That The area has sufficient integrity of setting.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Dr. Shon Baker/ Owner Charles Baker / Owner
organization: _____
street & number: 4501 Perrier Street
city or town: New Orleans state: LA zip code: 70115
E-mail shoncowanbaker@gmail.com cbaker@charlesmbaker.com
Telephone: 504-710-3289 504-994-3951
date: March 1, 2026

Photographs--Photo Log

Name of Property: Dunagan's Store
City or Vicinity: Mill Springs vicinity
County: Wayne
State: Kentucky
Photographer:
Date Photographed: 2026

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 11: East side of Dunagan's Store. Camera facing west.
- 2 of 11: North side of Dunagan's Store. Camera facing south.
- 3 of 11: South side of Dunagan's Store. Camera facing north.
- 4 of 11: West side of Dunagan's Store. Camera facing east.
- 5 of 11: Aerial view of Dunagan's Store. Camera facing down.
- 6 of 11: Interior, first floor east door view of Dunagan's Store. Camera facing west.
- 7 of 11: Interior, first floor food prep view of Dunagan's Store. Camera facing east.
- 8 of 11: Interior, first floor stair to second level view of Dunagan's Store. Camera facing west.
- 9 of 11: Interior second floor room Bedroom 1 view of Dunagan's Store. Camera facing west.
- 10 of 11: Interior second floor room Bedroom 1 view of Dunagan's Store. Camera facing east.
- 11 of 11: Additional aerial view of Dunagan's Store. Camera facing down.

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Dunagan's Store within map of surrounding area.