

VLR 6/6/07  
NRHP 7/24/07

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 Edom Store and Post Office  
other names/site number John Chrisman Store; Myers and Company; VDHR File No. 082-0112

2. Location

street & number 5375 Jesse Bennett Way not for publication N/A  
city or town Edom vicinity \_\_\_\_\_  
state Virginia code VA county Rockingham code 165 zip code 22834

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 \_\_\_\_\_ nationally \_\_\_\_\_ statewide X locally. (\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] \_\_\_\_\_ Date 6/14/07  
Signature of certifying official \_\_\_\_\_  
Virginia Department of Historic Resources  
State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting official/Title \_\_\_\_\_ 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.
- \_\_\_\_ determined eligible for the National Register  
\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.
- \_\_\_\_ determined not eligible for the National Register
- \_\_\_\_ removed from the National Register
- \_\_\_\_ other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action \_\_\_\_\_

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**5. Classification**

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**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>2</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>2</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

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**6. Function or Use**

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

Cat: <u>DOMESTIC</u>	Sub: <u>single dwelling</u>
<u>COMMERCE</u>	<u>department store</u>
<u>GOVERNMENT</u>	<u>post office</u>
<u>AGRICULTURE</u>	<u>animal facility</u>
_____	_____

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

Cat: <u>WORK IN PROGRESS</u>	Sub: _____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

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**7. Description**

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

- FEDERAL
- GREEK REVIVAL
- ITALIANATE

**Materials** (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation	<u>STONE</u>
roof	<u>METAL</u>
walls	<u>BRICK</u>
other	<u>WOOD; GLASS; CONCRETE</u>

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

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**8. Statement of Significance**

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**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)

ARCHITECTURE  
COMMERCE  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance** 1835-ca. 1940

**Significant Dates** 1835

**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.)

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**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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(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**

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

Name of repository: Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, Virginia

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**10. Geographical Data**  
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**Acreage of Property** 0.581 acres

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

Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	17	686600	2	4266070		3			4		

\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

**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 J. Daniel Pezzoni  
 organization Landmark Preservation Associates date March 26, 2007  
 street & number 6 Houston Street telephone (540) 464-5315  
 city or town Lexington state VA zip code 24450

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**Additional Documentation**  
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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 John Douglas Kline  
 street & number 5425 Jesse Bennett Way telephone (540) 833-6104  
 city or town Linville state VA zip code 22834

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**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.). A federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 36 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 National Register of Historic Places, National Park Service, 1849 C St., NW, Washington, DC 20240.



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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

**Edom Store and Post Office**  
**Rockingham County, Virginia**

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### **NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION**

#### **Summary**

The Edom Store and Post Office stands at 5375 Jesse Bennett Way in the village of Edom, Rockingham County, Virginia. The two-story brick building, believed to have been constructed in 1835, faces approximately southeast but for the purposes of the nomination is described as facing east. The building features a metal-sheathed gable roof, a five-bay façade with center entries on the first and second stories, a one-story entry porch, and a storefront in the right-hand bays of the first story, the latter two features are from the late nineteenth century. A long integral two-story ell, gabled like the main section, extends from the rear south corner. A shorter, altered, shed-roofed ell, partly incorporated into an enclosed back porch, extends from the rear north corner. Greek Revival and Italianate influences are seen in exterior decorative features, whereas the interior is transitional Federal-Greek Revival. Walls and ceilings are generally plaster on brick or lath and floors are wood. In the center passage is an elaborately carved double-run stair and in most of the rooms are elaborate mantels. There is a wide assortment of decorative painted finishes and wallpapers. Behind the building stands a ca. 1900 frame barn with an upper hay mow level and a lower level for animal, feed, and equipment storage. Clues to the historic appearance of the Edom Store and Post Office are provided by a photograph in the ca. 1907 publication *Rockingham County, Its Past and Present Illustrated*. The narrow rectangular lot on which the Edom Store and Post Office and barn stand includes approximately 0.581 acres and is located above Linville Creek, a tributary of the North Fork Shenandoah River and the Potomac River. Edom's main street (Jesse Bennett Way) passes in front of the building, an alley that was formerly part of SR 721 passes on the south side, and Virginia Highway 42 passes on the west side.

#### **Inventory**

1. Edom Store and Post Office. 1835; late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Contributing building.
2. Barn. Ca. 1900. Contributing building.

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### **Description (continued)**

#### **Detailed Description: Exterior**

The brickwork of the Edom Store and Post Office is one of the building's most notable architectural features. The front elevation is Flemish bond, whereas the side and ell elevations are American bond--1:3 and 1:4 on the first story and 1:5 on the second story. The first and second stories are constructed of brick of slightly different color--the first-story brick is a lighter shade of red than the second-story brick. The color change is an original feature rather than evidence for the addition of the second story. The division is marked by a narrow belt course of projecting beveled bricks that extends on all elevations except the north side of the ell, formerly the location of a two-tier porch. Bricks in a third shade--slightly darker and more brownish than the others--form narrow quoin-like vertical bands at the two front corners. The building appears to have been painted red and penciled in the nineteenth century. In the early twentieth century, after ca. 1907, the brick was painted yellow and penciled again, a treatment that along with the earlier red paint has mostly weathered off. There is also white paint on the rear elevations. Crowning all non-gable elevations except the north side of the ell is a molded brick cornice with concave and convex bricks. The cornice is painted white; the ca. 1907 photograph also shows it as white or a light color. Window and door openings have jack-arched lintels, slightly splayed in the first story and straight-sided in the second story.

The first- and second-story front entries have sidelights and transoms in decorative Greek Revival surrounds. The first-story entry is the more elaborate of the two. Its symmetrical moldings are formed of concave and lancet-section pieces with blank corner blocks. The sidelights and transom have curved muntins that form intersecting lancet and concave diamond designs. The glass is reverse painted gray in imitation of frosting. The door itself has six panels (six panels are typical on interior doors as well). The early twentieth-century-screen door has spindles and sawn work. The second-story entry surround uses only lancet-section moldings and has ordinary straight muntins that divide the sidelights and transom into rectangular panes. The vertical elements of the surround have simple caps.

The front entry porch was added in the late nineteenth century to replace an earlier porch of presumably similar size and form. The porch has chamfered posts and pilasters with molded caps and neckings that support a bracketed frieze with a dentil-like bed molding. Lattice was added under the frieze in the early twentieth century; a 1933 photograph shows a clematis vine growing on the lattice. The porch woodwork is painted white but there is evidence that the posts were once painted brown and the flush board ceiling was formerly painted blue and later yellow. At present the porch has a low-pitched hip roof onto which the second-story entry opened. As

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**Edom Store and Post Office**  
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### **Description (continued)**

originally constructed this roof or a deck in its place was bordered by a sawn balustrade with a vasiform repeat. The porch floor is paved with large squares of concrete, either separate pavers or a scored pattern, that are turned at an angle and are checkered buff and gray in color. The concrete floor ties into a system of concrete walkways, steps, and retaining walls which appear in the ca. 1907 photograph and were likely constructed between 1900 and 1907. Like the porch pavers the concrete blocks forming the walls are two-toned: the coping blocks are light gray and the wall blocks are buff or cream-colored. This two-toned effect is evident in the ca. 1907 photograph. Most of the terrace in front of the store is paved whereas it forms a small yard in front of the residence. The ca. 1907 photograph shows a small tree, possibly a fruit tree, growing in the yard and may show a picket fence along the top of the south retaining wall. The steps lead down to a concrete sidewalk with a stippled surface that is now up a bank from the street, but was level with the street ca. 1907. A ca. 1933 photograph shows tall gas pumps in front of the store with a tall standard from which is suspended a clock and a sign reading "gasoline."

The storefront is surmounted by a bracketed cornice and has a center entry flanked by tall windows. Flanking the windows and entry are narrow hinged doors (now screwed shut) that create the appearance of paneled pilasters. In the open position the doors are too narrow to cover the windows; therefore, it is presumed they cover pockets containing or formerly containing folded shutters that could be unfolded to cover the windows. A ca. 1933 photograph shows a shutter with narrow paneled leaves covering the left store window, secured by a metal cross bar; this would have been the left pocket shutter. The door/pilasters have paneled bases and the windows have paneled apron panels. The store entry is surmounted by a single-pane transom and has a door with two solid panels at the bottom (the panels have been replaced with plywood although they retain their moldings) and two window panes above. Some of the storefront woodwork preserves traces of red paint under later white. The ca. 1907 photograph shows a polychrome paint scheme of at least three colors or shades of the same color. The window sashes and muntins were the lightest shade, followed by the panels (which may have had lighter moldings), with the darkest shade used for the rails and stiles of the panels. (The cornice is in shadow and too dark to make out in the photograph.) Painted on the brick above the storefront in the ca. 1907 photograph is a sign reading "J. W. Myers. General Merchandise." No trace of this sign is now visible. A ca. 1933 photograph shows at least two colors on the storefront and a fold-out shutter with a light color on the panels and a darker color on the trim.

The building has a limestone foundation, three exterior gable end brick chimneys on the front section, and a broad brick chimney for a kitchen fireplace toward the end of the ell. The front chimneys project only slightly on the exterior. The two on the south end cantilever over the foundation rather than continuing to grade. The original window sashes are predominately nine-over-six with some narrower six-over-four sashes. The nine-over-six windows were mostly



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**Edom Store and Post Office**  
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### **Description (continued)**

replaced in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century (before ca. 1907) by two-over-two windows. The first-story left-hand front windows, which are now covered by sheets of plywood, formerly had shutters. There are basement windows along the south and north sides with limestone light wells. An entry at the west end of the long residential ell has a four-pane transom above a doorway lintel with a projecting half-round reeded section. Two entries on the now interior north side of the residential ell and a back entry on the store ell have the same reeded half-round lintels. The residential ell's west end entry has a late-nineteenth-century four-panel door with chamfered rails and stiles. The building's doors and windows have beaded surrounds that are now and probably were originally painted white. On the roof are lightning arrestors with glass globes that appear in the ca. 1907 photograph.

In the early twentieth century, after ca. 1907, a one-story, shed-roofed addition was made to the north side. The frame addition is sheathed with vertical beaded tongue-and-groove siding and has long mesh window openings on the side. It formerly sheltered a kerosene tank. The addition covers a basement entrance with a double-leaf vertical beaded batten door painted olive drab and secured by an iron bar. Projecting from the lintel are two iron hooks for holding some long item, perhaps a wood or iron bar used to secure the door before the present bar. On the back of the building is a non-original porch that was enclosed with vertical beaded tongue-and-groove siding. The enclosed porch, which contains a spring room, fills in the space between the two ells. It has a row of four-pane windows (most covered with plywood) and a reused six-panel door.

### **Detailed Description: First and Second Floor Interiors**

The front entry serves the residence half of the building and opens into a center passage containing the building's principal stair. The stair has slender turned newels, rectangular balusters, and delicate scrolled tread brackets. The lower edge of the stringer has a thick bead above a wood-paneled spandrel. Rising with the stair is wood paneled wainscoting that also extends to the walls of the passage. The stair woodwork and wainscoting and other woodwork in the center passage are grained orangish tan in a stylized version of oak grain. (The building's interior decorative finishes are described in greater detail in a separate section below.) Under the middle stair landing at the back of the passage is a back door that formerly opened onto the original back porch but now opens into the spring room.

A door on the left side of the passage opens into the principal first-floor room, which occupies the southeast corner of the building. The focal point of the room is a tall mantel in transitional Federal-Greek Revival style. The mantel has half-round pilasters with reeded shafts evocative of fluting, a frieze with alternating wide and narrow rectangular molded panels, molded bands at the top and bottom of the frieze, narrow projecting paneled tablets at the ends of the frieze

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### **Description (continued)**

(continuations of the pilasters), and a compound bed molding of stacked out-flaring moldings. The mantel shelf has a curved center edge and the fireplace has a mid-twentieth-century brick surround and lining. The room has paneled wainscoting and Federal-style molded door and window surrounds. Between this room and the next room to the west is a wide opening with a molded frame that was infilled with sheetrock in the mid-twentieth century and provided with a two-panel door with a plain surround. Originally this opening contained panels that were hinged at the top so that they could be opened to combine the two rooms. Presumably the panels were fastened to the ceiling of the second room by hooks when they were opened. These panels were taken to form a bathroom enclosure in the kitchen (described below).

The second-room mantel is similar to the one in the front room but with subtle differences. Its fireplace surround is plaster or stucco painted to simulate brick. The walls and ceiling of the room are sheathed with oak veneer panels separated by battens. The paneling appears to date to ca. 1950. The room has an original enclosed winder stair that ascends to the room above. The third room in the suite, located in the ell, has no fireplace. A small decorative shelf projecting from its north wall formerly supported a telephone and may have been installed in 1938 or 1939. The third room is separated from the fourth room by a vertical beaded tongue-and-groove partition added in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century. The third and fourth rooms were once a single room that presumably served as the dining room (in the 1930s they were used as a dining room and a kitchen). On each side of the fourth room fireplace are tall presses crowned with cornices with chevron-pattern reeded bands. The mantel between them is similar to the ones in the first and second rooms but less elaborate. Affixed to its frieze are two small whatnot shelves on sawn brackets.

There is no connection between the fourth room and the room at the end of the ell, the original kitchen. Both rooms have exterior entries that opened onto the original ell porch, an exterior circulation path that would have connected the main house and ell rooms. The concrete-floored kitchen has unpainted plaster walls (some of the plaster has fallen revealing brick), an enclosed two-run corner stair added in the mid-twentieth century, and a large cooking fireplace. The fireplace is framed by a mantel of Georgian design with an architrave and small tablets at the ends of a narrow frieze (the right-hand tablet is covered or replaced). Inserted in the fireplace and

projecting into the room is a cast-iron laundry furnace that probably dates to the late nineteenth or early twentieth century. The furnace has two hinged firebox doors and large and small circular openings that formerly held wash pots. The upper part of the fireplace opening is covered by a metal-lined door and panel that may be later than the rest of the furnace. The chimney at this level is stone. Spanning the flue are iron bars with chains that probably served for suspending cook pots and so forth. Iron spikes projecting from the back of the lintel also presumably served

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### Description (continued)

for suspending items during cooking or were used for drying food. To the left of the chimney breast is a press with paneled doors. To the right is a bathroom formed by the aforementioned paneled leaves from the opening between the first and second rooms. Inside the bathroom are a sink, a commode, a crude shower, and a black plastic- or linoleum-type wall lining patterned on ceramic tile.

The three first-story rooms to the north side of the front entry comprise the store. The space was converted to an apartment in the mid-twentieth century, perhaps ca. 1947. The front room is today almost featureless. A molded baseboard, a doorway to the adjacent room with a simple surround, the trim of the storefront door and windows, and the chimney breast are the principal features. The chimney breast provides clues to the earlier history of the space in the form of dates and names carved into the plaster. A later layer of plaster has the date 1908 and an earlier layer is scrawled with the names R. H. Sissick (?) and S. H. Sastrauer (?). A stove once stood in front of the chimney breast, but a crack in the plaster at approximately mantel level may indicate the former existence of a fireplace opening.

The front room of the former store space is separated from the one behind (the middle room) by an added studwall partition. The division between the middle room and the back room is located at the back wall of the main two-story section of the building, with the back room occupying an original ell. The wall at this division has a complex evolution in at least three stages. It was apparently originally brick. Then, perhaps during the post-bellum period when other upgrades were made to the store, the brick was removed to create a single salesroom from front to back. The large opening was framed with a molded surround that presumably conceals a lintel. The lintel is apparently structurally insufficient because the second-story brick wall above has begun to sag even though at least one post supports the lintel. Last of all, after store use ceased and the space was made into an apartment in the mid-twentieth century, a frame partition was inserted in the opening, incorporating in its construction material that may be former shelf boards.

In the back northwest corner of the back room stood a cabinet (now lying on its side in the middle room) similar to the presses in one of the first-story ell rooms. Like the presses the cabinet is detailed in the Federal style with a chevron-pattern reeded band in its cornice. The bottom part has single-panel cabinet doors and there are hinge scars that suggest the top also once had doors, perhaps glazed. There are five shelves in the upper part of the cabinet, but originally there may have been another shelf arrangement. The back room once had a plaster and lath ceiling which was removed to reveal the ceiling joists and rafters of the shed roof. Above the joists is visible the lower part of the second-story wall of the main building. On this section of wall are visible a bricked-up doorway, sawed-off floor boards, and the plaster wall finish of a former room. Since the molded brick cornice extends across the top of this wall on the exterior,

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### **Description (continued)**

this former room is interpreted to be a nineteenth-century addition removed in the twentieth century. Extending from the back room is the concrete-floored frame spring room which contains a system of three rectangular concrete spring basins at different levels to allow water to flow from one to the other. The water is said to have come from a well under the room.

The second floor has much the same character as the first with similar wall, ceiling, and floor finishes (albeit with chair rails rather than paneled wainscots), a center passage (divided into a front hall and a back stair hall by a partition), and a file of rooms in the ell. As on the first floor, the mantels are varied but related. The mantel in the northeast front room has the strongest Greek Revival character of any in the house with symmetrical moldings in the recessed faces of the pilasters and end frieze tablets and also more classical treatments of the caps at the tops of the pilasters and tablets. The mantels in the southeast room and the room behind have convex reeded elements in the recessed faces of the end frieze tablets that recall the similar treatments over the exterior and formerly exterior ell doorways. The pilasters of these two mantels are treated as half-round reeded colonnettes like those of the mantels in the rooms directly below. Two of the second-floor ell mantels have architrave fireplace surrounds below friezes with end tablets.

It appears that the only room on the south side of the second story that was originally accessible from the center passage was the front room. The room behind it was accessed by an original stair that rose from the room below. The two ell rooms (one has been subdivided by a partition) were accessed through doorways on their north walls from the second tier of a former porch.

### **Detailed Description: Attic and Basement**

The attic is reached by the center passage stair, which is ornamented to the top. The attic over the front section of the building was altered by the lowering of the roof in the early twentieth century, a period of alteration suggested by the use of wire nails. The original common rafters were reused; their upper ends were sawn off so that they could be lowered to produce a shallower roof pitch and they were then butted and nailed at the ridge. The mortises for former collar beams and Roman numeral builder marks are still evident. The alteration continues a short way over the ell but most of the ell attic has unaltered common rafters that are mortise-and-tenoned and pegged at the ridge. These too have builder marks. Many roof boards have multiple cut nails projecting through them indicative of former wood shingle roofing although most of the ell attic roof boards are narrow and widely spaced, perhaps indicative of a generation of nineteenth century metal roofing before the present metal roofing.

The basement exists only under the front section of the building and is divided into two

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**Edom Store and Post Office**  
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### **Description (continued)**

unconnected parts: a residential basement reached by steps that descend along the north side of the ell and a store basement entered through the aforementioned cellar entry on the north gable end. The basements have exposed whitewashed ceiling joists, concrete or dirt floors, and exposed stone and brick walls. The residential basement is accessed by a back stair with a pipe railing that replaces an earlier wood railing. This basement has a whitewashed vertical board partition with an original or early wood panel door with a large nine-pane window in its upper half to allow light to filter into the inner basement room. The partition incorporates an apparently reused chamfered post with a pintel projecting from one face. The room on the outer side of the partition contains an American Radiator Company Ideal No. 7 radiator. A narrow north room probably originally served for food storage and has multiple cut nail hooks on its ceiling joists. Most of the walls are whitewashed and/or painted white. There are two beaded batten doors with the boards attached vertically on one face and diagonally on the obverse. The door to the north storage room also has decorative nail studding. On the storage room face the nail heads form an x pattern. On the inner basement room side the nail heads form a six-panel or cross-and-bible pattern.

The two-room store basement has either unpainted walls or white-painted plaster finishes. There is no indication that the chimney breast on the north wall of the north room had a fireplace. There are numerous names and dates scratched into the plaster of the north room including "E. L. Masters" and the date March 12, 190[?]. The left leaf of the exterior door has the inscription "McKeever [&?] Bro" painted in black on its cross batten with an illegible continuation of the inscription below. (The McKeevers were associated with the property from 1868 to 1882.) Also under the cross batten is a "Price List of Crocks & Jars" handwritten on heavy paper and nailed to the door. The list gives the price in cents for jars, crocks and jugs of capacities from one to ten gallons. Another paper sign in the room gives prices for "Floor Oil Cloth" and linoleum. The south room, which extends across the front of the building to a basement window on the east side, has multiple cut nail hooks for hanging items from the ceiling joists. Stored in the basement are several counters with paneled ends and heavy bed moldings. Presumably these came out of the store above and their detail suggests they date to the late-nineteenth-century store remodeling.

### **Detailed Description: Decorative Finishes**

The Edom Store and Post Office is notable for its wide variety of decorative finishes mostly dating from the turn of the twentieth century to mid-century. These include graining in at least four or five styles, white-speckled gray granitic marbling, and a large collection of wallpapers beginning with an Art Nouveau paper in the second-floor southeast room. There are traces of earlier finishes. The mantel in the first-floor southeast room has traces of black under later white

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### **Description (continued)**

and off white. Black was a popular shade for mantels and other interior woodwork in the early nineteenth century. Wainscot panels on the stair are light green under the present graining, which probably covered the green ca. 1900. Paneled kitchen features such as the exterior/formerly exterior doors, press doors, and mantel have brown rails and stiles with gray panels. These colors may date to the late nineteenth century although they also appear on the paneled partition that forms the bathroom, which was not created until the mid-twentieth century. The partition may have been painted to match the existing colors in the room.

Four or five styles of graining have been identified. Among the earliest is reddish to rich brown graining that may have simulated mahogany. It appears under later graining or non-decorative paint on the inside face of the front entry where a rim lock was removed in the early twentieth century; in scrapes on the passage side of the door between the first-floor center passage and the southeast room; and on the side of the door between the second and third first-floor rooms that faces the second room. Possibly associated with this early graining is a trace of honey-brown paint on a wainscot panel in the former ell dining room. The honey-brown color appears sponge-painted although the effect was presumably to mimic woodwork. The store may have had mahogany graining on its woodwork, although possibly redder in color as suggested by a trace of what may be reddish graining under later dark red paint on one of the Federal-style cabinet doors. The dull brown graining on the exterior side of the front door, although not original, may represent another graining style from the nineteenth century. Similar graining survives on an interior sidelight sill. Possibly another nineteenth-century graining style is what may be orangish graining under multiple later layers of paint on the side of the tongue-and-groove third-fourth room partition that faces the fourth room.

The most extensive graining appears in the first-floor center passage. This well preserved graining imitates oak in shades of brown and tan. The graining is fairly realistic except in the centers of some of the wainscot panels which have overscaled knot-like patterns and in and around the whorls of the tread brackets of the stair where the painter combed the paint to follow the curves. Presumably this oak graining dates to the turn of the twentieth century when bold-grained oak was popular for interior woodwork and furniture. The graining is found on the stair from the first floor to the attic. It may date to after 1902 when John W. Myers acquired the property. Another style of graining appears in the second-floor southeast room, what may have been the bedroom of John W. Myers and his wife Elizabeth. This brown graining has an irregular and sometimes slashing freehand figure that does not closely resemble wood grain and appears less skillful (or perhaps more abstracted) than the graining in the center passage.

The second-floor southeast room contains two other decorative features of note: granitic marbled wainscoting and Art Nouveau wallpaper. The wall surface under the chair rail was painted dark

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### **Description (continued)**

gray and stippled with white speckles to give it an appearance of granite or, perhaps more accurately, an appearance of enameled metal graniteware. This granitic marbling probably dates to the late nineteenth century or possibly the very early twentieth century for it is overlaid by Art Nouveau wallpaper. The wallpaper and two coordinated border papers have figures in shades of greenish gray or sepia on a white ground. The paper is vertically striped and has a principal repeat of cartouches with stylized poppies or other flowers and a secondary repeat of small cruciform figures. The flower heads and cruciform figures are gilded. At the top of the wall is a wide border with stylized flowers and foliage in a frieze of alternating horizontal and vertical cartouches. Above this is a narrow border with alternating floral motifs. The same narrow border runs along the top of the chair rail. The ceiling has a fourth paper that may be coordinated with the others although it does not have the same figures. This ceiling paper has a light tessellated pattern of rosettes and dots. The Art Nouveau papers are best preserved in a mid-twentieth-century plywood closet in one corner of the room, otherwise they are overlaid by at least two other papers that probably date to the mid-twentieth century.

The Art Nouveau wallpaper appears to be the earliest to survive in the building. Other wallpaper patterns—of which there may be two or three dozen total—appear to date from ca. 1910 to the mid-twentieth century (two dates from the first decade of the twentieth century have been found scratched or written on the plaster under early paper). Common wallpaper patterns or visual themes include vertical stripes; diapering, usually with a repeat of small medallions in the diamonds; floral motifs, either individual flowers, small bouquets or sprays, or large bouquets in vases; ivy or other foliage; rococo or neoclassical designs with panels or other architectural or sculptural motifs; a few mid-twentieth century papers with figures like carriages and model sailing ships; and abstract patterns resembling fibrous textiles, squiggles, or fronds, usually with a silvered or satin-finish figure. A neoclassical paper in a second-floor ell room has a repeat of octagonal cartouches containing small landscape scenes, framed with flowers and leaves and interconnected with garlands of beads or pearls. Paper on a dismantled mid-twentieth century stair railing has a Wedgwood-inspired design of white foliage, flowers, and urns on light blue with cartouches containing the same designs in silver on a dark gray ground. Covering the walls of the front store room is an Art Deco-inspired paper patterned with large flowers and leaves in shades of white and gray on a red ground. A related paper with a similar design and colors appears elsewhere in the house. Most of the wallpapers have associated narrow borders at the ceiling and most are in poor condition. Walls under the earliest wallpaper are typically white plaster or painted white. One exception is the plaster wall in the back store room. Behind where the cabinet formerly stood the plaster has a light gray color that may be original (evidence suggests the cabinet was original to the room and had not been moved since construction). Another wall-color example is the oxblood red paint on the dining room walls, which may date to the late nineteenth or early twentieth centuries.

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### **Description (continued)**

#### **Detailed Description: Barn**

The barn is a two-level frame structure constructed with wire nails and mostly circular-sawn lumber. According to Helen Myers Wilfong, the granddaughter of John W. Myers who purchased the property in 1902, the barn was standing at the date of purchase, although it could not be much older on account of the wire nails used in its construction. The linear building has a metal-sheathed front-gable roof and is divided into three sections: an enclosed center section containing space for feed and animals in the lower level and a hay mow in the upper level flanked by mostly open side sheds for wagon or machinery storage. The west side shed is the earlier of the two and may be original since its shed roof end is sheathed with weatherboard siding that is a continuation of the siding in the gable end of the middle section. The west side wall of the shed has modern metal siding and a foundation of wood posts with concrete between. A similar foundation lies under the center section, although most of the infill may be limestone rock rather than concrete. The south front end of the west side shed has a vertical-board sliding door on an overhead track. The east side shed is an addition, possibly from the mid-twentieth century. It has open ends and sides, vertical-board or board-and-batten siding in the roof ends, and log posts on a concrete foundation along the east side. The lower level of the center section has hewn sills—either made at the time the barn was built or reused from another building—and slats instead of weatherboards at the top of the east wall. The south end may have served as a corn crib. The upper-level hay mow has a hay bonnet at the south end that shelters the end of a metal hay carrier or hay fork track. A portion of the hay carrier is still attached to the track. Openings under the eaves of the upper level ventilated the hay.



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### **NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

#### **Summary Statement of Significance**

The Edom Store and Post Office has stood at the center of life in the Rockingham County, Virginia, village of Edom since its traditional date of construction in 1835. The two-story brick building was erected for merchant and mill owner John Chrisman. Chrisman sold fancy dry goods in his stylish Federal-Greek Revival store, half of which served as a residence (presumably his). The store was operated by the firm of McKeever and Brother in the late nineteenth century and by J. W. Myers General Merchandise for much of the first half of the twentieth century. The Edom Post Office operated out of the store until the late 1930s. The property is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the commerce area of significance for its associations with the economic life of Edom and surrounding areas over the span of a century. The property is also eligible under Criterion C in the architecture area of significance for its notable original features including subtle polychrome brickwork, expressive Federal-Greek Revival detail, and a stair with scrolled tread brackets. Notable later features include an Italianate storefront and porch, evidence for fold-out storefront shutters in pockets, a ca. 1900 two-tone concrete porch floor and associated walks, steps, and retaining walls, and varied decorative finishes including graining, granitic marbling, and Art Nouveau wallpaper. Also of note are remnants of top-hinged partition panels that could be opened to combine two first-floor rooms, a possible Church of the Brethren-associated feature. The period of significance begins with the apparent date of construction of the building in 1835 and extends to ca. 1940, about the time that the store closed and soon after the Edom Post Office moved to another location. The Edom Store and Post Office is eligible at the local level of significance.

#### **Acknowledgements**

A number of individuals assisted in the preparation and review of this nomination, foremost among them is the owner of the property and sponsor of the nomination, John Douglas Kline, who conducted interviews and provided other historical materials for the project. Assistance was also provided by Susan Caldwell, Helen Myers Wilfong, W. T. Burrus, the staff of the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Historical Society Heritage Center, the staff of the Massanutten Regional Library, and Calder Loth, Joanna Evans, David Edwards, Jean McRae, and Marc Wagner of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources. Later assistance was provided by Danielle Spitzer Prigmore, Charles and Myrtle Spitzer's great-granddaughter.

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### Statement of Significance (continued)

#### Historical Background

The Edom Store and Post Office building is believed to have been built in 1835 for merchant John Chrisman according to research by historian Dale MacAllister. In 1822 Allen C. Bryan sold land to Chrisman that is believed to have included the site of the future village of Edom. Chrisman's original store, a frame building, is thought to have stood a short distance north of the brick store. An 1835 date of construction for the brick store is supported by the building's transitional Federal-Greek Revival style, as discussed below in the architectural discussion section. John "Jack" Chrisman (1794-1846) was the son of Madison and Lydia Chrisman. He married Elenor Rolstone (ca. 1796-1860) in 1816 and the couple presumably made their residence in the residential half of the store building after its construction.<sup>1</sup>

John Chrisman's surviving 1830-37 store ledger book provides detail on the operation of his general merchandise business. In the early 1830s Chrisman was apparently in business with a relative, G. H. Chrisman, whose initials are crossed out in later ledger page headings. It may be that G. H. Chrisman was no longer associated with the business at the time the brick store was built. Dry goods were prominent in Chrisman's stock. A receipt records the April 1836 purchase of dry goods from Peabody, Riggs and Company of Baltimore, "Importers of Dry Goods," and enumerates Persian gingham, flannel, linen, black and crimson merinos, Russell Brown Cloth, Holland cloth, chintz shawls, and "Fancy Silk & Cott[on] Hks [handkerchiefs]," among other goods.<sup>2</sup>

John Chrisman also operated the Edom Mill. Chrisman's store and mill were the key buildings in what would develop as the village of Edom, or Edom Mills as it was also known in the antebellum period. Edom Post Office, a name in use by the early 1850s, was the successor to Linville Creek Post Office, established in 1826. John Chrisman was Linville Creek's postmaster during the late 1820s and early 1830s. Virginia historian and geographer Henry Howe visited "Edom Mills" in the mid-1840s and in his *Historical Collections of Virginia* (1852) classified it as one of Rockingham County's "small places." Edom remained small after the Civil War. An 1885 map shows only the store and post office, the mill, a blacksmith shop, a warehouse, a school, a church, a doctor's residence, and a handful of other residences. Edom in 2007 has roughly the same village form as suggested on the 1885 map but it has lost most of its commercial and industrial functions.<sup>3</sup>

In 1847 Jehu Warren and his wife Harriet Rice Warren sold the property to "Franklin Pence etc.," the et cetera referring to Pence's partner David Link. Pence, Link, and a third partner had apparently been operating a general store in the building for several years. In November 1844 the firm of Little, Pence and Link advertised "More New Goods at Edom" in the *Rockingham Register*. "We are now receiving our second supply of fall & winter goods," the advertisement reads. "All in want of cheap and fashionable Goods, are invited to call at the Store of Little, Pence & Link, where they will find heavy

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### Statement of Significance (continued)

brown shirting, one yard and 2 inches wide at 10 cents, Ladies Slippers at 45 cts., good Coffee & Sugar at 10 cents, and every article in proportion.”<sup>4</sup>

David Link and his wife Elizabeth sold the property to Michael B. Cline in 1849 and Cline and his wife Catherine sold it to John K. Beery in 1852. In addition to the store Beery owned Edom Mill during the Civil War when the mill was burned by Federal forces. Beery rebuilt Edom Mill in 1867 and the following year he arranged with two brothers, William R. McKeever and Benjamin W. McKeever, to operate a store in the Edom Store and Post Office. Under the heading “New Merchants at Edom,” the imminent store opening was reported in the *Rockingham Register*. “Messrs. McKeever & Co., formerly of Wardensville, Hardy County, W. Va., have made arrangements to establish themselves at Edom . . . for the purpose of dealing in merchandize of all kinds. These gentlemen come to us with the best endorsements [*sic*], as honest men and fair dealers.” “They will have their goods opened in a short time,” noted the paper, adding “They are active, earnest, sagacious business men, and will be valuable accessions to our go a-head business community.” In June McKeever and Company advertised its “second installment of Summer Goods.” “Particular attention is called to their stock of Family Groceries,” reads the advertisement, which includes an illustration of a pitcher and wash basin, an indication that the store also carried crockery. Beery sold the “Store house” and slightly over four acres to the McKeevers in 1877.<sup>5</sup>

William and Benjamin McKeever were both listed as general merchants at Edom in 1880s and 1890s business directories, but the 1880 census suggests Benjamin was the more involved of the two in the day-to-day operations of the store. The census lists Benjamin W. McKeever (b. ca. 1844) as a merchant. Its description of the occupations of individuals enumerated just after Benjamin suggests he lived in a village, which would imply he lived in the residential half of the Edom Store and Post Office. In the same household were McKeever’s wife Mattie (b. ca. 1854), their six-year-old son Arthur N. and five-year-old daughter Bernice, and twenty-two-year-old William E. Knee, described as “clerk in store.” W. R. McKeever (b. ca. 1835), on the other hand, is listed as a farmer several pages away from his brother. An 1880 business directory lists “McKeever & Bro.” as a principal farmer in the vicinity. Perhaps the brothers co-owned the store and farm but divided their responsibilities (and living arrangements) between the two. The McKeevers also served as Edom postmasters—Benjamin from 1880 to 1882 and William from 1885 to 1890 and possibly later in the 1890s—and they operated the Edom Tanyard which they sold in 1874 to Robert Beaver.<sup>6</sup>

In 1882 the McKeevers sold the property to John Perry Swank, an Edom/Singers Glen area stock dealer. According to MacAllister, John P. Swank’s oldest son, W. Edward Swank, kept the store until 1896 when operations were taken over by J. Harvey Swank, apparently John P.’s brother. An 1885 map identifies the south half of the building as the J. P. Swank residence and the north half as the store and post office. Despite evidence for the Swank family as the owners and operators of the store, an 1893

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### Statement of Significance (continued)

business directory does not mention any member of the family as a merchant at Edom and instead lists the McKeeveres as “general merchants” at Edom. In 1899 John P. Swank and his wife Lizzie sold the property to their daughter Bertie B. Swank Masters. Charles H. Masters, probably Bertie’s husband, operated the Edom Post Office from 1897 to 1914.<sup>7</sup>

In 1902 the Edom Store and Post Office was acquired by John W. Myers (1868-1931), whose name and that of his family were synonymous with the property for the first half of the twentieth century. A cardboard sign discovered in the store suggests Myers’s association began several years before. The sign reads “David B. Rhodes Edom Va July 28 ’99. Store to be opened in few days by J. W. Myers & Saylor Wampler.” A Mr. F. R. Rhodes owned the property when Myers acquired it in 1902 and Wampler was the maiden name of Myers’s wife. Myers’s obituary also dated his association with the building to the late 1890s. In 1903 Myers sold the property to Howard Armstrong to secure a debt but he bought it back in 1919 and the evidence suggests he operated his store continuously during the period. About 1907 Myers and his business were featured in the promotional publication *Rockingham County, Its Past and Present Illustrated*. The publication included a photograph of the store that shows Myers’s name painted above the storefront. The text noted that he “deals in all kinds of merchandise, carrying a large stock of nearly everything to eat or to wear. He buys country produce at the highest market prices at all times and is an extensive shipper of the same.” Historian Nancy B. Hess writes that Myers “bought and sold country produce of all kinds and operated the Myers huckster wagon on rural routes in the western section of Rockingham. From this wagon one could buy or sell almost anything.” A reminder of the store is represented by dishes in the possession of a Myers descendant that are marked “Made especially for J. W. Myers General Merchandise Edom Va.”<sup>8</sup>

In addition to serving as Edom’s principal merchant, Myers was instrumental in obtaining electric and telephone service for Edom and he was active in the Church of the Brethren. Myers was likely assisted in the business by his wife Elizabeth “Lizzie” S. (Wampler) Myers (ca. 1869-1943) and by his sons, since his obituary gives the name of his business as J. W. Myers and Sons. In 1931 his children were listed as Willie Anna Miller (age 37), Isaac F. Myers (age 33), Hattie (or Hettie) E. Emmert (age 31), S. Blair Myers (age 27), Hannah C. Fike (25), and John W. Myers Jr. (age 20). Lizzie Myers, her son J. W. Myers, and her daughter-in-law carried on the store business for several years after J. W. Myers’s death in 1931. Telephone directories list the J. W. Myers Store until 1939 when the store listing was switched to Lizzie’s name. As the 1930s were also a period of economic distress, the listing change may be associated with the closing of the store. Lizzie Myers succeeded her husband as Edom postmaster in 1931 and was one of the last postmasters to keep a post office in Edom Store and Post Office before the office was moved to the nearby Burruss Mill, a change that had taken place by 1938. Lizzie Myers’s granddaughter Helen Myers Wilfong believes politics played a role in the post office move; the Myers family was Republican and the Burruss family was Democrat.<sup>9</sup>

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### Statement of Significance (continued)

Helen Myers Wilfong spent many days in her grandmother's store and house as a child in the 1930s. She recalls that the back room of the store was used for selling hardware and had bins of nails. Dry goods, sewing accessories, and a large cheese wheel were located up front. By Helen's day other rooms in the building that were formerly domestic in character had been converted to store use. Walnut meats were spread out to dry in the second-floor front or northeast room and the room behind was used for storing barrels of dishes, straw summer hats, shoes, and other "clean" items. Tires were stored in the long room in the house basement because the coolness helped preserve the rubber. Helen recalls that her grandmother was "a great one" for trying out on herself the patent medicines that the "drummers" (traveling salesmen) sold to the store. One drummer sold the store ONT thread, the letters standing for "Old 'Notty Thread." The store also sold dried corn that was cooked, cut off the cob, and spread out on sheets of metal on the barn roof to dry in the sun. Chickens were kept in the barn as payment for items sold in the store.<sup>10</sup>

Lizzie Myers took in boarders during the 1930s. Several upstairs rooms were rented out to a niece, her husband, and two children. A teacher at Linville-Edom School lived there as did girls who attended the school and did washing and other chores for Mrs. Myers in lieu of paying rent. The teacher was Ruth Orndorff, who later married Nelson Spitzer, a son of Charles and Myrtle who would eventually purchase the store. Lizzie Myers used the two front rooms on the first floor of the residential half as a living room (her player piano was in the front room), the third room as a dining room, and the fourth room as the kitchen with pots, pans, and dishes stored in the cabinets. The spring room was known as the back porch and crocks of milk and other dairy products were cooled in the spring troughs. Helen Myers Wilfong recalls that it was her grandmother's custom to sit by the radiator in the dining room and write letters to her children after church on Sundays.<sup>11</sup>

W. T. Burrus, whose family ran the Edom Mill in the 1930s and 1940s, recalls the inventory liquidation sale at the store in the early 1940s. The frame shed on the side sheltered a kerosene tank and the store basement held barrels of vinegar and other substances. Burrus's father-in-law, who is now ninety-four years old, recalls the Myers Store "huckster" wagons traveling through the Singers Glen area. Charles Spitzer (d. 1977), a carpenter, and his wife Myrtle (d. 1985) lived in the original residential half of the building after purchasing the property in 1942 and rented the converted store/apartment for several years thereafter. The first occupant was the Wenger family, and later the Deavers and Ruebushes lived there. Charles and Myrtle originally had six children, but two had passed away by 1942. Charles and two of his sons were carpenters. One son, Shirley Spitzer, moved into the second-floor end room of the ell after his divorce and lived there until he committed suicide in the back yard in 1969. Between the house and the barn by the cross street was the "ice pit," a circular brick structure constructed like an underground cistern but with a frame superstructure. Ice was cut off a reservoir in Edom and stored in the pit where it kept into the summer. Burrus believes the ice pit was simply filled in and that it may still exist. The property was auctioned in 1982, five years after the death of Charles Spitzer, after which time the

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### Statement of Significance (continued)

building was apparently no longer occupied. It was recently purchased by John Douglas Kline and a tax credit rehabilitation is now underway that will convert the building to several apartments.<sup>12</sup>

### Architectural Discussion

The Edom Store and Post Office building combines a store and residence that share the same front elevation, a commercial-residential form that is unusual compared to forms that feature residential space over the commercial space (common in towns and cities) or the store as a front wing of a dwelling (occasionally encountered in villages and rural areas). The principal architectural feature associated with commercial use is the post-bellum storefront. Evidence of earlier commercial use is more subtle and includes the existence of only a single chimney on the store side (suggesting the store was not carved out of residential space which would probably have had two chimneys for symmetry), lack of a doorway between the store and residence, a separate basement, and a separate ell. Because the post-bellum renovation involved the insertion of large display-type windows, it may be assumed that the store originally had smaller windows probably equal in size and character to others on the façade. Likewise, evidence for the original interior character of the store is scanty. Only the Federal-style cabinet that stood in the back room dates to original construction. Presumably this cabinet served to store valuable merchandise or records such as John Chrisman's ledger book.

More survives from the post-bellum store renovation. The principal features associated with the renovation are the storefront and the counters. The former is notable for pockets that hold (or formerly held) fold-out shutters for securing the large windows. Another documented example of this ingenious feature is the ca. 1898 Hamburg Store in the Page County village of Hamburg. The counters, which are stored in the store basement, have paneled ends that harmonized with the paneled treatment of the storefront. The store interior was probably lined with shelves before and after the post-bellum renovation, although no in situ evidence of former shelving has been positively identified.<sup>13</sup>

The building's exterior has a number of significant architectural features. One is the design of the residential front entry sidelights and transom which appears to be modeled on a plate in William Pain's *Practical Builder or Workman's General Assistant* (1793). Pain's plate is of a chimney "entablature" (mantel) although the gracefully curving and intersecting fretwork pattern was adaptable for other contexts, as the Edom example demonstrates. The Edom Store and Post Office entry surround would represent a late occurrence in Virginia of influence from Pain's pattern book. The building is also notable for its curious polychrome brickwork and its projecting belt course, a feature that calls to mind eighteenth-century practice and here may have served primarily to demarcate or emphasize the change in brick color from the first to second stories.<sup>14</sup>

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### Statement of Significance (continued)

The Edom Store and Post Office interior has several notable plan features. One that appears to be original is the separation of the second-floor ell rooms and one of the adjacent main section rooms from the rest of the second floor. The separation suggests a desire to segregate the family, which would have occupied the entire residential first floor, the second-floor southeast room, and the two second-floor north rooms, from individuals lodging in the other second-floor rooms, at least two of which were entered from the second tier of the ell porch. Considering the prevalence of houses of public entertainment during the early nineteenth century, it is possible the Chrismans boarded guests in the second-floor ell rooms.

Another separation, nineteenth or early twentieth century in date, was the hinged partition in the opening between the first-floor front room and the room behind it. The feature is very similar to hinged partitions known from a handful of early-nineteenth-century residences in western Virginia, two of which (both listed in the National Register) were used as places of worship by Church of the Brethren congregations. One example is the ca. 1833 Bowman House in Franklin County. A closer example, both in form and location, is the ca. 1800 Yount-Zigler or "Tunker" House, located near the town of Broadway approximately six miles from Edom. The Tunker House has two front rooms divided by a partition in two large panels, hinged at the top, that could be lifted and hooked to the ceiling in order to create a single large space for services. The smaller panels in the Edom building were also hinged at the top, although evidence of how they were secured to the ceiling is now missing or covered. At least two interpretations of the Edom partition may be proposed. One is that religious services were conducted in the two front parlors of the residential half. It may be relevant in this regard that John W. Myers was active in the Church of the Brethren. Another interpretation is that the partition served to open the space up for entertaining, similar to the sliding or side-hinged doors in certain genteel antebellum residences.<sup>15</sup>

The Edom Store and Post Office's decorative finishes are among its most significant features. The white-on-gray granitic effect created on the second-floor southeast room wainscot was a genre of marbling occasionally produced in the Shenandoah Valley. At the turn of the twentieth century a Rockingham County-born itinerant artist named Green Berry Jones painted granitic marbling effects on a mantel of the John Seawright House in Augusta County and the effect has also been documented outside the Valley in New Castle, Craig County. The effect may have been produced by shaking paint off the bristle ends of a brush. The granitic marbling of the Edom wainscot appears purposefully irregular, with some sections lighter than others, perhaps to create an impression of natural color variations. As for the building's graining, few historic properties preserve as many different styles of this decorative technique under one roof.<sup>16</sup>

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### Statement of Significance (continued)

#### Endnotes

1. MacAllister, "Chrisman Store in Edom;" Wagner, "Descendants of John Roulston I;" Rockingham County Burnt Deed Book 5, p. 364. Deeds relating to the Edom Store and Post Office and many other antebellum Rockingham County deeds were partially reconstructed after the deed books burned during the Civil War (hence the term "burnt deeds"). All that is known of the Bryan-Chrisman transaction from the deed is the name of the grantor and grantee and the month and year of the transaction.
2. Chrisman Ledger Book.
3. Wayland, "Rockingham Post Officers;" Wayland, *History of Rockingham County*, 114, 186, 204-05; Lathrop and Griffing, *Atlas of Rockingham County*.
4. MacAllister, "Chrisman Store in Edom;" Rockingham County Deed Book 18, p. 426; *Rockingham Register*, November 16, 1844.
5. MacAllister, "Chrisman Store in Edom;" Hess, *Heartland*, 207; Rockingham County Deed Book 14, p. 415; *Rockingham Register*, March 19 and August 20, 1868.
6. U.S. census; Chataigne, *Chataigne's Virginia Business Directory and Gazetteer, 1880-81*, 454, 456; Chataigne, *Chataigne's Virginia Gazetteer and Classified Business Directory, 1893-94*, 1110, 1116; Rockingham County Deed Book 16, p. 217; Wayland, "Rockingham Post Officers."
7. Rockingham County Deed Book 22, p. 168; Lathrop and Griffing, *Atlas of Rockingham County*; Chataigne, *Chataigne's Virginia Gazetteer and Classified Business Directory, 1893-94*, 1,116;
8. Rockingham County Deed Book 69, p. 73, Deed Book 71, p. 113, Deed Book 111, p. 356; *Daily News-Record*, March 17, 1931; *Rockingham County, Its Past and Present Illustrated*; Hess, *Heartland*, 207; Helen Myers Wilfong and Doug Kline personal communication.
9. *Daily News-Record*, March 17, 1931; Rockingham County Will Book 11, p. 516; Harrisonburg Mutual Telephone Company, *Harrisonburg and Vicinity Telephone Directory* (1938 and 1939 editions); Wayland, "Rockingham Post Officers;" Downs, Downs, and Ritchie, *Mills of Rockingham County* (Volume 4), 200; Helen Myers Wilfong personal communication.
10. Helen Myers Wilfong personal communication.



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**Edom Store and Post Office**  
**Rockingham County, Virginia**

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### **Statement of Significance (continued)**

11. Ibid, and Danielle Spitzer Prigmore personal communication.
12. W. T. Burrus and Doug Kline personal communication, and Danielle Spitzer Prigmore personal communication.
13. Giles and Pezzoni, "Page County Historic Resources Survey Report," 136.
14. Calder Loth personal communication.
15. Hill and Fishburne, "Tunker House;" Pezzoni, "Bowman Farm."
16. McCleary, "John Seawright House," 26.

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**Edom Store and Post Office**  
**Rockingham County, Virginia**

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**Rockingham County, Virginia**

Section number 9 Page 22

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

**Edom Store and Post Office**  
**Rockingham County, Virginia**

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### **GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

#### **Verbal Boundary Description**

The boundaries of the nominated area correspond to Rockingham County tax parcel 79.3.1.

#### **Boundary Justification**

The boundaries correspond to the property lines of the village lot on which the two contributing resources stand.

### **PHOTOGRAPHS**

All photographs are of:

#### **EDOM STORE AND POST OFFICE**

Rockingham County, Virginia

DHR File No. 082-0112

J. Daniel Pezzoni, Photographer

Negatives are stored at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources in Richmond, Virginia.

DATE: March 2007

VIEW OF: South and east (front) elevations. View facing northwest.

NEG. NO.: 23413:1

PHOTO 1 OF 7

DATE: March 2007

VIEW OF: East (front) and north elevations. View facing southwest.

NEG. NO.: 23413:8

PHOTO 2 OF 7

DATE: March 2007

VIEW OF: West elevation. View facing east.

NEG. NO.: 23413:7

PHOTO 3 OF 7

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**Edom Store and Post Office**  
**Rockingham County, Virginia**

Section number 10, Photographic Data Page 24

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DATE: March 2007

VIEW OF: South side of barn with store in background. View facing east.

NEG. NO.: 23413:5

PHOTO 4 OF 7

DATE: March 2007

VIEW OF: First-floor second room with view into front southeast room.

NEG. NO.: 23413:11

PHOTO 5 OF 7

DATE: March 2007

VIEW OF: Second-floor center-passage stair.

NEG. NO.: 23413:14

PHOTO 6 OF 7

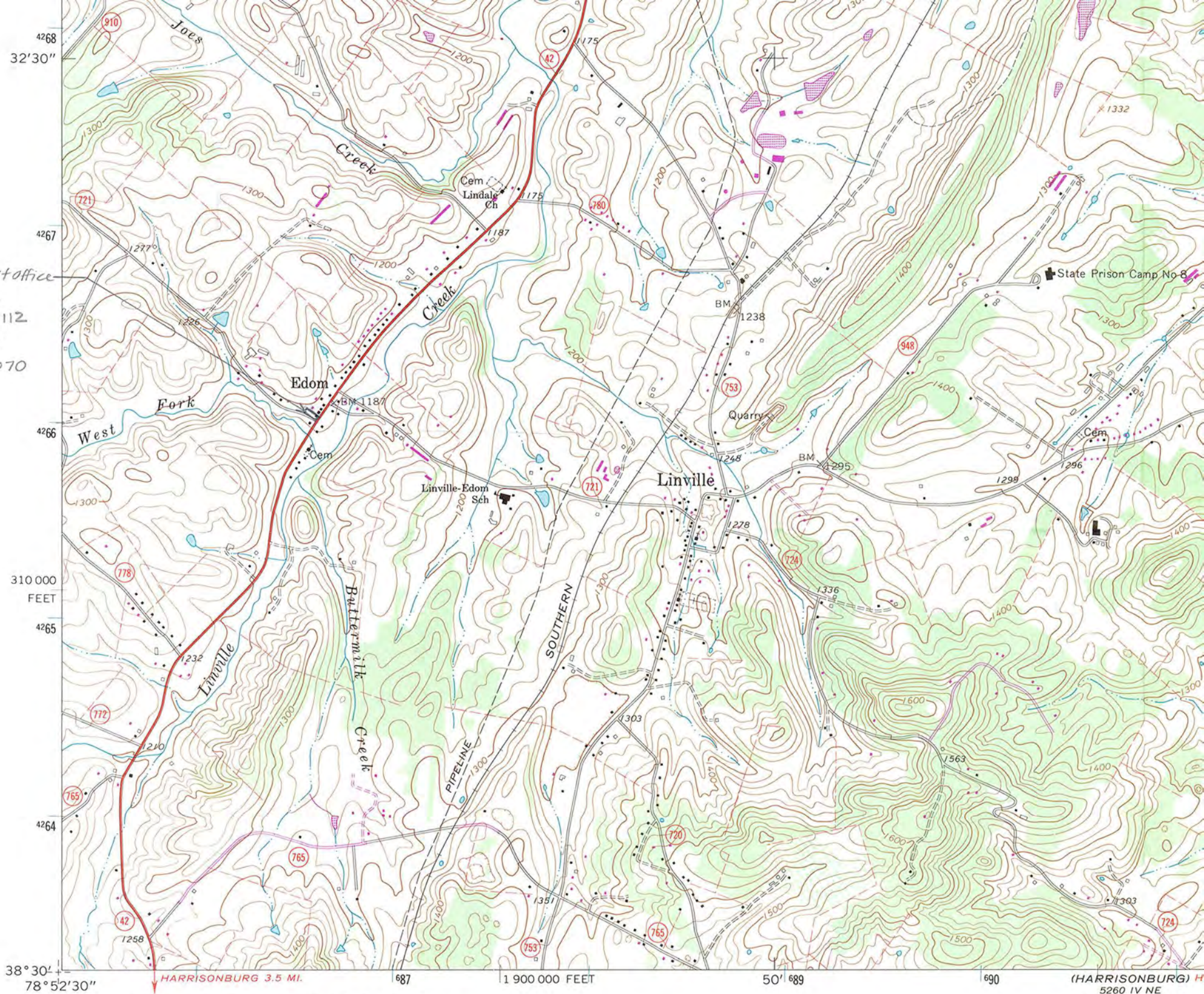
DATE: March 2007

VIEW OF: Front store room.

NEG. NO.: 23413:12

PHOTO 7 OF 7

Edom Store and Post Office  
Rockingham Co., Va.  
(DHR file no. 082-0112  
UTM ref. (zone 17):  
EG86600 N4266070



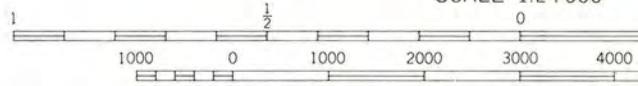
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78° 52' 30"  
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5260 IV NE  
SCALE 1:24 000

EDGEWATER  
50 IV NW

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA

Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

PROPERTY Edom Store and Post Office  
NAME:

MULTIPLE  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: VIRGINIA, Rockingham

DATE RECEIVED: 1/07/09 DATE OF PENDING LIST:  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 2/20/09  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 07000768

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT  RETURN  REJECT 2.11.09 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

~~additional Documentation Accepted~~

RECOM./CRITERIA

REVIEWER

TELEPHONE

DISCIPLINE

DATE

*Accept Additional Documentation*  
*Elsa Bell*  
*History*  
*2.11.09*

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

L. Preston Bryant, Jr.  
Secretary of Natural Resources

**Department of Historic Resources**  
2801 Kensington Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23221-0311

Kathleen S. Kilpatrick  
Director

Tel: (804) 367-2323  
Fax: (804) 367-2391  
TDD: (804) 367-2386  
www.dhr.virginia.gov



May 2, 2008

Mr. Patrick Andrus  
Chief, National Register of Historic Places and National Historic Landmarks Programs  
National Park Service 2280  
National Register of Historic Places  
1201 "I" (Eye) Street, N.W.  
Washington D.C. 20005

**RE: Salem Avenue/Roanoke Automotive Commercial Historic District (boundary increase – photo disk), City of Roanoke; and Edom Store and Post Office (replacement pages), Rockingham County**

Dear Mr. Andrus:

Enclosed is the disk photo disk for the Salem Avenue/Roanoke Automotive Commercial Historic District Boundary Increase, which I believe I owe you from being missing with the full package sent April 4, 2008.

The Edom Store and Post Office pages are edited pages from the original nomination which simply need to be replaced with the existing pages of the same section and page number. These have been edited after some updated information was provided to me from a family member of the property until the 1980s. None of the original information has been removed, only some dates and more specific information on family members and their ownership periods have been added. I also updated the footnotes and bibliography to reflect Ms. Spitzer Prigmore's information.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. My direct phone line is 804-367-2323 at extension 102.

Sincerely,

Jean McRae, Historic Preservationist  
National and State Register Program Coordinator

## Enclosures

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10 Courthouse Avenue  
Petersburg, VA 23803  
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Tel: (757) 886-2807  
Fax: (757) 886-2808

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Roanoke, VA 24013  
Tel: (540) 857-7585  
Fax: (540) 857-7588

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

**Edom Store and Post Office**  
**Rockingham County, Virginia**

Section number 8 Page 12

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### NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

#### Summary Statement of Significance

The Edom Store and Post Office has stood at the center of life in the Rockingham County, Virginia, village of Edom since its traditional date of construction in 1835. The two-story brick building was erected for merchant and mill owner John Chrisman. Chrisman sold fancy dry goods in his stylish Federal-Greek Revival store, half of which served as a residence (presumably his). The store was operated by the firm of McKeever and Brother in the late nineteenth century and by J. W. Myers General Merchandise for much of the first half of the twentieth century. The Edom Post Office operated out of the store until the late 1930s. The property is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the commerce area of significance for its associations with the economic life of Edom and surrounding areas over the span of a century. The property is also eligible under Criterion C in the architecture area of significance for its notable original features including subtle polychrome brickwork, expressive Federal-Greek Revival detail, and a stair with scrolled tread brackets. Notable later features include an Italianate storefront and porch, evidence for fold-out storefront shutters in pockets, a ca. 1900 two-tone concrete porch floor and associated walks, steps, and retaining walls, and varied decorative finishes including graining, granitic marbling, and Art Nouveau wallpaper. Also of note are remnants of top-hinged partition panels that could be opened to combine two first-floor rooms, a possible Church of the Brethren-associated feature. The period of significance begins with the apparent date of construction of the building in 1835 and extends to ca. 1940, about the time that the store closed and soon after the Edom Post Office moved to another location. The Edom Store and Post Office is eligible at the local level of significance.

#### Acknowledgements

A number of individuals assisted in the preparation and review of this nomination, foremost among them is the owner of the property and sponsor of the nomination, John Douglas Kline, who conducted interviews and provided other historical materials for the project. Assistance was also provided by Susan Caldwell, Helen Myers Wilfong, W. T. Burrus, the staff of the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Historical Society Heritage Center, the staff of the Massanutten Regional Library, and Calder Loth, Joanna Evans, David Edwards, Jean McRae, and Marc Wagner of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources. Later assistance was provided by Danielle Spitzer Prigmore, Charles and Myrtle Spitzer's great-granddaughter.

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

**Edom Store and Post Office**  
**Rockingham County, Virginia**

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### Statement of Significance (continued)

Helen Myers Wilfong spent many days in her grandmother's store and house as a child in the 1930s. She recalls that the back room of the store was used for selling hardware and had bins of nails. Dry goods, sewing accessories, and a large cheese wheel were located up front. By Helen's day other rooms in the building that were formerly domestic in character had been converted to store use. Walnut meats were spread out to dry in the second-floor front or northeast room and the room behind was used for storing barrels of dishes, straw summer hats, shoes, and other "clean" items. Tires were stored in the long room in the house basement because the coolness helped preserve the rubber. Helen recalls that her grandmother was "a great one" for trying out on herself the patent medicines that the "drummers" (traveling salesmen) sold to the store. One drummer sold the store ONT thread, the letters standing for "Old 'Notty Thread." The store also sold dried corn that was cooked, cut off the cob, and spread out on sheets of metal on the barn roof to dry in the sun. Chickens were kept in the barn as payment for items sold in the store.<sup>10</sup>

Lizzie Myers took in boarders during the 1930s. Several upstairs rooms were rented out to a niece, her husband, and two children. A teacher at Linville-Edom School lived there as did girls who attended the school and did washing and other chores for Mrs. Myers in lieu of paying rent. The teacher was Ruth Orndorff, who later married Nelson Spitzer, a son of Charles and Myrtle who would eventually purchase the store. Lizzie Myers used the two front rooms on the first floor of the residential half as a living room (her player piano was in the front room), the third room as a dining room, and the fourth room as the kitchen with pots, pans, and dishes stored in the cabinets. The spring room was known as the back porch and crocks of milk and other dairy products were cooled in the spring troughs. Helen Myers Wilfong recalls that it was her grandmother's custom to sit by the radiator in the dining room and write letters to her children after church on Sundays.<sup>11</sup>

W. T. Burrus, whose family ran the Edom Mill in the 1930s and 1940s, recalls the inventory liquidation sale at the store in the early 1940s. The frame shed on the side sheltered a kerosene tank and the store basement held barrels of vinegar and other substances. Burrus's father-in-law, who is now ninety-four years old, recalls the Myers Store "huckster" wagons traveling through the Singers Glen area. Charles Spitzer (d. 1977), a carpenter, and his wife Myrtle (d. 1985) lived in the original residential half of the building after purchasing the property in 1942 and rented the converted store/apartment for several years thereafter. The first occupant was the Wenger family, and later the Deavers and Ruebushes lived there. Charles and Myrtle originally had six children, but two had passed away by 1942. Charles and two of his sons were carpenters. One son, Shirley Spitzer, moved into the second-floor end room of the ell after his divorce and lived there until he committed suicide in the back yard in 1969. Between the house and the barn by the cross street was the "ice pit," a circular brick structure constructed like an underground cistern but with a frame superstructure. Ice was cut off a reservoir in Edom and stored in the pit where it kept into the summer. Burrus believes the ice pit was simply filled in and that it may still exist. The property was auctioned in 1982, five years after the death of Charles Spitzer, after which

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Rockingham County, Virginia

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### Statement of Significance (continued)

time the building was apparently no longer occupied. It was recently purchased by John Douglas Kline and a tax credit rehabilitation is now underway that will convert the building to several apartments.<sup>12</sup>

### Architectural Discussion

The Edom Store and Post Office building combines a store and residence that share the same front elevation, a commercial-residential form that is unusual compared to forms that feature residential space over the commercial space (common in towns and cities) or the store as a front wing of a dwelling (occasionally encountered in villages and rural areas). The principal architectural feature associated with commercial use is the post-bellum storefront. Evidence of earlier commercial use is more subtle and includes the existence of only a single chimney on the store side (suggesting the store was not carved out of residential space which would probably have had two chimneys for symmetry), lack of a doorway between the store and residence, a separate basement, and a separate ell. Because the post-bellum renovation involved the insertion of large display-type windows, it may be assumed that the store originally had smaller windows probably equal in size and character to others on the façade. Likewise, evidence for the original interior character of the store is scanty. Only the Federal-style cabinet that stood in the back room dates to original construction. Presumably this cabinet served to store valuable merchandise or records such as John Chrisman's ledger book.

More survives from the post-bellum store renovation. The principal features associated with the renovation are the storefront and the counters. The former is notable for pockets that hold (or formerly held) fold-out shutters for securing the large windows. Another documented example of this ingenious feature is the ca. 1898 Hamburg Store in the Page County village of Hamburg. The counters, which are stored in the store basement, have paneled ends that harmonized with the paneled treatment of the storefront. The store interior was probably lined with shelves before and after the post-bellum renovation, although no in situ evidence of former shelving has been positively identified.<sup>13</sup>

The building's exterior has a number of significant architectural features. One is the design of the residential front entry sidelights and transom which appears to be modeled on a plate in William Pain's *Practical Builder or Workman's General Assistant* (1793). Pain's plate is of a chimney "entablature" (mantel) although the gracefully curving and intersecting fretwork pattern was adaptable for other contexts, as the Edom example demonstrates. The Edom Store and Post Office entry surround would represent a late occurrence in Virginia of influence from Pain's pattern book. The building is also notable for its curious polychrome brickwork and its projecting belt course, a feature that calls to mind eighteenth-century practice and here may have served primarily to demarcate or emphasize the change in brick color from the first to second stories.<sup>14</sup>

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Edom Store and Post Office  
Rockingham County, Virginia

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### Statement of Significance (continued)

The Edom Store and Post Office interior has several notable plan features. One that appears to be original is the separation of the second-floor ell rooms and one of the adjacent main section rooms from the rest of the second floor. The separation suggests a desire to segregate the family, which would have occupied the entire residential first floor, the second-floor southeast room, and the two second-floor north rooms, from individuals lodging in the other second-floor rooms, at least two of which were entered from the second tier of the ell porch. Considering the prevalence of houses of public entertainment during the early nineteenth century, it is possible the Chrismans boarded guests in the second-floor ell rooms.

Another separation, nineteenth or early twentieth century in date, was the hinged partition in the opening between the first-floor front room and the room behind it. The feature is very similar to hinged partitions known from a handful of early-nineteenth-century residences in western Virginia, two of which (both listed in the National Register) were used as places of worship by Church of the Brethren congregations. One example is the ca. 1833 Bowman House in Franklin County. A closer example, both in form and location, is the ca. 1800 Yount-Zigler or "Tunker" House, located near the town of Broadway approximately six miles from Edom. The Tunker House has two front rooms divided by a partition in two large panels, hinged at the top, that could be lifted and hooked to the ceiling in order to create a single large space for services. The smaller panels in the Edom building were also hinged at the top, although evidence of how they were secured to the ceiling is now missing or covered. At least two interpretations of the Edom partition may be proposed. One is that religious services were conducted in the two front parlors of the residential half. It may be relevant in this regard that John W. Myers was active in the Church of the Brethren. Another interpretation is that the partition served to open the space up for entertaining, similar to the sliding or side-hinged doors in certain genteel antebellum residences.<sup>15</sup>

The Edom Store and Post Office's decorative finishes are among its most significant features. The white-on-gray granitic effect created on the second-floor southeast room wainscot was a genre of marbling occasionally produced in the Shenandoah Valley. At the turn of the twentieth century a Rockingham County-born itinerant artist named Green Berry Jones painted granitic marbling effects on a mantel of the John Seawright House in Augusta County and the effect has also been documented outside the Valley in New Castle, Craig County. The effect may have been produced by shaking paint off the bristle ends of a brush. The granitic marbling of the Edom wainscot appears purposefully irregular, with some sections lighter than others, perhaps to create an impression of natural color variations. As for the building's graining, few historic properties preserve as many different styles of this decorative technique under one roof.<sup>16</sup>

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**Edom Store and Post Office**  
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### **Statement of Significance (continued)**

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