

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: R.L. Leach Grocery Store

Other names/site number: WA1162

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

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

2. Location

Street & number: West Side of Dutch Mills Road, 175 feet from Washington Co. Road 418

City or town: Dutch Mills State: Arkansas County: Washington

Not For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

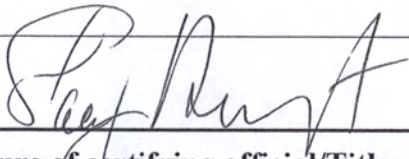
I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

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:

10-25-17
Date

Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

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

R.L. Leach Grocery Store
Name of Property

Washington County, AR
County and State

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

(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 ☐

R.L. Leach Grocery Store
Name of Property

Washington County, AR
County and State

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Commerce/Trade: Department Store

Government: Post Office

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Vacant/Not in Use

R.L. Leach Grocery Store
Name of Property

Washington County, AR
County and State

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Other: Plain/Traditional

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Wood, metal, and stone

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The R.L. Leach Grocery Store is located in Dutch Mills, Arkansas, on the west end of Dutch Mills Road, near Washington County Road 418. The building is situated along what used to be the highway running through Dutch Mills. Serving as both a grocer and a post office, the one story R.L. Leach Grocery Store was the hub of Dutch Mills after the arrival of its original German settlers following the Civil War and into the 1960s. It is a plain-traditional, twentieth-century commercial building with a gable roof made of metal and a rectangular plan. Approximately twenty-five feet long and forty feet wide, the building is adorned with a black and white "R.L. Leach" sign on the parapet, as well as a Coca-Cola "Fresh Fruits & Veg." sign. Featuring barred double-hung windows, the building has novelty siding as well as a front porch with an awning supported by posts. The building is built on a continuous field stone foundation.

Narrative Description

The R.L. Leach Grocery Store is located in Dutch Mills, Arkansas, on the west end of Dutch Mills Road, near Washington County Road 418. The building is situated along what used to be

R.L. Leach Grocery Store

Washington County, AR

Name of Property

County and State

the highway running through Dutch Mills. Serving as both a grocer and a post office, the one story R.L. Leach Grocery Store was the hub of Dutch Mills after the arrival of its original German settlers following the Civil War and into the 1960s. It is a plain-traditional, twentieth-century commercial building with a gable roof made of metal and a rectangular plan.

Approximately twenty-five feet long and forty feet wide, the building is adorned with a black and white "R.L. Leach" sign on the parapet, as well as a Coca-Cola "Fresh Fruits & Veg." sign. Featuring barred double-hung windows, the building has novelty siding as well as a front porch with an awning supported by posts. The building is built on a continuous field stone foundation. The building is comprised of two storefronts due to the Sycamore Filling Station being moved from across the road in 1939 and joined with the original building.

East/Front Elevation

The east side of the building has two symmetrical storefronts, each with a central door that is flanked on each side by a four-over-four barred double-hung window. The door in the southern storefront has decorative panels on the bottom half and a large window in the top half. The door on the northern storefront is a solid wood door. The two storefronts are spanned by a full front porch with a full-width shed roof supported by four wooden posts. A large stone step provides access to the porch in front of the southern storefront. At the north end of the building there is an additional boarded door frame. The parapet above the storefronts features the "R.L. Leach" sign as well as the Coca-Cola sign.

North/Side Elevation

The north side of the building has white novelty siding in fair condition. It also has no fenestration.

West/Rear Elevation

The rear of the building has a smaller one over one double-hung window with bars on it on the north side, as well as a four-over-four double-hung window the same size as the windows on the east facade. Immediately to the north of the four over four window, there is another boarded up entrance with an unpainted wooden barrier covering what used to be a back door.

South/Side Elevation

The south side of the building features another barred four-over-four double-hung window on the western end of the building. There is also an electrical wire fixed on the roof on the south side, which connects the building to the telephone wires to the west of the building.

Interior

The interior is one large space with built-in shelving along part of the west wall. Two wooden posts in the center of the building support the ceiling where the two buildings were joined together. The ceiling and walls of the original Leach building are covered with bead board paneling. In the Sycamore Filling Station part of the building, the walls and ceiling are covered with planks. Plank floors are found throughout the building.

R.L. Leach Grocery Store

Name of Property

Washington County, AR

County and State

Integrity

Overall, the Leach Store retains good integrity from its period of significance. The largest change to the building was the relocation in 1939 of the Sycamore Filling Station and its integration into the structure. However, this occurred during the period of significance and is a historic change in the building. The building retains much of its original fabric from the time of the Leaches running the store. In addition, the setting of the building still reflects the small-town atmosphere from when it operated as the store and post office. As a result, it is easily able to convey its historic significance.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☐ A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- ☐ B. Removed from its original location
- ☐ C. A birthplace or 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

R.L. Leach Grocery Store
Name of Property

Washington County, AR
County and State

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Commerce

Period of Significance

Circa 1925-1968

Significant Dates

Circa 1925

1939

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

R.L. Leach Grocery Store
Name of Property

Washington County, AR
County and State

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The R.L. Leach Grocery Store is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under **Criterion A** with **local significance**. It is being nominated with a period of significance of circa 1925-1968, when it served as a grocer and post office. The building is being nominated for its role in the commerce of Dutch Mills, and its importance within the community as its post office.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Dutch Mills was originally settled in 1850 by two German brothers, John and Karl Hermann, who established mills and stores within the settlement.¹ They organized a post office in 1853 under the name of Hermannsburg, which the settlement would be known as while the Hermanns remained there.² The Hermanns, as Unionists, were harassed by their neighbors and bushwhackers during the Civil War, until the family decided to flee to St. Louis shortly after the Battle of Prairie Grove in December of 1862.³ There are conflicting stories as to the origin of the community's name following its resettlement after the Civil War, with some stories holding that the loyalty of the Hermanns and their fellow German immigrants to the Union contributed to the renaming of the community, as "Dutch" was used as a pejorative by Southern loyalists towards Germans.⁴ Other sources maintain that the name was a result of the strange dialect of English that the community spoke as a result of their German heritage, and was simply a misnomer by those that settled Dutch Mills following the Hermanns.⁵

After the resettlement of Dutch Mills following the conclusion of the Civil War, the commerce that the Hermanns brought to the settlement with their mills and stores when it was still known as Hermannsburg had to be replaced. This movement started with the replacement of the post office for the town, when it was opened again as the Dutch Mills post office on October 10, 1871.⁶

There were a few merchants in Dutch Mills in the first couple decades of the twentieth century, with community members such as Fred Freeman and Austin Johnson working to maintain

¹ W.J. Lemke, *The Hermanns of Old Hermannsburg* (Fayetteville, AR: Washington County Historical Society, 1965), 3.

² *Ibid.*, 8.

³ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁵ Floy Baker, *Hermansburg or Dutch Mills*, 1991, in the files of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program.

⁶ Don Cook and Tom Maringer, *Postal History of Washington County, Arkansas* (Springdale, AR: Postal Historical Society of Washington County, Arkansas, 1994).

R.L. Leach Grocery Store

Washington County, AR
County and State

Name of Property

economic activity in Dutch Mills following the emigration of the German settlers that initially bolstered the settlement's commerce.⁷ Johnson ran a general store and a flour mill in town.⁸ His general store burned in 1925, and he built another store, which he sold to Ruth and Raymond Leach before it burned ca. 1931.⁹

Will Sparks operated a grist mill from the late 1920s through the 1930s in Dutch Mills.¹⁰ The Brannons of Dutch Mills ran a store for a few years in the 1930s.¹¹ In addition to the grist mill and various general stores, there were saw mills, flour mills, and blacksmith shops within the community.¹² In the beginning of the 1930s, a canning factory was opened in town, owned and operated by Jim Gregory and Jim Pyette of nearby Cane Hill, Arkansas. In the center of all this commerce, however, was the R.L. Leach Grocery Store. As with many smaller communities, the hub of the town was the post office, and Ruth Leach, as postmistress, took advantage of the traffic to the post office by having a grocer in the same building.¹³

Built circa 1925, the north half of the R.L. Leach Grocery Store is the original building sold to the Leaches by Johnny and Mary Jane Sparks, while the southern half is from the Sycamore Filling Station, which was located across the road from the Leach store, and was owned by Will Sparks.¹⁴ The R.L. Leach Grocery Store reflected the economic strategy employed by many postmasters at the time, further solidifying the importance of the building to the community. Utilizing this economic opportunity was Ruth Leach, who was appointed postmistress in 1928, following in the footsteps of her relatives Camma C. Leach and Thomas Leach in nearby Morrow, Arkansas, in the late 19th century.¹⁵ Without many other stores in the settlement, the grocer was central to the buying of goods for the people of Dutch Mills in the twentieth century, and its service as a post office until 1968 cemented its centrality to the community. Ruth's husband Raymond was a farmer, while she ran the store and the post office, resulting in her having a revered role in the community.^{16, 17}

Ruth Leach maintained her role running the store and her position as postmistress for over three decades, until her health forced her to retire in 1967.¹⁸ She was succeeded in both duties by Ora Matlock, until the post office was closed in 1968, and the store a few years later.¹⁹

⁷ Floy Baker, *Hermansburg or Dutch Mills*, 1991, in the files of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ George H. Phillips, *Handling the Mail in Benton County Arkansas 1836-1976* (Siloam Springs, AR: Benton County Historical Society, 1979), 26.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ Deane G. Carter, *Postmasters and Post Offices, Washington County, Arkansas, 1829-1976: One Hundred Forty-seven Years of Postal Service, the People and Places* (Fayetteville, AR: Carter, 1976).

¹⁶ Year: 1920; Census Place: Dutch Mills, Washington, Arkansas; Roll: T625_84; Page: 3A; Enumeration District: 139; Image: 284

¹⁷ Floy Baker, *Hermansburg or Dutch Mills*, 1991, in the files of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

R.L. Leach Grocery Store

Washington County, AR
County and State

Name of Property

With so few centers of activity in Dutch Mills, and with no others remaining, the R. L. Leach Grocery Store's significance is amplified. Being both a primary store for the people of Dutch Mills and serving as its post office ensured that people would be spending time in there, and today it is the only remaining commercial building from Dutch Mills' past. The Leach Store is emblematic of a time and place where the post office was central to the community, as was often the case in close-knit, rural communities of the early twentieth century.

The property is now owned by Historic Cane Hill, a non-profit that has been working on restoring properties in the area. The building was restored in 2013, resulting in the removal of red sheet metal siding and restoration of the novelty siding.

Significance of Property

With so few centers of activity in Dutch Mills, and with no others remaining, the R. L. Leach Grocery Store's significance is amplified. Being both a primary store for the people of Dutch Mills and serving as its post office ensured that people would be spending time in there, and today it is the only remaining commercial building from Dutch Mills' past. The Leach Store is emblematic of a time and place where the post office was central to the community, as was often the case in close-knit, rural communities of the early twentieth century.

The Leach Store incorporating another business' building demonstrates the importance that it had in Dutch Mills' commerce. With the traffic to the store bolstered by the presence of the post office, the store needed more space and was successful enough to acquire that section of the Sycamore Filling Station. Due to its importance in the commercial history of Dutch Mills, the R. L. Leach Grocery Store is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under **Criterion A with local significance.**

R.L. Leach Grocery Store
Name of Property

Washington County, AR
County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Baker, Floy. *Hermansburg or Dutch Mills*. 1991. In the files of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program.

Carter, Deane G. *Postmasters and Post Offices, Washington County, Arkansas, 1829-1976: One Hundred Forty-seven Years of Postal Service, the People and Places*. Fayetteville, AR: Carter, 1976.

Cook, Don, and Tom Maringer. *Postal History of Washington County, Arkansas*. Springdale, AR: Postal Historical Society of Washington County, Arkansas, 1994.

History of Benton, Washington, Carroll, Madison, Crawford, Franklin, and Sebastian Counties, Arkansas. Chicago: The Goodspeed Publishing Company, 1889.

Lemke, W.J. *The Hermanns of Old Hermannsburg*. Fayetteville, AR: Washington County Historical Society, 1965.

Oklahoma State University. "Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties," accessed May 31, 2017. <http://digital.library.okstate.edu/kappler/vol2/treaties/che0288.htm#mn2>.

Phillips, George H. *Handling the Mail in Benton County Arkansas 1836-1976*. Siloam Springs, AR: Benton County Historical Society, 1976.

Year: 1920; Census Place: *Dutch Mills, Washington, Arkansas*; Roll: T625_84; Page: 3A; Enumeration District: 139; Image: 284.

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 # _____

R.L. Leach Grocery Store

Name of Property

Washington County, AR
County and State

_____ 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): WA1162

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1 acre

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: _____ Longitude: _____

2. Latitude: _____ Longitude: _____

3. Latitude: _____ Longitude: _____

4. Latitude: _____ Longitude: _____

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map): _____

R.L. Leach Grocery Store
Name of Property

Washington County, AR
County and State

☐ NAD 1927 or ☒ NAD 1983

1. Zone: 15	Easting: 365375	Northing: 3971252
2. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
3. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
4. Zone:	Easting :	Northing:

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

PT NW SE & PT SW SE 1.00AC 21-14-33
Parcel 001-05367-101

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary includes all of the land historically associated with the property.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Baker Wells, Intern, edited by Ralph S. Wilcox, National Register & Survey Coordinator
organization: Arkansas Historic Preservation Program
street & number: 1100 North Street
city or town: Little Rock state: AR zip code: 72201
e-mail ralph.wilcox@arkansas.gov
telephone: 501-324-9787
date: 5/15/17

R.L. Leach Grocery Store
Name of Property

Washington County, AR
County and State

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: R.L. Leach Grocery Store

City or Vicinity: Dutch Mills

County: Washington

State: Arkansas

Photographer: Baker Wells

Date Photographed: 5/11/17

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

Photo 1 of 10 - East and north façades and surrounding area looking southwest.

Photo 2 of 10 - East façade looking west.

Photo 3 of 10 - East and north façades looking southwest.

Photo 4 of 10 - North façade looking south.

R.L. Leach Grocery Store

Name of Property

Washington County, AR

County and State

Photo 5 of 10 - North and west façades looking southeast.

Photo 6 of 10 - West and south façades looking northeast.

Photo 7 of 10 - South façade looking north.

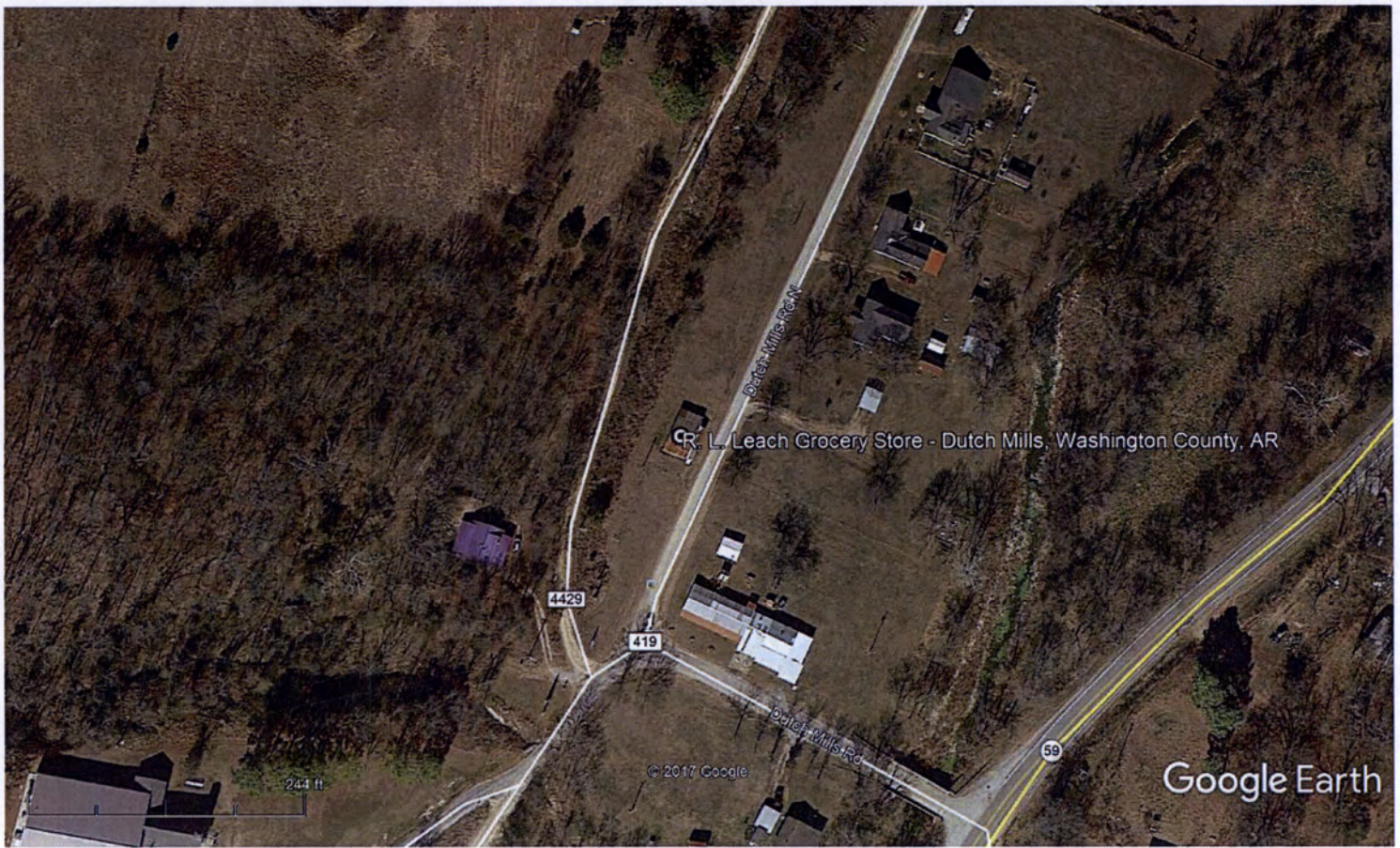
Photo 8 of 10 - South and east façades looking northwest.

Photo 9 of 10 - Interior of the south half of the store looking west.

Photo 10 of 10 - Interior of the north half of the store looking west.

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. 460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



|-----244 feet-----|

R. L. Leach Grocery Store

Dutch Mills, Washington County, Arkansas

UTM 15 365375E 3971252N



North



|-----2108 feet-----|

R. L. Leach Grocery Store

Dutch Mills, Washington County, Arkansas

UTM 15 365375E 3971252N



North



R.L. LEACH



Geo. W. Leach
Dutch Mills Ark.

















