

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service  
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property MEADOW RIVER LUMBER BUILDING

historic name: \_\_\_\_\_  
other name/site number: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number: State Fair of West Virginia Not for publication: N/A  
U.S. Route 219 South  
city/town: Fairlea vicinity: N/A  
state code: WV county: Greenbrier code: 025 zip code: 24902

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.)

William C. Kumar 10/1/97  
Signature of Certifying Official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau Date

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

Signature of Certifying Official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

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

Meadow River Lumber Building  
Name of Property

Greenbrier County, WV  
County and State

=====

**5. Classification**

=====

**Ownership of Property:**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

**Category of Property**

(Check only one box)

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

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing

Noncontributing

<u>1</u>		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	TOTAL

**Name of related multiple property listing**

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

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register** 0

=====

**6. Function or Use**

=====

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION & CULTURE:

MUSEUM - exhibition hall  
FAIR - state fair

RECREATION & CULTURE

MUSEUM - exhibition hall  
FAIR - state fair

=====

**7. Description**

=====

**Architectural Classification:**

(Enter categories from instructions)

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY

AMERICAN MOVEMENTS:

Bungalow/Craftsman

Foundation

Walls

Roof

Other

wire brick piers

wood siding, wooden  
shingles

asphalt shingles

**Narrative Description**

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

Meadow River Lumber Building  
Name of Property

Greenbrier County, WV  
County and State

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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.)

Property is:

- 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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE

ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**

1928

Meadow River Lumber Building  
Name of Property

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County and State

**Significant Dates**  
1928

**Significant Person**  
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)  
N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**  
N/A

**Architect/Builder**  
Meadow River Lumber Company

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

=====  
**9. Major Bibliographical References**  
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**Bibliography**  
(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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

- Primary location of additional data:**
- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other

Name of Repository: West Virginia State Fair  
Fairlea, WV

Meadow River Lumber Building  
Name of Property

Greenbrier County, WV  
County and State

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**10. Geographical Data**  
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**Acreage of Property:** Less than one acre

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

17      547330      4181050      Lewisburg Quad Map  
Zone      Easting      Northing

**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**  
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Name/Title: Marlene Ferguson, Assistant Manager of State Fair  
with Katherine Jourdan, National Register Coordinator  
Organization: WV SHPO      Date: 30 May 1997  
Street & Number: 1900 Kanawha Blvd East      Telephone: 304/558-0220  
City or Town: Charleston      State: WV Zip: 25305-0300

=====  
**Property Owner**  
=====

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

Name: State Fair of West Virginia  
Street & Number: P.O. Box 986      Telephone: 304/645-1090  
City or Town: Lewisburg      State: WV Zip: 24901  
=====

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National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Meadow River Lumber Building      Greenbrier County, WV  
Section number    7                      Page    2

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The Meadow River Lumber Company Building is located along a side lane of exhibit halls on the State Fairgrounds of West Virginia. This small one-room building has characteristics of the popular Bungalow style. It was constructed in 1928 as a showcase of the Meadow River Lumber Company's products.

The frame building is one story in height with a small center front gable rising from the roofline. The building sits on brick piers above an open crawl space. A center gable dormer breaks the front of the asphalt gable roof, and there are small rectangular vents in each gable end. The front facade has a full porch with four tapered wood posts and a wooden deck.

An early advertisement in a "Greenbrier Valley Fair" Premium booklet shows that the porch posts were once half their length and sat on brick supports. These brick supports once served as foundation piers for the front facade. At some point the house was rotated on its piers to face a side paved lane. It is suspected that the porch posts were changed at this time since the brick supports would have been broken by the move. The "x" railing may also have been removed at the same time.

The front elevation has a center single bay, or doorway, and side lights with beveled vertical lights popular in the Bungalow house styles of the time. The side elevations have paired 3/1 double-hung sash windows. The gable ends and the front dormer have wood shingles with alternating rows of flat and pointed shingles. Low brackets are under the eaves of the house. The rear has low horizontal three light windows which once flanked the chimney. The brick chimney was removed when the house was rotated, and the exterior wall of the house covered with siding.

The interior has one room with a wooden floor and plaster walls. Along the rear wall is a center brick fireplace and hearth with flanking bookcases, again a popular feature in the Bungalow housing styles of the 1920s. The mantel and glass fronted paired bookcases were constructed of oak trim pieces reflecting the variety of trims produced by Meadow River Lumber Company. The mantel has broken panels with a dentil trim under the mantel shelf. The room also has a oak cove moulding at the ceiling line, two dado strips which encircle the walls at chair height and below the wall light fixtures, and a beveled baseboard. The room is complemented with four original side wall lights.

Constructed as a fair display to demonstrate the product line of the Meadow River Lumber Company, the building has remained on the fairgrounds since it was erected in 1928. The building remains intact except for the changes necessitated by the building's rotation on its piers.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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The Meadow River Lumber Company of Rainelle constructed this small building as a sales showcase for their trims, moldings, and flooring for the Greenbrier Valley Fair in 1928. The building has remained a feature of the fairgrounds and is used for museum displays during the yearly state fair week. The architecture reflects the building materials produced by the lumber company, including popular features in the housing styles of the time. The building is significant under Criteria A for Commerce and Criteria C for Architecture.

**Meadow River Lumber Company**

The Meadow River Lumber Company ("MERILUCO") was founded in 1906 by two brothers, Thomas and John Raine in a valley at the foot of Sewell Mountain in Greenbrier County. The town of Rainelle developed near the site and took its name from the brothers. The two brothers pioneered the use of the band saw and in time the firm became the largest mill producing hardwood materials in the world, with three band saws operating under one roof. At its peak, the mill averaged about 20 million board feet per year and employed about 500 people.

Wood flooring was the major Meadow River product. However, the planing mill division made many types of wood trim, including stair treads and risers, baseboards, window frames, door jambs, and molding. Beginning in 1932, the mill produced millions of hardwood heels for women's shoes over a 30 year period, and at some point produced ship beams. Some of their most unusual products include chestnut coffins, special crates for glass, white ash frames for Packard cars, and maple for Ford car bodies.

Records show that Meadow River operated a successful furniture division until labor shortages during World War II forced it to close. The mill was documented by HABS/HAER before being demolished in 1975.

**Greenbrier Fair develops into State Fair**

The first record of a small fair in Lewisburg appeared in the form of a letter in 1858 from O.W. Kittinger of Alderson, WV. He wrote, "I saw there many fine horses, cattle, sheep an hogs confined in rail pens". This first Greenbrier County Fair was small and consisted only of one main building which housed products produced on local farms.

More than a decade passed before the next fair was held in Lewisburg in 1869, and another eight years until one was held in Alderson, in 1877. Fairs were held in 1892 and 1893 on the outskirts of the growing town of Lewisburg, on the road to the railroad boom town of Ronceverte. For the first time, the category of industry was added to agriculture during the "Greenbrier Industrial Exposition". The popularity of these fairs and various exhibitions led to the development of the Shorthorn Association show organized by the cattlemen of the Greenbrier Valley region. This exhibition was held in 1917 on the Watts Farm, located about a mile west of the present fairgrounds. After three successful shorthorn shows, a local group of public spirited men decided that an annual fair should be held in Greenbrier County between Ronceverte and Lewisburg.

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Section number 8

Greenbrier County, WV  
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On March 19, 1921, the Greenbrier Valley Fair was chartered. The original incorporators decided from the start that the fair would be a nonprofit organization, meaning all monies made by the corporation would go directly back into the fair for employment, improvements on the grounds, new exhibits each year, and other areas that required financial support. In 1941, the board appealed to the State Legislature to be recognized as the State Fair and realizing the unparalleled popularity of the event, the legislature passed an act proclaiming it the State Fair of West Virginia.

**Meadow River Lumber Company Building**

Constructed in 1928 by the Meadow River Lumber Company at the Greenbrier Valley Fair, this building now houses the State Fair museum. Originally the building was a sales "showcase" for Meadow River's most important products - trims, moldings, and flooring for houses. Meadow River was an important part of the fair and continued to exhibit through the 1930s. When first constructed, the house faced north and was located adjacent to its present site. Photo documentation shows that it was eventually moved to face east. The chimney was removed at that time as well as part of the porch fence and brickwork.

The architecture of the building is significant as an expression of the materials produced by the Meadow River Lumber Company. Erected by the company workmen, the building is comprised of lumber and trim produced by the firm. The building follows a simple house plan, including some of the features found in the Bungalow styles of the 1920s. This includes the exterior door with its vertical lights and side lights, and the center fireplace with flanking bookcases.

Used by the Meadow River Lumber Company for many years the building developed into a space appropriate for museum exhibits. Each year exhibits of artifacts interpreting the fair history are exhibited in display cases or in the building's bookcases. The building is also called the State Fair Museum.

**Summary**

The Meadow River Lumber Company Building supports the notion that fairs have and will continue to be a showcase of trade and commerce. Furthermore, it is a reminder of the tremendous impact that Meadow River Lumber Company once had on Greenbrier County's economy.



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**Bibliography**

Crookshanks, Ben, "Nothing but Hardwood, The Meadow River Lumber Company",  
GOLDENSEAL, Volume 17, Number 4, Winter 1991.

"PREMIUM LIST GREENBRIER VALLEY FAIR," archives of State Fair of West  
Virginia, August 1928.

"Historical Booklet Greenbrier County 160th Anniversary 1778-1938", pp 23,  
35.

Donnelly, Shirley, "Yesterday and Today" #395 "Cattle, Timber Built The  
Rainelle Area", BECKLEY POST, no date.

Rice, Otis K. A HISTORY OF GREENBRIER COUNTY. Lewisburg, WV: Greenbrier  
Historical Society, 1986.

Zembala, Dennis M., HABS-HAER REPORT AND DRAWINGS, 1974.

Interview by Marlene Ferguson, Assistant Manager State Fair of WV, with  
Mr. Ron Thompson, Rainelle, WV, April 8, 1997.

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**Boundary Description**

The property boundary includes the site of the building, and approximately  
five (5) feet around the perimeter of the foundation.

**Boundary Justification**

This is the only building on the fairgrounds associated with the Meadow  
River Lumber Company Building.

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Page 1

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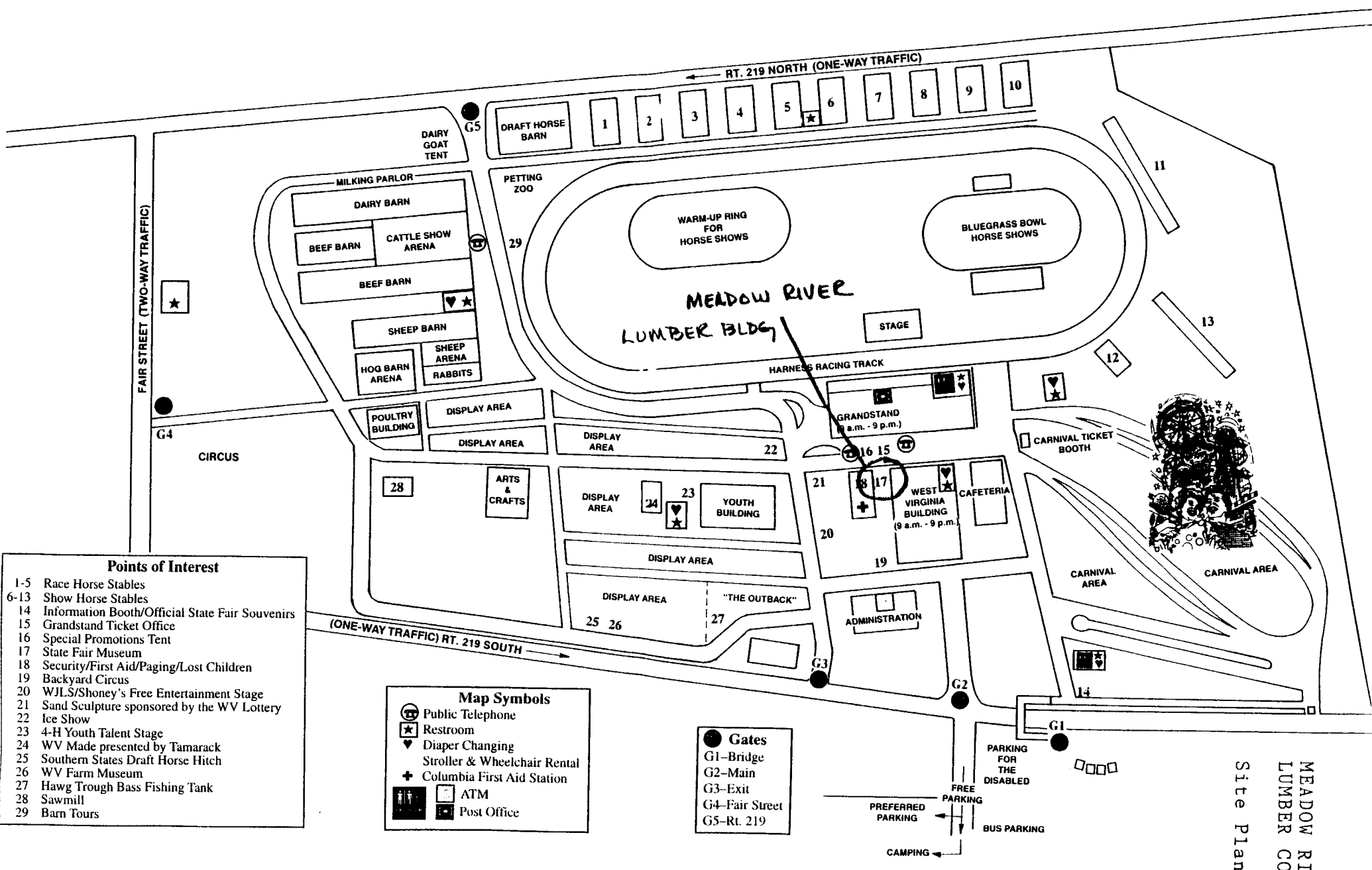
Name: Meadow River Lumber Company Building  
Address: State Fairgrounds of West Virginia  
City: Fairlea, WV  
County: Greenbrier County

Photographer: Katherine Jourdan

Date: April 24, 1997

Negatives: WV SHPO, Charleston, WV

- Photo 1 of 7: Front Facade, east side  
Camera looking west
- Photo 2 of 7: Building site on fairgrounds  
Camera looking southwest
- Photo 3 of 7: South Facade  
Camera looking northeast
- Photo 4 of 7: West Facade  
Camera looking east
- Photo 5 of 7: Interior view of fireplace  
Camera looking southwest
- Photo 6 of 7: Interior view of fireplace wall  
Camera looking northwest
- Photo 7 of 7: Interior view of doorway  
Camera looking east



**Points of Interest**

- 1-5 Race Horse Stables
- 6-13 Show Horse Stables
- 14 Information Booth/Official State Fair Souvenirs
- 15 Grandstand Ticket Office
- 16 Special Promotions Tent
- 17 State Fair Museum
- 18 Security/First Aid/Paging/Lost Children
- 19 Backyard Circus
- 20 WJLS/Shoney's Free Entertainment Stage
- 21 Sand Sculpture sponsored by the WV Lottery
- 22 Ice Show
- 23 4-H Youth Talent Stage
- 24 WV Made presented by Tamarack
- 25 Southern States Draft Horse Hitch
- 26 WV Farm Museum
- 27 Hawg Trough Bass Fishing Tank
- 28 Sawmill
- 29 Barn Tours

**Map Symbols**

- Public Telephone
- Restroom
- Diaper Changing
- Stroller & Wheelchair Rental
- Columbia First Aid Station
- ATM
- Post Office

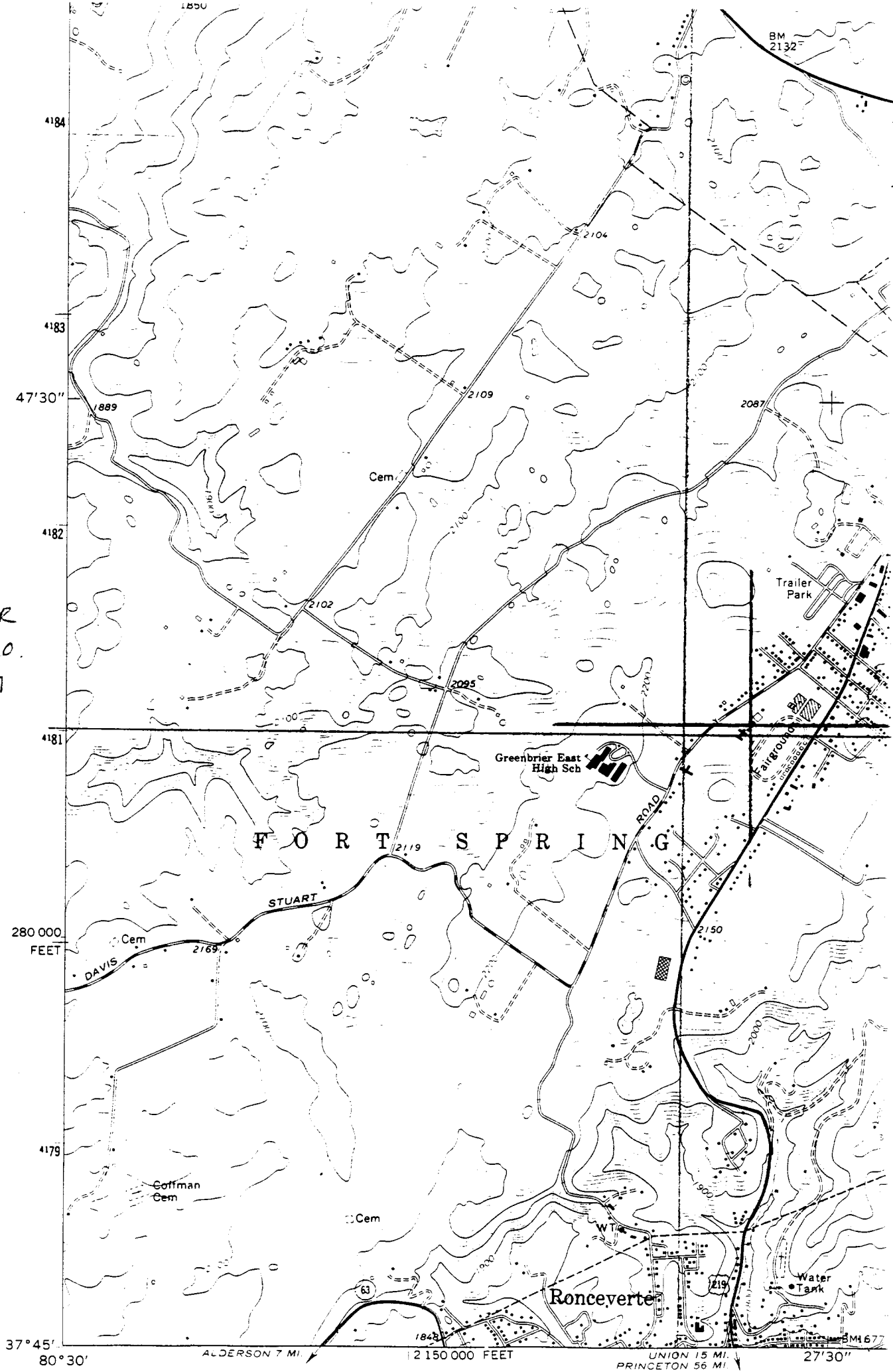
- Gates**
- G1-Bridge
- G2-Main
- G3-Exit
- G4-Fair Street
- G5-Rt. 219

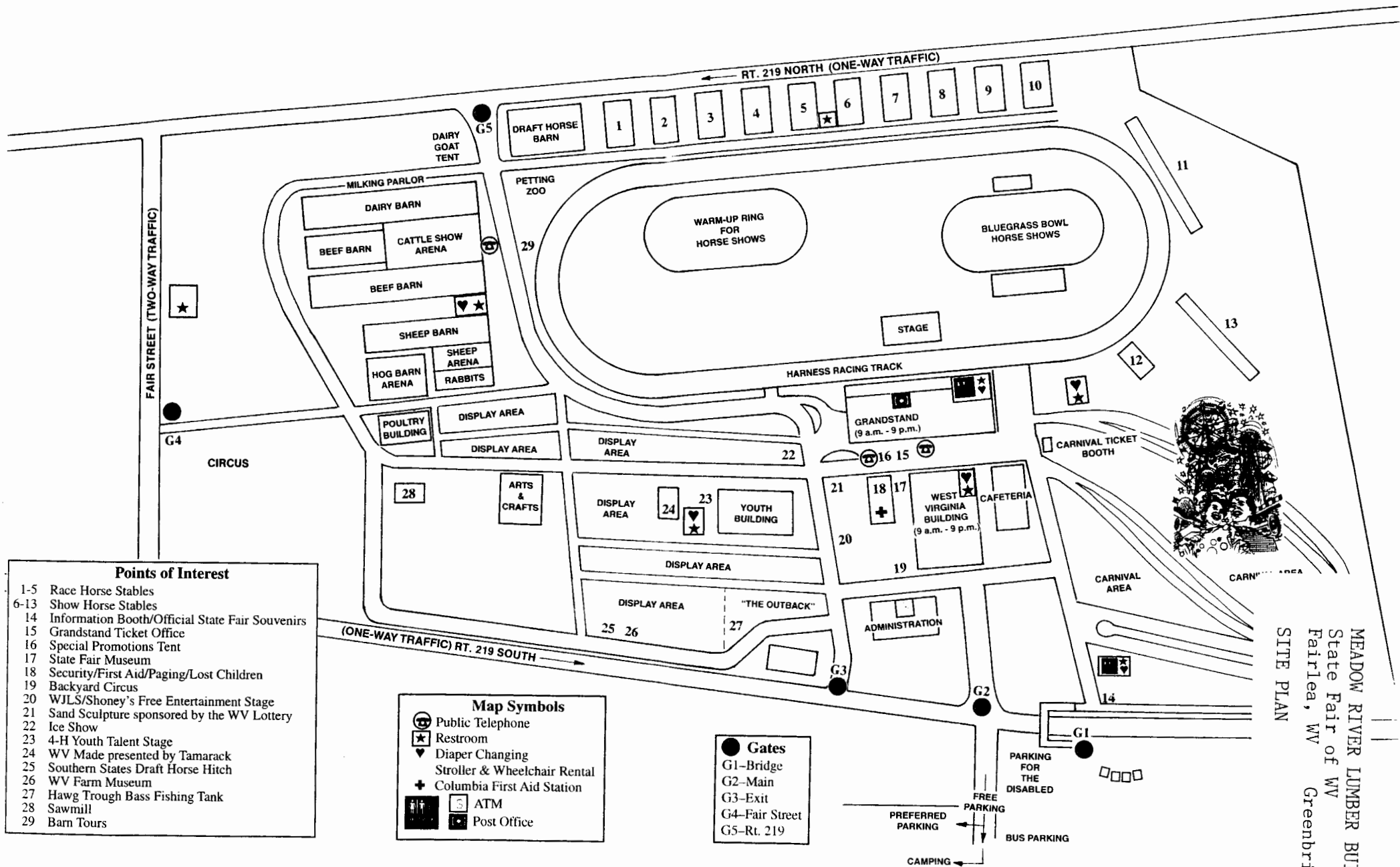
MEADOW RIVER  
 LUMBER CO. BLDG  
 Site Plan

MEADOW RIVER  
LUMBER CO.  
BUILDING

17 547330  
4191050

LEWISBURG,  
QUAD





**Points of Interest**

- 1-5 Race Horse Stables
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**Gates**

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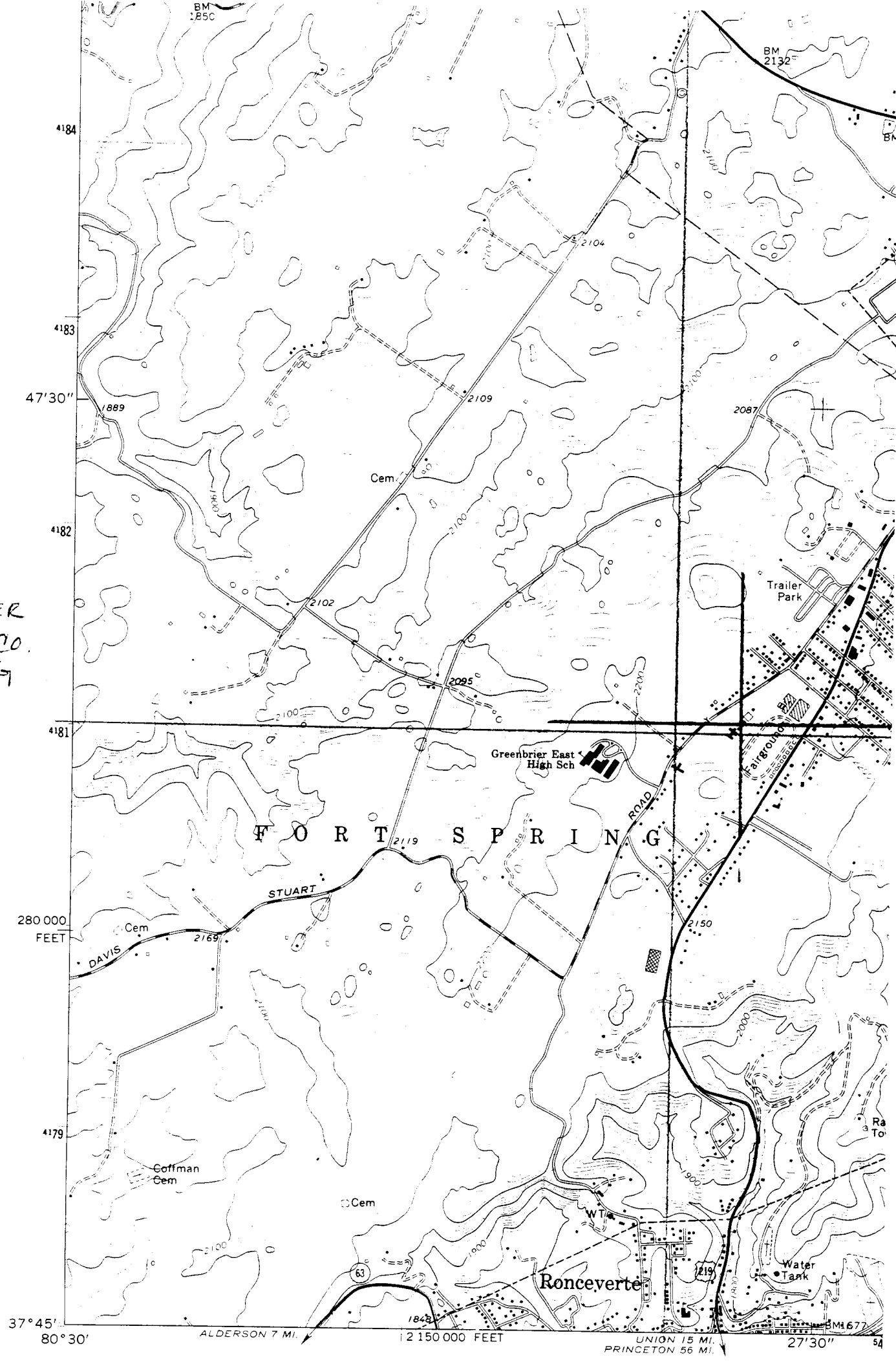


MEADOW RIVER LUMBER BUILDING  
 State Fair of WV  
 Fairlea, WV  
 Greenbrier Co.  
 SITE PLAN

MEADOW RIVER  
LUMBER CO.  
BUILDING

17 547330  
4181050

LEWISBURG  
QUAD



37° 45'  
80° 30'

ALDERSON 7 MI.

2 150 000 FEET

UNION 15 MI.  
PRINCETON 56 MI.

27' 30"



1911  
1912  
1913