

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED SEP 18 1979
DATE ENTERED NOV 8 1979

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Miller House

AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

647 East Dayton Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Madison

VICINITY OF

2nd

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Wisconsin 53703

CODE

55

COUNTY

Dane

CODE

025

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- MUSEUM
- COMMERCIAL
- PARK
- EDUCATIONAL
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- ENTERTAINMENT
- RELIGIOUS
- GOVERNMENT
- SCIENTIFIC
- INDUSTRIAL
- TRANSPORTATION
- MILITARY
- OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Lucile Miller

STREET & NUMBER

245 South Park Street

CITY, TOWN

Madison

VICINITY OF

STATE

Wisconsin 53715

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

City Assessor's Office, City-County Building

STREET & NUMBER

210 Monona Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Madison

STATE

Wisconsin 53709

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places

DATE

1979

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

State Historical Society of Wisconsin

CITY, TOWN

Madison

STATE

Wisconsin 53706

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

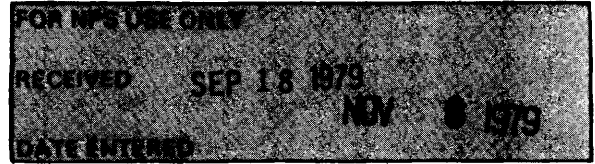
ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE 1908

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The building at 647 East Dayton Street is a two-story frame dwelling with an asbestos shingle siding added in the 1960's and early 1970's. When the main portion of the house was moved to the site in 1908, reportedly from North Pinckney Street, a wing was removed and added to the neighboring house at No. 643. The rear wing of the Miller House has the appearance of having been a detached house at one time, perhaps predating the front portion. Stud walls in the attic and rough hewn oak timbers in the basement suggest that the main portion of the house dates from the mid-nineteenth century, but that the structure above the second floor may be later. The existing front porch shelters a double Italianate Style door with carved embellishments framed by a Greek Revival door frame. Front parlor windows run from the floor to within a few inches of the ceiling. The interior of the house still retains a slender spindled stair rail, oak and wide plank pine floors and a pine Greek Revival fireplace mantel in the back wing of the house.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**



CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 6

PAGE 1

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS continued

Madison Landmarks

1978 x Local

Room 214, 210 Monona Avenue

Madison, Wisconsin

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) Black history, prominent person.
	<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES Moved to site - 1908. BUILDER/ARCHITECT Unknown.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The eligibility of the Miller House for the National Register is due, primarily, to its locally significant historical association with the William and Anna Mae Miller family, a prominent black middle class family long active in the improvement of the social conditions of black people. The earliest known of black-owned buildings in Madison, part of the building's significance is related to its use as a rooming house (1908-1919) under the Millers' ownership and prior to its use for their residence.¹ As a rooming house, the building housed new arrivals to Madison's black community, who emigrated from the south seeking greater freedoms and opportunities.

William Miller, who is credited as being the major influence in the growth of the East Dayton Street vicinity as a black neighborhood,² and his wife were two of several key figures in the social development of Madison's growing black community in the early decades of this century. Their educational backgrounds matched with their political commitment would have placed them among W. E. B. DuBois' "talented tenth" whose skills were called upon by other national Negro leaders to assist the "uplifting" of the race to its rightful place in the American social and economic scene. The Millers were early arrivals to Madison at a time when racial tensions and social unrest were aggravated by lynchings, and segregation and disenfranchisement legislation which precipitated a mass migration to the northern states. They, with their family, have worked toward the advancement of the black people through participation in the organization and development of local and national institutions, the improvement of housing opportunities in Madison and by lobbying against discriminatory policies and legislation.

Born in Richmond, Kentucky in 1872, William Miller received a liberal education from Berea College in Berea, Kentucky, after which he attended law school in Chicago. Berea College, at that time, was one of the few integrated colleges in the United States. In 1900 or 1901 while working at a summer job waiting tables at the Plankinton House in Milwaukee, he met Robert M. La Follette, Sr. who invited him to come to Madison to work as the messenger to the Governor. Miller accepted the appointment.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- "Capitol Times," April 17, 1920, p. 1.
- Interviews with Lucile Miller and Mae Mitchell, September and October 1978.
- Madison City Directory, 1917.
- Manuscript: I AM THE DARKER BROTHER, Barbara Schade, 1977.
- Minutes of the Book Lovers Club, Division of Archives and Manuscripts, the State Historical Society of Wisconsin.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

UTM NOT VERIFIED

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 0.05

QUADRANGLE NAME Madison West, Wisconsin

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24:000

UTM REFERENCES

A 16 306350 4772340

B

ZONE EASTING

NORTHING

ZONE

EASTING

NORTHING

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The property occupies the NE 1/2 of the NW 1/2 of Lot 8, Block 135, in the original plat of the City of Madison. Lot dimensions: 33' X 66'.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Gary Tipler

ORGANIZATION

Design Coalition, Inc.

DATE

March 30, 1979

STREET & NUMBER

2134 Atwood Avenue

TELEPHONE

608/241-2104

CITY OR TOWN

Madison

STATE

Wisconsin 53704

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL X

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Richard K. Henny

TITLE Director, State Historical Society of Wisconsin

DATE

5/4/79

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Tom Chadwick O'Skull

DATE

11-8-79

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST: *Anna Jane Saxe*

DATE

11-8-79

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

Regional Coordinator

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	SEP 18 1979
DATE ENTERED	NOV 8 1979

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

Miller's participation in the Madison Negro community and in the development of his neighborhood began shortly after he took up residency at John Turner's rooming house at 118 North Blount Street. In 1902, Miller, Turner and others organized the African Methodist Episcopal Church, acquired a building and moved it to 625 East Dayton Street, near Turner's house. The A.M.E. Church had often served in other communities as an advocate of Negro rights. In 1904, Miller and his bride, nee Anna Mae Stewart, bought a cottage at 645 East Dayton Street and a house at No. 643, although they soon moved into the latter. Miller, once described as "a quiet and unassuming man,"³ encouraged several friends and church members to buy lots and homes in the proximity of the church over the following years. Miller may have proclaimed the advantages of Negro ownership of neighborhood housing but he never exhorted a similar ownership clustering in the white neighborhoods in which he owned property. This was a point of disagreement with Anna Mae, who later regretted their location, in line with her belief for integrated housing.

Prior to the Miller's' arrival, the black population in Madison, numbering fewer than eighty people, was somewhat dispersed. Simultaneous with the growth of the East Dayton Street enclave, a more populous black neighborhood developed near the West Madison railroad depots in the east end of the Greenbush Addition, however, that neighborhood was obliterated by the "Triangle" redevelopment of the 1960's. A majority of the homes of these neighborhoods were moved from older parts of the city to the inexpensive marsh lands being filled in close proximity to the employment provided by the railroads and industries.

The Miller's' commitments to their children, to their political ideologies and, consequently, to staying in Madison were indicated, in 1905, by declining La Follette's offer for them to accompany the senator-elect to Washington, D.C. where the schools were segregated.⁴

William Miller's active involvement in local and national affairs testifies to his commitment to the improvement of the Negro situation. He became a member of the Niagara Movement (1905-1908), participated in the development of the NAACP by serving as the Wisconsin contact, and was a financial backer of the forerunner of the CRISIS, the NAACP publication. His admiration for the outspoken leader of the Negro intelligentsia, writer, and CRISIS editor

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	SEP 18 1979
DATE ENTERED	NOV 8 1979

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

W. E. B. DuBois led him to name a son in honor of him and to have him as a guest in his home upon several occasions.⁵ A leader in the St. Paul A. M. E. Church, Miller served as a trustee and steward since its founding. He was also a member of the Capital City Lodge No. 2 of the Prince Hall Free and Accepted Masons, and was serving his nineteenth year as the messenger to the governor at the time of his death in April, 1920. His commitment to his political ideals is well illustrated by an incident shortly before his death which followed a long illness... "on election day, too weak to go to the polls, he insisted on being carried from his bed to the polls in order that he might vote for the La Follette delegates."⁶ His funeral was attended by Senator La Follette who came from Washington for the occasion.⁷

Anna Mae Miller received an education and experience which prepared her for the social reform activities which she pursued, for the most part, in organizations in which she often served as an organizer and an officer. Born in Stanford, Kentucky in 1877, she attended Knoxville College and the Kentucky State Normal in Frankfort and taught at the Kentucky State Reformatory.⁸ She met William Miller at his college graduation ceremony, although it was not until 1903, after three years of engagement, that they were married.

Mrs. Miller played a major role in the education of the six Miller children. In communicating to them her social and political beliefs and values regarding racial equality, educational achievement and social etiquette, she displayed a disdain for the values frequently held by lower class Negroes and white supremists. This was evidenced by her reluctance to enroll her children in the public schools though they did attend Lincoln School which served many families at the upper end of the income scale. The Millers spent their summers at a cottage near the intersection of old Sun Prairie Road (East Washington Avenue) and Fair Oaks Avenue in order to avoid the questionable education that the children might receive on the streets during the summer. Although her children were young at the time of the death of their father, Anna Mae managed to raise her family while working as a cook for sororities and fraternities. (It must be remembered that blacks were not allowed to teach in Madison until only a few years before "Black Liberation" became a national call.)

Anna Mae Miller's commitments beyond those of her family involved a

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	SEP 18 1979
DATE ENTERED	NOV 8 1979

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 3

dedication to community groups and social causes. In the fall of 1909, she organized the Book Lovers Club, a literary society, fully ten years before the Harlem Renaissance began to foster a widespread awareness and appreciation of the Negro contribution to the arts. Through participation in recitations of poetry and song, the presentation of essays and the discussion of political writings and current topics, the club intended to engender awareness of the accomplishments of the Negro in American society and encourage self-betterment.⁹ By the following summer the club stopped meeting due to the departure of key members.¹⁰ The club included among its educated membership Mr. Jarius Anthony Josey who, in 1917, rose to prominence as the founder and editor of Wisconsin's first black newspaper, the Wisconsin Weekly Blade.

Mrs. Miller was involved in other organizations as well. In about 1910, she was a charter member of the local chapter No. 66 of the Order of the Eastern Star, for a black membership then affiliated with the Illinois lodge.¹¹ She was a member of the Madison Council of United Church Women and of the Minnie Brown Missionary Society for which she had served as president.¹² She also became a founding member and long-time treasurer of the Madison chapter of the NAACP, in 1943, and remained active in the A.M.E. Church and in racial advancement causes until her death in February, 1963.¹³

Lucile, the Millers' first child, born in 1904, also became active in local matters. After leaving high school in 1924, she began working as a clerk in stores and gardening to earn a living while continuing her education through night classes at the University and the Adult Vocational School. Around 1930, she initiated discussion with Zoe Bayliss, Assistant to the Dean of Women, concerning the closed housing policy of the University of Wisconsin. A meeting with other representatives of the Negro community ensued and within a year the dormitories were opened to Negro students.¹⁴ In 1942, she and friend Demetra Shivers formed the Madison Negro Civic League to campaign against the segregation of the USO at the Truax Air Force Base. Their efforts led to the re-organization, in 1943, of the local chapter of the NAACP.¹⁵ Lucile Miller, a pacifist and progressive, also served as the Second Ward Precinct Committeeman for the renewed Democratic Party in the late 1940's, worked on the Monona Terrace Committee in the late 1950's and early 1960's, served on the NAACP Housing Committee and participated with her mother in supporting State fair housing legislation in the early 1960's.¹⁶

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	SEP 18 1979
DATE ENTERED	NOV 8 1979

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 4

Lucile Miller lived in the house at 647 East Dayton Street from the time that her family first occupied it in the fall of 1919 until December, 1978, the third of the Miller residences on the block and the only one extant.

FOOTNOTES

1. Based on research of all known Negro property holders listed in the 1905 census and the 1917 City Directory.
2. From a conversation with Lucile Miller, January 6, 1979.
3. Capital Times, April 17, 1920, p.1.
4. From a conversation with Lucile Miller, February 3, 1979.
5. Manuscript: I AM THE DARKER BROTHER, Barbara Shade, 1977.
6. Capital Times, April 17, 1920, p.1.
7. From a conversation with Lucile Miller, January 6, 1979.
8. " " " " " " , February 3, 1979.
9. Minutes of the Book Lovers Club, Division of Archives and Manuscripts, the State Historical Society of Wisconsin.
10. From a conversation with Lucile Miller, February 3, 1979.
11. " " " " Mrs. Baylus (Mamie) Owens, December 14, 1979.
12. " " " " Lucile Miller, February 15, 1979.
13. " " " " " " , November 25, 1978.
14. " " " " " " , February 3, 1979.
15. " " " " " " , October 18, 1978.
16. Ibid.
The NAACP Housing Committee in 1959 published NEGRO HOUSING IN MADISON a report which bared discrimination and outlined housing needs and desires of residents.