

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received SEP 30 1988  
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Miller Farmstead

and/or common

2. Location

street & number Route 57 NA not for publication

city, town Mansfield Township/  
Lebanon Township — vicinity of

state New Jersey code 034 county Warren/Hunterdon code 041/019

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	NA	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name See continuation sheet.

street & number

city, town — vicinity of state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Warren County Court House

street & number Second Street

city, town Belvidere state New Jersey 07823

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Mansfield Township Historic Sites Survey/  
title HAER Sussex & Warren County Survey has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1981/1979  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Office of New Jersey Heritage, CN 404,

city, town Trenton state New Jersey 08625

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Miller Farmstead is a mostly 19th-century assemblage overlooking the Musconetcong River just north of Penwell at the intersection of Route 57 and Watters Road. It is linearly arranged along the edge of the river's narrow flood plain at the mouth of a small creek which cuts a deep ravine in the slaty/shale valley uplands rising to the northwest. The well-maintained complex consists of a house, tenant house, out kitchen/wash house, overshot bank barn, wagon house, and several other small structures, all of which contribute to the significance of the property. Except for the stone main block of the tenant house, the buildings are of frame construction. At the east end of the complex is an overgrown, stone-walled family graveyard. A triple-arched 19th-century stone bridge carries a continuation of Watters Road (Old Turnpike Road) over the river, and a poured concrete underpass, built in 1924, allows livestock to cross Route 57 to the pasture along the river. A similar bridge carries the highway over the creek.

#### House, exterior:

Facing southeast, the house is an L-shaped clapboard-clad gable-roofed structure whose simple detailing incorporates Greek Revival references. It consists of a 5-bay 2-story main block with single-pile center-hall plan and gable-end chimneys and a 1 1/2-story 1-room-plan rear wing with gable-end chimney. While physical evidence (nails, moldings, etc.) largely suggests that both sections were built c. 1830-50 and probably at the same time, some fabric present is more characteristic of an earlier period. These elements --principally hardware and woodwork found in several places-- may be recycled material, may be indicative of local building conservatism, or may be an indication that the house is earlier in whole or in part, perhaps dating to c. 1800, and was extensively remodeled in the second quarter of the 19th century. The house also exhibits some late 19th- and early 20th-century alterations in eclectic Victorian and craftsman modes.

Early exterior features include rubble-stone foundations, much of the siding, most of the doors and windows, the shed-roofed porch with pantry on the northeast side of the wing, the main block's box cornices, and the wing's exposed chimney back and bake oven. The flat-roofed porch on the southwest side of the wing dates to the late 19th century; the front porch is a replacement of c. 1915-30. The stick-bracketed raking eaves and slate roofs of the main block and wing are probably early 20-century installations, as are the enclosure of the shed-roofed rear porch, some of the siding, several window sashes, and perhaps the brick chimney stacks.

# 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input 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 checked="" 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)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates c. 1830-1924 Builder/Architect Unknown

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Picturesquely sited along the Musconetcong River, the Miller Farmstead is an important surviving element of Mansfield Township's rural heritage and possesses local historical significance in the areas of agriculture, architecture, archaeology, and transportation. Comprising one of the Township's largest and best-preserved farmsteads, the assemblage is a valuable document of the region's late 18th- and 19th-century domestic architecture and farm culture. The site itself, particularly in the environs of the house, out kitchen, and tenant house, has the potential to yield important archaeological information about the region's material culture in that era. Throughout the period the farmstead was owned by the Miller family, members of whom were substantial landowners and farmers and among the township's more prosperous and prominent citizens. The site also has some significance in local transportation history. Located at a river crossing on one of northwestern New Jersey's major east/west routes, the farmstead served as a tavern for travelers passing through the sparsely settled section before and perhaps after 1800. The triple-arched stone bridge at the river crossing, built in 1860 by a member of the Miller family, is an excellent example of traditional masonry construction and one of the few such bridges in the region whose construction date and builders can be documented.

The farmstead's principal buildings range in date from as early as the late 18th century until the late 1800s, and in their siting, form, construction, and detailing are representative of northwestern New Jersey's vernacular building practices during that period. The southern orientation of the buildings, their linear arrangement, and their protected location near a source of water are common characteristics of area farmsteads. Of traditional braced-frame and masonry construction, they include wood examples of a number of building types common to the region. Both the tenant house and out kitchen are representative of the small house type known as the "British cabin," as is the main block of the house of the single-pile version of the Georgian center-hall house. The overshot bank barn with its ells and the wagon house with its gable-end entries are also quite typical of the area. The buildings retain much notable early fabric and many distinctive features. Elements that should be singled out for individual mention include the embanked storage cellar attached to the tenant house, the plastered and wainscoted porch walls of the main house and out kitchen, the large hand-wrought Suffolk latches (particularly the rare club-cusp latch) of both these buildings, the out kitchen's ovolo-muntined window sashes, the "bed-curtain" staples in the ceiling of the main bedroom, and the angle in the barn's lateral wing.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheets.

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 108

Quadrangle name Washington

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UTM References

A 

1	8	5	0	8	8	8	0	4	5	1	5	7	4	0
Zone	Easting			Northing										

B 

1	8	5	0	9	2	0	0	4	5	1	5	1	2	0
Zone	Easting			Northing										

C 

1	8	5	0	9	4	2	0	4	5	1	5	2	4	0
Zone	Easting			Northing										

D 

1	8	5	0	9	4	8	0	4	5	1	5	1	4	0
Zone	Easting			Northing										

E 

1	8	5	0	8	7	8	0	4	5	1	4	4	8	0
Zone	Easting			Northing										

F 

1	8	5	0	8	4	2	0	4	5	1	5	1	0	0
Zone	Easting			Northing										

G 

Zone	Easting			Northing										

H 

Zone	Easting			Northing										

### Verbal boundary description and justification

See continuation sheet.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state New Jersey code 034 county Warren code 041

state New Jersey code 034 county Hunterdon code 019

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Dennis N. Bertland

organization Bertland Associates

date October 1987

street & number P.O. Box 11

telephone (201) 689-6356

city or town Port Murray

state New Jersey 07865

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

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.

Deputy

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Shirley J. Seneker

title Assistant Commissioner for Natural & Historic Resources date September 28, 1988

### For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Patrick W. Andrews  
for Keeper of the National Register

date 9/11/89

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Mansfield Township, Block 1401, lot 3.01, Block 1402, lot 24, and  
Block 1401, lot 9.01 are owned by:

Miss Bertha E. Fritts  
Route 1, Box 267  
Port Murray, New Jersey 07865

Mansfield Township, Block 1401, lot 3.02 and the Route 57 under-  
pass and bridge are owned by:

The State of New Jersey  
Department of Transportation  
CN 600  
1035 Parkway Avenue  
Trenton, New Jersey 08625

Mansfield Township, Block 1404, lot 9.02 is owned by:

Mr. Samuel DeGroot  
RD #2, Box 264A  
Port Murray, New Jersey 07865

The Old Turnpike Road bridge over the Musconetcong River is  
owned jointly by:

The County of Warren  
Administration Building  
Belvidere, New Jersey 07823 and

The County of Hunterdon  
Administration Building  
Flemington, New Jersey 08822

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The main block exhibits a regular fenestration on each elevation, composed for the most part of 6/6 sash windows. The first-floor windows on the front and the 2-bay west gable end are 1/1 sash replacements. Both gables have 4-light attic windows; the east gable end is otherwise blank. There is a central entry on both the front and rear. Partially above grade and hidden by the present porch, the foundation wall in front is pierced by an entry, now reached by a hatchway at the east end of the porch, and three 9-light windows. The porch itself has recently been glazed with metal-framed storm windows.

The southwest side of the wing has a regular 2-over-3-bay fenestration with two 3-light eyebrow windows on the upper story and 6/6 sash windows below flanking a slightly off-center entry. The gable-end wall has only two 4-light attic windows. The northeast side of the wing lacks eyebrow windows, but also has an off-center entry and a window to the left which retains its 6-pane upper sash but whose lower half has been blocked up. These openings are concealed by the porch enclosure which has an entry flanked by 2/2 sash windows. The pantry at the northwest end of the porch was originally lighted only by a 4-pane window opening onto the porch; a small modern window in one outside wall replaces a louvered opening which ventilated the pantry.

All of the early windows have architrave trim, and most retain louvered shutters, hung on small butt hinges, that appear to be of mid-to-late 19th-century date. Nearly all of the window trim has a Grecian ovolo outer molding typical of the second quarter of the 19th century. The trim of the first-story front windows and of the original pantry window, however, has an ovolo/cavetto outer molding, identical to molding used for some of the interior woodwork in both parts of the house, whose profile is more typical of Federal and Georgian style work.

The front entry also reveals Greek Revival design influences. It has a door with two vertical recessed panels edged with Grecian ovolo moldings, sidelights, corner lights, and a transom whose glass is stencil-decorated with a lattice design that may be an early treatment. The door is hung on butt hinges; its latch is a 20th-century replacement. The entry's wide trim is plain except for simple moldings at the bottom which suggest pilaster bases. The main block's rear entry, opening onto the wing's enclosed porch, has a similar 2-panel door which retains its original iron rim lock with C-scroll lift latch and key. Its architrave trim has the ovolo/cavetto outer molding. The wing's two entries have quirk-beaded trim and batten Dutch doors with early iron hardware. They are hung on spike pintle-mounted strap hinges, one pair of which has penny finials. Both

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doors also have large Suffolk latches, one with spade cusps and the other with rare club cusps, that are typical of 18th- and early 19th-century work.

The porch extending across the front of the main block is vaguely Craftsman-style in design and probably dates to c. 1915-30. Its shed roof, clipped at both ends, is supported by tapered square posts with molded capitals and bases that are carried on pedestals of ashlar stone. The closed railings between the pedestals are clapboarded. The first-story wall behind the porch is plastered above a wainscot of quirk-beaded horizontal boards, indicating that the main block had an earlier full-width front porch. The flat-roofed 2-bay porch on the southwest side of the wing exhibits Victorian embellishment typical of the late 19th century. It has a box cornice supported by brackets with a bulls eye motif and turned posts with square bases and capitals. The shed-roofed porch on the northeast side of the wing appears to be an early element. It originally was open except for the pantry at the north end, and behind the present early 20th-century enclosure the walls of both the pantry and the wing are plastered above a horizontal-board wainscot.

On its front and rear elevations the main block features heavy box cornices with large Grecian-ovolo corona moldings, smaller bed moldings, and mitered ends. The roof eaves on the gables originally were flush and retain quirk-beaded raking boards under the later overhangs. The wing also appears originally to have had flush eaves. The detailing of the stick-bracketed overhangs added to the raking eaves of both sections resembles Craftsman-style work of the early 20th century.

All three chimneys are of stone construction, and have brick stacks with corbelled watertables and drip caps. The wing's chimney has a wide exposed back from whose west end protrudes a stuccoed bake oven supported by a corbelled base. This chimney's tall stack probably was rebuilt and heightened. The main block chimneys rise from solid stone bases; their brick stacks appear to have been rebuilt at least in part.

## House, construction and interior:

The main block is of traditional braced-frame construction, and both hewn and saw-cut timber was used for the framing members. Only in the cellar and attic, however, is the frame exposed to view. The first floor is framed with hewn joists running front-to-back, except under the center hall where there are smaller, vertically sawn joists running perpendicularly to them. These members are supported about midway by a large, hewn summer beam which runs east/west from chimney base to chimney base. The roof of the main block is framed with

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vertically sawn common rafters, lap-jointed and pegged at the peak. They rest on saw-cut plates which are supported by small outlookers above large, hewn wall plates. Stuccoed nogging (probably brick) in the rear wall can be seen on the attic staircase landing. The thick boards used to sheath the staircase and for the attic floor are attached with machine-cut nails.

The wing undoubtedly is also of braced-frame construction, although since it has an inaccessible crawl space and finished attic, its frame is not readily visible. The wall between the wing and the main block is only 5 inches thick, and apparently is integral to the main block, indicating that the wing was an addition, if both sections were not erected at the same time.

The interior of the house exhibits few modern alterations besides the installation of heating, electrical, and plumbing systems and fittings. Among the early features are random-width flooring, plaster walls and ceilings, four fireplaces and mantels, paneled and batten doors with original hardware, and molded door and window trim and baseboards. Among the noticeable alterations are the installation of an acoustical-tile ceiling in the sitting room, linoleum in the kitchen, bathrooms, and one bedroom, and closets in the two east bedrooms.

The main block has a full-depth central hall flanked by rooms of equal size on each side, the "parlor" on the east and the "sitting room" on the west. In the hallway an open U-shaped staircase rises in two runs of unequal size, broken by a landing, to a small central hall on the second story. The upper hall provides access to four rooms --one bedroom over the sitting room, two smaller chambers over the parlor, and a very small room at the front of the hallway which has been converted into a bathroom-- as well as to the enclosed attic staircase. There are fireplaces in the two first-floor rooms and the large bedroom above. The east front chamber appears to have been heated at one time by a stove vented into the chimney.

Much of the main block's decorative wooden trim is typical of the second quarter of the 19th century and reveals Greek Revival influences. The wide door surrounds of the lower hallway, for example, have plain pilaster-like elements and corner blocks with a Grecian ovolo molding. Grecian ovolo moldings were also used for the parlor's woodwork which includes symmetrically molded door and window trim with corner blocks, recessed panels under the windows, baseboards, and the fireplace mantel. The mantel consists of a surround matching the door and window trim, a wide frieze with two recessed panels, and a robustly molded cornice. The sitting room fireplace has an identical mantel. Both fireplaces have plastered splayed jambs and brick hearths; the parlor fireplace may have



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been reworked, possible for the installation of a damper, as its mantel has been removed and reinstalled several inches above the original location.

Except for the batten door on the attic staircase, the doors throughout the main block are paneled. They have three horizontal panels above two vertical panels, recessed with a molded edge on one side and slightly raised on the other. The recessed panels match those of the parlor and sitting room mantels. The doors are hung on butt hinges and retain iron rim locks with C-scroll lift latches that are typical of the second quarter of the 19th century. The woodwork in both the upper and lower halls is stained, and on the doors, hung with their recessed panels facing the hall, the fields of the panels are grain painted. Except for its square spindles which are painted, the staircase also is stained; it has an open stringboard, slender turned newel posts with "muffin" caps, and a round railing.

In the sitting room, principal bedroom, and east rear chamber the architrave door and window trim has the same ovolo/cavetto outer molding found on the exterior first-story front windows; the molding was again used for the surround of the principal bedroom's simple "Georgian" mantelpiece which also has a plain frieze with center and end blocks and a molded cornice much more delicately profiled, than those of the two mantels below. The fireplace opening itself is quite small relative to the size of the mantel, and is not centered on the chimney breast, presumably to allow for the flue of the sitting room fireplace. The east front and hall chambers have ovolo-molded architrave door and window trim which is certainly more typical of the 18th century and early 1800s than of the 1830s. These rooms have quirk-beaded baseboards and, except in the sitting room, quirk-beaded peg boards. A more unusual feature of the principal bedroom is the ceiling staples. Marking the corners of a rectangle close to the wall on either side of the hall door, they probably were used for hanging bed curtains.

The rear wing has one first-floor room, the kitchen, from which an enclosed newel-turned staircase to the east of the large cooking fireplace provides access to three small chambers above. In the kitchen a door adjoining the staircase leads to the pantry which has been converted into a bathroom; another door on the south wall provides access to the cellar stairs which descend under the front staircase. The kitchen's wide fireplace has stone jambs, a lintel of brick headers supported by an iron bar, and a molded cornice shelf which extends westward above the opening to the adjoining bakeoven to a small batten-doored chimney-breast cupboard. The closet and enclosed staircase to the east have batten doors with butt hinges, Suffolk latches, and quirk-beaded trim. Other features include architrave door and window trim with the ovolo/ cavetto outer

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molding found elsewhere in the house, horizontal-board wainscoting on the east and west walls, and batten doors with butt hinges and Suffolk latches at the pantry and cellar entries.

The detailing of the wing's three garret chambers is quite simple and probably dates to the mid-19th century. It includes quirk-beaded door and window trim, quirk-beaded baseboards, and batten doors with butt hinges and cast-iron lift latches of mid-to-late 19th-century date.

## Site and Outbuildings:

The Miller House stands close to the intersection of Route 57 and Watters Road. It is surrounded by grassy yards planted with a variety of trees and shrubs. Except on the east, the yards are of moderate size. The front of the house is obscured by overgrown foundation plantings and small trees. A retaining wall encloses the small rear and west yards and extends eastward about 75 feet along the lane leading to the barns to the corner of the machine shop which stands at the end of the east yard. At least in part of stone construction and dating to the 19th-century, the wall appears to have been extensively rebuilt in poured cement sometime in the early 20th century. The area behind the house framed by the main block and wing is paved by a large pour-cement slab which covers a cistern.

The machine shop is a 1 1/2-story gable-roofed structure, evidently dating to the third quarter of the 19th century, with a later potting shed appendage on the southeast side. It has over-hanging eaves, clapboard and novelty siding, multi-pane sash windows and batten doors. Both hewn and saw-cut timber was used for the main block's braced frame. Near the machine shed at the end of the east yard is a frame, gable-roofed privy with clapboard siding and batten-doored entry. Probably dating to the 19th century, it is of braced-frame construction and has two seats.

Across Watters Road from the house is a range of three outbuildings which are roughly in line with the house and face southeast. The out kitchen/wash house, the first of the three, is a cellarless, 1 1/2-story, gable-roofed structure with one room below a garret chamber that probably dates to the late 18th or early 19th century. It has clapboard siding, flush eaves, a gable-end chimney with exposed stone back and brick stack, an integral front porch whose west half is enclosed as a storeroom, and a shed-roofed rear appendage. The latter, which covers a deep poured-cement pit, was used as an ice house and evidently dates to the early 20th century.

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The out kitchen is framed mostly with hewn timber, and its walls are nogged with mud and straw packed on hand-split slats. The garret floor joists, hand-planed and bevel-edged, project beyond the front wall to support the front porch's shed roof. The porch wall is stuccoed above a wainscoting of horizontal quirk-beaded boards. The front entry has architrave trim with an ovolo outer molding and a batten dutch door with strap hinges and rim lock like those in the house. The front window, hidden by the later storeroom, has matching trim and 6/6 sashes with wide ovolo-molded muntins of typically 18th-century profile; a similar window in the rear wall is concealed by the ice house.

The interior of the out kitchen remains quite unaltered. Early features include random-width flooring, plaster walls, architrave door and window trim with ovolo outer molding like that in east front and hall chambers of the house, and quirk-beaded baseboards. The large fireplace has stone jambs, brick stringer lintel, and molded cornice shelf; the brick-outlined opening of a removed bake oven remains in its rear wall. The closet and enclosed newel-turn staircase adjoining the fireplace have batten doors, one of which retains an early Suffolk latch. In the garret a small enclosure abutting the chimney may have been a chamber for smoking meat.

Perhaps 30 feet west of the out kitchen stands a hip-roofed 1-bay garage that probably was built in the 1920s or 1930s. It has kicked overhanging eaves, clapboard siding, 2/2 sash windows, and batten doors. Between the out kitchen and the garage is a well cast-iron pump. Just across the creek from the garage is the tenant house, whose original portion is a 1 1/2-story single-pile-plan gable-roofed structure of coursed rubble stone construction with hewn floor joists and roof rafters. It probably was built in the first third of the 19th century. The 2-over-4-bay front has paired recessed entrys with quirk-beaded outer trim, board-lined reveals, and batten doors, of which the wider one to the east is a Dutch door hung on strap hinges; both doors have rim locks with C-scroll lift latches. The flanking windows have pegged timber frames. Above are 3-light eyebrow windows; below and on the rear are 2/2 sash replacements. At the west end of the shed-roofed front porch, whose turned posts are Victorian, another batten door leads to a stone gable-roofed storeroom or root cellar that is partially below grade due to the rising ground.

The cellarless tenant house has two first-floor rooms and two garret chambers. The east chimney provides a timber-linteled fireplace on the first floor, to one side of which is a closet and enclosed newel-turned staircase; the smaller west chimney served a wood stove and may have been added later. Among

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the early features are random-width flooring, plaster walls and ceilings, quirk-beaded door and window trim, and batten doors.

At the east end of the tenant house is a frame addition whose exterior detailing suggests a construction date of c. 1915-35. It is 1 1/2-story gable-roofed structure with a narrow, double-pile plan, and has clapboard siding, overhanging eaves, and 3/1 sash windows. The central front entry has a glass and panel door and is sheltered by a 1-bay gable-roofed porch with Tuscan columns.

The barn complex is located to the east of the house. Its principal building is a 3-bay overshot bank barn with a coursed rubble stone stable level, a large ell at the east corner, and a narrow, angled wing projecting from the southwest gable end. The main block of the barn appears to date to the third quarter of the 19th century, and the wings probably were built shortly thereafter and certainly before 1900. Both hewn and saw cut timber was used in the construction of the main block's braced frame, and the principal members are of moderate size. The wings, also of braced-frame construction, are built entirely of saw cut timber, most of which evidences circular saw marks.

Exterior features of the barn, most of which are early fabric, include clapboard siding, overhanging eaves, 6/6 sash windows with plain trim, louvered windows whose plain trim is cut to give the openings segmentally arched heads, and batten doors which either slide or are hung on strap hinges. The forebay is supported by square posts, behind which the stable wall is pieced by several batten Dutch doors hung on strap hinges. An angled, cantilevered passage connects the main floor of the barn to the east ell, and the ell's north gable has a hoist overhang directly below which are double doors through which the hay loft was filled. A notable feature of the interior is the survival of the original stall partitions, mangers, and feed bins.

The barn yard is enclosed on two sides by a low stone wall with cement capping. Adjoining the fenced southwestern side stand a small, gable-roofed well house of rusticated cement block construction that was built c. 1910-30 and long, frame, gable-roofed corn crib with angled side walls that probably dates to the late 19th or early 20th century. The barn complex includes two other buildings which are located on either side of the lane leading to Watters Road. The braced-frame wagon house is a 1 1/2-story gable-roofed structure with gable-end entries and a shed appendage on its southeast side. Probably contemporary with the main block of the barn, it has clapboard siding, overhanging eaves, and batten sliding doors. Across the lane from the wagon house is a 1-story

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shed-roofed 3-bay chicken coop with poured cement foundation, novelty siding, and 6/6 sash windows. It is of early 20th-century date.

About 100 yards northeast of the barn is the Miller family graveyard. It is a small, square, overgrown plot, shaded by one large tree and enclosed by a low stone wall. Until they were stolen some years ago three stones survived; their inscriptions, which were transcribed in 1927, indicate that they were erected in the 1840s. Two other structures are associated with the farmstead assemblage. Roughly in line with the gateway that pierces the barnyard wall is an underpass which allows livestock to cross Route 57 to the pasture along the river. Of poured cement construction with steel-beam road deck, it undoubtedly was built during the construction of old State Route 12 in 1924 which followed a new alignment northeastward along the river. An identical bridge carries the highway over the creek which flows between the tenant house and the garage on the west side of the farmstead. Its parapet walls are inscribed with the name "State Route 12" and the date "1924." Before 1924 traffic coming up the valley turned east at the T-intersection in front of the Miller homestead and crossed the river to follow Old Turnpike Road which runs along the east side of the river. The stone bridge which carries the road over the river was built in 1860 by J.C. Miller and J.A. Skinner, according to the inscription on a marble plaque set in on one of the sidewalls. The triple-arched bridge, whose overall length is about 200 feet, has elliptical barrel vaults that are faced on their outside edges with cut-stone voussoirs. On both sides the piers are braced with small angled buttresses and are reinforced by iron tie rods. The parapets walls and flared wing walls have cement capping of 20th century date; the original capping probably was slate. The roadway is asphalt.

To the north of the farmstead on Watters Road is a frame ranch built c. 1980 on a lot subdivided from the farm; it is non-contributing.

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The Miller Farmstead nomination encompasses 8 contributing buildings, 7 contributing structures, and 1 contributing site. The 1924 concrete turnpike bridge, the paved surface of Route 57, and the modern dwelling are all non-contributing structures.

Contributing buildings: Farmhouse, machine shop, privy, out kitchen, tenant house, garage, bank barn, wagon house

Contributing structures: Cistern, well, wellhouse, corn crib, chicken coop, cattle underpass, 1860 stone bridge

Contributing site: Family graveyard

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The farmstead is of local historical interest due to its long association with the Miller family, members of whom, along with their relatives by marriage, the Vannattas and the Frittises, have owned the property from the 18th century until the present time. According to 19th-century secondary sources, the progenitor of the Miller family was an 18th-century German immigrant, Andreas (?) Miller, who settled in Newton, Sussex County, New Jersey. His son Andrew Miller (c. 1739-1829) is said to have left Newton as a young man and settled along the Musconetcong River in Mansfield Township, acquiring considerable property and establishing his homestead at the site of the Miller Farmstead, in conjunction with which he kept a tavern.<sup>1</sup> Documentary sources suggest that these family traditions have some basis in fact. The 1785 deed by which Andrew Miller acquired title to the property describes him as "of the Township of Newton," and an 1818 deed clearly indicates that his residence occupied the site of the main house. These deeds and other early 19th-century conveyances also reveal that he owned several hundred acres along the Musconetcong in two counties.<sup>2</sup> That Miller kept a tavern at his house is corroborated by the journal written by Theophile Cazenove during his 1794 journey across New Jersey in which he noted stopping at "Miller's Tavern" on the Musconetcong.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless the early history of both the property and the Miller family remains obscure.

Local history, for example, claims that Miller's Tavern was operating during the Revolutionary War, that General Washington and his troops camped on the farm for one night on march across New Jersey during the War, and that one of his soldiers died at the inn. While no record of any such encampment has come to light, documentary sources make it clear that Revolutionary War troops did march across northwestern New Jersey on several occasions and certainly camped at a number of different places in what is now Warren County. In particular, during Major General John Sullivan's 1779 western campaign against the Indians for which various regiments assembled and disbanded at Easton, Pa., it is quite possible that troops following the important east/west route across the Musconetcong valley stopped at the Miller farm.<sup>4</sup>

The chain of title for the homestead farm and the Miller family's association with it can be traced back to 1785, when Andrew Miller purchased it at a sheriff's sale on April 30th of that year, having made the high bid of 360 pounds. The previous owner of the 94.75-acre property (which consisted of two adjoining tracts) was one Yost Miller who lost it due to a 1783 court judgment against him for a debt of 300 pounds owed to Andrew Miller and Frederick Miller. Unfortunately, no deed or other records have been found to establish how and when Yost Miller acquired title to the two tracts. The 1785 deed does refer to the first corner of the second parcel as "the third corner of a tract of land

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purchased by Yost Miller from Thomas Pugh" and its last corner as "a post in the second line of the aforesaid tract purchased by Yost Miller."<sup>5</sup> Nothing else has come to light about Yost Miller other than that in 1782 he was evidently living in Sussex County and was separated from his wife "Elenor."<sup>6</sup> The kinship, if any, of Yost, Andrew, and Frederick Miller also remains unknown.

The 1785 deed from the sheriff to Andrew Miller notes that the auction of the "plantation" was held "at the House of Nathaniel Kerr on the premises", strongly suggesting that the property was cultivated and rented to a tenant farmer, as was much land in the Musconetcong valley in the 18th century. However, Theophile Cazenove described Miller's place as

an isolated house in the valley, on a <sup>7</sup>200-acre farm, which Miller bought for £600 in 1789, where it was all woods.

This appears to imply that the property was uncultivated woodland when acquired by Miller, besides differing from the deed as to its purchase date price, and size. Cazenove may well have been mistaken about the matter; it is also quite possible that Miller had already begun to enlarge his landholdings.

Andrew Miller divested himself of his real estate holdings in his old age and made provisions for his children and grandchildren. His 1827 will notes that, except for one lot, he had sold all of his real estate to his eldest son Henry, and that his other two sons, Daniel and Philip, had already received their fair share of his estate. Specific bequests of money and personal items were made to his two daughters and several grandchildren; no mention was made of his wife Eve Anthony, suggesting that she had died sometime before.<sup>8</sup> Between 1804 and 1820 Andrew sold to Henry by several deeds about 513 acres of land located on both sides of the river, including the homestead farm. In 1814 and 1818 Henry acquired two small lots of meadowland belonging to the homestead (one of 3.31 acres and the other of 3.33 acres) lying to the south of the bridge between the road and the river, together with rights to water from the small creek. The remainder of the homestead farm, amounting to 111.82<sup>9</sup> acres and including his father's house, was purchased by him in 1820 for \$3,000.

Henry Miller (1767-1852) succeeded his father on the homestead. Over fifty years old and married with several children at the time of his father's death, he probably had lived there since purchasing it in 1820, if not before.<sup>10</sup> While he may have resided in the same house as his father, it is quite possible that he occupied another dwelling on the property, perhaps the stone tenant house which dates to the early 19th century. He undoubtedly was living on the homestead in



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1830, when he was enumerated in the census of that year as the head of a household of ten which included two black servants.<sup>11</sup> According to an 1881 county history, "he erected commodious buildings [on the property], having his house on the west and some of his barns on the east side of the Musconetcong River" in Hunterdon County.<sup>12</sup> His estate inventory does in fact mention a "wagon house over the creek" in addition to a smokehouse, shop, milk house, and barn.<sup>13</sup> The present house was probably built by him in the 1830s or 1840s, replacing or possibly incorporating part of his father's residence, which as the 1818 meadow lot deed makes clear, stood on the site. As gravestone transcriptions indicate, the graveyard, which may have been established at a much earlier date, was being used by his family in the 1840s.<sup>14</sup>

Henry Miller died intestate, leaving seven adult children as his heirs, his wife Ann Hann and several other children having predeceased him. In the settlement of his estate his land was divided and sold to three of his sons. The 120-acre homestead farm and a 61-acre wood lot across the river were purchased in 1853 by his youngest son Henry, Jr. (c. 1828-77) who paid almost \$7,000 for his siblings' share in the property, with the stipulation that he provide for the maintenance of "Jemmia Bray a colored servant belonging to the estate of Henry Miller."<sup>15</sup>

Like his father and grandfather, Henry Miller, Jr. evidently farmed and occupied the premises, and he probably was responsible for the construction of the barn, wagon house, and machine shop. The inventory made after his intestate death in 1877 makes mention of the "machine house," and a newspaper advertisement for the court-ordered sale of his homestead farm refers to the "large Barn, Sheds, and all other necessary outbuildings" on the property.<sup>16</sup> A similar bank barn was built in 1873 by his brother John C. Miller (who also built the stone bridge spanning the Musconetcong) on the other side of the river on land which John had acquired from their father's estate.<sup>17</sup>

Several months after the auction which was held on January 15, 1879, the administrators of Henry Jr's. estate, his widow Adna and brother John, conveyed title to the homestead farm to Samuel Vannatta who had made the high bid of \$5,641.20.<sup>18</sup> Vannatta was the brother-in-law of one of John Miller's married daughters and his wife Elizabeth was a first cousin once removed of Miller's wife.<sup>19</sup> Within a week of this transaction, for some unknown reason, title to the property was transferred to Elizabeth Vannatta.<sup>20</sup> Thereafter, the Vannattas occupied the premises which they presumably farmed.

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While Elizabeth Vannatta died in 1898, her husband evidently continued to live on the farm until his death in 1906. Elizabeth died intestate; consequently, the property was sold at a court ordered auction in 1907 to Stewart B. Fritts (1871-1938), the widower of her daughter Elizabeth.<sup>21</sup> Stewart Fritts moved to the farm, where he lived until his death. He was responsible for constructing the frame wing of tenant house, the chicken coop, and the present front porch of the main house. He bequeathed the property to his only son Howard (1892-1977), but gave his second wife life rights. After she died, Howard Fritts moved to the farm from Hackettstown with his family. His only child Bertha inherited<sup>22</sup> the property where she continues to reside, and which she still manages.

Various sources attest to the prosperity of the Millers and the long history of their homestead as one of Mansfield Township's most substantial working farms. Early deeds indicate that Andrew Miller became a large landowner, and while he may not have owned 1,000 acres, as claimed by family tradition, his holdings had grown to over 500 acres by the second decade of the 19th century. His acquisitions included both crop and wood land and a one-acre lot along the river which he later described as his<sup>23</sup> "mill seat," although there is no other evidence that it was developed as such. In his land purchases Miller appears to have conformed to Theophile Cazenove's 1794 observation that area farmers used their extra money to acquire as much land as they could. Cazenove, however, also complained about the slovenly appearance of farmsteads in the Musconetcong valley, which he found to be mostly inhabited by poor first or second generation European immigrants, and their lack of gardens and other improvements. While these observations may well have applied to Miller's place, which Cazenove thought little of as a tavern, Miller was<sup>24</sup> successful enough to make ample provisions for his children and grandchildren.

Building both literally and figuratively on his father's foundations, Henry Miller became one of Mansfield Township's most substantial farmers. According to family history, "he was a representative farmer, and put the farm under a good state of cultivation."<sup>25</sup> He added to the property that he had acquired from his father, purchasing for example an adjacent farm on the west side of the river belonging to his mother's family, the Anthonys.<sup>26</sup> In the 1850 census, his land holdings were valued at \$30,000, and he was tied for first place among the heads of household in Mansfield for the distinction of owning the most valuable property. This valuation probably included his holdings on both sides of the river and land which he rented to tenants besides that which he farmed himself since, in the agricultural schedule of the 1850 census for Mansfield Township, he was listed as the "owner, agent, or manager" of a 175-acre farm (of which only 75

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acres were cultivated) valued at \$7,000.<sup>27</sup> At his death two years later, his personal assets were valued at slightly more than \$7,200 including notes, bonds, and cash in the amount of about \$5,000.<sup>28</sup> His prosperity also is attested to by the substantial construction and simple, but stylish detailing of his house which his estate inventory makes clear was quite comfortably furnished.

To assist family members on the farm, Henry Miller could afford to retain domestic servants and farm workers. The 1830 census lists two free colored people in his household, and in 1840 four were listed. There were two again in 1850, and after his death provisions were made for an aged black women "belonging to his estate."<sup>29</sup> These blacks may well have been freed slaves, possibly slaves once belonging to the family or their descendants. Local history holds the Millers to have been slave owners. That Henry Miller owned at least one slave is documented by his receipt, dated 1798, for the sale of a "Negro Boy" to one Jacob Sharp.<sup>30</sup>

Although much less wealthy than his father, Henry Miller, Jr. also appears to have lived on the homestead farm in some comfort and prosperity. In the 1860 census his property was valued at \$11,000, and in the next census at \$12,000, which placed his holdings well above average in value for the township. In 1870, in addition to family members, his household included two black "domestics."<sup>31</sup> In comparison to that of his father, his personal estate was modest, amounting to only about \$1,300.<sup>32</sup> Nevertheless, his estate inventory indicates that the house was as least as well furnished as it had been at the time of his father's death, and the barn bears testimony to his substance as a farmer.

There is also evidence of the Millers' participation in local affairs. Andrew Miller evidently was active in the Spruce Run Lutheran Church (located about six miles from his farm in Hunterdon County), as his name appears among those of the individuals elected trustees in 1799, as did those of two of his wife's brothers, and on the list of men who erected the congregation's first house of worship in the following year.<sup>33</sup> Church records indicate that two of his sons had children baptized by the congregation's minister in 1813.<sup>34</sup> According to family history, "he was among the first [in the neighborhood] to erect a log schoolhouse, and employ a teacher."<sup>35</sup> His son Henry also supported local education and was active in church affairs. In 1828 he donated a lot for and helped build the stone schoolhouse which, although abandoned for educational purposes in 1850, stood partially intact by the roadside on the west edge of the farm until 1898. (The site evidently was obliterated in the construction of Route 57.) He became a Presbyterian and was a founder of the Pleasant Grove Presbyterian Church, which is located a few miles from the farm on Schooley's

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Mountain. Politically, Miller was a Whig, and he is said to have filled many township offices. Although few Mansfield Township records have survived, it can be documented that he served one term as county Freeholder in 1835-36. He also was a captain in a local company of the state militia.<sup>36</sup>

Some further mention should be made of the property's significance as an early stopping place at a river crossing on one of northwestern New Jersey's major east/west routes. In the 18th century the main road from Morristown, New Jersey to Easton, Pennsylvania (later followed by the Washington Turnpike and State Highways 24 and 57) forked on Schooley's Mountain; one branch detoured northwestwardly to Hackettstown and, turning southeast along the Musconetcong River, joined the shorter, more direct route across the mountain at Penwell.<sup>37</sup> On his journey across northern New Jersey in 1794, Theophile Cazenove took the direct "upper road which... [was] not so good." It brought him to "Miller's Tavern" on the Musconetcong, which, like many others along his route through the sparsely settled region, he unfortunately found to be "Not [a] good lodging." Cazenove commented that "All the pioneers who go from the East to Pittsburg, Kentucky, etc. take this road." He was informed by Miller, "that every year hundreds of families pass, emigrating from New England to Kentucky and Ohio." He also noted in his journal that inns along the road were kept, for the most part, by farmers like Andrew Miller as a side-line to their agricultural pursuits. Such taverns were about the only place of accommodation available to travellers and provided a meetingplace for local farmers "to talk about politics and to drink."<sup>38</sup>

Notes

1. James P. Snell, (ed.) History of Sussex and Warren Counties, New Jersey, Philadelphia: Everts & Peck, 1881, p. 733.
2. Hunterdon County Deeds, Book 31, pages 390, 423, 424 and 426; and Sussex County Deeds, Book H, page 144, A<sub>2</sub>/405, C<sub>2</sub>/201, K<sub>2</sub>/337, and P<sub>2</sub>/160.
3. Rayner W. Kelsey, Cazenove Journal, 1794: A Record of the Journey of Theophile Cazenove Through New Jersey and Pennsylvania, Haverford, PA: The Pennsylvania History Press, 1922, p. 14.

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4. Frederick J. Cook, Journal of the Military Expedition of Major General John Sullivan Against the Six Nations of Indians in 1779. Auburn, NY: Knapp, Peck & Thompson, 1887, pp. 190, 210 & 220.
5. Sussex County Deeds, Book H, page 144.
6. William Nelson (ed.), Archives of the State of New Jersey: Documents Relating to the Colonial, Revolutionary, and Post-Revolutionary History of the State of New Jersey, Extract from American Newspapers Relating to New Jersey. Vol. V, Trenton: State Gazette Publishing Company, p. 498.
7. Cazenove Journal, p. 14.
8. Warren County Wills, Book 1, page 210.
9. See note #2 above.
10. Snell, Sussex and Warren, p. 733.
11. Mansfield Township Census Schedules, 1830.
12. Snell, Sussex and Warren, p. 734.
13. Warren County Inventories, Book 6, page 8.
14. Hellen P. Alleman, "Corrections: Miller Family Plot," The Genealogical Magazine of New Jersey, XXXIII, Nos. 3/4 (July/October 1958), p. 81; Warren P. Coon, "Gravestone Records From Miller Family Plot, Mansfield Township, Warren County", The Genealogical Magazine of New Jersey, III, No. 1 (July 1927), p. 157.
15. Warren County Deeds, Book 37, page 25.
16. Warren County Inventories, Book 11, page 566.
17. Snell, Sussex and Warren, p. 734.
18. Warren County Deeds, Book 108, Page 8.

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19. Snell, Sussex and Warren, pp. 720e, 721 & 734; Mr. & Mrs. M. B. Streeter, The Wyckoff Family in America, Rutland, Vermont: The Tuttle Company, 1947, pp. 269, 286, & 321-22.
20. Warren County Deeds, Book 108, pages 15 & 17; Snell, Sussex and Warren, p. 734.
21. Warren County Petitions, Book 18, page 581; Warren County Deeds, Book 185, page 211.
22. Warren County Wills, Book 31, page 381; interview with Miss Bertha Fritts in September 1987.
23. See footnote #2; Snell, Sussex and Warren, page 733; and Sussex County Deeds, Book A<sub>2</sub>, page 406.
24. Cazenove Journal, pp. 14 & 15; Warren County Wills, Book 1, page 210.
25. Snell, Sussex and Warren, p. 734.
26. Warren County Deeds, Book 30, page 363.
27. United States Census, Mansfield Township, Schedules of Population and Products of Agriculture, 1850.
28. Warren County Inventories, Book 6, page 18.
29. United States Census, Mansfield Township, Schedule of Population, 1830, 1840 & 1850.
30. Eleanor P. Mills (ed.), History of Mansfield Township 1754-1964, p. 39; "Receipt for Sale of Negro Boy slave to Jacob Sharp," Hackettstown Historical Society.
31. United States Census, Mansfield Township, Schedule of Population, 1860 & 1870.
32. Warren County Inventories, Book 11, page 656.
33. James P. Snell, (ed.) History of Hunterdon and Somerset Counties, New Jersey. Philadelphia: Everts & Peck, 1881, p. 452.

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34. Spruce Run Lutheran Church Records, Hunterdon County Historical Society.
35. Snell, Sussex and Warren, p. 734.
36. Ibid. pp. 726 & 734; Warren County Deeds, Book 33. page 46.
37. Peter Wacker, The Musconetcong Valley of New Jersey, New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1968, p. 138.
38. Cazenove Journal, pp. 14 & 15.

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A D D E N D U M

Some further mention can be made of the significance of the cattle underpass as a rare transportation-related resource, whereby a special agricultural function ( the need to move livestock on farms bisected by highways) was accomodated in the state's early twentieth century road building program. Records of the New Jersey Department of Transportation indicate that as of 1981 only 15 such structures (13 underpasses and two overpasses) existed in New Jersey in association with a state highway.<sup>39</sup> The structures were located in the central and northwestern portions of the state; construction dates were given for all but one of them and range from 1924-1940. Of them, the underpass on Route 57 associated with the Miller Farmstead is the earliest. How many of the others survive today is not known.

<sup>39</sup> Bridge Inventory, New Jersey Department of Transportation, Bureau of Maintenance, 1981.



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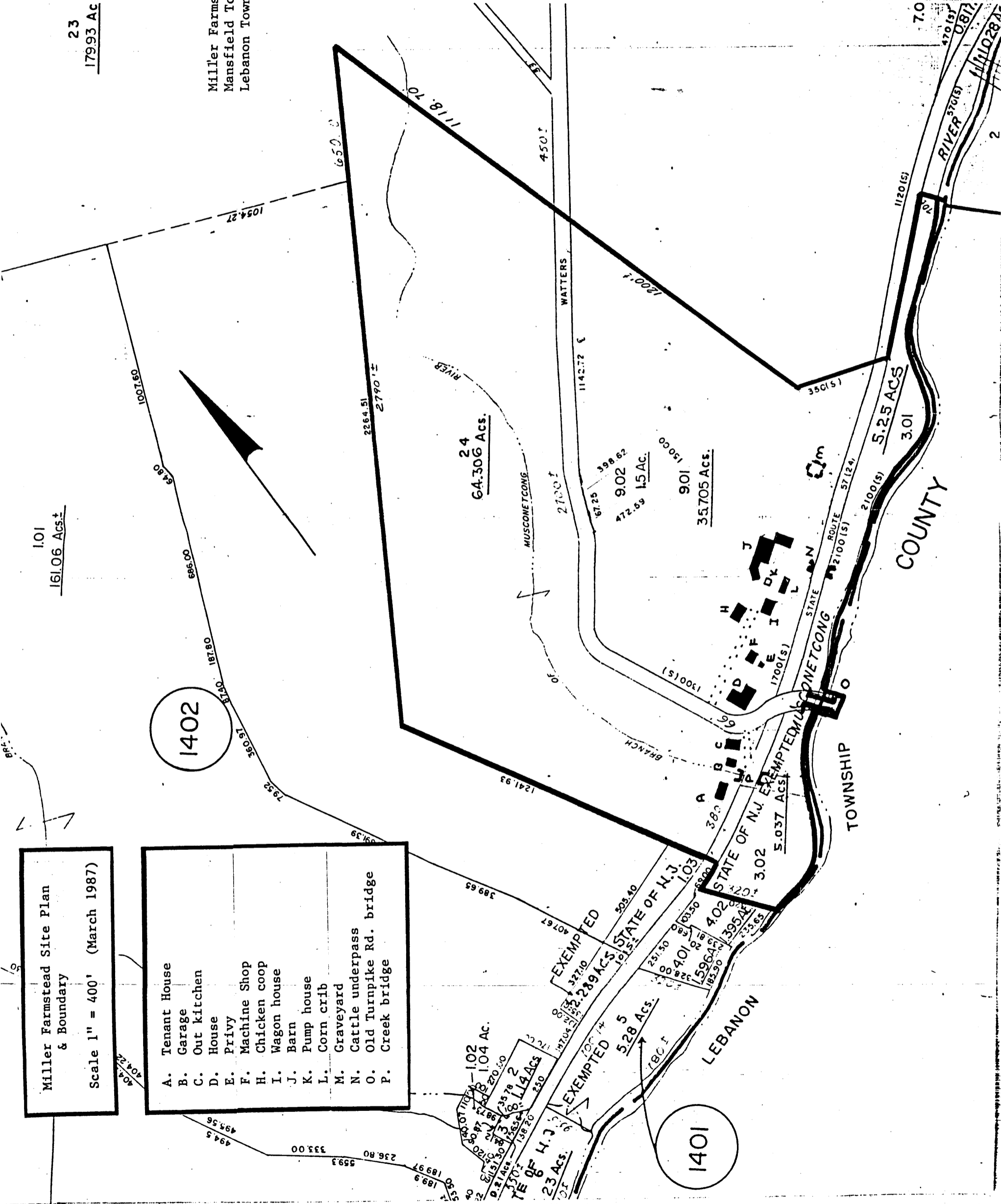
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& Lebanon Township, Hunterdon County, NJ

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The nominated property includes five lots in Mansfield Township, block 4101/lots 3.01 & 3.02, block 1402, lot 24, and block 1404, lots 9.01, 9.02 as well as the Old Turnpike Road bridge in both Lebanon and Mansfield Townships, Hunterdon and Warren Counties and the concrete underpass on Route 57 in Mansfield Township. This property encompasses the homestead farm of Henry Miller as acquired by his son, Henry Miller, Jr. The boundary is thus the historic boundary of the farmstead; see the site map for the boundary's delineation.

Miller Farmstead  
 Mansfield Township, Warren County &  
 Lebanon Township, Hunterdon County, NJ

- |    |                         |
|----|-------------------------|
| A. | Tenant House            |
| B. | Garage                  |
| C. | Out kitchen             |
| D. | House                   |
| E. | Privy                   |
| F. | Machine Shop            |
| H. | Chicken coop            |
| I. | Wagon house             |
| J. | Barn                    |
| K. | Pump house              |
| L. | Corn crib               |
| M. | Graveyard               |
| N. | Cattle underpass        |
| O. | Old Turnpike Rd. bridge |
| P. | Creek bridge            |



Miller Farmstead  
Mansfield Township, Warren County &  
Lebanon Township, Hunterdon County, NJ

Miller House  
First Floor Plan  
Scale: 1/4" = 1'

