

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PH0684091

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	SEP 11 1978
DATE ENTERED	DEC 14 1978

# 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's Tavern

AND/OR COMMON Brooke County Historical Museum

## 2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Corner of 6th and Main Streets -- NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN Wellsburg VICINITY OF First CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE West Virginia CODE 54 COUNTY Brooke CODE 009

## 3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

## 4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Brooke County Historical Museum Commission

STREET & NUMBER Brooke County Courthouse, 7th and Main Streets

CITY, TOWN Wellsburg VICINITY OF West Virginia STATE

## 5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Brooke County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER 7th and Main Streets

CITY, TOWN Wellsburg STATE West Virginia

## 6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE \_\_ FEDERAL \_\_ STATE \_\_ COUNTY \_\_ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN STATE

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<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		

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## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Miller's Tavern is located at the northeast corner of 6th and Main Streets opposite the Wellsburg wharf in Wellsburg, Brooke County, West Virginia. The two-story, hip-roofed building is a simple rectangle constructed of brick sited on a once thriving riverfront street overlooking the Ohio River. Despite 20th century alterations of the building that have damaged its historical fabric, Miller's Tavern retains for the most part those elements that identify it as one of West Virginia's earliest extant examples of vernacular Federal style architecture.

In the late 18th and early 19th century, taverns were inns and inns were taverns. Miller's Tavern was constructed to accommodate, therefore, travellers who desired refreshment and temporary amenities, or overnight lodging. The building's utility is clearly evident in its layout and massing. Featuring only a three-bay front, the Miller's Tavern/Brooke County Historical Museum building nearly covers an entire city lot with its nine-bay sides. The great length of the structure was necessitated by business needs to house travellers and by space needs that were competitive even in the early 19th century along Water (Main) Street where brick buildings monopolized available land adjacent to Wellsburg's busy riverfront.

Miller's Tavern is a brick rectangle, though at the date of its construction near the turn of the 19th century the building was planned as an L. The ell of the structure comprises the present front extending along Main Street, a fact betrayed by the well preserved sandstone foundation blocks that may be seen in the full basement underlying the building. At the turn of the 20th century the space at the rear of the ell on the north side of the building was enclosed to give the structure its present rectangular shape.

The addition is apparent in the dissimilar foundation blocks of the basement, in the five-course American brick bonding that contrasts with the original west and south walls laid in the traditional Flemish style, and in the cornice and fascia board seam apparent at the point of the addition.

Aside from the Flemish bond brickwork, no ornamentation is evident in the otherwise severe front and side elevations. Plain rectangular sandstone window lintels are flush with the building's now painted walls. A single bay wooden front porch is a recent addition. First floor windows have been bricked-up or filled in with molded glass blocks. Upper floor windows are covered with painted wooden sheets.

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These alterations occurred for the most part in recent years when the building was used as the headquarters of a fraternal society.

Major alterations of the interior were undertaken in the 1930s to provide space for a local club. The removal of the original fabric has virtually gutted the structure. The space within the building is presently utilized by the Brooke County Historical Society for exhibits, meetings, and receptions.

Miller's Tavern stands on a terrace approximately four feet in height. The ashlar sandstone retaining blocks are similar to the tavern's finished foundation stones. Terraces and high foundations are common characteristics of the older buildings of flood prone Ohio River communities.

# 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

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SPECIFIC DATES      c. 1797      BUILDER/ARCHITECT      John Henderson

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## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Miller's Tavern at Wellsburg, Brooke County, West Virginia, is one of the Ohio Valley's oldest surviving examples of Federal style architecture. It is located nearly opposite the Wellsburg wharf, and was therefore an integral part of the social and economic fabric of a river town that rivaled Wheeling as a leading commercial center on the upper Ohio River in the early 19th century. The tavern served as a hostelry for travellers and passengers sailing to and from Pittsburgh, Wheeling, Marietta, Cincinnati, and New Orleans. As a commercial center, Wellsburg traffic moved on keelboats, flatboats, and river steamers whose presence was an everyday scene at the city wharf.

Wellsburg was a famous point of debarkation for pioneers headed for Kentucky and the Ohio Country that, before 1803, was called the Northwest Territory. As a shipbuilding center, Wellsburg attracted entrepreneurs and rivermen whose appearance in the city might have been noticed at several Water Street inns including: the Washington Inn, the Granite House, and the Virginia House.

The advantageous location of Miller's Tavern is probably a result of its construction as a virtual adjunct of one of the wharf's warehouses or, as they were better known, "checkhouses". Checkhouse owners often resided in and owned inns adjacent to local wharfs. John Henderson, credited as the builder of Miller's Tavern, was known to have been owner of a warehouse on the riverbank north of the city wharf.

Local tradition ascribes the construction of Miller's Tavern to John Henderson. Henderson died in 1798, so the date of the building may predate his death by several years. Basis for this tradition rests in an indenture at the Brooke County Courthouse, dated May 28, 1818, in which property belonging to Duncan Henderson, heir of John Henderson, including "one lot of ground in the town of Wellsburg No 17 situate on the corner of Watter and Ohio Streets whereon is erected a tavern now in the tenure of William Miller..." is sold to, one, William Wallace.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Brooke County Historical Museum brochure, Brooke County Historical Museum Commission, Wellsburg, West Virginia, n.d.

"Brooke Historians Seek Federal Aid". Steubenville, Ohio, Herold-Star, Dec. 1, 1974, p.LL3.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1/4 acre

QUADRANGLE NAME Steubenville East, W.V., PA, Ohio QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES

A 1,7 5,3,2 8,3,0 4,4 5,7 5,0,0

B                  

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C                  

D                  

E                  

F                  

G                  

H                  

### VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Located on lot no. 17 plat of Wellsburg at the northeast corner of 6th and Main Streets facing Main Street.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Rodney S. Collins, Research Assistant

ORGANIZATION

West Virginia Department of Culture and History July 18, 1978

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

The Cultural Center, Capitol Complex

TELEPHONE

304-348-0244

CITY OR TOWN

Charleston

STATE

West Virginia

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL   

STATE X

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

*Clarence Morrow*

September 6, 1978

TITLE

DATE

### FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

*W. M. Smith*

DATE

12/14/78

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*William Labovich*

DATE

12/14/78

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

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It seems likely that Miller leased the inn from Henderson until 1818. On page 329 of Louis Coachran's book, The Fool of God, is the statement: "In 1841, Alexander Campbell advised students visiting Bethany College if coming by boat to stop at Mrs. Miller's Tavern in Wellsburg". A presumption from this quote is that this is the same tavern and that Mrs. Miller, following the death of her husband, continued to operate it for a number of years.

After the occupancy of numerous tenants, a fraternal society purchased the building in the 1930s. During their stay major interior and certain exterior alterations were undertaken. In 1973, the building was sold to the Brooke County Commission, who in turn, gave it to the people of Brooke County as a museum. The old Miller's Tavern, one of the oldest buildings in the county, is administered by the Brooke County Historical Museum Commission and the Brooke County Historical Society.

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Caldwell, Nancy. "History of the Brooke County Historical Museum and Miller's Tavern." Brooke County Historical Society, Wellsburg, W. V., n.d.

Indenture of May 28, 1818. Deed Book 6, p. 286. Office of the County Clerk. Brooke County Courthouse, Wellsburg, W. V.