

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

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: New York	
COUNTY: Warren	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
"The Owl's Nest"

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
Edward Eggleston Estate

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Route 9L

CITY OR TOWN:  
Joshua's Rock, Lake George

STATE: New York      COUNTY: Warren

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____
Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No			

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
E. Roy Stremple, President, Joshua's Rock Corporation

STREET AND NUMBER:  
"The Owls Nest," Rt. 9L, Joshua's Rock

CITY OR TOWN: Lake George      STATE: New York

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Town Hall Building

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Iroquois Street

CITY OR TOWN: Lake George      STATE: New York

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY:       Federal     State     County     Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:      STATE:      CODE

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

(Check One)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated
(Check One)		(Check One)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

"The Owl's Nest" is an estate fronting Dunham Bay, Lake George, in the area known as Joshua's Rock. The portion of the estate significantly associated with the career of Edward Eggleston lies between the bay and Route 9L, and has three principal buildings: "The Homestead," "Mellowstone," and Eggleston's residence. Northwest of this group of buildings is a small, single-story wooden library donated by Eggleston to the county government, which continues to utilize it. Southeast of the main building is a modern cottage, and situated southwest of this structure is a private cemetery in which the author is buried.

Although Eggleston summered regularly at Lake George after 1875, where he stayed in his early years is unknown. His daughter (and sometime literary collaborator) Elizabeth married Elwin Seelye in November 1877 and two years later the couple moved to "The Owl's Nest," an estate on land said to have been acquired by the Seelye family through a royal grant. The house which the couple built there is now known as "The Homestead." In 1883 Eggleston built "Mellowstone" as his library. Later, after a trip to Europe, he built the stone house northeast of this library as a residence for himself and his wife, Lizzie, who died in 1889. The frame wing of the house was added about 1890.

The house in which Edward Eggleston lived is a one-and-a-half story stone structure with a gable roof and an interior chimney. Its southeast elevation has a central bay window over which the roof is extended. To the southwest of this is a single small window, while to the northeast is one opening of the screen porch which occupies the eastern corner of the house. Above, there are two half-timbered dormers with a sunburst motif in their gable ends. The northeast elevation has a door in its half-timbered gable which leads out onto a wooden balcony above which the roof is slightly extended. Below the balcony, there is a bay window to the northwest and the screen porch opening to the southeast. The southwest elevation has two windows and a ventilator in its half-timbered gable. On the first floor of this elevation there are two windows, to the southeast of which a door opens into a breezeway leading to the southwest. A two-story wooden wing projects from the northwestern elevation. On its southwestern elevation, the wing has an open single-story porch with a shed roof, beyond which is a two-story projection. On its northeast elevation there is a screen porch.

The door in the breezeway leads into a hall in which is a flight of stairs. On the southeastern side of the house is a bedroom which belonged to Eggleston's daughter, Allegra, and which has a fireplace set diagonally across its northern corner. Northwest of this bedroom is a study formerly Eggleston's own bedroom and the chamber in which he died. The fireplace, being on the opposite side of the chimney from the bedroom fireplace, is also set diagonally. It has a stepped brick mantel in which is set a wooden relief carving executed by Eggleston's sister.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century            | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century |                                       |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1881 to 1902

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |   |   |  |  |
|---|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal     | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input type="checkbox"/> Political           | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric    | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic       | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science             | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture    | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture           | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture   | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Literature  | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater             | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce       | <input type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation      | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |  | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation   |   |  | _____  |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

Edward Eggleston was among the earliest of America's realistic novelists and perhaps the first writer to tap in a serious vein the literary potential of America's frontier experience. The western movement had spawned a society with its own distinct character, and, as Bret Harte exploited the romantic and picturesque aspects of Far Western life, Eggleston produced what one critic has called "something as realistic as Dutch painting, touching with love and care the homely details of living" as he knew them in the frontier Ohio Valley and Minnesota.<sup>1</sup> Of spotty quality in themselves, his works nonetheless began a tradition of realism in the treatment of native life which later flowered in the works of Garland, Dreiser, Cather, Sandburg, and Lewis.<sup>2</sup>

Eggleston began summering at Lake George, New York in 1875, and from the early 1880's on, it was his only permanent address. At "The Owl's Nest," his son-in-law's estate on Dunham Bay, he built first a library, which he called "Mellowstone," and then a residence where he lived except during the winter months, which he spent variously in New York, Washington, and Madison, Wisconsin. Most of his later work was done here, including his two volumes of history, and here he was buried in 1902. After Eggleston's death, the property remained intact and relatively undisturbed in the hands of his descendants.

Biography

Edward Eggleston was born in Vevay, Indiana, in 1837, the son of an aristocratic Virginia lawyer who had emigrated to the Ohio River frontier. After his father's death in 1846, his mother married a Methodist minister and the family lived in several other Indiana towns before returning again to Vevay, where he was encouraged in his writing by a sensitive local teacher. Eggleston received almost no formal education, although he read widely.

1. Wallace Stegner, quoted in Robert E. Spiller and others, eds., Literary History of the United States (NY: The MacMillan Company, 1960), p. 870.

2. Ibid., p. 863.

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Eggleston, George Cary, The First of the Hoosiers, Philadelphia: A. J. Drexel Biddle, 1903.  
 Randel, William P., Edward Eggleston, New York: Twayne Publishers, 1963.  
 Spiller, Robert E., and others, eds., Literary History of the United States, New York: The MacMillan Company, 1960, pp. 862-77 passim.

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES			
CORNER	N	LATITUDE	W		LONGITUDE	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
		Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	
NW		43 ° 26' 43 "		73 ° 39' 25 "	0		"	
NE		43 ° 26' 43 "		73 ° 39' 12 "		0	"	
SE		43 ° 26' 31 "		73 ° 39' 12 "			"	
SW		43 ° 26' 31 "		73 ° 39' 25 "			"	

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 10

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE: Robert S. Gamble and Edmund Preston, Survey Historians

ORGANIZATION: Division of History, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, National Park Service

DATE: 7/30/71

STREET AND NUMBER: 801 19th Street, N.W.

CITY OR TOWN: Washington

STATE: D.C.

CODE:

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Keeper of The National Register

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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7. Description (1)                      "The Owl's Nest"

Like the bedroom, the study has exposed beams and paneling to the height of approximately five feet. This room contains a grandfather clock and French Empire chair, which are among other furnishings dating from the writer's time. North of the entrance hall, a second hall leads into the wing, which contains the dining room, kitchen, and back stairs. The dining room, which has a brick mantel, opens onto the screen porch to the northeast. On the second floor of the house there are two bedrooms in the main section and two in the wing.

The southwest end of the breezeway leads into a partially excavated shedroofed walkway at the rear of the stone structure known as "Mellowstone." This building has a gable roof and an interior chimney. In the gable end of its southeast elevation is a lateral window with five sections, which is flanked and surmounted by the rising sun motif. The roof is extended slightly over this window, below which is an entrance with glazed double doors, sidelights and a transom. There is a window on each side of this entrance, which opens into a stone terrace with a concrete floor. This terrace extends across the southeast, and part of the northeast, sides of the building. Cinder blocks have been substituted for parts of the original railing. As the ground falls off toward the east, the terrace has a room set under its corner. This room has two windows and a door on the southeast elevation, and three windows on the northeast elevation. There is an enclosed porch across the whole southwest elevation of "Mellowstone," and a smaller one on the northeast elevation. Neither porch is original. On the northwest elevation, above the walkway, is a tall double window flanked by two windows. Above, in the gable end, is a smaller double window flanked by two lights.

The entrance in the southeast elevation of "Mellowstone" leads into Edward Eggleston's library, which has a brick fireplace rising to the ceiling. Above and to the left of the fireplace opening, a bust of the author stands on a projecting brick shelf. This room also contains an oil portrait of Eggleston, as well as a set of his works, his desk, two of his canes, and other objects which belonged to him. The original bookshelves remain only on the northwestern wall. Near the western corner of the room, a doorway leads into a hall. From this a door, over which is inscribed a motto, leads into the southwestern porch. Another door leads into Allegra's studio, which occupies most of the northwest end of the building. Like the library, this room has exposed ceiling beams. The upper floor is an attic.

Approximately one hundred feet to the southwest of "Mellowstone" is a two-story, gray clapboard house with a hipped roof known as "The Homestead."

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STATE		New York
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(Number all entries)

7. Description (2)

"The Owl's Nest"

The front (northeast) elevation has two bays, between which is an exterior chimney. The roof extends slightly over the second story's double windows, which have false balconies. Below, two French windows open onto a terrace. A band of diagonal boarding replaces the clapboard between the two floors. Near the eastern corner of the front elevation, a single story porch with a shed roof protects the entrance to a similar screened porch on the eastern portion of the southeast elevation, which has two bays. On the northwest elevation is a two-story wing with a gable roof. At the northwest end of the wing is a detached water tower and a woodshed. At the rear (southwest) side of the wing is a two-story ell. There is a single-story projection with a shed roof in the corner formed by the ell. As at the front, the roof of the main section projects slightly over the two upper windows.

The French windows on the terrace lead into the living room, behind which is the dining room and a bedroom at the southern corner of the house. The wing and its ell contain an inner and outer kitchen. Upstairs are five bedrooms grouped around a central hall. Changes to the interior include the alteration of ceiling, installation of linoleum in the kitchen, and new paneling in the dining room and downstairs bedroom.

"The Owl's Nest" is presently owned by the Joshua's Rock Corporation, founded by Eggleston's descendents, who use it as a summer home. The total property is over a hundred acres. The boundaries of the historic area are as follows: from the intersection of Dunham Bay and Route 9L, northwest along Route 9L to a point approximately 150 feet northwest of the public library (73° 39' 25" W. Long; 43° 26' 43" E. Lat.) from this point due east to the property line; south and east along the property line to Dunham Bay; south along the shore line to its intersection with Route 9L.

8. Significance

Between 1854 and 1865, he led a chequered career, refusing to enter the University of Virginia because the State condoned slavery and finally becoming a Methodist circuit rider in Minnesota. In 1866, he moved to Evanston, Illinois, as editor of the Little Corporal, a children's magazine, and the next year he became the editor of the National Sunday School Teacher. Then in 1870, he moved east to work on the New York Independent.

Shortly afterward, he took over the faltering Hearth and Home and began the serialization of his novels, which revived the magazine and made him famous. Expressing the pietistic view that the novel--considered wicked by many of his contemporaries--should be instructive as well as entertaining, he faithfully recorded a fading frontier America. The boisterous flavor of his Ohio Valley childhood, coupled with his experiences as a pioneer

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8. Significance (3) "The Owl's Nest"

minister, provided grist for his writing. His most widely-known work, The Hoosier Schoolmaster, appeared during 1871, The End of the World in 1872, and The Mystery of Metropolisville in 1873. During 1873-74, Christian Union serialized The Circuit Rider--possibly his best novel from a technical stand-  
point. Three more novels, Roxy (1878), The Hoosier Schoolboy (1883), and The Graysons (1888), further developed the theme of frontier life. During this period, Eggleston also published articles and short stories in various magazines.

His strict Methodist upbringing had faded with his growing sophistication, and from 1874 to 1879 he served as paster of a Unitarian congregation in Brooklyn. In the latter year, however, he retired to devote himself fully to writing, and to expand from the field of fiction into social history. Eggleston believed that history should deal with everyday life as well as the merely political, and from the beginning had seen his fiction as a part of the effort to broaden the concerns of history. Moving to Lake George, New York, in 1881, he embarked upon his projected History of Life in the United States, while supporting himself through further fictional writing. But Eggleston had completed only two volumes, The Beginners of a Nation (1896) and The Transit of Civilization (1901), when ill-health incapacitated him. A supporter of progressive movements throughout his life, and a pioneer in both American fictional and historical writing, Eggleston died on September 2, 1902 at his Lake George home.

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COUNTY Switzerland	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
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*(Number all entries)*

Edward Eggleston House

Bibliographical note:

The Indiana Magazine of History, Volume 18 (March-December, 1922), pages 371-373, contains a very complete description of the Eggleston house as it appeared at that time.