

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC

MIFFLINBURG HISTORIC DISTRICT

AND/OR COMMON

USE THIS COPY
FOR DUPLICATING

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Bounded by Cherry, 10th, High, Church, 6th,

Greenbrier, 3rd, Ridge Avenue and High Street NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Mifflinburg

VICINITY OF

17th

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Pennsylvania

42

Union

119

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

DISTRICT

PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

COMMERCIAL

PARK

STRUCTURE

BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

OBJECT

IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

NO

MILITARY

OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Multiple

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

VICINITY OF

STATE

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Union County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

2nd and St. Louis Streets

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Lewisburg

Pennsylvania

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Pennsylvania Inventory of Historic Places

DATE

3/7/79

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Harrisburg

Pennsylvania

CONDITION

CHECK ONE

CHECK ONE

 EXCELLENT DETERIORATED UNALTERED ORIGINAL SITE GOOD RUINS ALTERED MOVED DATE _____ FAIR UNEXPOSED

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The proposed district focuses upon 19th century architecture, through the Buggy Era. It includes three streets, Chestnut, Market, and Green, and begins at the center of the 200 block of Chestnut and continues just beyond Ninth Street, the western edge of the "old town." This street begins and ends in residential areas with two business blocks at the center. The latter contains two hotels dating from the mid-19th century, an 1880s row of business blocks with brick on brick embellishment. There are two houses with over-the-sidewalk bay windows, three house-store (business block) combinations, a three story Italianate mansion, now serving as the borough headquarters, and a house and office combination. The residential blocks include houses erected in the 1850s which, with few exceptions, are rectangular structures in the Federal tradition. Noticeable also are brick and frame buildings dating from the 1870s and 1880s reflecting an Italian influence. Others erected in the 1890s with high roofs and ornate gables suggest the Queen Anne mode. From Fifth to Ninth Street there are but two intrusions!

The district moves westward on Market Street at Third and continues to Sixth Street, again, buildings dating from the 1850s are found here. It is residential, and includes four of the five 19th century churches in the town.

The district resumes on Green Street at Ridge Avenue. The block between Ridge Avenue and Third Street was opened in 1886, and eleven of the twelve structures here were built within a span of a single decade. Between 3rd and 6th Streets there are 3 buildings dating from the 1st quarter of the 19th century including a church, a school and a log house (now sided). There is also the home of John Montelius, a prominent Antimasonic state legislator, and peace maker in Pennsylvania's "Buckshot" war of 1838. At the rear of one of the lots stands the buggy works of William A. Heiss, which includes the blacksmith and wood and paint shops (one building) and the display repository (one building). The Heiss house remains near by at 523 Green Street. On this street, also, are 4 houses identified with the Gutelius family, the most prominent buggy name in Mifflinburg.

Mifflinburg, Pennsylvania, lies in the heart of Buffalo Valley, one of the richest agricultural regions in the state. It slopes slightly from south to north with a water run off into Buffalo Creek. Its soft water, supplied by the borough is proverbial, and dates from 1895. Its population numbers about 3000, one-third of whom reside in suburban clusters developed since World War II.

Streets numbering one through nine run north and south in the older center of the community, and 7 streets bearing a variety of names run east and west. Most of these names were changed about a century ago.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

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

MIFFLINBURG HISTORIC DISTRICT, Union County

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

During the 1790s two hamlets evolved within the present boundaries of the town - Youngmanstown on the west and Rhodestown on the east, merging at present day 3rd Street. It was not a "perfect" fit, however. The width of the streets did not match, and Rhodes (or Rote) laid out his lot parallel to 3rd Street rather than perpendicular to the main (George, later Chestnut) street, thus leaving a barn for a given house almost directly behind the neighbor next door!

In 1827 the two villages were incorporated, and by 1835 there were 72 log, 29 frame and 9 brick structures. A few of these early log buildings remain, but they are now covered with siding or incorporated into larger buildings, and they are difficult to identify without close inspection. Brick structures built about 1850 remain at the four corners of Chestnut and Fourth Streets and on Chestnut just west of 3rd. An original log house dating from the first quarter of the 19th century remains at Green and 5th Streets, but it is now covered with siding.

Growth slowed after 1835, but revived with the coming of the buggy era in the 1860s, and it continued until the first quarter of the 20th century, when it again lagged. It was during the buggy era that the solidly built "old town" took shape, appearing much as it does today. Thus, it remains largely a "Victorian" town. There is but one Italianate structure with the typical squared cupola, but many of the exteriors retain evidence of their period. Turn of the century buildings, in turn, reflect the Queen Anne mode of this era in their gables, roofs and porches. They also reflect the tastes of the two principal builders, Joseph Boob, between the 1850s and 1880, and Enoch Miller, between 1870 and 1910. In brick structures they liked to arrange bricks at the corners to resemble quoins. They also preferred ornamental brackets and window framing. In the 1890s dozens of houses, heretofore quite plain, received fancy "spool" style porches.

The "old town" retains much of the 19th century flavor, and the sizeable growth of the community since World War II has been at the edges leaving the 19th century town almost unchanged.

Despite its name Market Street is residential. Green is also residential and Chestnut is both residential and commercial. Except for two blocks of Market Street, which were designed as a central square, the streets are quite narrow. Business came to Chestnut Street when it became the pathway of the Lewisburg and Mifflinburg Turnpike in 1828.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

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

MIFFLINBURG HISTORIC DISTRICT, Union County

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE 3

Most of the buildings were erected on 60 foot lots or smaller divisions thereof. They line the streets, leaving almost no space for driveways. Horses and carriages were accommodated in barns on the alleys.

Houses are well painted and maintained. Streets are tree lined; yards are well tended; there is an obvious pride in appearances.

The alleys are paved, and are lined with a melange of barns and sheds. Some have been removed or converted into garages, but the narrow width of the alleys tends to limit their number.

Mifflinburg is the end of the line of an old branch of Penn-Central Railroad, and its industries require up to two or three car loads of materials daily. But there is no "wrong side of the track" here, as both sides share the pleasant atmosphere of the community.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES _____ BUILDER/ARCHITECT _____

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

In retrospect it would appear that a village in the vicinity of Mifflinburg was inevitable, situated as it is in the heart of fertile Buffalo Valley extending 25 miles in length, and, at its broadest, 6 miles across. Today it is intersected by busy Route 45 which feeds Interstate 80 eastward and westward.

Officers serving in Colonel Bouquet's campaign against Indians in the Ohio Country in 1764 recognized its fertility and petitioned the proprietary government for land grants here, but it was Elias Youngman who capitalized upon its potential by purchasing the land a few years after the close of the Revolutionary War. He laid out the town site in 1792, and he must have been pleased with the results, having sold thirty-two 60 by 100 foot lots and fifty-six one acre outlots during the first year.

Like the Proprietors of Pennsylvania before him, he included quit-rents, expecting they would guarantee him a yearly income in perpetuity. And like other promoters he offered lots to religious groups for token payments and donated a school lot and a cemetery plot as well. His survey began at present day Third Street, and extended westward.

Noticing Youngman's flurry of sales George Rhodes (Rote) purchased land just east of Youngman, and surveyed it to create Rhodestown. Residents of the town have often wished that he had coordinated his plans with those of Youngman since comparable lot and street arrangements might have eased traffic in the 20th century.

Sensing that Youngmanstown (as it was termed at the start) offered prospects for future growth, tradesmen and merchants were among the early arrivals, and within the space of a single year the village had a storekeeper and tavern keeper, as well as a carpenter, mason, blacksmith, tailor and gunsmith.

The tide of migration into the valley-Scots Irish from the lower Susquehanna Valley, and Germans from Berks County - sustained the growth, and by 1799 the village had fifty-three taxables, a gain of three fold in 6 years. But once the farm land was filled, its growth slowed, and Lewisburg at the foot of the valley on the West Branch of the Susquehanna River gradually emerged as the principal town.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

MIFFLINBURG HISTORIC DISTRICT, Union County

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

Meanwhile, Youngmanstown served briefly as the acting county seat when Union County was created in 1813, but New Berlin succeeded it a year later. In 1827 Youngmanstown and Rhodestown were joined officially to create the borough of Mifflinburg, so named to honor the state's first governor, Thomas Mifflin. In 1855 the rivalry of Lewisburg and Mifflinburg surfaced briefly when Snyder County was removed from Union, and a new county seat was determined by referendum. Lewisburg won after a hard contest, and Mifflinburg's future seemed less rosy.

But in the 1860s the horse-drawn vehicular industry in the village, heretofore limited to two or three shops, and possibly ten or twelve mechanics, gained momentum. Since almost every fair sized village in the area had at least one wagon-carriage shop, and since iron and wood, and blacksmiths and woodworkers were commonplace, a specialization in a particular community would have appeared remote indeed. But it happened in Mifflinburg.

Competition invited competition, and a more vigorous salesmanship. Apprentices left their masters to open their own shops, and by 1881 more than 30 buggy works were in operation. Most employed but one or two mechanics, but several as many as 12 or 15. During the winter of 1880-1881 one shop turned out 138 sleighs; another 90; and a third 71. The largest builders in the 1880s were the three Gutelius brothers, Thomas, Jacob and John each of whom operated his own shop. Frederick Gutelius and his wife Anna Bishel had moved to Mifflinburg from Berks County about 1805, and after three generations Gutelius was the most common surname in the community. Energetic and raw boned they furnished more than their share of leadership in civic and religious activities.

The expansion of buggy making made Mifflinburg the "buggy town," and the buggy capital of Pennsylvania. Vehicles were shipped by the box car into the South and West, as far as the Carolinas and Kansas, and they were towed in tandem to markets across Pennsylvania.

Thus the significance of the buggy town can scarcely be exaggerated.

The Mifflinburg Buggy Association was organized in May of 1978 to commemorate the significance of the industry in the life of the community. Unknown at that moment by the organizers was the fact that the Heiss Buggy Works had been closed without the removal of its machines and spare parts. Its subsequent discovery has enabled the association to lease 3 properties involved, and to undertake its restoration. It is believed that such a setting for a buggy museum is unique. Most Mifflinburg vehicles were labeled, and can be identified according to the maker.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

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

MIFFLINBURG HISTORIC DISTRICT, Union County

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 3

To date tags representing about twenty builders have been rediscovered.

At the turn of the century three buggy companies, the Mifflinburg Buggy Company, the Hopp Carriage Works and the Mifflinburg Body and Gear Company were organized to provide mass production. And while production increased for a few years the smaller producers closed their doors one by one. In 1917 the Mifflinburg Buggy Company and the Mifflinburg Body and Gear merged to create the Mifflinburg Body Company, and for a decade, while buggy production ebbed, this factory produced wooden truck and station wagon bodies for the automobile trade. Its employment neared 300, but steel bodies constructed by the large auto companies in the 1930s and 1940s destroyed its markets, and it ended in bankruptcy in the 1940s.

Largely as a result of the buggy industry the population of the town doubled after 1870 within the span of two generations. Growth subsided thereafter, and when it resumed after World War II it was concentrated in the suburbs, and the older blocks retained their 19th century characteristics. Remaining among these older buildings are no fewer than sixteen which were once involved in buggy building.

While the buggy industry was the most important catalyst in the community's growth, developments in transportation were also significant. The Lewisburg and Youngmanstown and the Youngmanstown and Bellefonte turnpikes had helped to spark the village's early growth, and the coming of the Lewisburg and Tyrone Railroad in 1873 jointed the community with the ever growing railroad network. Mifflinburg had a surprising number of traveling salesmen, and train schedules permitted both teachers and students to reach their schools on a daily basis. Late in the 19th century narrow gauge railroads linked Mifflinburg and the west end of the county to enormous stands of timber, and made possible a large scale lumber industry. And more recently super highway, Interstate 80, has multiplied the trucking business in the area.

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Lincoln, R.V.B. Recollections of Mifflinburg
- Snyder, Charles M. "Union County; A Bicentennial History" 1976
- Linn, John Blair "Annals of Buffalo Valley" 1877
- Tax Assessments
- Newspaper survey of 1830, Paschall & Kelly 1856, D.G. Beers 1868, View of Miff Maps

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 75QUADRANGLE NAME Mifflinburg, PAQUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES

A

1,8	32,78,6,0	4,43,16,8,0
-----	-----------	-------------

B

1,8	32,78,4,0	4,43,14,4,0
-----	-----------	-------------

C

1,8	32,78,3,0	4,43,12,4,0
-----	-----------	-------------

D

1,8	32,75,6,0	4,43,10,8,0
-----	-----------	-------------

E

1,8	32,72,4,0	4,43,00,0,0
-----	-----------	-------------

F

1,8	32,68,6,0	4,43,09,4,0
-----	-----------	-------------

G

1,8	32,68,2,0	4,43,11,0,0
-----	-----------	-------------

H

--	--	--

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

(See Continuation Sheet)

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

Dr. Charles M. Snyder, Professor Emeritus New York State, University of

ORGANIZATION

Union County Historical Society

DATE

Oswego

STREET & NUMBER

2nd and St. Louis Streets

TELEPHONE

717-524-4461

CITY OR TOWN

Lewisburg

STATE

Pennsylvania

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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE ED WEINTRAUB, Director
Office of Historic Preservation

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

DATE

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

