

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

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

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

WEST BRANCH DIVISION OF THE PENNSYLVANIA CANAL AND  
LIMESTONE RUN AQUEDUCT IN MILTON

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

Bounded on north by Broadway, east by Filbert Street,  
south by Limestone Run and west by Bound Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Milton

--- VICINITY OF

17th

STATE

Pennsylvania

CODE  
42

--- NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

COUNTY  
Northumberland

CODE  
097

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

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

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

ConRail, Harry Wiedemann, Manager of Real Estate

STREET & NUMBER

700 East Water Street

CITY, TOWN

Syracuse

--- VICINITY OF

STATE

New York 13210

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Northumberland County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Market Square

CITY, TOWN

Sunbury

STATE

Pennsylvania

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Pennsylvania Inventory of Historic Places

DATE

1977

--- FEDERAL  STATE --- COUNTY --- LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission  
William Penn Memorial Museum, P. O. Box 1026

CITY, TOWN

Harrisburg

STATE

Pennsylvania

**7 DESCRIPTION****CONDITION**

EXCELLENT  
 GOOD  
 FAIR  
 DETERIORATED  
 RUINS  
 UNEXPOSED

**CHECK ONE**

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

**CHECK ONE**

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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

The West Branch of the Pennsylvania Canal had its southern terminus at the canal basin in Northumberland and from this point ran along the east bank of the West Branch of the Susquehanna River, north through Muncy and west through Williamsport, Jersey Shore, and Lock Haven to Farrandsville.

General Data West Branch Canal

1. Dates of Construction:  
 construction started: 1828  
 construction completed: 1830  
 Canal abandoned: 1890 or 1891
2. Contractor, Engineer, Builder:  
 Contractor: Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
 Engineer: Francis W. Rawle  
 Builder (of Milton Section): Follmer and Levan
3. Elevation:  
 The West Branch Canal covered a total distance of 73 miles overcoming a 138.5 feet change in elevation from Farrandsville to Northumberland.
4. Number of Locks:  
 19 Locks, 12 dams, 8 aqueducts
5. Source of Water:  
 Susquehanna River (Muncy Dam)
6. Speed and Navigation:  
 Average speed was 2 to 3 miles per hour with a two or three mule draft. Only 4 miles of the West Branch was slack water navigation the remaining 69 miles was canal.
7. Boat Types and Dimensions:  
 The general cargo boats were 15 feet wide, 80 feet long, 7 feet deep drawing 5 to 6 feet of water. About 1900 double boats were used.
8. Typical Lock Dimensions:  
 The average lock on the West Branch Division was 90 feet by 17 feet.
9. Canal and Towpath Dimensions:  
 The towpath on this division varied anywhere from 5 to 6 feet to 12 to 15 feet depending upon the terrain. The canal was in general 40 feet wide at the top of the water line, 28 feet at bottom with a minimum depth of 4 feet.

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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10. Original Purpose of the West Branch Division:

The West Branch Division was developed to extend the service area of the Pennsylvania Canal up the West Branch of the Susquehanna River. Lumber was the major commodity transported on this section.

Local residents hoped that this branch might be extended to make connection with the Allegheny River to the northwest. However, the only subsequent additions were a 4 mile state-built section known as the "Bald Eagle Cut", west of Lock Haven along Bald Eagle Creek; which was later supplemented by a 22 mile privately financed addition called the Spring Creek and Bald Eagle Navigation, making connections into Bellefonte.

A short connection known as the "Lewisburg Cut", was built in 1833 across the Susquehanna by the State to tie Lewisburg directly into the West Branch Canal System. There was also a privately-built 3/4 mile connection at Muncy, known as the "Muncy Cut".

11. Condition of the Canal Today:

Many locks and aqueducts on the West Branch Division remain today and some of the canal is still water filled although most has been filled.

MILTON SECTION OF THE WEST BRANCH DIVISION

The Milton Section is in the lower canal above Lewisburg almost to the confluence of the West Branch of the Susquehanna with the Susquehanna at Northumberland. Located in Milton are Lock #17 and a small aqueduct over Limestone Run. However, only the aqueduct is standing.

Canal Features

Condition

Limestone Run Aqueduct

This aqueduct was built between 1829-1830 by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The contractors and builders were McCormick and Montgomery. The engineer was Francis W. Rawle. This single span of 20 feet is constructed of stone and wood with an overall width of 75 feet, a trunk width of 30 feet, and height of 7 feet. The stone abutments are in good condition although they have been used as the footers for a railroad bridge.

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Canal Features

Condition

Canal Bed

Filled but liner still in good condition. (See attached engineer's report.)

Towpath

Land is cleared although path cannot be seen at this time.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input 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 checked="" 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				

SPECIFIC DATES 1829-1830

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Builder: Follmer & Levan  
McCormick & Montgomery

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Architect/Engineer: Francis W. Rawle

Interest in the development of a canal system in Pennsylvania began in the early 1800's. Early canal supporters hoped that a safe and relatively quick way could be developed to link Philadelphia and the eastern seaboard with Pittsburgh and other land locked cities. With public pressure rapidly increasing, the state legislature of Pennsylvania successively passed three canal acts. The first was dated March 27, 1824 for development of a canal route from the great valley of Chester and Lancaster Counties along one or another set of natural waterways westward to Pittsburgh.

The second act, dated April 11, 1825 was to consider navigable connections between the eastern and western waters of the state and Lake Erie.

The third act of February 25, 1826 authorized the commencement of a canal to be constructed at the expense of the state and called the Pennsylvania Canal.

While this Main Line of the Pennsylvania Canal was the principle system developed by the state for tying Pennsylvania together, east to west, there were also other state constructed and operated divisions to supplement the Main Line, connecting with it, either directly or indirectly. The West Branch Division was one of these connector canals.

The West Branch Division of the Pennsylvania Canal was first opened in November, 1830, connecting with the North Branch Division and Susquehanna Divisions at Northumberland.

The Borough of Milton through which it passed was rapidly growing into a significant agricultural and industrial center. The coming of the canal in 1830 was one of the most important events in the community's history giving impetus to an already burgeoning economy. The coming of the packet boat greatly facilitated travel to Harrisburg and Philadelphia adding another stimulus to population growth. Milton continued to make progress through the middle of the last century, but in 1880 a great fire completely destroyed the entire center of the Borough and since then the business district has been injured by a number of floods, the most devastating being in 1972. The result has been a gradual loss of activity in the central business district.

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Milton has been involved in a Federal Redevelopment Program since the early 1970's. This resulted in the parcel of land containing the West Branch Canal and the Limestone Run Aqueduct becoming available as one large parcel. The Borough and people of Milton are now involved in a feasibility study to reconstruct the canal and aqueduct as soon as possible and develop the entire canal area as a business, professional, and residential district in keeping with the period 1830-1860.

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1.7 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,8	3442,00	4,54,24,2,0	B	1,8	3441,3,0	4,54,20,8,0
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	1,8	3441,0,0	4,54,20,8,0	D	1,8	3441,6,0	4,54,24,3,0
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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. Sidney Davis / Ms. Susan M. Zacher

ORGANIZATION

Milton Historical Comm. / Pa. Hist. & Mus. Comm.

DATE

November, 1977

STREET & NUMBER

425 Broadway / P. O. Box 1026

TELEPHONE

717-742-7113 / 717-787-4363

CITY OR TOWN

Milton / Harrisburg

STATE

Pennsylvania

**12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL     

STATE  X

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 WILLIAM J. WEWER, Executive Director  
Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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Report of Canal Commissioners, Senate Journal. 1828-1829.

Pennsylvania Railroad Maps of Pennsylvania Canal, Maps #125, #126.

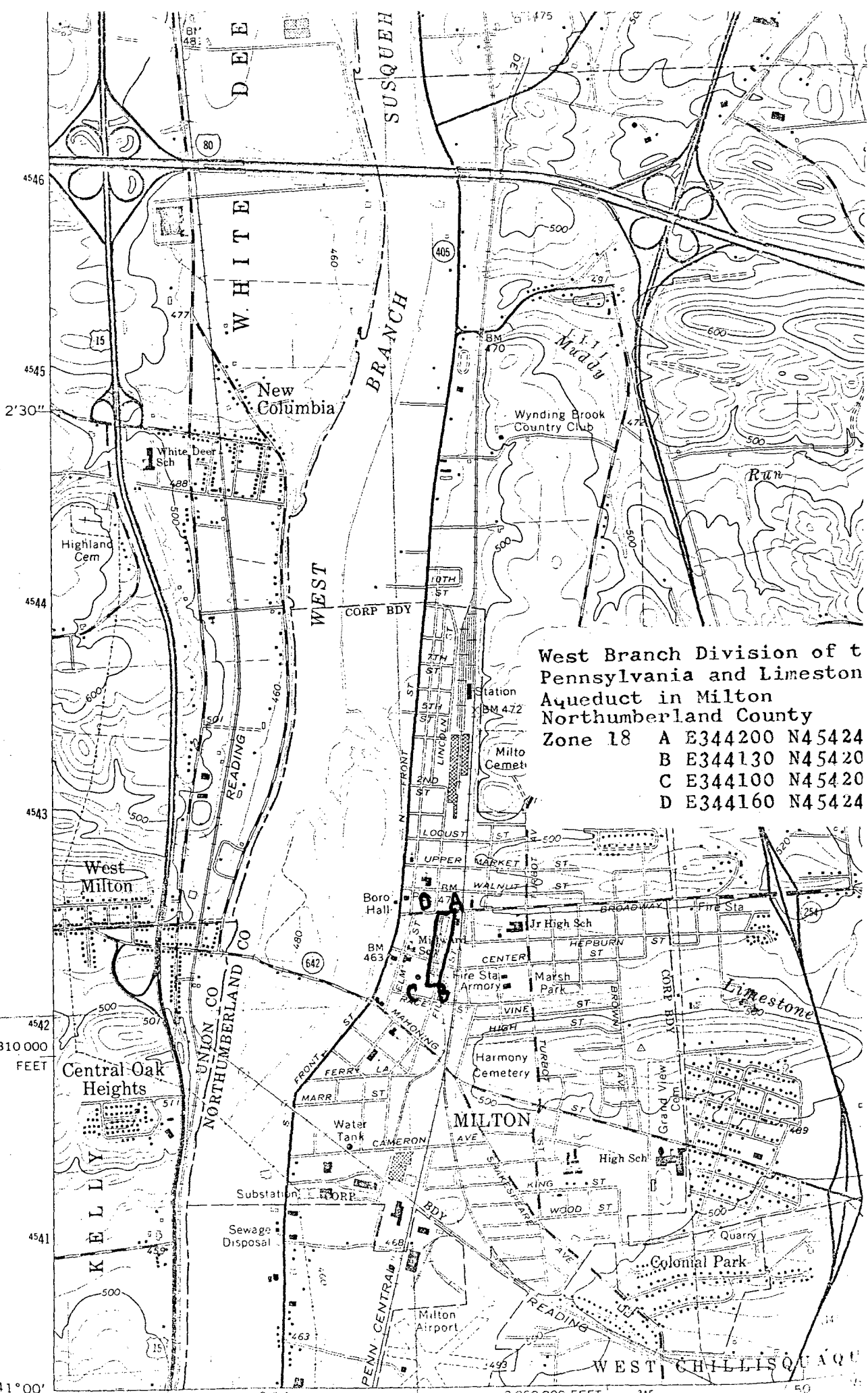
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Klein, Theodore R. The Canals of Pennsylvania and the System of  
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West Branch Division of t  
 Pennsylvania and Limestone  
 Aqueduct in Milton  
 Northumberland County  
 Zone 18

A	E344200	N45424
B	E344130	N45420
C	E344100	N45420
D	E344160	N45424

4546  
 2'30"  
 4545  
 4544  
 4543  
 4542  
 310 000  
 FEET  
 4541  
 41°00'