

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name MILLER, CHRISTIAN, HOUSE

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Location

street & number 233 West Mahoning Street

not for publication

city, town Punxsutawney

vicinity

state PA

code PA

county Jefferson

code 065

zip code 15857

### 3. Classification

#### Ownership of Property

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

#### Category of Property

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

#### Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	_____ buildings
_____	_____ sites
_____	_____ structures
_____	_____ objects
<u>1</u>	<u>none</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register none

### 4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

DR. BRENT D. GLASS

11/7/194  
Date

Signature of certifying official

PA HISTORICAL & MUSEUM COMMISSION

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

### 5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.  See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Work in Progress

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Italianate

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Sandstone

walls Wood

roof Slate

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Christian Miller House is a ca. 1870 2½-story Italianate residence of wood frame construction, 40'x33', set upon a foundation of cut stone and capped with a slate-clad gabled roof. Centered intersecting gables break the plane of the roof both at the front and the rear of the house. Interior brick chimneys, devoid of any corbeling or other ornamental treatment, rise from the interior reaches of the roofline. The property is sited on a corner lot immediately adjacent to the central business district. While some alterations have occurred to the building, the resource does retain a high degree of integrity of setting, materials, and overall 19th-century character.

The facade is the most highly ornamented elevation of the property. It is arranged in a five-bay configuration with a double doorway centered under a one-story porch measuring 8'x10'. Originally, the porch extended across much of the facade; the arcaded trim of the porch was removed at an indeterminate time, likely concurrently with the porch being reduced to its present scale. The porch which remains is symmetrically located, retains much of its original trim, and does not detract seriously from the overall integrity of the resource. The porch is hipped roofed, supported by square posts and pilasters with neck molding and chamfered corners, and is further detailed using sandwich brackets and a dentil band. A turned balustrade extends toward the sidewalk on each side.

Except for the enclosed rear porch, fenestration on the Miller House consists of both round- and segmental-arched windows. On the facade, the first story windows and the single window in the centered third-story gable are round-arched, while those on the second story are segmental-arched. The gable ends contain both window forms; windows on the first story and in pediment of the third story are round-arched, while those on the second are segmental-arched, including paired window units near the rear of the gable ends. One single window opening into a bathroom on the rear of the second floor has been replaced by a small paired window unit with one-over-one sash. All original windows are one-over-one lights, trimmed with surrounds exhibiting simple faces, plain drip labels beneath the sills, and consoles supporting the window heads. The window heads are crowned with curvilinear molding and stylized keystones on the first story, flat-topped molding on the second, and round-arched molding on the gable-end windows on the third.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally     statewide     locally

Applicable National Register Criteria     A     B     C     D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)     A     B     C     D     E     F     G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance

1870  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates

1870  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder

Unknown  
\_\_\_\_\_

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Christian Miller House derives its significance from its embodiment of the Victorian Italianate style of architecture, a design mode which flourished in America during much of the last half of the nineteenth century. In Punxsutawney, however, the Italianate style is barely represented at all, either in residential or commercial architecture. The community's major growth began in the latter years of the nineteenth and early in the twentieth century, when this particular architectural style had fallen from fashion. Indeed, in *Punxsutawney Centennial, 1849-1949*, it is noted that

Punxsutawney grew very rapidly from 1890 to 1910. During this time the industries were developed and they brought major progress and economic success to the community. It was then that a great number of our business structures and residences were erected.

The finest residential property built nearly contemporaneously with the Miller House is the 1868 Winslow Mansion at 200 Pine Street, a brick Italian Villa structure with a three-story central tower on its facade. The Miller House reflects a far higher degree of integrity than does the Winslow Mansion, since the latter remains converted for apartment use and is not in a good state of repair. As suggested in the *Centennial* publication above, the fortunes of Punxsutawney had not yet reached their peak during the years of Italianate design, and the community's architectural heritage corroborates this interpretation. The majority of Punxsutawney's historic residences date from the very early years of the twentieth century, reflecting styles such as the Dutch Colonial Revival (308 West Mahoning Street), the Tudor Revival (202 Pine Street), and the Georgian Revival (the Dr. Seitz House (ca. 1900, 402 West Mahoning Street), the W. A. Bowers House (1904, 814 East Mahoning Street), and the T. M. Kurtz House (1904, 312 West Mahoning Street and listed in the National Register on July 25, 1988). Thus, the Miller House, somewhat architecturally anomalous then and now, is clearly the finest Italianate residence in Punxsutawney.

The home was built for Christian Miller (1842-1902). A native of Dansville, New York, Miller came to Punxsutawney when but a child. During the Civil War he served two years in Company G of the Ninth Regiment, Pennsylvania Volunteers; at the battle of Charles City Crossroads, he sustained wounds

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Punxsutawney Centennial, 1849-1949 (Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania, 1949), n.p.  
"Punxsutawney Spirit," January 19, 1902.

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreeage of property less than one acre

**UTM References**

A     
 Zone Easting Northing

C

B     
 Zone Easting Northing

D

See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description** Deed book 528, page 286-287:

Beginning at the southeast corner of West Mahoning and Church Streets, then south along the east side of Church Street 161.3' to a point at the northeast corner of Church Street and Mulberry Alley; then east along the north side of Mulberry Alley 140.2' to a point; then north 80.5' to a point; then west 60.0' to a point; then north 79.5' to the south side of West Mahoning Street; then 60' west to the point of beginning.

See continuation sheet

**Boundary Justification**

The boundary includes that portion of the city lot historically associated with the property, except for a section 60'x80' which was sold to the immediate east of the property.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title David L. Taylor, Principal

organization Taylor & Taylor Associates, Inc. date September 10, 1993

street & number 9 Walnut Street telephone 814-849-4900

city or town Brookville state PA zip code 15825

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Miller, Christian, House

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Two window forms are found on the enclosed rear porch: a 2-light sliding glass assembly opens into a kitchen area at the left side of the enclosed porch, and a one-over-one unit opens into a bathroom nearer to the center of the porch.

On the right side of the house is a one-story bay window with recessed paneled aprons beneath the windows and a bracketed cornice above.

The most lavish ornamental feature on the exterior of the Miller House is the main cornice which extends around all elevations. It is articulated by paired and single sandwich brackets, a frieze punctuated by molded panels, and a dentil band.

The rear of the house likely had an open porch spanning approximately thirty feet of the first story and extending outward about ten feet from the rear wall. This element was changed when the property was modified for multi-family residential use many years ago, leaving the appearance of a wood frame extension of the main house. The only remaining open section of the rear porch is found at the far right side, where a small area leads to the 4-panel back door.

The interior of the Miller House reflects the finest that could be produced locally during this period. The original four-over-four plan is arranged around a central hall which runs through most of the building. Dominating the hallway on the first and second floors is a stair with an open balustrade of walnut, a molded newel on the first floor, a carved handrail, and turned balusters.

All interior walls are of plaster. Except for the enclosed rear porch, woodwork on the interior consists of deeply molded door and window surrounds, some finished naturally and others painted. Most doors are of a four-panel design, with operable transoms. The original three-part interior shutters are set in tracks on the inside of the window reveals.

The two principal rooms are a front parlor and the diningroom, located back-to-back to the right of the hallway. The parlor is distinguished by its woodwork, including parquet flooring and a plate rail located at a height corresponding with the meeting rails of the windows. A mantelpiece of white marble is also found in this room. The diningroom contains plate rail-height paneled wainscoting of golden oak, a parquet floor, a marble mantelpiece, and a built-in china cupboard. This room also contains a bay window, pierced by three round-arched windows and accented by paneled window aprons.

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Other rooms on the first story are of indeterminate usage, but feature essentially the same woodwork and associated accoutrements as found in the parlor and diningroom. The front room to the left of the hallway contains a white marble mantle. The room to the rear contains a wainscot of battened horizontal boards. Floors are of varnished hardwood.

The enclosed rear porch reflects the period during which it was remodeled, likely in the 1950s, and contains a bathroom, a kitchen, and a small storage room.

The second floor of the Miller House contains bedrooms with marble mantles and an area at the right rear which was likely converted from a bedroom into a kitchen and bath. The woodwork on the second floor is identical to that on the first and has been painted, although some has been stripped and refinished naturally as part of the rehabilitation process. The floors are of varying finish, some covered with linoleum, others carpeted, and some original and exposed.

The third floor of the house is reached by an enclosed stair which rises from the rear of the second floor. It is divided into rooms and is finished with plaster, softwood floors, simple baseboards, and correspondingly unadorned window and door surrounds. Beyond these features, the third floor is generally devoid of any remarkable architectural ornament.

There are no outbuildings extant on the site.

As noted above, the property had been converted from single-family to multi-family residential use. The major alterations which occurred at this time consisted of the enclosing of the rear porch and the modification of the left rear area of the second floor for use as a kitchen and bath. The rear porch alteration is not on a major elevation, is executed in wood, and does not significantly reduce the overall integrity of the resource. The insertion of partitioning into the left rear portion of the second floor is not an atypical 1950s approach to remodeling. While one bedroom area was lost, the three remaining bedrooms, complete with their marble mantles and uncompromised trimwork, more than compensate for this loss and the total reflection of the property's significance is not diminished. It is presently in the midst of rehabilitation for use as professional offices.

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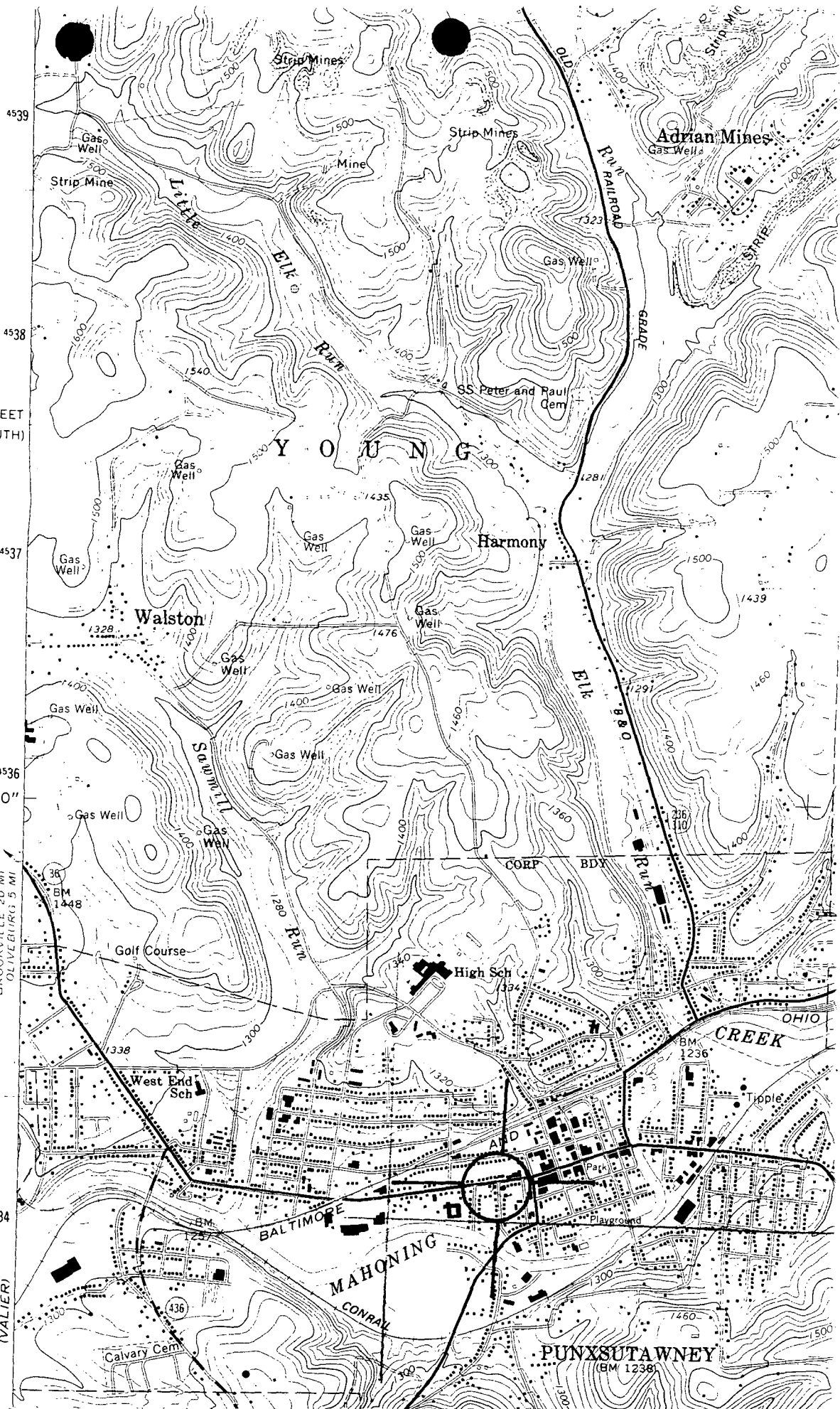
Miller, Christian, House

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necessitating the amputation of one leg. Returning home, he kept a saloon. He soon entered politics and in 1867 and in 1871 was elected Jefferson County Treasurer. Active with Civil War veterans' affairs, in 1882 Miller became a charter member of the Captain E. H. Little Post of the Grand Army of the Republic. Vocationally, he operated an insurance business and served as the superintendent of the Mahoning Gas and Heat Company, which was established in 1884 to supply natural gas to the community. He also served part of a term as Associate Judge in the 1890s. Court House records suggest that Miller built his home about 1870; it is shown in James Caldwell's *Illustrated Atlas of Jefferson County, Pennsylvania*, published in 1878. He resided here until his death in 1902.

Following Miller's death, the property was sold several times over the years. Lavon C. Barrelle purchased the home shortly after Miller's death; after her own death in 1931, the property reverted to her surviving siblings, one of whom, Susie McClure, sold the property to one John Beatty in 1946. It is likely that the home was "apartmentized" during the Beatty's ownership. In 1959, the Miller House passed to Beatty's daughter, Margaret Beatty Sutter, who sold it to the present owner in 1988. The building remained "apartmentized" until the present rehabilitation began, roughly at that time.

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(SOUTH)



MILLER, CHRISTIAN  
 4574160  
 670500  
 Zone 17  
 JEFFERSON  
 COUNTY, PA

punxsutawney  
 Quail