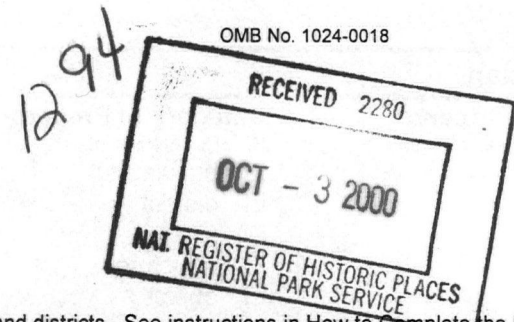


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Miller, Thomas, House  
other names/site number Wessel House (HAM-110-53)

2. Location

street & number 11294 U.S. Route 50 n/a  not for publication  
city or town Elizabethtown n/a  vicinity  
state Ohio code OH county Hamilton 061 zip code 45052

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Barbara Power <sup>Dept. Head</sup> Planning Inventory & Registration September 14, 2000  
Signature of certifying official Date

Ohio Historic Preservation Office -- OH SHPO  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. 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): \_\_\_\_\_

Edson H. Beall 11-2-00  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

for  
Signature of Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
3	2	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
3	2	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

n/a

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

domestic

agriculture

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

single dwelling

agricultural outbuilding

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century/Greek Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation stone

roof metal

walls brick

other stone, wood, concrete

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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## 7. Description

**Setting.** The Thomas Miller House is located on U.S. Route 50 in Whitewater Township, Hamilton County, Ohio, approximately one-half mile east of the Indiana state line. It lies approximately 21 miles west of downtown Cincinnati and nine miles east of Lawrenceburg, Indiana. Whitewater Township is in the southwestern corner of the county. One of the last rural areas in a heavily urbanized county, the township is for the most part sparsely settled. It contains no incorporated communities and has no zoning. Industrial development is occurring along major roads. The township takes its name from the Whitewater River, which passes through its western section. The township's southern and eastern boundaries follow the Great Miami River. (See topographic map.) About one-half mile east of the Miller House is the village of Elizabethtown, a small community founded in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century whose housing stock is composed largely of modest vernacular dwellings of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, interspersed with mobile homes and empty lots. U.S. Route 50 is a busy east-west thoroughfare with mixed agricultural, residential and industrial land uses. Interstate 275 crosses Route 50 just west of the property. To the east of the Miller House is a frame American Foursquare farmhouse surrounded by outbuildings and open fields. To the west, on the other side of the freeway, is a brick Greek Revival/Italianate I-house. A rail line parallels the south side of the road.

The Miller House occupies a level tract of land containing 1.797 acres. (See photo 1.) Cultivated fields lie to the north and east of the house. Along the western edge of the property is a dry creekbed. The house faces a broad lawn shaded by pine, fir and spruce trees. Junipers and mature cedars frame the façade and serve as foundation plantings. A gravel driveway winds around the north and east sides of the house.

**Description.** The Miller House is a two-and-a-half story brick Greek Revival dwelling on the I-house plan, built c. 1830-36. The main block, symmetrical in design, is five bays wide and two bays deep. (Photo 1.) A two-story brick ell with gabled roof adjoins the north side of the main block. (Photo 6.) The roof, of moderate pitch, utilizes a rather unusual design: it features a hip in the west elevation and a gable in the east. It is covered with raised seam metal. Brick interior chimneys stand in the gable ends. The box gutters and fascia have been covered with vinyl or aluminum siding but their profiles are still visible. The façade and side elevations of the house are laid in Flemish bond; common bond brickwork, with every seventh course composed of headers, is utilized for the rear wall. Lintels and sills are of smooth-faced stone. The walls are painted red with white trim. The foundation and projecting water table are composed of tooled limestone.

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The main entrance, centered in the façade, is framed by engaged Tuscan colonnettes with pronounced entasis. It features an eight-panel door with small brass knob and escutcheon. A broad, seven-pane transom surmounts the entry. (Photos 2, 3.) Secondary entrances in the east and west sides of the ell utilize similar types of doors but are treated more simply, with single-pane transoms. A beveled wooden lintel is visible above the east doorway. The steps leading to the west entry have been removed. (The presence of a door in the far side of the ell, away from the domestic yard, is somewhat unusual for a house of this type.) Windows contain double-hung, six-over-six sashes to which metal storm sashes have been added. A pair of small quarter-circle windows can be seen in the east gable end. (Photo 4.) Two bays in the west elevation are blind and were included for the sake of symmetry. (Photo 6.)

The entrance is sheltered by a small, hipped-roof porch borne by pairs of slender octagonal posts. It features a cylindrical handrail and slender "stick" balusters. The porch's steps and foundation are of tooled limestone. The porch is original to the house, although the floor was rebuilt in the 1950s. (Photo 2.) A double gallery shelters the east elevation of the ell and winds around the north end of the main block. The upper story features a shed roof, plain square posts and a balustrade composed of horizontal crossbars. The lower story is borne by square brick posts. The porch was largely rebuilt in the 1950s using many of the existing timbers; the brick posts replaced wooden ones in deteriorated condition. (Photo 5.) An enclosed, dog-leg staircase in the northwest corner of the porch leads to the upper story; it provides the only access to the ell's second-floor rear room. Beneath the staircase is a trap door leading to the basement. A small section of the porch behind the main block was enclosed in the late-20<sup>th</sup> century; the enclosure is covered with vertical wood siding. The porch rests on a concrete foundation.

**Interior.** The interior plan of the Miller House is characteristic of the classic I-house type. The main doorway opens to a central passage. (Photo 14.) Each floor contains two rooms, one on either side of the hallway: a parlor and a dining room on the first floor and two bedrooms on the second. At the top of the stairs, a small room--perhaps intended as a nursery or a sewing room--was converted to a bathroom in the 1950s. A small bathroom was inserted behind the stairs in the 1960s; it was created by enclosing a small portion of the rear porch. No other changes have been made to the floor plan of the house.

The house features simple yet elegant woodwork characteristic of the Federal and Greek Revival eras. An open staircase winds to the second floor; built of cherry, it features a

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tapered newel; slender, tapered balusters; and scrolled risers. The doorways are framed by Federal-style moldings with mitered corners, and the door casings are enhanced by distinctive fluted panels. Federal-style doors with five horizontal panels are found throughout the house; they feature large iron rimlocks with small, round, brass knobs; the front door lock retains its original skeleton key. All interior doors and woodwork remain in place.

Focal point of each room is a massive fireplace on the end wall. Those found on the first floor have deep, angled fireboxes built of limestone, with brick jack arches. The dining room features a broad frame-and-shelf mantelpiece framed by wallpresses. The presses, arranged in three tiers, contain pairs of short cupboards on top and bottom and one or two drawers in the center. (Photo 13.) The room features mitered woodwork like that of the stairhall. (Photo 12.) The parlor includes a Greek Revival mantelpiece with engaged, tapered colonettes; the fireplace was bricked in when central heating was installed. The room utilizes flat, unadorned woodwork with plain, square corner blocks. Below the windows are paneled aprons. (Photo 15.)

The second-floor bedrooms feature pier and lintel mantelpieces of simpler design than those of the first story, with deep lintels. The broad, low fireboxes are lined with brick. (Photo 16.) Flanking the fireplaces are Greek Revival-style cupboards with double-leaf doors featuring vertical panels. (Photo 17.) Closets with louvered doors were added along the inner wall of the east bedroom in the 1950s or 60s.

The rear ell contains one large room on each floor. The first-floor room, originally used as a dining room, was converted to a kitchen in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. It features a broad mantelpiece like those of the parlor and dining room, with original double-door cupboards on either side. The ceiling is covered with tongue-and-groove boards. A doorway in the east wall opens to the rear porch; a second doorway, in the west wall, has not been used for many years, and a cupboard now stands in front of it. The second-floor room, known as "Jake's room" for the family member who once occupied it, is accessible only from the upper-story rear porch. (It may have been intended as quarters for a hired man or servant.) A large fireplace, similar to the one found in the kitchen, occupies the north wall. A steep, narrow, enclosed staircase beside the fireplace winds to the attic. The room has been used for storage for many years.

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Ceilings, which are 12 feet high on the first floor and ten on the second, are faced with smooth plaster; the walls, which are 18 inches thick, are papered. Floors are wide ash boards with clear finish.

**Outbuildings.** Directly behind the house is a one-room structure built of coursed fieldstone, known as the "stone kitchen." It stands one-and-a-half stories tall under a side-gabled roof covered with asphalt shingles. The kitchen features wooden batten doors and small double-hung windows with six-over-six lights. Courses of vertically set stones serve as lintels. (Photo 7.) A datestone set in the east gable end bears the legend "TM 1830." A stout chimney of coursed, mortared fieldstone rises from the roof surface; its upper section was rebuilt and raised in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century to meet building codes. The kitchen was the original house on the property; family tradition says the Millers resided in it while the brick house was being built. It then served as a kitchen until the 1900s. The first floor contains a single large room. On the west wall is a large cooking fireplace framed by cupboards. Presently used for storage, the building is in sound condition. To the east of the kitchen is a raised stone patio that dates from the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century.

A frame, two-car garage, built c. 1950, stands beside the driveway. It features a side-gabled roof surmounted by a small cupola. (Photo 8.) Another garage of similar design, built around the same time or somewhat later, is located to the east of the house, near the road.

In a field east of the house stands a small barn with forward-facing gable roof, dating from the late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is built of mortise-and-tenon construction. The roof is covered with corrugated metal and the walls with old vertical wood siding. The weathered boards are widely spaced, with gaps in between. Built into a gentle slope, the barn rests on a raised foundation of coursed, mortared limestone. A large, shed-roofed addition has been appended to the south elevation; it includes a passage for a tractor. It is covered with weathered vertical siding of somewhat newer vintage. Tiers of tobacco poles rest on the rafters. (Photo 9.) The property formerly included other outbuildings, now gone, of which little is known.

**Integrity.** The Miller House has been remarkably well preserved. Alterations to its historic fabric are unobtrusive and largely reversible. The reconstruction of the rear porch maintained its original character and re-used original materials; moreover, the changes are visible only from the rear of the property. The gutters and fascia, as noted earlier, have been refaced but remain in place underneath. Inside, bathrooms have been added

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without altering the room layout or disturbing original walls. Surrounded by farm fields, with an original barn nearby, the house retains its historic rural setting; new development in the vicinity is not visible from the house. The house was carefully maintained during its long tenure by the Miller, Guard and Wessel families.

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## 8. Significance

**Summary.** The Miller House, built c. 1830-36, is significant under Criterion C as a distinguished example of a Greek Revival dwelling built on the I-house plan. It has been evaluated in the context of the Greek Revival architecture of Whitewater Township, Hamilton County, Ohio. Its simple detailing and careful proportions are typical of rural examples of the style. Noteworthy features include the well-detailed main entrance with columns and transom, quarter-circle attic windows and Flemish bond brickwork. The interior of the house features an original staircase and woodwork and mantelpieces in the Federal and Greek Revival modes. The property also includes a one-room fieldstone vernacular house that is an early and significant example of stone construction in the township, and a small timber frame barn. The house and its environs have been carefully preserved and retain a high degree of integrity.

### Architectural Development

**Representation in existing surveys.** Whitewater Township was surveyed in 1985 and 1986 as part of a comprehensive survey of Hamilton County. The work was completed under the auspices of the Miami Purchase Association for Historic Preservation (now known as the Cincinnati Preservation Association). A total of 98 properties were recorded in the township, 27 on individual Ohio Historic Inventory forms and 71 on group forms. No buildings in the township are presently listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The Thomas Miller House was deemed to have merit for National Register listing during the course of the survey. The house is immediately west of the John Wesley Butler Archaeological District, which was listed in the Register in 1975. The district encompasses a village site and several burial mounds believed to have been used by several prehistoric cultural groups over a long period of time.

**Greek Revival architecture.** "Greek Revival was the dominant style of American domestic architecture during the interval from about 1830 to 1850...during which its popularity led it to be called the National Style" (Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* [Alfred A. Knopf, 1986], p. 182). The new style grew out of Americans' increasing interest in classical buildings (first Roman, then Greek) during the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. Archaeological discoveries in the ancient world also roused interest in classical buildings. In addition, the Greek war for independence fought in the 1820s aroused much sympathy in the newly independent United States. The style was spread by carpenter's guides and pattern books, and by a growing number of trained architects who

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
removed from its original location.
a birthplace or a grave.
a cemetery.
a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
a commemorative property.
less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

architecture

Period of Significance

c. 1830-36

Significant Dates

c. 1830; 1836

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

n/a

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Architect/Builder

unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 #

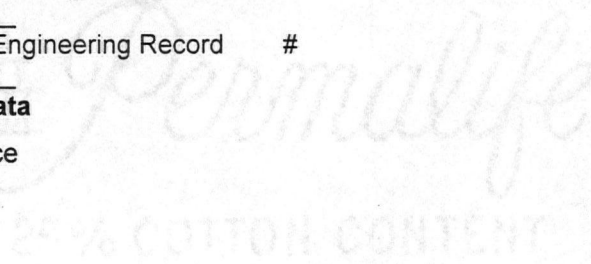
- Federal agency
Local government
University
Other

Name of repository:

Cincinnati Preservation Association

Primary location of additional data

- State Historic Preservation Office
Other State agency



**10. Geographical Data**Acreage of Property 1.797 acres**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting Northing  
1 16 688770 4336600

2 \_\_\_\_\_

Zone Easting Northing

3 \_\_\_\_\_

4 \_\_\_\_\_

 See continuation sheet.**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**name/title Margo Warminskiorganization Cincinnati Preservation Association date July 17, 2000street & number 342 West Fourth Street telephone 513-721-4506city or town Cincinnati state OH zip code 45202**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets****Maps**A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.**Photographs**Representative **black and white** photographs of the property.**Additional items**

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Cincinnati Preservation Associationstreet & number 342 West Fourth Street telephone 513-721-4506city or town Cincinnati state OH zip code 45202

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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designed high-style buildings in the Grecian mode. (See McAlester, p. 184.) Other factors in the dissemination of the style included the "widespread system of transportation improvements (roads, canals, railroads), and the need to house the migratory waves that surged out of the northeastern and southern United States, as well as directly from Europe, all contributed to this style that was not only nationwide but nation-building as well" (James Massey and Shirley Maxwell, *House Styles in America* [Penguin Studio, 1996], p. 66).

Greek Revival buildings are characterized by simple rectangular or massed plans; roofs of gentle to moderate pitch; symmetry or balanced asymmetry, as in a door balanced by a pair of windows; and flat facades with rectilinear ornamentation. They feature "bold, classical details and architraves built in a post-and-lintel arrangement. The rectilinear nature of these elements imitates the post and beam construction of Greek architecture" (Gordon, p. 79). "All windows and doors are trabeated, because the arch had no place in Greek architecture; the place of the Adam style fanlight over the front door is taken by an oblong glazed opening" (Marcus Whiffen, *American Architecture Since 1750: A Guide to the Styles* [MIT Press, 1992], p. 38). Windows generally include multi-light glazing, most often with six-over-six panes.

The cornice lines, doorways and porches of Greek Revival houses were often focal points of ornamentation. The "cornice line of the main roof and porch roofs [is] emphasized with wide bands of trim (this represents the classical entablature and is usually divided into two parts: the frieze above and the architrave below)" (McAlester, p. 179). Friezes may be adorned with dentil bands or simple moldings. More elaborate examples may be ornamented with classical details such as modillions, triglyphs or mutule blocks. They may also include rectangular windows to bring light to the attic story, sometimes with decorative grilles. Houses built after 1850 may feature scrolled Italianate-style brackets. Greek Revival doorways often feature shouldered architraves; they are often framed by narrow, multi-pane transoms and sidelights. Some, like those of the Miller House, are flanked by engaged columns. "It is rare indeed to find a Greek Revival house without an impressive doorway. Multipaned transoms, sidelights, paired columns, and pilaster trim created an impact in the simplest entryways" (Massey and Maxwell, p. 71).

Porches are common features of many Greek Revival dwellings. "[M]ost have porches (either entry or full-width) supported by prominent square or rounded columns, typically of Doric style" (McAlester, p. 179). Porch treatments show considerable regional variation; perhaps more than any other stylistic element. Southern Ohio examples,

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including the Miller House, often feature single-bay entry porches with low hipped roofs, borne by Doric or Tuscan columns or, less commonly, square posts.

Early Greek Revival examples, such as the Miller House, often include elements of the Federal style, which preceded the Greek Revival in popularity; their proportions may also be more typical of Federal-era houses. The Miller House's relatively small windows and narrow lintels are reminiscent of houses of the 1820s and 30s; the quarter-circle attic windows are also characteristic of early-19<sup>th</sup>-century residences. Flemish bond brickwork was popular among antebellum dwellings of the 1820s to 1840s; it was most often employed for principal facades only. The eight-panel, unglazed front door is also typical of the period.

Greek Revival buildings occur "in all areas settled by 1860...and especially flourished in those regions which were being rapidly settled in the decades of the 1830s, '40s, and '50s.... Not surprisingly, the largest surviving concentrations of Greek Revival homes are found today in those states with the largest population growth during the period from 1820 to 1860..." (McAlester, p. 182). According to the authors, Ohio ranks third on the list, behind New York and Pennsylvania (*ibid.*). The Greek Revival style was popular in the state c. 1835-1860 (Gordon, p. 79). "In the interior states, and in rural areas everywhere, it remained a dominant style for domestic buildings until the early 1860s" (McAlester, p. 184).

During the heyday of the Greek Revival in Ohio, regional variations developed in the state. In southern Ohio, including Hamilton County, most examples represent one of three primary house types: I-houses; side-passage "two thirds Georgian" houses, generally with side-facing gables; and massed-plan "four-over-four" houses: two rooms deep with central passages and, generally, side-gabled roofs. All three plan-types are represented in Whitewater Township.

Several Greek Revival houses, built between 1830 and 1865, were recorded in the township during the 1986 survey. The Peter Tebow House (HAM-37-52) at 10901 Stephens Road in Elizabethtown is a massive four over four dwelling built c. 1845 that formerly was used as a drovers' inn. It features central doors with transoms in the first and second stories. The entablature features brackets and cornice returns. Long vacant, the house is in deteriorated condition. The Tebow House was determined eligible for National Register listing by the 1986 survey. The Mrs. K.W. Lewis House (HAM-4169-60) at 3617 Lawrenceburg Road in Elizabethtown is a three-bay frame dwelling of side

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hall plan, built c. 1865. The house is in severely deteriorated condition and retains little original fabric. Just west of the Miller House is 11368 U.S. Route 50, a substantial brick dwelling of transitional Greek Revival/Italianate design. It features centered doorways in the first and second stories, framed by transoms and sidelights. Minimal cornice brackets accent the eave line. (Photo 11.) Several other Greek Revival dwellings documented by the survey have subsequently been demolished.

The Miller House compares favorably with the few remaining Greek Revival residences in the area in terms of both architectural distinction and integrity. It expresses the qualities of the style: restraint, balance, careful proportions, and simple but correct classical detailing. Other examples of the mode in the vicinity represent different plan types or later periods, or have diminished integrity.

**I-houses.** The Miller House is also an excellent example of the I-house, one of the most familiar rural folk houses in America. I-houses stand two- or two-and-a-half stories high and one room deep, under a side-gabled roof of moderate pitch. Chimneys, most often paired, may be placed in or adjacent to the gable ends, stand in the ridgeline or flank the central hall. Facades generally contain three to five bays, most often arranged in symmetry. One- to two-story ells, usually with gabled or shed roofs, adjoin the rear of the main block. Inside, the houses contain two rooms on each of the primary floors, generally bisected by a central hallway. I-houses were built in large numbers throughout the mid-Atlantic region, the upland South and some areas of the Midwest from the early 1800s through the early 1900s, with the preponderance built between 1840 and 1880. Many I-houses built in the 1830s through early 1860s, like the Miller House, exemplify the Greek Revival style. Numerous examples built c. 1860 to 1880 reflect the newly popular Italianate style, while still others show Gothic Revival influence. Still others exhibit no academic style, achieving distinction through form alone. The Miller House exemplifies the "classic" I-house subtype popular from c. 1840 to 1880, characterized by balanced, five-bay facade.

The I-house is one of the most common vernacular house types in Whitewater Township. Several diverse examples can be found in the vicinity of the Miller House. The David Lemmons House (HAM-4061-60) at 5938 State Route 128 near Miamitown is a brick dwelling with five-bay façade and central transomed entrance, built c. 1845. The hipped-roof entry porch was rebuilt in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century with spindled posts and frieze. (Photo 10.) An 1836 basement barn contributes to the significance of the property. The Dr. John Hughes House (HAM-4091-60) at 4632 Kilby Road, built c. 1850, is a brick dwelling

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that exhibits a three-bay façade with off-center entrance, framed by transom and sidelights. Delicate bargeboard trim accents the eave line. A concrete porch was added in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The house is presently vacant and deteriorating. The Lemmons and Hughes houses were determined eligible for National Register listing during the 1986 survey. At 3553 Lawrenceburg Road in Elizabethtown (HAM-4203-60) is a frame house with irregular six-bay façade. The casual pattern of fenestration, and the off-center chimney placement, suggest the house may have evolved through a two-step process. Vinyl siding, replacement windows and a treated wood porch have been added. At the corner of U.S. Route 50 and Mills Street in Elizabethtown is a three-bay I-house that has been covered in vinyl siding. Replacement windows and a colossal portico have been added recently. Several I-houses in the area recorded by the 1986 survey have since been demolished; others have suffered loss of integrity due to insensitive alterations or years of neglect. The Miller House ranks among the township's finest and best-preserved examples of the house type.

### Historical Development

**Land records and family history.** Census records and Indiana county histories offer historical information about the Miller family. Thomas Miller's parents, Thomas Miller, Sr. (1762-1842), and Priscilla Hayes Miller (1760-1845), natives of Pennsylvania, were among the original settlers of Dearborn County, Indiana. (Dearborn County is located on the other side of the Ohio state line; see topographic map.) Priscilla Miller was a daughter of Captain Joseph Hayes, an officer of the Revolutionary War. In 1791 the Millers joined a settlement party composed of members of the Hayes and Guard families; after traveling down the Ohio River they landed at North Bend, Ohio, approximately five miles east of present-day Elizabethtown. Two years later they established permanent settlements at the mouth of the Great Miami River. In 1796 the Millers relocated to Dearborn County, settling in the "great bottom" north of Lawrenceburg; their stone house became a center of hospitality in the rural community (*History of Dearborn and Ohio Counties, Indiana, From Their Earliest Settlement* [Weakley & Co., Publishers, 1885], p. 411). Miller was active in the local Methodist church, and early services were held in the Miller home. He also operated a copper still on Double Lick Run, with a capacity of two barrels a day (*ibid.*, p. 424).

Thomas Miller, Jr. (1795-1875), was one of five children born to Thomas and Priscilla Miller. According to deed records, he made his first land purchase in Whitewater Township in 1822, while still residing in Dearborn County. In that year John Hardin sold

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 6

Miller, Thomas, House  
Hamilton County, Ohio

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him an undivided one-third of 222-¼ acres of land (totaling 74 acres) lying in Section 30 and fractional Section 31 (deed book W: 657). In 1837 Thomas Scroggin sold Miller 65 acres on the north side of Section 30, lying east of Enoch Hays' land (62: 137). He also sold Miller five- and 17-acre parcels in Section 19. Miller appears to have held the 74- and 65-acre parcels throughout his lifetime and acquired additional land nearby. Local histories assert that two settlers, Benjamin Cox and Thomas Walter, were shot and scalped by Native Americans in 1794 or 1795 (the date is in dispute) on what is now the Miller farm, near the stone kitchen; the two were believed to be the last white victims of Indian warfare that concluded with the Treaty of Greenville. (See Weakley, p. 91.)

According to the 1830 federal population census, the Miller household then included a total of 11 persons; little information is given apart from their gender and approximate ages. The 1850 census, which is somewhat more detailed, states that Miller was 55 years of age at the time. His wife, Abigail, was 58. The couple had three daughters: Charlotte, 22; Abigail, 19; and Ann, 16. Miller was born in Ohio; his wife's birthplace is not legible. The girls were all born in the Buckeye state. Also residing in the household was Isaac Shurman, a 26-year-old laborer, and Mary Williams, age 16. Miller owned real estate worth \$13,800. The 1870 census states that Miller was now 74 years old; his (second) wife, Martha, was 65 and had been born in Virginia. Four children, all with the surname Clark, resided in the household: Lizzie, 18; Minnie, 15; John, six; and Reese, 11. All had attended school in the last year. Jane Coffman, age 40, a domestic servant, lived with the family, as did Ames Landman, a laborer. Coffman was born in Kentucky; Landman was born in Baden to parents of foreign birth. Miller was a farmer and his wife kept house. Their real estate was now valued at \$50,000 and their personal property at \$2,000. Hamilton County histories offer little information about Miller except to note that he was a member of the Methodist church and that he constructed "the first stone house in the township" (Henry A. Ford, A.M., and Mrs. Kate B. Ford, *History of Hamilton County, Ohio*, p. 405). (This claim may not be accurate, since stone buildings that appear to have earlier construction dates were identified during survey.)

Thomas Miller died in 1875. In the intervening 125 years, the house and part of the land have remained in the family, passed down through the generations. In 1881 Miller's heirs, including members of the Miller, Gibson, Guard and Hayes families, sold the 74-acre tract to Priscilla Ann McKinney. The sale included land in Sections 24 and 13, the latter including the "Sugar Grove Church lot which is to be dedicated" (525: 417). In the 1910s Abba Guard purchased parcels of 74 and 72 acres in Sections 30 and 31 from the McKinney family. The 74-acre tract was described as "being the same tract where

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Thomas Miller, deceased, lived at the time of his death" (1073: 94). Following the death of Abba Guard, her son Lewis L. Guard became trustee of her estate. The farm, then including 74 acres, was partitioned into several tracts. The Guard family retained two parcels, comprising 27.27 acres and 1.797 acres respectively.

In 1949 Lewis L. Guard sold both parcels to Rebecca Guard Wessel and her husband, Francis H. Wessel (2397: 465), who then moved into the house. At the time the house was in sound condition but in need of repair; it had also suffered the depredations of the 1937 Ohio River flood, which filled the first floor with approximately six feet of water. The Wessels renovated the house while preserving its character: they repaired and rebuilt the porches, added indoor plumbing and central heat and upgraded the electrical system. They also added the garages and planted the evergreens that shade the front lawn. Mrs. Wessel (1922-2000) was a teacher who taught in local school systems in Ohio and Indiana. She was also very active in her church. Mr. Wessel (1919- ), now retired, was a mechanical engineer who worked for various companies in southwestern Ohio and southeastern Indiana. He also served the local volunteer fire department and was a Whitewater Township trustee in the late 1960s.

In 2000 the Wessels, seeking to preserve the historic integrity of the Miller homestead, donated the house and surrounding land to the Cincinnati Preservation Association.

**Maps.** The Miller property is clearly indicated on an 1835 map of Hamilton County. It is impossible to determine, however, whether the brick house or the stone kitchen is the one depicted, since family tradition asserts that the brick house was not yet completed. An unidentified road, presumably the Cincinnati-Louisville Turnpike, cut across the property at an angle. An 1847 county map notes that Miller owned two adjacent tracts of land in Sections 30 and 31, in the southwest corner of the township. A second house, which might have been a rental property, is indicated on Section 31. No acreage figure is given for the property. An 1850 atlas notes that the farm, long and narrow in shape, included 74 acres in Sections 30 and 31. Double Lick Run Creek crossed its southwest corner. The Whitewater Canal cut across the property at an angle, following the roadway. Another 65.22-acre tract to the north is also labeled "T. Miller." An 1869 map indicates that the Indiana, Cincinnati and Lafayette Railroad (later the Cincinnati, Indianapolis, St. Louis and Chicago) now bisected the farm, running through the old canal bed. Miller's 74-acre home farm is labeled "Priscilla A. McKinney" on an 1884 county map. A 1914 map indicates that the Cincinnati, Lawrenceburg and Aurora electric interurban line, which ran

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Miller, Thomas, House  
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parallel to the Cincinnati, Indianapolis, St. Louis and Chicago, passed through the property.

**Whitewater Township.** Whitewater Township was established in 1803 when Ohio became a state. It originally included all the land in Hamilton County west of the Great Miami River. While other areas in the county were opened for purchase and settlement in the 1780s and 1790s, Whitewater was first occupied by squatters who could not buy the land they lived on. Government-owned land was surveyed and was offered for sale at public auction in 1802. It was sold in sections of 640 acres for no less than two dollars per acre. After the close of the sale, unsold property could be purchased for one dollar and a quarter per acre. (See Ford, p. 405.) Early settlers came from the British Isles, New England and the mid-Atlantic states. Settlers such as Thomas Miller found fertile lands in the bottoms of the Great Miami and Whitewater Rivers. Substantial farmhouses and great barns attest to the agricultural prosperity of these alluvial plains.

During the early 19<sup>th</sup> century several small communities were founded in the township. The village of Miamitown, located on a main road (now State Route 128) at a bend in the river, prospered as a trading center. The small community of Elizabethtown, just east of the Miller farm, was settled c. 1806 but was not "platted as a village" until 1817 (Ford, p. 412). It lies "in the great Whitewater Trough through which the Whitewater River twines south and joins the Miami a short distance northeast of the village" (Writers' Program of the Work Projects Administration, *Cincinnati: A Guide to the Queen City and Its Neighbors*, p. 510). The village benefited from its proximity to two important roads: the highway from Cincinnati to the Indiana towns of Manchester, Greensburg and Indianapolis, and the road from Brookville to Lawrenceburg, Indiana. During the second quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century it also prospered from the Whitewater Canal, which meandered through the countryside just east of the town. Work on the canal was begun in the 1830s and finished in the early 1840s. The first section built, totaling about 55 miles, connected Cambridge City, Wayne County, Indiana, on the National Road, with Lawrenceburg. The last section constructed, comprising 25 miles, connected Harrison, Ohio, with the Cincinnati area. (See Charles Cist, *Cincinnati in 1841: Its Early Annals*, p. 91.) The canal provided an easy and inexpensive means to ship produce and manufactured goods. The rivers that brought opportunity also periodically inundated Whitewater's low-lying towns, where flooding remains a problem to this day.

Whitewater Township was reduced in size several times as other townships were carved from its acreage. It achieved its present proportions in 1853. By the 1860s the Indiana,

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Section 8 Page 9

Miller, Thomas, House  
Hamilton County, Ohio

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Cincinnati & Lafayette Railroad was built through the southern portion of the township, linking the region with Cincinnati and central Indiana. Beginning in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century small-scale industrial concerns began to locate in Whitewater, especially along present-day Route 50 and State Route 128. These included small factories and gravel mining operations. The nearby town of Hooven, for example, was founded as an industrial community at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century larger industrial operations, including an oil refinery, opened in the township. During the same era the Cincinnati-Louisville Turnpike became part of U.S. Route 50. Over time it was rebuilt and widened, in the process bypassing some older communities and transforming others.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 9 Page 1

Miller, Thomas, House  
Hamilton County, Ohio

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 10 Page 1

Miller, Thomas, House  
Hamilton County, Ohio

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**10. Geographical data**

**Verbal boundary description**

Lying and being in Section 30, Town 1, Range 1 east, in Whitewater Township, Hamilton County, Ohio. Beginning at a point in the center line of the Cincinnati-Louisville Pike 1329.57 feet east from the intersection of the center line of the Cincinnati-Louisville Pike and the west line of said Section 30 (the above-mentioned 1329.57 feet being measured along the center line of the Cincinnati-Louisville Pike); thence north 50 degrees 10 minutes east the center line of the Cincinnati-Louisville Pike 342.60 feet; thence north 33 degrees 50 minutes west 204.60 feet; thence south 58 degrees 37 minutes west 341.03 feet to the northeast corner of the property conveyed to Robert A. and Helen J. Barth, as the same is recorded in Deed Book 2193, page 180, of the Hamilton County, Ohio, Recorder's Office; thence south 33 degrees 50 minutes east along the easterly line of said Barth property 255 feet to the center line of the Cincinnati-Louisville Pike and the place of beginning, containing 1.797 acres.

**Verbal boundary justification**

This boundary includes all the property presently associated with the property. It includes sufficient acreage to enclose the house and its outbuildings.



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CONTINUATION SHEET

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Miller, Thomas, House  
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12. Additional documentation

Photograph key

Thomas Miller House (same for all photographs)

Hamilton County, Ohio (same for all photographs)

Photographer: Margo Warminski (same for all photographs)

Date: July 2000

Location of negatives: Cincinnati Preservation Association, 342 West Fourth Street,  
Cincinnati, OH 45202 (same for all photographs)

General view of farm complex, looking northwest from US Route 50.

Photo 1

Façade view, looking northwest.

March 2000

Photo 2

View of main entrance, looking north.

March 2000

Photo 3

East elevation of house, looking west.

March 2000

Photo 4

Rear (north) elevation, rear ell and porches. Looking west.

March 2000

Photo 5

West elevation of house, looking northwest.

March 2000

Photo 6

South and east walls of stone kitchen, looking northwest.

March 2000

Photo 7

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National Park Service

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Miller, Thomas, House  
Hamilton County, Ohio

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Garage, looking north.

March 2000

Photo 8

Barn, looking northeast.

March 2000

Photo 9

Façade view of David Lemmons House, 5938 State Route 128. Looking east.

March 2000

Photo 10

Façade and east elevation of 11368 U.S. Route 50. Looking northwest.

March 2000

Photo 11

Dining room, looking west from hallway.

May 2000

Photo 12

Wallpresses, west wall, dining room.

May 2000

Photo 13

Main staircase, looking west toward dining room.

May 2000

Photo 14

Parlor, looking east from hallway.

May 2000

Photo 15

West bedroom, looking west from hallway.

May 2000

Photo 16

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National Park Service

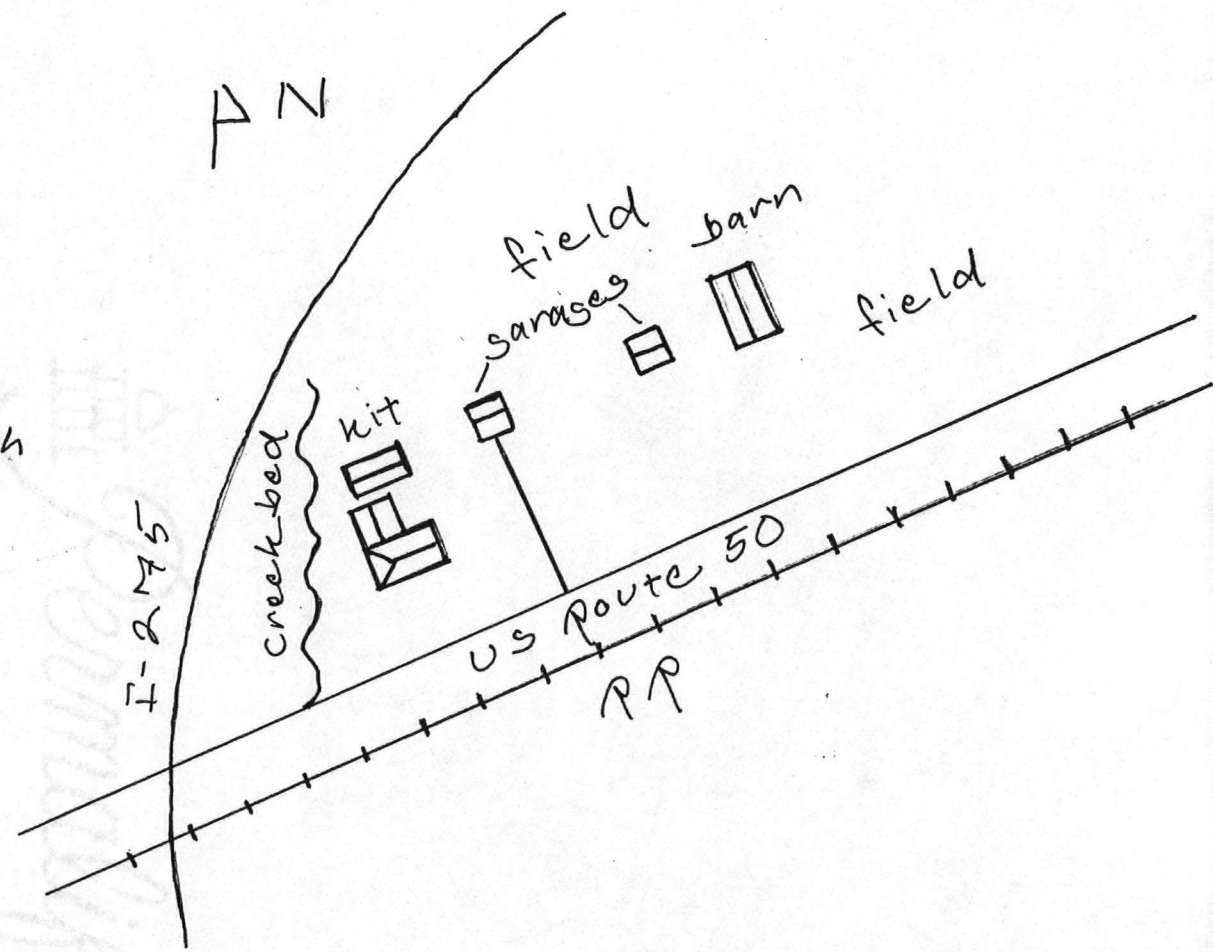
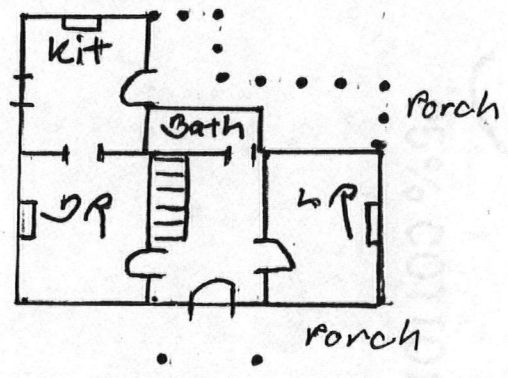
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 12 Page 3

Miller, Thomas, House  
Hamilton County, Ohio

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Doorway, second floor.  
May 2000  
Photo 17



Thomas Miller House  
 Site plan and floor plan  
 Hamilton County, Ohio

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Miller, Thomas, House

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: OHIO, Hamilton

DATE RECEIVED: 10/03/00      DATE OF PENDING LIST: 10/16/00  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 11/01/00      DATE OF 45TH DAY: 11/17/00  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 00001294

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT       RETURN       REJECT      11.2.00 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

**Entered in the  
National Register**

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_ DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N



Thomas Millen House, Hamilton Co., OH  
Photo 1



Thomas Miller House, Hamilton Co., OH photo  
2



Thomas Miller House, Hamilton  
Co., OH Photo 3



Thomas Miller House, Hamilton Co., OH  
Photo 4



Thomas Miller House, Hamilton  
Co., OH photo 5



Thomas Miller House, Hamilton Co., OH  
Photo 6



Thomas Miller House, Hamilton Co., OH  
Photo M



Thomas Miller House, Hamilton Co., OH  
Photo 8



Thomas Miller House, Hamilton Co., OH  
Photo 9



Thomas Miller House, Hamilton Co., OH  
Photo 10



Thomas Miller House, Hamilton Co., OH  
Photo 11



Thomas Miller House, Hamilton Co., OH  
Photo 12



Thomas Miller House, Hamilton  
Co., OH Photo 13



Thomas Miller House, Hamilton Co.,  
OH Photo 14



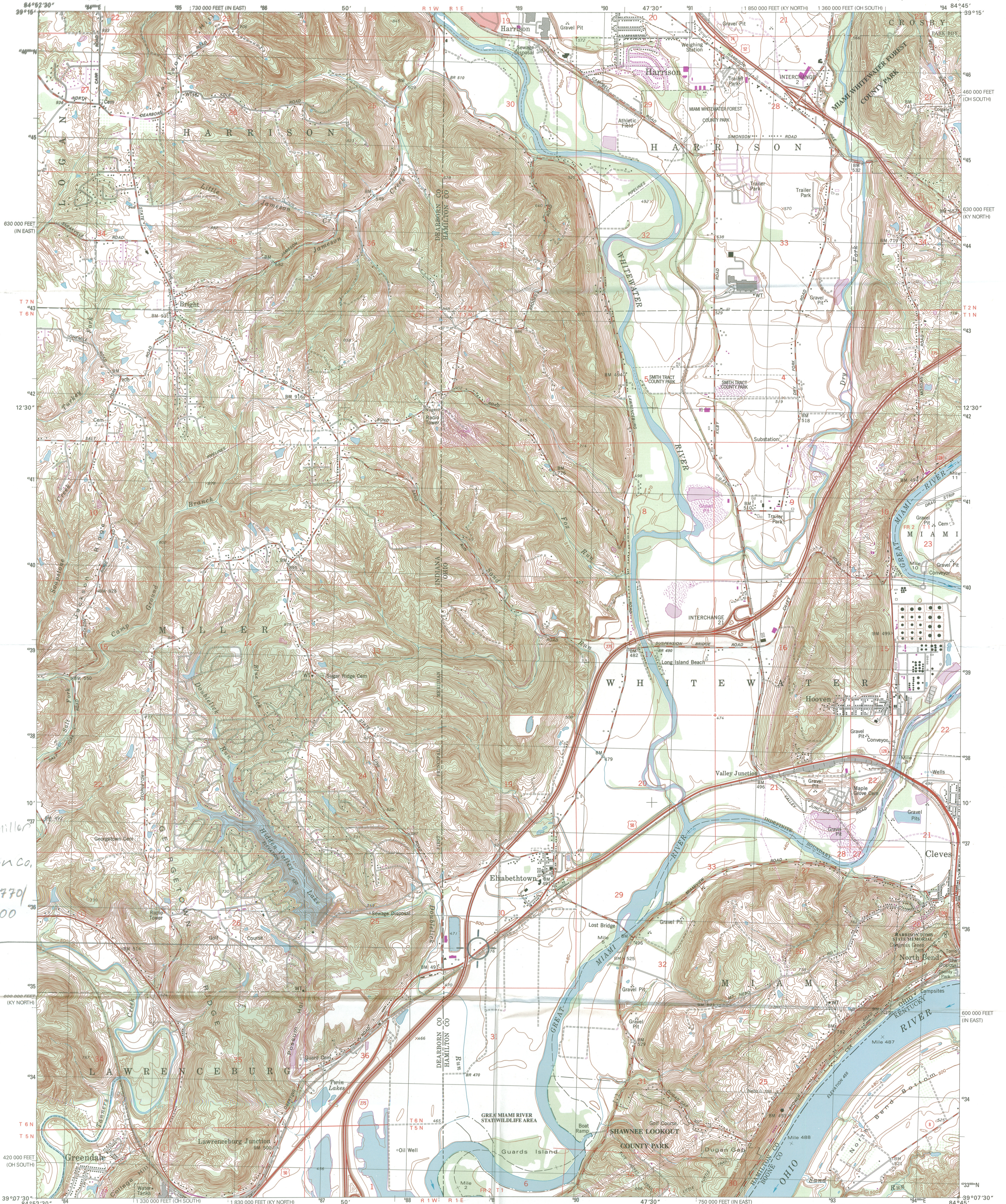
Thomas Miller House, Hamilton Co., OH  
Photo 15



Thomas Miller House, Hamilton Co., OH  
Photo 16



Thomas Miller House, Hamilton  
Co., OH photo 17

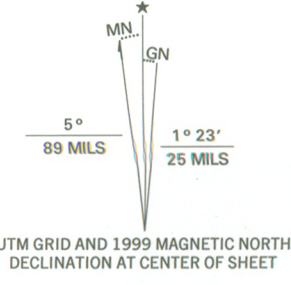


Thomas Miller House  
Hamilton Co.  
OHIO  
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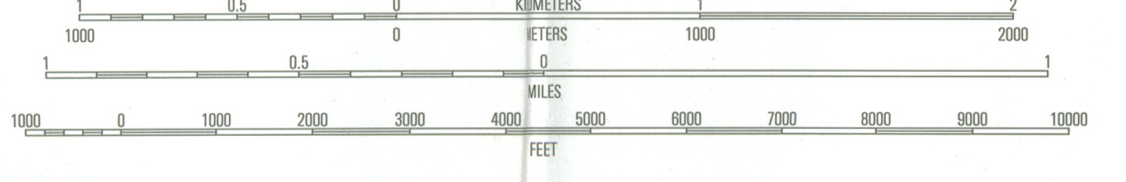
Produced by the United States Geological Survey

Topography compiled 1977. Planimetry derived from imagery taken 1984 and other sources. Photorevised using imagery dated 1996; no major culture or drainage changes observed. PLSS and survey control current as of 1977. Boundaries, other than corporate, revised 1999. North American Datum of 1927 (NAD 27). Projection: Ohio coordinate system, south zone (Lambert conformal conic). 10 000-foot ticks: Ohio coordinate system, south zone and Indiana coordinate system, east zone and Kentucky coordinate system, north zone. 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 16. North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83) is shown by dashed corner ticks. The values of the shift between NAD 27 and NAD 83 for 7.5-minute intersections are obtainable from National Geodetic Survey NADCON software.

Area west of the Great Miami River lies within the Miami River Survey. Area east of the Great Miami River lies within the Miami. Land lines in Ohio based on the Great Miami River Base. Dotted land lines established by private subdivision of the Symmes Purchase. There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map. Information shown in purple may not meet USGS content standards and may conflict with previously mapped contours.



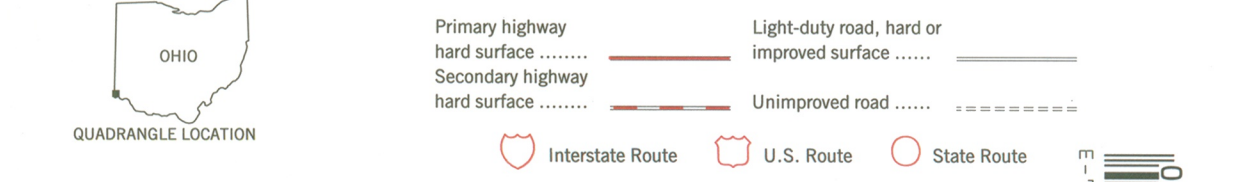
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CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET  
NATIONAL GEODETIC DATUM OF 1929  
TO CONVERT FROM FEET TO METERS, MULTIPLY BY 0.3048

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, P. O. BOX 25286, DENVER, COLORADO 80225  
AND INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA 46204  
KENTUCKY GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY 40506  
AND KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, FRANKFORT, KENTUCKY 40601  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

INTERIOR - GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA - 1999



ADJOINING 7.5' QUADRANGLE NAMES

1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	

1 Cedar Grove  
2 Harrison  
3 Shandon  
4 Guilford  
5 Adoynton  
6 Aurora  
7 Lawrenceburg  
8 Burlington

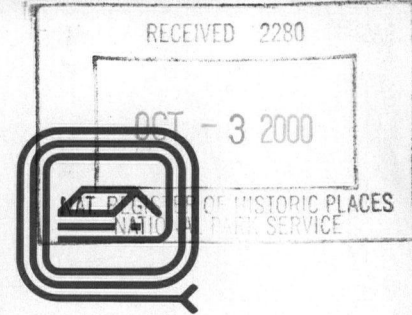
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1996  
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567 East Hudson Street  
Columbus, Ohio 43211-1030  
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**OHIO  
HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY**  
SINCE 1885

September 25, 2000

Ms. Carol Shull, Chief of Registration  
National Park Service  
National Register, History & Education Programs  
Mail Stop 2280, Suite 400  
1849 C. Street, NW  
Washington, D. C. 20240

Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed please find three (3) new National Register nominations. All appropriate notification procedures have been followed for this new submission.

NEW SUBMISSION

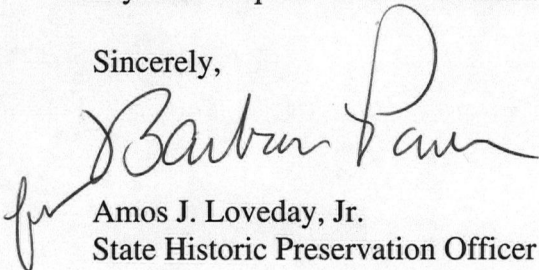
COUNTY

Miller House  
Wilson House  
The Courtland

Hamilton  
Hamilton  
Cuyahoga

If you have questions or comments about these documents, please contact this office.

Sincerely,

  
Amos J. Loveday, Jr.  
State Historic Preservation Officer

enclosures