

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

REFNUM 83002061

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received

date entered

9/29/83

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Merriman, Wells E., residence

and or common

2. Location

street & number 641 West Market Street N/A not for publication
14th
city, town Akron N/A vicinity of congressional district (John Seiberling)
state Ohio code 139 county Summit code 153

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Mr. and Mrs. F. Eugene Smith

street & number 1103 Courtleigh Drive

city, town Akron N/A vicinity of state Ohio 44313

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Summit County Recorder's Office

street & number 175 S. Main Street

city, town Akron state Ohio 44308

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Akron Historic Landmark Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1978 federal state county local

depository for survey records Dept. of Planning, City of Akron 166 S. High St.

city, town Akron state Ohio 44308

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Built in 1860, the Wells E. Merriman house is an "Upright and wing" vernacular house type with Greek Revival elements, constructed of native sandstone, having a 1 1/2-story rectangular gable-ended main block that is essentially unaltered. To the right extends what was originally a hipped-roof, one-story wing fronted by an open porch under a common roof with the wing.

The facade of the main block has three bays. At the right is an entry door with side lights over wainscot panels. The full-width transom above is surmounted by a trabeated stone lintel. The center and left bays each contain a single large double-hung window with six panes over six. The gable above has two symmetrically placed windows matching those below. Except for the small windows under the eave of the west elevation, all of the windows of the main block are of the same size, with their original glass panes. All have stone lug sills and trabeated stone lintels.

The stone of the front gable end is smooth-dressed ashlar of fine reticulation, laid in horizontally attenuated blocks extended only a block or two around the corners. The remaining side walls employ random-size, irregularly coursed stones of rougher surface, as do the walls of the wing's first story. A slightly projecting water table surrounds the house; it and the exposed foundation stones below have a tooled surface like that of the front gable end.

The roof of the main block has a pronounced overhang of slim profile, treated simply at the gable ends with no cornice returns; its slates were replaced with asphalt shingles in 1942. When the wing was given a second story of shingled frame about 1900, its hipped roof was replaced by an end-gabled roof with eaves aligned with those of the main block. At the same time the square bracketed columns of the porch were replaced with the present round ones. The porch was later enclosed with glass.

At the rear of the main block is a single-story kitchen addition built in 1881. Its irregularly coursed rough stone matches that of the original house, and the windows are of the same type. The rear-facing door abuts a window to its right, both under a common lintel, repeating in reverse the front door and window treatment under the porch of the wing to the right of the main block. A brick chimney is set against the rear wall of the kitchen.

The present owners are concerned with regaining the integrity of the building (see enclosed letter from F. Eugene and Romona Smith dated 12/8/82). As outlined in the letter, their future plans include: reinstalling the slate roof; replacing the chimney tops removed for the gas stoves; removing the glass enclosure from the front porch added after 1914; removing the pair of modern garage doors now on the stable and reinstalling a sliding center door as during its original occupancy. These changes will help to convey the district architectural building type represented by this house and its appearance during the Merriman's occupancy.

Stable

About 50 feet behind and slightly northeast of the house is a small, red painted 1 1/2 story building (ca. 1860) that was originally a stable and carriage house. Of post-and-beam construction and saltbox configuration, it has board-and-batten siding and an asphalt shingle roof. Centered in its cross gable is an oculus window. The original sliding center door has been replaced by a pair of modern garage doors.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics-government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates C. 1860 Builder/Architect unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Wells E. Merriman house is one of the very few remaining examples of an "upright and wing" housing type in Akron. The Merrimans were a pioneer family in the area and for several generations played prominent roles in the city's agricultural, commercial, financial, and civic development.

The house is one and a half stories, with a projecting gable-ended main block with a one story wing with porch extending to the right. This particular house type has been identified by cultural geographer Pierce Lewis as an "upright and wing." This is a common New England house form, particularly in New York State, which migrated westward to the upper midwest during the mid-nineteenth century. This house form is prevalent throughout the Western Reserve, the northeast portion of the Northwest Territory which had been granted to Connecticut after the American Revolutionary War. The Merriman house is one of only two such Akron houses constructed of stone. The other has alterations and additions and is less significant historically than the Merriman house.

The Merriman house is widely recognized as an Akron landmark. It is the oldest residence on heavily traveled Market street, the city's principal east-west thoroughfare. Situated in what was once a fine residential area, it is one of the last survivors. Many of the old houses that were once its neighbors have been razed and replaced with office or apartment buildings.

Charles Merriman, founder of the family in Akron, came here with his wife in 1835 from their farm in Berkshire County, Massachusetts. He bought nearly 300 acres and established a productive farm along what later came to be called Merriman Road and is so named today; his farmhouse was razed many years ago. In 1860 he bought seven acres on West Market Street for his son Wells, who then built the house that is the subject of this nomination. Wells lived in it for the rest of his life and his son Jesse also lived there in his early adulthood, when he was gaining prominence as a business leader.

Wells Merriman learned both the jeweler's and machinist's trades, the latter as an employee of Taplin Rice & Co., a firm whose Akron factory buildings have long since been demolished. In 1870, while residing in his Market Street house, Wells made the models for the rubber industry machines used by Dr. B.F. Goodrich in starting the rubber industry in Akron. He also invented and patented a cotton stalk puller used in the cotton fields.

Jesse B. Merriman, son of Wells, organized the Cuyahoga Falls Savings Bank in 1904, beginning a long association with financial interests in Akron. He was also involved with many commercial ventures, such as the National Laundry and Windsor Land companies, as well as serving in public and civic affairs as a city councilman.

The property left the Merriman family in the late 1940s and has since passed through several owners with the most recent being Mr. and Mrs. F. Eugene Smith.

AKRON WEST QUADRANGLE
OHIO-SUMMIT CO.
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

4766 III NW
(HUDSON)

NE (UL) 453 454 32/30" 455 2 270 000 FEET OHIO TURNPIKE 12 MI. 81°30' 41°07'30"



4552
530 000
FEET

STOW 5 MI.

0.8 MI. TO OHIO 5

Wells E. Merriman
House
Akron, Summit County
Easting: 17 454/840
Northing: 4549/140

Ohio Historic Preservation Office

Ohio Historical Center I-71 & 17th Avenue Columbus, Ohio 43211 (614) 466-1500

October 26, 1985

Mr. & Mrs. F. Eugene Smith
1105 Courtleigh Drive
Akron, OH 44313

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Smith:

I am pleased to inform you that the Merriman, Wells E., Residence - Akron, OH has been entered in the National Register of Historic Places by the National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior.

The nomination was made in connection with a state plan to identify and document prehistoric and historic places in Ohio which qualify for National Register status under provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. All nominations are approved by the Ohio Historic Site Preservation Advisory Board.

Enclosed is information explaining the purposes and goals of the National Register of Historic Places.

Sincerely,



W. Ray Luce
State Historic Preservation Officer

WRL:dd

enclosure

X.c: Mayor of Akron
Senator Oliver Ocasek
Representative Thomas C. Sawyer
NEPCO
Jeff Brown, RCO

Ohio Historic Preservation Office

National Register of Historic Places File Checklist

The following materials are contained in this file of the National Register form for:

Name: Merriman, Wells E, House

County: Summit

Original National Register of Historic Places nomination form

Multiple Property Nomination form

Photograph(s)

Photograph(s) (copies)

USGS map(s)

USGS map(s) (copies)

Sketch map(s)/figure(s)/exhibit(s)

Correspondence

Other _____

