

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

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

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC The Old Stone House; Tyree Stone Tavern

AND/OR COMMON The Old Stone House

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER County Route 10 about 1 mile east of intersection with U.S. Route 19

CITY, TOWN  
Clifftop

VICINITY OF

— NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
Second

STATE  
West Virginia

CODE  
54

COUNTY CODE  
Fayette 019

**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"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME Billy R. Simms

STREET & NUMBER  
Route 2, Box 35-A

CITY, TOWN  
Rainelle

VICINITY OF

STATE  
West Virginia

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Fayette County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN  
Fayetteville

STATE  
West Virginia

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

# 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 Old Stone House built by the Tyree family in 1824 in what is now Fayette County, West Virginia, stands today as a solid reminder of a well-constructed house made of materials generally available in the area.

The original portion is of field stone from the foundation through the chimneys on the gables and has exterior walls of about 22" thickness. Approximately forty feet long and thirty feet deep, the house has two stories plus attic. The stone construction incorporates a large chimney in the east and west walls, and these provide fireplaces on both floors. There are two doors and one window on the first floor of the south (front) elevation with three windows on the second level. East and west elevations have small openings in the attic on each side of the chimney. The east side also has a door on the first floor toward the rear, and the west has a window near the front of the first level. Neither east nor west elevations have openings on the second floor. To the rear, placement is somewhat haphazard, there being a door and two windows on the first floor and two windows on the second floor, the latter arranged so as not to be directly above first-story openings. The roof, now of corrugated metal, was originally capped with riven shakes.

Presently, the structure has two additions to the east side, a small porch and a stoop on the rear and a deep, one-story porch across the entire front. Most of these alterations date from the renovations undertaken in the 1890s by E.V. and Fred Babcock who owned the building as part of coal company property for many years. A frame lean-to was placed on the east side sometime before 1900, and a small frame room was added to this around 1930. The Babcocks apparently also added the small rear porch and metal roof. Windows in the stone portion are now 1/1 and those in the additions are 2/2 and 6/1, but originals were probably 4/4. The front of the stone house has been painted white in recent years.

When first constructed, the interior consisted of two large rooms on each floor separated by a seventeen-inch-wide partition. Stairs are placed well back from the central door. Fireplaces on the first floor are interesting and a bit unusual, for they are placed in the sides of the large rooms with two openings at about a 35° angle, thus allowing heat to radiate in different directions. This was probably designed to facilitate partitioning of each room into two separate entities if desired, and there is evidence of such a partition in the west room of the first level. There are two fireplaces on the second floor, and these face directly into the rooms from the chimney. Another interesting feature of this section is the rafters which were made from unhewn poles and are still in place.

The stone house was partitioned into four rooms on the second floor during the twentieth century. The lean-to addition incorporates two rooms and has one window on each side with a door to the screened porch on the rear. For the most part, the interior walls, floors and ceilings are now covered with chestnut and red oak boards of various widths, but much of the original wainscoting is still in place.

The many log outbuildings are no longer standing, but a springhouse made of stone similar to that used in the house is located on the east side of the property. The old stone wall and loading block (apparently used by passengers alighting from stages) stand near the road (part of the former James River and Kanawha Turnpike) at the end of the walk from the front of the house. Placement of a door near the rear of the east side of the stone section indicates that there may have been an outside kitchen in this area until about the 1890s.

# 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/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 checked="" 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 1824

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Large and plain in appearance, the Old Stone House is a fine example of the rough and strong structures which were essential in the rugged mountain terrain along the James River and Kanawha Turnpike between Charleston and Lewisburg, West Virginia. With its many outbuildings and desirable location on the heavily traveled road (east of the heights which lead down to the Kanawha River and on to Charleston and west of the mountains which form a barrier to the resort areas near Lewisburg and on to Virginia), it became a frequented stopping place for stagecoaches, drovers and individual travelers as they made their way to markets, railheads or water courses.

Tyree Stone Tavern was constructed in 1824 at an elevation of about 2400 feet on the western slopes of the more than 3200-foot-high Sewell Mountains. Stone and wood from the surrounding countryside were used to build the stout house in a style which has been called "pure mountain." Walls were 22" thick, the interior had only four large rooms (probably a family room and dining room on the first floor and two dormitory-type rooms on the second) and six fireplaces blazed to insure heat during cold weather. Nothing was fancy about the single, huge partitions on each floor, window placement was irregular and roughness of style was the rule where no need existed for finishing (in the unhewn rafters, for example). Such features as the dual fireplaces which project at about a 35° angle in the first-floor rooms, however, did give to the house a measure of fineness, and family and visitors alike were provided the comfort of abundant space and supplies.

Constructed as it was along the James River and Kanawha Turnpike--a section of the old road still runs in front of the house--between Charleston and Lewisburg and nestled in an area suitable for pause on a long journey before one made the ascent of the Sewells to the east or moved on to the heights and then the valleys of the west, the Old Stone House was an ideal stop for the traveler. Stages made it a regular stand where they might get a change of horses and lodge and feed their passengers for a night. Drovers appreciated the rolling fields; wagoners and individual journeymen welcomed the hospitality. The Tyrees added the necessary dependencies and made the tavern nearly self sustaining with the assortment of workshops, granary, meathouse and springhouse. So it was that it played its part in aiding in the movement of goods and people between the Ohio River and tidewater Virginia.

Many men prominent in public affairs were guests here. As they traveled to and from Washington, D.C., and their homes in Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee and elsewhere, they made the regular stops along the way. It is believed that, among others, Andrew Jackson, Henry Clay and Thomas H. Benton visited. The house was also on the path of movements by both Federal and Confederate troops during the Civil War and apparently served as housing or headquarters for several generals and lesser soldiers such as Rutherford B. Hayes and William McKinley. Another notable guest was Matthew Fontaine Maury, one of the great authorities of the day on oceanography. It has often been repeated that Maury was laid up at the Tyree Stone Tavern for about a month with a broken collar bone he had suffered in a stage accident nearby, and during this time he wrote a good portion of his work on

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED

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

CONTINUATION ~~SHEET~~

ITEM NUMBER

PAGE one

8. SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

ocean currents.

The great period of travel on the old turnpike was coming to an end after the Civil War, however, and the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway's line to the Ohio River nearly eliminated long distance overland passage of goods and people to the east and west. In 1884 the Tyree family sold the property to the Longdale Iron Company, and that firm, in turn, passed it on to the Babcock Coal and Coke Company. While the area was quickly developing its rich coal resources, the old house deteriorated and was used for storage or to temporarily shelter tenants. At the urging of West Virginia's Governor William MacCorkle, though, the Babcocks undertook renovations in the 1890s, and the house has had a new life since. In fact, it even took on the look of its tavern days in the 1920s and 1930s, for it was once again frequented by travelers who were welcomed to its tourist lodgings.

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Blizzard, William C. "The Old Stone House." Gazette-Mail (Charleston, W.Va.), May 11, 1969, State Magazine Section.  
 Donnelly, Shirley. "Old Stone House an Historian's Treasure." Beckley (W.Va.) Post-Herald, Jan. 3, 1966.  
 Peters, J.J. and B.H. Carden. History of Fayette County, West Virginia. Charleston, W.Va.: Jarrett Printing Co., 1926. (pp. 136-42)  
 Pinnell, Lois. "The Old Stone House." West Virginia Review, March 1944, 8-9, 29.

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 2 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 7	5 0 8 3 <sup>3</sup> 4 0	4 2 0 6 9 1 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

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

C.E. Turley, Research Assistant and James E. Harding, Research Analyst

ORGANIZATION

West Virginia Antiquities Commission

DATE

March 31, 1975

STREET & NUMBER

Old Mountainlair, West Virginia University

TELEPHONE

(304) 292-1527

CITY OR TOWN

Morgantown

STATE

West Virginia

**12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

*Leonard M. Davis*

TITLE West Virginia State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE May 12, 1975

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

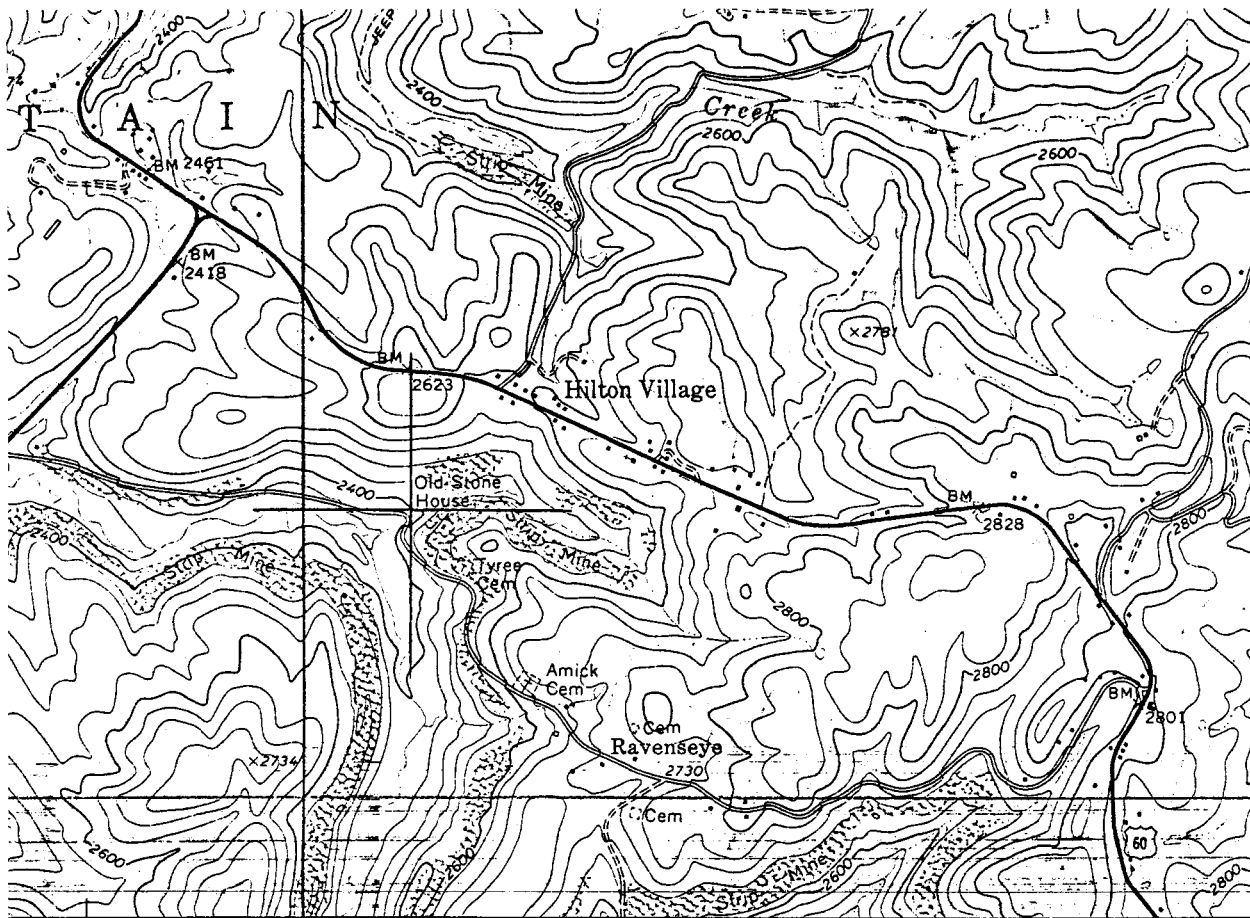
DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



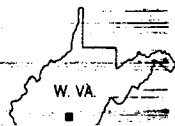
THE OLD STONE HO.  
 FAYETTE COUNTY,  
 WEST VIRGINIA  
 UTM REFERENCES:  
 17/508390/4206910

17 55' 508 509 510000m E. RAINELLE 8 MI. 80° 52' 30" 38° 00' 4206000m N.

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

- Primary highway, hard surface \_\_\_\_\_
- Secondary highway, hard surface \_\_\_\_\_
- Light-duty road, hard or improved surface \_\_\_\_\_
- Unimproved road \_\_\_\_\_
- Interstate Route    □ U. S. Route    ○ State Route

1 MILE



Form No. 10-301  
 (Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
 NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
 PROPERTY MAP FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
 TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- ENCLOSE WITH MAP

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC The Old Stone House; Tyree Stone Tavern

AND/OR COMMON The Old Stone House

**2 LOCATION**

CITY, TOWN  
 Clifftop

VICINITY OF

COUNTY  
 Fayette

STATE  
 West Virginia

**3 MAP REFERENCE**

SOURCE U.S. Geological Survey  
 Winona, W.Va. 7.5' Quadrangle



OLD STATE HOUSE  
1824

1824