United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory - Nomination Form

1. NAME
   COMMON: Levi Shinn House
   AND/OR HISTORIC: 

2. LOCATION
   STREET AND NUMBER: Clarksburg Road (U.S. Route 19, South)
   CITY OR TOWN: Shinnston (1st. Congressional District)
   STATE: West Virginia
   CODE: 54
   COUNTY: Harrison
   CODE: 033

3. CLASSIFICATION
   CATEGORY (CHECK ONE)
   □ District □ Site □ Object
   □ Building □ Structure □ Other
   □ Public □ Private □ Both

   OWNERSHIP
   □ Public Acquisition:
     □ In Process
     □ Being Considered
   □ Private Acquisition:
     □ In Process
     □ Being Considered

   STATUS
   □ Occupied □ Unoccupied
   □ Preservation Work in Progress
   □ Restricted
   □ Unrestricted
   □ Yes
   □ No

   ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC

   PRESENT USE (CHECK ONE OR MORE AS APPROPRIATE)
   □ Agricultural □ Government □ Park
   □ Commercial □ Industrial □ Private Residence
   □ Educational □ Military □ Religious
   □ Commercial □ Industrial □ Private Residence
   □ Other (Specify) □ Transportation
   □ Comments
   □ No

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY
   OWNER'S NAME: Shinnston Historical Association, Inc.
   STREET AND NUMBER: 124 Pike Street (or Route 1)
   CITY OR TOWN: Shinnston
   STATE: West Virginia
   CODE: 54

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
   COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
   County Clerk's Office, Courthouse
   STREET AND NUMBER: Main Street
   CITY OR TOWN: Clarksburg
   STATE: West Virginia
   CODE: 54

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
   TITLE OF SURVEY:
   DATE OF SURVEY:
   DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
     □ Federal □ State □ County □ Local
   STREET AND NUMBER:
   CITY OR TOWN:
   STATE: West Virginia
   CODE: 54
The Levi Shinn House, near Shinnston, Harrison County, West Virginia, was built by its owner in 1778. Its structure was typical of log buildings of the place and period in some respects, atypical in others. It was constructed of native hardwood logs, these squared by hand tools, notched at the corners, and erected in tiers. It was of two stories in height, with the gabled roof providing a storage attic. Logs were chinked with clay. Since the main body of the house is preserved in its original condition, the tool marks on the logs may still be seen.

One feature of the house which was not typical of the frontier in the 18th century was the large interior chimney, providing fireplaces for several of the cabin's rooms. Fireplaces are still much as they were.

So far as can be determined, the original roofing material was clapboard "shakes," rived out of blocks of white oak. The original roof has long been replaced by more modern materials.

Later owners of the property added a small front porch to the house, placed siding boards on the gable ends, and added a kitchen at the rear. In the main structure, however, many of the original rafters, beams, and other materials are in place. The structure preserves much of the exterior and interior integrity of a typical 18th century settler's cabin.

The original log house had a length of 37 feet, and a width of 20 feet, 8 inches. It contained four rooms, with a four-foot hallway, and a staircase at the north end leading to the second floor. There was also a rudely constructed cellar, reached by an interior stairway.
Levi Shinn was the founder and first settler of the community of Shinnston, in what is now northern Harrison County, West Virginia. He was born in 1748, near Burlington, New Jersey, and in 1772 he and a younger brother moved to the valley of the West Fork of Monongahela River, in the colony of Virginia. Here he and his brother acquired lands, but they returned to New Jersey until 1778, when Levi came once again to the Shinnston area, and there built the log house which stands today.

Shinn was of the Quaker faith, and he used his influence to encourage local settlers to remain on their lands and tend their crops even during the troubled times of Indian wars and the Revolution. His religion prevented his bearing arms during the Revolutionary War, but he was a supporter of the new nation in the years of its formation.

He became an extensive property owner in Harrison County, and near his home he established what may have been the first grist mill in the county. This structure, along with settlers' cabins that grew up around it, became the nucleus for the present village of Shinnston.

Levi Shinn led the quiet life of a pioneer; he did not seek public office, nor did he covet honors and fame. His major interests were in the development and preservation of his properties, which he passed on to his children. The present log structure remained in family hands for several generations. It is believed by local historians to be the oldest standing home in the county.

In 1972 the active Shinnston Historical Association acquired the Levi Shinn House for the purposes of preserving it as an historical landmark, and of using it as headquarters for their activities.
MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

West Virginia History: A Quarterly Magazine, Vol. XXIX, No. II

History of Harrison County (W.Va.), by Dorothy Davis, p. 8

Now and Long Ago, by Glenn D. Lough, p. 253

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

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LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES

LATITUDE: 39° 23' 00"
LONGITUDE: 80° 18' 23"

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 0.2 Acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE: CODE COUNTY CODE
STATE: CODE COUNTY CODE
STATE: CODE COUNTY CODE
STATE: CODE COUNTY CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Jack Sandy Anderson, President Shinnston Historical Association, Inc. For the

ORGANIZATION: West Virginia Antiquities Commission

DATE: March 30, 1973

STREET AND NUMBER: Old Mountainlair--West Virginia University

CITY OR TOWN: Morgantown

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National [x] State [ ] Local [x]

Name: Maurice G. Brooks
Title: State Historic Preservation Officer
Date: May 30, 1973

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register