

# MILLER-BREWER HOUSE HISTORIC SITE

George and Marita Miller traveled north by wagon from Oregon to take a Donation Land Claim here on the banks of Scatter Creek in the late 1850's. The house, built by Miller, is set on native open prairie land adjacent to Scatter Creek and is shaded by a grove of native oak trees. Miller was a farmer as well as a territorial representative, serving as a Notary Public, County Commissioner and a member of the Territorial Legislature.

The property was sold to Reece Brewer, an old friend of Miller's who had moved to Grand Mound from Oregon with his wife in 1858. The Brewers had four children before his first wife, Eliza, died of pneumonia in 1870.

Brewer settled in here as a stockman, raising cattle on the fine grasses of the native prairie. He remarried and had two children, Effie and Fred, before his second wife died of pneumonia in 1878. Brewer sold cream to creameries, was a member of the Territorial Legislature in 1871, the local Post Master in this house from 1884 to 1888, Justice of the Peace at Grand Mound for ten years, and was elected as Thurston County Commissioner in 1888 and 1890.



Reece Brewer

*Scatter Creek  
"Here on the prairie,  
grass was stirrup high and  
the creek was available  
for water without any  
effort on the part of either  
the rancher or the stock.  
The creek flowed through  
comparatively flat land  
and with no steep banks.  
As a consequence, any  
great amount of rain for  
several days caused it to  
spread beyond its normal  
bed - thus the name  
Scatter Creek."  
Memories of Wilbert F. Brewer*

Over the years, Brewer would remarry again, and again lose his wife and a grandson to pneumonia. His youngest son Fred married Gertrude, moved to Grand Mound, and had three children before losing his wife to pneumonia, a fate to plague the family. Brewer's daughter Effie and husband Tibb moved to The Ranch and lived there the remainder of their days. Tibb's untimely death had Fred moving back to the Ranch with his sister and the aging Reece Brewer, who died here at the age of 74.



Effie Brewer Mills



Tibb Mills



Fred Brewer



Gertrude Brewer

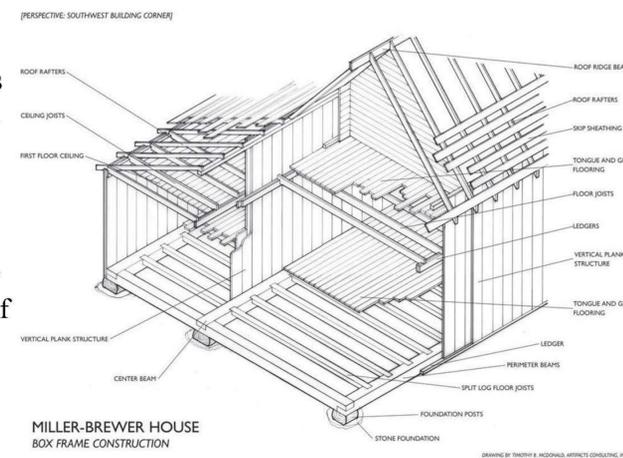
The property was active in raising cattle, sheep, farming, and vegetable gardening. It had a small apple orchard, and a small fish pond behind the house. The children maintained a trap line along Scatter Creek and the surrounding area and sold the pelts to a fur company in St. Louis. Fred was active in field dog training, holding training and trials on the homestead property. When Effie died in 1963, Fred made arrangements to sell the Miller-Brewer property to the Washington Department of Game to be used as a public outdoor recreation area. Fred died in 1964.

*Ode to Scatter Creek  
You trickle down the valley in the  
good old summer time,  
And float the leaves of Autumn  
when the frost is on the vine.  
The high dark water of winter  
screens  
The salmon going by like tiny  
submarines.  
With flowers all about.  
And in those deep pools lurk wily  
cutthroat trout.  
So ramble on and on, my friend.  
May your changes never end,  
As you charm everyone you see,  
And bring joy throughout eternity.  
Wilbert F. Brewer  
Son of Fred & Gertrude Brewer  
Source: "My Heritage, Memories and a Little History" by*

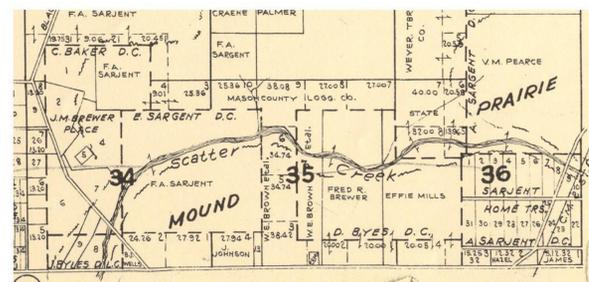


Identifiable people: Left to right—Reece Brewer (with cane); his sister, Sarah Brewer Bacon (also with cane); Flora Brewer; behind little girl Hilda Wright; right of corner post, Willard Brown; next to Ned the dog, Florence and Gladys Brown.

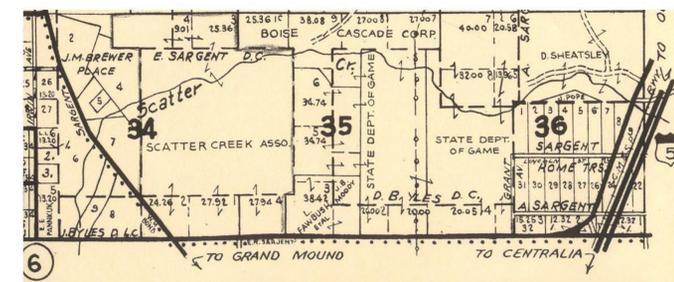
The Miller-Brewer House, is a Greek Revival style house and is historically significant for its Box Frame construction, a method only used during early pioneer settlement in Washington from approximately 1855 through 1875, and is one of few examples left that remains intact in the Pacific Northwest.



The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (formerly the Department of Game) has used the Miller Brewer House in a variety of capacities over the decades to facilitate management operations at what is now the Scatter Creek Wildlife Area. The site is managed for the preservation, protection, and perpetuation of fish, wildlife, and ecosystems and for sustainable fish and wildlife recreational and commercial opportunities. The Miller Brewer house was nominated and placed on the National Historic Register in 1988.



1937 Metzger Map



1973 Metzger Map



Marker made possible by the Thurston County Board of Commissioners, Thurston County Historic Commission and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

