

Harrigan-Sturver Building  
Minersville Neighborhood  
134 Iron Street  
Johnstown  
Cambria County  
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-5782

HABS  
PA,  
11-JDTD,  
64-

PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

Harrigan-Sturver Building

HABS No. PA-5782

HABS  
PA,  
11-3070,  
64-

Location: 134 Iron Street, Minersville, Johnstown, Cambria County, Pa.

Description: No. 134 Iron Street is a large multi-family and retail building, facing southeast on a corner lot with a multi-family building to one side. The structure is rectangular, built of brick with a side gable roof. It is three stories tall and ten bays long. The roof displays three gable dormers. Two vacant storefronts, approximately 20' wide, are on the first floor. Vacant residential units are on the second and third floors.

History: No. 134 Iron Street was constructed between 1903 and 1906. Michael Harrigan and William Sturver purchased several lots here in 1903 for \$3,300. The relatively high price for the land may have been a factor of its proximity to the lower works of the Cambria Iron Company. Benjamin Applebaum purchased the building from both parties between 1906 and 1908 for \$5,400. The 1910 census records Applebaum, a merchant, his family of four, a servant and approximately forty boarders as residents. Applebaum was born in "Austria-Poland," according to the census, and sold groceries and dry goods. The boarders were mostly males, between the ages of 20 and 30, and primarily Polish. Nearly all of the boarders were laborers in the steel mills. Michael Billow purchased the property in 1919 and the Billow family has retained ownership since then.

According to present and former Minersville residents, the building housed a small branch of the Penn Traffic Department Store in this era. The store closed, they say, during the Depression. According to a 1931 city directory, Michael Billow operated a grocery store here.

Sources:

Deed Records, Cambria County Courthouse, Ebensburg, Pa.

Interview with Minersville resident George Smith, June 18, 1988.

Interview with former Cambria City resident Emma Abele, August 21, 1988.

Interviews with former Rosedale Borough residents, Johnstown Flood Museum, August 17, 1988.

Johnstown City Directory, 1931.

Sanborn Map Company, Johnstown, Pennsylvania, (New York, The Sanborn Map Company, 1895, 1911).

United States Census, Cambria County, Pennsylvania, City of Johnstown, Fourteenth Ward (1900, 1910).

Project Information: This report was part of a larger project to document the city of Johnstown, Pennsylvania. The project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER), Robert Kapsch, chief, at the request of America's Industrial Heritage Project (AIHP). An overview of history of the city (HABS No. PA-5669) and an overview of the neighborhoods of Cambria City and Minersville (HABS No. PA-5672) provide context for these buildings as well as a comprehensive list of sources. See also additional HABS reports on buildings in the downtown and other neighborhoods.

This report was prepared by Jeffrey Hickey in August 1988 under the direction of Alison K.

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Hoagland, HABS historian, and Kim E. Wallace, the supervisory historian of the project. Hickey's and other project historians' work was published as The Character of a Steel Mill City: Four Historic Neighborhoods of Johnstown, Pennsylvania (Washington, D.C.: HABS/HAER, National Park Service, 1989), edited by Kim E. Wallace. Illustrations in the publication include large format photographs taken by HAER photographer Jet Lowe and 35 mm photographs taken by the project historians.