

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PH 066493 DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED MAR 20 1978
DATE ENTERED SEP 24 1979

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

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON

Bell-Varner House

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

on the south side of Unger Road

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Leitersburg

X VICINITY OF

Sixth

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Maryland

CODE
024

COUNTY

Washington

CODE

043 ✓

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

___DISTRICT

___PUBLIC

X OCCUPIED

X AGRICULTURE

___MUSEUM

X BUILDING(S)

X PRIVATE

___UNOCCUPIED

___COMMERCIAL

___PARK

___STRUCTURE

___BOTH

___WORK IN PROGRESS

___EDUCATIONAL

X PRIVATE RESIDENCE

___SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

___ENTERTAINMENT

___RELIGIOUS

___OBJECT

___IN PROCESS

___YES: RESTRICTED

___GOVERNMENT

___SCIENTIFIC

___BEING CONSIDERED

___YES: UNRESTRICTED

___INDUSTRIAL

___TRANSPORTATION

X NO

___MILITARY

___OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Mr. and Mrs. Conrad Varner

STREET & NUMBER

Maryland National Bank Building, West Washington Street

CITY, TOWN

Hagerstown,

___ VICINITY OF

STATE

Maryland 21740

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Washington County Court House

STREET & NUMBER

West Washington Street

CITY, TOWN

Hagerstown,

STATE

Maryland 21740

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

___FEDERAL ___STATE ___COUNTY ___LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input 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

The Bell-Varner house is located on the south side of Unger Road, about three miles south of Leitersburg in Washington County, Maryland. It is situated on a gentle rise of ground and faces east.

A 2 1/2-story, five-bay brick dwelling with a two-story, four-bay el extending to the rear or west, the house was built into a slight bank making the front elevation a full three stories in height. The lowest story consists of the foundation of roughly-coursed fieldstone. The bricks at the front elevation are laid in Flemish bond while the side and rear elevations display common bonding. They are flat brick arches over the openings, and a corbeled brick cornice finishes the walls. A date-stone set in the north gable is inscribed: "Jonas Bell, 1851 C.B."

The windows appear to be spaced evenly in the front elevation. Most display modern, single-pane, double-hung sash held within narrow frames; however, six-over-six light sash remain at several main story windows. Most of the windows have shutters that are half louvered and half paneled. The small windows that flank the entrance at ground level on the front have paneled shutters.

The main entrance is located in the center bay of the main story at the front elevation. The entrance treatment includes a high transom and paneled jambs. Directly beneath is a door in the ground story level. A raised porch extends along the front elevation at the main story level and continues with the north elevation. A partially enclosed double porch is present on the south elevation of the el.

The roof is of slate, terminating with a plain barge board set directly against the end walls.

Between the two rooms of the interior of the front east part of the house is a central stair and entrance hall. The woodwork is consistent with the 1851 building date and features interior doors with three pairs of vertical panels. Door architraves in the parlor are trimmed with corner blocks decorated with concentric circles. This motif is used on the fireplace mantels throughout the house as well. The wing to the rear contains two rooms. The innermost of these has a fireplace in its north wall that shares a flue with the fireplace in the north room of the front section. The end room is a kitchen with a service fireplace and a small stairway.

Construction of the cellar of this house is notable. Several 18th century architectural elements were found there, particularly in a stone walled room beneath the parlor and main entrance hall. This room has a large service fireplace in its south end wall with a trammel for hanging utensils. A massive raised panel door with a batten back hung on large strap hinges opens into the room. The end partition consists of vertical beveled panels which appear to be from an 18th-century structural pieces. In the

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Bell-Varner House
Washington County,

CONTINUATION SHEET Maryland ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 1

DESCRIPTION (continued)

rear of the cellar is a small vaulted room for vegetable storage.

The farm on which this house stands has been divided into smaller parcels. The tract with the house contains approximately four acres and a chicken coop and wagon shed of the early 20th century. It does not include the large frame bank barn on fieldstone foundations directly across Unger Road.

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 type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input 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 Jonas Bell 1851 C.B. BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Dated 1851, the Bell-Varner House is a documented and well-maintained example of the mid-nineteenth century domestic architecture of Washington County. Its five-bay, center door plan represents a significant architectural group in the county and the Cumberland Valley. The house has undergone relatively few exterior alterations.

The house is also important for the 18th-century woodwork and structural elements found in the basement. These suggest that parts of an earlier house were used in construction of the present dwelling, or that the present house rests on foundations of a possible 18th-century structure.

According to the datestone, the house was built by or for Jonas Bell. Members of the Bell family were prominent in the early life of the Leitersburg vicinity.

It appears likely that there was some sort of settlement in this area prior to Jonas Bell's occupation of the land in the mid-19th century. Deeds indicate that Bell acquired the farm containing slightly more than 100 acres on March 30, 1848 (IN3/292). The property had actually been sold to him at public sale in 1840 as directed in an equity court case between John Burkholder and John Yockey. John Yockey and his niece, Susan Yockey Burkholder, wife of John Burkholder, were the only surviving heirs of a John Yockey who had died intestate "many years ago." (Chancery Record 3/155). Apparently, John Yockey Sr. had resided on this farm.

The farm includes parts of the land grants, "Resurvey on Darlings Sale," "Resurvey on Webb's Discovery," "Webb's Discovery" and "The Forest." "Darling's Sale" was patented on October 14, 1743, containing 420 acres, for Capt. John Charlton. After Capt. Charlton's death, the tract was divided into seven 60-acre parcels, one for each of his children.¹

¹ Herbert C. Bell, History of Leitersburg District. Leitersburg, Maryland: the author (1908) 27.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Washington County Land Records.
Washington County Chancey Records.
Bell, Herbert C. History of Leitersburg District. Leitersburg, Maryland:
by the author, 1908.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 3.64 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A | 18 | | 27.6 | 35.0 | | 43 | 9.3 | 9.2 | 0 |
ZONE EASTING NORTHING
C | | | | | | | | | | | |

B | | | | | | | | | | | |
ZONE EASTING NORTHING
D | | | | | | | | | | | |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #2.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

njm

NAME / TITLE

Paula Stoner ~~Dickey~~, Consultant

ORGANIZATION

Washington County Historic Sites Survey

DATE

August 1975

STREET & NUMBER

33 West Washington Street

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Hagerstown,

STATE

Maryland 21740

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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

John D. Pearce

DATE

3/15/78

TITLE STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

William H. Bradman
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE *9-24-78*

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST: *Caro Jane Saw*

DATE *9-21-79*

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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RECEIVED AUG 14 1979
DATE ENTERED SEP 24 1979

Bell-Varner house
Washington County

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

BEGINNING at a point on the south side of Unger Road $\frac{1}{2}$ mile southwest of the main road between Smithsburg and Leitersburg; thence, west along the south side of Ungar Road about 800 feet; thence, south 200' to a point; thence, east 729.03' to a point; thence, north 200' north 200' to the point of beginning, containing 3.64 acres.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The present owners of the house, Mr. and Mrs. Conrad Varner, bought the house and 20.99 acres June 20, 1977 (638/817) and sold 17.35 acres of this behind (south of) the house and two sheds. The barn across the road is not included because it is under separate ownership.