United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form  

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 18A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word process, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>historic name</th>
<th>Tattersal Property</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>other names</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Location

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>street &amp; number</th>
<th>Union Street</th>
<th>not for publication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>city or town</td>
<td>Bolivar</td>
<td>vicinity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>state code</td>
<td>WV</td>
<td>county</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WV county code</td>
<td>Jefferson</td>
<td>code 037 zip code</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this □ nomination □ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property □ meets □ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant □ nationally □ statewide □ locally. □

See continuation sheet for additional comments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signature of certifying office/Title</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State or Federal agency and bureau</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

in my opinion, the property □ meets □ does not meet the National Register criteria. (□ See continuation sheet for additional comments).

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<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State or Federal agency and bureau</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I hereby certify that this property is:</th>
<th>Signature of the Keeper</th>
<th>Date of Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ entered in the National Register.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ determined eligible for the National Register.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ determined not eligible for the National Register.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ removed from the National Register.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ other (explain):</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State or Federal agency and bureau</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
## 5. Classification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ownership of Property</th>
<th>Category of Property</th>
<th>Number of Resources within Property</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Check as many boxes as apply)</td>
<td>(Check only one box)</td>
<td>(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ private</td>
<td>□ building(s)</td>
<td>Contributing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ public-local</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ public-State</td>
<td>□ district</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ public-Federal</td>
<td>□ structure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ object</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Contributing:** 2 buildings
- **Noncontributing:** 1 site, 1 structure, 2 objects

**Name of related multiple property listing**
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

- Historic Properties of Harpers Ferry National Historical Park

**Number of contributing resources previously Listed in the National Register**

- 1

## 6. Function of Use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Historic Functions</th>
<th>Current Functions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Enter categories from instructions)</td>
<td>(Enter categories from instructions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landscape/Natural Feature (cliff, hilltop)</td>
<td>Domestic/single dwelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation and Culture/outdoor recreation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture Subsistence/agricultural field</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## 7. Description

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Architectural Classification</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Enter categories from instructions)</td>
<td>(Enter categories from instructions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Style</td>
<td>Foundation Concrete block</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Walls Aluminum siding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Roof Metal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Narrative Description**
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets)
Physical Description:

The Tattersal property is located on a flat-topped hill at the intersection of Union Street and US Route 340, overlooking the Shenandoah River to the south. The southern boundary of the property is a cliff of rock and wild vegetation. The house and associated buildings are located on about one acre of cleared land at the top of the hill on a two-acre parcel. A mixture of mostly deciduous trees surrounds the clearing. The yard is grassy and a great number of flower garden beds are established around the house.

The Tattersall house is a one-story frame dwelling constructed over several years, beginning in 1946. The house sits on a cement block foundation, the front (south), four bay, elevation appears to be an enclosed porch with a low pitched shed roof, one bay deep, with a two-pane, sliding window on the west elevation. The front bays consist of two, three-part windows with a fixed large center pane, and smaller one over one sash windows on either side. A front door with storm screen door is placed between the two window sets. A fourth front bay, on the southeast corner is a smaller one over one sash window. This section of the house probably sits on block piers, these are masked with a formed concrete pad and step on the front, and wood paneling on the sides. The middle section of the house is one story with a small square, single-paned attic window in the gable ends. The first story is two bays deep with one single and one paired, one over one sash window. A stuccoed chimney is located centrally in the peak of the roof. The rear section of the house sits on the same block foundation as the middle section, it is one bay deep with a low pitched shed roof. The window has one over one sash. The siding over all of the above sections of the house is aluminum, the roof is standing seam metal. Attached to the rear of the back section is a one bay, frame addition with flat roof. The rear (north) elevation is three bays, two paired one over one sash windows and a central door. The addition sits on a poured (or formed) concrete pad. The siding on the addition is vinyl, the roof is channelled metal.

The complex of outbuildings, located north of the dwelling house, is a series of garage, carport, workshop, and sheds. All appear to be connected in some way, and were built over a long period of time. Construction materials include: a steel framed carport with some wood panel siding, wood frame garage, workshop and sheds, with both wood German siding, wood clapboard siding, and asbestos shingles. Roofing materials appear to be channelled metal over all. Three small sheds indicated on the 1995 NPS Survey of the Tattersall tract were not observed.
8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of our history.
- Property associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- Property as yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply)

Property is:
- owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- removed from its original location.
- a birthplace or grave.
- a cemetery.
- a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- a commemorative property.
- less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography
(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets)

Previous documentation on files (NPS):
- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Primary location of additional data:
- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:
Statement of Significance:

The Tattersall Property is significant under National Register Criterion A as a contributing element to the whole landscape of the Harpers Ferry National Historical Park. The 2.06 acre lot, although referred to in earlier deeds as slightly over 3 acres, appears to have retained its essential boundaries since at least 1848. Traditionally a cleared but vacant lot, the “Circus Hill Lot” has played a variety of roles in the community landscape of the Harpers Ferry/Bolivar area. It is part of the Multiple Property Documentation entitled “Historic Properties of Harpers Ferry National Historical Park,” within the contexts, “Patterns of Development in the Post Civil War Harpers Ferry Areas, 1865-1955,” “Harpers Ferry in the Civil War,” and “Black Education in the Harpers Ferry/Bolivar Area from 1864-1955.” The property type is a community resource.

The Tattersall tract is located on the southwestern boundary of the town of Harpers Ferry, atop a promontory between Camp Hill and Bolivar Heights. Bounded on the west by Union Street, and on the south by cliffs along the Route 340 corridor (formerly Shenandoah Street), the lot overlooks the Shenandoah River to the south, just at the western tip of Virginius Island. While there is a house currently located on the lot, constructed in 1946, it appears the tract remained undeveloped for most of its history.

Resource History

Sometime prior to 1848, Lewis Wernwag, a well-known local bridge builder who lived on Virginius Island, purchased the Union Street lot from George Rowles. No deed was recorded for this transaction unfortunately, and in 1848, both men having passed away, a special commissioner was appointed by the Chancery Court to settle the ownership dispute between the heirs of George Rowles and Lewis Wernwag. The settlement placed the lot in the hands of Wernwag’s heirs, which they retained for 68 years. At some point during this time the lot became known as the “Circus Hill Lot.” A reference to this name is found in the 1914 deed from Julia Ann Wernwag Johnson to S. W. Lightner. The locally produced Woman’s Club newsletter, The Mountain Echo, dated August, 1919, described the origin of the name: “This hill . . .received its name from the fact that, in ante-war days, John Robinson’s famous circus annually pitched its tents on the flat top of the hill, not far from the point overlooking the river, and attracted large crowds from the surrounding country.”

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1The Mountain Echo, Vol. 1, No. 2, August 1919, Henry T. McDonald Papers, Harpers Ferry National Historical Park Library, Harpers Ferry, WV.
The apparent use of the hill lot, before the Civil War, for a circus location, indicates the lot was probably maintained as a cleared field or meadow. The same newsletter article notes that Civil War soldiers were thought to have been buried on the north end of the lot. The bodies were later removed, according to the article, leaving depressions in the ground. While the possibility exists that this anecdote is true, further research would be necessary to document the validity of the newsletter account.

The 1914 purchase of the “Circus Hill Lot” by Scott W. Lightner, a Trustee of the nearby Storer College, began a new association for the hill parcel. In 1916, Lightner sold the property to Storer College. The 1919 *Mountain Echo* article described the lot as “now under cultivation as the property of Storer College.” Immediately east of the hill lot, across a ravine, was the western boundary of the Storer College campus, occupied by the college barn and gardens used in the Husbandry and Gardening courses at the college. A photo from the 1913-14 college catalogue shows this view, probably taken from the “Circus Hill Lot” location. Until 1942, Storer College had been operating as a two-year college, with emphasis not only on Education Certification, but also instruction in Industrial Arts and Agriculture. In 1942, Storer College began offering four-year degrees in Education, Science, and Home Economics. With a waning emphasis on agricultural education, the college perhaps no longer needed the extra acreage of the “Circus Hill Lot.” In 1944 the Trustees of Storer College sold the lot to Edward Tattersall.

Edward Tattersall began building his modest home on the summit of the “Circus Hill Lot” in 1946. Unfortunately, Edward died the same year, unable to complete construction of the building. The lot then passed to Edward’s children, including Melvin Tattersall, who continued construction of the house over the next twenty years. In 1952 Melvin and his wife Dorothy acquired sole ownership of the property. The Tattersalls sold the lot to the National Park Service in 1995, but retained a “Life Estate.” The property is currently vacant.

Resource Evaluation

The Tattersall Property, historically known as the “Circus Hill Lot,” is part of the Multiple Property Documentation Form entitled “Historic Properties of the Harpers Ferry National Historical Park.” The tract of land is significant as a contributing element to the overall natural and cultural landscape of the Harpers Ferry/Bolivar area. In the years before the Civil War...

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3. *Storer College Catalogue, 1913-1914, Storer College Collection, Harpers Ferry National Historical Park Library, Harpers Ferry, WV.*
5. *Personal communication from Dorothy Tattersall, May 1999.*
War, its use was as the site of circus entertainment. During the war the site was possibly used for observation and burials. In the years of re-development following the war, the property was a cultivated field for the education of African American students at Storer College. All of these incarnations of the “Circus Hill Lot” have made it an integral part of the Harpers Ferry cultural landscape. The buildings currently on the property are considered to be non-contributing to this history.

The historic integrity of the Tattersall Property remains good, despite the presence of the Tattersall house and associated buildings on the lot. The surrounding setting remains much the same. Union Street has seen very little modern development, the backlots bordering the ravine to the east are still wooded, as is the ravine (as seen in the 1913 Storer College Catalogue photo). The subject lot remains cleared of trees on the summit, because of the dwelling complex, and a large number of flower gardens have been established. Despite the fact that the former Shenandoah Street below the lot is now Route 340, the change does not intrude on the integrity of the lot due to the tremendous height of the cliff on which the lot sits. Because of this height, the view shed of the Shenandoah River and the Loudoun Heights beyond has remained essentially unchanged by development below.
Major Bibliographical References:

Brown, S. Howell, Map of Harper Ferry, 1869, Jefferson Co. Court House, Charles Town, WV.


Henry T. McDonald Papers, Harpers Ferry National Historical Park Library, Harpers Ferry, WV.

Jefferson County Land Records, Jefferson Co. Court House, Charles Town, WV.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1907, 1922, 1933, West Virginia University Archives, Morgantown, WV.

Storer College Catalogues, Storer College Collection, Harpers Ferry NHP Library, Harpers Ferry, WV.
Tattersal Property
Name of Property

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 2.06

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Verbal Boundary Description
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Edith B. Wallace, Research Associate
organization Paula S. Reed and Associates, Inc. date 6/99, rev. 12/00
street & number 105 N. Potomac Street telephone 301-739-2070
city or town Hagerstown State Maryland zip code 21740

Additional Documentation
Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets
Maps
A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property’s location.
A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs
Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional Items
(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner
(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO)

Name Harpers Ferry NHP
street & number P.O. Box 65 telephone 304-535-6298

Paperwork Reduction Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.
Verbal Boundary Description:

The boundaries are those shown and described on the attached survey plat for NPS tract 103-41. The property is also verbally described in Jefferson County Deed Book 186, page 407, and contains 2.06 acres.

Boundary Justification:

This is the entire property, as surveyed and deeded in 1944. These appear to be the historic boundaries for the property.
NOTES:
1) P.S. INSTRUMENTS PER SURVEY
BY BRAND ENGINEERING COMPANY, MARTINSBURG, W.V.,
DATED JUNE 1952, AND J. B. PEARSON & COMPANY, INC.,
HAGERSTOWN, MD. DATED JANUARY 1953.
2) REFERENCE IS MADE TO STATE ROAD PLANS ENTITLED
"PLAN AND PROFILE FOR CONSTRUCTION OF STATE ROAD,
ROUTE NO. U.S. 340 PROJECT NO. E R-1 (1) AND
F (1) BOLIVAR VIRGINIA STATE LINE", DATED OCTOBER 1954.
REVISED SEPTEMBER 1957 AND,
"PLAN AND PROFILE FOR CONSTRUCTION OF STATE ROAD,
PROJECT NO. STATE E R-1, "TO MAIN STREET,
HARPERS FERRY" DATED MARCH 1956.
3) BOTH DOCUMENTS ARE OF RECORD IN THE CLERK'S
OFFICE OF JEFFERSON COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA.

FURTHER REFERENCE IS MADE TO THE FOLLOWING
DEED BOOKS AND PAGES:
DB 186, PG 177
DB 185, PG 422
DB 186, PG 147
DB 111, PG 183
DB 113, PG 99
DB 83, PG 12

HARPERS FERRY NHP
TATTERSALL PROPERTY
PHOTO KEY
1  Photo # + Direction
2  Property/Boundary

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR - NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
HARPERS FERRY NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

SURVEY OF TRACT 103-41
MELVIN TATTERSALL, et ux.,
DB: 186, PG. 407
AREA: 2.06 ACRES

SURVEYED BY: CHARLES K. SAGER
DRAWN BY: C. BLAUSER & J. M. CHANET
APPROVED BY: C. K. SAGER & C. BLAUSER
DATE: APRIL 17, 1956
NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20541
MARSHALL, W.VA. 26330