

Greene County

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The Bickers-Comer House



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THE BICKERS-COMER HOUSE

Mr. & Mrs. K. Comer

HISTORY

The house was built in 1858 by John L. Jones. It was sold in 1874 to L.B. and Jane McMullen. McMullen was the organizer of a military company in the Civil War; he was captain of the company and his heroism in the war made him a famous Greene County son. He was Justice of the Peace after the war. His wife was from Missouri, and according to the WPA report on the house: "...brought with her the first wisteria seen in this section." It was called for a number of years the "Missouri Bean." The house was sold to Pendleton Proctor Bickers in 1898.

In the 1950's the house was remodeled by the Bickers family. The kitchen and dining room were

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housed in the basement, and two bathrooms were added. The Kenneth Comer bought the house in 1967 and put a large addition onto the back of the house in 1976.

The house was originally a farmhouse, part of a small farm of 19-20 acres. In recent years the farmland has been sold and a subdivision has developed. The original well house with its water trough and the smoke house are on the property. They were both relocated by the Comers, however, when they erected the addition.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

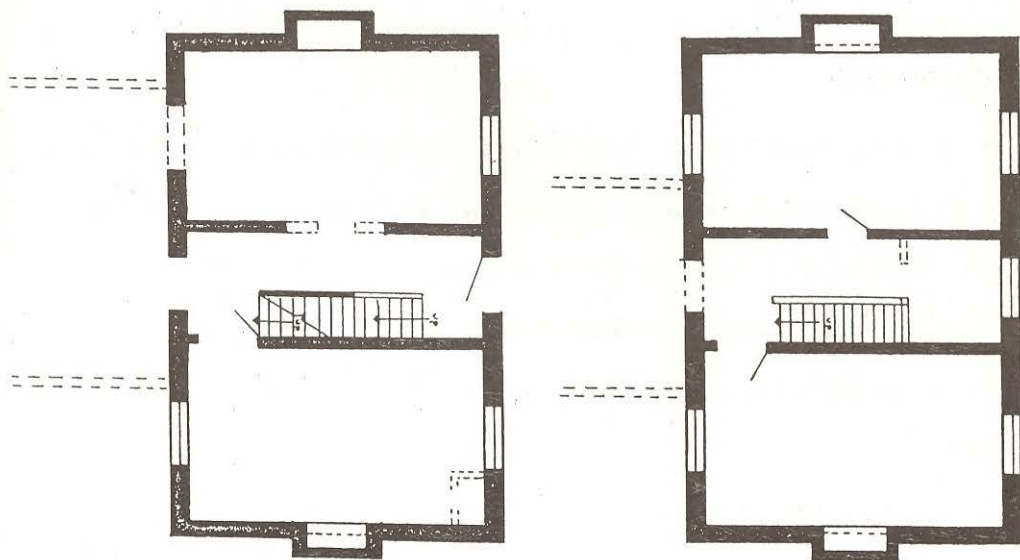
The original portion of the house has six rooms; two are on each floor, and two are in the cellar. There is a central stair hall. The floor is the original pine in the living room and bedroom above. The woodwork is simple, having butt-jointed door surrounds, unturned stair balusters, and a simple mantle of flat pilasters and plain frieze.

The porches were added late in the nineteenth century; originally, front and back were identical.

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The fireplaces have all been covered over with the exception of the one in the parlor (living room).

The 1976 addition is very much in keeping with the spirit of the original. The original openings were used and the door transom was retained along with the back brick wall.



First floor

Second floor

FLOOR PLAN OF THE BICKERS-COMER HOUSE

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The original porches were probably smaller, or possibly there were none at all. Certainly the basement windows looking out of the underside of the porch is an awkward arrangement. The present owner says that the McClean house in Appomattox where Lee surrendered is very similar. It has a full porch with a brick walkway below. This may have been the original intention for this house.

STRUCTURE

- A, Construction. The house is brick in common bond. The roof is metal, and the porches are trimmed in wood.
- B. Condition. The house is in excellent condition, and is very well maintained.

LOCATION

The Bickers-Comer House is on the east side of Rt.230 across from the Stanardsville Baptist Church. The house is set up on a small hill, and the roof line runs diagonal to the road. The site is quite nice, with a well cared-for lawn, and some mature trees.

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IMPORTANCE

This is the home of one branch of the Bickers family, an important one to Stanardsville. Earlier, it was the home of L.B. McMullen who found some renown in the Civil War. The house itself is a nice farmhouse from the middle of the nineteenth century, characteristically simple and unadorned.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The house should be preserved and effort should be made to discourage any other encroachments on the integrity of the property. The owners are contemplating the restoration of a smaller porch to the house which is certainly a good idea if research proves that to be the original design.

INFORMATION SOURCES

Interview with Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Comer (owners)

WPA reports, "P.P. Bickers House"

Interview with Mrs. Lelia Bickers