ACHS SUMMARY FORM

M: 18-44

1. Name: Little Seneca Viaduct, B&O Metropolitan Branch, Boyds, Md.

2. Planning Area/Site Number: 18/19* 3. M-NCPPC Atlas Reference: *Not on Atlas Map 6 I-14

4. Address: Midway between Germantown and Boyds
Abandoned Right of Way, B&O Railroad

5. Classification Summary

Category structure
Ownership private
Public Acquisition NA
Status unoccupied
Accessible yes: restricted
Present use other

Previous Survey Recording None
Title and Date:

Federal ___ State X County X Local ___

6. Date: 1896-1928 7. Original Owner: John E. Greiner

8. Apparent Condition

a. ruins b. unaltered c. original site

9. Description: Stone end abutments and 18 stone piers remain of the trestle over Little Seneca Creek, once 105' above water level and 480' long. The bridge was built in 1896 to replace the wooden trestle built in the early 1870s. The 6 larger piers are located in the stream bed, and canted so that their long dimension is parallel to the riverflow; their upstream ends are wedge-shaped, a feature called "cut-water".

The smaller piers are rectangular. They are located at the higher elevations along the banks of the creek.

The site is entirely on private property, posted against trespassing.

10. Significance: The significance of this site is in the powerful surge the railroad gave to the economy along the B&O's tracks. This trestle was an integral part of the Metropolitan Branch of the B&O. It was demolished in 1928, but the stone end abutments and stone piers remain. The single-tracked "iron bridge" on the B&O's Metropolitan Branch, near Boyds, served from 1896 until 1928, when the line was re-located and double-tracked. During its period of service, it was on one of the major rail lines into the Nation's Capital, and it became the B&O's main line from Baltimore to the west. The bridge was single-tracked and built on a sharp curve which increased the difficulty of construction. The 1896 viaduct was designed by John E. Greiner (1859-1942) who was the B&O's Engineer of Bridges at the time. Greiner was an accomplished civil engineer of some note, and was involved in a number of important construction projects after he left the B&O in 1908.

11. Researcher and date researched: Carlos Avery
Richard Warfield - 2/79

12. Compiler: Peg Coleman 13. Date Compiled: 6/79 14. Designation Approval ___

15. Acreage:

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

M: 18-44

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC: Little Seneca Viaduct, B&O Metropolitan Branch, Boyds, Md.

AND/OR COMMON:

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER: Midway between Germantown and Boyds

CITY, TOWN: Abandoned Right of Way, B&O Railroad — VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: 8

STATE:

COUNTY: Montgomery

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
__DISTRICT	__PUBLIC	__OCCUPIED	__AGRICULTURE	__MUSEUM
__BUILDING(S)	X PRIVATE	X UNOCCUPIED	__COMMERCIAL	__PARK
X STRUCTURE	__BOTH	__WORK IN PROGRESS	__EDUCATIONAL	__PRIVATE RESIDENCE
__SITE	**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**	**ACCESSIBLE**	__ENTERTAINMENT	__RELIGIOUS
__OBJECT	__IN PROCESS	X YES: RESTRICTED	__GOVERNMENT	__SCIENTIFIC
	__BEING CONSIDERED	__YES: UNRESTRICTED	__INDUSTRIAL	__TRANSPORTATION
		__NO	__MILITARY	X OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME: Mrs. E. Kingston Pickrell and Mr. Edward Pickrell — Telephone #:(301)428-0631

STREET & NUMBER: 15001 Barnesville Road

CITY, TOWN: Boyds — __ VICINITY OF — STATE: Maryland — zip code: 20720

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Montgomery County Courthouse

Liber #: 498 2644

Folio #: 305 19

STREET & NUMBER:

CITY, TOWN: Rockville — STATE: Maryland

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE: None

DATE:

__FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

CITY, TOWN: STATE:

M:18-44

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
_EXCELLENT	_DETERIORATED	X_UNALTERED	X_ORIGINAL SITE
_GOOD	X_RUINS	_ALTERED	_MOVED DATE_____
_FAIR	_UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The remnants of the second trestle over Little Seneca Creek, near Boyds, consist of the stone end abutments and 18 stone piers. These are located approximately midway between Boyds and Germantown on the abandoned right-of-way of the B&O's Metropolitan Branch, which runs from Washington, DC, to Point of Rocks, Maryland. On the USGS topographic map of the Germantown area, the site can be seen near "Black Hill". (The UTM coordinates for the site are approximately 18.30130.433965). The site is entirely on private property, which is posted against trespassing.

The abutments measure approximately 31' in width and 12' in length and stand some 12' above grade at the exposed ends. Two types of piers were used: the smaller type are rectangular and measure about 5'x8'. These are located at the higher elevations along the banks of the creek and their exposed heights vary from 8-12' above ground slope (at the east end) to flush or nearly buried (on the west slope). One pier has had its coping stone replaced with a poured concrete slab. The six larger piers are located in the riverbed. These are about 6'x12' and stand 8-13' above ground or water level. These piers are canted so that their long dimension is parallel to the river flow, and their upstream ends are wedge-shaped--a feature known as a "cut-water".

The "iron bridge" was built in the latter half of 1896. The dates chiseled in the east abutment, "6.17.96" and "10.13.96" probably represent the period of construction of the stonework. The newspaper accounts indicate the bridge was constructed during the period June-December 1896.

Measurements of the stone remains and the available photos of the bridge indicate that it was built on a 4-degree curve with a total span of about 480'. It was about 105' above water level at its midpoint. The bridge was a relatively standard design viaduct, with the track supported by deck-type girder spans supported by nine bents, arranged into four towers and one stand-alone bent. There was a 3' walkway on either side of the single track, with water barrels positioned at irregular intervals. The tower spans were 30' long, with 60' spans between the main towers and end spans of 70' (at the east end) and 50' (at the west end). The maximum width of the towers at the base was approximately 60'.

The 1896 viaduct replaced a wooden trestle which was built in the early 1870's. The only visible remains of that earlier bridge are the stone retaining walls--which the B&O referred to as 'riprap'--at the base of the fill on the east bank of the river.

The crossing of the Little Seneca Creek now takes place some distance downstream of this site via an earthen fill and a concrete arch viaduct.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

M:18-44

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
__PREHISTORIC	__ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	__COMMUNITY PLANNING	__LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	__RELIGION
__1400-1499	__ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	__CONSERVATION	__LAW	__SCIENCE
__1500-1599	__AGRICULTURE	__ECONOMICS	__LITERATURE	__SCULPTURE
__1600-1699	__ARCHITECTURE	__EDUCATION	__MILITARY	__SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
__1700-1799	__ART	X ENGINEERING	__MUSIC	__THEATER
X 1800-1899	__COMMERCE	__EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__PHILOSOPHY	X TRANSPORTATION
__1900-	__COMMUNICATIONS	X INDUSTRY	__POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	__OTHER (SPECIFY)
		__INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1896-1928 BUILDER/ARCHITECT B&O RR/John E. Greiner

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The single-tracked "iron bridge" on the B&O's Metropolitan Branch, near Boyds, served from 1896 until 1928, when the line was re-located and double-tracked. During its period of service, it was on one of the major rail lines into the Nation's Capital, and it became the B&O's main line from Baltimore to the west.

The 1896 viaduct replaced a wooden trestle over the Little Seneca Creek which was built in 1872. Both of these bridges were single-tracked and built on a sharp (4 degree) curve which added to the difficulties in their construction.

The 1896 viaduct was designed by John E. Greiner (1859-1942) who was the B&O's Engineer of Bridges at the time. Greiner was an accomplished civil engineer of some note--after he left the B&O in 1908, the consulting firm he founded was involved in a number of important projects, including the Pennsylvania Turnpike, the Susquehanna River bridge at Havre de Grace, and many others. Greiner was also probably responsible for the upgrading of the Bollman Truss spans and their replacement on the Monocacy Viaduct in the 1890-1906 period.

The bridge Greiner designed was a relatively standard design early steel viaduct, though its sharp curvature was not so common. The design of such viaducts traces back to the Portage (NY) Viaduct, on the Erie R.R., designed by George S. Morison in 1875.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

M:18-44

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Avery, Carlos P. "Victorian Stations on the B & O's Metropolitan Bran. - and Other Works of E. Francis Baldwin." To Be Published.
Ayton, Hershey, Gaithersburg. Interview.
Boyd, T.H.S. History of Mont. Co. Regional Publishing Co., Balt. 1879.
Greiner, John E. Selected Publications.
B & O Track Map, 1918. V.25. USGS Map, Germantown Quadrangle.
CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE	COUNTY
STATE	COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Carlos Avery/Richard Warfield

ORGANIZATION	DATE
Sugarloaf Regional Trails	February 1979
STREET & NUMBER	TELEPHONE
Box 87	926-4510
CITY OR TOWN	STATE
Dickerson	Md. 20753

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 267-1438

PS-1108