

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Chew House or "Blue Stone House"

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

518 Virginia Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Towson

___ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

9th

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Baltimore

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Josef L. Gehring

Telephone #: (301) 828-7222

STREET & NUMBER

518 Virginia Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Towson

___ VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Maryland 21204

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Baltimore County Courthouse (New annex)

Liber #: 4784

Folio #: 269

STREET & NUMBER

Washington Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Towson

STATE

Maryland

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

None

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
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		DATE <u>Jan., 1978</u>

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The building once known as the Chew House and designated the "blue stone house" by a 1925 plat and family tradition, is located at 518 Virginia Avenue near Joppa Road. It was built and owned (until 1943) by the Chew family prominent in both Towson and Philadelphia. The building is three stories with a hipped roof (until recently it had a bracketed cornice as evidenced by a photo on p. 24 of the Hahn and Behm book) and is Italianate in appearance. The house was originally T shaped in plan. The main block is 6 bays wide and 4 deep and the east wing is 2 bays wide and is flanked by covered wooden porches on either side that extend from the ground to the third floor and have entrances on each floor. The layout of the building is that of a central plan as obvious from the central location of the front door. The fenestration is regular on the street facade and slightly more irregularly spaced on the sides. All the windows are the 6/6 sash type with inset wooden lintels. That the windows once had shutters is evidenced by remains of shutterlocks on the north elevation.

The street facade is of a regular ashlar construction and the corners appear to be quoined. This facade is the only one on which any real attempt at coursing is made. There is a one bay cement entrance porch with a single story portico, both of which have been altered. The doorway is slightly recessed. The door is a window door bordered by 3 sidelights on either side. The same wood paneling that lines the recessed doorway is also present on the door under the sidelights. Apparently all the second floor windows have been altered and shortened in height.

The north elevation contains an altered brick chimney centered between the four windows.

Presently, the top floor of the east facade of the building is stuccoed. Also, upon analysis, the porches flanking this wing of the house are estimated to be late 19th to early 20th century. The one story red roof lines on both sides of the building where the porches are located indicate that once roofed sheds were there.

The south elevation contains an interior chimney centered between the four windows. There is also a ground level small porch-like enclosure of apparent recent construction leading to the cellar. The base of this entrance, however, would appear to be original as it is constructed of the same stone as the rest of the house.

Although further access to the interior could not be obtained a centrally located stairs was observed that leads to a sky light. This sky light replaced a cupola about 25 years ago.

There is presently a cement garage located on the site of a previous outbuilding shown on a 1877 map.

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

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Chew or "blue stone " house is significant to Towson for several reasons. It is believed to have been built between 1853 and 1861 as neither it nor Virginia Avenue appear on the plat of Towson dated December 1853 to be used for the donation of land for a courthouse. It does, however, turn up in a newspaper ad for sale in March 1861.

As stated in the description, this house is Italianate in appearance. The Italianate was a popular style in Towson during the 19th century and over a dozen are known to have existed but less than half of these remain. This house and the county jail are the only remaining stone Italianate buildings in the area. Regardless of style, the Chew house is also one of the few extant houses in Towson constructed of local stone; something which was relatively common as can be surmised from old photographs and the 1898 color-coded atlas.

In addition, the house can be regarded as a part of the overall chain of land ownership and development of the area which started with the Ridgely family of Hampton (relatives of the Chews) in the 18th century. The division of the Ridgely estate in 1832 in which part of this land came into Chew ownership lead to eventual southward growth and development. Most importantly the buildings involved become visual documents of this development, especially as it relates to America's architectural styles and taste. For example, there is Hampton, built in the late Georgian style; Epsom, with its Federal or Greek Revival portico addition; the Blue stone house or 518 Virginia Avenue in the Italianate style; the Red stone house or 512/14 Virginia Avenue which exhibits features of the Gothic revival; and lastly the frame dwellings of "Chewville". The name "Chewville" was documented by an 1861 newspaper ad and undoubtedly refers to the Chew family's land ownership especially in the vicinity of what is now Virginia Avenue and Joppa Road as evidenced by the 1853, 1877, and 1898 maps. These holdings also included the Epsom estate which has since become Goucher College.

Located in an area which has since seen the influx of modern high rises and commercialism, the Chew house stands as an important link with Towson's heritage and lifestyles of the mid-late nineteenth century.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Baltimore County American, March 1, 1861

Bromley. Atlas of 1898

Gontrum, Edwin K., ed. Sidelights on the History of Baltimore County, Towson,md:

Edwin Gontrum, 1966, pp. 11-12.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning for the same on the easternmost side of Virginia Avenue 60 feet wide and at the end of the third line of the land which by a deed dated October 29, 1919 and recorded among the Land Records of Baltimore County in Liber W.P.C. No. 518 folio 76, was conveyed by Harriet R. Chew to Wilson W. Watson and running thence binding on the easternmost side of Virginia Avenue North 3 degrees 51 minutes east 231.65 feet to the center of Joppa Road as the same is now opened and constructed, thence binding on the center of Joppa

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

STATE COUNTY

STATE COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

WAYNE L. NIELD, II
HISTORIC TOWSON, INC.

NAME / TITLE

Susan M. Cook Student/Surveyor

ORGANIZATION

Goucher College

DATE

January 19, 1978

STREET & NUMBER

Dulany Valley Road

TELEPHONE

(301) 825-3300

CITY OR TOWN

Towson

STATE

Maryland

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

Item Number 9 -- continued

Hahn, H. George and Carl Behm III. A Pictorial History of a Maryland Town: Towson, Norfolk, Virginia: The Donning Co., 1977, pp. 24-26.

Hopkins, G.M. Atlas of 1877

Plat of Towson Town, December 1853

Wilson, Hilda N., ed. Then...Now: Towson Bicentennial 1768-1968, Towson, Md: Junior Press, 1968.

Item Number 10 -- continued

Road south 87 degrees 29 minutes east 133.5 feet to the westernmost side of an alley heretofore laid out 12 feet wide; thence binding on the westernmost side of said alley with the use in common with others having a similar right thereto south 1 degree 48 minutes west 229 feet to the end of the second line of the land conveyed as aforesaid by Harriet R. Chew to Wilson W. Watson and thence binding on the third line of the last mentioned land north 88 degrees 32 minutes west 141.7 feet to the place of the beginning. (Liber 4784 folio 269) This does not include the land leased by Edward Ehman and wife to Esso on Fe. 20, 1951 as recorded in Baltimore County Land Records Liber 1961 folio 514.

CHEW HOUSES

BA-206

Both of these stone buildings should be seen as part of a chain of land ownership and development by two important Baltimore County families. It began with the Ridgelys at Hampton in the 18th century, whose land was divided in 1832, with a large portion going to their relatives, the Chews. The Chew estate was called "Epsom" and is the present site of the Goucher College campus. The land on which these houses stand was part of the Chew holdings. They were built by the Chews and constituted part of what was called "Chewville" in one 1861 advertisement. The buildings associated with this evolution document the full gamut of major architectural styles in America. The Georgian is well represented by Hampton, early sketches show that Epsom had a large Greek Revival portico, and in these two buildings one finds good examples of the Gothic Revival and Italianate.

Although they differ in color, both of these houses are built of local stone. For obvious reasons # 512-14 is known as the "red stone house" and for less obvious reasons its neighbor at 518 the "blue stone." Early deeds confirm the use of these terms.

The red stone house is a duplex which is basically a deeply corniced gable-end structure typical of the Greek Revival. Applied to it are somewhat oversized scroll work decorations typical of Gothic Revival patternbooks.

The blue stone is a large three-story residence resting on a high basement, and even without its recently removed brackets, it remains one of Towson's better Italianate structures. Although it was designed to be a residence, the large and well equipped building "is admirably adapted for a female seminary or boarding house," as was pointed out in an 1861 real estate advertisement.

B. C. American, Mar.1, 1861,
p.1.

TITLE SEARCH for CHEW HOUSE - BLUE STONE

Liber 4784, Folio 269 June 2, 1967

Grantor: Clara M. Ehman, widow

Grantee: Josef L. Gehring & wife

"Beginning...Easternmost side of Virginia Ave. 60' wide...East
231.65'...East 133.5'...West 229'...West 141.7'..."

Liber 1310, Folio 1 August 9, 1943

Grantor: The Pennsylvania Co., et. al.

Grantee: Edward R. Ehman & wife

Liber 54, Folio 267 June 18, 1867

Grantor: Charles R. Chew et. al.

Grantee: Samuel Chew

Samuel Chew died leaving property to widow Mary Johnson Brown Chew
through Will 8/106, 1887

Mary J. B. Chew died leaving property to surviving children, 1927

Anne S. P. Alston acquired undivided 1/5, having died 1931, passing
the undivided 1/5 interest to neice Mary Evelyn Stephenson, nephew David
Sands Brown Chew and sister Elizabeth B. Chew.

David S. B. Chew died 1934, and in Will 36/548 devised to his wife
Bertha E. Chew and Bank of North America and Trust with power of sale.
Merger- with The Pennsylvania Co. Bertha E. Chew died 1937 leaving
The Pennsylvania Co. sole trustee.

Baltimore County Advocate February 11, 1860

AD: Sale for two Red Stone Dwellings and a Blue Stone Mansion
Virginia Ave. "ready for immediate occupation."
Blue Stone - can accomodate two families, a school, or boarding house
Will be fitted with modern improvements.
Apply to Henry B. Chew

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
INVENTORY

317-207206

1. STATE Maryland
 COUNTY Baltimore Co.
 TOWN Towson VICINITY Dist. IX
 STREET NO. Virginia Ave. S. of Joppa Rd.
 ORIGINAL OWNER Col. Chas. Ridgely
 ORIGINAL USE
 PRESENT OWNER
 PRESENT USE office building
 WALL CONSTRUCTION stone
 NO. OF STORIES 3 stories

2. NAME Chew House (Epsom)
 DATE OR PERIOD 1840
 STYLE
 ARCHITECT
 BUILDER

3. FOR LIBRARY OF CONGRESS USE

4. NOTABLE FEATURES, HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE AND DESCRIPTION

OPEN TO PUBLIC

A large three story structure, once topped by a cupola, of quarried stone, numerous large windows, wide porches. The property was acquired by Henry B. Chew from Col. Charles Ridgely of Hampton and called "Epsom". A Chapel by that name was formerly located directly opposite on Joppa Road.

5. PHYSICAL CONDITION OF STRUCTURE

Endangered

Interior

Exterior



6. LOCATION MAP (Plan Optional)

7. PHOTOGRAPH

8. PUBLISHED SOURCES (Author, Title, Pages)
 INTERVIEWS, RECORDS, PHOTOS, ETC.

9. NAME, ADDRESS AND TITLE OF RECORDER

Baltimore Co. Hist. Soc.
 Agriculture Bldg.
 Texas, Md.

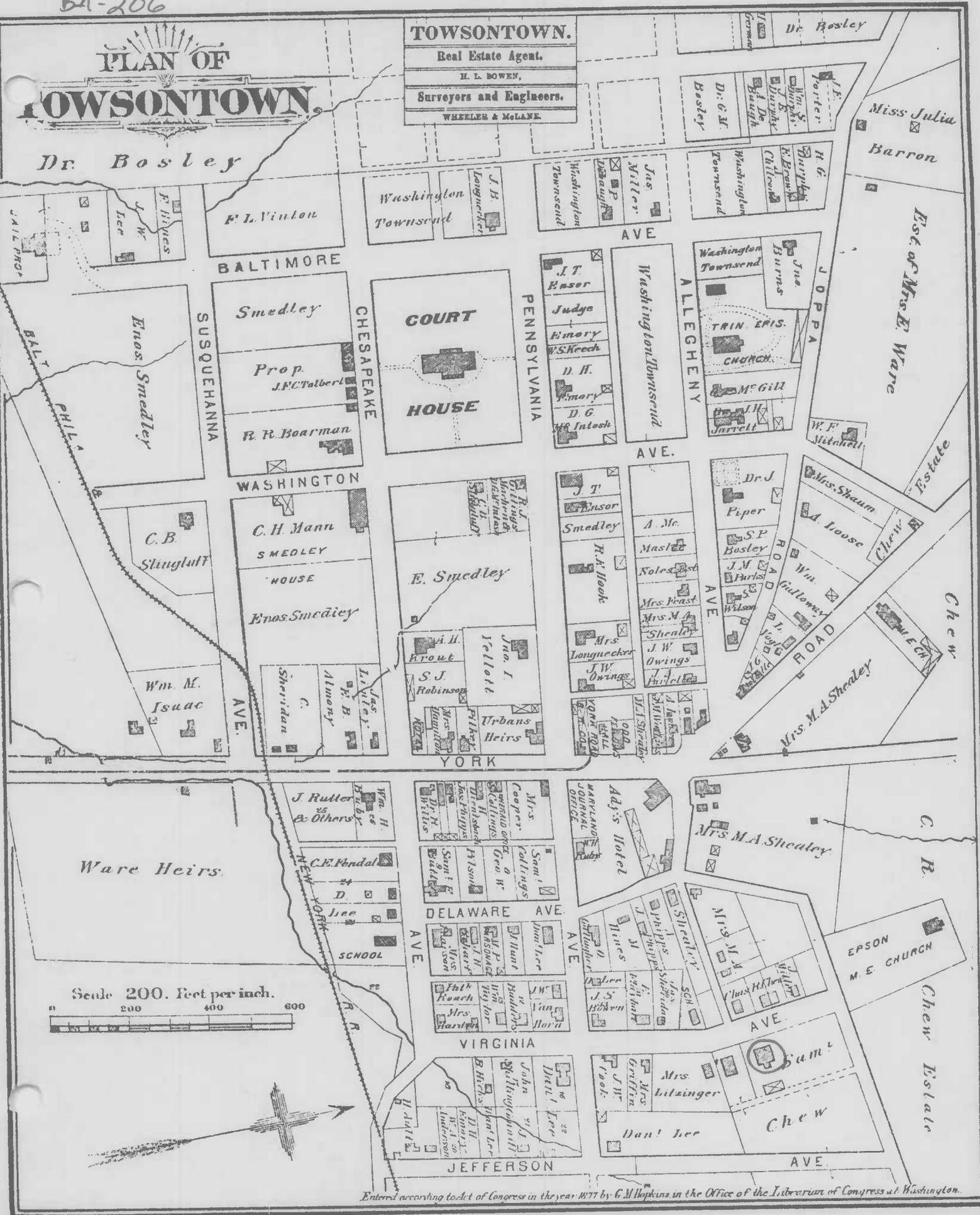
DATE OF RECORD March 20, 1968

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION AND PHOTOGRAPHS MAY BE ADDED ON SHEET OF SAME SIZE

PLAN OF TOWSONTOWN.

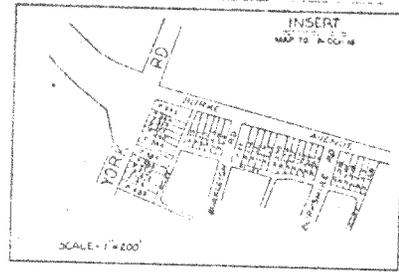
TOWSONTOWN.
 Real Estate Agent.
 H. L. BOWEN,
 Surveyors and Engineers.
 WHEELER & McLANE.

Dr. Bosley

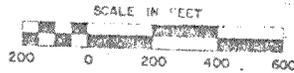


Chew Houses
Blue Stone

BA-206



COPYRIGHT MAP DRAGON 1967
MD DEPT OF ASSESS & TAX



TOWSON
SCALE 1" = 200'

DEPT. OF ASSESSMENTS & TAXATION
TAX MAP DIVISION

MAP NO. 70A



BA-206

CHEW HOUSE-BLUE STONE
S.W.

W. NIELD



BA-206

CHEW HSES
BLUE STONE
E.

W. NIELD
SUM-78



BA-206

CHEW HSES
BLUE STONE
W.

W. NIELD
SUM-78



BA-206

CHEW HSES
BLUE STONE
N. FACADE

W. NIELD
SUM-78