

CHEW HOUSES

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, March 1, 1861, p. 1.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

BA - 1157

MAGI # 0311575504

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC
Chew House or "Red stone" House
AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
512/14 Virginia Avenue

CITY, TOWN
Towson

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
9th

___ VICINITY OF

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 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 checked="" 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY (Duplex with Double Ownership - see continuation sheet)

NAME
Wilson W. Watson Telephone #: (301) 823-8942

STREET & NUMBER
514 Virginia Avenue

CITY, TOWN
Towson

STATE, zip code
Maryland 21204

___ VICINITY OF

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, LIBER #: 518 /& Liber# 4830
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Folio #: 76 /& Folio# 210
Baltimore County Courthouse (New annex)

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

This double residence faces west and is located on the east side of Virginia Avenue where the street intersects with Shealey Avenue. It was built and owned by the Chews, a family prominent in both Towson and Philadelphia, until 1919 when the ownership was divided. The house is a two story building with a finished attic. It is made of local stone and follows the coursed rubble form of construction with corners that appear to be quoined. The house is 4 bays wide and although the side fenestration is quite irregular, it would appear to be 4 long bays deep following a longitudinal plan. It has a gable roof with deep cornices that is common to the Greek Revival.

The street facade has symmetrically placed windows with those on the first two floors being 6/6 sash and the attic story windows being rounded casements. These sash windows have gingerbread scrollwork cornices whereas the attic windows have hoodmoulds tacked on. The sash windows were once louvered as the remains of the shutterlocks would indicate. There is a wooden 2 bay entrance porch supported by late 19th century ironwork. The two doors are located slightly off center and contain 8 window panes. There is also a fleche, or small wooden spire-like object, projecting from the roof's ridge.

The north elevation contains irregular fenestration and has an interior chimney centered between the 2 windows. There is a bulkhead cellar entrance with the same stone base as the house. The south elevation has the same irregular fenestration, chimney placement, and cellar entrance and includes a 1 bay porch entrance with wooden doric columns. The ceiling and floor boards on the porch are tongue and groove.

The east elevation of the house has a regular placement of the windows but some disparity in sizes. There is also a porch addition, half of which is enclosed and half open with turned columns. This latter section also has a tongue and groove ceiling. Another chimney is placed in the rear of the house on the side of the open porch.

At the time of this writing, the interior was inaccessible and therefore an interior description was not possible.

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
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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Chew or "Red stone" house is significant to Towson for several reasons. As to when it was built, the only known documentation would indicate that construction took place sometime between 1853 and 1877. This is because neither the house nor Virginia Avenue appear on the Plat of Towson dated December 1853 to be used for the donation of the land for a courthouse. It does, however, turn up on the Hopkins map of 1877. It should be noted that architectural analysis suggests that 512/14 is older than 518 Virginia Avenue (1853-61) although evidence is not presently available.

As stated in the description, this house exhibits elements of both the Greek and Gothic Revivals. Both of these styles were popular in Towson during the 19th century. It is believed that perhaps the house was originally a stone Greek Revival house and that later, as styles and tastes changed, the Gothic features were added. 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. (Bromley)

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 Greek and Gothic revivals; and lastly the frame dwellings of "Chewville". The name "Chewville" was documented by an 1861 newspaper as 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.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Bromley. Atlas of 1898.

Gontrum, Edwin K., ed. Sidelights on the History of Baltimore County,
Towson, Md: Edwin Gontrum, 1966, pp. 11-12.

Hahn, H. George and Carl Behm III. A Pictorial History of a Maryland Town: Towson,
CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See continuation sheet

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

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Susan M. Cook Student/Surveyor

WAYNE L. NIELD, II
HISTORIC TOWSON, INC.

ORGANIZATION

Goucher College

DATE

January 20, 1978

STREET & NUMBER

Dulaney 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 4 -- continued

As listed in Liber 4830 folio 210, Clara E. Green, Katherine G. Jones and her husband William L. Jones are co-owners of 512 Virginia Avenue. At the present time no address is known for them although the occupants of 512 Virginia Avenue say the Jones family resides in Virginia.

Item Number 9 -- continued

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.

Wills, T.P. Liber 7 folio 428 , Baltimore County, February 13, 1884.

Item Number 10 -- continued

514 Virginia Avenue

Beginning for the same at a point on the East side of Virginia Avenue (60 feet wide) said point being at the distance of 31.5 feet North 0 degree and 15 minutes West from the beginning of the third parcel of land which by deed partition dated June 18th 1867 and recorded among the Land Records of Baltimore County in Liber J.H.L. No. 54 folio 267 and was conveyed by Charles R. Chew et. al. to Benjamin Chew said point being also in line with the centre of the partition wall of a double stone house located on the lot now being described and the lot adjoining on the South and running thence to and through the center of said partition wall and binding on a fence now standing in all 146.9 feet to intersect the South 3 degrees East 4.3 perch lines of the above whole parcel of land, and running thence binding on said line reversely North 0 degree and 15 minutes west 42 25/100 feet to the beginning of said line thence North 89 degrees and 41 minutes west 12 feet thence continuing the same course North 89 degrees and 41 minutes West 135.3 feet to the east side of Virginia Avenue and thence binding on the East side of said Avenue South 0 degree and 15 minutes East 43 25/100 feet to the place of beginning. (Liber 518 folio 76)

Item Number 10 -- continued

512 Virginia Avenue

Beginning for the same at a point on the east side of Virginia Avenue (60 feet wide) said point being at the beginning of the third parcel of land which by deed of partition dated June 18, 1867 and recorded among the Land Records of Baltimore County in Liber J.H.L. No. 54 folio 267 was allotted by Charles R. Chew et al to Benjamin Chew and running thence binding on the east side of Virginia Avenue and on part of the first line of the said deed of partition North 0 degree 15 minutes west 31.5 feet to a point in line with the centre of the partition wall of a double stone house located on the lot now being described and the lot adjoining on the North, and running thence to and through the center of said partition wall above referred to, and binding on a fence as now located in all 146.9 feet to an iron pipe, and to intersect the south 3 degrees east 4.3 perches line of the above deed of partition, thence binding on said line South 0 degree and 15 minutes East 29 feet to an iron pipe and to the beginning of the South 84 $\frac{3}{4}$ degrees West 8.9 perches line of the aforesaid deed of partition and thence binding on the said line South 83 degrees and 21 minutes west 146.85 feet to the place of beginning. The improvements thereon being now known as No. 512 Virginia Avenue. (Liber 4830 folio 210)

TITLE SEARCH for CHEW HOUSE - RED STONE

Liber 4830, Folio 210 December 5, 1967

Grantor: James A. Pine & wife

Grantee: Clara E. Green et. al.

Beginning...eastside of Virginia Ave...said point being at the beginning of the third parcel of land which by deed of partition dated June 18, 1867 and recorded in the...Land Records...JHL 54/267...by Charles R. Chew et. al. to Benjamin Chew...West 31.5' to a point in line with the center of the partition wall of a double stone house...146.85' to place of beginning...known at # 512 Virginia Ave.

(Liber 4830, Folio 208 December 5, 1967 Clara E. Green et. al. to James A. Pine & wife.)

Liber 2474, Folio 273 May 3, 1954

Grantor: Evelyn E. Grolock

Grantee: Clara E. Green

Liber 517, Folio 222 October 17, 1919

Grantor: Harriet R. Chew

Grantee: Benjamin C. Green et. al.

Being part of land allotted by Charles R. Chew et. al. to Benjamin Chew...
Being also part of land - Will dated February 13, 1831, recorded in
the Register of Wills book 7/428 Benjamin Chew to Harriet R. Chew.
"My two red stone houses I devise and bequeath to my niece..."

Subject to leaving a 12' space for an alley. Also subject to restrictions:

- 1) That no alcohol or intoxicating liquors shall be made, brewed sold or kept for sale upon said lot.
- 2) That no blacksmith shop...shall be maintained...or any use... which shall be noxious or dangerous to health.
- 3) That neither lot or part shall be sold or permitted to be occupied by any negro or any person of negro descent not to include employees

Baltimore County Advocate February 11, 1860

AD: Sale for two Red Stone Dwellings and a Blue Stone Mansion
Virginia Ave. "ready for immediate occupation."
Apply to Henry B. Chew (Father of Benjamin Chew)

BA-1157

Continuation Sheet

Title Search

ALSO:

Liber 518, Folio 76 October 29, 1919

Grantor: Harriet R. Chew

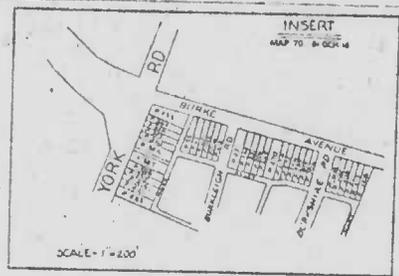
Grantee: Wilson W. Watson et. al.

Beginning...at a distance 31.5'...to a point in line with the center of the partition wall of a double stone house located on the lot adjoining on the south...43.25' to place of beginning.

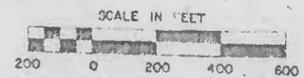
Being the northern half of one of two red stone houses

Chew Houses
Red Stone

BA-1157



COPYRIGHT-MAP DIVISION-1967
MD DEPT OF ASSESS & TAX



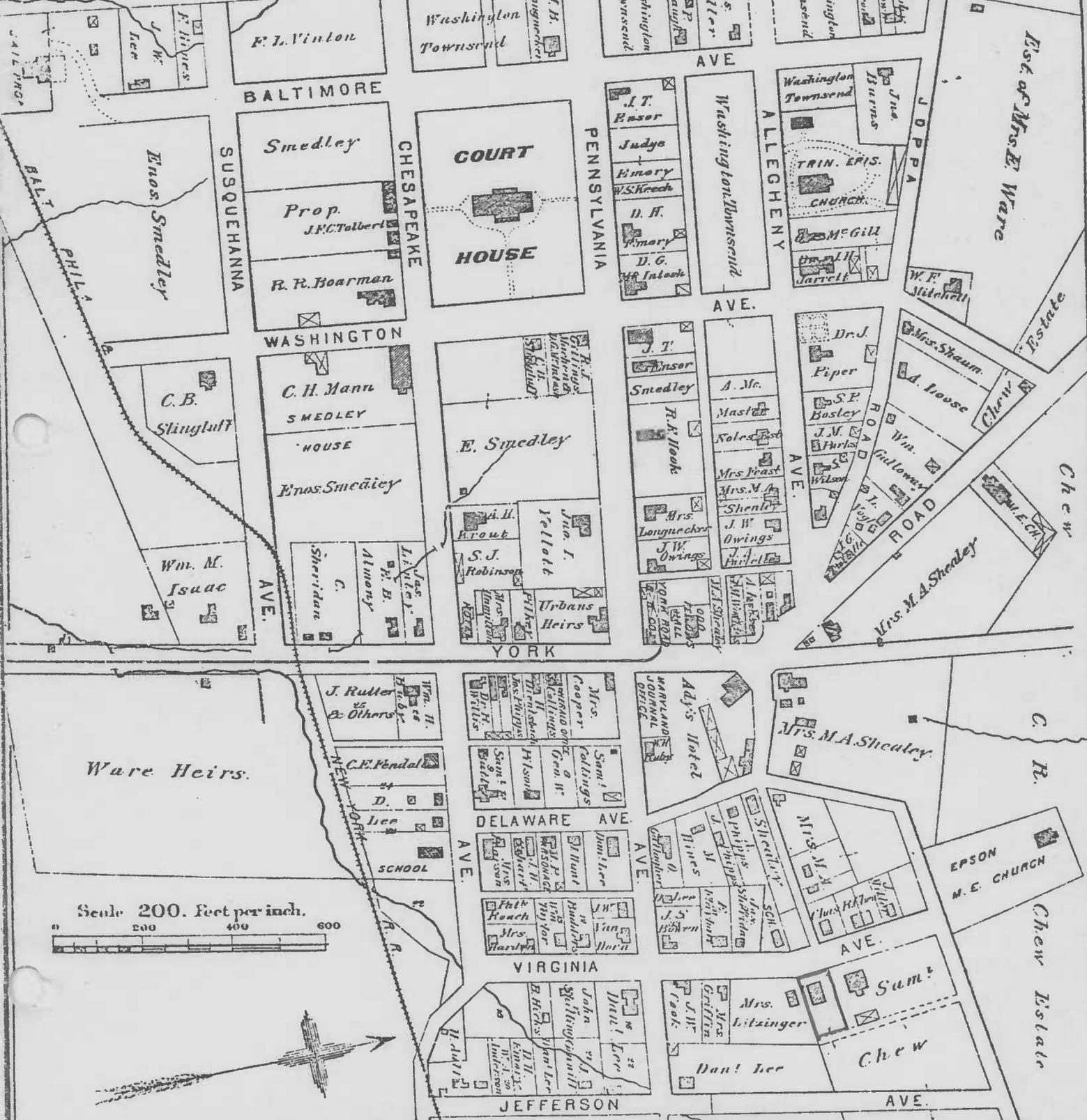
TOWSON
SCALE 1" = 200'
DEPT. OF ASSESSMENTS & TAXATION
TAX MAP DIVISION

MAP NO
70A

PLAN OF TOWSONTOWN.

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

Dr. Bosley



Scale 200. Feet per inch.
0 200 400 600





BA-1157

CHEW HSES.
REDSTONE
S.E. CORNER

W. NIELD
SUM-78