

ODD FELLOWS HALL

This large stone building has seen several substantial additions and renovations, including being gutted by fire in 1878. It has, however, maintained its original character, particularly its exterior and in the second floor meeting room. Given the fact that the original walls and foundation were constructed prior to 1853, and that Oddfellowship in the United States began in nearby Baltimore in 1819, this building may be seen as one of the oldest of its kind in the country. It is still being used for its original purpose.

Being constructed of local stone and containing fine Italianate brackets, the building may be seen as being architecturally significant. This aesthetic value is enhanced by the sculptures that are integrated into the building as symbols of the order.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

BA - 1505

MAG1-031505/4510

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Odd Fellows' Hall (Odd Fellows' Temple, Towson Lodge No. 79)

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

511 York Road

CITY, TOWN

Towson

9

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

— VICINITY OF

Baltimore

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- COMMERCIAL
- EDUCATIONAL
- ENTERTAINMENT
- GOVERNMENT
- INDUSTRIAL
- MILITARY
- MUSEUM
- PARK
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- RELIGIOUS
- SCIENTIFIC
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Independent Order of Odd Fellows #79

Telephone #: 825-9796

STREET & NUMBER

511 York Road

Maryland 21204

CITY, TOWN

Towson

STATE, zip code

— VICINITY OF

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Baltimore County Courthouse

Liber #: 206

Folio #: 66

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Towson

Maryland

STATE

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

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

According to various newspaper accounts, the original Odd Fellow's Hall, Lodge # 79 burned on January 26, 1878. The original had been built in 1852 and appears on the 1858 map of Towson, but after the fire, nothing remained save the stone walls. The building was rebuilt later that year, and reoccupied in August, 1878. The main gable was reconstructed to be similar to the one before the fire. The large, South extension was added in 1926, at the same time as major remodeling by an architect named Andrew.

Pictures from one source show that the main gable had a large porch roof, and a single store front below that housed a drugstore, before the additions and renovations in 1926. The addition is similar to the original part, since it was constructed with the same uncoursed stone.

The front facade, which is the only really visible side, is seven bays wide and two stories high. The 1926 addition is four bays wide. Each second story window is of equal fenestration, that is, large 6/6 sash windows, save for the French doors which open on to a small balcony at the South end of the building. Each door has six panes. Under each of the other six windows is a granite sill.

The roof is a slate ~~shingle~~ roof, as it was before the fire. (It was believed at the time of the fire, that the building would be fireproof, since it was constructed of stone and slate.) There are deep cornices on the Front gable as well as on the other three gables, which are hardly visible. The cornices as well as the pediment are decorated with brackets. The main gable is decorated with several symbols of the Odd Fellow's.

The first floor store fronts, of which there are five, have been altered considerably throughout the building's history. Despite much renovation, there are indications of older styles. The porch roof line is apparent, which predates the 1926 addition. There are three remaining fluted, wooden pilasters which separate the store fronts. Inside one of the buildings there is tongue and groove woodworking, indicative of the early twentieth century. Above one of the modern windows, is a many paned window which is a good deal older than the other windows on the store fronts. Above one of the store fronts is a pink glass that is representative of the Art-Deco style, and can be seen on other Towson buildings.

On the interior, one can see the 1926 projection on both the front (street facade) and the back (West facade). The front addition is nine feet wide; the original wall is one foot thick. The main room is twenty five and one half feet wide, and fifty feet in length. In this room, there are four windows, which have been boarded up, on the North wall, and none on the South wall. The ceiling is twelve feet high. The floors is a dark stained, random-width boards. The baseboards are ten inches high. In this room there are large pieces of furniture, such as couches and ceremonial chairs, which are made from mahogany and designed with egg and dart patterns, and from leather. There are also many important portraits and photographs which hang on the four walls.

The attic showed many interesting features of both the 1878 building and the newer part. The newer facade is uncoursed stone, whereas the older facade, which is now nine feet from the new facade, is coursed stone.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

Continued- interior

The coursed stone was cut, and the mortar contained grouting. The original facade shows the original oculus which is accomplished through the use of keys. The collars and rafters are circular sawn. The original stone walls are seventeen inches thick.

The room adjoining the meeting room, though it has been renovated, still is significant for its use. It used to be the only movie house in Towson, which served the public. Through this room, to the west facade, there are six or more windows which were not visible from the exterior. They are found on the back projection which was added in 1926.

The basement, which serves as office space, is extensive, and shows many original features. Throughout the basement, there are large foundations, perhaps as high as ten feet. There are both brick and stone foundations. As can be seen by examining the basement, the stairway used to be exterior, and there used to be a passageway between this building and the building next door. The original basement entry is seen from this passageway, and it used to lead into the coal room. Though there are no visible chimneys, there is a chimney support in the basement, constructed of brick. The basement used to be a pool room and a bowling alley for the public, before it was converted into offices.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799 | <input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION | | Meeting place for Odd Fellows | |

SPECIFIC DATES 1878 (Incorporated in 1852) BUILDER/ARCHITECT Andrew architect for 1926 remodeling.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Historically, Baltimore was the birthplace of Odd Fellowship in the United States, in 1819. It was begun by Thomas Wildey, an Englishman who wanted to establish a benevolent order based on the Odd-Fellows in London. The Independent Order of Odd Fellows # 79 in Towson, is one of the oldest halls that was constructed for the purpose of a meeting place for the Odd Fellows.* It is significant not only for its relative proximity to the original Odd Fellow's Hall in Baltimore, but also for its service to the community as a meeting place. It still has the same function that it had one hundred years ago, which is rare, except in the case of a church or a courthouse, which serves the community as a meeting place, and usually retains its original function.

Before the fire in 1878, the Odd Fellows Hall was one of the original buildings on York Road, which appears in many accounts of Towson history, as well as in photographs, and on the 1853 map. It still retains the same style of architecture it had before the fire, and therefore gives an idea as to the original York Road area. It is one of the few buildings which was constructed out of the local stone, and still stands in Towson's main commercial district.

The evolution of the store fronts is significant. At one point, before the renovation, and remodeling in 1926, there was a single store front, which was a drugstore. It is possible to trace architectural design throughout the buildings history, simply by examining the store fronts. For example, the tongue and groove woodworking indicates early twentieth century design. The tiled entrances and the pink glass above the present store windows, indicates Art-Deco design. As far as the streetscape as a whole is concerned, it is likely that since the Odd Fellow's Hall was decorated with brackets, and deep cornices, that the other businesses in the area followed that style. There is a definite unity created by the various other buildings through the architectural styles which may date back to the 1880's and 1890's. It is a part of the commercial streetscape, as can be seen by similarity in store fronts, and yet, it retains an individual importance on the second floor with its architecture.

Aside from being a meeting place for the Odd Fellows, the second story portion houses various photographs, and portraits of some of Towson's founders and citizens. There is a portrait there of General Towson, which according to oral history, may have been painted by Rembrandt Peale of Maryland.

*There are more than 17,000 Lodges in the North American Continent, today.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

William Liston, Odd Fellow's member- oral history
1853 map of Towson.
David Leys member of the Odd Fellow's Hall # 79.
Scharf, J. The History of Baltimore County. Philadelphia: Regional Publ. Co. 1881.
The Baltimore Sun, Monday January 28, 1878, p.4.
CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See Attachment

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

| STATE | COUNTY |
|-------|--------|
| STATE | COUNTY |

11 FORM PREPARED BY

| | | |
|-----------------|---|------------------|
| NAME / TITLE | WAYNE L. NIELD, II HISTORIC TOWSON, INC. | January 20, 1978 |
| ORGANIZATION | Jane W. Andrews / Historic Towson Surveyor | DATE |
| STREET & NUMBER | Goucher College | 825-3300 |
| | | TELEPHONE |
| CITY OR TOWN | Towson | Maryland |
| | | STATE |

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

Some Prominent Towsonites in the Towson Towne Room of the Odd Fellows Hall:

Wm. S. Grason NG 1878

Frank Duncan NG 1918

J. Milton Green NG 1906

Fred Groom NG 1894

Wm. H. Ruby NG 1859

Charles R. Chew NG 1852

J. Fred Talbott NG 1876

R.C. Massenburg

Samuel E. Parks NG 1864

Wm. P. Cole NG 1886

Wm P. Cole Jr. NG 1911

Walter Cole

Painting of Nathan Towson

Z. Howard Isaac NG 1897

Louis W. Held NG 1874

Edward Burns

Grafton M. Bosley NG 1952

George W. Seipp NG 1875

Also had framed p. 9 of Nov. 30, 1912 Democrat & Journal featuring pictures and names of prominent Odd Fellows

TITLE SEARCH

"California"
422 York Road
Towson Maryland 21204

1) Liber 4725 folio 140

Grantor- Ronald H. Doub and Katherine G. Doub
Grantee- Charles E. and Nancy S. Brooks and Glen H. and Yvonne Treslar
Transaction date- February 13, 1967
Boundaries- Beginning for the same at the northwest corner of a lot of ground which by deed dated on the 17th of November 1902 and recorded among the Land Records of Baltimore County in Liber N.B.M. no. 265 folio 323 was granted and conveyed by C. Harris Collings unto Samuel Collings Jr thence bounding on said lot in an easterly direction 150 feet to the northeast corner of said lot and to the west side of an alley there situate, thence in a northerly direction binding on said alley 25 feet to the southeast corner of a lot of ground now owned by William M. Isaac thence in a westerly direction on the south side of the lot now owned by Wm. M. Isaac aforesaid 150 feet to the east side of the Baltimore and Yorktown Turnpike Road and thence in a southerly direction 25 feet binding on said Turnpike Road to place of beginning.

2) Liber 4719 folio 350

Grantor- Katherine E. Doub, Administratrix of Estate of Irene E. German, deceased, and Edward S. German and Nancy J. German
Grantee- Ronald H. and Katherine G. Doub
Transaction date- May 6, 1966
Boundaries- as above

3) Liber 2451 folio 301

Grantor- Irene E. German
Grantee- Hattie E. German
Transaction date- January 1, 1953
Boundaries- same

4) Liber 2140 folio 247

Grantor- Hattie E. German
Grantee- Irene E. German
Transaction date- April 29, 1952
Boundaries- same

5) Liber 1603 folio 107

Grantor- E. June Shock
Grantee- Hattie E. German
Transaction date- Sept. 13, 1947
Boundaries- same

6) Liber 1603 folio 105

Grantor- Hattie E. German
 Grantee- E. June Shock
 Transaction date- Sept. 13, 1947
 Boundaries- same

7) Liber295 folio 482

Grantor- Samuel Collings,
 William S. and Agnes M. Collings, Bettie H. and William W. Boyce
 Lide C. and M. Whitridge Amos, and Anna M. Taylor
 Grantee-Edward E. and Hattie E. German
 Transaction date- March 26, 1906
 Boundaries- same as above and Being the north half of a lot of ground conveyed by John Rutter et. al. unto Samuel Collings by deed dated on the first day of April 1869 and recorded among said land records in Liber EHA no. 62 folio 169 and which said lot of ground passed under the last will and testament of said Samuel Collings to C. Harris Collings, who is now deceased and whose heirs at law are the grantors herein named

8) Liber 265 folio 323

Grantor- C. Harris Collings
 Grantee- Samuel Collings Jr.
 Transaction date- November 17, 1902
 Boundaries- Division of property given to Samuel Collings Sr by John Rutter.

9) Liber 62 folio 169

Grantor- John Rutter
 and Maria Rutter, David McFarland, and Wm. McCullogh, executors
 of the will of David McCousley
 Grantee- Samuel Collings Sr
 Transaction date- April 1, 1869
 Boundaries- At a stone on the east side of the Baltimore and Yorktown Turnpike Road at the Northwest corner of a lot of land heretofore conveyed by John Rutter et. al. to Henry Diensbach thence bounding on said land 150 feet to a stone planted on the northeast corner of said Diensbach land thence North 15 degrees east 50 feet to a stake thence north 8 degrees west 150 feet to a stake thence 50 feet in a straight line to the place of beginning

Title/Deed

for 211 York Road (Odd Fellow's Hall)

BA-1505

Liber/Folio

Date

Conveyor to Conveyee

206/066

July 30, 1894

Grafton Bosley to Towson Lodge
#79 Independent Order of Odd
Fellows

BA _____ ODD FELLOW'S HALL, Towson, No. 511 York Road. Built 1878 after building of c. 1852 was burned.

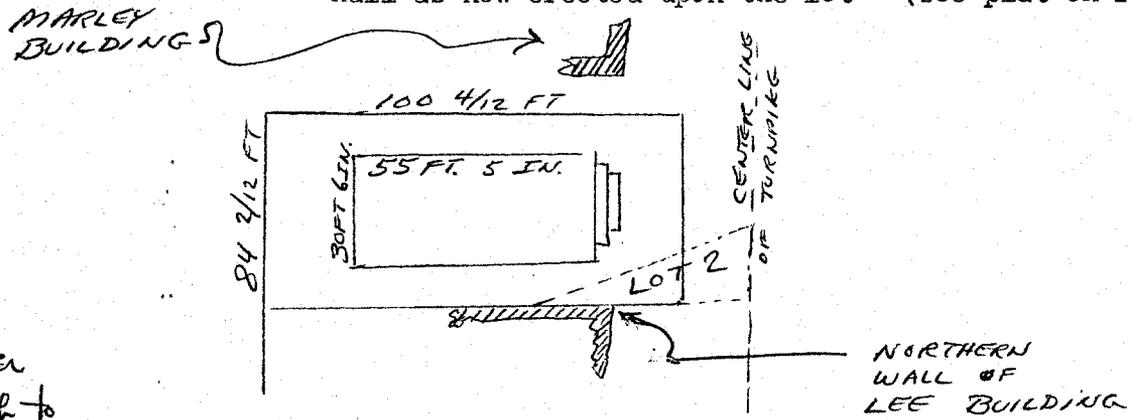
Tax Map 70-A, Parcel 129.

Deeds LMB 206:66

Grafton M. Bosley et al., Trustees--deed--to Towson Lodge No. 79, I.O.O.F. of Baltimore County ... 30 July 1894 ... Whereas by an indenture of deed dated 23 September 1852, the said Grafton M. Bosley conveyed or attempted to convey to Henry B. Chew, Edward Rider, Jr., John Bain, Joseph Parks and Jesse Bell as trustees for Towson Lodge No. 79 ... a parcel of land in B.C. in the village of Towsontown ... ref ... HMF 3:269 ... at that time an unincorporated body ... attempted to incorporate on 29 Nov 1852 ... (trustees omitted statements required by law) Certificate Recorded in Chattel Records in Liber HMF No. 1, f. 155 ...

Thu
Eve. 7-8⁰⁰

Whereas afterwards to wit ... 26 July 1894 ... (reincorporated) Incorporation Records ... LMB 3:191 ... convey parcel ... Now this deed witnesseth ... all that lot ... described as follows ... Bg at a stone set in the ground at the end of a line measured 28-1/12 feet N29 1/4 W from the northwest corner of the Odd Fellows Hall as now erected upon the lot (see plat on f. 70):



Wall was later extended south to meet Lee's store

f. 72

President & Managers of Baltimore and Yorktown Turnpike Road, Trustees--to--Towson Lodge No. 79 ... deed ... 30 July 1894 ... (ref to attempt in 1876 to convey the same parcel) ... ref to Lee Building ... Same as ... conveyed to said Edward Rider et al., trustees by said President, Managers & Company ... to Towson Lodge No, 79 ... Lot No. 2 ... 17/1000 of one acre ...

Deeds HMF 3:269

Grafton Marsh Bosley --deed--to H.B. Chew et al (trustees) ... 23 September 1852 ... \$1 Trustees of Towson Lodge No. 79 ... I.O.O.F. parcel of Gott's Hope* Resurveyed in the village of Towsontown ... part of 55 acres 14 square perches heretoford conveyed by George W. Wilhelm to Josiah Marsh by deed ... recorded ... in B.C. ... Beginning ... at stone now set up in

** TRACT SEEMS MORE LIKELY TO BE "JAMES MEADOWS"*

in the ground planted N31°45'W 1 perch 19 links from the NW corner of the Odd Fellows Hall recently erected, and running thence parallel with the west wall of said building S13½W 6 perches to the line of the fence of the Toll Gate Lot as at present possessed. Thence by and with the line of said lot N84¼E 6 perches and 10 links to a stone planted on the west side of the Baltimore and York Turnpike Road as the North East corner of said Toll Gate lot, thence with the west side of said turnpike N13½E 3 perches and 23 links to a stake planted N65°30'E 1 perch 23 links from the NE corner of the aforesaid Odd Fellows Hall, thence N76¼W 6 perches and 2 links to the place of Beginning ... per survey made Seprember 3 1852 ... by R.W. Templican (?) ... for 3/16th of an acre

1918 Tax Ledger, District 9, f. 189:

ODD FELLOWS HALL

Lot 80 x 100 York rd 150' n. Penna. Ave "Towson" #2186
House 31' x 55' Hall 4604

See newspaper accounts:

Construction, Baltimore American, August 30, 1878, p. 4. (Story of dedication ceremonies held on Aug. 29, 1878.

Md. Journal, June 22, 1878 Odd Fellow's Hall now in course of erection ... slate roof by M. Gault & Son ... constructed by Joseph S. Bowen ... the stories are higher than in old building ... first floor being 11 feet high, the second 113 feet

Md. Journal, Aug. 17, 1878 Dedication of new Hall of Towson Lodge, I.O.O.F.

Md. Journal, Aug. 31, 1878 ... description of building ... 30 x 55 ... two stories ... light blue limestone from quarries of Charles Ridgely of H. ... slate roof ... iron fence in front ... insignia on walls : the bundle of sticks ... hand ... eye ...

BA-1505

American, Monday, January 28, 1878, p. 1.

Towsontown/ A Disastrous Fire ...

... On the second floor of the former () was the Baltimore County Herald printing office, Joseph B. Mitchel, proprietor, and the second floor of the later () was occupied by the Towson Lodge, I.O.O.F., which owned the whole building and rented the first floor to Lee. The roof of this later building was of slate, but fringed with a heavy wooden cornice. Shortly after the door of Shealy's store was broken open, the powder returned to ignited, and there was a terrific explosion, blowing open all the windows of the building and shaking it to its foundations. The flames leaped through the rent windows and rifled roof high, and catching the cornice of the Odd Fellows' Hall on the south and Walker's frame dwelling and restaurant on the north, the conflagration became general, casting a bright light, which was visible for miles around.

As Towson Town has no fire engine and apparatus ... The Towson Town Guards ... called out ... loss of \$10,000 by I.O.O.F. ... lodge books and regalia saved ... the Masons lost \$300 in regalia stored in I.O.O.F. hall

American, August 30, 1878, p. 4

AN ODD FELLOWS' DEMONSTRATION

Dedication of the New Hall at Towson Town -- The Procession

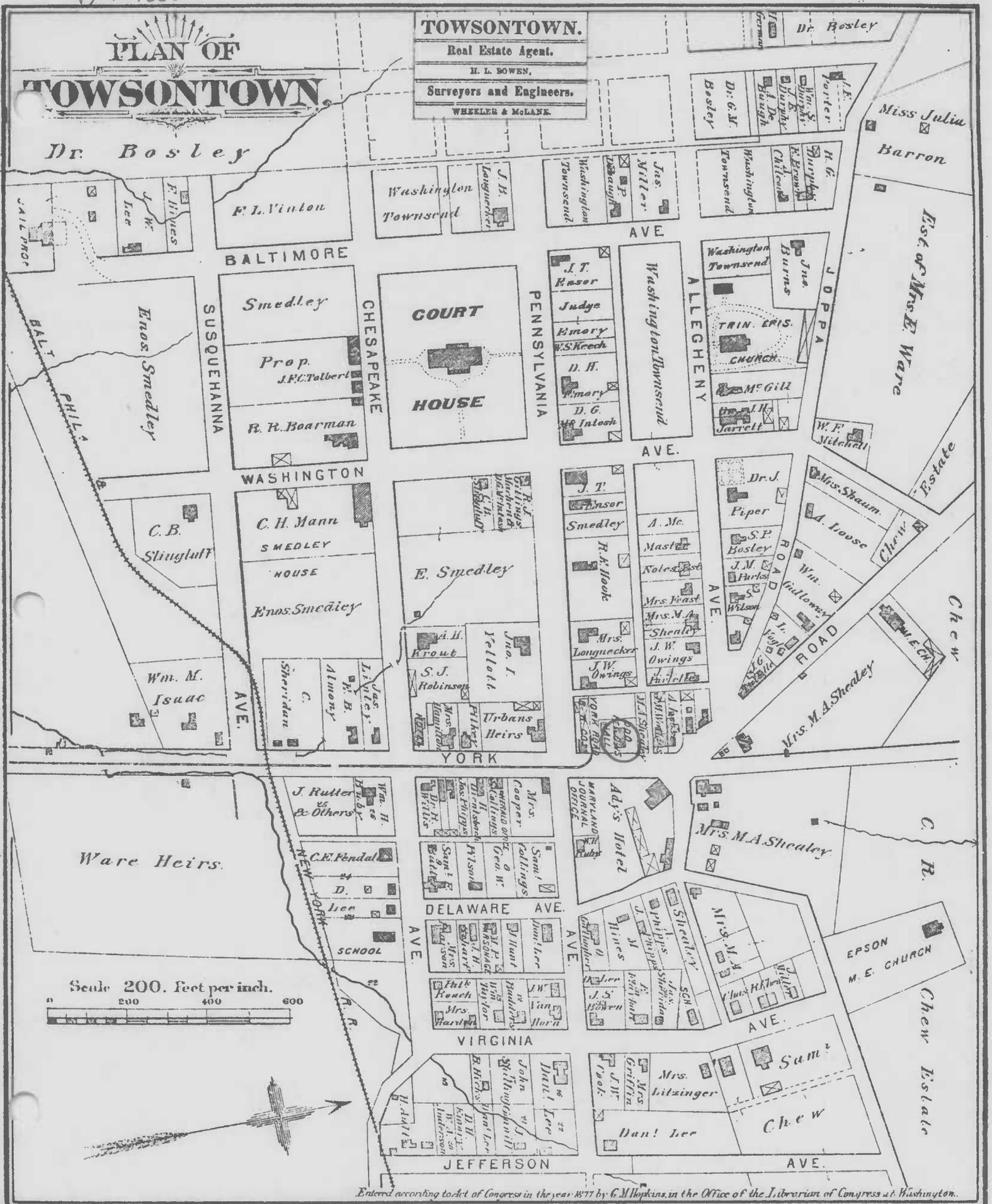
The new hall built by Towson Lodge of Odd Fellows at Towsontown in place of the building destroyed by fire January 26th, was dedicated yesterday. A large number of Odd Fellow's lodges from the surrounding county were represented ... The village appeared to be in a festive dress, numerous flags being displayed from the houses ...

The procession then moved from the hall to Lee's store, York turnpike to Joppa road, to Keech's, countermarched to Dunphy and Burns', to Slingluff's, to Dr. Piper's, to Chew's, to Bowen's (East Pennsylvania avenue), to Gallagher's and Lee's, to High School, to the York turnpike, down to Talbott's, and countermarched to the hall.

PLAN OF TOWSONTOWN.

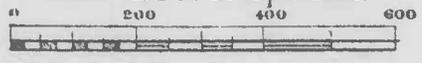
TOWSONTOWN.
Real Estate Agent.
H. L. BOWEN,
Surveyors and Engineers.
WHEELER & McLANE.

Dr. Bosley

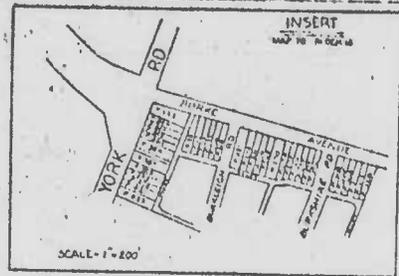
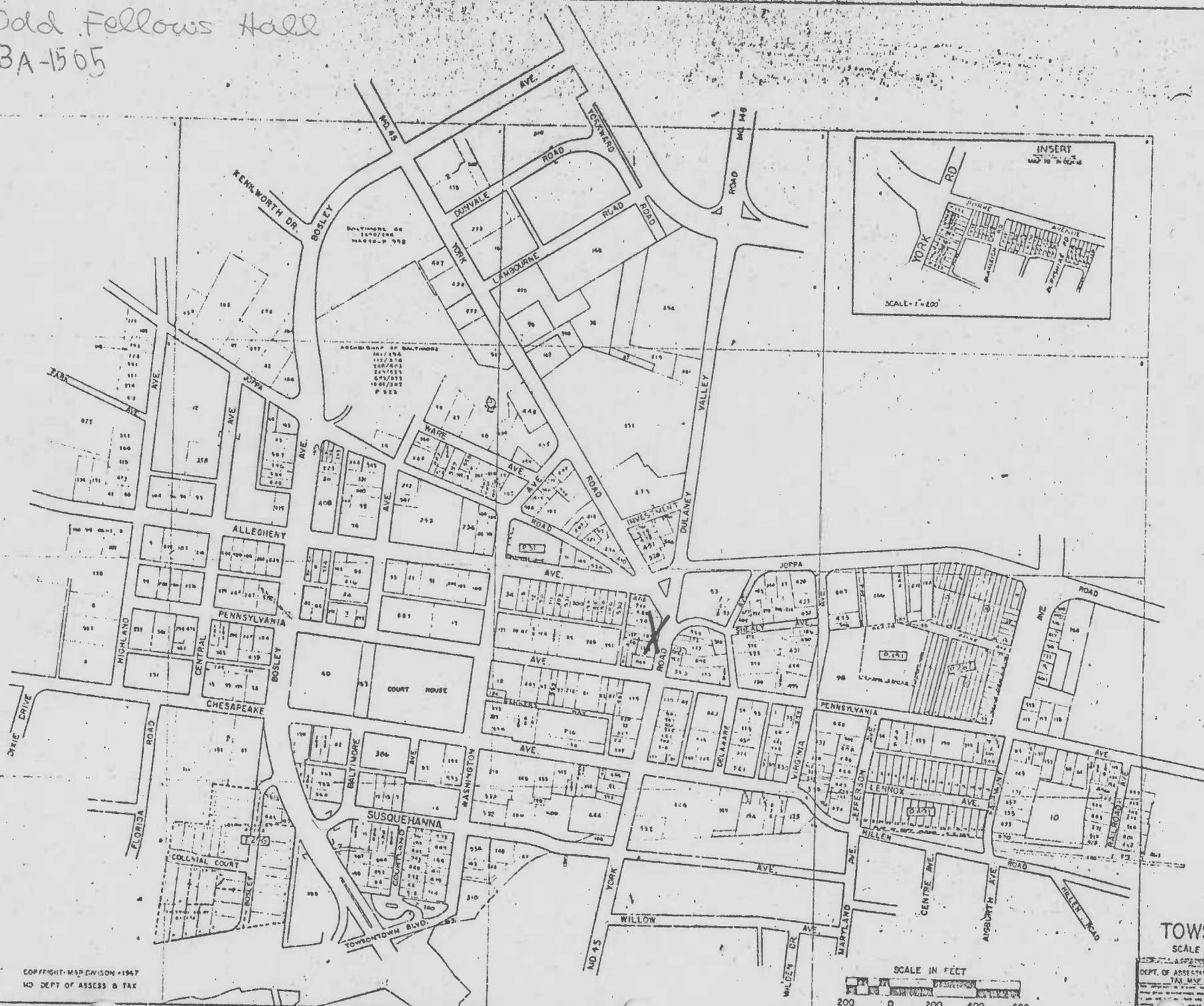


Ware Heirs.

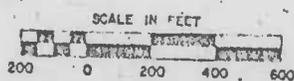
Scale 200. feet per inch.



Odd Fellows Hall
BA-1505



COPYRIGHT MAP DIVISION 1947
MD DEPT OF ASSESS & TAX



TOWSON
SCALE 1"=200'

DEPT. OF ASSESSMENTS & TAXATION
TAX MAP DIVISION

MAP NO
70A



Towson
Town
Room

COLE
PORTER
1948

GOING OUT OF BUSINESS
SALE
ALL MERCHANDISE

THE FELLOWS
TEMPLE
TOWSON ROOM

BA-1505

ODD FELLOWS HALL

N. E. CORNER
DETAIL

W. NIELD

WINTER 77-78



p shop

A BIT OF GEORGE TOWN

A BIT OF GEORGE TOWN

SPORT SHOP

Tape
DISCOUNTS

Tomson
Town
Room

BETS

DRIVE

BA-1505

ODD FELLOWS HALL
S. ~~W.~~ E.

W. NIELD

WINTER 77-78