

BA 2139

c. 1867

CATONSVILLE COLORED SCHOOL

CATONSVILLE

PRIVATE

The present Full Gospel Church is a former school, built for black pupils by private enterprise on the part of both black and white citizens of Catonsville in 1867. For the first few years after Emancipation, the subdivisions of Maryland provided no funds for the education of black children, and this structure is a link with that period. It was not until February 1870 that the Baltimore County Board of School Commissioners voted even token payments for black education, at which time the Catonsville Colored School was one of thirteen institutions that had been started by private effort. The General Assembly mandated the local support of black schools in 1872, but for years the County provided only teachers' salaries, leaving the communities to find a sheltered space in which to hold classes.

This school was taken over by the County and maintained as a public school until 1923. The Board of Education had never received a deed to this property from the original trustees, but won a suit against the survivors of Remus H. Adams in 1943, claiming adverse possession. The Full Gospel Tabernacle, Inc. purchased the building in 1943 and continues there today. The school structure has been embellished with a few churchly touches, including lancet windows at each end, and the building continues in use as one of the focal points of West Catonsville's long-established black communities.

**RECEIVED**

SEP 9 1981

MARYLAND HISTORICAL  
TRUST

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC Catonsville Colored School

AND/OR COMMON

Full Gospel Tabernacle

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

100 Winters Lane

CITY, TOWN

Catonsville

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

6th Congressional District

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Baltimore County

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

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

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Full Gospel Tabernacle, Inc.

Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER

100 Winters Lane

CITY, TOWN

Catonsville

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Maryland 21228

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. County Courts Building

Liber #: RJS 1310

Folio #: 455

STREET & NUMBER

401 Bosley Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Towson

STATE

Maryland 21204

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

None

DATE

\_\_\_ FEDERAL \_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

**7 DESCRIPTION**BA-2139  
CATONSVILLE COLORED SCHOOL

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      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The former school, now the Full Gospel Tabernacle, is a one-story frame building in a mixture of vernacular and Victorian styles. The church is set parallel to Edmondson Avenue, well spaced from that road, which post-dates the school-church. The gable end of the church faces the eastside of Winters Lane, and there is sufficient yard for a pair of white oaks of remarkable circumference. The church is gable-roofed, and fairly long and narrow. Its outer wall covering is white or pearl-grey asphalt shingle. The church is three bays wide by five deep. The windows in the main facade (west) are in Gothic Revival style. The two paneled entrance doors are centrally located, approached by four concrete steps. A transom extends across both doors, rectangular in design with four lights of clear glass.

On either side of the main entrance, there are tall, narrow lancet windows. These windows have moveable lower sashes, and the panes around the outer edges of these sashes are fitted with small colored glass panes set in white wooden mullions. Over the entrance, there is a wide lancet window with white mullions retaining clear glass.

A small square louvered belfry is set on the roof ridge not far from the west end of the church.

On the southside, the church is five bays deep. There are four ordinary double-hung sash windows of 1-over-1 layout, counting toward the rear from the Winters Lane entrance. The fifth bay, the easternmost, contains a side door approached by a small concrete porch, four steps above grade; this entrance is sheltered by a simple cantilevered hood. The door is paneled, without glass lights.

Foundation is stone, the roofing material green rubber or asphalt tile or shingle.

The northside is four bays deep. A square, outside brick chimney rises along the northside between the third and fourth windows from the street.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

INTERIOR FEATURES

Almost the entire volume of the former school structure has been converted to a church nave. Only a six-foot four-inch portion of the entire building length has been devoted to a vestibule. The vestibule is separated by partitions about ten feet high, which stop short of meeting the ceiling. On the southside of the vestibule is a closet, on the north an inside stairway leading to the basement. A pair of French doors with blue and white lights of opalescent glass open into the main meeting area. Pews on either side of the center aisle extend 21 feet, 4 inches to an open floor area which then stretches another ten feet to a carpet-covered curved step with a curved balustrade or railing immediately behind it. Another open space of six feet, five inches intervenes between the balustrade and a platform or podium. The podium occupies the entire width of the church at the rear, except for a passage leading to the back door; it is carpeted in the same red as the aisle and red floor and stretches 10 feet, 2½ inches to the back wall. The platform contains, in addition to the wooden lectern: a number of pews, two mahogany chairs of Gothic Revival design, and a number of modern chairs in blond wood. Toward the southeast corner of the nave (the right-hand side) is a rear door, topped by a transom and an exhaust fan. Opposite the door near the rear, northeast corner, is a frosted glass window. Four such windows are installed in the north (or left side) and three in the south.

The walls are plastered in a rustic style, painted a cream color. The lower portions of the walls are wainscoted or paneled, the wood stained and varnished. The ceiling is formed of acoustical paneling.

This former schoolhouse provided a large area to convert into church purposes, and the ample spaces have been tastefully organized and furnished. The open interior is well lighted, even through its frosted glass panes.

The basement extends under the entire building and contains furnace, rest rooms, and other utilities. It has not been elaborately developed. A number of rectangular basement windows are set high in the wall. An outside, sunken stairway of poured concrete leads to the basement at the southwest corner of the church.

#### GROUNDS

At the front of the church, there is a remarkably large white oak tree, which has a circumference of 11 feet, 10 inches, measured four feet above the ground.



Narrative History

The present Full Gospel Tabernacle began its life as a school for black children and is a survival of the period immediately following Emancipation when schools for blacks were not thought to be the responsibility of the County School Board and were left to the State and to private initiative. This building represents a school constructed by good-willed local citizens and only later thrust upon the shoulders of County government. It represents the educational seed that begot other schools in the West Catonsville neighborhood, and in use as a church continues as one of the focal points of community identity.

On November 2, 1867, the owners of the ground in what was then a rural part of West Catonsville, deeded a half-acre to a group of trustees, including Libertus Van Bokkelen, Charles Thomas, Remus H. Adams, John J. Herbert, and Lemuel Gavins. The owners, Alexander Gould, Jr. and his wife Sarah E. Gould conveyed the property for a total of \$5. (1)

Van Bokkelen was a man of many titles; he was an Episcopal minister and founder of the St. Timothy's Academy, a military school located not far to the east; he was also the first State superintendent of public instruction. (2) The year of acquiring the school lot was the same year that the Rev. Mr. Van Bokkelen's job in State government was abolished at the end of only three years when the newly adopted Maryland Constitution of 1867 took the State out of education. (3)

Dr. Van Bokkelen was an advocate of education for the children of the newly emancipated, stating in his annual report for 1865 that the blacks had a right to education since they were bearing taxes. (4) At that moment, State law provided that taxes collected for school purposes from the Negroes should be set aside for their school. In Maryland, schools were being built or established with funds collected from private donors—money even came from England and Ireland before local government furnished support.

Acting as State Superintendent, Dr. Van Bokkelen's report for 1867 stated that schools under construction in Baltimore County for black children (due for completion by January 1, 1868) totaled four. (6)

The creation of a complete school system without any public funding was an extraordinary achievement, pushed with remarkable speed. Van Bokkelen's second report credits all the black schools in the Maryland Counties, some 84 schools, to the Baltimore Association for the Moral and Mental Improvement of Colored Persons. This association was also aided by the Freedmen's Bureau. The Federal government gave the bureau a number of military barracks built to defend Baltimore during the Civil War and the surplus timber was hauled away to become Association schools. (7)

CONTINUATION SHEET NO. 2, ITEM 8, PAGE 3 CATONSVILLE COLORED SCHOOL

But not long before being compelled to do so by State law, the Baltimore County Board of School Commissioners began to support black education; their minutes showed that in February of 1870, a token \$300 was voted to distribute among thirteen schools, three of which were located in the First Election District, and presumably included the school under discussion. (8)

The General Assembly passed an Act in 1872 to compel the counties to support education for blacks and in the same session passed a bill providing \$50,00 for that purpose. (9)

Baltimore County's colored schools were by order of the local board to be of the same quality as schools for white children: to use the same books, the teachers to receive the same salary. (10) But many of the black pupils found themselves attending school in rented church basements and lodge halls—just as did many white children in the still primitive school system.

The Board of County School Commissioners resolved on August 20, 1872, to establish colored schools temporarily "provided furnished houses are offered to the Board free of rent." The tabulated list included "First District—Catonsville." According to Amy Crewe's history of this school system, no money was reported as spent for buildings and physical plant for black students. (11) Year after year, the statistical tables in the annual reports of the board show zero dollars expenditure on rent at Catonsville Colored School No. 1, District 1. The pattern seemed to have been broken when \$100 was spent on a school at Cowdensville in 1888. Then in 1897, Catonsville enjoyed \$1.50 in repairs, and in 1901, the board paid \$75 in rent. (12) Reports for 1901 show that this was School No. 21, District 1, the "20" series representing black schools.

A "school house" is clearly shown at the present church location in the 1876 atlas plate of Catonsville. It was called a "Colored School" in the 1898 Bromley atlas, and the structure is still shown in the 1915 edition of Bromley, printed in yellow to represent a frame building.

A peculiar cloud hung over the legal title to the school, because in May of 1888, Dr. Van Bokkelen and some of the other original trustees deeded the school lot held in their personal names to one of the founding trustees, nearby landowner, Remus H. Adams; the conveyance stated that the earlier trusts "were by their nature void." (13) Yet, Adams was not taxed on this lot in County ledgers of 1896 and 1911. Adams was the local blacksmith, and had a large stone shop on the southside of Frederick Road, where Catonsville Elementary School now stands.

In 1923, a larger school, the Catonsville Colored Elementary School, located on Eastwood Avenue, was constructed for the black pupils of Catonsville and in 1925, the Board of Education, which had succeeded to the properties of the old School Commissioners

CONTINUATION SHEET NO. 3, ITEM 8, PAGE 4 CATONSVILLE COLORED SCHOOL

in 1916, offered the original school at public auction. A number of persons appeared at the auction claiming ownership of the tract, and the property was withdrawn from sale.

The Board of Education filed a suit to prove its ownership. Their attorney claimed that County school authorities had enjoyed undisputed use of the school for at least the last twenty years, and had in fact owned the school for "unnumbered years" and had "continuously maintained thereon a school for the education of the colored children of Catonsville and its vicinity.": (14)

The parties claiming ownership of the school cited a deed made by Remus H. Adams to his son William Adams. (15) Maisie Harris, granddaughter of Remus H. Adams argued that Adams had permitted the use of his land for school purposes, but now that a school was no longer conducted there, she advanced her claim. The School Board had no title to show for the property but argued that they had successfully deeded a portion of the lot to an adjoining landowner in the year 1905. The plaintiffs argued that the school had been operated intermittently rather than continuously.

However, the court ruled in favor of the Board of Education, and in 1943, that body sold the building to its present owner, Full Gospel Tabernacle, Inc. (16)

William Adams happend to be, along with his wife, the Rev. Lydia Adams, one of the founders of the Tabernacle, the congregation dating from January 1, 1924, per an inscription on the wall. Adams was also the founder of Catonsville's first taxi service. He is remembered by Catonsvillians as a tall and grave, ministerial person.

CONTINUATION SHEET NO. 4, ITEM 8, PAGE 5 CATONSVILLE COLORED SCHOOL

## NOTES:

1. Baltimore County Deeds, JHL 56:300.
2. Amy C. Crewe, No Backward Step Was Taken (Towson, 1949), pp. 35-36. Van Bokkelen had been eased out of his pulpit due to his Unionist sentiments. Yet, his private academy had produced a remarkable sampling of Confederate officers.
3. Crewe, No Backward Step, p. 37.
4. Crewe, p. 207.
5. Crewe, p. 207.
6. Second Annual Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (Annapolis, 1868), p. 45.
7. Second Annual Report, p. 43. Also, Richard Paul Fuke, "The Baltimore Association for the Moral and Mental Improvement of Colored People, 1864-1870," Maryland Historical Magazine, 66 (Winter, 1971): 360-404. The surviving papers of the association do not account for every one of the possible schools, Maryland Historical Society, MS. 94, MS. 95-II.
9. Crewe, p. 209. Acts of 1872, Chapter 377, Chapter 17, "Schools for Colored Children."
10. Crewe, p. 210.
11. Crewe, p. 211. Minutes and Meetings of Board of Baltimore County School Commissioners, August 20, 1972, p. 241 (at Board of Education, 6901 N. Charles Street, Towson, Md.).
12. Report of the Board of County School Commissioners of Baltimore County (Towsontown, 1897), p. 61; 1899, p. 23; 1901, p. \_\_. Scharf's 1881 County history listed Josephine Jones as teacher at School 1, District 1.
13. Baltimore County Deeds, JWS 170:334.
14. Judicial Records, CWB JR. 433:562. Board of Education-v.-Howard M. Duvall, et al. (1927).
15. B.C. Deeds, LMB 226:423.
16. B.C. Deeds, RJS 1310:455.

BA-2139

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Judicial Records, CWB JR. 433:562-and following.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 0.5

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

N33W 70 feet along eastside of Winters Lane  
N63E 208 feet  
S35½E 125 feet to NW side of Edmondson Avenue  
Southwesterly  
223 feet along NW side of Edmondson Avenue to Beginning.  
(Tax Map 101, Parcel P1256).

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

STATE None COUNTY None

STATE None COUNTY None

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

John W. McGrain, Sites Surveyor

ORGANIZATION

Baltimore County Office of Planning and Zoning

DATE

May 19, 1980

STREET & NUMBER

401 Bosley Avenue

TELEPHONE

494-3521

CITY OR TOWN

Towson

STATE

Maryland 21204

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

CATONSVILLE COLORED SCHOOL -- List of Color Slides

- |     |  |           |
|-----|--|-----------|
| 1.  | Main (west) facade, from west                    | June 1980 |
| 2.  | Main (west) facade, from west, heavily shaded    | June 1980 |
| 3.  | South (or Edmondson Avenue) side                 | June 1980 |
| 4.  | Southside and rear from SW                       | Feb. 1981 |
| 5.  | Rear, detail of lancet window                    | Feb. 1981 |
| 6.  | French doors, rear of church interior            | Nov. 1981 |
| 7.  | Podium, lectern, & rear window (horizontal view) | Nov. 1981 |
| 8.  | " " " " (vertical view)                          | Nov. 1981 |
| 9.  | Lectern  | Nov. 1981 |
| 10. | Rear wall, SE corner, & furnishings              | Nov. 1981 |
| 11. | Rear, NE corner and furnishings                  | Nov. 1981 |

BA-2139



BALTIMORE COUNTY  
OFFICE OF PLANNING AND ZONING  
TOWSON, MARYLAND 21204  
494-3211

NORMAN E. GERBER  
DIRECTOR

October 27 1981

Mr. Mark R. Edwards  
Maryland Historical Trust  
21 State Circle  
Annapolis MD 21401

Dear Mark,

We got mixed up in our terminology on the site at BA 1559 in Ruxton. After hearing from the present trustees, they say it should be called

St. John's A.U.M.P. Church.

Although it is no longer part of that church conference, that name is historic. The designation M.E. or A.M.E. isn't correct. You should be able to fix that with a few bits of sticky tape.

Today I got word that the trustees of the Full Gospel Tabernacle in Catonsville are willing to put their church on the NR and I will have to get measurements and interior photos. That is a former school, first private, later public, and is BA 2139, on Baltimore West Quad.

The attached LPC write-up is a freebie for your files (Site BA 2138, also on B. WEST QD). The photo is a freebie from its owner.

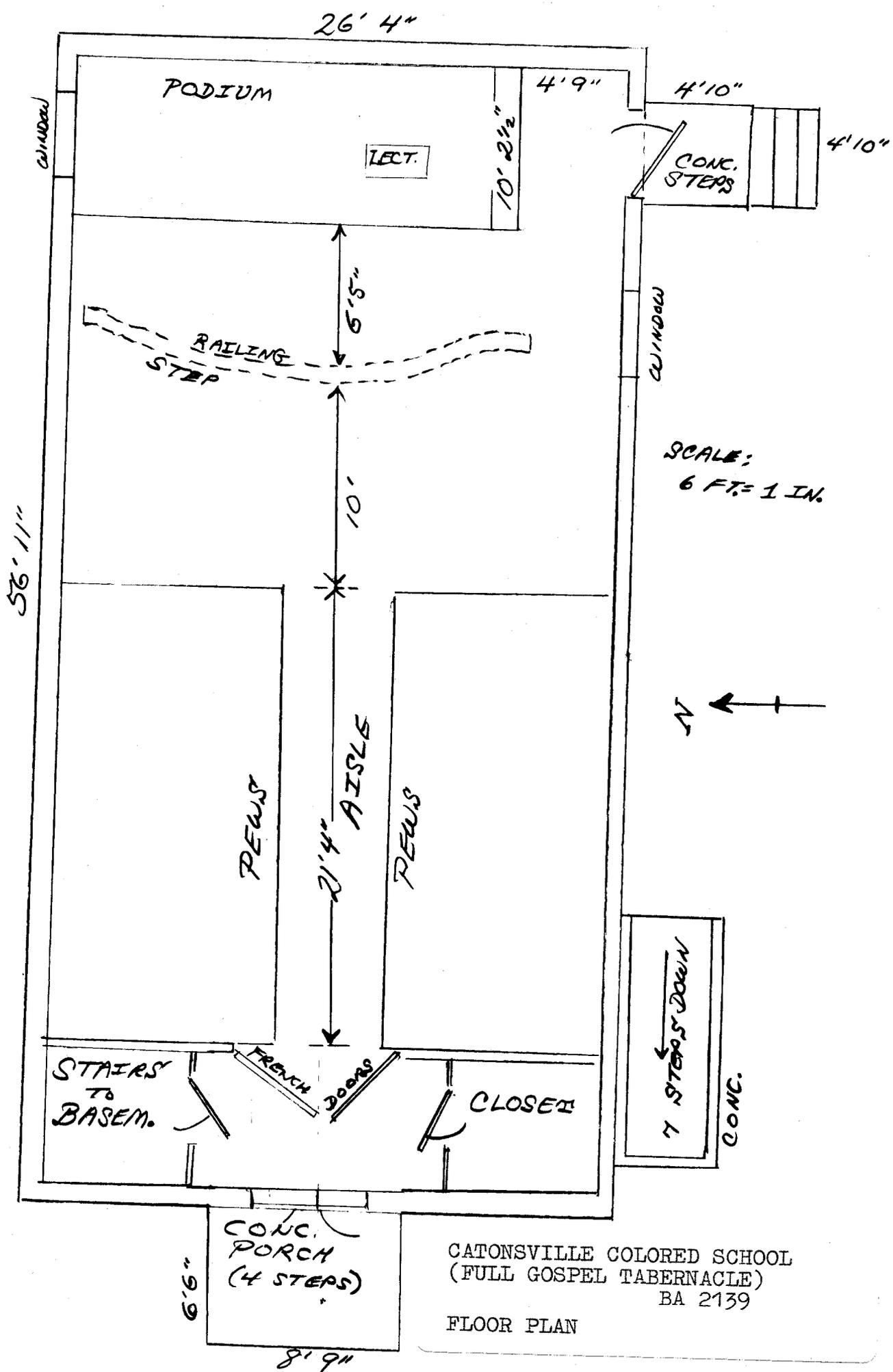
Very truly yours,

*John McGrain*  
John McGrain  
LPC BC

*Forget this!*

*Mrs. O'Donovan JETted  
on the name with  
Rodney Little -- Oct. 27.*

*John*



26' 4"

PODIUM

LECT.

4' 9"

10' 2 1/2"

4' 10"

CONC. STEPS

4' 10"

WINDOW

WINDOW

SCALE:  
6 FT. = 1 IN.

N

56' 11"

REWS

REWS

21' 4" AISLE

10'

6' 5"

RAILING STEP

STAIRS TO BASEM.

FRENCH DOORS

CLOSET

7 STEPS DOWN

CONC.

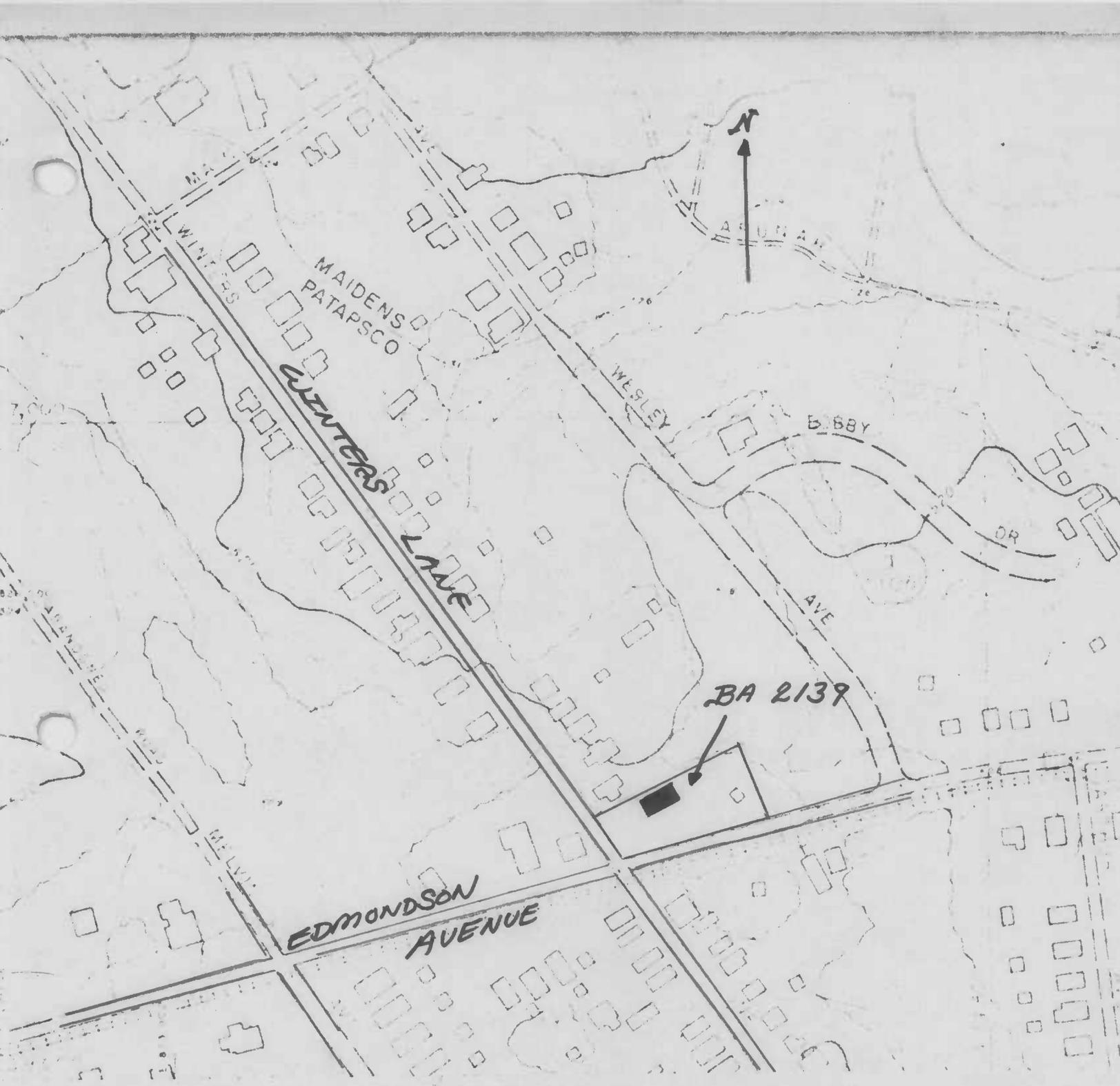
CONC. PORCH (4 STEPS)

6' 6"

8' 9"

CATONSVILLE COLORED SCHOOL  
(FULL GOSPEL TABERNACLE)  
BA 2139

FLOOR PLAN



CATONSVILLE COLORED SCHOOL  
BA 2139  
Scale: 1 INCH = 200 FEET  
SHEET 2 F-SW

17'30"

4350

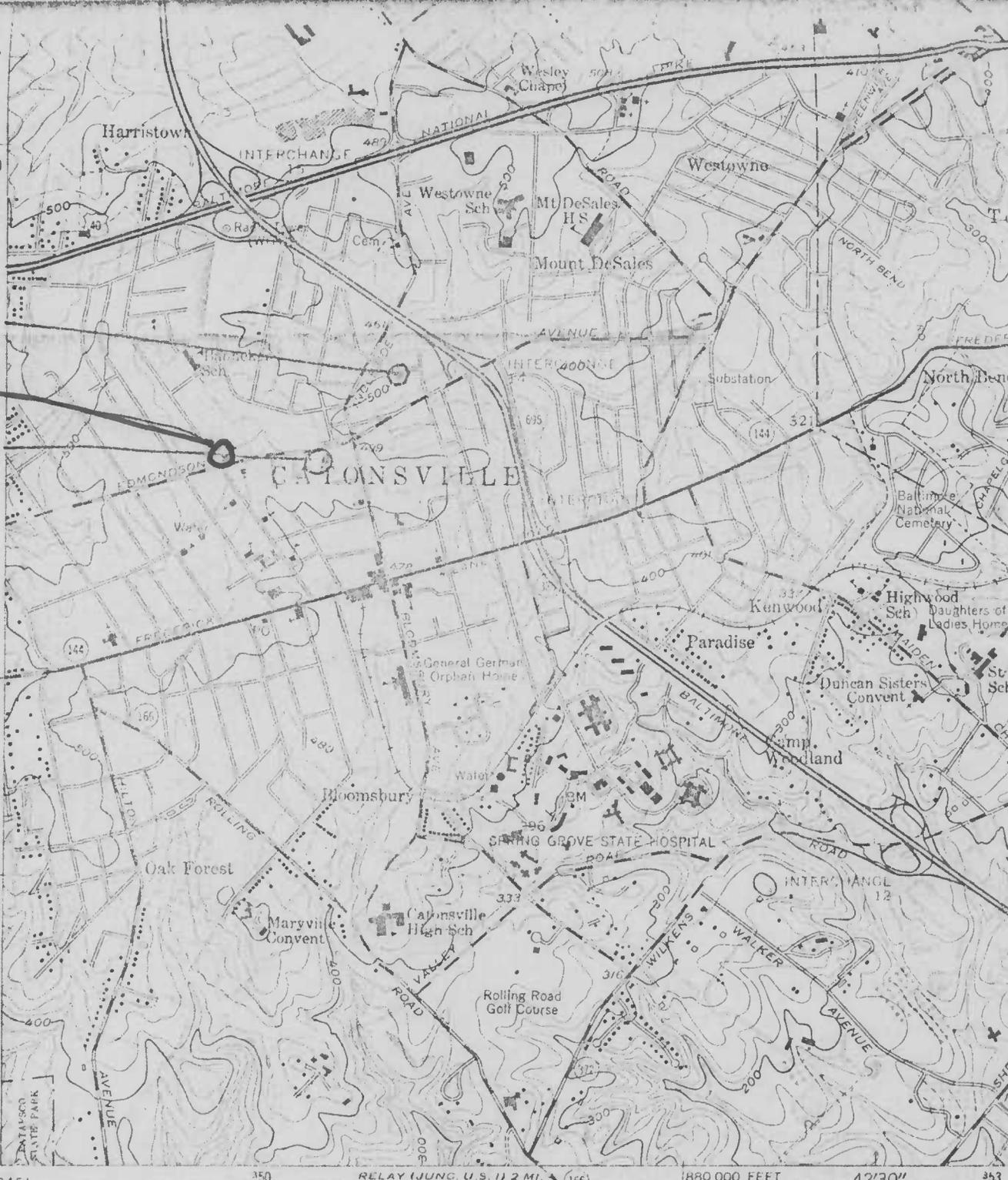
**BA 2139**

6.5 MI TO U.S. 40  
ELLICOTT CITY 2.8 MI

520 000  
FEET

4346

39°15'  
76°45'



Mapped by the Army Map Service  
 Edited and published by the Geological Survey  
 Control by USGS, USC&GS, USCE, and City of Baltimore

Topography from aerial photographs by photogrammetric methods  
 Aerial photographs taken 1943 Field checked 1944  
 Culture revised by the Geological Survey 1953

Hydrography from USCGS Chart 545 (1942)  
 Polyconic projection 1927 North American datum  
 10,000 foot grid based on Maryland coordinate system  
 1000 meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks  
 zone 18, shown in blue

Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are  
 Unchecked elevations are shown in brown

Revisions shown in purple compiled by the Geological Survey from  
 aerial photographs taken 1943. This information not to be used

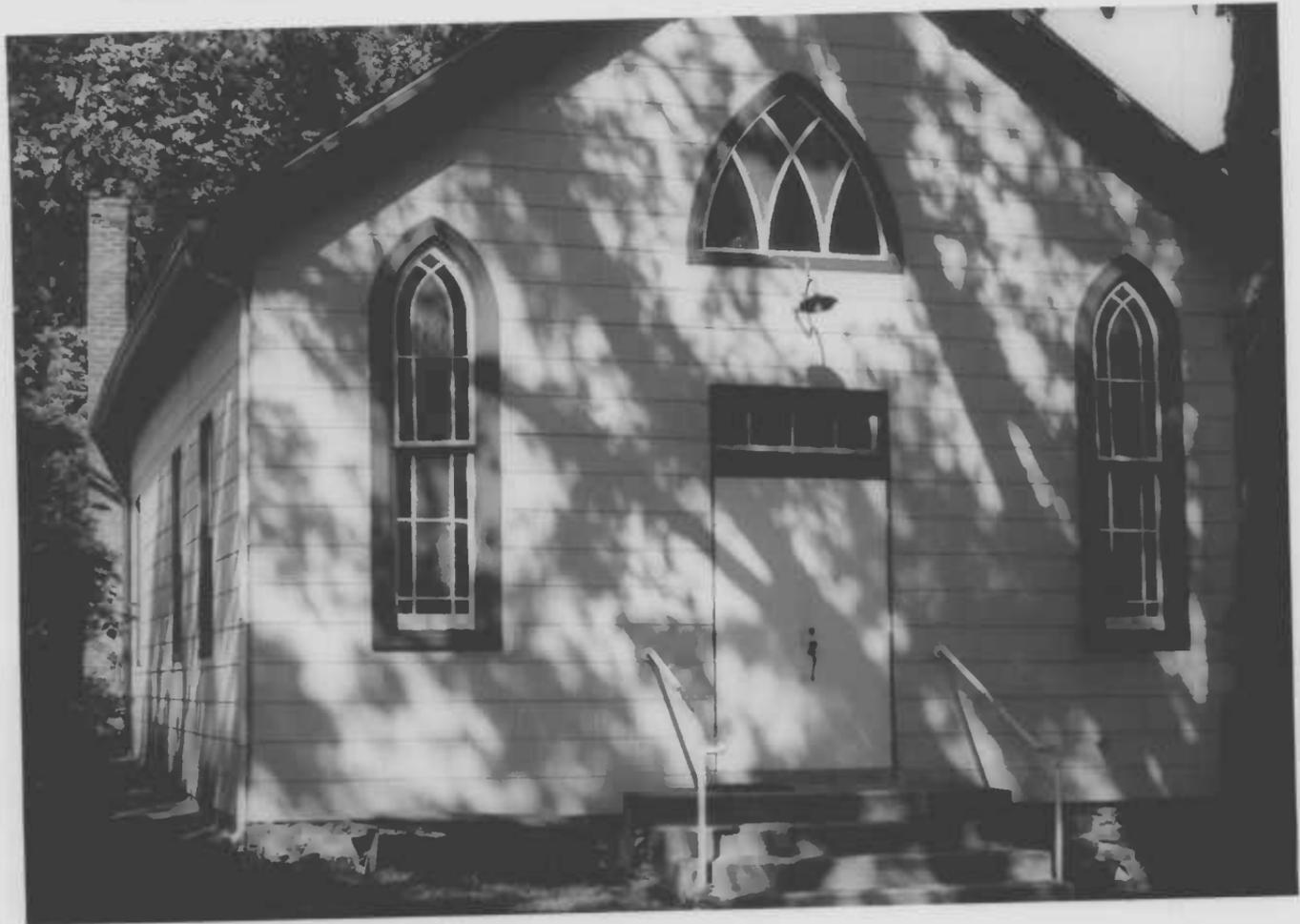
(SAVAGE)  
Map 2 in NE



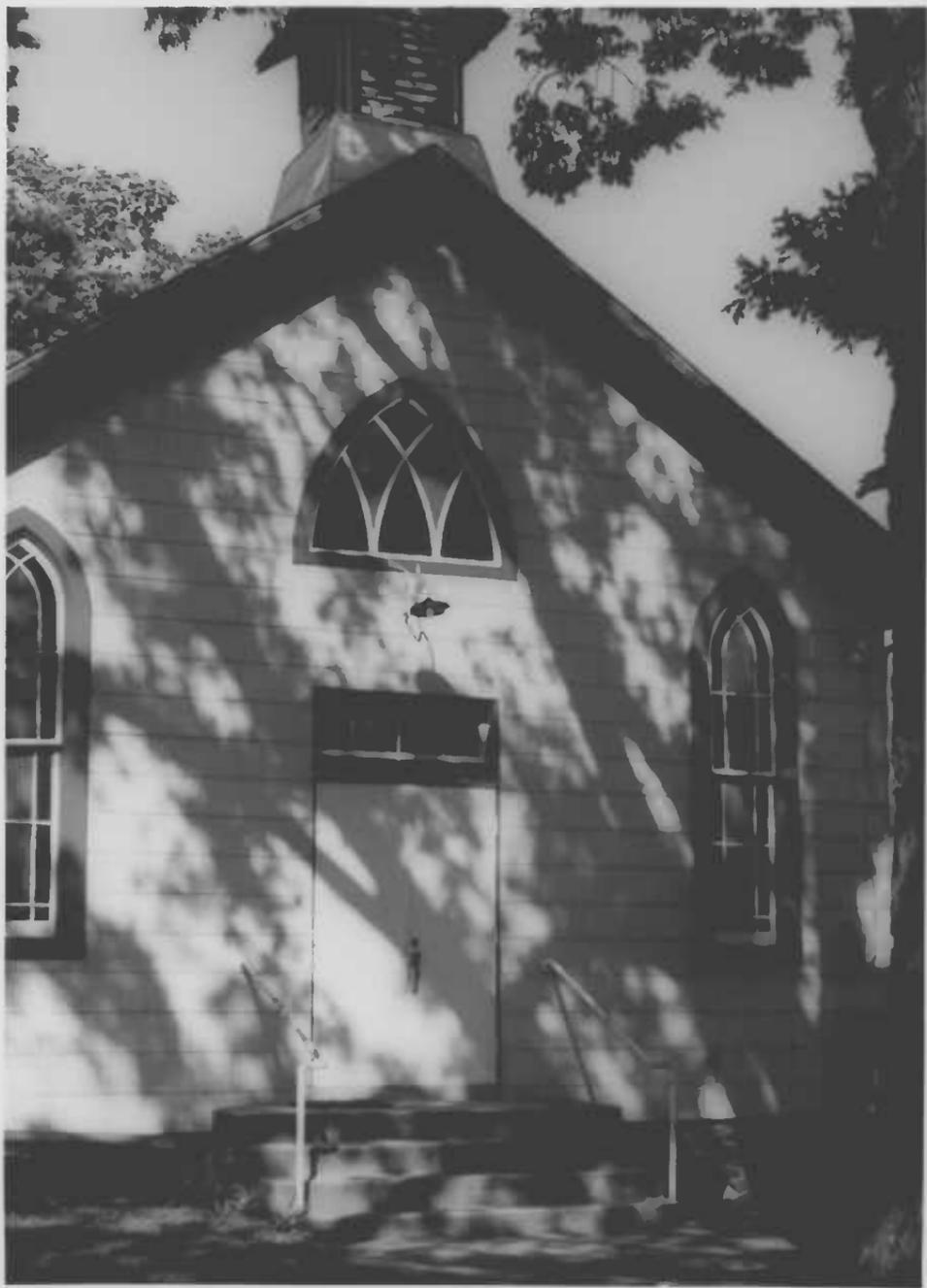
**CATONSVILLE COLORED SCHOOL** BA 2139  
 Portion of U.S.G.S. 7.5-Minute Quad, BALTIMORE WEST



CATONSVILLE COLORED SCHOOL BA-2139  
Baltimore VCounty, Maryland  
John McGrain July 1980  
Neg. located at MHT  
Main (W) facade & north side  
Photo 1 of 7



CATONSVILLE COLORED SCHOOL BA-2139  
Baltimore County, Maryland  
John McGrain July 1980  
Neg. located at MHT  
Main (W) facade from NW  
Photo 2 of 7



CATONSVILLE COLORED SCHOOL BA-2139  
Baltimore County, Maryland  
John McGrain July 1980  
Neg. located at MHT  
Main (W) facade and base of belfry  
Photo 3 of 7



CATONSVILLE COLORED SCHOOL BA 2139  
Baltimore County, Maryland  
J. McGrain November 1981  
Neg. located at MHT  
French doors at rear  
Photo 4 of 7



CATONSVILLE COLORED SCHOOL BA 2139

Baltimore County, Maryland

J. McGrain November 1918

Neg. located at MHT

Podium and rear of church

Photo 5 of 7

LES LES CONDINE



CATONSVILLE COLORED SCHOOL BA 2139  
Baltimore County, Maryland  
J. McGrain November 1981  
Neg. located at MHT  
Lectern and rear lancet window  
Photo 6 of 7



CATONSVILLE COLORED CHURCH BA 2139  
Baltimore County, Maryland  
J. McGrain November 1981  
Neg. located at MHT  
SW corner (rear) of podium  
Photo 7 of 7