Survey # WA-III-155
Rohrer House
Street Address 4312 Main Street
Town, State Rohrersville, Maryland 21779
private _X_, public ___

Approximate date Ca. 1860-70

This house sits back from Main Street in Rohrersville and is oriented to "Pig Alley" rather than the main street. It follows a form distinctive to southern Washington County, and associated with the mid 19th century, consisting of an L shape with a combination hip and gable roof. This house is four bays in length along each of its two principal facades. It is of frame construction and is covered with brick-patterned asphalt siding (insul). Windows have two over two light sash within architraves with bracketed tops, suggesting Italianate influence. The principal facade which faces southeast, has a window, door, door, window configuration. The two entrances each have a narrow transom. The other facade which faces southwest, has a window, door, window arrangement with a one story addition. Each facade has an entrance porch supported by square posts with brackets and a cut work frieze board. Brick chimneys are located inside the gables and at the corner of the L. Date attribution is based on the frame construction, Italianate features and the dates of other similar buildings in the south county. The 1877 Atlas map shows this as belonging to B. Zimmerman. 2 contributing buildings.

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

I. Geographic Organization: Western Maryland

II. Chronological/Developmental Period(s): Agricultural-Industrial Transition 1815-1870

III. Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme(s): Architecture, Landscape Architecture and Community Planning

IV. Resource Type:

Category: Buildings

Historic Environment: Village

Historic Function(s) and Use(s): Domestic/Single Dwelling, Shed

Photo Reference: Photo # 32

Form Prepared By: Paula S. Reed, PhD, Architectural Historian
Woodward-Clyde
200 Orchard Ridge Drive
Gaithersburg, MD 20878

Date: 6/97

Maryland Historical Trust
State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No. WA-III-155

Magi No.

DOE ___ yes ___ no

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic Zimmerman House

and/or common Rohrer House

2. Location

street & number 4312 Main Street ___ not for publication

city, town Rohrersville ___ vicinity of congressional district

state Maryland county Washington

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
district)	public	occupied	agriculture	museum
x building(s)	x private	unoccupied	commercial	park
structure	both	work in progress	educational	x private residence
site	**Public Acquisition**	**Accessible**	entertainment	religious
___ object	in process	yes: restricted	government	scientific
	being considered	yes: unrestricted	industrial	transportation
	x not applicable	___ no	___ military	___ other:

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Mark E. Bradstreet

street & number P.O. Box 1 telephone no.:

city, town Seal Harbor state and zip code Maine 04675

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Washington County Courthouse Liber 791

street & number 95 West Washington Street Folio 831

city, town Hagerstown state Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date ___ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. WA-III-155

Condition		Check one	Check one
excellent	deteriorated	unaltered	x original site
good	ruins	x altered	moved date of move
x fair	___ unexposed		

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Resource Count = 2

Built in the mid-19th century, the Rohrer House is an L-shaped, two-story, symmetrical frame dwelling that follows a form distinctive to southern Washington County, and associated with the mid-19th century, consisting of an L shape with a combination hip and gable roof. The building has undergone changes to both its exterior and its original site orientation. A frame shed is also located on the property.

Located in a village comprised of houses lining the Main Street, the Rohrer House sits back further from the road than any other property in the village. Historically the house was oriented to a thoroughfare, commonly known as Pig Alley, that extended in a westerly direction from the north/south Main Street. The almost one-acre lot is comprised of a gently sloping front yard extending to Main Street. Trees generally surround the remaining sides of the house. A stone retaining wall is on the south side of the property where a stream runs through at Pig Alley.

A unique site feature is a tombstone lying in the slate walkway about four feet from the porch which reads, "John Rohrer, born 17__, died 1826". It is unknown whether a John Rohrer is buried here.

The original wood siding on the Rohrer House is covered with asbestos siding and the roof is covered with asphalt shingles. Brick chimneys are located inside the gables and at the corner of the ell. Windows have 2/2 light sash within architraves with bracketed tops, suggesting Italianate influence. The house has two principal facades; one which faces Main Street and the second facing Pig Alley. Its mid-19th century construction is characterized by its frame construction and Italianate features.

The principal facade facing southeast (facing Main Street) is 4 bays in length with two central half-glass doors with double panels below and a flat 2-light transom above. Double doors are a common characteristic of rural dwellings in German derived populations of the Mid-Atlantic region. Each door is flanked by one window. Four equally-spaced windows are in the second floor. The entrance porch is supported by square posts with brackets and a cut work frieze board.

The southwest facade faces the stream and features the same porch as the existing front of the house facing Main Street. A board and batten addition to the left of the porch has removed the original exterior features of the house. The entrance features a door with a flat 2-light transom. One window is located to the right of the door. The second floor contains 3 windows.

The northeast side elevation features a cornice return. The only windows on this side are two small boarded windows in the gable. A small vinyl sided shed type addition is within the ell of the house. However the exterior of the original part of the house remains intact and includes a double panel door with a flat light transom on the main block and an identical door and window on the ell.

The northwest (rear) elevation contains two windows on the first floor, two in the second floor and two small boarded windows in the gable. The ell of the house has one window in the second story above the shed addition.

The frame shed is a front gable with a vertical board door on the front gable.

The interior of the house features a stairway immediately upon entering the original front door with one room to the left and one to the right which leads to a third room in the ell. The stairway is enclosed by walls on both sides. Remaining architectural features in the house include wood floor molding, wood floors, wood window trim (except the kitchen), and doors and ceramic doorknobs. No cornices exist on the interior. The date 1921

carved in the attic rafters indicates that the roof has been replaced. The resident of the property states that log beams exist in the basement.

On the first floor, the kitchen has been completely remodeled with wainscoting on the walls and new trim around the windows. The entry room and living room have wood floors and the brick fireplace mantel on the north wall in the living room is modern. The second floor is comprised of three rooms with wood floors. Two rooms flank the stairway and one room is at the top of the stairway.

Changes to the building include covering the original wood siding with asphalt, an addition on part of the facade, and reorientation of the building. Despite these changes, the building retains integrity in its defining characteristics including the overall massing of the ell shape and its decorative elements.

8. Significance

Survey No. WA-III-155

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	x architecture	education	military	social/ humanitarian
1700-1799	art	engineering	music	theater
x 1800-1899	commerce	exploration/settlement	philosophy	transportation
1900-	___ communications	industry	politics/government	___ other(specify)
		___ invention		

Specific dates ca. 1860-1870 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

check: Applicable Criteria: A B x C D
and/or
Applicable Exceptions: A B C D E F G

Level of Significance: ___ national ___ state x local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

The Rohrer House is important as a mid-19th century dwelling in Rohrersville when the village served as rural trading center in the Pleasant Valley Region of Washington County that had prospered due to the location of a grist mill in the village. The house contains basic traditional building characteristics as well as an L shape that is distinctive in southern Washington County and a facade arrangement that is an example of the Germanic adaptation of early 19th century designs. Despite alterations, the building retains integrity as a traditional rural dwelling.

History

The first mention of this house in the deeds is when Benjamin Zimmerman, of German ancestry, sold the property in 1886. Zimmerman had acquired the property in 1861 and is listed as a house carpenter in the 1870 census. He owned the property for 25 years. Zimmerman may have built this house given the length of ownership, his occupation, and the reference to a house in the deed and that time he sold it. The house sits on what once contained two parcels of land known as Parcel #1 and Land Part #2. It appears that Parcel #1 contained the house and Land Part #2 contained a blacksmith shop.

Zimmerman had acquired the property from Ezra Snyder.[1] The 1860 census lists Ezra Snyder as a farmer with real estate valued at $5,000 and a personal estate of $9,000. Given his wealth and the fact that he owned it for only three years, Snyder may have acquired this property as an investment. Earlier records lead back to the sale of the property in 1846 by the town's founder David Rohrer and most likely the property did not contain any buildings at that time.
At the time Zimmerman bought the property, Rohrersville had become well established as the primary village in the Pleasant Valley District in Southern Washington County, between South Mountain and Elk Ridge. Located in the midst of a fertile valley near the Antietam Creek, the village had developed, like others in Washington County, near a grist mill that serviced area farms. The popularity of the region was largely due to its abundant grain production and overall by 1870, Washington County had the highest yield of wheat in bushels per acre in Maryland.[2] The area was mainly settled by Pennsylvania Germans and Scotch-Irish who immigrated south and established farms and villages.

In 1886, David Smith acquired the property from Zimmerman owned it for 11 years, when their heirs sold it to Herbert Potter in 1911. Potter sold it in 1918 to Sophia Rohrer. The house today is commonly referred to as the Rohrer House as it stayed in the Rohrer family for 67 years, between 1918 and 1985, when both Parcel #1 and Land Part #2 were sold to the current owner.

The only John Snyders listed in the 1860 census were two teenagers.
Reed, Paula. "Keedysville Survey Report." Preservation Associates, Inc., Hagerstown, Maryland, 1993, p. 4.

Theme

Early to mid-19th century architecture in Rohrersville: Rohrersville's first phase of building is represented in its buildings constructed between 1810 and 1870 with approximately half of the dwellings built during this time frame. The majority of the houses from this time period in Rohrersville, as well as Washington County, were built in a vernacular, tradition influenced type of frame or brick construction with two-stories, side-gables, three- or four-bays wide, 2/2 light sashes, and some containing additions and rear shed extensions. Often times fashionable decoration was added to the houses in the form of window and porch detailing as seen in the Rohrer House. While the Rohrer House contains characteristics similar to the traditional houses of Rohrersville it is distinctive in its shape and facade arrangement. The house is built in an L shape with a combination hip and gable roof, a form distinctive to southern Washington County in the mid-19th century. The facade's four bays and two central front doors are representative of the arrangement that resulted from early 19th century German-Americans abandoning the central chimney continental plan for hybrid designs that incorporated Germanic traditions with more current design elements that were English-derived[3]. Only three of Rohrersville's thirty-six houses exhibit this facade arrangement. Furthermore, the house is highly unusual in appearance in that it is the only house in Rohrersville that has two principal facades.

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[3] Reed, Paula S. "Keedysville Survey Report." Preservation Associates, Inc., Hagerstown, MD, 1993, p. 23.

Chain of Title

Parcel #1

04/01/1846 David Rohrer to Daniel Grim
Liber IN 1 Folio 860

03/09/1855 Daniel Grim to John Snyder
Liber IN 13 Folio 34

03/15/1858 John Snyder to Ezra Snyder
Liber IN 13 Folio 36

04/02/1861 Ezra A. Snyder to Benjamin Zimmerman
Corner of land touches William Ray's blacksmith shop
Liber IN Folio 671

04/19/1886 Catherine Zimmerman's estate and C. J. Zimmerman to David F. Smith
Mentions house
Liber 89Folio 183

02/06/1900 David F. Smith to Mary E. Smith (wife)
Includes a house and lot, one corner is at the "old Blacksmith shop"
Liber 127 Folio 159

01/05/1911 John H. Smith & Cora G. Smith, Amanda C. & Charles L. Mullendore, Thomas H. & Susie M. Smith, Minnie M. & Oliver F. Mullendore, Lugenia & Ezra Long, Sara A. & David Iler, Sophia C. Smith, Oltho C. & Lizzie Smith - heirs of Mary E. Smith to Herbert R. Potter
Liber 135 Folio 136

05/01/1918 Herbert R. Potter & wife (LuLu) to Sophia A. Rohrer
Liber 153 Folio 573

02/28/1942 Elmer J. S. and Cora A. Rohrer to John F. and Mae E. Rohrer (Elmer J. S. Rohrer received from Sophia J. Rohrer who died intestate)
Liber 218 Folio 215

08/13/1985 George F. Shaffer, Sr., Marian E. Smith, John D. Rohrer personal representative of estate of Mae E. Rohrer to Mark E. Bradstreet
This land included two pieces of property known as parcel #1 and piece of land
Liber 791 Folio 831

Land Part #2

07/01/1855 Henry Keedy, Sr. to Barbara A. Ray
Blacksmith shop standing on lot
Liber IN 10 Folio 679

03/12/1901	Susan Winfield to John R. & Elva J. Clopper Property touches corner of the blacksmith shop, deed makes direct reference to 07/01/1855 transaction Liber 114 Folio 436
07/05/1922	John R. & Elva J. Clopper to E. J. S. & Cora A. Rohrer Liber 163 Folio 214
07/31/1937	E. J. S. Rohrer & Cora A. Rohrer to John T. & Margaret Geltmacher (John remarried to Edna D.) Liber 205 Folio 382
12/11/1954	John T & Edna D. Geltmacher to John F. & Mae E. Rohrer (sole surviving heir to John) Liber 290 Folio 573

HISTORICAL CONTEXT:

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization: Western Maryland

Chronological/Developmental Period(s): Agricultural-Industrial Transition, 1815-1870

Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme(s): Architecture/Landscape Architecture, and Community Planning

Resource Type:

Category: Building

Historic Environment: Village

Historic Function(s) and Use(s): Domestic/Single Dwelling
Shed

Known Design Source: Unknown

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. WA-III-155

Lake, Griffing and Stevenson. An Illustrated Atlas of Washington County, Maryland. Philadelphia, 1877.
Reed, Paula. "Keedysville Survey Report." Preservation Associates, Inc., Hagerstown, MD, 1993, p. 24.
Washington County Land Records

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property .90

Quadrangle name Keedysville

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References DO NOT COMPLETE UTM REFERENCES

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
A				B			
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification
The boundary is Parcel 175 which contains the house and corresponds to the boundaries to which the current owner holds title.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Susan Cianci Salvatore

organization Woodward-Clyde date June 1997

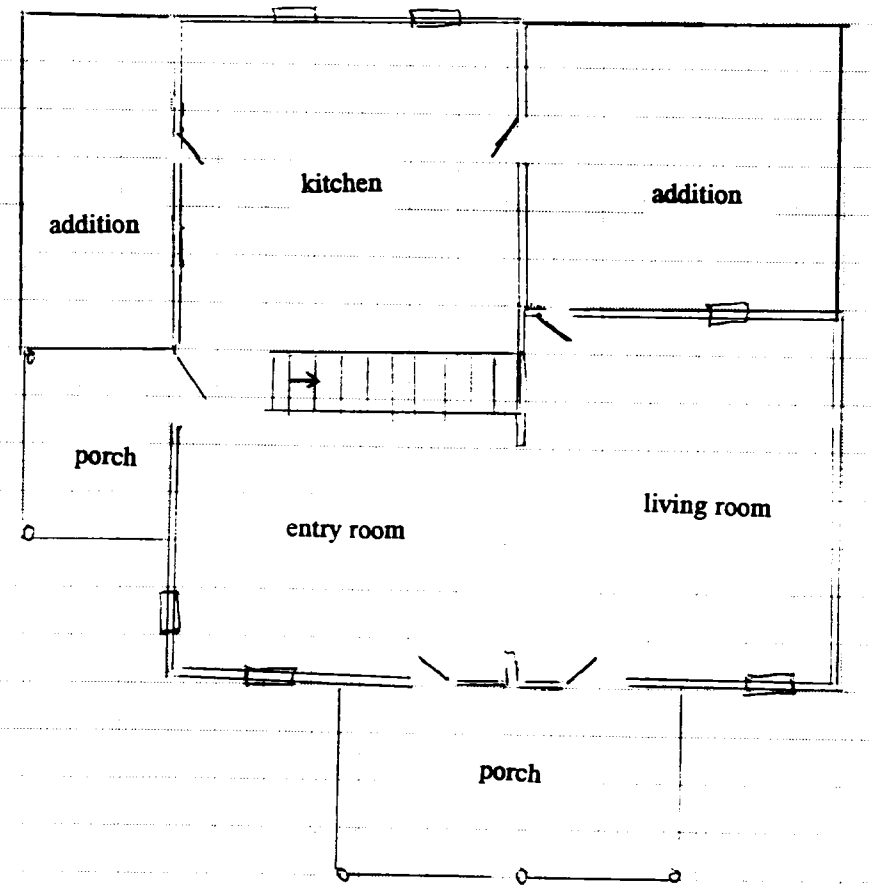
street & number 200 Orchard Ridge Dr. telephone 301-670-3361

city or town Gaithersburg 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
People's Resource Center
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023
410-514-7000



North

approximate scale: 1/4" = 2'

Survey No. WA-III-155
Rohrer House
Rohrersville, Washington County
Main Level Floor Plan

ROHRERSVILLE

DIST. No. 8

Scale 2 inches to the Mile

BUSINESS REFERENCE.

Dealers in ries, Dry Goods Glassware, etc. Also, Whole rs.

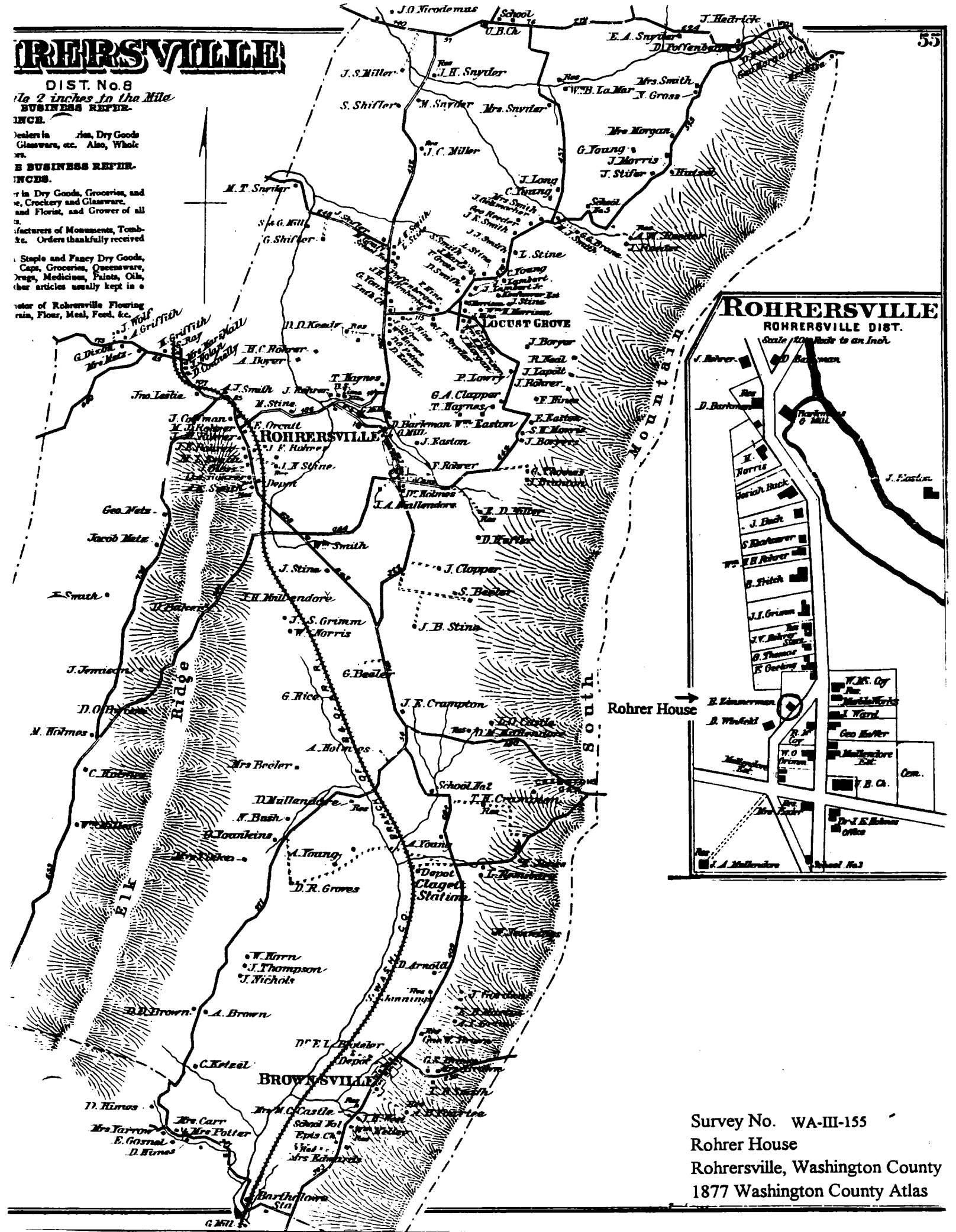
E BUSINESS REFERENCES.

r in Dry Goods, Groceries, and e, Crockery and Glassware. and Florist, and Grower of all s.

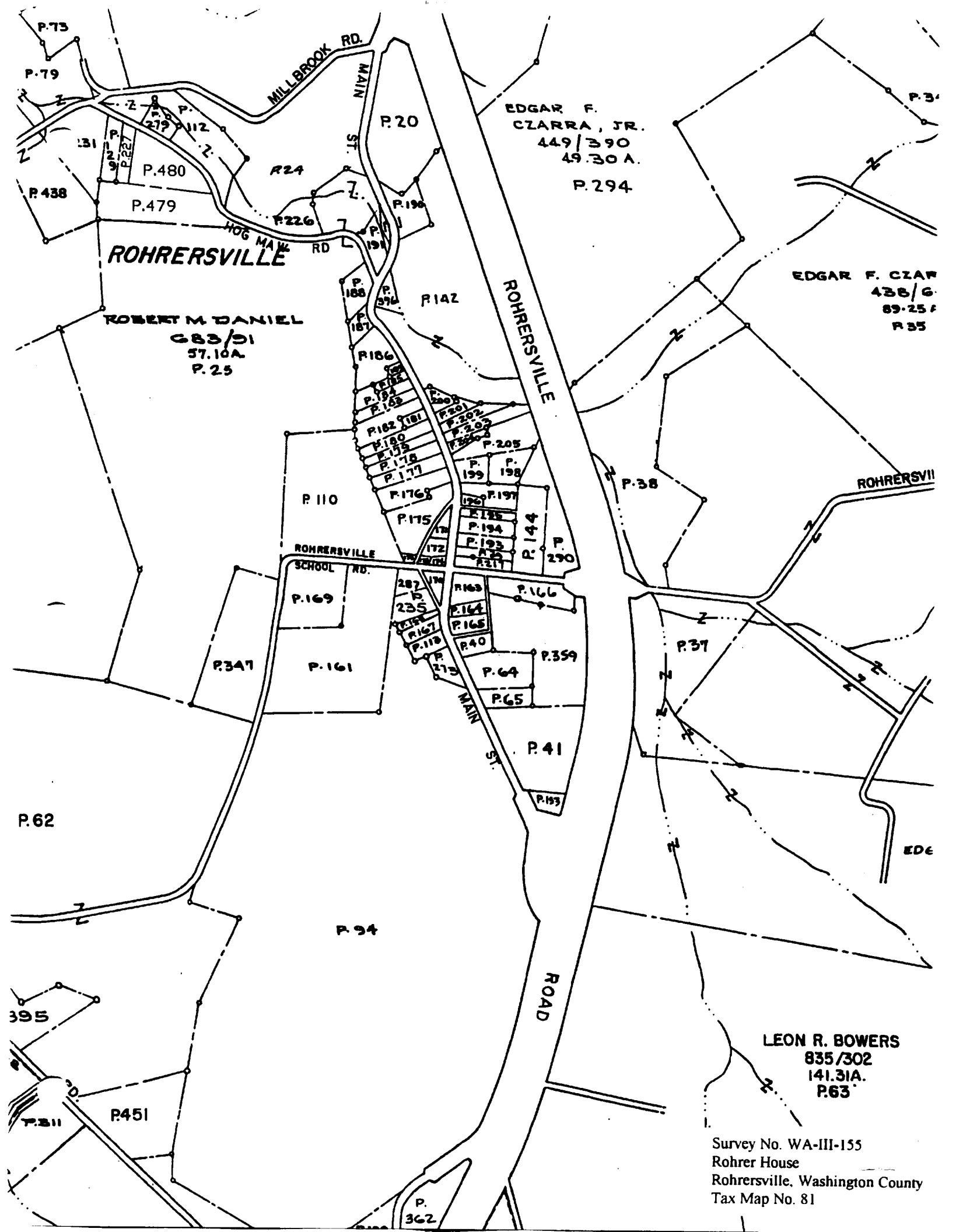
facturers of Monuments, Tomb- Etc. Orders thankfully received

Staple and Fancy Dry Goods, Caps, Groceries, Queensware, Drugs, Medicines, Paints, Oils, ther articles usually kept in

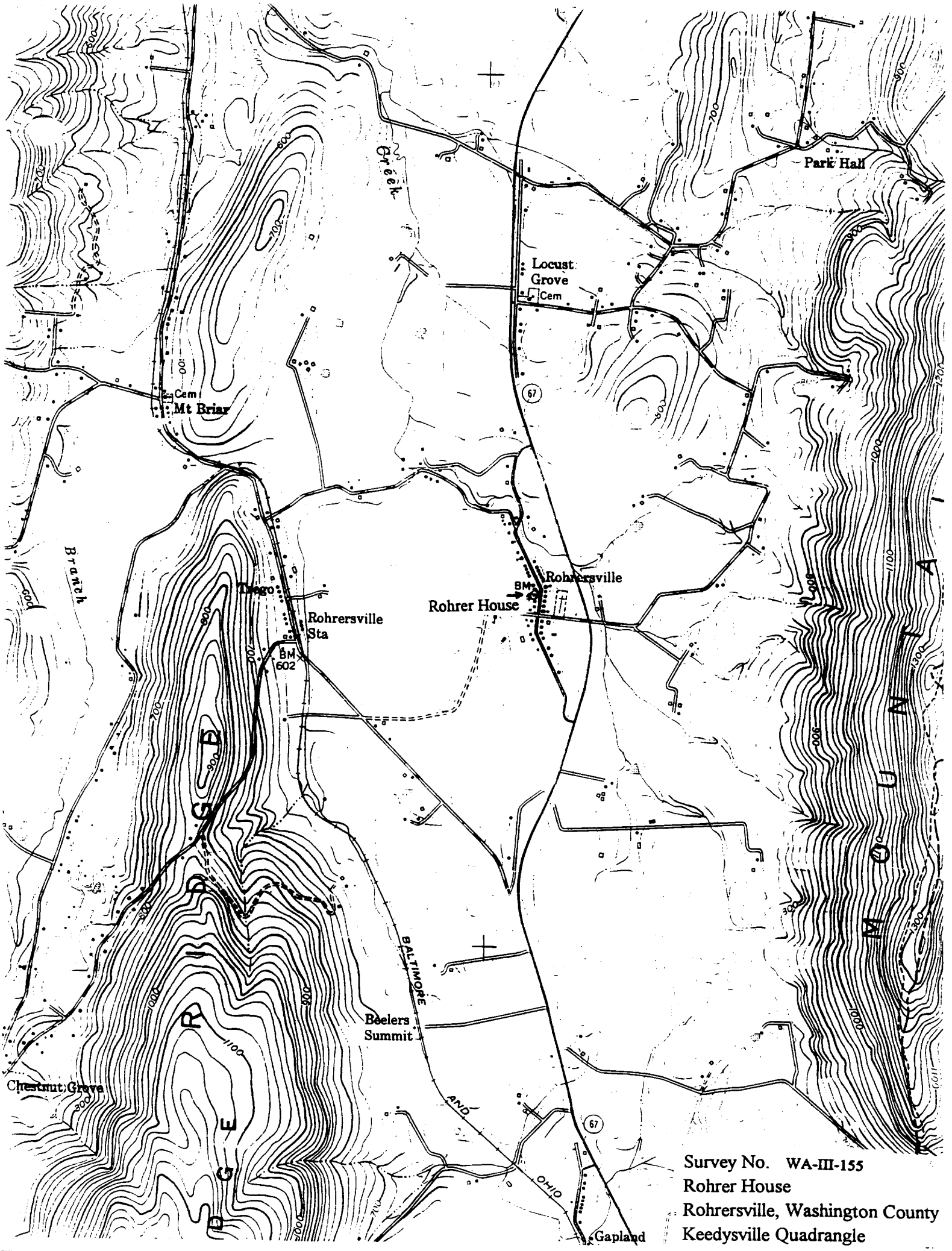
tor of Rohrersville Flouring rain, Flour, Meal, Feed, &c.



Survey No. WA-III-155
Rohrer House
Rohrersville, Washington County
1877 Washington County Atlas



Survey No. WA-III-155
Rohrer House
Rohrersville, Washington County
Tax Map No. 81



Survey No. WA-III-155
Rohrer House
Rohrersville, Washington County
Keedysville Quadrangle

WA-III-155
Rohrer House, Rohrersville
Washington County, MD
S.C Salvatore
5/1997
Neg: MD SHPO
Rohrer House, NE Elevation
#1 of 11

WA-III-155
Rohrer House, Rohrersville
Washington County, MD
S.C. Salvatore
5/1997
Neg: MD SHPO
NE and SE elevations
#2 of 11

WA-III-155

Rohrer House, Rohrersville

Washington County, MD

S.C. Salvatore

5/1997

Neg. MD SHPO

NW elevation

#3 of 11

WA-III-155
Rohrer House, Rohrersville
Washington County, MD
S.C. Salvatore
5/1997
Neg: MD SHPO
Window Detail
#4 of 11

4
3
2

WA-II-155
Rohrer House, Rohrersville
Washington County, MD
S.C. Salvatore
5/1997
Neg: MD SHPO
Porch Detail
#5 of 11

WA-III-153
Rohrer House, Rohrersville
Washington County, MD
S.C. Salvatore
5/1997
Neg: MD SHPO
SW elevation
#6 of 11

WA-III-155
Rohrer House, Rohrersville
Washington County, MD
S.C. Salvatore
5/1997
Neg: MD SHPO
Gravestone
#7 of 11

WA-III-155
Rohrer House, Rohrersville
Washington County, MD.
S.C. Salvatore
5/1997
Neg: MD SHPO
SE + SW elevations - outhouse
8 of 11

WA-II-155
Rohrer House, Rohrersville
Washington County MD
S. C. Salvatore
6/1997
Neg: MDSHPO
Entry room, camera facing SW
9 of 11

WA-III-155
Rohrer House, Rohrersville
Washington Co, MD
S.C. Salvatore
6/1997
Neg: MD SHPO
Living room, camera facing E
#10 of 11

WA-III-155
Rohrer House, Rohrersville
Washington County MD
S.C. Salvatore
6/1997
Neg: MD SHPO
Kitchen, camera facing N
#11 of 11