

K-17

Simon Wickes House, Perkins House  
Water Street, Chestertown  
c. 1780

Simon Wickes purchased water lot No. 10 and half of lot No. 15 opposite in 1780 for the sum of "222 bushels of Good merchantable wheat."<sup>1</sup> He immediately set out building a fine brick house that would be similar to that at 110 Water Street. The house was built into the river bank and is nearly one story higher on the water side than on the street. Flemish bond was used below the water table on the facade as well as on three other walls. Glazed headers were used in the bond on the northeast gable, creating an archaic effect in relation to the all header bond on the street facade. There was a porch on the river side, probably with stair on ground level. There is evidence that the street entrance had a deck with benches flanking the door.

Like the house at 110 Water Street, the original kitchen was located in the basement, however, here there was access to the river side yard from a central grade level entrance. The central hall contained the stair on all three floors above. This stairhall was separated from the end rooms by vertical board partitions. On the second floor, the northeast end of the house was divided into two separate rooms, the larger room having the fireplace. This arrangement was like the Violet Farm and Tibbalds.

In the northeast room of the first story, the fireplace wall was originally sheathed with raised fielded paneling, a feature common throughout the 18th Century. Flanking the fireplace there were cabinets or closets. In the southwest room the fireplace is off-center because of the

large flue from the kitchen fireplace below. The chimney breast had no paneling, but a mantel, corner boards and cornice forming a framing for a plaster panel. The same treatment was used on the two fireplaces on the second floor. All of the windows had splayed jambs with paneled interior shutters.

Sometime before 1805 Simon Wickes purchased the Custom House. Whether or not Mr. Wickes moved his residence there can not be ascertained from the existing records. In his will of 1813, however, he bequeathed his real estate first to his daughter Elizabeth and then to his son Simon Wickes, Jr. While Elizabeth is listed as owner of 115 Water Street in the 1841 Tax Assessment the house is further described as "occupied by Mrs. Perkins."

After Elizabeth's death the house was indeed sold to the Perkins family who retained ownership of it until 1942. In the 19th Century, the Perkins family remodeled the house by adding a large double dormer centered over the stair hall for extra headroom. They also added three dormers on the street side of the roof and overhanging eaves. All of the windows were replaced, including their trim. The balustrade was also replaced, however, they kept many other original features. Later in the 19th Century, a kitchen and lavatory were constructed on the river side of the building with access from one of the gable windows in the southwest room.

After their acquisition of the house in 1942, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Carvell enclosed part of the porch and made a den. The porch was also lengthened and that part converted into a screened porch with access to

ground level. A small fish pond was installed between the porch and street. On the street entrance a double brick stair with wrought iron railing was installed. Other improvements to the heating, plumbing and kitchen were made at that time as well.

In 1971, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Atherton purchased the property from the Carvells. Their occupancy only lasted until 1972, at which time they sold the house to Mr. and Mrs. William Sears who maintained the old landmark house for the next ten years. In 1982, Mr. and Mrs. George Dean purchased the house and began its restoration. They essentially brought the form and function and many of the details back to the Wickes period, while introducing modern conveniences.

1. Lib. DD 5, fol. 538.

17  
 Perkins House

1760-1780

Chestertown

private

Architectural ~~evidence~~ evidence suggests this handsome small scale Georgian residence is of the same vintage as its sister house, the Meeteer House across the street, though the documents that have turned up thus far are extremely difficult to interpret. Both houses appear to have been built in the 1760's, but the Perkins House may be later, as late as 1780, the year blacksmith Simon Wickes purchased the property for "222 bushels of good merchantable wheat." It is particularly notable for its all header brick facade, a feature it shares with the Meeteer House. The house has been meticulously maintained and is one of the flowers of Chestertown's famous eighteenth century ~~collection~~ Water Street collection.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

1500172204

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON

Perkins House

K-17

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

115 Water Street

CITY, TOWN

Chestertown

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

First

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Kent

**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	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<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**

NAME

William and Jeanne Sears

Telephone #: 778-1081

STREET & NUMBER

115 Water Street

CITY, TOWN

Chestertown

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Maryland 21620

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Office of the County Clerk

Liber #: EHP 54

Folio #: 650

STREET & NUMBER

Kent County Court House

CITY, TOWN

Chestertown

STATE

Maryland

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

none

DATE

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

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

K-17

**7 DESCRIPTION**

<b>CONDITION</b>		<b>CHECK ONE</b>	<b>CHECK ONE</b>
<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      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

115 Water Street is located in Chestertown, one door down from the intersection of Maple Avenue and Water Street on the river side of the block. It occupies what is essentially Water Lot 10 on the 1730 Plot of Chestertown. It is set very close to the street.

It is a 2½-story, 3-bay brick Georgian dwelling with an "A" roof and gabled dormers, very similar both in general features and details to 110 Water Street diagonally across the street from it. The house is two full bays deep, slightly deeper than 110 Water. The facade is symmetrical and is laid in all header brick, as is 110 Water. There is a molded water table which jogs over the basement windows; the brick below the water table is laid in Flemish bond. There is a 2-brick belt course between the first and second stories.

The central door is 6-paneled, has a 4-pane transom above it, and is framed by full-length louvered shutters. There is a brick stoop, which is ascended from both sides by brick steps. There is evidence that some sort of pedimented portico was added and later removed.

All windows are 6/6 double-hung sash, have wood sills, and louvered shutters. The first story windows have segmental arches, the second story windows have wood lintels.

There is a plain box cornice and a tin simulated-tile roof. There are three gabled dormers on the front roof and one in the rear. There are chimneys within both gable ends.

The northeast (left) gable end is laid in Flemish bond with glazed headers. According to the Sanborn Insurance Map, there were no windows in this elevation prior to 1891. Presently there are two 6/6 windows on the first story, one 6/6 plus a small 4/4 on the second, and two small attic windows in the gable. None have arches.

The southwest (left) gable end had two windows on the first story, but the rear one has been covered by a small frame addition, which bridges a passage from the street through to the rear of the property, and which abuts a similar frame addition to the adjoining building, 111-113 Water Street. There are two windows on the second story, and two attic windows in the gable. The first and second story windows are 6/6 and have louvered shutters.

There is a single story/<sup>frame</sup>addition, consisting of porch and kitchen in the rear.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER		
<input 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 2nd half 18th century BUILDER/ARCHITECT unknown

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Georgian

This handsome small-scale ~~Georgian~~ residence may be of approximately the same vintage as its sister house, 110 Water Street, though the documentary evidence that has been turned up thus far is extremely difficult to interpret. Both houses appear to have been built in the third quarter of the eighteenth century, though 115 may have been built later.

John Falconer, Jr. had the land from his father and sold it to Richard Bennett in 1736. This transfer included all of Town Lot 15 (which is now occupied by 114 Water Street--late 19th century house--and the Metcalfe Apartments--late 18th century) and Water Lots 9 and 10 (now occupied by 117 Water Street--1890--and 115 Water Street respectively). We presume all three lots were undeveloped at that time.

In 1749 Bennett willed all of the property (the will is not explicit about buildings) to John Calder, an attorney. In 1754 Calder transferred the three lots "and tenements" to John Bordeley, a merchant, for £100 sterling. It is conceivable that 115 Water Street had been built by then, though the price--a little over £30 per lot--suggests very strongly that the "tenements" were something less substantial.

Bordeley willed his property to his wife, Isabella, in 1761. She appears immediately to have married William Stevenson, another local merchant. Together they then transferred their joint property to Attorney Robert Sterling and back again in that same year to secure title. This transaction involved several parcels of land and several town lots, including Town Lot 15 and Water Lots 9 and 10. (The only house mentioned specifically turns out to be on Lot 41.)

In 1780, merchant Stevenson divided the three lots in question into two equal packages, selling the northeast half of Lot 15 and Water Lot 9 to Daniel Metzlar for 444 2/3 bushels of "good merchantable wheat" and the southwest half of 15 and Water Lot 10 to blacksmith Simon Wickes for 222 bushels of the same. Neither price tells us anything conclusive. We suspect that the frame dwelling which has become the Metcalfe Apartments was on the northeast half of Lot 15 by 1780. And if we consider that evidence alone--forgetting that there may have been some outside financial agreement between Stevenson and Wickes--it makes it seem unlikely that at half ~~the~~ the price of a lot and a half and a house Wickes got anything as substantial as a Georgian brick messuage. The house may have been built for Wickes soon after 1780 and modeled on the recently completed (?) 110 Water Street across the street. (1766-1771 ?)

Wickes willed the property in 1797 to Elizabeth Wickes and then to Simon, Jr., with the stipulation that a 20-foot square in the northwest corner (which by modern

K-17

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Research assistance from William Sears, owner of the property.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

"Part of Water Lot 10, Town Plot of 1730" RAS 4 213

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

STATE COUNTY

STATE COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

Robert Neill Historic Site Surveyor

ORGANIZATION

Maryland Historic Trust / Town of Chestertown

DATE

March, 1976

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

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

reckoning could be either corner, the rear middle or right rear of what is presently 112 Water Street) be reserved as a burial plot.

When both Elizabeth and Simon, Jr. died, the property ownership became extremely complicated, and was finally transferred by Thomas Ringgold as attorney for a half-dozen contesting Wickes to Anne, Elizabeth, and Caroline Perkins in 1851 for \$900. The house remained in the Perkins family, from whom it takes its popular name, until 1942.

## Summary of Title Search: 115 Water Street

John Falconer, Sr.

John Falconer, Jr. to Richard Bennett Folio 4 688 (1736) (Town Lot 15, Water Lots 9 & 10)

Richard Bennett wills property to John Calder (Will in Q.A. County) (1749)

John Calder to John Bordeley Liber 7 429 (1754) £100 sterling  
(Lot 15, Water Lots 9 & 10 and "tenements")

John Bordley wills to Isabella Bordley, his wife Wills Liber 4 124 (1761)

Isabella Bordley Stevenson and William Stevenson to Robert Sterling DD 1 25 (1761)  
and back again DD 1 27

(100 acre parcel, 95 acre parcel, 28 acre parcel, Town Lot 41 with a house on it,  
Town Lot 15, Water Lots 9 and 10, "houses, orchards" etc.)

William Stevenson to Simon Wickes DD 5 538 (1780) "222 bushels of good merchantable  
wheat"  
(southwest half of Town 15 & Water Lot 10)

Simon Wickes wills property in 1797 to Elizabeth Wickes and then to Simon, Jr.. Both  
die and the property passes to Sarah Wickes Ringgold, and several others. In 1826  
the southwest half of Lot 15 is sold off.

Thomas C. Ringgold, Sarah Wickes Ringgold, John Wickes, Mary Wickes, Phoebe Wickes,  
and James Wickes to Anne Perkins, Elizabeth Perkins, and Caroline Perkins

JR 1 337 (1851) \$900

Caroline Perkins wills property to Eben F. Perkins.

Eben F. Perkins wills property to Mary E. Perkins.

Mary E. Perkins dies and Executor of Estate sells property to Eben F. Perkins, Jr. (1904)

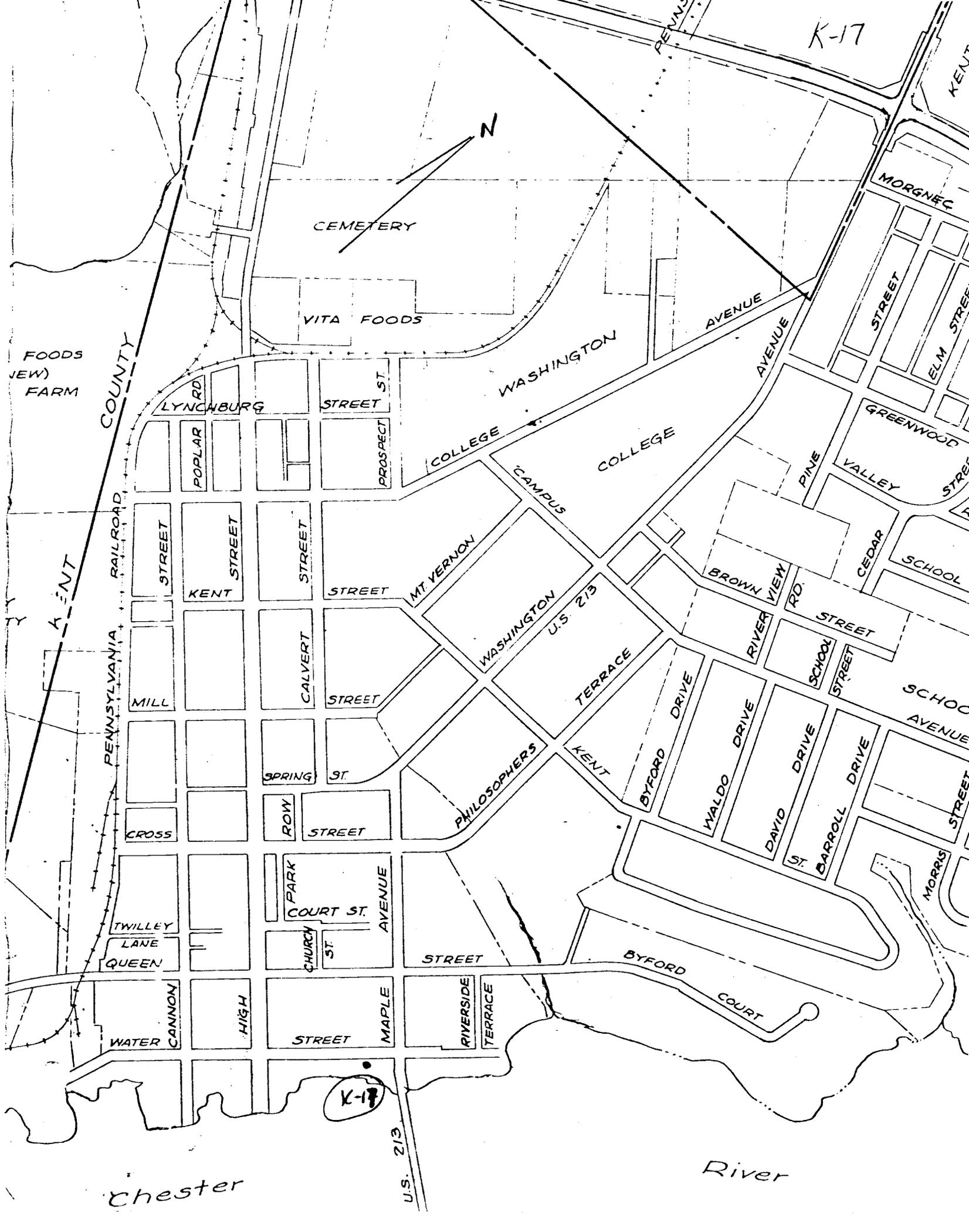
Eben F. Perkins and Wheeler B. Perkins to J. Raymond Simperts RAS 25 109 (1940)

J. Raymond Simperts to Eben F. Perkins and Wheeler B. Perkins RAS 25 111 (1940)

Wheeler B. Perkins, widow to Richard and Josephine Carvell RAS 25 476 (1942)

Richard and Josephine Carvell to Charles Atherton EHP 39 248 (1971)

Charles Atherton to William and Jeanne Sears EHP 54 650



K-17

N

CEMETERY

VITA FOODS

FOODS (NEW) FARM

COUNTY

PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD

KENT

TWILLEY LANE QUEEN

WATER CANNON HIGH STREET

CROSS

MILL

STREET

POPLAR RD

LYNCHBURG STREET

PROSPECT ST

KENT STREET

STREET

STREET

CALVERT STREET

STREET

SPRING ST

ROW STREET

STREET

PARK COURT ST

CHURCH ST

AVENUE

STREET

MAPLE STREET

MAPLE

RIVERSIDE TERRACE

U.S. 213

K-17

Chester

River

WASHINGTON AVENUE

COLLEGE AVENUE

CAMPUS

COLLEGE

MT VERNON

WASHINGTON U.S. 213

TERRACE

PHILOSOPHERS

KENT

BYFORD DRIVE

WALDO DRIVE

DAVID DRIVE

BARROLL DRIVE

BYFORD COURT

COURT

BROWN VIEW RD

RIVER

SCHOOL STREET

STREET

CEEDAR

SCHOOL

GREENWOOD VALLEY STREET

STREET

ELM STREET

MORNEC

KENT





K 17 Perkins Home, 115 Utah

1/77 W + N



K 17 Perkins House, 115 Water

1/77 W view