Form No. 10-300 (Rev. 10-74) Easement WC-[illegible] 5

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED NR
DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON
The Costen House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
206 Market Street — NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN
Pocomoke — VICINITY OF — CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT First

STATE Maryland — CODE 24 — COUNTY Worcester — CODE 047

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
__DISTRICT	__PUBLIC	__OCCUPIED	__AGRICULTURE	X MUSEUM
X BUILDING(S)	X PRIVATE	__UNOCCUPIED	__COMMERCIAL	__PARK
__STRUCTURE	__BOTH	X WORK IN PROGRESS	__EDUCATIONAL	__PRIVATE RESIDENCE
__SITE	**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**	**ACCESSIBLE**	__ENTERTAINMENT	__RELIGIOUS
__OBJECT	__IN PROCESS	X YES: RESTRICTED	__GOVERNMENT	__SCIENTIFIC
	__BEING CONSIDERED	__YES: UNRESTRICTED	__INDUSTRIAL	__TRANSPORTATION
		__NO	__MILITARY	__OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
The Spirit of Newtown Committee, Inc.

STREET & NUMBER
217 Walnut Street

CITY, TOWN
Pocomoke — VICINITY OF — STATE Maryland

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Worcester County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN
Snow Hill — STATE Maryland

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE — __FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN — STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

WO-132

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
_EXCELLENT	_DETERIORATED	X UNALTERED	X ORIGINAL SITE
X GOOD	_RUINS	_ALTERED	_MOVED DATE_____
_FAIR	_UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Costen House located at 206 Market Street, Pocomoke City, is a two story, hipped roof, frame dwelling in the Victorian Italianate style. The street facade is five bays in width at both floor levels. The center three bays of the first floor are sheltered beneath a flat roofed porch decorated with elaborately carved cornice brackets and arched lacework between the porch posts.

The main entrance occupies the center first floor bay and consists of a door of four octagonal panels framed by over and side lights. The four windows flanking the door and the five windows of the second floor frame sash of four over four panes and have louvered exterior blends. Unlike many houses of this type, the windows of the Costen House lack ornamental hoods or sills.

Centered on the front slope of the roof is a iron gable with a small arched sash window near the gable peak. Similar iron gables are on the ends of the house. The bracketed roof cornice is continued around the inside of the gables.

On the north end of the house, there is a three sided bay window set forward of the center line. It has narrow sash windows divided by plain wood pilasters over a simple paneled base. The treatment of the roof cornice repeats that of the main roof. The whole of the exterior of the house retains its original clapboard sheathing.

Centered on the rear elevation is a three bay, two story service wing with a flush gable chimney at the west end. This chimney has an ornamental corbelled cap which matches the two centered chimneys of the main block in design. On the west end of the wing is a later second floor sun porch supported by three posts.

The first floor room configuration of the main block consists of a centered stair hall with four flanking rooms, the two forward rooms being the larger. Most of the woodwork throughout the house is original and in good repair. Later changes would include the glazed tile facing around two front fireplaces, built in coal grates, a circa 1900 Adamesque mantel in the northwest parlor, and chair rails and, possibly, wood ceiling cornices in the principal ground floor rooms.

The main stair, which rises along the south wall of the hall, has turned newels and balusters and a walnut rail. Evidences of alterations to the stair suggest that the balustrade might not be original to the house, even though it is stylistically appropriate.

As the house has been occupied by one family since its construction, significance can be attributed to virtually all alterations. The house is perhaps as important as the Costen family's home, reflecting their changing tastes and living habits, as it is as a good local example of nineteenth century Italianate architecture.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

WO-132

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	X OTHER (SPECIFY)
		__INVENTION		

local history

SPECIFIC DATES BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

A capsulized history of Pocomoke City published in 1940 explains that it is "the largest town in Worcester County. It was established as Meeting House Landing about 1700. Later called Warehouse Landing, and still later (1780-1878), the place has steadily developed as an agricultural shipping center."[1] In spite of its long history, Pocomoke has few older buildings left due to a series of fires in 1888, 1892, and 1922.

The building standing at 206 Market Street, known as the Dr. Isaac T. Costen House, is one of the few survivors. It is a good example of the Victorian Italianate style and has remained basically unaltered since its construction. It is Pocomoke City's finest remaining nineteenth century structure.

Dr. Costen (usually spelled Coston until the twentieth century) was a well-known citizen of Pocomoke even before he became the city's first mayor in 1888. Born in Somerset County several miles from Pocomoke in 1832, he attended a local school and then Washington Academy in Princess Anne. He taught school for two years and then went to the Pennsylvania State University where he studied medicine. He began his medical practice in Somerset County, moving to New Town in July 1865 where he married Olivia Adams the following February.

The Costens purchased a house and lot at 206 Market Street from William Ulysses Schoolfield in 1877 for $1,000.[2] Schoolfield had purchased the property almost two years before for $600 from William S. Dickinson.[3] It appears that the present house was built shortly before the period of the Costen's ownership.

Reportedly a compassionate, humanitarian physician, Dr. Costen was also active politically. He ran for the House of Delegates in the

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[1]Work Projects Administration Writers' Program, Maryland, A Guide to the Old Line State (Reprint of 1940 ed., New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), p. 427.

[2]Deed ITM 6/59, Worcester County Land Records, Hall of Records, Annapolis, Maryland.

[3]Deed ITM 4/430.

(See continuation sheet No. 1)

Maryland Assembly in 1881 and was elected to that position. He was also a member of the Democratic State Central Committee at this time. In 1888 he was elected mayor of Pocomoke, the first to hold this position.

During the Civil War, Dr. Costen was a supporter of the Confederate cause. He supposedly was a blockade runner for the South, having once been caught by Union troops carrying money and supplies to a boat at Cedar Hall Dock.[4]

Dr. Costen died in the spring of 1931, leaving his widow and four daughters, Mary H., Addie L., Olivia J., and Elizabeth C. Costen. The house was kept by the family until several years ago when Olivia J. Costen left it to enter a nursing home. At that time it was sold to the Reverend Elmer Bennett who subsequently sold it to the city of Pocomoke. It was decided to demolish the building to make way for a parking lot, but through the efforts of interested residents this plan was averted.

A group of citizens who joined together in order to obtain a court order to stop construction of the parking lot was subsequently organized and incorporated under the leadership of Mrs. Myrtle A. Polk as the Spirit of Newtown Committee, Inc. They offered to buy the house from the city and were eventually successful in this attempt. The voters of the area elected, 413 to 324, to save the house. Some money was raised locally and an interest-free loan was obtained from the Maryland Historical Trust for the purchase of the building.

The Committee's plans for the future of the house were outlined by Mrs. Polk in the September 23, 1973, edition of the Worcester County Messenger:

> "The Committee hopes to form a museum where the historic gems of Newtown and Pocomoke may be exhibited--along with a woman's exchange where individuals may bring their handiwork arts, crafts and culinary arts, antiques on consignment to be sold with a percentage from the sale going to the home," Mrs. Pold said. "This will be the means of defraying the cost of maintaining the home. It is our hope that all this will bring more people to our downtown area."

[4]The information about Dr. Costen's life was taken from: Deborah Jean Hall, Salutatorian Address and Old Home Prize Essay, June 1974, copy in the files of the Maryland Historical Trust, 21 State Circle, Annapolis, Maryland.

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9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Land and Probate Records of Worcester County, Hall of Records, Annapolis, Md.

Hall, Deborah Jean. Salutatorian address and Old Home Prize Essay, June 1974. Copy in files of Maryland Historical Trust.

Newspaper clipping in files of Maryland Historical Trust.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than 1 acre

UTM REFERENCES

	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
A				B			
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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
J. Richard Rivoire, Architectural Historian; Pamela M. James, Historian Assistant/(sao)

DATE
May 1975

ORGANIZATION
Maryland Historical Trust

TELEPHONE
(301) 267-1438

STREET & NUMBER
21 State Circle; The Shaw House

CITY OR TOWN
Annapolis

STATE
Maryland 21401

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL ____ STATE ____ LOCAL ____

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

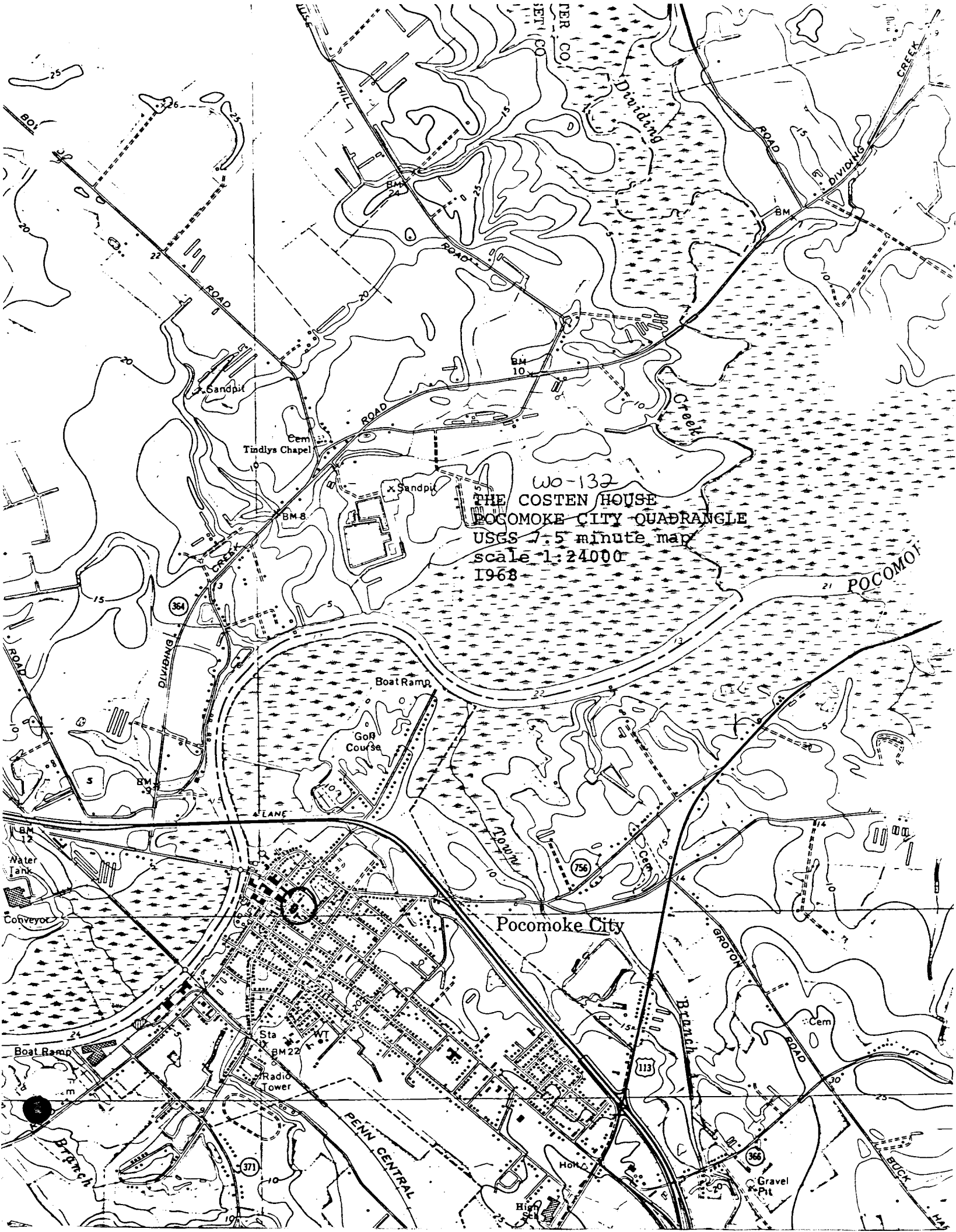
DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER


WO-132
THE COSTEN HOUSE
POCOMOKE CITY QUADRANGLE
USGS 7.5 minute map
scale 1:24000
1968
Pocomoke City
Tindlys Chapel
Sandpit
Boat Ramp
Golf Course
Water Tank
Conveyor
Radio Tower
PENN CENTRAL
Gravel Pit
Dividing Creek
Town Branch
GROTON ROAD
DIVIDING CREEK
POCOMOKE
HILL ROAD
4 LANE
BM 24
BM 10
BM 8
BM 12
BM 22
Cem
Sta
WT
364
756
113
371
366

WO-132
COSTEN HOUSE
POCOMOKE CITY, WORCESTER COUNTY, MD.
SOUTHEAST ELEVATION
10/90
PHOTOGRAPHER, MICHAEL HARRISON DAY
NTC / MD HISTORICAL TRUST

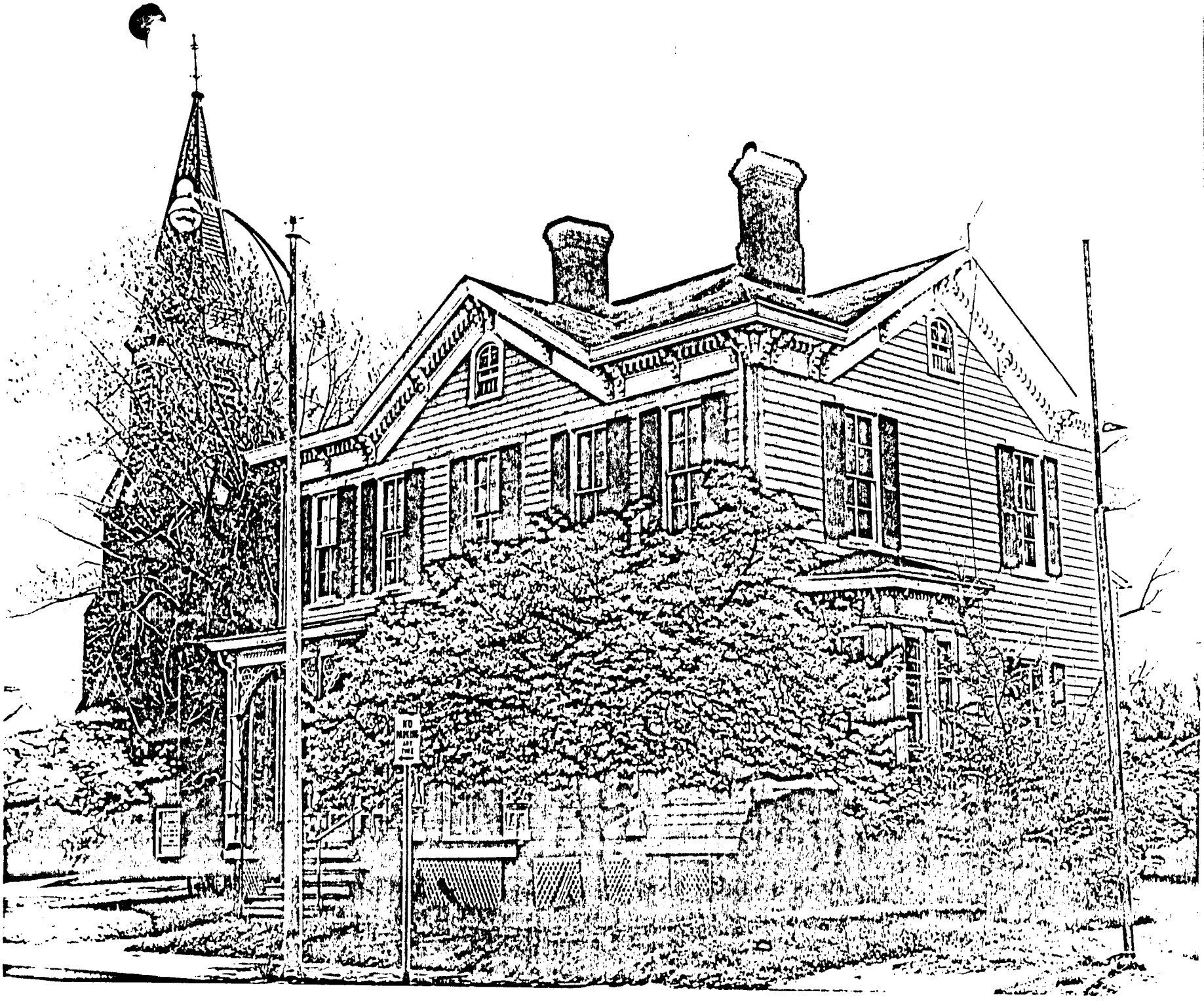
WO-192
COSTEN HOUSE
POCOMOKE CITY, WORCESTER COUNTY, MD.
EAST ELEVATION
10/7/88
PHOTOGRAPHER, MICHAEL HARRISON DAY
NEH / MD. HISTORICAL TRUST

WO-132 Costen House

Please Credit to: J. M Kilvington
Maryland Historical Trust
2525 Riva Road
Annapolis, MD. 21401

WD - 132 Coston House
10/78

(opening day)


NO
PARKING
ANY
TIME