AL-VI-B-341
14811 Back Street
Midland, Allegany Co., Maryland
Capsule Summary

The Harriet Taylor House, 14811 Back Street (formerly 417 Main Street), is situated on the corner Lot #36 in the town of Midland. The dwelling, built c.1892, is typical of Late Victorian rural homes with simplified stylistic features. The interior is remarkably preserved with original unpainted moldings, original hardware, and an early 20th century kitchen unchanged from the year of its addition to the house.

The Harriet Taylor House is significant as a contributing element to the historic development of the Midland Survey District. The Late Victorian style house is typical of the numerous dwellings constructed in Midland during the late 19th century, the George's Creek Valley coal region's greatest period of growth. It is a remarkably intact example of rural Late Victorian architecture. Although the house was enlarged with a kitchen in the 1930s, the original woodwork, doors and hardware remained intact through its occupation.

Maryland Historical Trust
Maryland Inventory of
Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. AL-VI-B-341

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic	Harriet Taylor House (preferred)
other	417 Main Street, 14811 Back Street

2. Location

street and number	14811 Back Street	__ not for publication
city, town	Midland	__ vicinity
county	Allegany	

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

name	Board of Co. Commissioners, Allegany Co., Maryland				
street and number	701 Kelly Rd.			telephone	
city, town	Cumberland	state	MD	zip code	21502

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.	Allegany Co. Courthouse			tax map and parcel	Midland Map 1 - I
city, town	Cumberland			liber 686	folio 369

5. Primary Location of Additional Data

_____ Contributing Resource in National Register District
_____ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
_____ Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
_____ Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
_____ Recorded by HABS/HAER
_____ Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT
__X__ Other: Midland Survey District

6. Classification

Category
_____district
__X__building(s)
_____structure
_____site
_____object

Ownership
__X__public
_____private
_____both

Current Function
_____agriculture
_____commerce/trade
_____defense
__X__domestic
_____education
_____funerary
_____government
_____health care
_____industry
_____landscape
_____recreation/culture
_____religion
_____social
_____transportation
_____work in progress
_____unknown
_____vacant/not in use
_____other:

Resource Count

Contributing	Noncontributing
2	_____ buildings
_____	_____ sites
_____	_____ structures
_____	_____ objects
2	_____ Total

Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory

_____

7. Description

Inventory No. AL-VI-B-341

Condition

___ excellent	___ deteriorated
___ good	___ ruins
X fair	X altered

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

The Harriet Taylor House, 14811 Back Street (formerly 417 Main Street), is situated on the corner Lot #36 in the town of Midland. The dwelling, built c. 1892, is typical of Late Victorian rural houses with simplified stylistic features. The interior is remarkably preserved with original natural-wood moldings, original hardware, and an early 20th century kitchen unchanged from the year of its addition to the house.

The dwelling is two-story frame, side-gabled structure with a central cross gable. The north (front) elevation is three bays wide with a window, door, window fenestration. Windows are one over one double hung sash with overlying storm windows and flat molded architraves. An arched window is located in the front gable peak with a pointed arch molded architrave. The front gable is enclosed with a frieze band which continues around the cornice of the building. The central entrance has a multi-pane, wood framed outer door, and a carved wood panel and half glass main door. The door has a transom above and flat molded architrave surrounding. The front porch is three bays across with hipped roof and plain frieze, supported on square columns. The solid panel baluster between the porch columns has been covered with asbestos siding on the exterior. The porch floor is narrow gauge boards, raised two steps above ground level.

The building was constructed in several sections. The original section was in the form of an ell, one room deep on the east gable end. On the west gable end a second room extends to the south in a south-facing gable. A kitchen addition, c.1929, with an attached enclosed porch was added to the rear, filling the corner of the ell and giving the building an essentially square footprint. The interior brick chimney rises off-center in the eastern section of the original building. The house is sheathed with asbestos shingle siding. The roof is asphalt shingle.

The central entrance opens into a center hall with dog-leg stairs to the second floor. All moldings are unpainted, stained dark. The newel post is heavy square, machine carved. The balusters are turned and painted white. Walls are papered with c. 1930s style wallpaper. Immediately within the central hall are doors to rooms on either side. Moldings are stained, machine-carved with bull's eye corner blocks; the doors are grain painted and have transoms above. The room on the east side has a window in the north and east wall. There are no other doors in the room. The chimney flue protrudes into the room running up the interior west wall. The room is wallpapered. The room on the west side of the central hall has windows on the north and west walls. A built-in cupboard, with lower drawers and glass cabinet doors above, is located on the interior south wall. A grain painted pass-through door is also located in the interior south wall. The room is wallpapered. The southwest room, part of the original three-room footprint of the building, appears to have been a kitchen. The walls are painted plaster with stained wainscoting. Windows are located in the south and west walls. The north interior wall has an enclosed projection containing stairs to the cellar and stairs to the second floor, both with tongue-in-groove doors. The added kitchen room is accessed by pass-through doors from the southwest room and the rear of the central hall. The kitchen has a window in the east wall and a door to the enclosed porch on the south wall. A pantry room is located in the southwest corner of the kitchen. The pantry has a double window in the south wall and a single window in the east wall opening onto the enclosed porch.

South of the main house, facing east onto Union Street is a one-story frame structure known as the 'office' by Taylor family members. The structure has a shed roof with a front parapet. It is three bays on the east elevation with a window, door, window fenestration. There are several shed additions on the rear. The building is sheathed with asbestos siding. It was reportedly used as an insurance office.

The lot on which the buildings stand is grass with minimal landscaping. Boxwood hedges line the property boundary on the south and east around the main house. Several large evergreen trees, two of which are dead, stand in the front yard area. The rear yard runs back to George's Creek.

8. Significance

Inventory No. AL-VI-B-341

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below		
__ 1600-1699	__ agriculture	__ economics	__ health/medicine	__ performing arts
__ 1700-1799	__ archeology	__ education	__ industry	__ philosophy
X 1800-1899	X architecture	__ engineering	__ invention	__ politics/government
X 1900-1999	__ art	__ entertainment/ recreation	__ landscape architecture	__ religion
__ 2000-	__ commerce		__ law	__ science
	__ communications	__ ethnic heritage	__ literature	X social history
	__ community planning	__ exploration/ settlement	__ maritime history	__ transportation
	__ conservation		__ military	__ other: _____

Specific dates 1890s-1930s **Architect/Builder** unknown

Construction dates c. 1892

Evaluation for:

_____ National Register _____Maryland Register ____X___not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

Statement of Significance

The Harriet Taylor House is significant under National Register Criterion A as a contributing element to the historic development of the Midland Survey District. The Late Victorian style house is typical of the numerous dwellings constructed in Midland during the late 19th century, the George's Creek Valley coal region's greatest period of growth. The house is significant under National Register Criterion C as a remarkably intact example of rural Late Victorian architecture. Although the house was enlarged with a kitchen in the 1930s, the original woodwork, doors and hardware remained intact through its occupation.

Historic Context

The history of Allegany County was powered by the development of industry and transportation in Western Maryland. The discovery of iron ore and coal in the 18th century in the western mountains of Maryland intensified the growth of the area already begun to a small degree through hunting and farming. Not until the early 19th century, however, did the need for high quality coal and iron, and the ability to transport them efficiently, spur the development of company towns like Midland. Company towns like this are spread throughout Allegany County. The National Pike, begun in 1806, was improved with a macadam surface in 1831. A network of railroads radiating from Cumberland began to take shape in the 1840s and 1850s. These improved routes of transportation, along with the development of the C&O Canal stimulated the mining boom in the second half of the 19th century in western Maryland.[1]

The mineral rich George's Creek Valley, running south from Frostburg to the Potomac River at Westernport, and bounded on the east by Dan's Mountain and on the west by Big Savage Mountain, was the setting for much of the mining development. Home of the "Big Vein," a prodigious deposit of high quality coal, the valley provided for the development of many independent mining companies. The prototype for all coal companies in the George's Creek region was the Maryland Mining Company. This business was incorporated in 1828 to mine coal in the Eckhart area. Coal was discovered near Eckhart during the construction of the National Road in the 1810s.[2] A deep mine was opened shortly after 1835. According to the Maryland Historical Trust survey form for the Eckhart area, the coal mining operations carried out there by the Maryland Mining Company "inaugurated the era of corporate development of coal resources in Maryland."

[1] Donna M. Ware, *Green Glades and Sooty Gob Piles*, Crownsville: Maryland Historical Trust, 1991, p. 22-28.

[2] Maryland Historical Trust Survey Form, "Eckhart Survey District."

The B&O Railroad from Baltimore reached Cumberland by 1842, and was extended to Piedmont, Virginia (now West Virginia) around the southwestern end of the George's Creek Valley nine years later. Additionally, the C&O Canal was completed from Georgetown to Cumberland in 1856. With each advance in the transportation network new mining companies were established. The George's Creek Coal Company (GCCC), which operated mines in the Lonaconing area, was organized in 1835.[3] Additional coal mines in the central region of the George's Creek Valley opened following the construction of the Cumberland and Pennsylvania Railroad beginning in 1846 and continuing through 1864.[4] Segments of the George's Creek Railroad running south from Lonaconing to Piedmont and the Mount Savage Railroad running northeast to Cumberland were connected, providing access for the entire valley to both the Cumberland and Piedmont depots of the B&O Railroad.

Just to the northeast of the George's Creek Co. mines, the Midland Coal and Iron Co. opened the Midland mines in 1856.[5] It appears that the Midland Mine and nearby Ocean Mine were reopened, probably around 1870, by the Hampshire and Baltimore Company (H&BC).[6] By 1875 mines lined the valley on both sides of George's Creek, each with a rail spur to the mine constructed by the mining company and connected to the Cumberland and Pennsylvania Railroad (see 1875 Atlas map attached).

Villages housing miners and railroad men sprang up in the valley as well. Some were established by the company, like Eckhart and Lonaconing.[7] Other villages, like Barton and Pekin, divided into lots and sold to workers. Midland appears to have been a combination of the two. David Dorsey in the recordation of the "Midland Survey District" noted:

> In 1856 the Midland Coal & Iron Company, one of several coal companies operating in the vicinity, was building duplex "block" houses in Midland at a cost of about $400 each. Rent for each half of the double houses was from $2-$3 monthly. By 1862 there were 22 company houses in the town.[8]

However, the company also "sold building lots to those employees who could afford to build their own homes."[9]

Midland was located about halfway down the George's Creek valley, immediately on the east bank of George's Creek. Although the 1875 Atlas map of Allegany County showed Midland as "Ocean (P.O.)" the village was certainly well established prior to that time. An Allegany County land record written in 1875 described the lots sold as part of the "Addition to Midland," indicating that private development was actively adding to the town of Midland by 1875.[10] In the 1880 U.S. Population Census, the Midland Mine Village numbered 276 residents.[11] Although coal mining was the primary occupation of Midland inhabitants, it seems that by the 1880s, the village was developing as a small market center. In 1881, the *Frostburg Mining Journal* noted: "The new tannery at Midland reported as doing handsomely."[12]

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[3] Thomas Scharf, *History of Western Maryland*, Vol. 2, (1882; reprint, Baltimore: Regional Publishing Co., 1968), p. 1446.
[4] Ibid, p. 1430.
[5] David A. Dorsey, "Midland Survey District," Maryland Historic Sites Inventory, 1982, Section 8, p. 1.
[6] Scharf, p. 1440.
[7] Ware, p. 66.
[8] Dorsey, Section 8, p. 1.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Allegany Co. Land Record T.L. 46/64.
[11] Scharf, p. 1358.
[12] *Frostburg Mining Journal*, July 22, 1911, "Thirty Years Ago 1881-1911."

Following a coal depression in the 1870s, the 1880s through the first two decades of the 20th century were the peak years of coal mining in the George's Creek valley. In 1923, Williams described the town of Midland as having 2000 residents, "stores of all descriptions . . . several manufacturies," and three churches.[13]

Resource History

Following the Civil War the coal mining industry of the George's Creek Valley began a period of great expansion and consolidation.[14] As the population grew with the mines so too grew the surrounding villages. Although still too small to rate a passenger stop by the Cumberland and Pennsylvania Railroad, by 1875 Midland had additional land subdivided into building lots added to its north side bordering George's Creek.[15] Curiously the new lots were located one block north of the railroad, typically the center of town, but on a street named Main Street. A photograph taken of Midland facing north c. 1897, showed that the north side of town along Main Street was substantially more developed than on the south side of the railroad.[16] Since many of the historic commercial buildings dating from the late 19th century and early 20th century in Midland are located on Railroad Avenue, it appears the main street shifted, probably after the C&P RR established a passenger stop in Midland. A 1908 postcard labeled "Main St. Midland, MD" revealed that Main Street still continued as a highly developed and active street into the 20th century.[17]

In 1875, Dr. G. E. Porter sold five lots, numbers 34, 35, and 36 "of Addition to Midland," and lots 38 and 39 on the east side of Union Street, to William Morgan for $1,000.[18] At a price of $200 per lot, it seems unlikely that any of the lots contained buildings at this time. Dr. Porter, a Civil War veteran of the Potomac Home Brigade, lived and practiced in Lonaconing.[19] Presumably he had purchased the lots as a speculative investment. Morgan may have constructed a building on lot 36 on the corner of Main and Union Streets. Local lore describes the early building as a butcher shop, however no evidence of this has been found in the historic record. In 1892, Morgan sold lots 34, 35 and 36 to Harriet A. Taylor for $825.[20]

Again, the low purchase price does not indicate any kind of substantial building on the property. Probably the Late Victorian dwelling was constructed on lot 36 c.1892, shortly after the Taylor purchase. The house was elegant but simply styled by Victorian standards. Behind the house stood a washhouse and chicken coop beyond.[21]

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[13] J.W. Thomas and T.J.C.Williams, Vol. 1, (L.R. Titsworth & Co., 1923), p. 498.

[14] Ware, p. 28.

[15] *Frostburg Mining Journal*, Jan. 4, 1879, lists Cumberland & Penn. RR passenger stops at Piedmont, Barton, Lonaconing, Ocean, Frostburg, etc.; reference to "Addition to Midland," Allegany Co. Land Record T.L. 46/64, August 18, 1875.

[16] Lee G. Schwartz, Albert L. Feldstein, and Joan H. Baldwin, *A Pictorial History of Allegany County*. (Donning, Virginia Beach, 1980).

[17] Albert L. Feldstein, *Feldstein's Historic Postcard Album of Allegany County, Maryland*. (Cumberland, MD: Commercial Press Printing Co., 1983), p. 87.

[18] Allegany Co. Land Record, T.L. 46/64.

[19] Scharf, p. 1504.

[20] Allegany Co. Land Record, T.L. 72/487.

[21] Personal communication, Taylor descendents, October 2000.

Just twelve years after her purchase, Harriet sold the family home to her brother Henry.[22] Apparently the three frame duplexes had been constructed on lots 34 and 35 by this time. In addition to a 'life estate' reserved for Harriet, allowing her to stay in the corner dwelling, the deed required that Harriet "take, collect and receive the rents, issues and profits thereof" indicating the rental properties had indeed been constructed by 1904. Henry, who also lived in the house, described the buildings in his will, probated in 1916: "improved by three two story double frame dwellings and one two story single frame dwelling."[23]

Thomas Taylor, Jr. inherited the property from his uncle Henry Taylor in 1916. It was during Thomas' ownership that the kitchen addition was constructed on the main dwelling. Additionally, the washhouse was converted to a commercial office used by Thomas Taylor's insurance agency.

Hazel Dean Taylor, sister of Thomas, Jr., was the final Taylor owner of the property, from November 1972 to September 2000, during which time the house was rented.[24] Few of the original features of the dwelling have been changed since its construction in 1892.

Architectural Evaluation

The Harriet Taylor House is a remarkably intact example of the simplified Late Victorian architecture typically found in rural settings. The standard gable-end structure is 'Victorianized' by the central cross-gable with a pointed arch window. Interior attention to details, including stained machine-carved wall and stair moldings, wainscoting, grain painted doors, and a built-in stained wood dining room cupboard, reveal additional Victorian influence. A kitchen room addition, added in the 1930s, remains unchanged from its original installation. 1930s era wallpaper remains intact throughout the house as well. The house is a window on the period of greatest expansion in the Midland area.

[22] Allegany Co. Land Record, 94/508.
[23] Allegany Co. Will Book L, page 52.
[24] Allegany Co. Land Record, 458/634.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. AL-VI-B-341

See Continuation Sheet attached.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property	139' x 150'		
Acreage of historical setting	180' x 150'		
Quadrangle name	Lonaconing	Quadrangle scale:	1" = 2,000'

Verbal boundary description and justification

Description:

The property is part of a combined tract made up of three town lots #s 34, 35 , and 36, now described by the boundaries of Parcel 71 on the Allegany tax map Midland 1 – I.

Justification:

The boundary, which historically included all of lots #34, 35, and 36 since their sale together in 1875, was reduced by 41' along the south boundary (Back St.) by the sale of the western-most frame duplex located on part of lot #34. The remaining 139' x 150' property contains the two remaining duplexes and the Harriet Taylor House.

11. Form Prepared by

name/title	Edie Wallace, Research Associate		
organization	Paula S. Reed and Associates, Inc.	date	7 November 2000
street & number	105 N. Potomac St.	telephone	301-739-2070
city or town	Hagerstown	state	Maryland

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties 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
DHCD/DHCP
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023
410-514-7600

Maryland Historical Trust
Maryland Inventory of
Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. AL-VI-B-341

Name
Continuation Sheet

Number 9 Page 1

Major Bibliographic References

Allegany Co. Land Records, Allegany Co. Courthouse, Cumberland, MD.

Dorsey, David A. "Midland Survey District," Maryland Historic Sites Inventory, 1982.

Feldstein, Albert L. *Feldstein's Historic Postcard Album of Allegany County, Maryland.* Cumberland, MD: Commercial Press Printing Co., 1983.

Frostburg Mining Journal, reproduced in Albert L. Feldstein, *Feldstein's Historic Newspapers of Allegany County.* Vol. II, Cumberland, MD: Commercial Press Printing Co., 1987.

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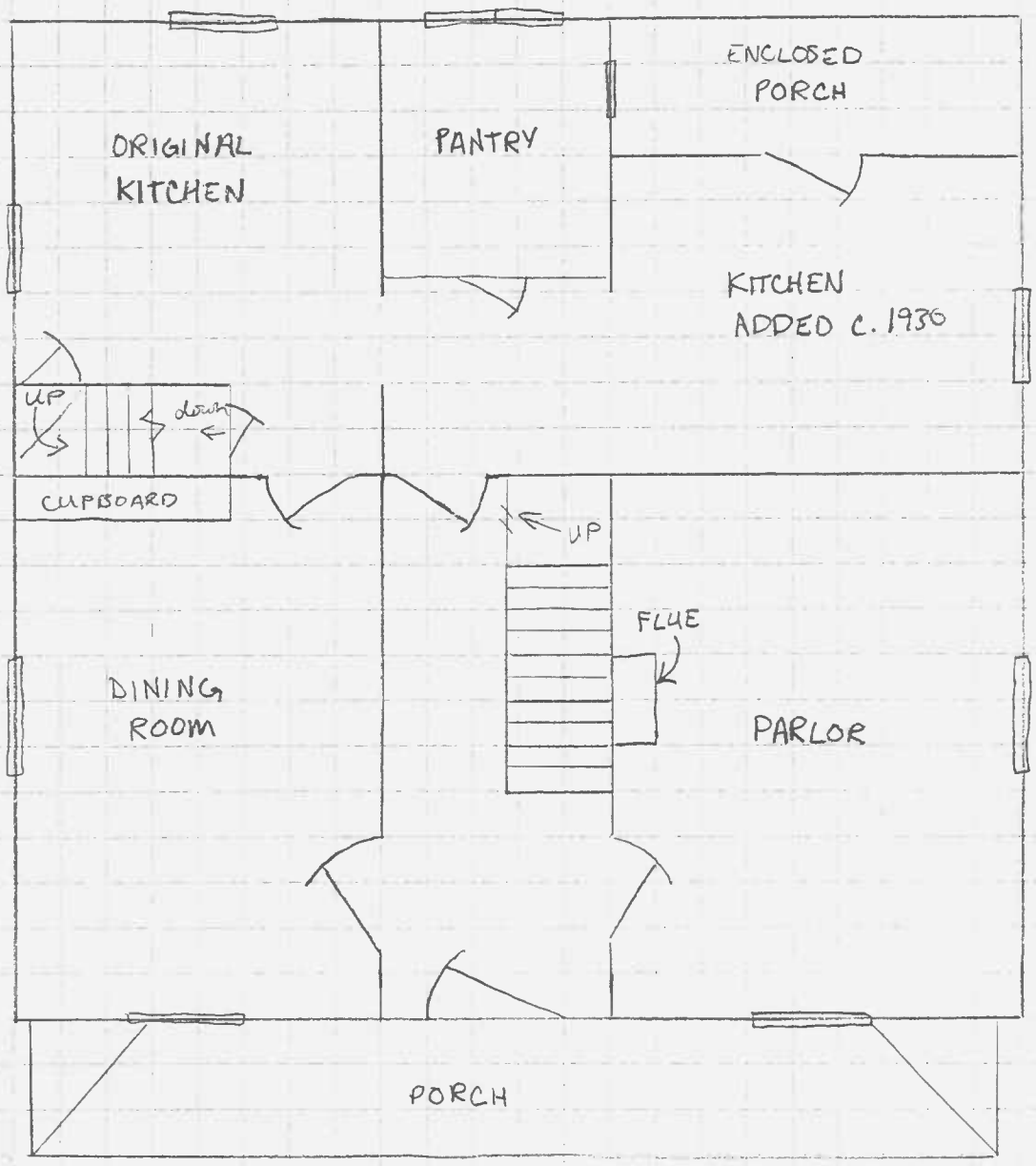
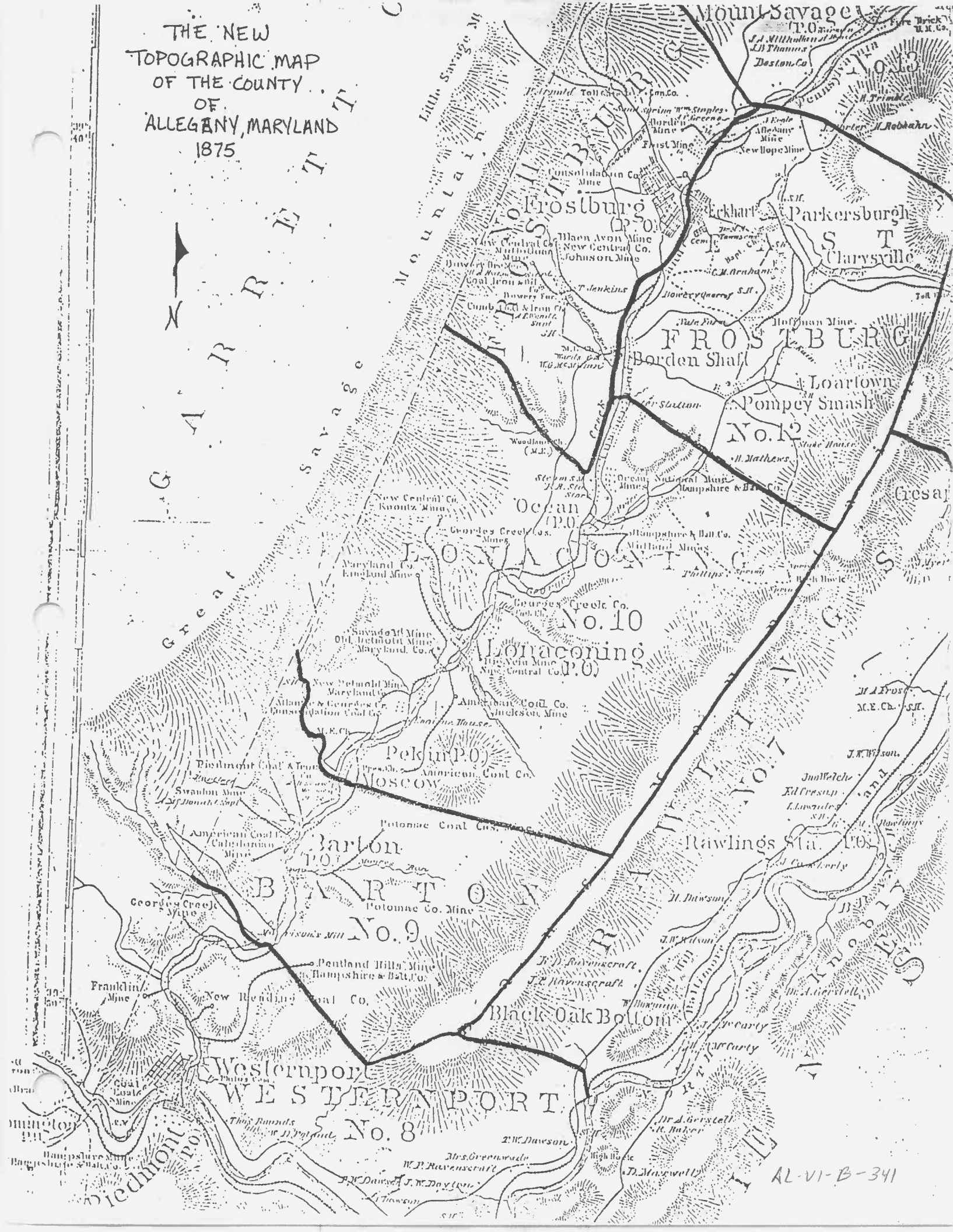
Thomas, J.W. and T.J.C.Williams, Vol. 1, L.R. Titsworth & Co., 1923.

Ware, Donna M. *Green Glades and Sooty Gob Piles,* Crownsville: Maryland Historical Trust, 1991.



AL-VI-B-341
HARRIET TAYLOR HOUSE
FLOOR PLAN
1st FLOOR


THE NEW
TOPOGRAPHIC MAP
OF THE COUNTY
OF
ALLEGANY, MARYLAND
1875
N
Mount Savage
Frostburg
Parkersburgh
Clarysville
FROSTBURG
Borden Shaft
Loartown
Pompey Smash
No. 12
Ocean
LONACONING
No. 10
Lonaconing
Pekin
Moscow
Barton
BARTON
No. 9
Rawlings Sta.
Black Oak Bottom
Westernport
WESTERNPORT
No. 8
Great Savage Mountain
Little Savage Mt.
Piedmont
AL-VI-B-341

AL-VI-B-341

ALLEGANY CO. TAX MAP
MIDLAND 1-I
AL-VI-B-341, 342, 343

KEY

- - - PROPERTY BOUNDARY

ALLEGANY CO. TAX MAP
MIDLAND 1-I
PHOTO VIEW MAP
AL-VI-B-341

KEY

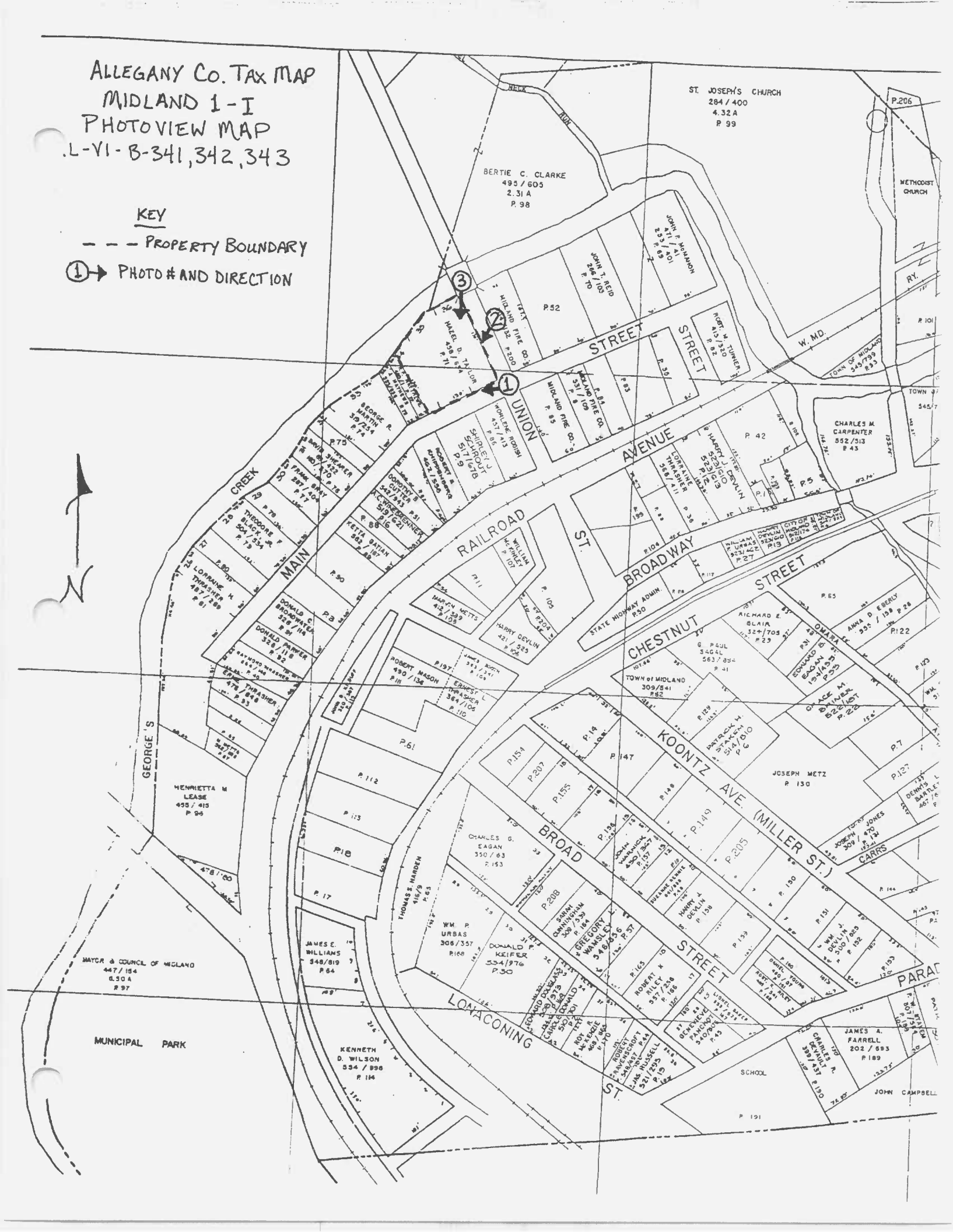
- - - PROPERTY BOUNDARY
(1)→ PHOTO # AND DIRECTION

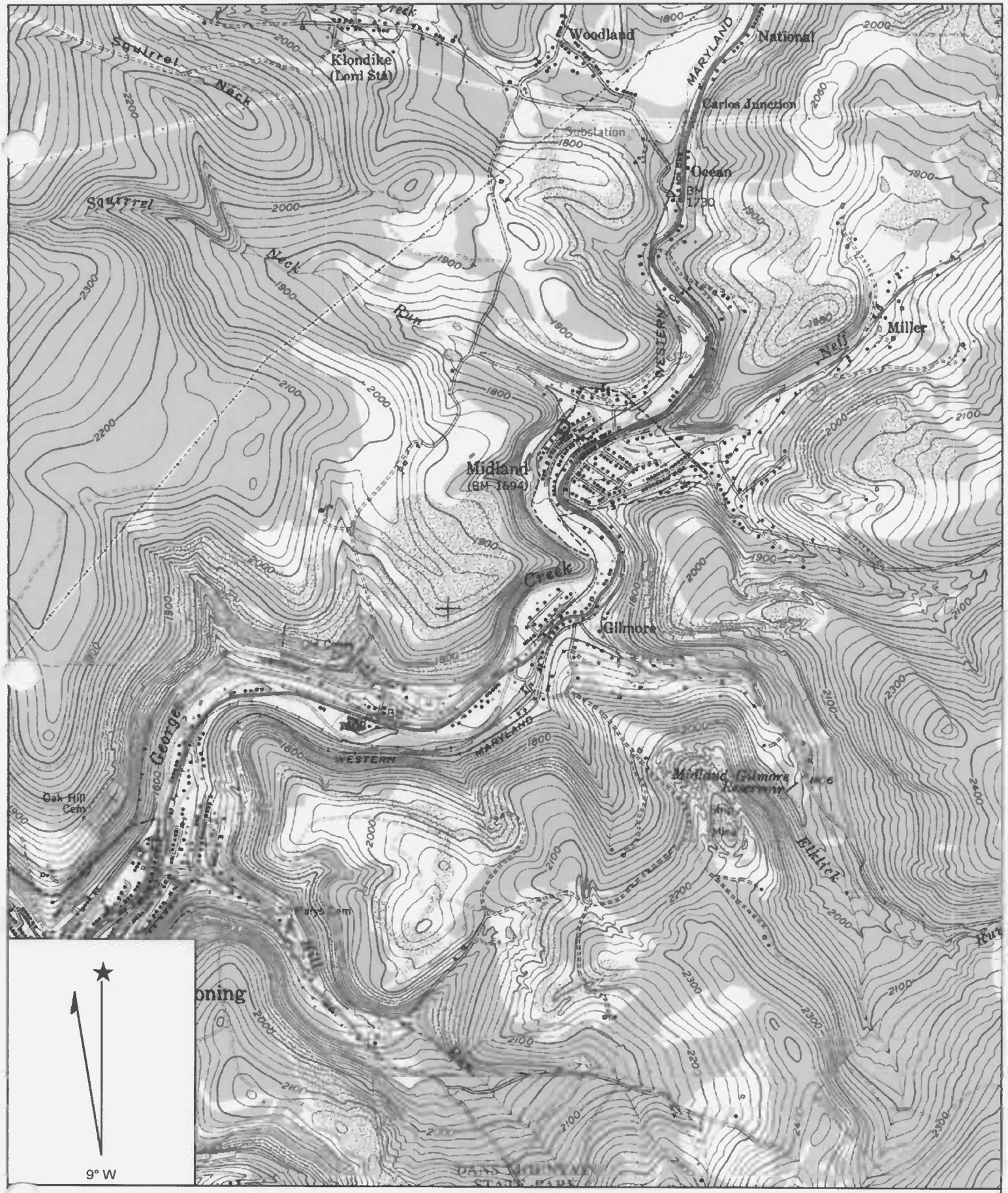
ALLEGANY CO. TAX MAP
MIDLAND 1-I
PHOTOVIEW MAP
L-VI-B-341,342,343

KEY

- - - PROPERTY BOUNDARY

① → PHOTO # AND DIRECTION





Name: LONACONING
Date: 11/8/2000
Scale: 1 inch equals 2000 feet

Location: 039° 35' 02.1" N 078° 57' 18.1" W
Caption: AL-VI-B-341
Midland, Maryland

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AL-VI-B-341

14811 Buck St., Midland MD Allegany Co.

Allegany Co. MD

photo by P. Reed, P. Reed & Assoc. Inc.

10/00

MD SHPO

NW view of front of building

1 of 9

A-VI-B-341

14811 Back St Midland MD

Allegany Co. MD

photo by P. Reed, P. Reed + Assoc. Inc.

10/00

MD SHPO

SW View of northeast elevation and separate office building

2 of 9

AL-VI-B-341
14811 Back St., Midland, MD
Allegany Co., MD
Photo by P Reed, P Reed and Assoc. Inc.
10/00
MD SHPO
SE view of rear of house and office building
#3 of 9

AL-VI-B-341

14811 Back St., Midland MD

Allegany Co. MD

photo by P. Reed, P Reed and Assoc. Inc.

10/00

MD SHPO

S. view of rear & house and office building

#4 of 9

AL-VI-B-341

14811 Back St. Midland, MD

Allegany Co. MD

photo by P. Reed, P. Reed and Assoc, Inc

10/00

MD SHPO

Interior, main staircase

#3 of 9

AL-VI-B-341

14811 Back St. Midland Md.

Allegany Co., MD

photo by P. Reed & Assoc, Inc. Paula Reed

10/00

MD SHPO

Interior. entrance area and front door

#6 of 9

AL-VI-B-341

14811 Back St., Midland, MD

Allegany Co. MD

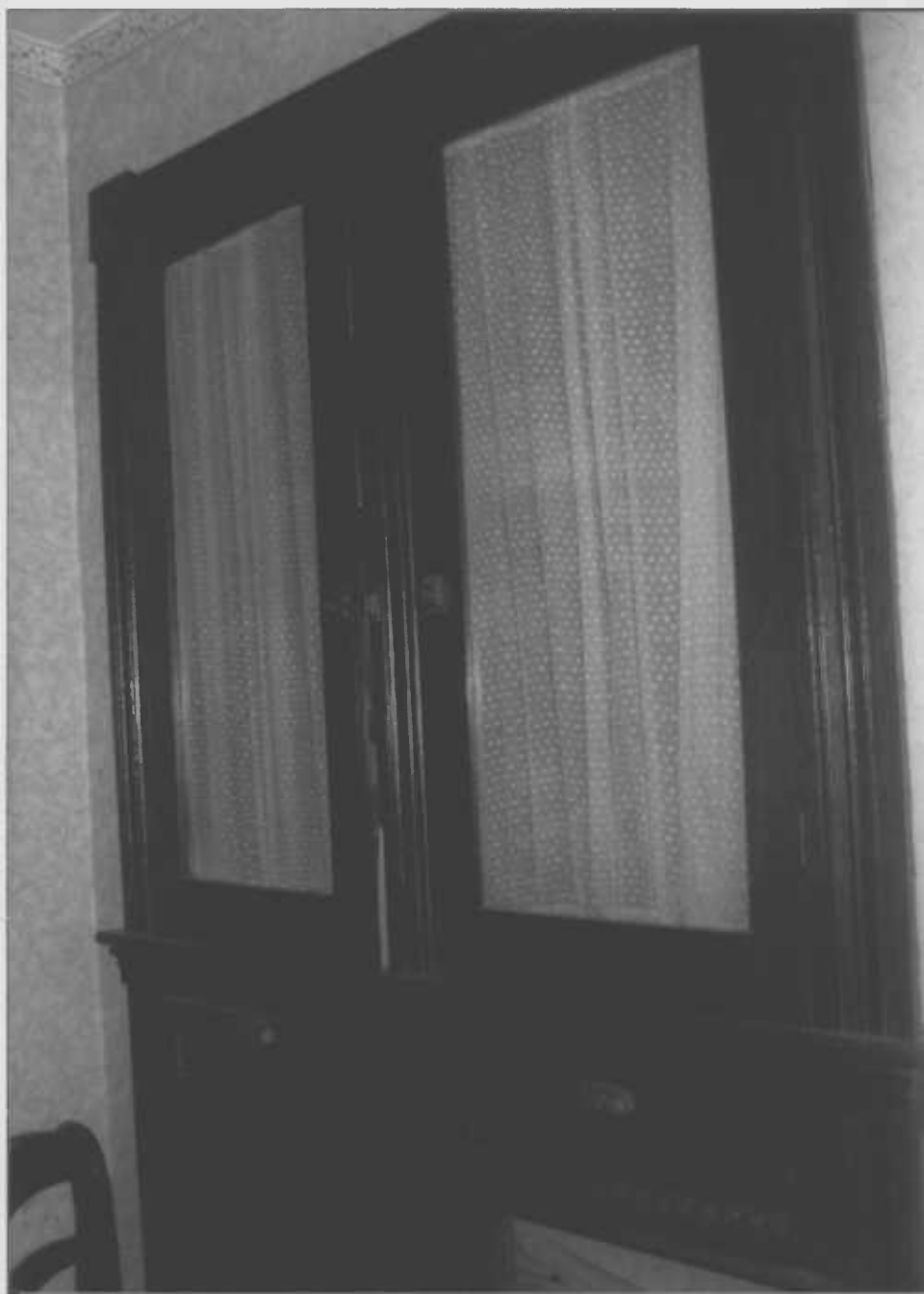
photo by P. Reed & Assoc. Inc. Paula Reed

10/00

MD SHPO

Interior, cupboard, west room, 1st floor (dining room)

1 of 9



AL-VI-B-341
14811 Back St., Midland, MD
Allegany Co. MD
Photo by P. Reed, P. Reed & Assoc. Inc.
10/00
MD SHPO

Interior, cupboard, detail, west room, 1st floor (dining room)

8 of 9

AL-VI-B-341

14811 Back St. Midland, MD

Allegany Co. MD

Photo by P. Reed, P. Reed and Assoc. Inc.

10/00

MD SHPO

Interior, door from original dining room to original kitchen

#9 of 9

SNC 681

AL - VI - B - 341, 342, 343

14811, 14813-15, 14817-19 Back St. Midland,
Allegany Co. MD

Photo by P. Reed, P Reed + Assoc. Inc.

10/00

MDSHPO

SW view along Back St., showing fronts of the houses which face SE

#1 of 3

AL-VI-B-341, 342, 343

14811, 14813-15, 14817-19 Back St., Midland

Allegany Co. MD

photo by P. Reed. P. Reed + Assoc. Inc.

10/00

MD SHPO

SW view of rear of properties from Union St.

#2 of 3

AL-VI-B-341, 342, 343

14811, 14813-15, 14817-19 Back St. Midland

Allegany Co. MD

photo by P. Reed. P Reed and Assoc. Inc.

10/00

MD SHPO

S view of rear of properties from Union St. at Georges Creek

#3 of 3