

AL-VI-B-342  
14813-15 Back Street  
Midland, Allegany Co., Maryland  
Capsule Summary

The frame duplex known as 14813-15 Back Street (formerly 413-15 Main Street) in Midland, Maryland, built c. 1900, is typical of worker housing constructed around the turn of the 20th century. Sited on part of Lot #35 on the north side of Back Street, the duplex stands in the 100 year floodplain of George's Creek. The building has suffered from lack of maintenance as well as the intrusion of flood waters.

The duplex is significant as a contributing element to the historic development of the Midland Survey District. The frame duplex is similar in style to the company-built homes constructed in Midland and the George's Creek Valley coal region during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but represents the later construction of privately owned working class rental properties.

# Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. AL-VI-B-342

## 1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic 413-415 Main Street (preferred)

other 14813-15 Back Street

## 2. Location

street and number 14813-15 Back Street \_\_\_ not for publication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 Road 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
- Other: Midland Survey District

## 6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function	Resource Count	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape	Contributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture	1
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> defense	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	<input type="checkbox"/> Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input type="checkbox"/> domestic	<input type="checkbox"/> social	<input type="checkbox"/> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> sites
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> structures
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> unknown	<input type="checkbox"/> objects
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use	1
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> other:	Total
				<b>Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory</b>

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## 7. Description

Inventory No. AL-VI-B-342

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### Condition

excellent     deteriorated  
 good         ruins  
 fair          altered

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

The frame duplex known as 14813-15 Back Street (formerly 413-15 Main Street) in Midland, Maryland, built c. 1900, is typical of rental housing constructed around the turn of the 20th century. Sited on part of Lot #35 on the north side of Back Street, the duplex stands in the 100 year floodplain of George's Creek. The building has suffered from lack of maintenance as well as the intrusion of flood waters.

The building is a 2 1/2 story frame duplex on stone foundation. The gable-end construction is four bays wide on the north (front) elevation, each dwelling unit having a door and window fenestration. The east unit has a multi-pane full glass door; the west unit has a half-glass and panel door. Windows are two over two double hung sash. A plain frieze band runs below the cornice of the entire building. A brick interior chimney rises in the center of each unit. Unpainted, shed-roofed entrance porches replaced a full front porch within the last several years. The unpainted shadow of the original porch roof-line on the front elevation siding implies the original full front porch design. Each unit is two bays deep with a one-story shed-roofed kitchen addition added across the full length of the south (rear) elevation. The kitchen addition has a single brick chimney through the center which services both kitchens. A bathroom addition was added to each unit on the roof of the kitchen addition. Each gable end has a full-sized attic window. The duplex is sheathed with German weatherboard siding overall. The roof is asphalt shingle. A full-length porch is located on the south elevation of the kitchen addition; it is sheathed with corrugated fiberglass panels.

The duplex interior mirrors its attached unit. Each unit is one room wide and three rooms deep with the kitchen addition. The front entrance opens directly into the front room. The chimney flue rises along the interior north wall of the center room. Boxed stairs rise to the second floor from the interior north wall of the kitchen addition along the unit division wall. A closet space below the stairs is located on the interior south wall of the center room. There is no evidence of where the original stairway might have been prior to the kitchen addition. Walls throughout the first floor are covered with wood paneling; floors are carpeted. Interiors are in extremely poor condition. The second and attic floors were not observed. Views of the attic through open exterior windows revealed finished walls and ceiling. Family members recalled that the attic of each unit had a finished room.

The surrounding yard is overgrown with grass and weeds. The building is setback only slightly from the sidewalk with a narrow grass area. The rear yard runs south to George's Creek.

# 8. Significance

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

**Specific dates** c.1900-1930s **Architect/Builder** unknown

**Construction dates** c. 1900

Evaluation for:

National Register  Maryland Register  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 duplex known as 413-415 Main Street (now 14813-15 Back Street) is significant under National Register Criterion A as a contributing element to the historic development of the Midland Survey District. The frame duplex is similar in style to the company-built houses constructed in Midland and the George’s Creek Valley coal region during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but represents the later construction of privately owned working class rental properties.

### 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 18<sup>th</sup> 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 19<sup>th</sup> 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 19<sup>th</sup> century in western Maryland.<sup>1</sup>

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.<sup>2</sup> 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.”

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

<sup>1</sup> Donna M. Ware, *Green Glades and Sooty Gob Piles*, Crownsville: Maryland Historical Trust, 1991, p. 22-28.

<sup>2</sup> Maryland Historical Trust Survey Form, “Eckhart Survey District.”

# Maryland Historical Trust

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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.<sup>3</sup> 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.<sup>4</sup> 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.<sup>5</sup> It appears that the Midland Mine and nearby Ocean Mine were reopened, probably around 1870, by the Hampshire and Baltimore Company (H&BC).<sup>6</sup> 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.<sup>7</sup> 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.<sup>8</sup>

However, the company also "sold building lots to those employees who could afford to build their own homes."<sup>9</sup>

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.<sup>10</sup> In the 1880 U.S. Population Census, the Midland Mine Village numbered 276 residents.<sup>11</sup> 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."<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Thomas Scharf, *History of Western Maryland*, Vol. 2, (1882; reprint, Baltimore: Regional Publishing Co., 1968), p. 1446.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1430.

<sup>5</sup> David A. Dorsey, "Midland Survey District," *Maryland Historic Sites Inventory*, 1982, Section 8, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup> Scharf, p. 1440.

<sup>7</sup> Ware, p. 66.

<sup>8</sup> Dorsey, Section 8, p. 1.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> Allegany Co. Land Record T.L. 46/64.

<sup>11</sup> Scharf, p. 1358.

<sup>12</sup> *Frostburg Mining Journal*, July 22, 1911, "Thirty Years Ago 1881-1911."

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Following a coal depression in the 1870s, the 1880s through the first two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> 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 manufactories," and three churches.<sup>13</sup>

### Resource History

Following the Civil War the coal mining industry of the George's Creek Valley began a period of great expansion and consolidation.<sup>14</sup> 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.<sup>15</sup> 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.<sup>16</sup> 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.<sup>17</sup>

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.<sup>18</sup> 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.<sup>19</sup> 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.<sup>20</sup>

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.<sup>21</sup>

Just twelve years after her purchase, Harriet sold the family home to her brother Henry.<sup>22</sup> 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,

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<sup>13</sup> J.W. Thomas and T.J.C. Williams, Vol. 1, (L.R. Titworth & Co., 1923), p.

<sup>14</sup> Ware, p. 28.

<sup>15</sup> *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.

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

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

<sup>18</sup> Allegany Co. Land Record, T.L. 46/64.

<sup>19</sup> Scharf, p. 1504.

<sup>20</sup> Allegany Co. Land Record, T.L. 72/487.

<sup>21</sup> Personal communication, Taylor descendents, October 2000.

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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."<sup>23</sup> The design of the duplexes was very similar to the numerous company houses found throughout the George's Creek Valley housing miner's families.<sup>24</sup>

Thomas Taylor, Jr. inherited the property from his uncle Henry Taylor in 1916. While prosperity continued for the town of Midland through the first two decades of the 20th century, the duplexes probably supplied a respectable income.

Hazel Dean Taylor, sister of Thomas, Jr., was the final Taylor owner of the property, from November 1972 to September 2000.<sup>25</sup> The western-most duplex was sold, while the remaining two duplexes fell into disrepair over the years. The flood of 1996 marked the last time these duplexes were occupied.

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<sup>22</sup> Allegany Co. Land Record, 94/508.

<sup>23</sup> Allegany Co. Will Book L, page 52.

<sup>24</sup> see Ware discussion, beginning p. 66.

<sup>25</sup> Allegany Co. Land Record, 458/634.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. AL-VI-B-342

See Continuation Sheet attached

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## 10. Geographical Data

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

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### 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.

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## 11. Form Prepared by

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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

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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-342

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## Major Bibliographic References

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

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

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

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

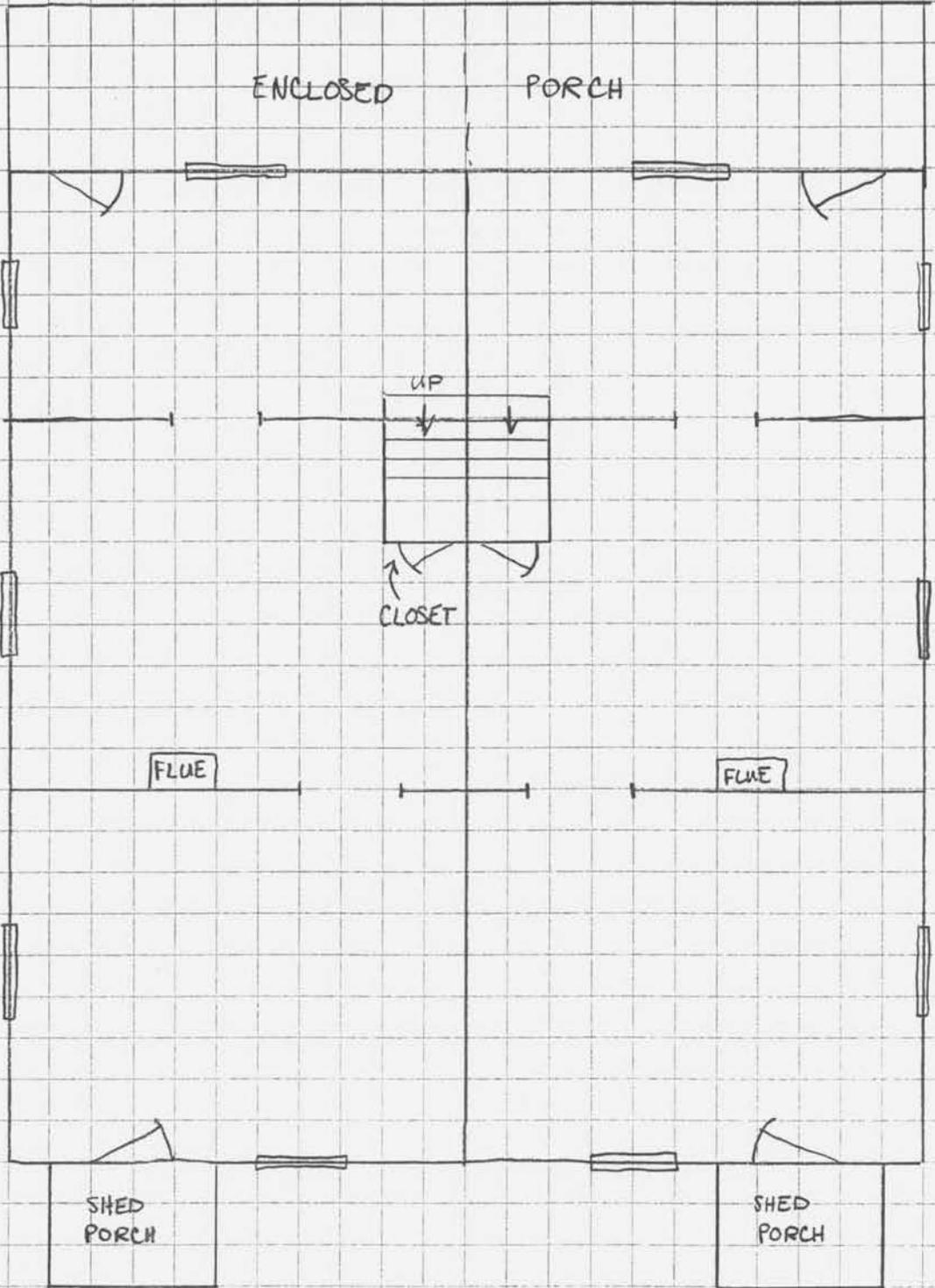
Maryland Historical Trust Survey Form, "Eckhart Survey District."

Scharf, Thomas, *History of Western Maryland*, Vol. 2, (1882; reprint, Baltimore: Regional Publishing Co., 1968.

Schwartz, Lee G., Albert L. Feldstein, and Joan H. Baldwin, *A Pictorial History of Allegheny County*. Donning, Virginia Beach, 1980.

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

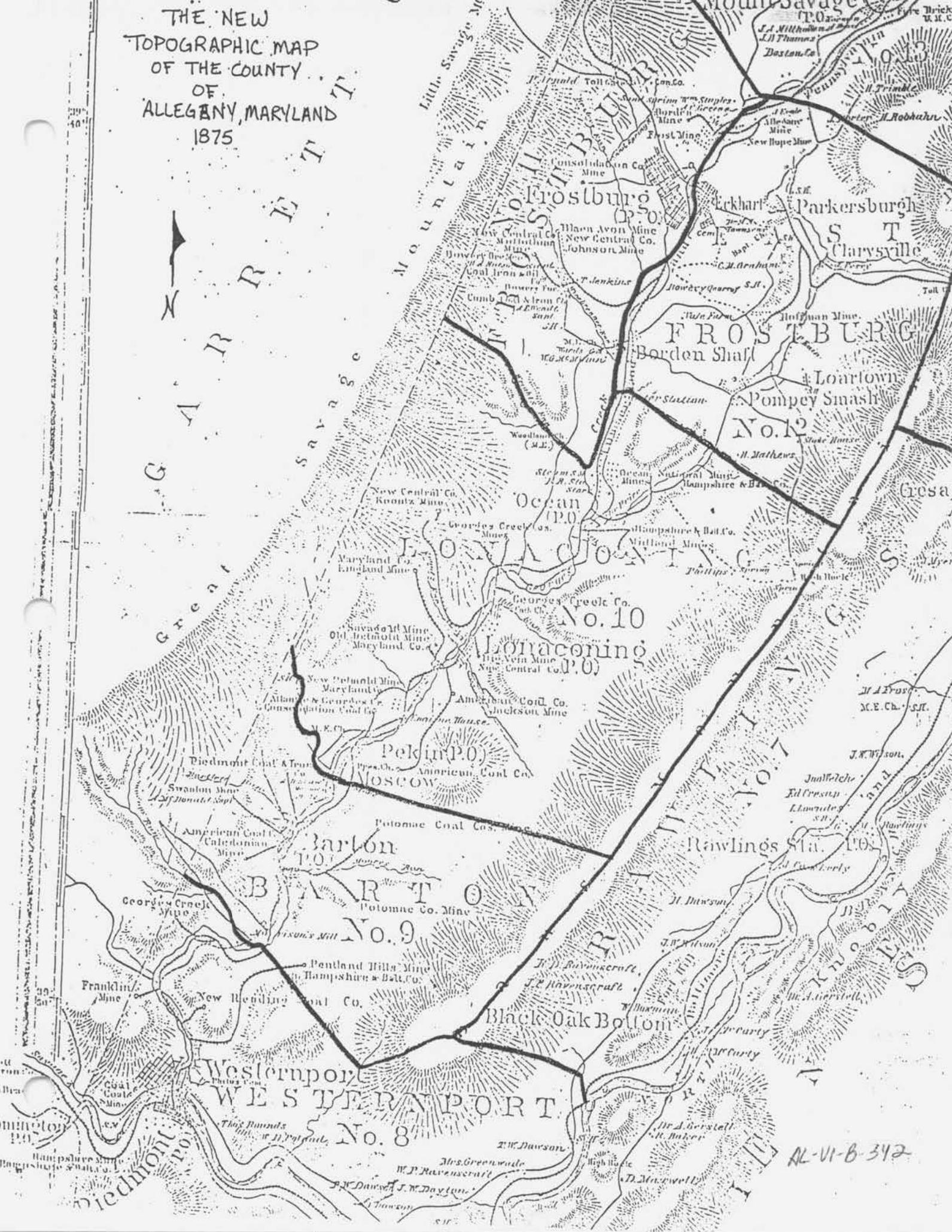
Ware, Donna M. *Green Glades and Sooty Gob Piles*, Crownsville: Maryland Historical Trust, 1991.



AL-VI-B-342  
14813-15 BACK ST.  
FLOOR PLAN  
1<sup>st</sup> FLOOR

THE NEW  
TOPOGRAPHIC MAP  
OF THE COUNTY  
OF  
ALLEGANY, MARYLAND  
1875

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AL-VI-B-342

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

KEY

--- PROPERTY BOUNDARY



ST. JOSEPH'S CHURCH  
284 / 400  
4.32 A  
P. 99

BERTIE C. CLARKE  
495 / 605  
2.31 A  
P. 98

HENRIETTA N  
LEASE  
455 / 415  
P. 96

WATER & COUNCIL OF MIDLAND  
447 / 154  
5.50 A  
P. 97

MUNICIPAL PARK

KENNETH  
D. WILSON  
334 / 996  
P. 114

JAMES E.  
WILLIAMS  
246 / 819  
P. 64

CHARLES S.  
EAGAN  
350 / 83  
P. 183

ROBERT  
MASON  
490 / 136  
P. 111

WILLIAM  
W. WILSON  
P. 107

WILSON FIRM CO.  
P. 85

MIDLAND FIRM CO.  
P. 82

RICHARD E.  
BLAIR  
320 / 705  
P. 23

CHARLES M.  
CARPENTER  
562 / 513  
P. 43

JOHN J. WATSON  
P. 70

ALLEGANY CO. TAX MAP  
 MIDLAND 1-I  
 PHOTO VIEW MAP  
 AL-VI-B-342

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

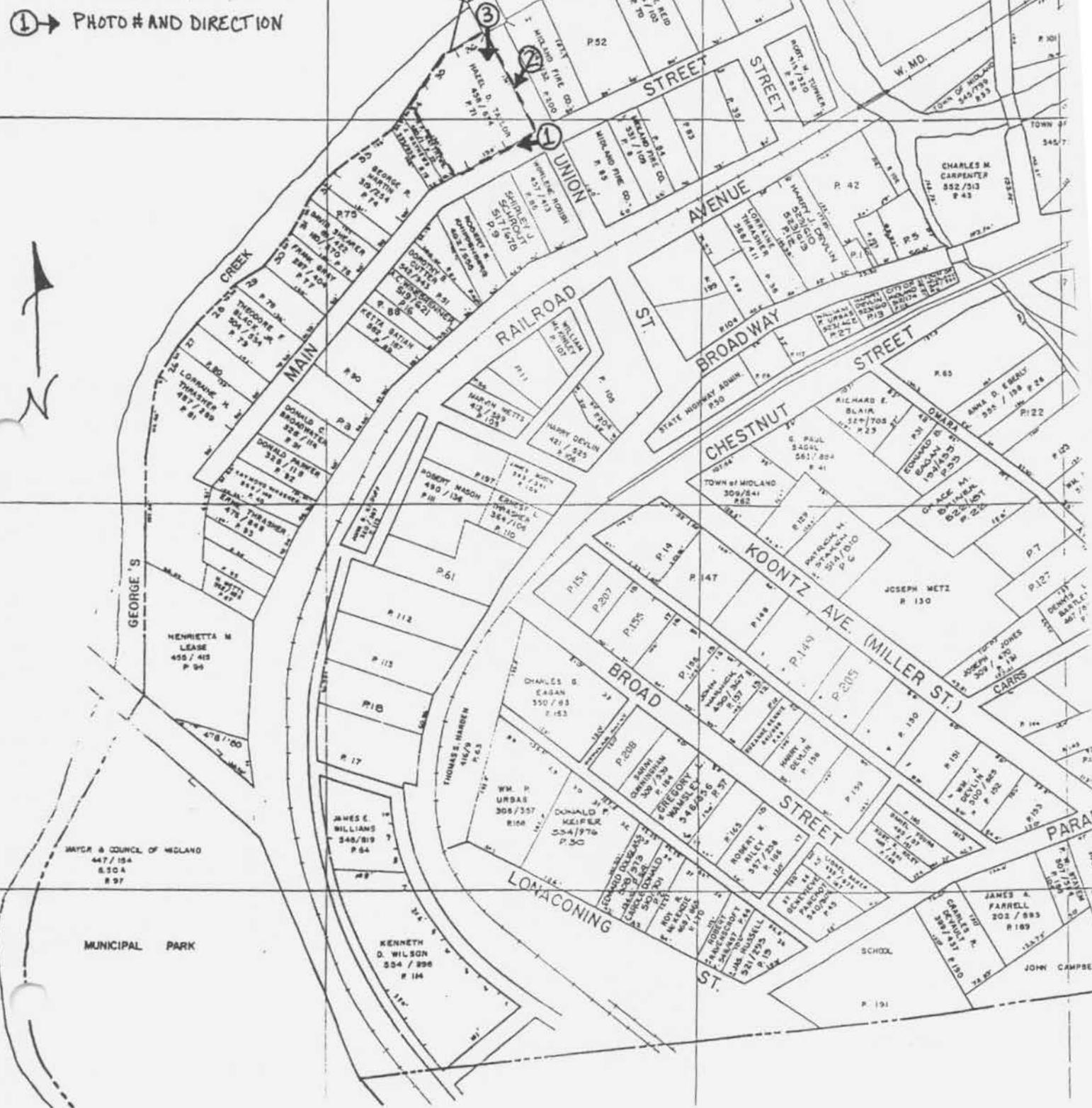


ST. JOSEPH'S CHURCH  
 284 / 400  
 4.32 A  
 P 99

BERTIE C. CLARKE  
 495 / 605  
 2.31 A  
 P. 98

P.206

METHODIST CHURCH



MAYOR & COUNCIL OF MIDLAND  
 447 / 154  
 6.50 A  
 P 97

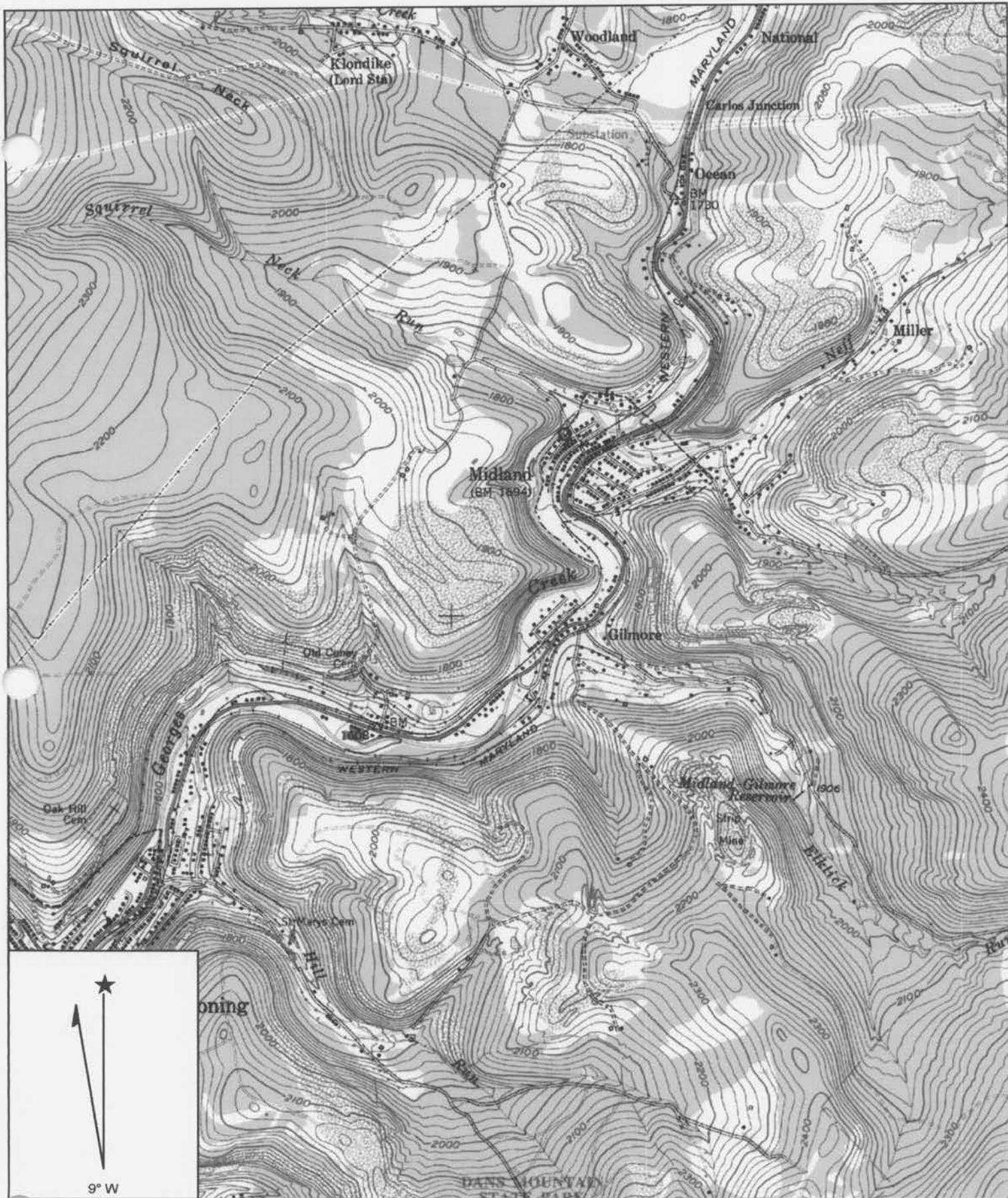
MUNICIPAL PARK

KENNETH  
 D. WILSON  
 334 / 398  
 P 114

JAMES A.  
 FARRELL  
 202 / 393  
 P 189

JOHN CAMPBELL

P. 191



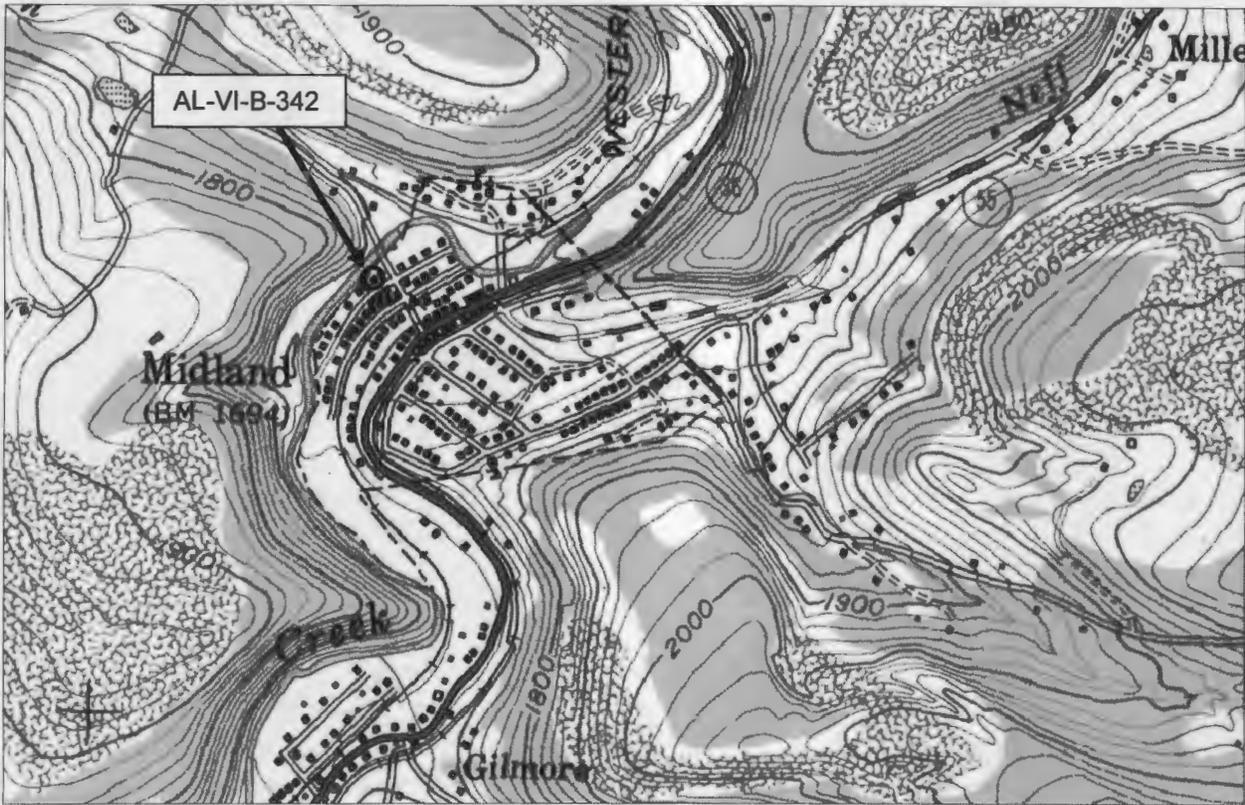
Name: LONACONING  
 Date: 11/8/2000  
 Scale: 1 inch equals 2000 feet

Location: 039° 35' 02.1" N 078° 57' 18.1" W  
 Caption: AL-VI-B-342  
 Midland, Maryland



AL-VI-B-342  
Frame Duplex, 413-415 Main Street  
14813-15 Back Street, Midland  
Lonaconing Quadrangle 1950, Photorevised 1981

DEMOLISHED



Allegheny County Tax Map 1i, Parcel 71



JKC 07/06/2015



AL-VI-B-342

14813-15 Back St. Midland, MD

Allegany Co. MD

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

10/00

MD SHPO

NW view, front elevation

# 1 of 2



AL-VI-13-342

14813-15 Back St., Midland MD

Allegany Co. MD

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

10/00

MD SHPO

SE view, rear elevation

# 2 of 2