

ENSOR HOUSE

The Italianate style was very popular in Towson during the Victorian era and the Ensor House stands as testimony to that fact. Although the house has been much altered for commercial use, the exterior, including the bracketed eaves, has survived. This house once shared the northeast corner of Pennsylvania and Washington Avenues with a larger Italianate house that has been demolished.

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Ensor House

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

30 W. Pennsylvania Ave.

CITY, TOWN

Towson

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

2nd

VICINITY OF

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Baltimore

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

DISTRICT

BUILDING(S)

STRUCTURE

SITE

OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

PUBLIC

PRIVATE

BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

IN PROCESS

BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

OCCUPIED

UNOCCUPIED

WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

YES: RESTRICTED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

NO

PRESENT USE

AGRICULTURE

COMMERCIAL

EDUCATIONAL

ENTERTAINMENT

GOVERNMENT

INDUSTRIAL

MILITARY

MUSEUM

PARK

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

RELIGIOUS

SCIENTIFIC

TRANSPORTATION

OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

The Clothes Line Inc.

Telephone #: 823-3800

STREET & NUMBER

30 W. Pennsylvania Ave.

CITY, TOWN

Towson

VICINITY OF

STATE

Md.

zip code

21204

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Baltimore Co. Courthouse, New Courts Building

Liber #: 3578

Folio #: 163

STREET & NUMBER

401 Bosley Ave.

CITY, TOWN

Towson

STATE

Maryland

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

BA-1443

| CONDITION | | CHECK ONE | CHECK ONE |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| <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 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FAIR | <input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED | | DATE <u>Jan., 1978</u> |

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This 2 story frame house features a hipped tin-ribbed roof and is characterized by its decorative bracketed eaves. Resting on a stone foundation, the main block is L-shaped, the street wing being higher by approximately 1/3 story than the back wing, which is also a full stories. It is 5 bays wide and 5 bays deep with an exterior end and interior central chimney. The exterior is covered with clapboards. There have been extensive interior and exterior alterations. The style is Italianate.

The south street facade is very handsome with its regular fenestration of tall 6/6 light sash windows on the second story and the bracketed eaves. Based on examination of another similar Italianate house on this street, the single-storied porch, although now enclosed, was probably at one time open. The door, located at the central bay, has 4-pane side-lights which also appear to be altered. The frieze is plain but adding to the elaborateness of this facade is the cyma reversa cornice moulding.

The west facade is characterized by the single-storied addition which covers the southern half, extending beyond where the wings meet, and enclosing the exterior end chimney. Rock-faced formstone foundation supports the addition on this facade, indicating this addition is at least 30 years old. Only the southern wing has bracketed eaves; the north wing is plain. The second story has regular fenestration consisting of 2 6/6 light sash windows on the southern portion, 2 in the central area and 1 northern 6 light casement window. The first level has somewhat irregular fenestration due to the addition on this story. Lighting the addition itself are 2 6/6 light sash windows and 2 closely placed 6/6 light sash windows. The northern wing has one single and 2 closely placed 6/6 light sash windows.

The northern facade shows another addition, here 2 stories with an exterior stairway leading to the second story. The door on this level is located at the easternmost bay. This story also features 3 adjacent 6 light casement windows and a sloping roof. The north facade of the southern wing has bracketed eaves. The first level has 2 6/6 light sash windows, one of which is hidden by the stairway, and a door at the westernmost bay.

A completely enclosed addition covers the southernmost wing of the east

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

facade. Like the west facade, there is regular fenestration of 2 6/6 light sash windows on the second level, 1 on the north wing, and 1 6-light casement window there. Also on the north wing on the first story are 2 4-light casement windows.

The first of 2 outbuildings is a frame structure which has a gabled-end roof. Probably used as a grage, it is 10'3" wide and 18' deep with a 4' extension on the north side. The original block has 10' between eaves and ground, eaves being about 1' deep and the rafter ends are exposed 2X4's. The door at the southwest corner relates to the house and has 4 lights and 2 panels. The gable on the south side is vented by a square window. The building rests on brick piers and is decorated with lattice work. The interior walls are finished with horizontally laid tongue and groove 5½" wide paneling. The exterior walls are finished with clapboards. It probably had a wide entrance double door on the north side. This building was probably built before cars became popular and as cars got bigger, the addition was built to enclose them. The second outbuilding, the east half of which is a 2-car garage, is constructed of rock-faced formstone, and is 20' wide, 19½' deep. The gabled-end roof has exposed rafter ends suggesting brackets.

Over the years, the interior has been extensively altered, especially on the first level which now serves as a shop. The cellar shows very little original fabric. The second floor is in its relatively unaltered state, but it too has been changed as it appeared to have been converted into an apartment.

A central stairway leads down to the full low ceilinged stone cellar. Vertically sawn floor joists, buttressed stone supports and common wire nails were among the few pieces of original fabric found in this area.

On the first level the main block is divided into the 2 wings which constitute the L plan. The southern rooms were most likely the parlors and the northern rooms, the kitchen area. Supporting this idea are the more detailed moulding and trim found in the south wing as compared with the very plain moulding and trim in the north wing. But not much more about the use of each room can be said, since there have been so many alterations. Even both

fireplaces have been covered.

The house is entered by means of a central hall which contains the staircase and has flanking parlors. The hall provides access to only these southernmost rooms. The northern wing is entered through a door at the westernmost bay.

Probably the most classical and decorative detail is seen in the delicate treatment of the stairway. It is a switchback open well staircase with scrolled steps, a pair of flaring newels, and thin turned balusters. The other notable features in the first floor area are the brass and glass doorknobs, kittycorned built-in cabinets in the SW room, wall paneling in the SE room, some panes of waivy glass, and a 15 panel door opening into a closet behind the stairs.

The second floor plan probably originally reflected that of the one below, providing for at least 3 bedrooms with 2 other rooms at the NW wing which was later converted into a kitchen and probably had a veranda-like porch. The central decoratively moulded stairway solves the problem of connecting the lower northern wing with the higher southern wing as it provides 1 landing at the north wing and another leading up to the south wing. The southernmost rooms are provided with a lot of light due to the high (9') ceilings and the many tall windows, and have fancy architrave trim. The northern wing has a trapezoidal ceiling and plain baseboards. Interesting details encountered on this level include a closet in the alcove of the SE room with tongue and groove paneling, early electric gas fixtures in the SW room and recessed handles on the bottom of the window wood.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

| PERIOD | | AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC | <input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799 | <input type="checkbox"/> ART | <input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING | <input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC | <input type="checkbox"/> THEATER | | |
| <input checked="" 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 | | | | |

map of 1868-1877; appeared on Hopkins map couldn't determine
 SPECIFIC DATES 1877 in same shape and in assessment record 1876, probably not built
 BUILDER/ARCHITECT before 1868 - see land records
 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Like many of the houses in Towson, this one is significant to the city in both its individual style and as part of the group of houses which were built as part of the courthouse square, this particular one being built sometime between 1868 and 1877 when it appeared on the Hopkins map. The price of the property when it was sold in 1868 indicates there was probably not a dwelling thereon.

As an individual structure this house reflects the strong influence of the Italianate style as evidenced by the tall, handsome street facade decorated by bracketed eaves. This Italianate style can be seen in over a dozen houses in the Towson area alone and in a few houses within a block of the courthouse square. This house, in an effort to be part of the courthouse scene of the day, responded by showing its real design and fashion on the street facade. The southern rooms are themselves fancier and lighter than the practical living area which is part of the northern wing hidden from view from the street.

A very important point to note in the determination of the future of a building such as this is that this house is perhaps one of the last residence-like structure on the block. It is a very strong example of the way in which a charming building can be recycled to accommodate the ever-expanding community as in this case, the once residence was converted into a modern business.

Ensor House - Significance

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9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See tile abstrast

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

STATE COUNTY

STATE COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

WAYNE L. NIELD, II
HISTORIC TOWSON, INC.

NAME / TITLE

Willis E. Anne Burton

Wayne Nield

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Goucher College

Historic Towson, Inc. Jan. 18, 1978

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

Dulaney Valley Rd.

296-5493

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Towson,

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
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 267-1438

Title Search

liber/folio

| | | |
|-------|----------|--|
| Deeds | 3578/163 | Towson Building Co.--to--The Clothes Line Inc. ... 2 lots... beginning for first 75 ft. easterly from the intersection of Penn. and Wash. Aves. 8/14/1959 |
| Deeds | 1748/549 | William L. Gaebel & wife --to--Towson Building Co. ... same lots. 6/7/1949 |
| Deeds | 1271/350 | Grace B. Haile--to-- William L. Gaebel ...same lots... 3/1/1943 |
| Deeds | 498/343 | Cora M. Hipsley--to--Charles T. Haile ...same lots... 5/16/1918 |
| Deeds | 333/515 | John T. Ensor & wife--to--Cora M. Hipsley ...same lots... 11/2/1908 |
| Deeds | 59/441 | Joseph J. Lewes & Enos Smedley--to--(9/13/1868) John T. Ensor...lot included in larger piece of property conveyed from Washington Townsend to Lewes and Smedley and also being part of that property deeded from Grafton Bosley to Enos Smedley dated 7/24/1854 and recorded among land record liber 9 folio 123 |

Title Search

liber/folio
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Deeds 1271/350

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... same lots... 3/1/1943

Deeds 498/343

Cora M. Hipsley--to--Charles T. Haile
... same lots... 5/16/1918

Deeds 333/515

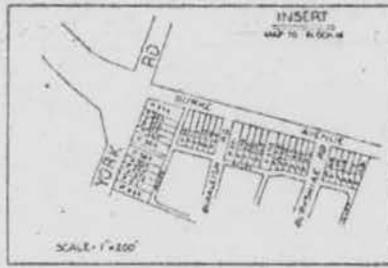
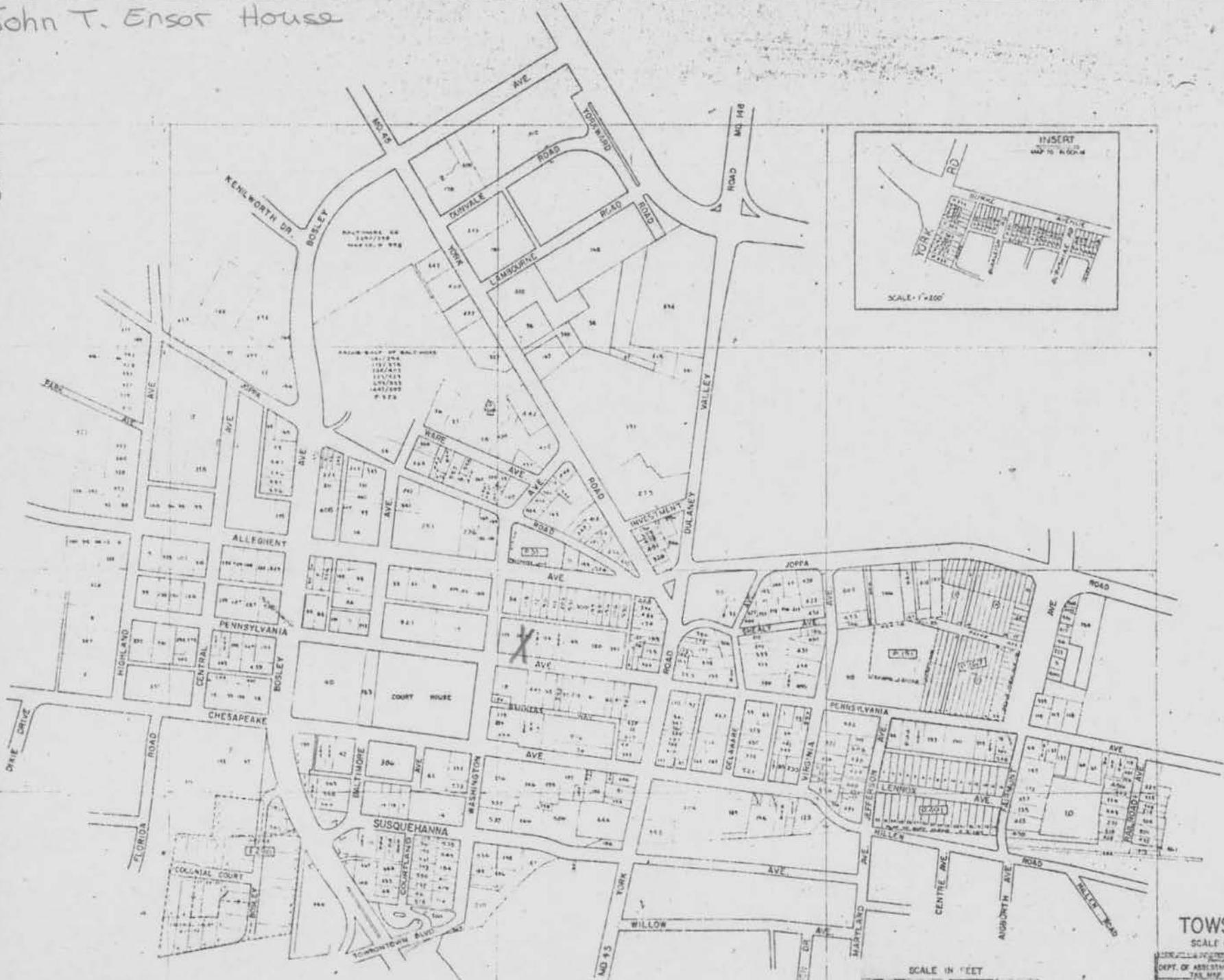
John T. Ensor & wife--to--Cora M. Hipsley
... same lots... 11/2/1908

Deeds 59/441

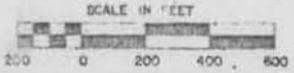
Joseph J. Lewes & Enos Smedley--to--
John T. Ensor ... lot included in 9/13/1868
larger piece of property conveyed from
Washington Townsend to Lewes and
Smedley and also being part of that
property deeded from Grafton Bosley to
Enos Smedley dated 7/24/1854 and recorded
among land record liber9 folio123

John T. Ensor House

BA-1443



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MD DEPT. OF ASSESS. & TAX



TOWSON
SCALE 1" = 200'

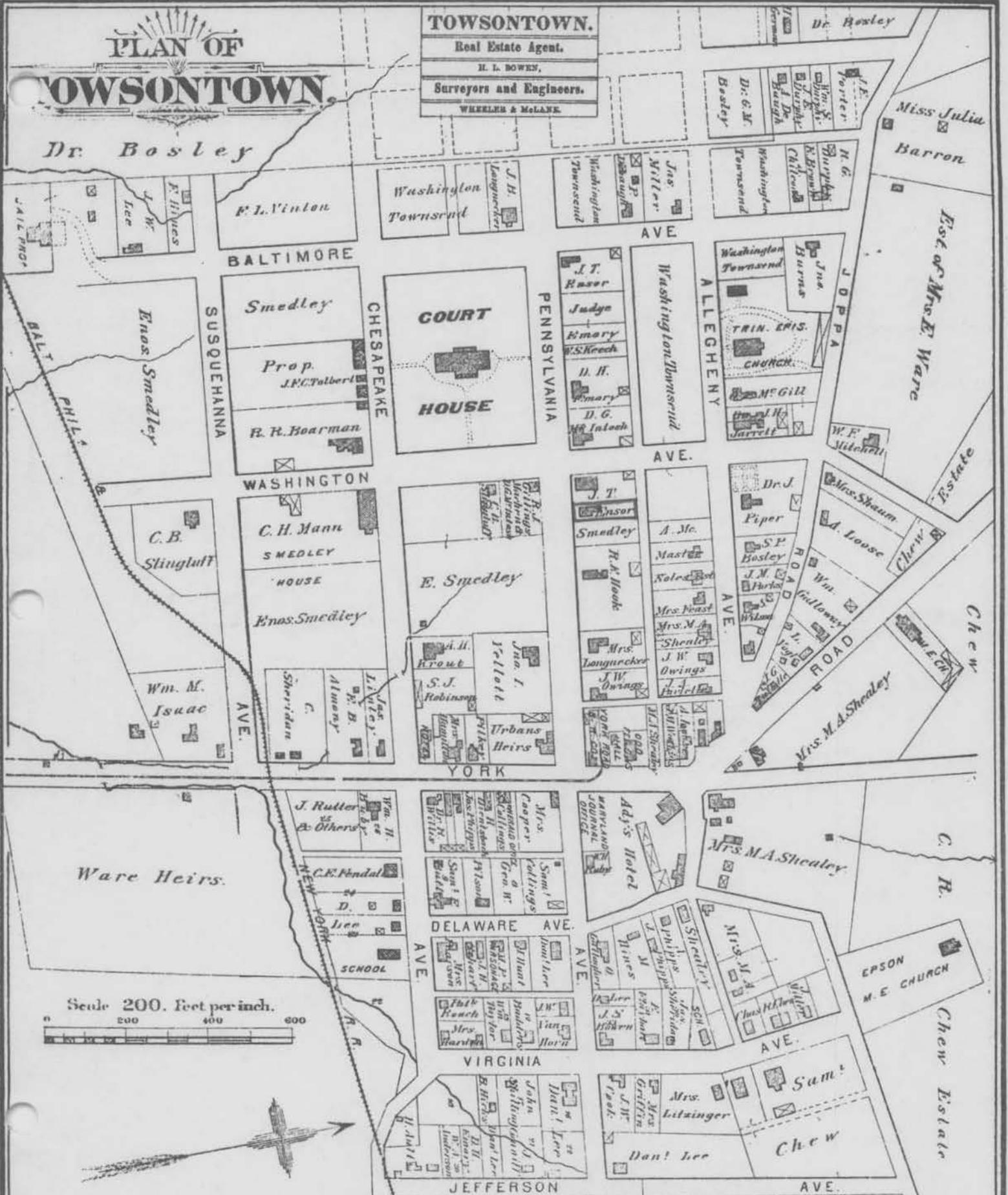
DEPT. OF ASSESSMENTS & TAXATION
TAX MAP DIVISION

MAP NO. 70A

PLAN OF TOWSONTOWN.

TOWSONTOWN.
Real Estate Agent.
H. L. BOWEN,
Surveyors and Engineers.
WHEELER & McLANE.

Dr. Bosley



Scale 200. Feet per inch.



Entered according to act of Congress in the year 1877 by G. M. Hopkins in the Office of the Librarian of Congress at Washington.



BA-1443

ENSOR HSE
S.W. CORNER

W. NIELD

1/78



BA-1443

ENSOR HSE
W.

W. NIEB
1/78



BA-1443

ENSOR HSE
GARAGE
S.E. CORNER

W. NIELD
1/78