Survey No. K 328

Magi No. 1503285711

DOE __yes __no

Maryland Historical Trust
State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic IMPERIAL HOTEL (preferred)

and/or common IMPERIAL HOTEL, EASTERN SHORE INN

2. Location

street & number 208 High Street ___ not for publication

city, town Chestertown ___ vicinity of congressional district First

state Maryland county Kent

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
___ district	___ public	x occupied (1st.bsmt)	___ agriculture	___ museum
x building(s)	x private	___ unoccupied	x commercial	___ park
___ structure	___ both	x work in progress (2nd 3rd.)	___ educational	___ private residence
___ site	**Public Acquisition**	**Accessible**	___ entertainment	___ religious
___ object	___ in process	x yes: restricted	___ government	___ scientific
	___ being considered	___ yes: unrestricted	___ industrial	___ transportation
	x not applicable	___ no	___ military	___ other:

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

name Robert J. and Janet A. Kestell

street & number 103 Maple Street telephone no.: 301-778-5696

city, town Chestertown, Maryland state and zip code 21620

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Kent County Courthouse liber EHP86

street & number High Street folio 295

city, town Chestertown state Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title Chestertown Survey

date November 1983 ___ federal x state ___ county x local

depository for survey records Maryland Historical Trust, 21 State Circle, Annapolis, Md.

city, town Town Hall Chestertown, Maryland 21620 state

8. Significance

Survey No. K-328

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	x social/ humanitarian
___ 1700–1799	___ art	___ engineering	___ music	
___ 1800–1899	___ commerce	___ exploration/settlement	___ philosophy	___ theater
x 1900–	___ communications	___ industry	___ politics/government	___ transportation
		___ invention		___ other (specify)

Specific dates Designed 1902, Built 1903 **Builder/Architect** E. L. Rice, Jr. Architect

check: Applicable Criteria: __A __B __C __D
and/or
Applicable Exception: __A __B __C __D __E __F __G

Level of Significance: __national __state x local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY:

The Imperial Hotel is a significant example of simple neo-classical commercial buildings of the turn of the century, and one of the few such buildings in Chestertown's Historic District. It makes the structure a distinctive part of the lower High Street streetscape. Because original architectural drawings exist for the building, its original floor plan is known. The room designations and the mechanical and ventilating systems shown are important documents of late Victorian building use and design.

HISTORY:

The Imperial Hotel was designed by Architect E. L. Rice, Jr. of Wilmington, Delaware for Wilbur W. Hubbard, Esq. as a hotel, store, and office for Mr. Hubbard, a local fertilizer manufacturer. (Blue print copies made from Mr. Rice's original ink and ink wash on oil cloth are enclosed. Note changes in the front door and porch columns.) The building retained this after 1915 when it was leased by a Chestertown women's group, Federated Clubs, and renamed the "Eastern Shore Inn." But in 1918 the women's venture failed and the second and third floors were converted into boarding apartments. Gradually the building deteriorated into low-cost apartments and run-down commercial rental space. Its porches and carriage house began to sag. The stairway connecting the first to the second floor was replaced by a stair leading to the south side door.

In 1977 Robert and Seiko Behr renovated the first floor of the building into shops and repaired the front porches. One of the first restorations of Victorian buildings in this sector of Chestertown, the work was intended to provide inexpensive but attractive rental retail spaces for fledgling businesses as well as to revitalize a prominent commercial structure. The project, combined with aggressive advertising on the part of the "Imperial Hotel Shops," successfully reestablished the building's identity in Chestertown.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The building's greatest significance lies in its place in the street scape of lower High Street, Chestertown's major commercial street. Its three-story porches are distinctive, providing shelter for shoppers as well as an exciting view down the street to the Chester River. It is the only such porch remaining in the town.

The Imperial Hotel also serves as an example of a Neo-classical building of the turn-of-the-century. Its form and detailing are simple and use primarily mass produced building parts, but the structure has a feeling of graciousness because of its shaped moldings, high ceilings, and wide hallway. Little building was occurring in Chestertown from the 1890's until the First World War; this is one of the few commercial structures of that period and probably the most distinctive.

7. Description

Survey No. K-328

Condition		Check one	Check one
___ excellent	___ deteriorated	___ unaltered	_x_ original site
_x_ good	___ ruins	_x_ altered	___ moved date of move _____
___ fair	___ unexposed		

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

DESCRIPTION SUMMARY:

Constructed in 1903, the Imperial Hotel in many ways typifies Neo-Classical commercial row-buildings of the turn of the century. It is a rectangular brick box, three stories tall with a full basement and shallow shed roof. Its symmetrically spaced front fenestration uses wide double-hung windows and centrally located wooden doors. The trim used throughout the building is of the type that was mass-produced and easily available. The most distinctive and unusual architectural feature of the building is its 3-story wooden porch which covers the public sidewalk.

SITE:

The Imperial Hotel is located on the north east side of High Street on a short block which includes three other large late nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial buildings. Its immediate northern neighbor is the three-story, yellow-tan brick Chester Theatre built in the 1920's in a Mediterranean Neo-Classical style; to the south and at the corner of the block is a simple, 2½ story frame building with a gable roof pierced by tall dormers. At the northern corner of the block stands the 4-story, red brick Stam Hall with its Second Empire mansard roof and prominent clock tower. Together these structures are the largest-scale group of commercial buildings in Chestertown's historic commercial district; they form a distinct and urban street "wall."

BUILDING FORM:

In its basic form the Imperial Hotel is a rectangular brick box measuring 35 by 60 feet; it is three stories tall with a deep, full-story basement. Its roof is a flat shed which slopes slightly toward the rear. This roof is finished with a bold wooden cornice. The most notable feature of the building is its enormous, three-story front porch which extends across the entire front of the building and over the wide public side walk. A simple, utilitarian wooden porch, also three stories tall, extends across the rear of the building.

FENESTRATION:

In general the building is evenly fenestrated using massproduced double-hung windows with wooden bull-nosed frames. The street front of the building is three bays wide with a central door and flanking windows on each floor. On the third floor these windows measure 4'10" wide and 4'6" tall. They have 2 over 2 sash with a slender central muntin. On the second floor the same window is used but with a pair of paneled wooden jib doors that open out onto the porch beneath each. The central doors on these floors are wooden sash doors with a pair of raised panels beneath. The panels have applied ogee panel moldings. These doors are quite large - 3'6" by 7'4" - and have heavy screen doors with brackets in the corners of the screens.

Large plate glass store windows with pairs of transom lights are used on the first floor. These window assemblies are approximately eight feet square overall. On this floor the central doorway is recessed about four and one half feet. The door has a transom light above and full length side lights on either side. The door was originally a four panel wooden door detailed to match the doors above. In 1977 modern etched glass panels were installed in the upper panels and sidelights. Sash doors which match the doors above are used in the sides of the recessed doorway and may once have

continued

provided access to the front rooms. The transom bars of the doorway and windows are reeded and have turned corner blocks.

The basement shops are lighted by windows that match the second and third floor front windows. A doorway leads to each front basement room.

The sides of the building are fenestrated primarily with 2 over 2 double hung wooden windows with segmental brick arches and plain wooden sills. They are arranged in six regular bays along the north side and seven irregular bays along the south elevation. There is a secondary entry leading to a narrow alley on the south elevation of the building and triple double hung windows near the rear of the south elevation first floor in a former office room.

Fenestration on the rear of the building is an irregular combination of casement and double hung windows, some of which have been altered. As on the front, there is a central door on each floor leading to the porch.

MATERIALS OF CONSTRUCTION, MISCELLANEOUS DETAILS:

The face brick of the Imperial Hotel is hard-surfaced, sharp-edged, dark red brick laid with narrow mortar joints in American bond. The sides and rear are laid in common brick.

The wooden cornice of the roof is boxed with an ogee crownmolding, modillion blocks, and a deep wooden fascia.

The three story front porch extends about twelve feet forward from the building and is covered with a shallow, hipped roof. The ceilings at each level are beaded porch ceiling boarding. The floors of the second and third level are fir boarding; the concrete sidewalk serves as the first floor. Each porch level is carried on round simple Doric Columns of wood. The cornice at each level is finished with an ogee crown molding and flat rectangular modillion blocks beneath the cornice box. The porch railings are wooden with plain, closely-spaced rectangular balusters.

Leading to the basement level are two concrete stairs which provide access to two doors which enter the two basement shops. Along the edge of the stair wells is a wrought iron railing with scroll-work at corners and level changes.

INTERIOR:

The upper three floors are organized with a central 7 foot-wide corridor with 12'6" wide rooms on either side. On the first floor there are three rooms on either side with a bathroom and storage closet at the rear of the south side. In 1977 the first floor was remodeled into a series of seven shop rooms entered by a collection of Victorian doors salvaged from demolished Eastern Shore buildings. Three projecting bay windows incorporating salvaged Victorian brackets and cornice moldings were built along the south side of the interior corridor. The third room back on the north side retains its corner fireplace with its inset cast iron coal grate. The cornice is wooden with two tiers of shelves each supported by slender composite columns. Set into the overmantle is a beveled mirror. The hearth is tan and brown tile. The original interior trim on the first floor is made up of a shallow fillet-ogee-head-ogee-fillet and is 4" wide. New trim added in the 1977 remodeling is the same width with a double-route to suggest a Victorian motif. Both are used with turned antique corner blocks. The original trim on the second floor matches that on the first. On the third floor simple 3½" beaded trim is used. Original doors throughout the building are standard 4-panel wooden doors. Yellow pine flooring was used on the upper floors. The first floor has modern maple strip floors or carpet.

7. DESCRIPTION continued

The second and third floors are now essentially gutted although the floors and most interior window trim remain in place. Most doors have 2-light transoms above. The only original stair remaining inside runs from the second to the third floor. It is a straight-run, closed string oak stair with square newel posts and plain balusters. A second enclosed stair leads to the south side entry from the second floor.

When the interior plaster on the second floor of the building was demolished, an eight-foot arch was discovered leading to the front room on the south side of the corridor. On the original plans this room was labeled "Parlour." Evidently this floor was used for public functions; a Dining Room, Butler's Pantry, Kitchen and storage pantry as well as 2 bedrooms were also planned on this floor. On the third floor were eleven small rooms and one bath.

PRESENT USE:

In the basement is a beauty shop and storage. On the ground floor is an art gallery and restaurant. Renovating the upper floors is under consideration.

OUTBUILDINGS:

Behind the Imperial Hotel but entered from Queen Street is a 2-story frame stable. Although now a part of the hotel property it was originally a part of an L-shaped parcel of land which included 102 N. Queen Street (K-339) and the Geddes-Piper House (K-24), a 1790's town house which is now the headquarters of the Kent County Historical Society. The barn appears to have been constructed between 1877 and 1885 by George Wescott.

The stable has a steeply pitched but assymetrical roof edged with a wooden "gingerbread" scallop. A wooden cupola with wooden finial and louvered sides sets atop the ridge. The building is entered by four pairs of wooden barn doors on long wrought iron hinges. It is covered with lapped siding. The feeding troughs for the horses remain on the north wall.

The building is heavy timber construction with diagonal bracing and plates pegged into corner posts. This system is typical of barn construction in Kent County except that the corner posts of this stable appear to be set into the ground rather than resting on a foundation with sill. This has lead to serious deterioration and the building is now in near-derelict condition.

The public dining room and parlour as well as the small private rooms and few bathrooms illustrate the kind of transient accommodation favored in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Meals were provided and the guests were expected to participate in communal activities in the parlour and porch. Privacy was a lesser concern.

The original drawings document clearly the Victorian concern for ventilation in rooms. Although the entire building was heated by radiators with water heated by a coal-fired boiler in the basement, there are a series of brick chimney stacks - 13 in all - rising inside the side and rear walls of the structure. Only one of these stacks, the one running to the boiler room, was designed to carry smoke. The others were fitted with opening grilles, probably set close to the floor, and intended to ventilate stale air, considered unhealthy, from the rooms. The night air was also thought by the Victorians to be unhealthy, hence having windows in sleeping rooms was not a sufficient ventilating system. The brick ventilating chimneys were considered a necessity.

The Imperial Hotel Stable is typical of the many stables that once existed in the interiors of the blocks in downtown Chestertown.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. K-328

Kent County Land Records
Kent County News
Bothe, Chris. "The Grand Old Lady of Chestertown" in Shorewoman Magazine, Spring 1977, pp.18-21.
Sanborn Map of 1885
The 1877 Atlas of Chestertown, Maryland

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____ Quadrangle scale _____

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
A				B			
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification

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 Marsha Fritz, Assoc.

organization Chesapeake Associated Architects, Inc. date November 5, 1983

street & number 104 Church Alley telephone 301-778-4899

city or town Chestertown state 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
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

PS-2746

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Washington D.C. 20240

Form Approved
OMB No 42 R1765

JEF

K-328

HISTORIC PRESERVATION CERTIFICATION APPLICATION—PART 1

RECEIVED

MAR 12 1984

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

structions: Applicant should read the instructions carefully before completing application. No certification may be made unless a complete plication form has been received. Use typewriter or print clearly in dark ink to complete the application form. If additional spaces is needed to mplete Part 1, use the reverse side or a separate plain sheet of paper clearly indicating the owner's name and mailing address. Part 1 of this plication may be completed and sent to the appropriate State Historic Preservation Officer at anytime during the year.

ART 1 EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE

Name of property: Imperial Hotel

Address of property: 202 High Street

City Chestertown County Kent State Md. Zip Code 21620

Name of historic district in which property is located: Chestertown Historic District

Check here if request is for:
☒ certification (structure contributes to significance of the district)
☐ decertification (structure does not contribute to significance of the district)
☐ easement qualification (for donation of easement on structure or land for conservation purposes).

. Description of Physical Appearance:
(see instructions for map and photograph requirements-use reverse side if necessary)

Please see attached sheets.

I. Statement of Significance:
(use reverse side if necessary)

Please see attached sheets

Date of construction (if known): 1903 ☒ Original site ☐ Moved ☐ Date of alterations (if known):

1. Rehabilitation of first floor:1977
2. Demolition of interior of second & third floors: about 1980

I. Name and Malling Address of ~~Owner~~ Contract Purchaser;

Name Mr.&Mrs. George W. Dean

Street 116 E. High St.

City Chestertown State Md. Zip Code 21620

Telephone number (during day) Area Code 301-778-0071

I hereby attest that the information I have provided is to the best of my knowledge, correct, and that I am owner of the property described above.

gnature [redacted] Date 3-3-84

cial Security Number or Taxpayer Identification Number [redacted]

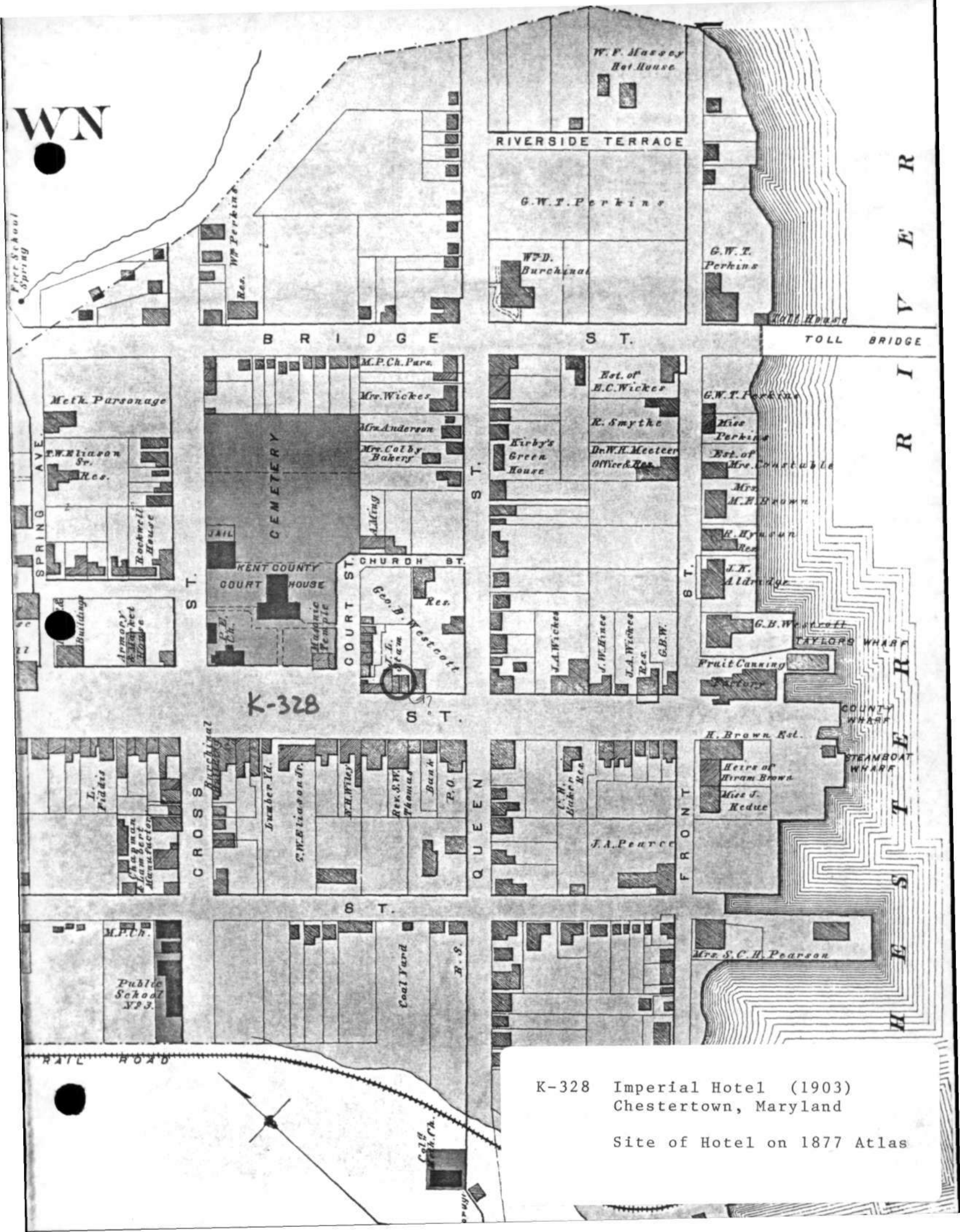
r office use only

e structure described above is included within the boundaries of a Registered Historic District and ☐ contributes ☐ does not contribute to character of the district.

e structure ☐ appears ☐ does not appear to meet National Register Criteria for Evaluation (36 CFR 60.6) and ☐ will likely ☐ will not be minated to the National Register in accord with the Department of the Interior procedures (36 CRF 60)

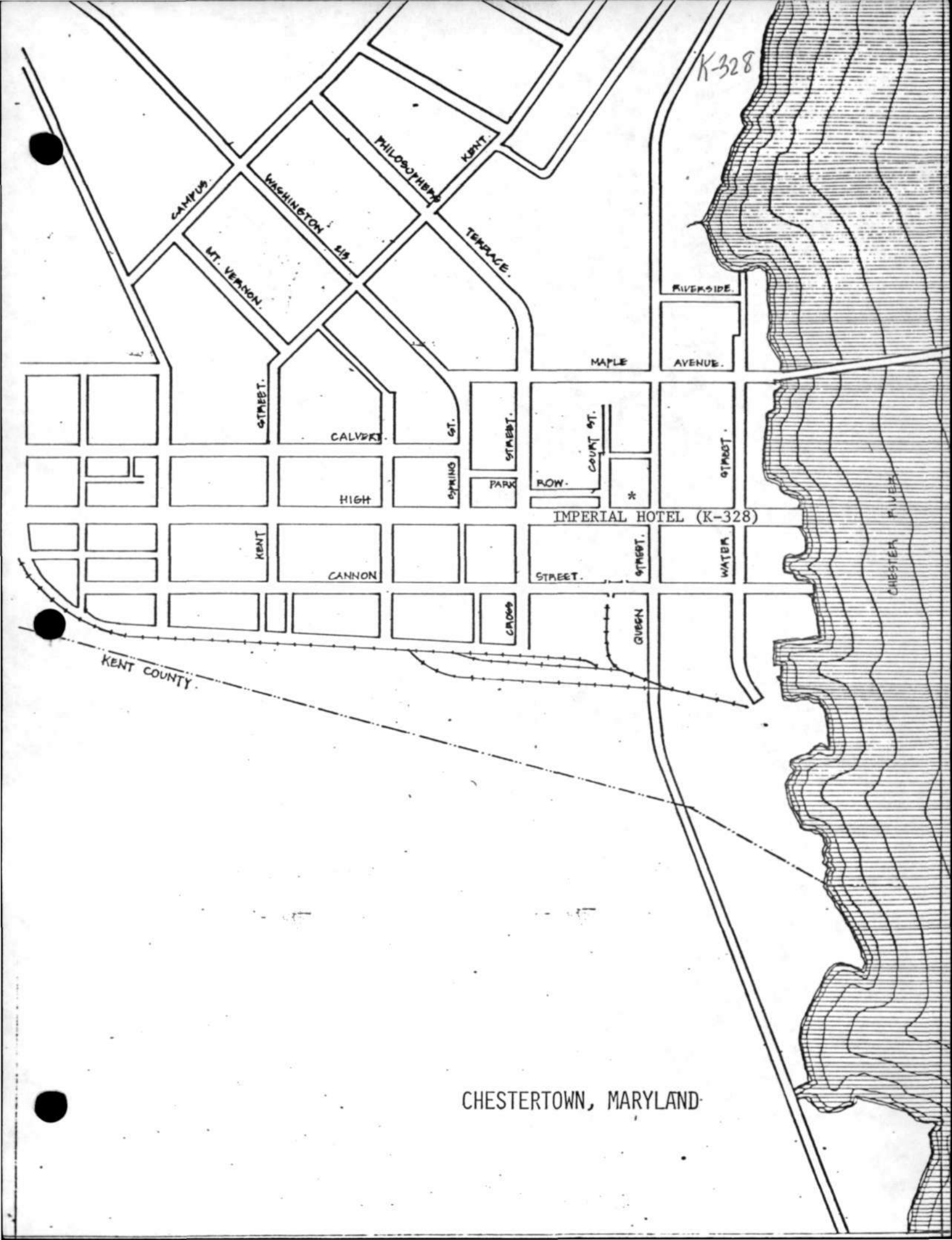
[redacted]ure is located in a district which ☑ appears ☐ does not appear to meet National Register Criteria for Evaluation (36 CFR 60.6) and [redacted]kely ☐ will not be nominated to the National Register in accord with Department of the Interior procedures (36 CFR 60). d ☑ appears ☐ does not appear to contribute to the character of said district or ☑ will likely ☐ will not be recommended for rtification as substantially meeting National Register criteria.

gnature [signature] Date 4-3-84
State Historic Preservation Officer

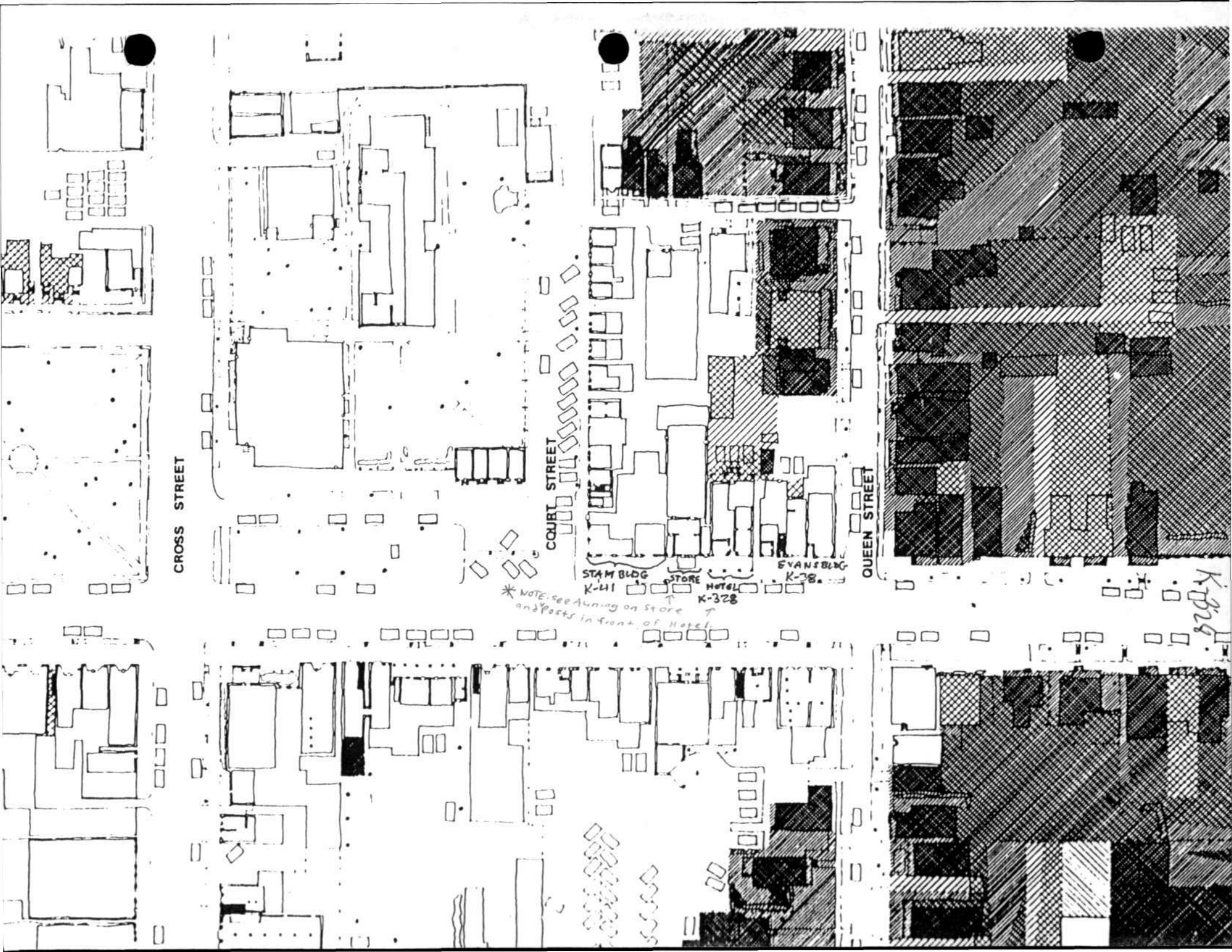


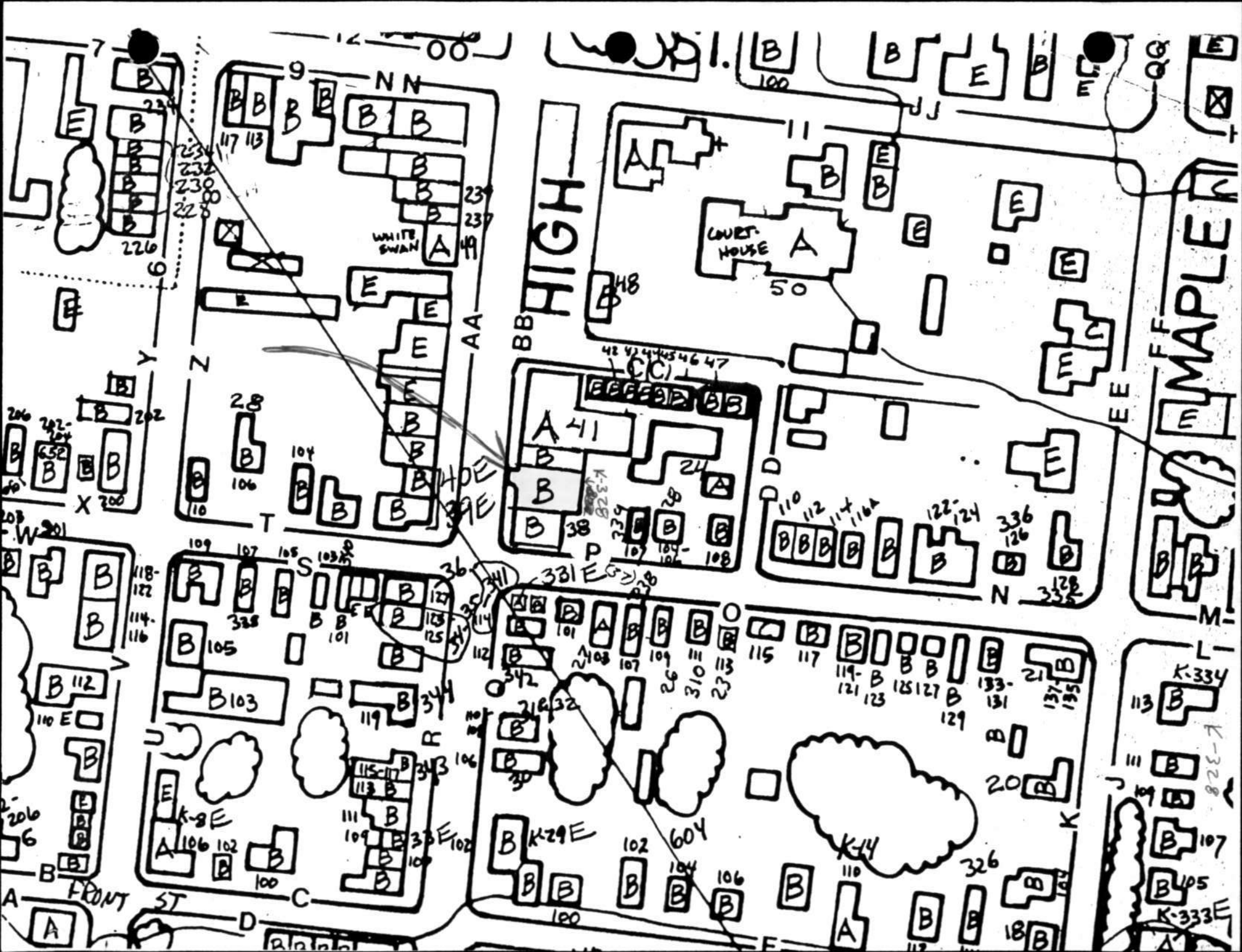
K-328 Imperial Hotel (1903)
Chestertown, Maryland

Site of Hotel on 1877 Atlas

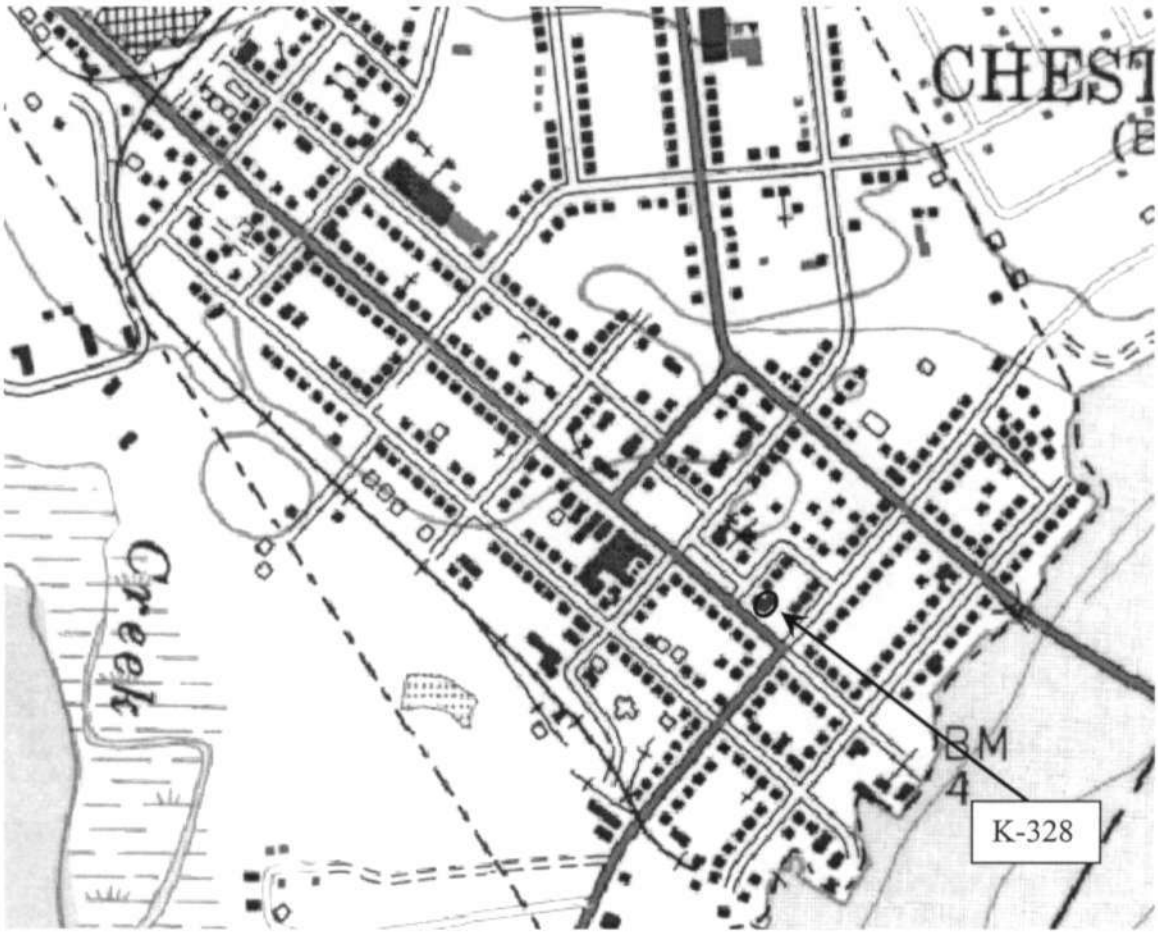


CHESTERTOWN, MARYLAND


CROSS STREET
COURT STREET
QUEEN STREET
STAM BLDG
K-41
STORE
HOTEL
K-328
EVANS BLDG
K-38
* NOTE: see Awning on Store and Posts in front of Hotel.
K-329


HIGH
MAPLE
COURT HOUSE
WHITE SWAN
FRONT ST
K-8E
K-29E
K-14
K-334
K-333E
331E
33E
39E
604

K-328
Imperial Hotel (Eastern Shore Inn) & Stables
208 High St.
Chestertown
Chestertown Quad.
Kent County



THE IMPERIAL HOTEL

K. 328 Imperial Hotel
Chestertown, Md
11/1983 K. Austin, U. Almaly
208 High Street

K-328
7-22

Imperial Hotel Stables
208 Hig. Stret, Chesterton
11/1923 R. Austin Walmsley