

UNION M.E. CHURCH  
Worton, Maryland  
(ca 1900)

K-410

The present Union M.E. Church was constructed between 1895 and 1900. Like the many other churches constructed by small congregations in the villages of the county its design shows Gothic revival influence.

This structure replaces an earlier building which stood a few hundred feet south of Christ Church I.U. (K-134) where Union Cemetery is now located. Constructed about 1835, the first church was a Greek Revival frame building that closely resembled Salem Chapel (K-428) in Fairlee.

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON

Union M.E. Church

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER West side of Route 297

CITY, TOWN

Worton

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

1st

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Kent

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

| CATEGORY  | OWNERSHIP                                   | STATUS  | PRESENT USE                            |   |
|---|---|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT               | <input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED        | <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE   | <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM               |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE | <input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED                 | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL    | <input type="checkbox"/> PARK                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE              | <input type="checkbox"/> BOTH               | <input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS           | <input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL   | <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SITE                   | <b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>                   | <b>ACCESSIBLE</b>                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT                 | <input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS         | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED | <input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT    | <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC           |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED   | <input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED          | <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL    | <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION       |
|   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> NO                         | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY      | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER                |

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Union M.E. Church

Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Worton,

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Maryland 21678

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Kent County Court House

Liber #: SGF 2

Folio #: 315

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Chestertown, Maryland

STATE

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

\_\_\_ FEDERAL \_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

K-410

# 7 DESCRIPTION

| CONDITION                                |                                       | CHECK ONE                                   | CHECK ONE   |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT       | <input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED | <input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD | <input type="checkbox"/> RUINS        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED | <input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FAIR            | <input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED    |   |   |

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Union Methodist Episcopal Church at Worton is located on the west side of Route 297 facing east.

It is a frame structure with a wide gable that faces the street. The entry is into a square bell tower attached to the northeast corner of the structure. The gable roofed section of the building is three bays long, three wide and has a 1½ story sanctuary inside. The tower is about 2 stories tall over all. The entry door in the east facade is sheltered by a gable-roofed hood supported on brackets. The belfry is open on 4 sides but with an arched lattice portierre in each opening. The roof is pyramidal with flaring eaves and a finial.

The front gable of the church has 3 pointed 1 over 1 sash windows grouped at the center of the first floor level. All three are filled with colored glass, but the central window is taller. A sweeping bracket or board decoration follows the slope of the gable, forming a gothic arch shape.

The building is covered with white aluminum siding over the original weatherboarding. The roof is covered with wooden shingles and stands on a brick foundation.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**8 SIGNIFICANCE**

K-410

| PERIOD                                    | AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW |   |   |  |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC      | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC  | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING     | <input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE | <input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899        | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE                | <input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY             | <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION      |
| <input checked="" 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              |   |  |

SPECIFIC DATES ca 1900

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The present Union M.E. Church was constructed between 1895 and 1900. Like the many other churches constructed by small congregations in the villages of the county its design shows Gothic revival influence.

This structure replaces an earlier building which stood a few hundred feet south of Christ Church I.U. (K-134) where Union Cemetery is now located. Constructed about 1835, the first church was a Greek Revival frame building that closely resembled Salem Chapel (K-428) in Fairlee.

A research paper outlining the history of Union Church prepared by Caroline Cooper, a member of the congregation, is attached.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

K-410

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

See attached research paper by Caroline Cooper, Chestertown, Maryland.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE COUNTY

STATE COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE  
Marsha L. Fritz, Survey Consultant

ORGANIZATION  
Kent County Planning Commission

DATE  
778-4600, ext.67

STREET & NUMBER  
Court House

TELEPHONE

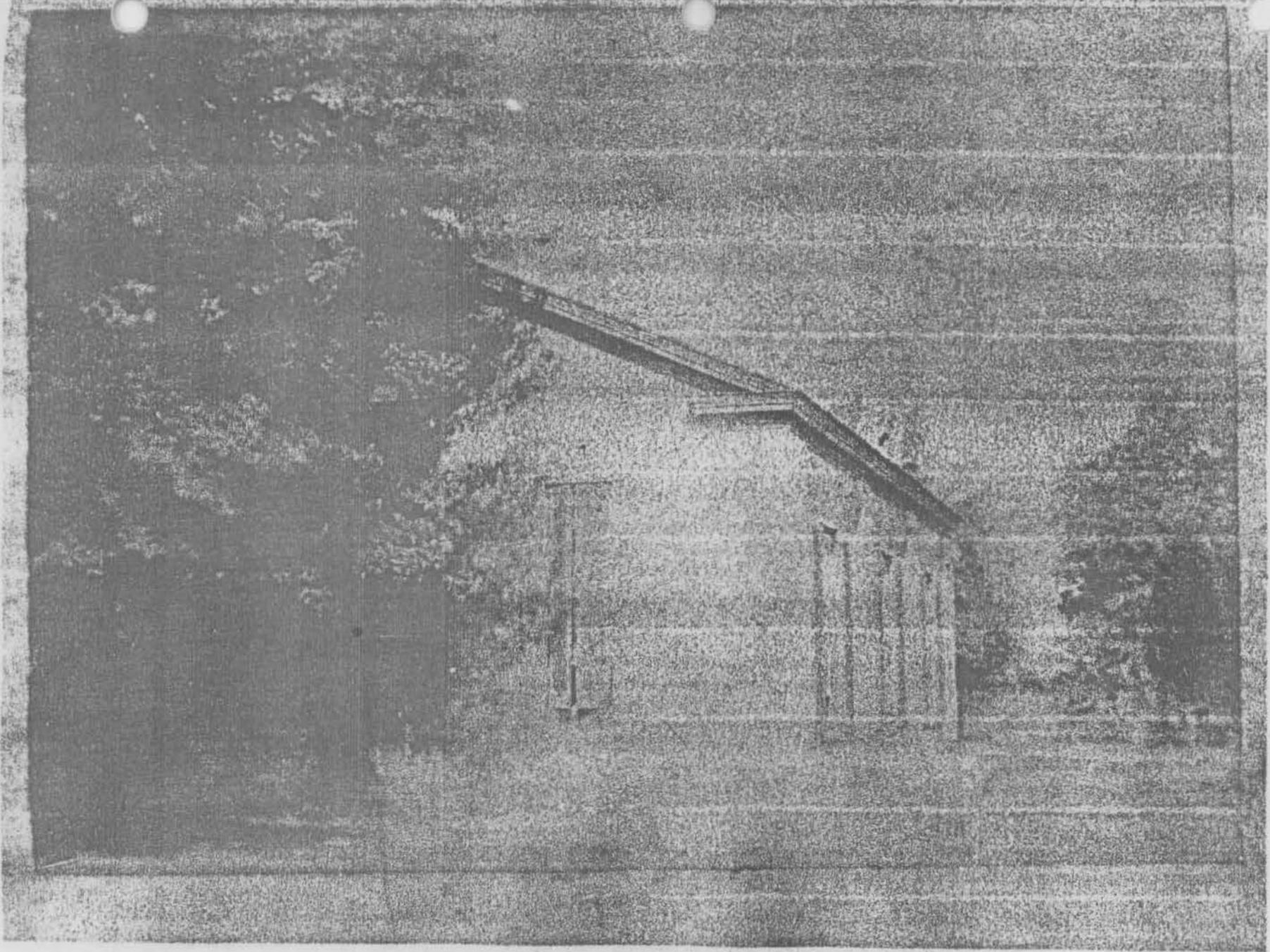
CITY OR TOWN  
Chestertown, Maryland

STATE

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



Union M.E. Church, Worton, Md 1835-1898

K-410

The first organized unit of Methodist converts in this country was at Lewis, Delaware in 1739. They only lasted three years due to persecution and difficulty with the Presbyterians. It wasn't until 1769 that another Methodist minister appeared, namely Robert Strawbridge and Thomas Webb. Robert Strawbridge came from the western shore to the Eastern Shore and "so far as we can discover, preached at one place only, during that first visit, namely at John Randles' farm near Worton, Md."<sup>1</sup> Also the first regular appointment was made there.

John Randal lived near Worton and the first meetings were held in his home. "Several of the early writers, who had visited Randall, speak of the fact that he was a deaf and dumb man, but highly respected and deeply religious. The only word that he could speak was his wife's name. After the first preaching of Strawbridge's there in 1769, there was established preaching at the Randall's."<sup>2</sup>

The first Conference in America was in Philadelphia in 1773 and there were no churches (Methodist) up to this time. It wasn't until 1784 that a general superintendant was ordained and the church properly organized. Before this time any baptisms, marriages, etc. done were not sanctioned by the church or legal.

There were many oppositions to us in the beginning. The Methodist ministers spoke against war, there being 25 of them in this country by then. The Methodist were branded by the Church of England and Quakers as Tories and traitors during the Revolution. Many were persecuted and had to go underground. The ministers couldn't preach in Maryland without taking the oath, which required the bearing of arms, and many fled to Delaware where the test law was lenient. Bishop Asbury hid in a cypress swamp east of Sudlersville, and was taken to the home of John Forwell, there, and was a quest until he was safe.<sup>3</sup>

I - Randall's Meeting House or Worton Chapel

As I noted before, the first regular appointment was at the home of John Randal's, near Worton. A Chapel was erected near there around 1780. As near as I can figure this was located west of Militoda next to the then Corey's School house, across the road from J.W. Corey. "This first church was made of sawed logs with four corner posts, the logs being mortised into them."<sup>4</sup> This church was called Worton Chapel and sometimes referred to as Randal's Meeting House.

At that time we were a part of the Kent Circuit. In 1833-34 there were 32 members of Worton Chapel, the leader being William Kennard. Other members were: Racheal Kennard, Hannah Smith, Ann Ashley, James Beck, Martha Reason, Sarah Asbury, Mary A. Smith, William Wroth, Amelia Wroth, Martha Ashley, Ashah Iamb, Ann Beck, Maria Lyza, Margaret Smith, Dobs Joiner, Sarah Gamble, Kitty A. Clark, Elizabeth Downey, Jane Tolson, Sarah Kennard, Rebecca R. Porter, Mary J. Beck, Araminta Skirven, Hannah Middleton, Benjamin Middleton, Rebecca Middleton, Sarah Middleton, Elizabeth M. Swift, Cyrus Raison, Sarah C. Crouch, Sarah Crouch, James Meredith and James Pinfect.<sup>5</sup>

There are several local churches which are successors of this original society. Among them are Salem, Worton, and Stillpond.

The following was found handwritten in the front cover of the oldest Worton Church book, located in our church, Union M.E. Church, Worton, Md., pertaining to the history of the church. Evidently the previous church records remained with the charge church before our last move in 1900.

"The earliest records found by writer were at Stillpond, dated 1801. Giving a report of the 1st. quarterly conference of that year with following amount of appl's and amount of etg. each brought in."

|                      |                    |                  |                    |       |
|----------------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|-------|
| " Chestertown        | 10                 | Quaker Neck      | 1.50               | K-410 |
| Bastwicks            | 4.11               | Comegys          | 2.20               |       |
| Georgetown XRoads    | 5.50               | East Neck Island | 3.84 $\frac{1}{2}$ |       |
| Wilson's             | 6.66 $\frac{1}{2}$ | Andersons        | 3.84               |       |
| Brick Chapel         | 1.50               | Kent Chapel      | 6.23               |       |
| Still Pond           | 1.75               | (Public Col.)    |                    |       |
| Yongers              | --                 | Moffetts         | 3.50               |       |
| Worton, near         | 2.75               | Old Chapel       | 2.89 $\frac{1}{2}$ |       |
| Corey's School house |                    | Moodys           | 6.42               |       |
|                      |                    | Chestertown      | 13.38              |       |
|                      |                    |                  |                    |       |
| Total                |                    |                  | 82.90 "            |       |

"The Worton mentioned above was near Cory's School House near Militoda - this seems to have gone down with the organization of a class at Bel Air (now Fairlee) about 1834, when first mention is made of a class of 15 members."

"At the same time, 1834, the present Worton Church began with a class and in 1839 the ground for the Old Worton Union Church was bought adjoining I.U.P.E. Church. On this ground a frame building was erected." 6

#### II - Old Union M.E. Church, Worton, Md.

Following is a copy of the Land Records found in the Kent County Courthouse

|   |                     |
|---|---------------------|
| John Walker and Joseph Resdue           | JNG 4, Folio 86     |
| in trust for John Hurtt and             | Sept. 21, 1835      |
| Elizabeth his wife                      | \$10.00             |
| to                                      | Kent Co., Md.       |
| John Webb, Joshua C. Bell, James Cohee, | 151 perches of land |
| Joseph G. Edwards, William Rasin        |                     |
| and James Beck                          |                     |

This indenture was made this 21st. day of Sept. 1835 between John W. Walker and Joseph Redue (trustees to sell and convey the real estate of John D. Hurtt and Elizabeth his wife) to John Webb, Joshua C. Bell, James Cohee, Joseph G. Edwards, William Rasin and James Beck (trustees in trust for the uses and purposes hereinafter mentioned.

Description: A certain lot or piece of land (being part of a larger tract of land situate in Kent County called "Forrest of Dean") of the real estate of said John D. Hurtt and Elizabeth contained within the following metes and bounds: Beginning at a bounded stone at the south east corner of the I.U. Church land and running with said land west 15 and  $\frac{4}{10}$  perches; thence south  $10\frac{1}{2}$  degrees,  $10\frac{1}{2}$  west - 10 perches, then east  $15\frac{4}{10}$  perches, then south  $10\frac{1}{2}$  degrees east 10 perches to the beginning containing 151 perches of land. (see plat land done by Th. Gale S.K. Cty, May 1, 1834..... to them: John Webb, Joshua Bell etc. and their successors in office forever in trust for the use of the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church called and known by the name of "The Union" according to the rules and discipline which from time to time may be agreed upon and adopted by the ministers and preachers of the said church at their general conference and according to the articles of incorporation entered into by the said church under the name of "The Board of Trustees of The Union Chappel of the Methodist Episcopal Church" and in further trust - and confidence that they shall at all times forever thereafter permit such ministers and Preachers belonging to the said Church as shall from time to time be duly authorized by the General Conference of the ministers and Preachers of the said Methodist Episcopal Church or by the annual Conferences authorized by the said General Conferences, to preach and expound Gods holy word in the House of Worship that may be erected thereon and further to use the same with the appurtenances therunto belonging as shall be authorized by the discipline of the said church.

Recorded 27th. day of Oct. 1835 7

The church sat up on the hill in the lot where the cemetery is now, facing the road, not the lane. It was the only one in the Kent Circuit without black membership. The rest of them had about an even number of blacks and whites. In March of 1836 there were 37 members and John Webb was the leader. Other members were: Ann Webb, James Beck, Joshua Bell, Sarah Jones, Mary Draper, Ann M. Ashley, Ann Ashley, Mary R. Smith, Jane Edwards, Henrietta Barnes, Catherine Tolson, Martha A. Taylor, Hannah Edwards, Racheal Tolson, Ann Alfred, Mary J. Kennard, Israel Argodine, Mary Argodine, Mary A. Watts, Elizabeth Edwards, Jane Forman, Ann Forman, Sarah Rasin, William Rasin, Mary J. Ashley, Ann Kennard, Ezekiel Forman, Susan Ashley, William Cullen, Mary M. Boots, Ann Sparklin, and James Jones. 8

At this time the Worton Chapel located near Corey's School was still open, and wasn't closed until a few years after the other churches were built. After it was closed it was used as a tenant house. Our church was just one of many which branched off and started a church of their own from the old Worton Chapel or Corey Church. Therefore, our church going on it's own doesn't really begin until 9/21/1835 when the property was bought for the Old Union. When the Union church was first built it was used by both the Presbyterians and Methodist, until 1839 when the Presbyterians built a frame building in Worton.

The following was found among the notes found in our church records aforementioned:

"Ministers Who Served and Charge Changes"  
Union M.E. Church

"While still in the Kent Circuit"

|           |                |                            |
|-----------|----------------|----------------------------|
| 1837-1847 | - Kent Circuit | Preacher Benjamin F. Price |
| 1847-1852 |                | H. Sanderson               |
| 1852-1856 |                | Quigley and Duhammond      |
| 1860-1864 |                | Wm. B. Walton              |

1864-1889 - Still Fond and Union Charge

|           |           |
|-----------|-----------|
| 1864-1868 | Bryan     |
| 1868-1872 | Thompson  |
| 1872-1875 | Caldwell  |
| 1875-1879 | Corgg     |
| 1879-1882 | Merritt   |
| 1882-1885 | Barrett   |
| 1885-1888 | MacNichal |
| 1888-1890 | Rigg      |

1898-1900 - Ellis - Separate Church in Worton and Morgnec" 9

"The Union Church was improved in 1878 and 1889 at a cost of \$ 1,800."  
Enclosed is a partial list of the tombstones in the Union Cemetery.

III - Union M.E. Church in Village of Worton

Around 1898 several members of the church felt that it would be advantagous to the church to move it into the village of Worton, one of the reasons being that it would be more convenient for the children. On February 9, 1894 the property was purchased in Worton for \$166.00 from James A. Pearce (Atty) for the erection of a "Methodist Episcopal Church in U.S.A.". The property was described as being on the west side of the public road leading from Chestertown to Worton Heights, 225 feet northside, and bought by the trustees of Union M.E. Church, namely: Daniel E. Jewell, Benjamin F. Rash, B.F. Crew, Joseph H. Porter, George T. Williams, H.P. Smith, and W.W. Parks. 10 B.F. Rash put a Kent Co. News and a dime in the cornerstone of the new church.

~~In 1900 the new church was built and this church summerized with Chestertown. In 1901 we reunited with Salem and in 1902 finished paying for the new church.~~

The following ministers served the new church: found in church notes

|           |         |           |        |
|-----------|---------|-----------|--------|
| 1904-1906 | Halbert | 1908-1910 | Kelso  |
| 1906-1907 | Easley  | 1910-1911 | Chairs |
| 1907-1908 | Taylor  | 1911-1912 | Given  |

"During the year 1912 the chairs were taken out of Union Church and handsom pews were put in at a cost of \$265.00. In 1913 a new heater was put in at a cost of \$165.00."

"In 1924 the stewards of the church were:

Benjamin F. Rash, Cornelius Hadaway, Mobrey Hadaway, Will Rasin, Mrs. Harry T. Williams, Ralph P. Williams, Harry T. Williams, Mrs. George Williams, Mrs. Rose Raison. The Sunday School Superentendant was B.F. Rash." 11

Some of the older members remember quite well that for quite a few years after the church moved into Worton, that once a year the Worton congregation held a service in the yard at the site of the old Church in the Cemetery. Also during the summers they would frequently have picnics there, the women bringing the food and the men bringing all of the equipment necessary to clean the cemetery. They would have an afternoon outing, all working together to clean up the cemetery and ending the day with a picnic there. Later on the farmers would clean it between crops in the summers. Mrs. Milton Price, Ethyl R. Loud and Albert Williams became a cemetery committe. The records of burials were kept by Katie Cooper and after her death by Mrs. Racheal Carter. Unfortunately, they were destroyed.

1. E.C. Hallman, The Garden of Methodism
2. Ibid
3. Ibid
4. Ibid
5. Microfilm prepared by Mary E. Parsons, Worton Station. Located at the Hall of Records, Annapolis, Md.
6. Handwritten records found in Union M.E. Church office Books (History of the Church)
7. Land Records - Kent Co. Courthouse, Chestertown: JNG 4, folio 86
8. Microfilm, prepared by Mary E. Parsons, Hall of Records, Anapolis, Md.
9. Records in Union Methodist E. Church Office Books, Worton, Md.
10. Land Records - Kent Co. Courthouse, Chestertown Md.: SCF 2, folio 315
11. Records in Union M.E. Church Office, Union Church, Worton, Md.
12. Raymond B. Clark Jr and Sara Seth Clark, Kent Co. Md. Marriage Liscences 1796-1850 and Lists of Kent Co. Ministers

Carolyn E. Cooper  
1979

K-410

Smithville 415

Kent Airport  
Christ Church  
Cem

Buttertown  
Cem  
Mt Olive Church

Worton  
Union Church

230  
420  
Lynch

231

228

232

206

229

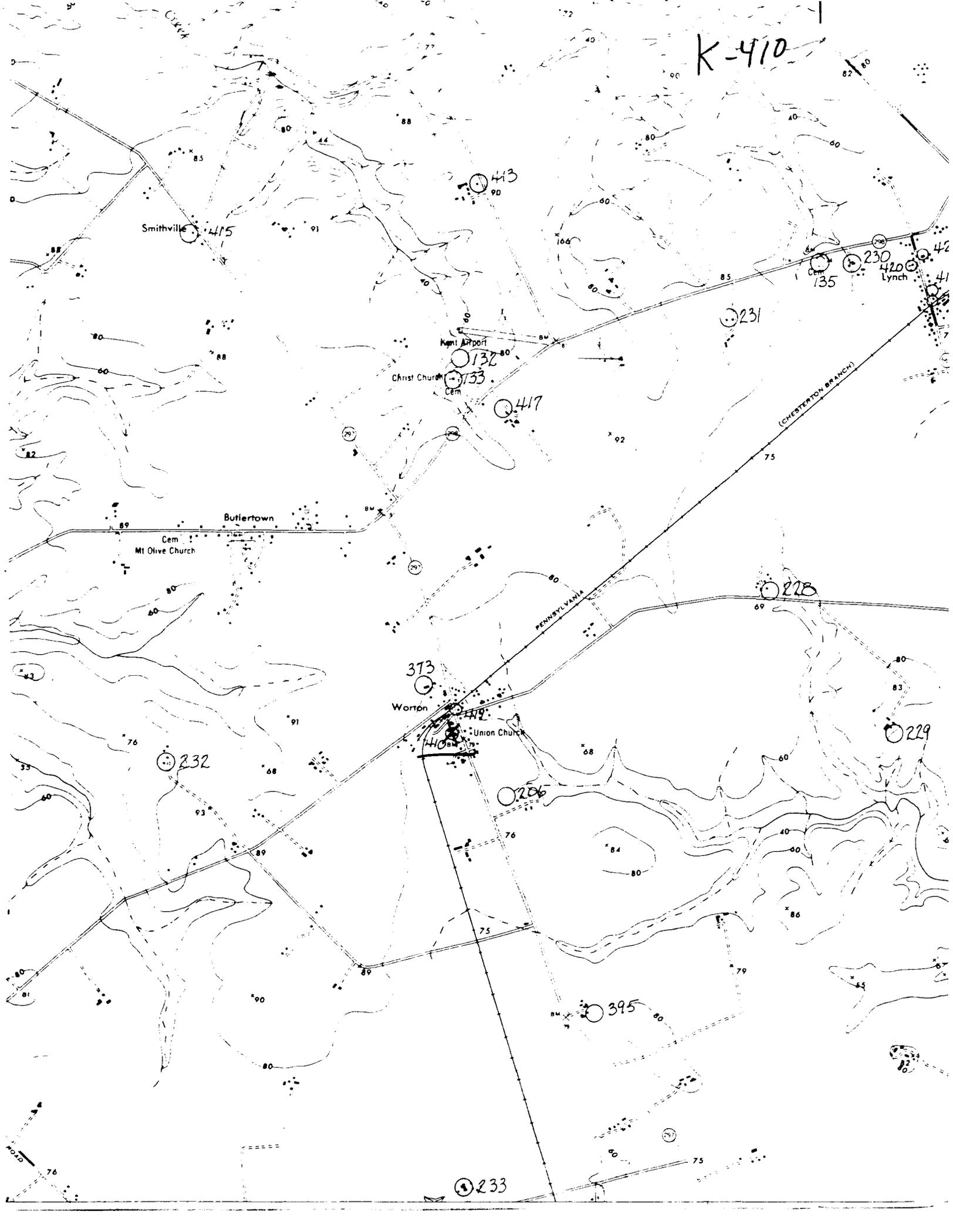
395

233

413

417

373





K-410  
Union M. E. Church  
Worton, Md.

Photograph: M.L. Fritz, September 1980

View to S.W.

PRINTED BY

*J. Tyler Campbell*

CHESTERTOWN, MARYLAND

SEP 25 1980