

K-62

John Russell House
512 High Street, Chestertown
1841-1846

512 High Street, adjacent the old Catholic Church is situated on part of Lot No. 61, which in the late 18th century included 518 High Street, the Robert Reed House. The house appears to have been constructed on part of the lot after it was purchased by Ann Russell Rollins in 1841. When Ann Rollins' son, John Russell, sold 518 High Street in 1846, the deed mentioned the "palings between the Brick House part and the *new frame house part . . .*," referring incidentally to the one-and-a-half-story building.¹

The house, as built, was a one-and-a-half-story, three-bay, frame structure with a leanto kitchen off the northeast half of the rear facade. Its plan was a basic hall-parlor with entry into the hall and an enclosed stair in the east corner. The house possesses the slightest hint of the Greek Revival style in the use of a wide frieze board below the cornice. Otherwise, it is a plain representation of the period, similar to the Cochran House in Galena and the Davis Tenement on Mill Street.

John Russell kept the property in trust for his children either residing there or holding it as a rental property. He sold the lot in several parcels in 1859, including 518 High Street, a store house with eave overhanging the latter, and 512 High Street.² The latter was sold to Simon and Joseph Lehmeyer of Baltimore, in whose family it remained until 1895.³

In the early 20th century, the original stair was removed and a new one installed in the parlor, ascending between the two second story

bedrooms. The large shed dormers were built at the same time, creating enough space for a bedroom and bath over the old hall.

The rear leanto had been lengthened to create another room behind the parlor in the late 19th century. A second leanto was added off the other, creating an unusually long line on the gable. All of the additions were evident when the building was remodeled in 1975.

1. Land Records, Lib. JNG 11, fol. 111.
2. Apparently John Russell received 518 High Street a second time in a foreclosure.
3. Land Records, Lib. JKH 1, fol. 578.

Maryland Historical Trust
State Historic Sites Inventory Form

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF
HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Survey No. K-62

Magi No.

DOE yes no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic

and/or common the John Russell House

2. Location

street & number 512 High Street not for publication

city, town Chestertown vicinity of congressional district First

state Maryland county

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

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

name Thomas & Diane Cousineau

street & number 512 High Street telephone no.:

city, town Chestertown state and zip code MD 21620

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Kent County Courthouse liber EHP111

street & number Cross Street folio 344

city, town Chestertown state MD

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title N/A

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. K-62

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 of move _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

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

512 House Street, adjacent the old Catholic Church, is situated on part of lot 61, which, in the 18th century, included 518 High Street, the Robert Reed House. The house appears to have been constructed on part of the lot after it was purchased by Ann Russell Rollins in 1841. When Ann Rollins' son, John Russell, sold 518 High Street in 1846, the deed mentioned the "palings between the Brick House part and the new frame house part...," referring incidently the one-and-one-half-story building.

The house, as it has come into the late 20th century, is a three-bay frame structure built on a brick foundation. It is one-and-one-half-stories tall with wide shed dormers, nearly as long as the house, stretching almost from chimney-to-chimney. Behind the basic rectangular structure are a series of two leanto additions across the entire rear, creating a long one-story space.

When the house was being rehabilitated in 1975, the development became evident in the structural melange which was altered to create a more useable home.

The plan of the house was a basic hall-parlor plan with the door into the hall. The original stair was located in the northeast corner adjacent the fireplace. On the opposite side of the fireplace was another window to light the otherwise meagerly-lighted room. (the back wall had no windows due to the presence of the kitchen leanto). The parlor also had windows in the same position as the hall. Behind the parlor was a bedroom.

In the early 20th century the original stair was removed and a new one installed in the parlor, ascending between the two second-story bedrooms. The large shed dormers were built at the same time, creating enough space for a bedroom and bath over the old hall.

8. Significance

Survey No. K-62

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 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		

Specific dates

Builder/Architect

check: Applicable Criteria: A B C D
 and/or
 Applicable Exception: A B C D E F G
 Level of Significance: national state local

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

512 High Street is significant in an architectural survey of Chestertown because it represents a type housing built in the first half of the 19th century by tradesmen or as rental properties owned by middle class citizens of the town. 512 High Street has the slightest hint of the Greek Revival period in which it was built in the use of a wide frier board below the cornice. Otherwise it is a plain representative of the period, similar to the Orlando Sutton House in Galena and the Davis Tenement on Mill Street.

512 High Street was built on part of Lot No. 61 between 1841 and 1846 either by Ann Rollins (d.1844) or by her son and administrator, John Russell. As stated in #7, in a deed for 518 High Street in 1846, reference as made to the new frame house on part of lot 61.

John Russell kept the property in trust for his children either residing there or renting it out. He sold the lot in several parcels in 1859, including 518 High Street, a store house next door and 512 High Street. The latter, he sold to Simon and Joseph Lehmyer of Baltimore for \$900, consisting of 46' along High Street by 132' in depth.

The Lehmyer heirs sold the house in 1895 to Jennie B. Y. Vickers, the wife of Harrison Vickers, who immediately sold it to Alexander Gray for \$400.00, a \$75.00 profit over her cost.

Alex Grey died in 1910 leaving everything to his sister Rebecca Wilkins. Mrs. Wilkins and her children sold the property in 1918 to Martha Eva Carter Jacobs, who later married Mr. F. P. Vansant and moved to Wilmington. Between 1932 and 1968 the house was owned by Julian and Hariet Carter. Catherine Mench purchased the house and lot from Anthony Libersky, trustee for the estate of Hariet Carter. She sold it in 1975 to Georgia Duffee, professor of German at Washington College, who refurbished the house, taking the first floor bedroom and adjacent leanto and creating a den with windows overlooking the yard.

The house was ruined by fire in 1977 during the ownership of Heidi Engstrom, after which it was purchased and rehabilitated again by the town. In 1980 it was sold to the present owners.

1500622304

<p>1. STATE <u>Maryland</u> COUNTY <u>Kent County</u> TOWN <u>Chestertown</u> VICINITY STREET NO. <u>512</u></p> <p>ORIGINAL OWNER ORIGINAL USE <u>dwelling</u> PRESENT OWNER <u>Mrs Julian Carter</u> PRESENT USE <u>dwelling</u> WALL CONSTRUCTION <u>frame</u> NO. OF STORIES <u>1 1/2</u></p>	<p>HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY <u>K-62</u> INVENTORY</p>
	<p>2. NAME</p> <p>DATE OR PERIOD <u>early 19th Century</u> STYLE <u>Colonial</u> ARCHITECT BUILDER</p>
	<p>3. FOR LIBRARY OF CONGRESS USE</p>
<p>4. NOTABLE FEATURES, HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE AND DESCRIPTION</p>	
<p style="text-align: right;">OPEN TO PUBLIC <u>No</u></p> <p>512 High Street is a frame one and a half story house. It is four bays long and one room deep. The entire early appearance has been changed by enlarging the windows and adding a large shed dormer on each side of the roof. It is presently covered with green wood shingles. It has two small chimneys within the gables.</p>	
<p>5. PHYSICAL CONDITION OF STRUCTURE Endangered <u>No</u> Interior Exterior <u>fair</u></p>	
<p>6. LOCATION MAP (Plan Optional)</p>	<p>7. PHOTOGRAPH</p>
<p>8. PUBLISHED SOURCES (Author, Title, Pages) INTERVIEWS, RECORDS, PHOTOS, ETC.</p>	<p>9. NAME, ADDRESS AND TITLE OF RECORDER</p> <p><u>Michael Bourne</u> <u>Maryland Historical Trust</u></p> <p>DATE OF RECORD <u>Feb 6, 1968</u></p>

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION AND PHOTO APHS MAY BE ADDED ON SHEET OF SAME SIZE



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- A. MING, Dealer in Groceries and Provisions. Court Street.

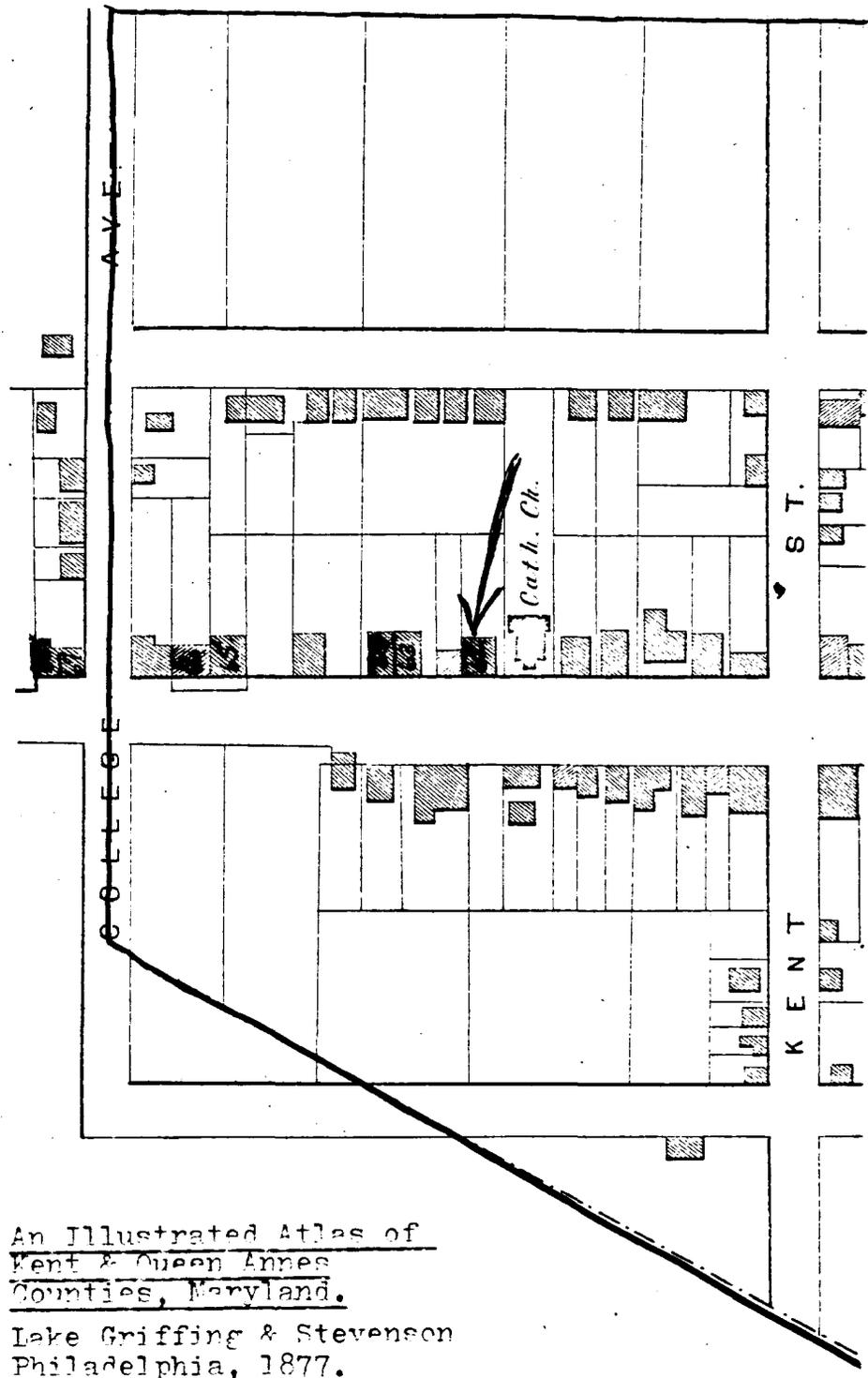
EDITORS.

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K-62

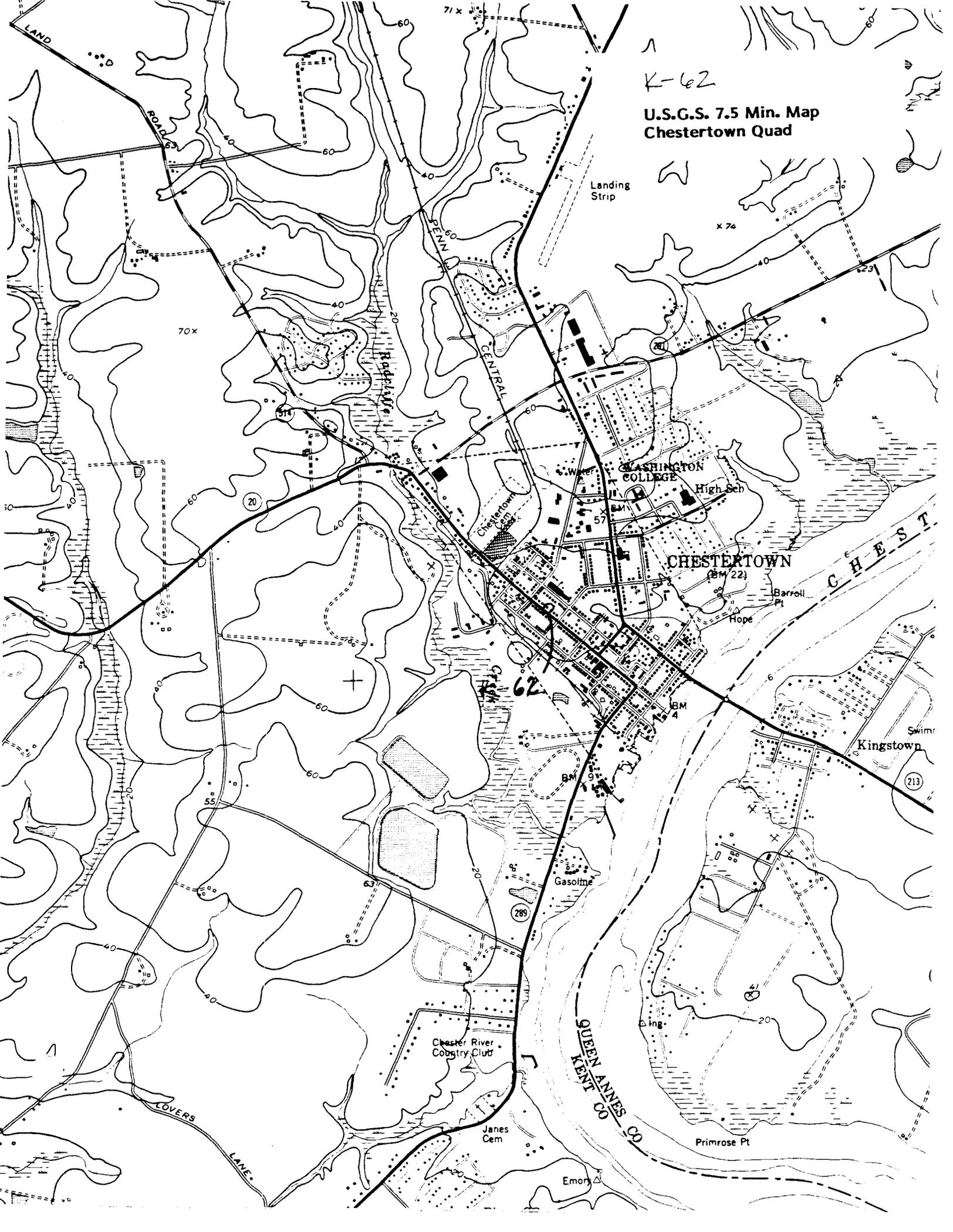


An Illustrated Atlas of
Kent & Queen Annes
Counties, Maryland.
Lake Griffing & Stevenson
Philadelphia, 1877.

Prepared by MOB
6/1/71

K-62

U.S.G.S. 7.5 Min. Map
Chestertown Quad





John Russell House K-62

512 High St.

Chestertown

s.w. facade

Michael Bourne

March 1996

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