

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For HCRS use only

received

date entered

1. Name

historic Wesley Chapel Methodist Episcopal Church

and/or common Wesley Chapel

2. Location

street & number Liberty and Johnsville Roads n/a not for publication

city, town Eldersburg vicinity of Fifth congressional district

state Maryland code 24 county Carroll code 013

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Wesley-Freedom United Methodist Church
c/o The Reverend Perry Miller

street & number 1011 Liberty Road

city, town Sykesville vicinity of Maryland state 21784

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Baltimore City Courthouse

street & number

city, town Baltimore state Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Maryland Historical Trust
Inventory of Historic Sites has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1979 federal state county local

depository for survey records 21 State Circle

city, town Annapolis state Maryland 21401

7. Description

CARR-167

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

DESCRIPTION SUMMARY:

Wesley Chapel is a small stone church built in 1822 to serve an early Methodist congregation near Eldersburg in Carroll County, Maryland. The gable-roofed building is constructed of uncoursed rubble, one story high, three bays wide by three deep, and faces Liberty Road (Maryland Route 26) to the south. The principal entrance is centered in the south gable facade and consists of paneled double-leaf doors set within a paneled reveal and surmounted by a transom. The flanking bays hold 12/12 sash; a smaller 12/12 window above the entrance lights a gallery. The west elevation has three evenly-spaced 12/12 windows; on the east, a central entrance identical to that on the south is flanked by 12/12 sash. A three-sided, hip-roofed apse projects from the north gable; this facade is finished in stucco which is scored to simulate ashlar. The interior consists of a single large barrel-vaulted nave, with the pulpit located in a lower vault in the apse; a gallery spans the rear of the nave, reached by a winder stair in the southeast corner. The building retains considerable original trim and hardware, including the pulpit and pulpit rail, gallery, stair and balustrade, paneled doors, two open rim locks and a cast-iron box lock. A small cemetery provides the setting for the chapel. A modern residential subdivision surrounds the property.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Wesley Chapel is located on the north side of Liberty Road (Maryland Route 26), just west of the center of Eldersburg in Carroll County, Maryland. A small cemetery provides the immediate setting for the building. The property is surrounded by a modern residential subdivision.

The chapel was constructed in 1822 of uncoursed rubble masonry. It stands one story high, three bays wide by three deep, and faces south, with the entrance located in the central bay of the south gable facade. The entrance consists of double-leaf doors with three panels each, surmounted by a transom, set in a paneled reveal. Each of the flanking bays holds a 12/12 window comprising modern replacement sash within the original beaded surround. A smaller 12/12 window aligned above the entrance lights the gallery; here the surround and sliding frames are original, while the muntins are replacements. All the openings are surmounted by lintels finished in mortar and painted to simulate jack arches; this treatment probably coincided with a recent repointing of the building. (A ca. 1922 photograph appears to show solid stone lintels above these openings.) Large blocks at the corners suggest quoins. The marble cornerstone in the southeast corner which reads "Wesley Chapel M. E. Church - 1822 - Freedom, Carroll County, Md." probably dates from the 1922 Centennial celebration.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #1

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Carroll County, Maryland

GENERAL DESCRIPTION (continued)

The east elevation is three bays wide, with an entrance identical to that of the south gable in the central bay, flanked on either side by 12/12 windows. The outsides of the double-leaf doors have been clad in sheet metal. Windows are replacement sash in original beaded surrounds. A modern cellar entrance is located between the central and southern bays, and an exterior brick chimney rises between the central and northern bays.

The west elevation has a 12/12 window in each of its three evenly-spaced bays. As on the south and east facades, windows hold replacement sash in original surrounds, retain cast-iron shutter pintles, and are topped by simulated jack arches. A brick exterior chimney with a corbeled cap rises between the northern and central bays.

The north elevation features a three-sided projecting apse with a hipped roof. The diagonal facets of this projection retain original 12/12 sash windows. This elevation is finished in stucco which is scored to simulate ashlar.

The chapel's gable roof is clad in asphalt shingles.

The exterior retains a high degree of integrity. Maintenance requirements have resulted in the repointing of the masonry and the replacement of original window sash with appropriate wooden replicas with 12/12 lights. Installation of a modern heating plant required the excavation of a partial basement and the provision of an entrance for access; two slender brick chimneys serve the furnace.

The interior consists of a single large barrel vaulted space occupied by the nave, with the pulpit located in a lower vault in the north apse.

The pulpit atop a raised platform of vertical beaded boards within the arch of the apse, is presumed to be original. It has four plain recessed panels and a cove cornice, and is flanked on either side by a short balustrade with turned newel, square balusters, and oval-section rail. The chancel retains its original wide-plank flooring, beaded baseboard, and windows within beaded recesses. The edge of the arch is decorated with a single plaster bead. Three iron pintles presumably for lighting fixtures, survive in the pulpit area.

The Communion rail, in front of the pulpit, is a Victorian addition with blocky turned newels and heavy balusters. The present pews, with a Gothic-influenced profile, were probably originally installed in the adjacent Wesley-Freedom United Methodist Church, constructed in 1868. Three grain-painted pews of simpler profile survive in the gallery of the chapel and may represent the original furniture.

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GENERAL DESCRIPTION (continued)

A gallery spans the rear of the nave, its forward edge intruding into the openings of the southernmost windows. Two tapered, beaded posts support the gallery. The cross beam has a beaded lower edge, and the closed "balustrade" of vertical beaded boards is defined at top and bottom by a heavy complex molding. The area between the gallery rail and ceiling has been enclosed in recent years with light framing and wall board; plans call for removal of this partition in the immediate future.

A winder stair in the southeast corner of the nave affords access to the gallery; the stair retains its original turned newel, square balusters, and handrail which are identical to those in the chancel. Square posts with chamfered edges mark the turnings of the stair. The side of the gallery facing the stair has been enclosed with a light partition, replacing its original open balustrade; plans call for the restoration of this feature. The gallery retains its original wide-plank flooring, and fragments of late-19th century wallpaper with a classical architectural motif. In the nave below the stair is a closet whose batten door of vertical beaded boards is hung on cast butt hinges and closed with a keyhole-shaped open rim lock. Other significant interior features include the cast-iron box lock on the south entrance, and a large keyhole-shaped open rim lock securing the east doors. Doors feature slightly-raised panels framed by ogee-astragal moldings, and are set in original beaded architraves with ogee-astragal backbands.

The interior has been subjected to relatively few alterations. The walls have been furred out and refinished with drywall, which has concealed the original baseboards and interior window trim (except on the two windows in the apse). The sanctuary has been refloored with narrow hardwood flooring, over which wall-to-wall carpeting was installed very recently. As previously described, a light partition encloses the gallery.

8. Significance

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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 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 1821-1822 **Builder/Architect** John Elder

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Applicable Criteria: A, C
Applicable exception: A

SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY:

Wesley Chapel is significant for its architecture, and for its historical association with the development of Methodism in Maryland. The building has remained substantially unaltered since its construction in 1822, and presents a significant example of early-nineteenth century vernacular church architecture in the rural Piedmont region of Maryland. Characteristic features include rubble masonry construction and simple massing, coupled with restrained exterior and interior detailing. The paneled doors which retain their original hardware and the pulpit, pulpit rail, and stair balustrade are especially noteworthy. Wesley Chapel derives additional significance from its association with the development of Methodism in Carroll County. The Methodist movement in America began in Carroll County, Maryland about 1760. Wesley Chapel was erected to serve one of the earliest Methodist congregations in the county, reputedly organized in 1780. The present building reflects the efforts of a mature, established group. The Wesley Chapel is the oldest unaltered Methodist house of worship remaining in the County; one extant building, the Stone Chapel at New Windsor, predates it (1783) but has been extensively altered over time.

HISTORY AND SUPPORT:

The development of Methodism in America began in Carroll County, Maryland, about 1760, with class meetings held on the site of the Robert Strawbridge House in New Windsor. The congregation responsible for the construction of Wesley Chapel was organized in 1780.

Several of the founders of Wesley Chapel attended Holy Trinity Episcopal Church in Eldersburg before the Revolutionary War. At that time, Methodists were members of the Episcopal Church who followed the Methodist doctrine of John Wesley. When the Rector of Holy Trinity fled to England in 1775 because he was labeled a Tory, it is believed Methodist lay leaders continued to use the church, as no Episcopal services were held at that time. In 1780, the Episcopal Church again attempted to utilize Holy Trinity for services, but the residents, impressed by the preaching of itinerant Methodist ministers and lay leaders, refused to support these efforts, and Holy Trinity was closed.

The first record of a Methodist class involving an original Trustee of Wesley Chapel dates to 1780 when a class was organized in Daniel Elliott's home in Delaware Bottom. In 1788, a second class was organized at the home of William Beasman, located closer to the present town of Eldersburg. Documents indicate that from 1803 until at least 1815, Methodists in the Eldersburg area met at Adam's Garden, the home of Robert Shipley, located behind the present site of the Eldersburg Improvement Association on Maryland Route 32.

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HISTORY AND SUPPORT (continued)

It is assumed that during this period a need was felt by the Shipley class members for a permanent place of worship. At the quarterly meeting of the Baltimore Circuit, held at Stone Chapel on October 16, 1813, the following notation was made in the Steward's Book: "Application being made to this Conference to appoint Trustees to take a Deed for land from Nicholas Harding to Build a Preaching House on, Have accordingly appointed Elisha Bennett, Daniel Elliott, Samuel Gore, Robert Shipley of Adam, and William Baseman to act as such." We have not yet found proof of purchase of land for this meeting house, but oral tradition confirms the known location of an early log structure called "Antioch" which was north of the present site of Wesley Chapel. It is felt the Methodists used this building as a meeting house until 1821.

Several changes had occurred by 1821 that caused a need for a new meeting house. The area was no longer a wilderness dotted by a few farms. The towns of Eldersburg and Freedom had formed, populated by tradesmen and merchants. Methodist converts had significantly increased in numbers following a decline in the late 1700's. A road to the west and to the markets of Baltimore was developing. By 1815, a company was formed to build a turnpike to Frederick and Hagerstown. This road, now known as Liberty Road, was to be built along an original Indian trail which had been used as a road when the land was settled and which passed through the Freedom area. The area around Eldersburg and Freedom was active and growing.

On July 20, 1821, Helena and John Welsh conveyed to Elisha Bennett, Daniel Elliott, Matthew Chambers, Lewis Shipley, Samuel Gore, Nicholas Harding, and John Elder one acre of land, part of a tract called Perserverance. This land was given in trust that they erect a house of worship for the use of the Methodist Episcopalals and no others.

Construction of the church took place in 1821 or 1822. Chairman of the Building Committee was Reverend Samuel Gore, a local lay preacher for over 50 years whose grave is in the Wesley Chapel Cemetery. The contractor for the church was John Elder, and the cabinet work was likely done by Benjamin Forester, who helped with the building of Springfield Presbyterian Church in 1837. When the church pulpit was repaired approximately 1920, the following inscription was found on a board: "John Elder, Contractor, I am 24 years old today, June 24, 1822, Benjamin Forest."

In addition to the people already mentioned, the following prominent members of the congregation are buried in Wesley Cemetery:

Joseph Steele, who was appointed as one of the first county commissioners in 1837 when Carroll County was formed and who also served on the committee to determine the nine election districts in the county;

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HISTORY AND SUPPORT (continued)

Warren L. Little, the first master of the Freedom Lodge of the A.F. & A.M. #112 and the last proprietor of a tavern-inn, erected in 1769 in Freedom and which served travelers not only during the Revolutionary War but also during the westward migration in the 1800's;

Col. Peter Little, who was a member of Congress from the Baltimore District and a zealous officer in the militia, who served in the War of 1812, and whose family settled in the area before 1765;

and, Margaret Elder, wife of John Elder, founder of Eldersburg, whose son, John, is also buried at the Chapel.

Many notable ministers served Wesley Chapel during this early period, including Job Guest, Wesley Chapel's first minister; Richard Brown, prominent camp meeting manager and conference steward for seventeen years; and Henry Slicer, who went on to serve as Chaplain of the United States Congress for seven sessions.

Prior to the Civil War, a schism developed within the Chapel, and a group of Southern sympathizers refusing to free their slaves were barred from entering Wesley Chapel by members holding rifles. After meeting in homes and the Masonic Hall for several years, these Southern sympathizers organized in June 1866 as the Freedom Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

This schism resulted in the 1868-1869 construction of a new church building located across Liberty Road and a few hundred feet to the east of Wesley Chapel. Known as Freedom Methodist Episcopal Church, South, this congregation worshiped independently until 1943, when it merged with the membership of Wesley Chapel to form Wesley-Freedom Methodist Church. The joint congregation alternated services between the two buildings for several years and then came to use the Chapel mainly for youth education programs and the Freedom building for Sunday services. The Freedom building was extensively renovated in 1949.

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES:

Scharf, J. Thomas. History of Western Maryland. Philadelphia, 1882; rpt. Baltimore: Regional Publishing Co. 1968.

Steele, Guy W. Centennial of Wesley Chapel M. E. Church, September 24, 1922. n.p., n.d.

Stewards' Books, 1794-1815. Lovely Lane Museum, Baltimore, Maryland.

Baltimore Sun, Democratic Advocate, Sykesville Herald. (Various articles).

9. Major Bibliographical References

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SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #4

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property approximately 2 acres

Quadrangle name Finksburg, Md.

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

118	331	0120	43636110
Zone	Easting		Northing

B

Zone	Easting		Northing

C

D

E

F

G

H

Verbal boundary description and justification : Boundaries are depicted on the attached map.
Boundary Justification: The nominated property encompasses the resource within a small cemetery which provides its historic setting. The property is bounded on the north, east, and west by a modern residential subdivision and on the south by a major thoroughfare (ID Rt.2)

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	n/a	code	county	code

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title 1. Peter Kurtze, Assistant National Register Administrator
 2. Jean H. Hershberger

organization 1. Maryland Historical Trust
 2. Wesley Chapel Preservation Committee **date** November 1983

street & number 1. 21 State Circle (301) 269-2438
 2. 6406 Taper Court telephone (301) 781-4956

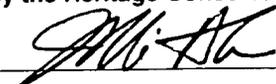
city or town 1. Annapolis Maryland 21401
 2. Sykesville state Maryland 21784

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

title STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER date 2-15-84

For HCRS use only
 I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register
 date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: date

Chief of Registration

JOHNSTOWN

CARROLL CO. BOARD
684/44
49.91
P.6

COPYRIGHT - MAP DIVISION - 1967.
DEPT. OF ASSESS. & TAX.

PART F HURLINE
57.1352
131.74A
P.94

FREEDOM

EDWIN A. PARRISH
231/12
65 T3A.
P.17

CARR-167
WESLEY CHAPEL
M.E. CHURCH,
CARROLL COUNTY, MD.
NATIONAL REGISTER
BOUNDARY

CARROLL CO.
BOARD OF
42.80A
P.241

MOST REV.
LAWRENCE
J. SHEHAN
(ROMAN
CATHOLIC
ARCHBISHOP OF
BALTIMORE)
358/258
P.470

WESLEY
FREEDOM
CHURCH
P.507

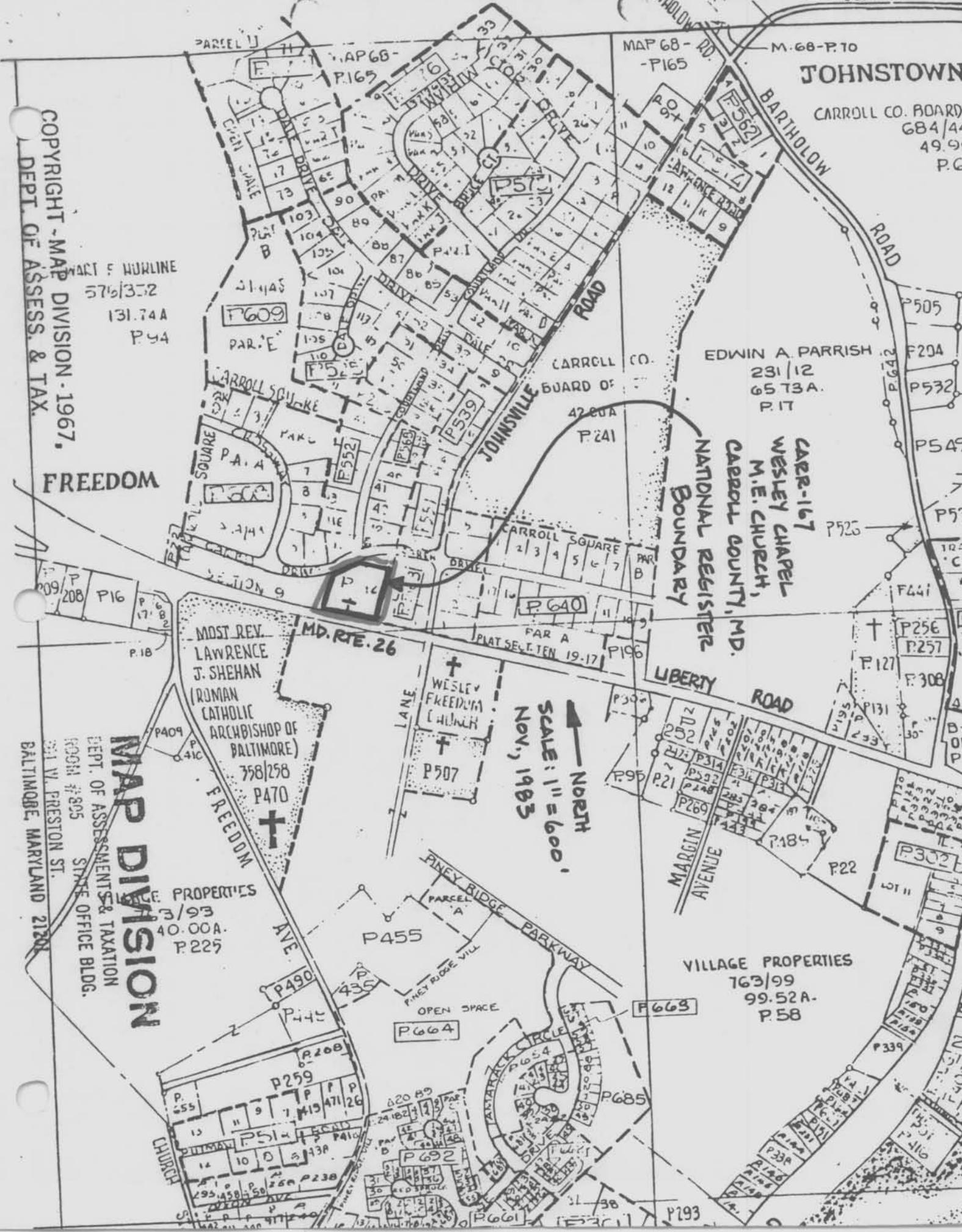
North
SCALE: 1" = 600'
NOV, 1985

MAP DIVISION

DEPT. OF ASSESSMENTS & TAXATION
ROOM #805
STATE OFFICE BLDG.
311 W. PRESTON ST.
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21201

PROPERTIES
3/93
40.00A.
P.229

VILLAGE PROPERTIES
763/99
99.52A.
P.58



CARR-167
WESLEY
CHAPEL
M. E. CHURCH

CARROLL COUNTY,
MARYLAND

18-331020 -
4363610

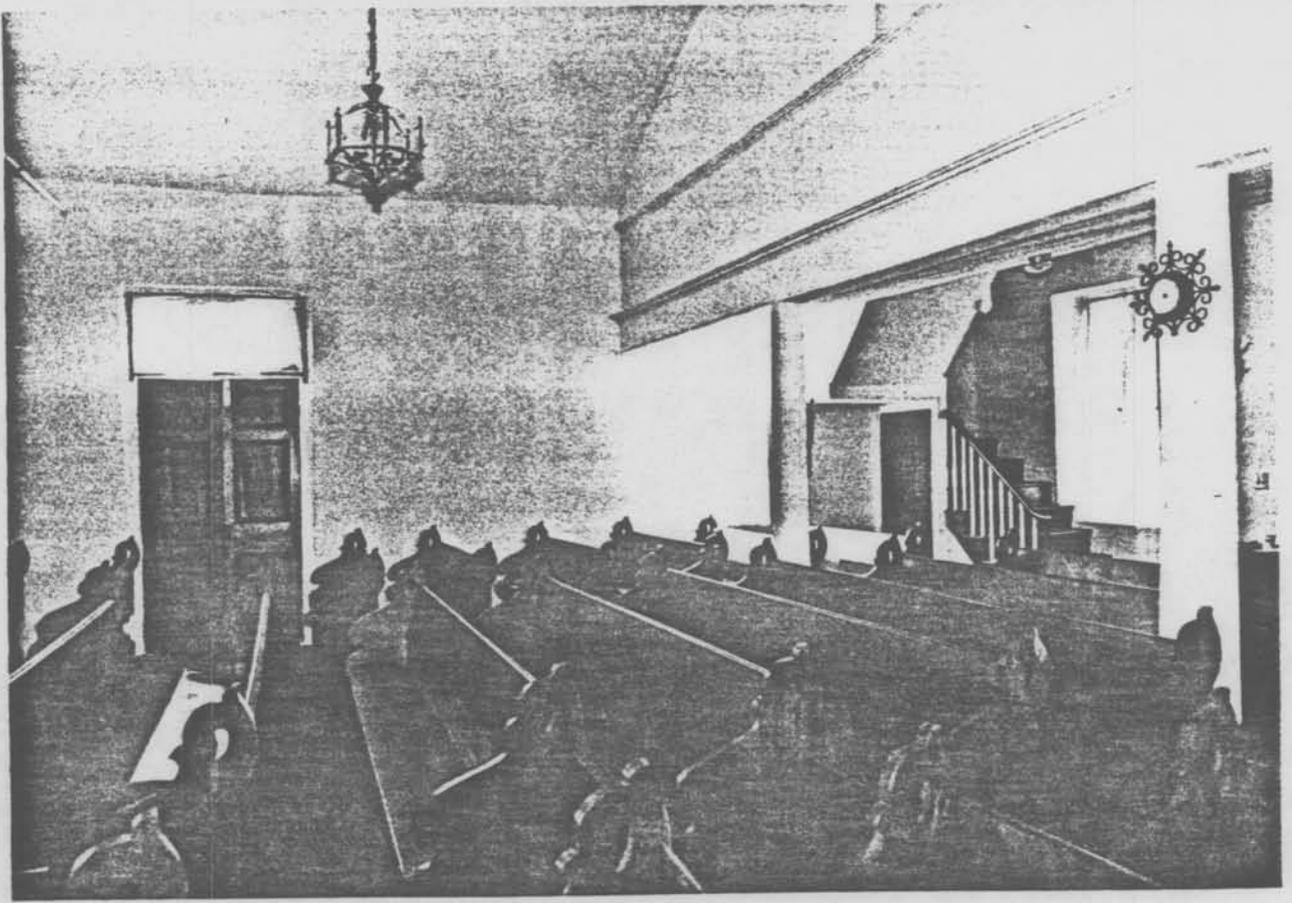
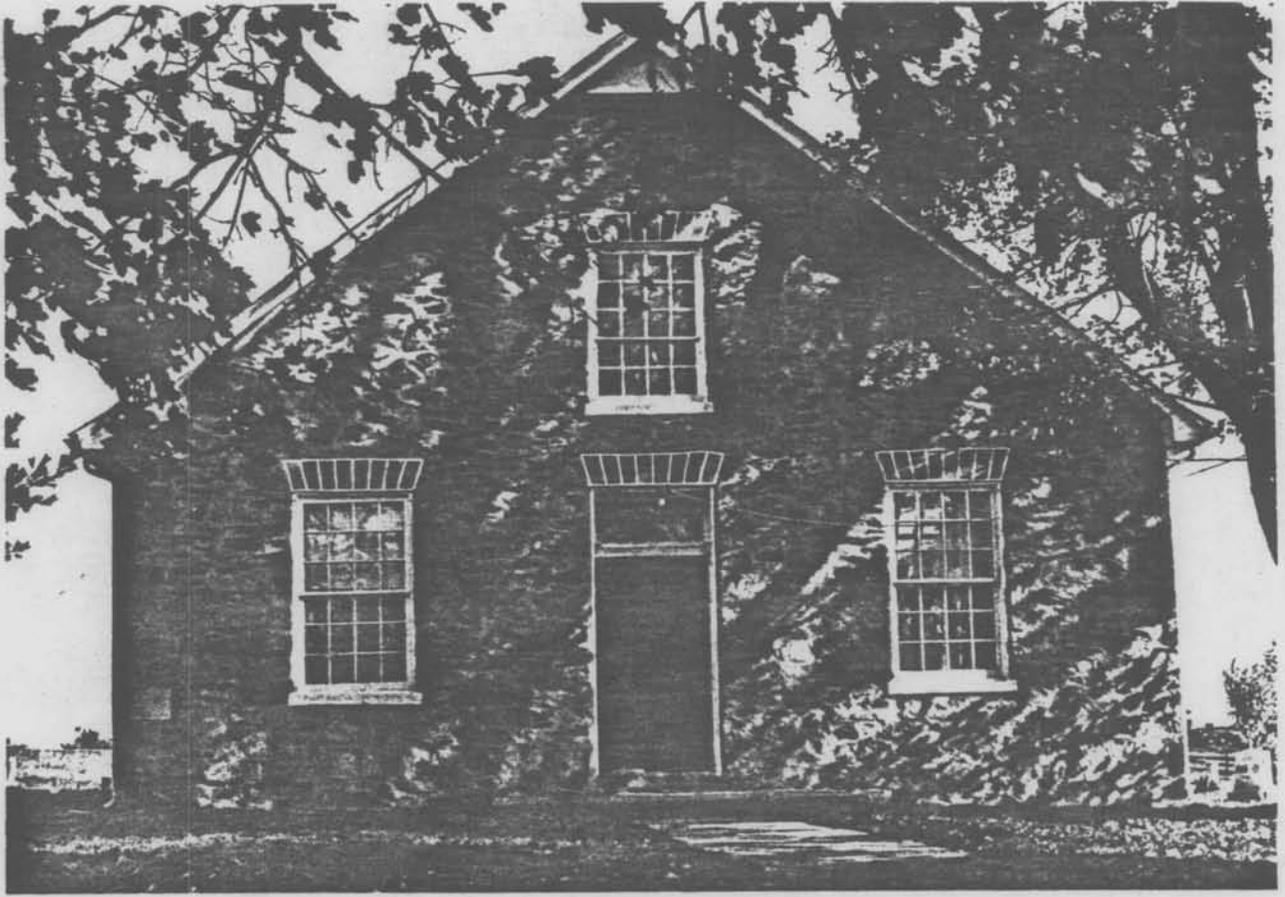


39°22'30"

SLACKS CORNER 4.2 MI.

1810 000 FEET 57'30"

CARR-167





Wesley Chapel, M.E. Church

Dec. / 78

Car. - 117

Southwest corner

fredi &

0.11.12



Wesley Chapel - M-E. Church

Deer Tr

Car - 167

South elevation

April 2.