

S-471

1928

New Union Asbury M. E. Church
Freemantown
Public worship

Central to the historic black community of Freemantown is this imposing tee-shaped brick church that stands at the intersection of Main Street Extended and “Freedomtown” Road, east of the City of Crisfield. Built in 1928, the stretcher bond brick church is a distinctive landmark for this crossroads, which is defined otherwise by one- and two-story frame dwellings and modest commercial structures. Raised on a high elevation, the sanctuary is lighted by long colored glass windows featuring pointed arches. A series of three lancet windows pierce each gable end parapet wall. The most dominant architectural element, however, is the three-story entrance and bell tower that rises in the southeast corner of the tee plan. Long flights of concrete steps rise to a pair of double-door openings accented with pointed arch, colored glass transoms.

A marble datestone, fixed in the southeast corner of the foundation, documents the construction of this church in 1928 during the pastorship of Reverend Malachi Raisin. A second datestone is cemented in the southwest corner and was taken from the former church that housed this congregation. It is inscribed “Union Asbury M. E. Church.” Two dates, 1876; and 1902, record when the initial church was erected in the decade following the Civil War on a site south of the present location. As cited on the Lake, Griffing, and Stevenson Atlas (1877), and corroborated by older Freemantown residents, the “Col’d

Church” stood several hundred yards south of the crossroads. Evidently the original building was extensively remodeled in 1902 thereby instigating the need for a second date. The current church lot was sold to the Trustees of Union Asbury M. E. Church by Noah C. Sterling in May 1921 for \$1000.

HISTORIC CONTEXT INFORMATION

Resource Name: NEW UNION ASBURY M. E. CHURCH

MHT Inventory Number: S-471

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA:

- 1) Historic Period Theme(s): Architecture
Religion
- 2) Geographic Orientation: Eastern Shore
- 3) Chronological/Development Period(s):
Industrial/Urban Dominnace
1870-1930
- 4) Resource Type(s):
Church

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF
HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Survey No. S-471

Magi No.

DOE yes no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic NEW UNION ASBURY M. E. CHURCH

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 3480 Freedomtown Road not for publication

city, town Crisfield vicinity of congressional district First

state Maryland county Somerset

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	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

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

name Trustees of New Union Asbury M. E. Church

street & number 3480 Freedomtown Road telephone no.:

city, town Crisfield state and zip code MD 21817

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Somerset County Clerk of Court liber

street & number Somerset County Courthouse folio

city, town Princess Anne state MD 21853

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date federal state county local

pository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. S-471

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.

The New Union Asbury M. E. Church stands on the northeast corner of the intersection of Main Street Extended and "Freedomtown" Road in the historic black community of Freemantown, east of Crisfield, Somerset County, Maryland. The large single-story, tee-shaped brick church faces south.

Built in 1928, this single-story, tee-shaped brick church is laid in stretcher bond and the steeply pitched roof is covered with asphalt shingles. Standing next to the church on its west side is the church parsonage. (See S-472)

The south front is an asymmetrical gable-front elevation balanced with a three-story entrance and bell tower. The high basement is marked by a series of two-pane cellar windows, and the main level is highlighted by three pointed arch, colored glass windows. The center double lancet window is flanked by narrower lancet windows of colored glass. Each window opening is topped by a rowlock arch set in a pointed shape. The gable end roof is finished with a parapet wall topped by a concrete cap. Fixed in the southeast corner of the foundation is a marble datestone inscribed, "New Union Asbury M. E. Church, Malachi Raisin, Pastor, 1928." A second datestone is fixed in the southwest corner and was evidently salvaged from a former church. It is inscribed, "Union Asbury M. E. Church, 1876, Remodeled 1902."

The south face of the entrance and bell tower is marked by a pointed arch double door entrance featuring a pointed arch colored glass transom. The second level is highlighted by a diamond shaped window filled with colored glass as well, while the third story features a large louvered bell tower opening. The top of the tower is finished with a crenelated wall and concrete capping.

The east side of the church is detailed in a similar fashion with the gable front parapet wall facing Freedomtown Road. A narrow single-flue brick stove chimney rises through the roof. The east face of the entrance and bell tower is identical to the south side.

The north elevation is five bays across with each bay defined by a single width colored glass lancet window. The basement level is pierced by three two-pane windows.

The west side of the church features many of the same architectural elements as the rest of the exterior with pointed arch colored glass windows piercing the main floor. The basement level is marked by a center door and flanking two-pane windows. Rising through the west side is a single-flue brick chimney stack. The west side of the projecting leg of the tee-plan is marked by pointed arch windows as well.

The interior was not seen.

8. Significance

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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1876, 1902, 1928 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.

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S-471
NEW UNION ASBURY M. E. CHURCH
Freemantown
Public worship
Chain of title

84/304

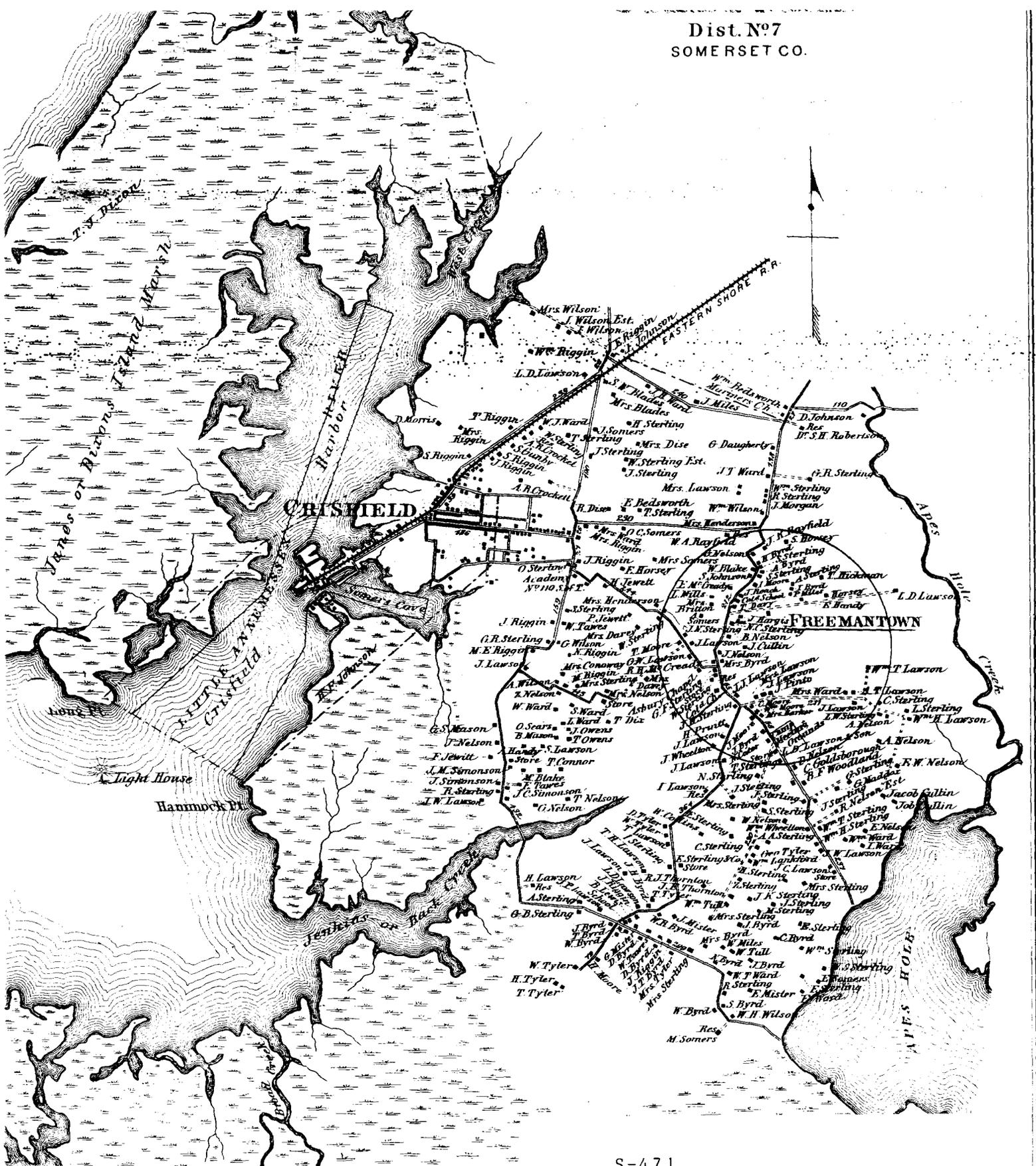
Noah C. Sterling

to

5/19/1921

Trustees of Union Asbury M. E. Church

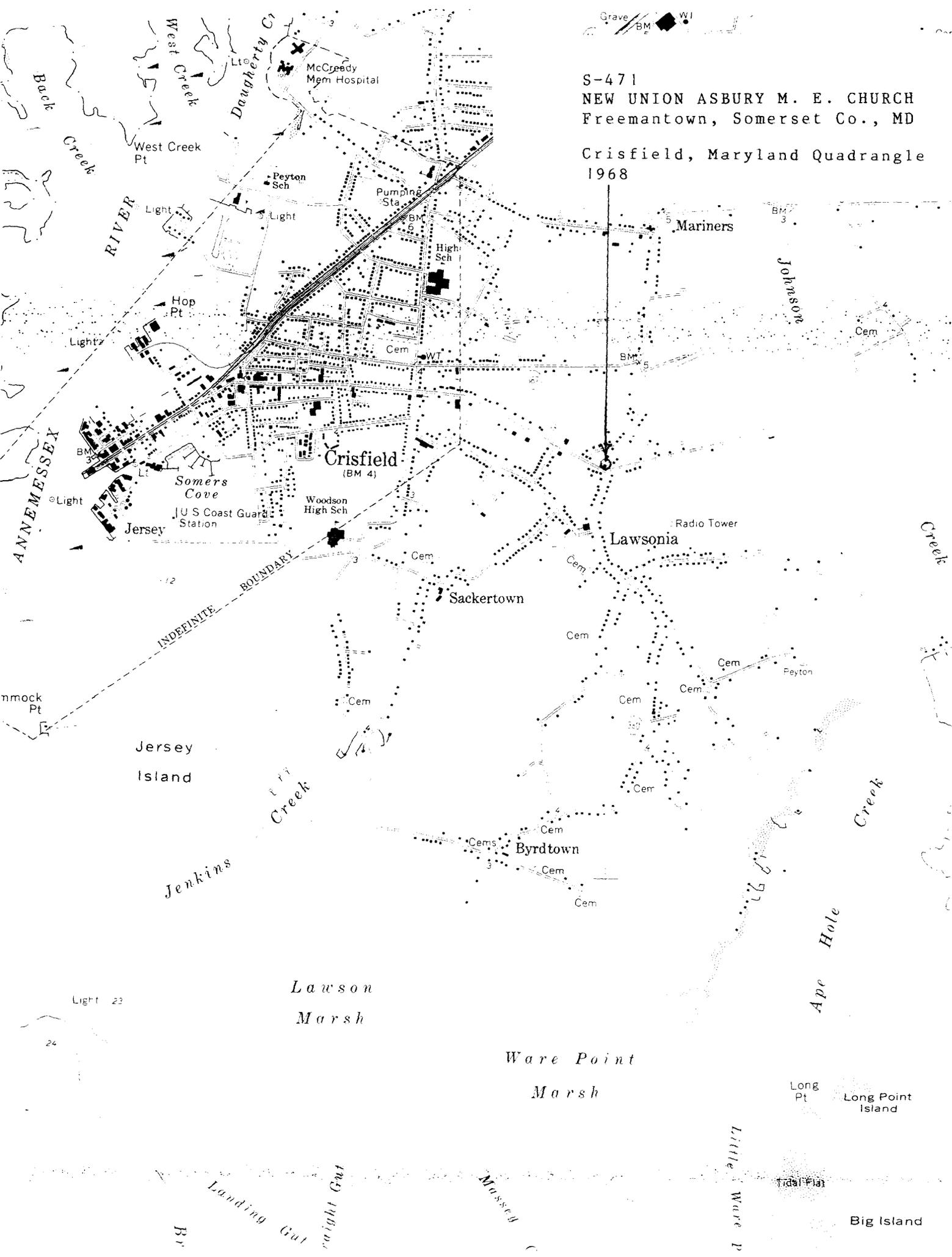
\$1,000 Main Street Extended



S-471
NEW UNION ASBURY M. E. CHURCH
Freemantown, Crisfield vicinity
Somerset County, Maryland
Lake, Griffing, and Stevenson
Atlas 1877

S-471
NEW UNION ASBURY M. E. CHURCH
Freemantown, Somerset Co., MD

Crisfield, Maryland Quadrangle
1968





S-471

NEW UNION ASBURY M. E. CHURCH
FREEMANTOWN, CRISFIELD VICINITY,
SUMMER COUNTY, MARYLAND

SOUTHEAST ELEVATION

6/95, PAUL TRUART, PHOTOGRAPHER

NEC. / MD. HISTORICAL TRUST

1/4



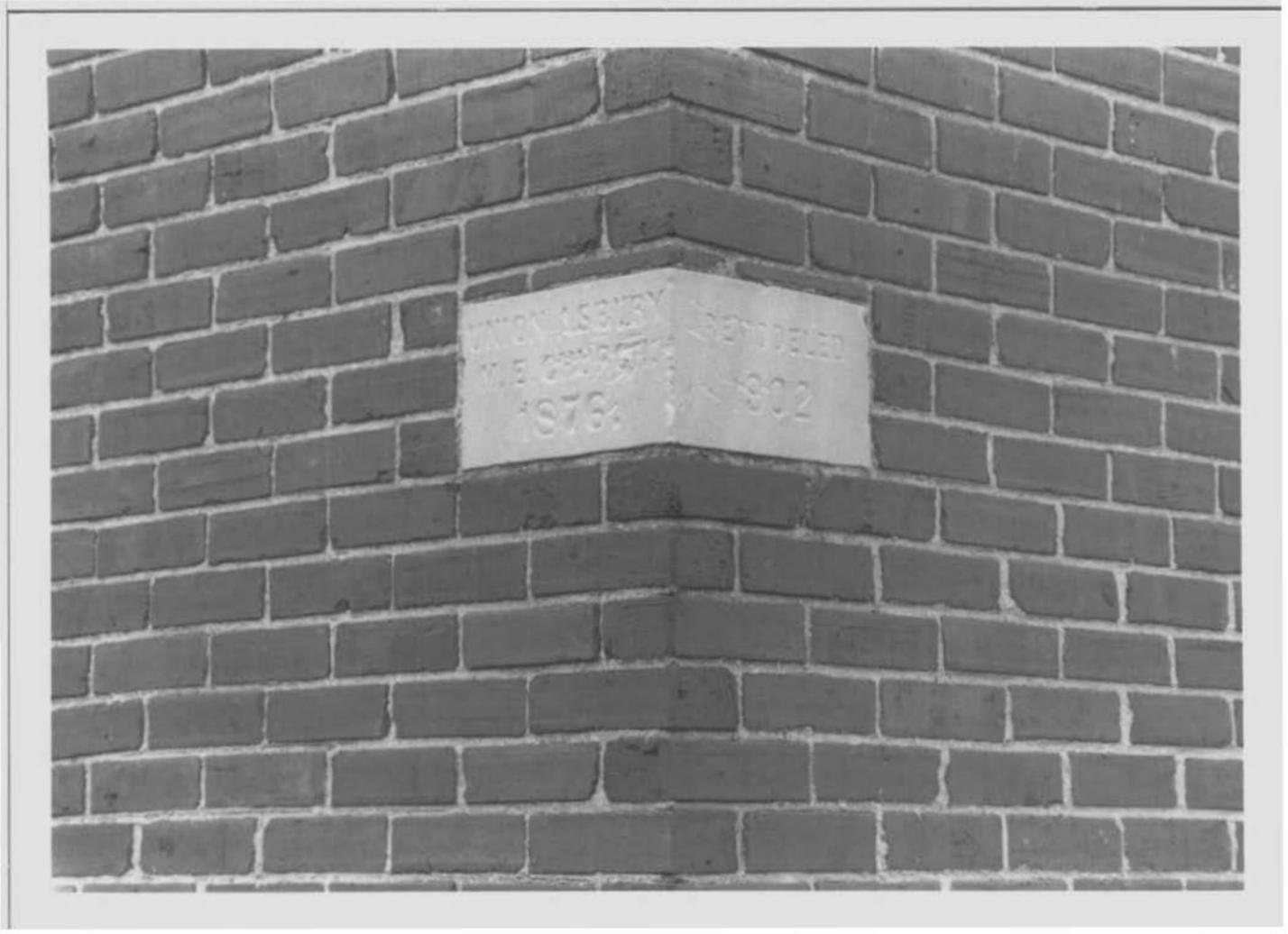
S-471

NEW UNION ASBURY M.E. Church
FREEMANTOWN, CRISFIELD VICINITY,
SUMMERS COUNTY, MARYLAND

NORTHEAST ELEVATION

6/95, PAUL TOURRE, PHOTOGRAPHER
WEL. / M.D. HISTORICAL TRUST

2/4

A black and white photograph of a brick wall corner. The wall is constructed of dark bricks with light mortar. In the center of the corner, there is a rectangular, light-colored stone or concrete plaque. The plaque has an inscription in raised letters. The text is arranged in four lines: the first line reads 'WILLIAM ASBURY', the second line reads 'THE CHURCH', the third line reads '1876', and the fourth line reads '1902'. The plaque is positioned such that it covers the corner of the brickwork.

WILLIAM ASBURY
THE CHURCH
1876
1902

S-47.1

NEW UNION ASBURY M. E. CHURCH

FREEMANTOWN, CRISFIELD VICINITY,

SOMERSET COUNTY, MARYLAND

OLD DATESTONE - SOUTHWEST CORNER

6/95, PAUL TOWNAT, PHOTOGRAPHER

NEG. / MD. HISTORICAL TRUST

3/4

NEW UNION ASBURY
M. E. CHURCH
WILLIAM RUSSELL PASTOR

BUILT
1928

S-471

NEW UNION ASBURY M. E. CHURCH

FREEMANTON CRISFIELD VICINITY,

SOMERSET COUNTY, MARYLAND

DATESTONE. SOUTHWEST CORNER.

6/95, PAUL THOMAS, PHOTOGRAPHER

NEG. / MD. HISTORICAL TRUST

4/4