

SITE NUMBER: WA-IV-142  
ADDRESS: 16 North Main Street, Smithsburg, MD  
OWNER/LOT NUMBER/ACCESS: Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church,  
Chapel, 211/675 and 128/338, access during worship hours  
BUILDING DATE: 1909

The Trinity Lutheran Evangelical Chapel is a one-and-one-half-story, three-bay, front-gable, brick church with a projecting tower. The red brick is laid in a running bond. The majority of the decorative detail is presented in brick and includes piers, corbelling at the cornice line, and pointed lintels at the lancet windows and door. The windows bear stained glass designs, and have stone sills and brick lintels with stone keystones. A pair of double, wood doors placed in the tower lead into the chapel.

The building is set on original lot 50, a lot that was owned by John Grimes Wrehging, according to the 1814 plat of the town. The 1814 plat shows a one-and-one-half-story, two-bay house with a front gable on the lot. A building, possibly the one noted on the 1814 plat is indicated on the 1875 map on a lot which was then owned by a Mrs. Black. According to the building cornerstone, the chapel was erected in 1909. The 1916 and 1928 Sanborns both indicate the chapel which was numbered 158 Main Street. It stood next to the Lutheran Church, which was numbered 159.

The building is within the Western Maryland Geographic Organization, the Development Period of Industrial/Urban Dominance, and falls within the Historic Period Themes of Religion, and Architecture, Landscape Architecture, and Community Planning.

Prepared by Julie Mueller, April 1991

WA. IV. 142

N

TRINITY EVANGELICAL  
LUTHERAN  
CHURCH

211/675, 128/338

MORRIS LAY  
674/425

ROBERT  
SEISER  
627/303

D.S. SMITH  
708/246

MARY L. RIDENOUR  
505/181

MARY L.  
RIDENOUR  
505/184

JOHN W. EARLEY  
498/26

WAYNE E. PUTMAN  
867/221

RICHARD E. VERDIER  
802/615

DONALD E. HAYS, JR.  
653/42

JOHN L.  
BURKETT  
707/738

CHARLES P. JOHNSON  
822/782

ROBERT L. AURAND  
745/548

EAST WATER

JULIAN OLIVER  
550/422

CARL E. CLINGAN  
829/327

MONROE J. TARANTO  
826/785

WAYNE L. RAMSBERG  
734/815

SIMON CLOPPER  
700/171

CLIFFORD KENDALL  
720/787

THOMAS D. ECKSTINE  
726/931

PAUL C. CORNISH  
895/502

TERRY L.  
MYERS  
628/680

DAVID E. REED  
755/757

DAVID P. CREAMER  
887/865

HOMER L. MYERS  
908/498

DAVID E. REED  
755/757

DAVID P. CREAMER  
887/865

HOMER L. MYERS  
908/498

CATHERINE V.  
POPFENBERGER  
1233A/322

SMITHSBURG LIBRARY

WILLIAM B. KIMLER  
141/584

WILLIAM B. KIMLER  
150/364, 141/585, 138/108

GLORIA W. BARNARD, ET AL  
881/536

SHAWN T. SHINGLER  
515/50

ZELDA P. GROVE, TRUST  
922/37

CHEWSVILLE COOP ASSOCIATION  
230, 173

SOUTH MAIN ST.

WESTERN

**MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN:**

**STATEWIDE HISTORIC CONTEXT**

Geographic Organization: Western Maryland

Chronological/Development Periods: Agricultural-Industrial  
Transition

Historic Period Theme: Religion; and Architecture, Landscape  
Architecture, and Community Planning

Resource Type:

Category: buildings

Historic Environment: small, rural town

Historic Function and Use: ecclesiastical

Known Design Source: unknown

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF  
HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Magi No.

DOE  yes  no

## 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church

and/or common

## 2. Location

street & number 16 North Main Street  not for publication

city, town Smithsburg  vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ congressional district \_\_\_\_\_

state Maryland county Washington

## 3. Classification

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>	
<input checked="" 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"/> 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 Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church

street & number 16 North Main Street telephone no.: 301-824-7460

city, town Smithsburg state and zip code Maryland 21783

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Washington County Courthouse liber

street & number Summit Avenue and West Washington Street folio

city, town Hagerstown state MD

## 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date  federal  state  county  local

pository for survey records

city, town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_

# 7. Description

Survey No. WA-IV-142

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input 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 Setting

Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church is located in Washington County at 16-20 North Main Street in Smithsburg. Sited immediately north of the commercial district, it is built directly at the public-right-of-way on Smithsburg's principal north-south thoroughfare. The church is a visual landmark as it can be seen from very far away--its steeple is the town's tallest architectural feature.

The church is located at the southeast corner of Main Street and Fire House Lane. It is abutted on the house by a house. The rear of the lot is defined by an alley. The cemetery behind the church and chapel has the unmarked grave of Christopher Smith, the founder of Smithsburg.

## Exterior

The Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church is comprised of two distinct sections: the church and its neighboring, connected chapel. The church is a one-and-a-half-story brick building with a gently sloping, front-gable roof and a tall projecting tower in the center bay. The tower is topped by a tall frame spire. The building was encased with new brick siding in 1964 in an attempt to halt deterioration of the original brick walls.

The entrance to the church is located in the projecting tower. It is composed of a set of double doors set in a pointed arch entry. Fenestration consists of lancet windows. It is joined to the chapel by a small, one-story connector that was built in 1938.

The chapel is a one-and-one-half-story, three-bay, front-gable, brick building with a projecting tower. The red brick is laid in a running bond. The majority of the decorative detail is presented in brick and includes piers, corbelling at the cornice line, and pointed lintels at the lancet windows and door. The windows bear stained glass designs and have stone sills and brick lintels with stone keystones. A pair of double, wood doors placed in the tower lead into the chapel.

The back of the chapel has received several additions over the years. In 1912 a kitchen was constructed and in 1972 a large, two-story addition was erected that holds classrooms and offices.

(continued...)

# 8. Significance

Survey No. WA-IV-142

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 checked="" 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 1851, 1891, 1909 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.

The history of Lutheran worship in the Smithsburg area is traced to 1787 when St. Peter's or "Beard's" Church was erected. The oldest Lutheran Church in the Smithsburg charge, it served a congregation that was spread over a large territory east of Hagerstown. It was not until 1822 that a Lutheran Church was erected in Smithsburg. According to church records, that building was designed by the architect John Etnoyer and was built of stone. Less than 30 years later the Smithsburg congregation had outgrown that church and decided to erect a new one.

The new church was erected in 1851 at a cost of \$3000 on original lot 51. It was a one-and-a-half-story structure built in a design that was commonly found in the area (it is similar to St. Paul's Methodist Church in Smithsburg and the original Christ Reformed Church in Sharpsburg). This building forms the core of the extant structure. It has been extensively remodeled over the years. In 1870 it was repaired and re-furnished. A large building program took place in 1891 when the tower and spire were added to the front of the building, the pulpit recess was constructed, and new pews and furniture were purchased.

In 1909 the cornerstone for the chapel was laid on a plot immediately south of the main church. The plot was part of original lot 50 that was owned by John Grimes Wrehging, according to the 1814 plat of the town. The 1814 plat shows a one-and-one-half-story, two-bay house with a front gable on the lot. A building, possibly the one noted on the 1814 plat, is indicated on the 1877 map on a lot which was then owned by a Mrs. Black.

The design of the chapel echoes that of the church; it is a front-gable brick building with a tower and truncated spire. The two structures were joined in 1938 with the construction of a connector.

The most radical of the alterations to the structures took place in the 1960s and 1980s. In 1964 the church and the connector were encased in new brick to protect the deteriorating walls. The interior alterations described in Section 7 were completed in 1983.

(continued...)



## 7. DESCRIPTION

Page 7.1

Interior

The interior of the church is divided into two sections: an entry hall with a set of stairs leading up to the balcony and the sanctuary. The sanctuary is a large open room with a pointed apse and a balcony at the rear of the church. The sanctuary was extensively remodeled in the 1970s. This included a complete refurnishing, the installation of an acoustic tile ceiling, the addition of paneling to the walls, and the installation of a new organ. All that appears to remain from the older church is a large wood starburst medallion at the center of the ceiling that was carved by Jacob Honodel.

A door next to the altar area leads from the sanctuary into the 1938 connector to the chapel. This room contains restrooms, a stairwell into the basement, and an entrance to North Main Street. The connector is architecturally undistinguished.

The chapel is now used for classes. All pews have been removed to create a single large space. The space can, however, be divided into smaller units. A modern sliding wall system that moves along tracks placed into the drop ceiling has been installed. Original features in the chapel include wainscotting and the stained glass windows. The windows at the back (east elevation) of the chapel were blocked off in 1912 when the kitchen addition was built. Original cabinets and counters are extant in this section.

The 1972 rear wing contains a variety of small and large, unornamented rooms.

**8. SIGNIFICANCE**

Page 8.1

Significance

A preliminary architectural evaluation of the church was made in January 1991 by Julianne Mueller during a survey of Smithsburg. At that time a survey site number WA-IV-142 was assigned and it was determined that the structure is a contributing element to Smithsburg's historic architectural character. A summary sheet on the building with photographs was submitted to the Maryland Historical Trust in May 1991. The summary provides a basic description of the building and places it within the Maryland Comprehensive State Historic Preservation Plan: State Historic Context (Western Maryland Geographic Organization; the Development Period of Agricultural-Industrial Transition and Industrial/Urban Dominance; the Historic Period Themes of Religion; and Architecture, Landscape Architecture, and Community Planning).

Upon the suggestion of the Smithsburg Historical Society, the general history of the church was researched. It was concluded that the buildings have served an important religious and community role since the mid 19th century, are a good example of restrained, late 19th-century, Gothic Revival architecture, and may meet eligibility Criterion C for listing on the Maryland Register.

**Criterion A -- The property is associated with significant historical events.**

**Criterion B -- The property is not associated with a significant person.**

**Criterion C -- The building exhibits exceptional architectural design, method of construction, or craftsmanship, or is the product of a trained architect. For its commanding presence on the Smithsburg skyline, and for its restrained Gothic Revival detailing, the Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church is a contributing element to the architectural significance of Smithsburg. However, due to the alterations to the interior and exterior of the original church, the property would not qualify as an individual landmark.**

**Criterion D -- The property may provide important information about history or prehistory. The property has not been assessed for its archeological potential. Because of extensive alterations to the building over the years, the archeological record may have been obliterated except in the cemetery area which has not had any new burials since the 1890s.**

9. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Page 9.1

Scharf, J. Thomas. History of Western Maryland. Baltimore:  
Regional Publishing Company, reprinted 1968.

Smithsburg Historical Society, photographic files

Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, historic files

MAPS:

1814 Plat of the town

1877 town map

1916 Sanborn

1923 Sanborn Map



K.J.N.

WA-IV-142

c.1910 (14 N. Main is being excavated in the foreground of this photo.)

c. 1915-

lot to south appears to be the  
excavation for 14 S. Main that  
was bld. c. 1915

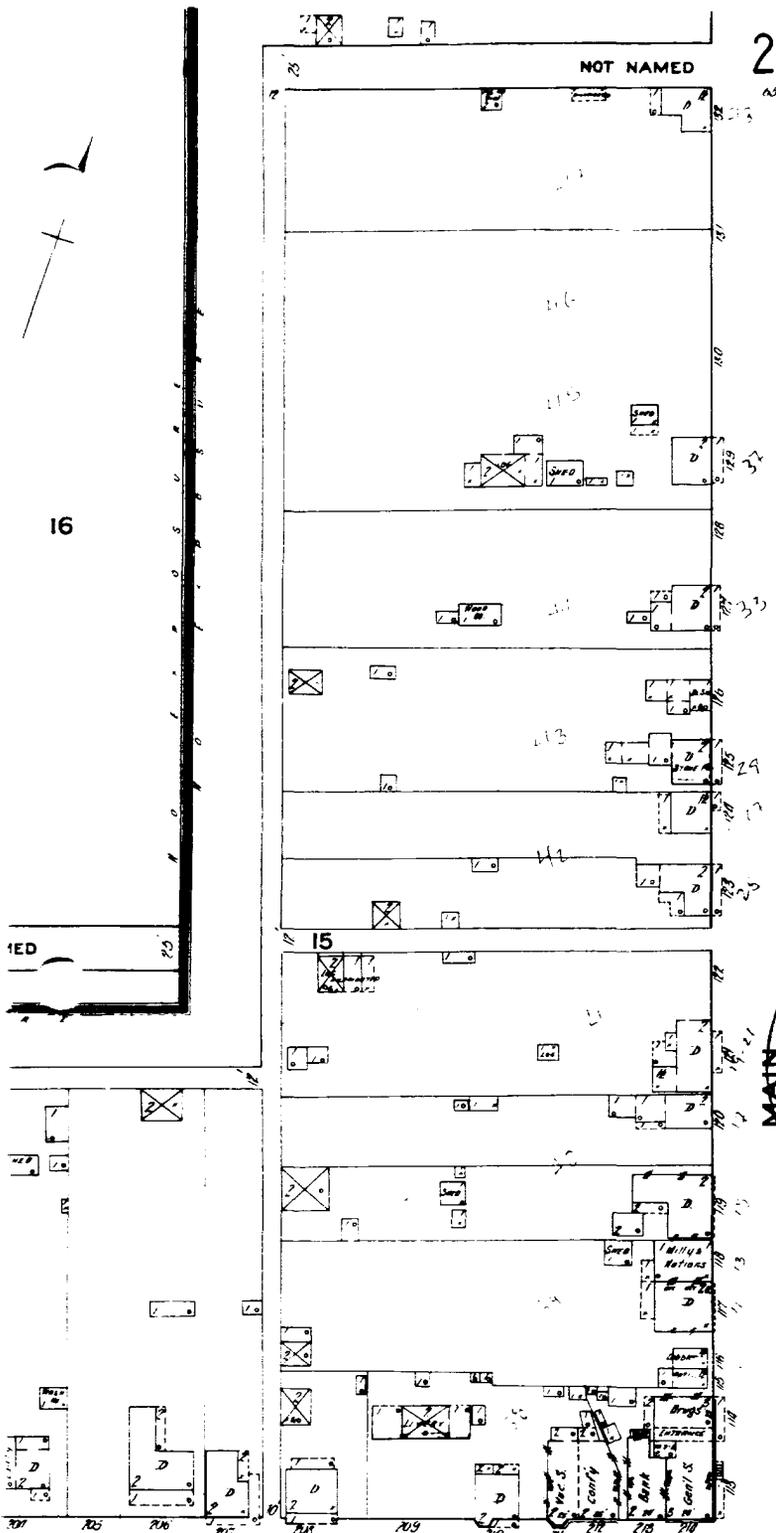


PH-III-VM

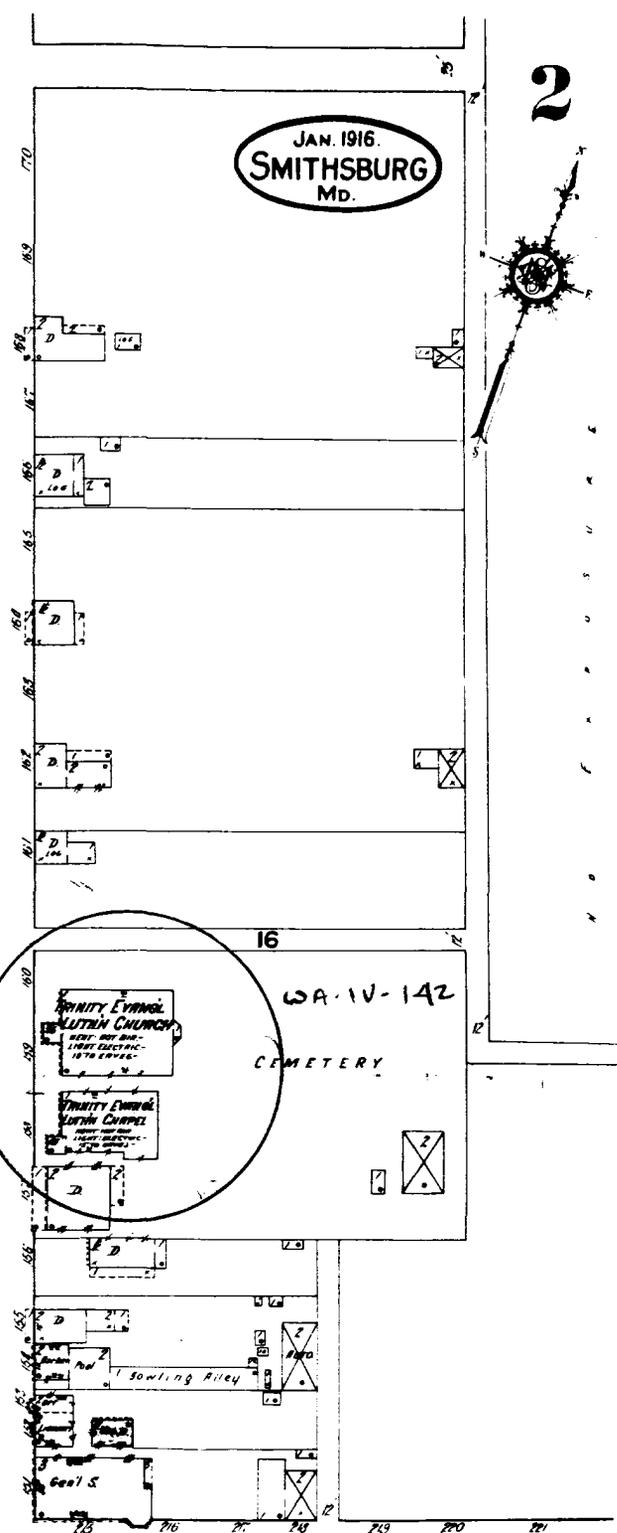
WA-IV-142  
pre 1891



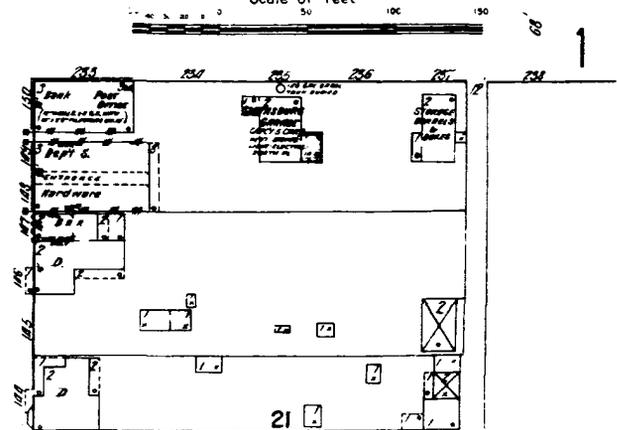
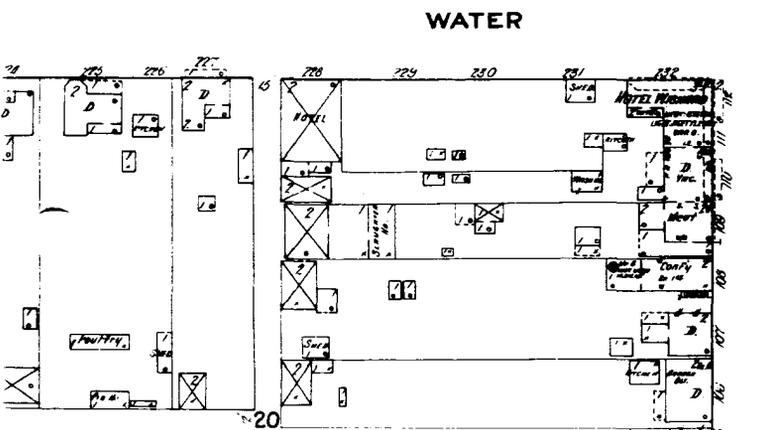


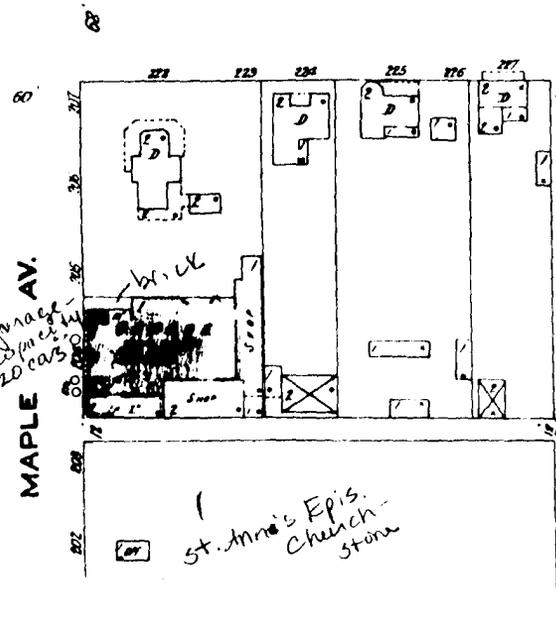
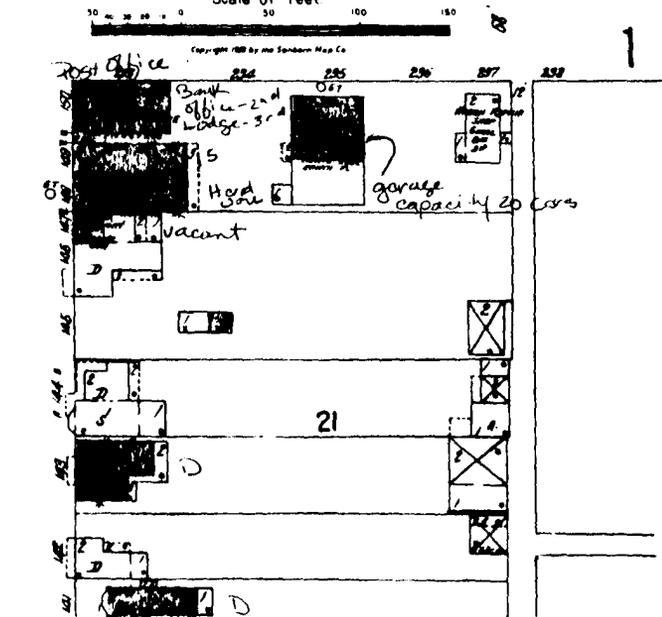
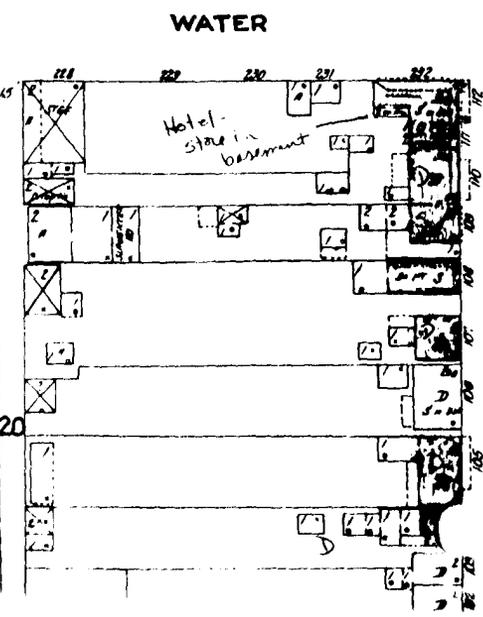
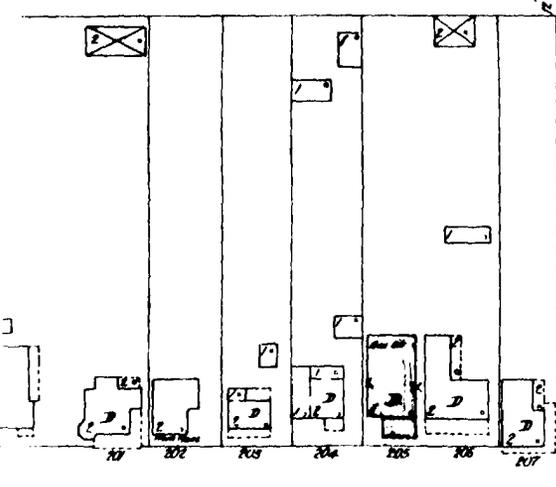
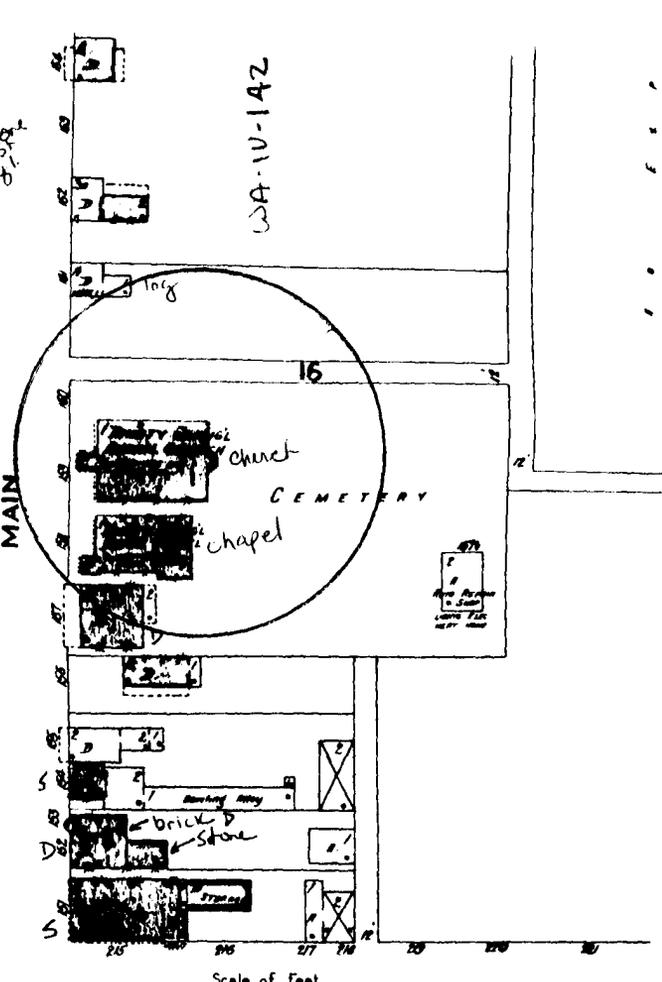
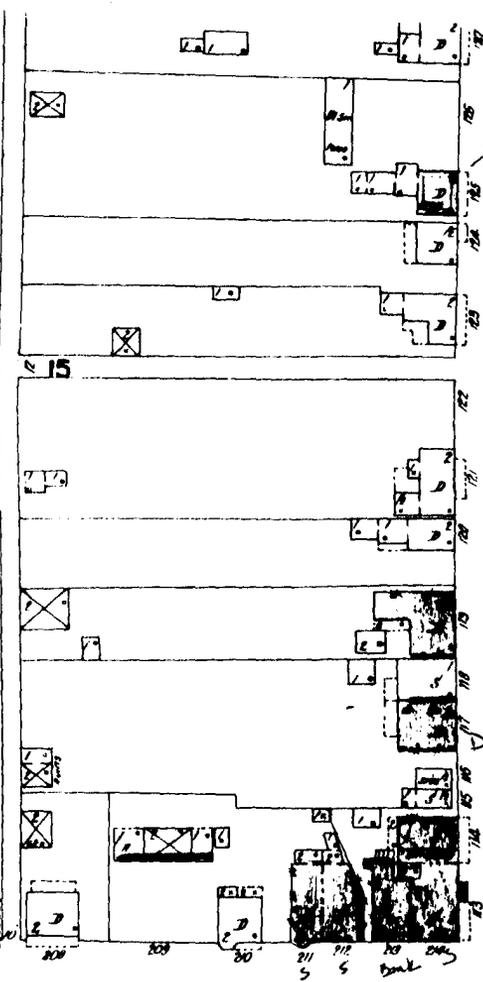
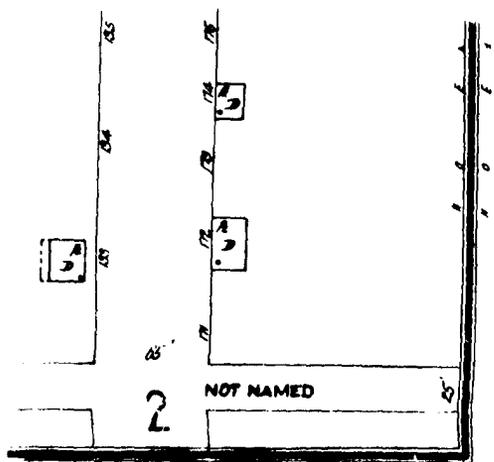


2



2





1923 Sanborn

WA. IV. 142



TRINITY EVANGELICAL  
LUTHERAN  
CHURCH  
211/675, 128/338

MORRIS E. LAY  
674/425  
ROBERT  
SEISER  
627/303  
D.S. SMITH  
708/246  
MARY L. RIDENOUR  
505/181

JOHN W. RILEY  
498/26  
MARY I.  
RIDENOUR  
505/184

WAYNE E. PUTMAN  
867/221  
RICHARD E. VERDIER  
802/615  
DONALD E. HAYS  
653/42

JOHN L. BURKETT  
707/738  
CHARLES P. JOHNSON  
822/782

ROBERT L. AURAND  
745/548

EAST WATER

JULIAN OLIVER  
553/422  
CARL E. CLINGAN  
829/327

MONROE J. TARANTO  
826/785

WAYNE L. RAMSBERG  
734/815

SIMON CLOPPER  
700/171

CLIFFORD KENDALL  
720/787

THOMAS D. ECKSTINE  
726/931

PAUL C. CORNISH  
895/502

DAVID E. REED  
755/757  
DAVID R. CREAMER  
887/865  
HOMER L. MYERS  
908/498

CATHERINE V.  
POPFELBERGER  
12/338/322  
SMITHSBURG LIBRARY

WILLIAM B. KIMLER  
141/584

GLORIA W. BARNARD, ET AL  
881/536

SHAWN T. SHINGLER  
213/50

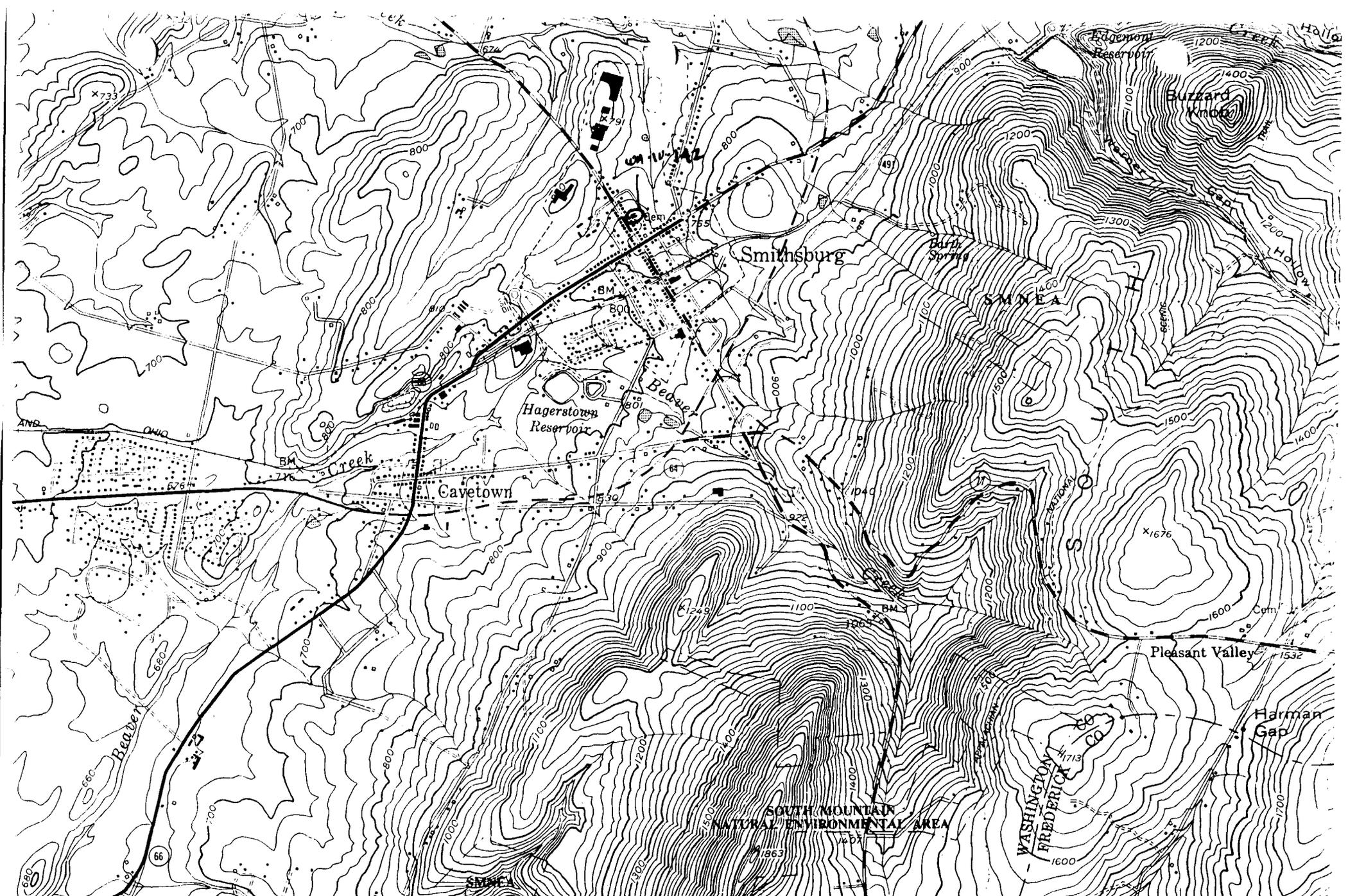
ZELDA P. GROVE, TRUST  
922/37

WILLIAM B. KIMLER  
150/364, 141/585, 138/108  
500A

SOUTH MAIN ST.

CHEWSVILLE CO-OP ASSOCIATION  
290/173

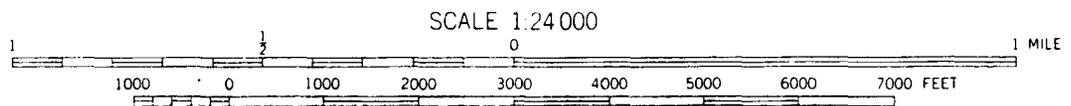
WESTERN



TNA 1.9 MI. 630 000 FEET 277 278 35 279 (MYERSVILLE) WOLFVILLE 3.8 MI. GARFIELD 2.3 MI. 32'30" 282  
 (MD.) 5463 11 SE 10 MI. TO U.S. 40

ological Survey

from aerial





WA-10-142

7/1991

J. Muelle

N. elev.



WA-10-142

71991

J. Muelle

rear (E+N) elev. + cemetery



WA-1V-142

7/1991

J. Mueller

rec (E.) elev.



WA-10-142

7/1991

J. Muelle

N elev.







