WI-414 1913-15
Maryland National Guard Armory
Salisbury
Public

For close to sixty years the southwest corner of South Division and Circle Avenue was distinguished by the Maryland National Guard Armory building erected between 1913 and 1915. Designed by Easton architects, Brinkloe & Canning, the fortress-like armory by inspired by medieval English castles. The start of construction for this long-anticipated building was announced in *The Wicomico News* on June 12, 1913. The paper stated that,

> *In a few days ground will be broken at Division and Circle avenue for Salisbury's splendid new Armory–the finest single company armory in Maryland. The architecture suggests one of the huge old castles of Medieval England–simple, sturdy but mightily attractive. Two tall towers, with castellated tops, guard the gateway; to right and left of these stretch the main wings of the building, with lesser towers at the extreme ends. The walls are all built of picturesque black header brick (Made in Salisbury by the way) relieved by copings, corner blocks, and cornices of white limestone. A dry "moat" runs along the front, to carry out the castle idea and also give light to the basement windows.*

Thomas H. Mitchell received the contract for construction, which totaled close to $28,000. With its ambitious size and well-defined exterior, Salisbury's National Guard Armory building was executed on an impressive scale for its time and place. Although not nearly as elaborate, armories of similar design were erected in several other lower Shore communities. The Crisfield and Pocomoke City armories, nearly identical to one another, were erected in 1927.

Following the state's sale of the armory property to the City of Salisbury in 1959 the structure was redesigned and rebuilt in its current form as the Wicomico County Free Library.

MARYLAND HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN INFORMATION

RESOURCE NAME: Armory Company No. 1

MHT INVENTORY NUMBER: WI-414

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DATA

1. Historic Period Theme(s): Architecture
Government

2. Geographic Orientation: Eastern Shore

3. Chronological/Development Period(s): Industrial/Urban Dominance
1870-1930

4. Resource Type(s): Armory

Survey No. WI-414

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Magi No.

DOE ___yes ___no

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic: Armory Company No. 1

and/or common: Wicomico County Free Library

2. Location

street & number: 122 South Division Street ___ not for publication

city, town: Salisbury ___ vicinity of congressional district: First

state: Maryland county: First

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
___ district	_x_ public	x occupied	___ agriculture	___ museum
_x_ building(s)	___ private	___ unoccupied	___ commercial	___ park
___ structure	___ both	___ work in progress	x educational	___ private residence
___ site	**Public Acquisition**	**Accessible**	___ entertainment	___ religious
___ object	___ in process	___ yes: restricted	___ government	___ scientific
	___ being considered	x yes: unrestricted	___ industrial	___ transportation
	_x_ not applicable	___ no	___ military	___ other:

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

name: Wicomico County Council

street & number: Government Office Building telephone no.:

city, town: Salisbury state and zip code: MD 21801

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.: Wicomico County Clerk of Court Map 107, P. 1072 liber 862

street & number: Wicomico County Courthouse folio 575

city, town: Salisbury state: MD 21801

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date ___ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. WI-414

Condition		Check one	Check one
___ excellent	___ deteriorated	___ unaltered	_x_ original site
_x_ good	___ ruins	_x_ altered	___ moved date of move _____
___ fair	___ unexposed		

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

The Wicomico County Free Library, located on the southwest corner of South Division Street and Circle Avenue, incorporates the cellar and portions of the walls of the former National Guard Armory. The armory was severely altered when it was rebuilt as a library during the 1960s. The structure faces east.

Built between 1913 and 1915, the former concrete, brick and stone armory followed the prevailing taste in structures of this type with its fortress-like design inspired by English Tudor castles. Supported on an poured concrete foundation with an excavated cellar, nine-bay by three-bay brick and stone armory was topped by a flat roof hidden behind a crenelated parapet. Attached to the back of the rectangular main block was a long single-story rear wing assembly room.

The east (main) wall of the former armory was a symmetrical nine-bay facade with a pair of three-story octagonal tower flanking the front entrance. The pointed arch front entrance, dressed in carved stone, was reached by way of a flight of masonry steps. Fixed atop the entrance was a grid of nine multi-pane windows set within a stone framework. Above the window wall was a carved stone seal of the State of Maryland. The flanking towers were built in brick with dressed stone quoins accenting each corner of the octagonal tower. Narrow windows pierced the front wall and even narrow slit windows pierced the adjacent sides. The top of each tower was finished with a crenelated parapet dressed in stone. Flanking the towers were groupings of tripartite window sash. The first floor windows, capped by a large stone lintel, included six-over-six sash windows topped by six-pane transoms. A molded stone beltcourse stretched around the wall above the second floor windows. The top of the wall was finished with a crenelated parapet. The outside corner bays projected forward and constituted another tower-like projection for the medieval castle association. Multi-pane windows framed with stone dressings marked the first and second floors, and the top of the wall was finished with a crenelated parapet as well. Large window openings in the foundation wall lighted the full cellar.

The north and south sides were designed in asymmetrical format with a various of large and small windows dressed with stone surrounds. The top of each wall was crenelated also.

8. Significance

Survey No. WI-414

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
___ prehistoric	___ archeology-prehistoric	___ community planning	___ landscape architecture	___ religion
___ 1400–1499	___ archeology-historic	___ conservation	___ law	___ science
___ 1500–1599	___ agriculture	___ economics	___ literature	___ sculpture
___ 1600–1699	_x_ architecture	___ education	___ military	___ social/ humanitarian
___ 1700–1799	___ art	___ engineering	___ music	___ theater
___ 1800–1899	___ commerce	___ exploration/settlement	___ philosophy	___ transportation
_X_ 1900–	___ communications	___ industry	_X_ politics/government	___ other (specify)
		___ invention		

Specific dates 1913-15 **Builder/Architect** Brinkloe & Canning, architects; Thomas H. Mitchell, builder

check: Applicable Criteria: __A __B x C __D
and/or
Applicable Exception: __A __B __C __D __E __F __G

Level of Significance: __national __state _xlocal

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

For close to sixty years the southwest corner of South Division and Circle Avenue was distinguished by the Maryland National Guard Armory building erected between 1913 and 1915. Designed by Easton architects, Brinkloe & Canning, the fortress-like armory by inspired by medieval English castles.[1] The start of construction for this long-awaited building was announced in *The Wicomico News* on June 12, 1913. The paper stated that,

> *In a few days ground will be broken at Division and Circle avenue for Salisbury's splendid new Armory–the finest single company armory in Maryland. The architecture suggests one of the huge old castles of Medieval England–simple, sturdy but mightily attractive. Two tall towers, with castellated tops, guard the gateway; to right and left of these stretch the main wings of the building, with lesser towers at the extreme ends. The walls are all built of picturesque black header brick (Made in Salisbury by the way) relieved by copings, corner blocks, and cornices of white limestone. A dry "moat" runs along the front, to carry out the castle idea and also give light to the basement windows.*[2]

Thomas H. Mitchell received the contract for construction, which totaled close to $28,000. With its ambitious size and well-defined exterior, Salisbury's National Guard Armory building was executed on an impressive scale for its time and place. Although not nearly as elaborate, armories of similar design were erected in several other lower Shore communities. The Crisfield and Pocomoke City armories, nearly identical to one another, were erected in 1927.

---

[1] *The Wicomico News*, April 24, 1913.

[2] *The Wicomico News*, June 12, 1913.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. WI-414

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____ **Quadrangle scale** _____

UTM **References** do NOT complete UTM references

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
A				B			
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification

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

state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Paul B. Touart, Architectural Historian		
organization	Private Consutlant	**date**	3/10/99
street & number	P. O. Box 5	**telephone**	410-651-1094
city or town	Westover	**state**	Maryland 21871

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
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
DHCP/DHCD
100 COMMUNITY PLACE
CROWNSVILLE, MD 21032-2023
514-7600

PS-2746

WI-414
Maryland National Guard Armory
(Wicomico County Free Library)
South Division Street
Salisbury, Wicomico County, Maryland
Chain of title

Map 107, Parcel 1072

862/575	Wicomico County Free Library
	to
7/21/1976	Wicomico County, Maryland
JWTS 539/355	City of Salisbury
	to
5/31/1962	Wicomico County Free Library "Maryland National Guard Armory Property"
JWTS 468/237	State of Maryland
	to
3/9/1959	The City of Salisbury Being in respects the same land and easements conveyed to the State of Maryland

EAT 86/25 Salisbury Realty Company

to

2/28/1913 State of Maryland

$6,500 Whereas by the Act of the Assembly of MD for 1912, Chapter 749 an appropriation of $400,000 was made, thirty thousand dollars of which was to purchase a piece of real estate in the town of Salisbury, Wicomico County, MD for the purpose of erecting thereon an armory for the use of the MD National Guard

Being part of the tract of land conveyed by Thomas H. Spence and Charlotte Spence, Mary L. Spence, Adelle S. Spence, Walter C. Humphreys, Laurena T. Humphreys, Thomas H. Spence, admin. of E. Virginia Spence and Oliver D. Collins, exec. of Margaret S. Purnell to Henry B. Freeny, 3/17/1910, EAT 76/63, and conveyed by said Henry B. Freeny to said Salisbury Realty Co., 4/4/1910, EAT 70/72

EAT 70/63 Thomas A. Spence, et al.

to

3/17/1910 Henry B. Freeny

All those lots, tracts, or parcels of land situate partly in Salisbury Election District, partly in Camden Election District, partly in Parsons Election and partly in Nutters Election District....

land laid out by the commissioners to divide and value
the real estate of Dr. Cathell Humphreys in the years
1867-68 119.89 acres

The Wicomico News, March 6, 1913

...Last week Mrs. E. R. Jackson purchased the corner lot on Division street, belonging to the Humphreys heirs, opposite the beautiful Trinity M. E. Church, South, as the site for the new Y.M.C.A. Building. Plans will be prepared at once and the erection of the building will be started in the early summer.

The Wicomico News, April 10, 1913

Main Street will be opened through to the tracks of the New York, Philadelphia, and Norfolk Railroad sometime within one year.

The Wicomico News, April 24, 1913

The Armory Plans Have Been Adopted

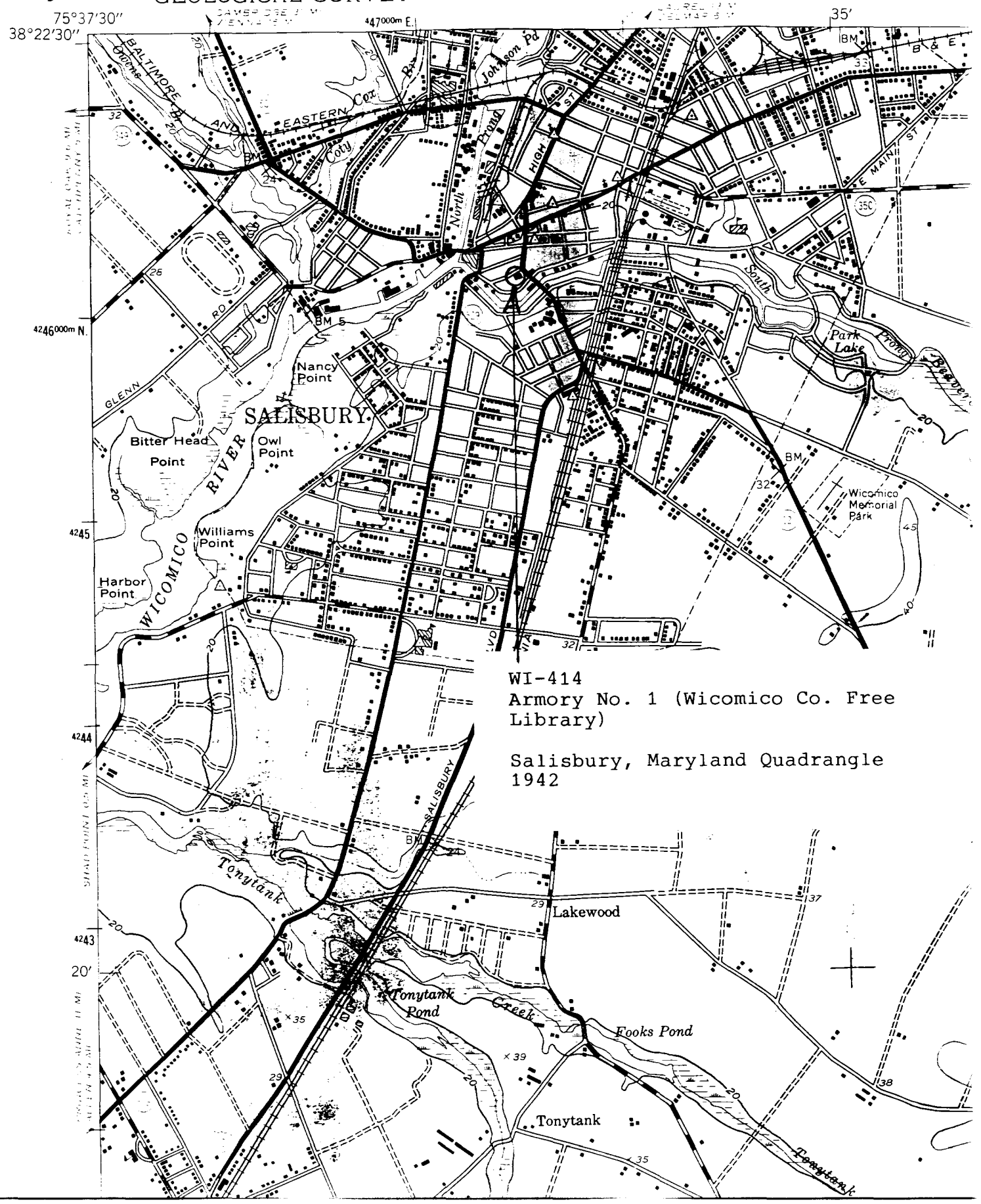
Architects, Brinkloe & Canning of Easton, MD prepared the plans and specifications, which shows a beautiful building of ancient style of architecture. The interior will have a cellar under the entire building with drill hall over it. The front of the building will be three stories with battlement front, representing an ancient castle or fortress.

The Wicomico News, June 12, 1913

In a few days ground will be broken at Division street and Circle avenue for Salisbury's splendid new Armory–the finest single company armory in Maryland. The architecture suggests one of the huge old castles of Medieval England–simple sturdy but mightily attractive. Two tall towers, with castellated tops, guard the gateway; to right and left of these stretch the main wings of the building, with lesser towers at the extreme ends. The walls are all built of picturesque black header brick. (Made in Salisbury by the way) relieved by copings, corner blocks and cornices of white limestone. A dry "moat" runs along the front, to carry out the castle idea and also give light to the basement windows.

Thomas A. Mitchell received the contract for $ 27,980.14

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY



WI-414
Armory No. 1 (Wicomico Co. Free Library)

Salisbury, Maryland Quadrangle
1942