

WO-260
Old Mason's Opera House
Snow Hill
private

c. 1900

When first erected the old Mason's opera house was one of the most distinctive and popular buildings that stood in the heart of Snow Hill. The Washington Street site was not only the location for viewing the current films of the day, but the brick structure was initially three stories high with a prominent parapet wall pierced by tripartite and paired window sash. Capping the wall was a bold metal cornice. Within the recent past, however, the third story has been removed, the commercial front has been reworked, and the interior has lost its significant theater fittings.

HISTORIC CONTEXT INFORMATION

Resource Name: OL - MASON'S OPERA HOUSE

MHT Inventory Number: W0-260

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA:

1) Historic Period Theme(s):

ARCHITECTURE, ECONOMIC

2) Geographic Orientation:

EASTERN SHORE

3) Chronological/Developmental Period(s):

1870-1930 INDUSTRIAL / URBAN DOMINANCE

4) Resource Type(s):

1. STANDING STRUCTURE

a. FORMER OPERA HOUSE AND
MOVIE THEATER

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic OLD MASON'S OPERA HOUSE

and/or common

2. Location

street & number North Washington Street not for publication

city, town Snow Hill vicinity of congressional district First

state Maryland county Worcester

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 checked="" 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 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 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

street & number telephone no.:

city, town state and zip code

5. Location of Legal Description

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

street & number Worcester County Courthouse folio

city, town Snow Hill state MD 21863

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date federal state county local

pository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. WO-260

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input 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 checked="" 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 old Mason's opera house stands on the west side of North Washington Street in the center of the business district of Snow Hill, Worcester County, Maryland. The two-story, three-bay brick structure faces southeast and is covered by a flat roof hidden behind a parapet wall.

Evidently built around the turn of the twentieth century, the two-story brick building has been extensively reworked. The first floor commercial front has been completely replaced, and the third floor has been removed as well. As originally erected the Washington Street building was three full stories with a bold metal cornice that topped the parapet wall. Currently the first floor retains a center pier and recessed entrances that open into unoccupied spaces. The flanking display windows are modern replacements. Lighting the second floor are nine single-pane sash windows set in three groups of three. Individual jack arches top each window. Fixed above the row of windows is a recessed panel that once held the name, "MASON'S OPERA HOUSE." The upper portion of the wall has been rebuilt as a solid brick wall. Rising from the north corner of the building is a narrow brick stack.

The sides of the building are covered with adjacent commercial structures, and the interior has been recently gutted of the former theater fixtures.

8. Significance

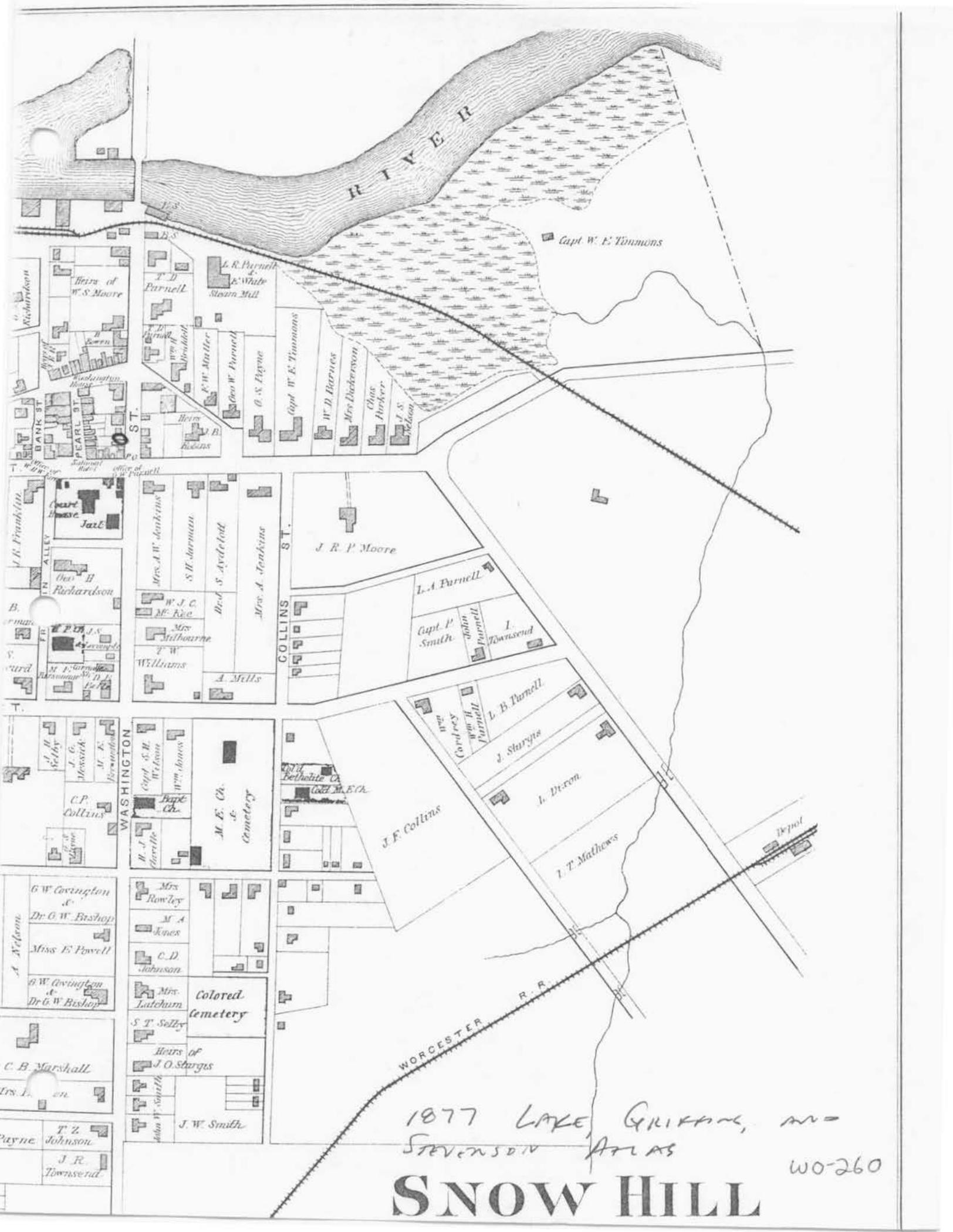
Survey No. WO-260

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: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D and/or	
Applicable Exception: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> G	
Level of Significance: <input type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> state <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> local	

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

The former Mason's opera house was a distinctive building in the center of Snow Hill before recent alterations have removed most significant exterior and interior features. A documentary photograph of the building reveals that the structure was originally three stories high with tripartite and paired windows lighting the third floor. The high parapet wall was capped by a bold metal cornice. Within the past few decades the third floor has been removed and the first floor commercial front has been reworked with bland modern materials. The interior has been gutted of its period features as well.



R I V E R

Capt. W. E. Timmons

Richardsen
Heirs of W. S. Moore
T. D. Purnell
L. R. Purnell & White
Steam Mill
P. Purnell
F. W. Miller
Geo. W. Purnell
O. S. Payne
Capt. W. E. Timmons
W. D. Barnes
Mrs. Dickerson
Chas. Parker
J. S. Nelson

J. K. Franklin
J. K. Richardson
Mrs. A. W. Jenkins
S. H. Sherman
Doc. S. Aydebold
Mrs. A. Jenkins
W. J. C. McRae
Mrs. Milbourne
Williams
A. Mills
J. R. P. Moore
L. A. Purnell
Capt. P. Smith
John Purnell
I. Townsend

WASHINGTON
Capt. S. H. Wilson
Bapt. Ch.
M. E. Ch. & Co.
Cemetery
Bethelite Ch.
Gold M. E. Ch.

6 W. Covington & Dr. G. W. Bishop
Miss E. Powell
A. W. Covington & Dr. G. W. Bishop
C. B. Marshall
Mrs. L. ...
Payne
T. Z. Johnson
J. R. Townsend
Mrs. Rowley
M. A. Knes
C. D. Johnson
Mrs. Latham
S. T. Selley
Heirs of J. O. Sturgis
J. W. Smith

J. F. Collins
L. B. Purnell
J. Sturgis
L. Dixon
I. T. Mathews
Depot

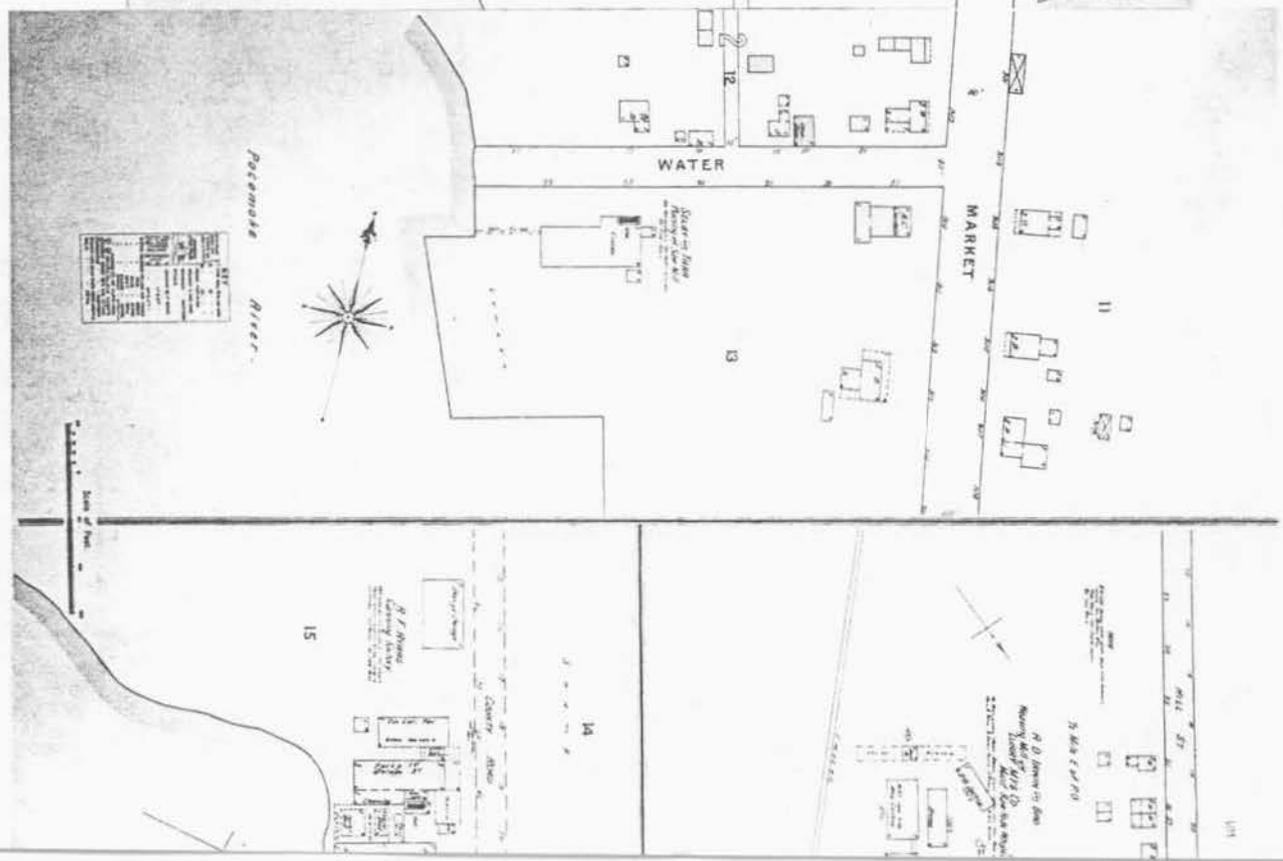
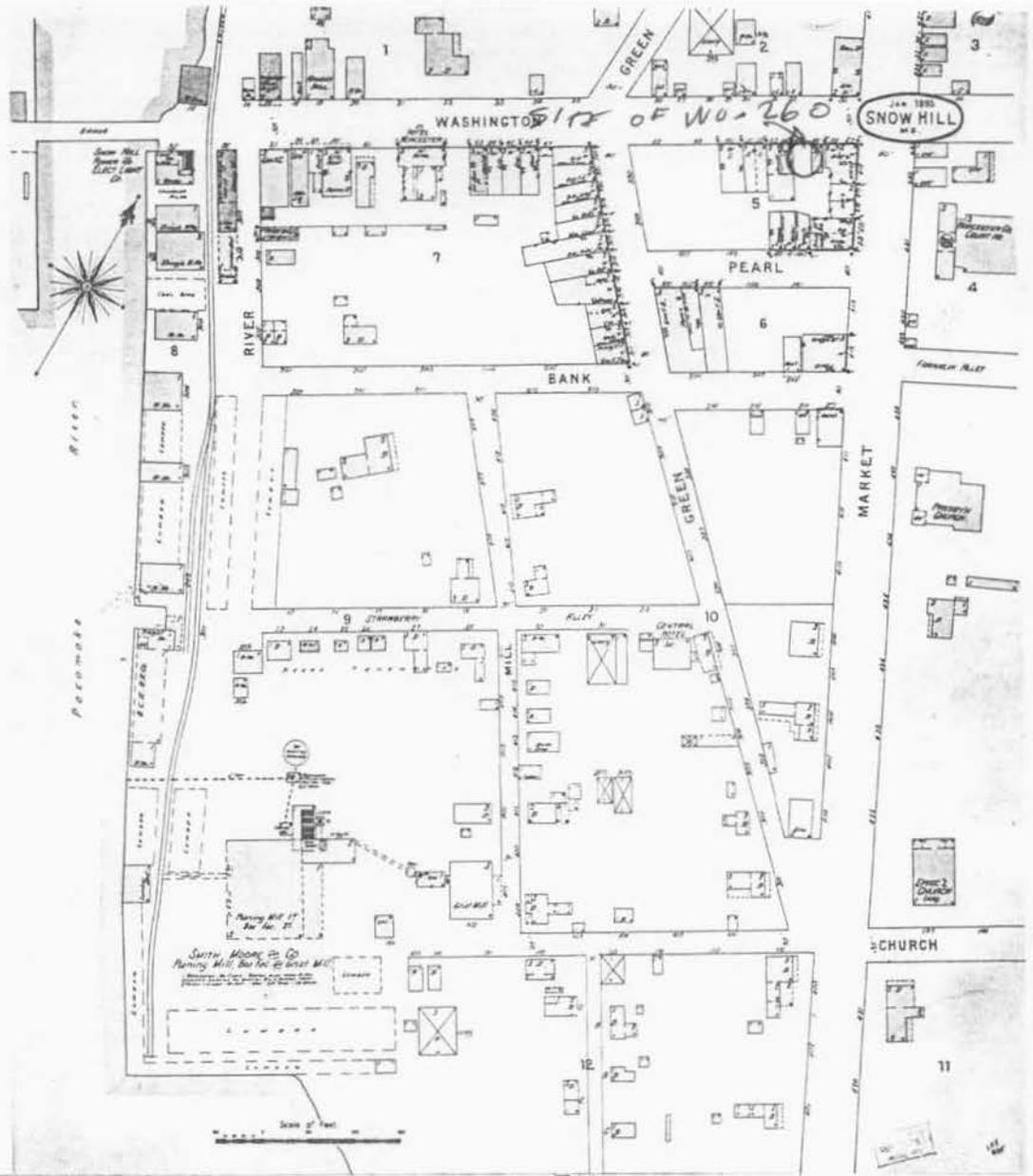
WORCESTER R. R.

1877 LAKE, GRIFFINE, AND STEVENSON'S ATLAS

SNOW HILL

WO-260

1895 SANBORN
SURFACE
MAP



WO-260

WO-260
OLD MASON'S OPERA HOUSE
Snow Hill, MD Quadrangle, 1966

