D-173

Wager Lots 53B, 54A, 55 and 56, High Street, Harpers Ferry National Historical Park

(1796 to 1953)

Special History Study

FINAL REPORT

Prepared by

Mary Johnson
August 17, 1995

National Park Service/University of Maryland
Cooperative Agreement

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PREFACE

Wager Lots 53 to 56 are located on the west side of High Street, in the triangle formed by the stone steps and the intersection of High Street and Public Walk. The Harper House and Marmion Row (Park Buildings 1A to 1D) are just west of these lots. With the exception of Park Building 3, situated on lots 53A and 54B but not dealt with in this report, no buildings are located on the lots. However, ruins of several other buildings are extant.[1]

Existing historical documentation for the vacant lots was developed by Charles Snell in the late 1950s in four reports: "Historic Building Site Survey Report for Bldg. No. 3 - Wager Lot No. 53 - High Street, 'The Williams and Koonce Lots'," "Historic Building Survey Report for Bldg. No. 2, Wager Lot No. 54 - High Street, 'The George W. Cutshaw and Michael Doran Lots'," " Historic Building Survey Report for Wager Lot No. 55, High Street, 'The Hillary Allison and John Gibson Lots'," and "Historic Building Site Survey Report for Wager Lot No. 56 - High Street, 'The John Whip, John McCall and Thomas Boerly Lots'."[2]

In the mid-1830s, Wager Lot 53, Lot 54, Lot 55, and Lot 56 were created. Soon thereafter, these lots were subdivided. The original lot names are historical, but Snell created the names for the subdivisions (Lot 53A, Lot 53B, and so forth). In large part, the present report retains Snell's labels. LOT 56 IS THE EXCEPTION. In his study, Snell divided this lot into three parts--56A, 56B, and 56C--based on his analysis of the lot's antebellum history and his belief there were three buildings standing on the property. Subsequently developed information points

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[1]For information on Park Building 3 see Mary Johnson "Park Building 3 and Wager Lots 53A and 54B, High Street, Harpers Ferry National Historical Park," Special History Study (draft, National Park Service/University of Maryland Cooperative Agreement, 6 March 1995).

[2]These reports are hereafter cited as "Wager Lot No. 53," "Wager Lot No. 54," "Wager Lot No. 55," and Wager Lot No. 56" respectively.

to the existence of four buildings but shows ownership, particularly in the post-war years, divided the property in half. Thus, a two-part division is more appropriate, and this report uses 56A and 56B. Lot 56A includes Snell's 56A, plus occupancy information from his 56B. Lot 56B includes the buildings on Snell's 56B and 56C.

Snell's report covered the history of these lots up to the Civil War. The present report addresses the history of Lots 53 to 56, excluding Park Building 3 and Lots 53A and 54B, from their earliest documented history to acquisition of the property by the Park in the 1950s. As with the earlier reports, this document is a physical history, presenting known information on property ownership, the construction or removal of buildings, and use of the property.

Central to the preparation of this report has been the Park computer database. Begun in February 1989 under a cooperative agreement between the National Park Service and the University of Maryland Department of History, this database contains a computerized index of information on the Harpers Ferry area found in various sources, primarily local newspapers, censuses, and property records.

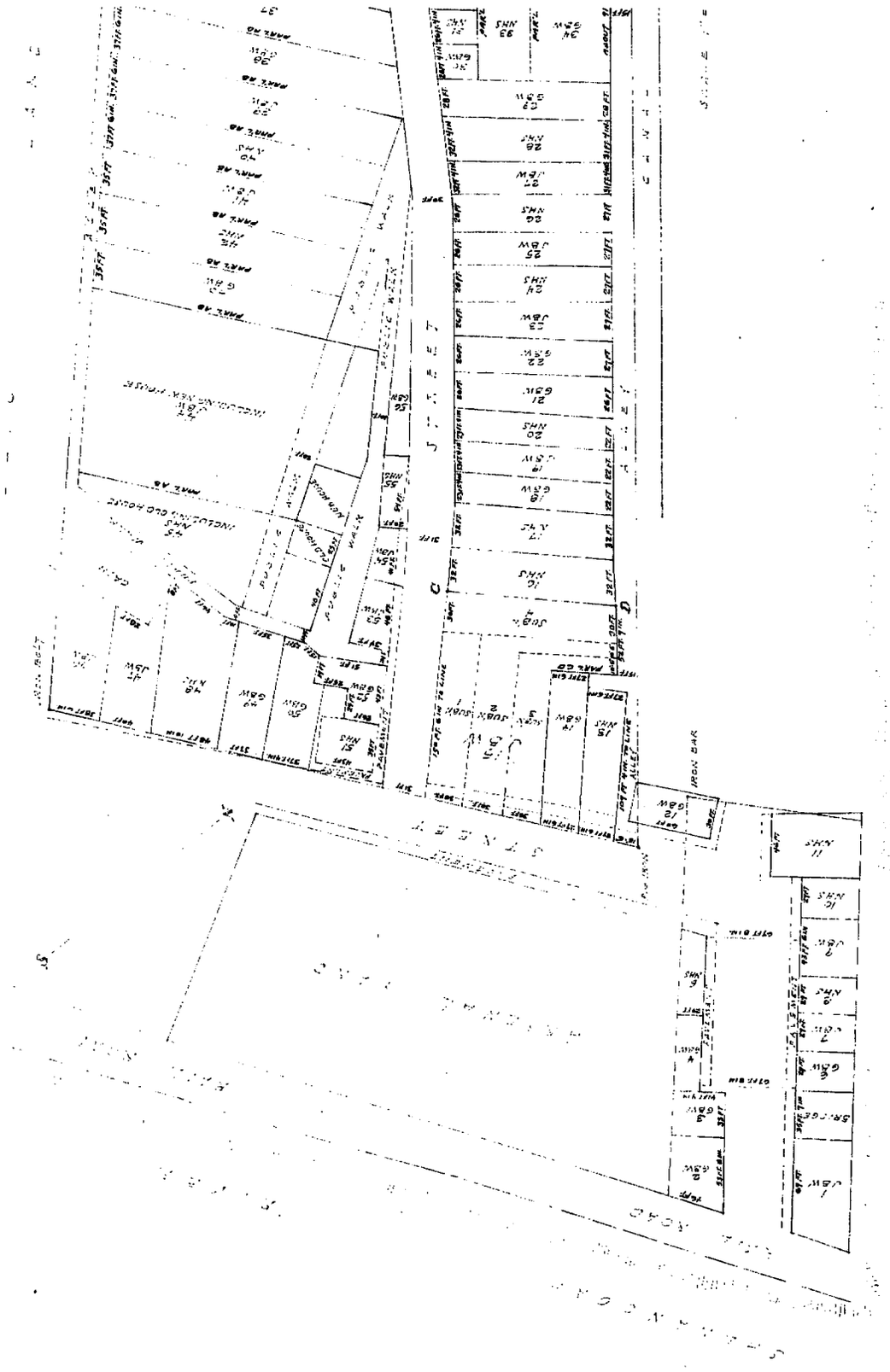


Figure 1. Tracing of 1835 Plat of Wager Lots.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The development of Wager Lots 53 to 56 was an outgrowth of the establishment of a national armory at Harpers Ferry at the end of the eighteenth century, the declining influence of a single family during the fourth decade of the next century, and the formation of transportation networks during the same time period. In 1747, Robert Harper came to the confluence of the Shenandoah and Potomac rivers on his way to the Shenandoah Valley. Pleased with what he saw, Harper bought the claim of squatter Peter Stephens. Later, Harper obtained formal title from Thomas Lord Fairfax in several patents between 1751 and 1763. In 1796 and 1797, the United States purchased much of Harper's land.[3]

When the United States purchased land there, Harpers Ferry had grown only modestly from the settlement Harper first had seen in 1747. Then little more than a convenient river-crossing point for travellers journeying through the Blue Ridge Mountains to the Shenandoah Valley and beyond, the community held only a handful of buildings, in addition to a gristmill, sawmill, and ferry operation, at Harper's death in 1782. Within two decades of the establishment of the armory, the community's population had grown to nearly 1,400, creating demand for residential construction to house the new arrivals and commercial development to provide goods and services for this population.[4]

Although the United States government owned much of the land at Harpers Ferry, the Wager family, Robert Harper's heirs, had retained two centrally-located parcels: one of six acres

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[3]Charles W. Snell, "The Acquisition and Disposal of Public Lands of the U. S. Armory at Harper's Ferry, West Virginia, 1796-1885," Vol I, "A Narrative History," (National Park Service, December 1979), pp. 1-3.

[4]Joseph Barry, The Strange Story of Harper's Ferry with Legends of the Surrounding Country (Martinsburg, WV: Thompson Bros., 1903; reprint Shepherdstown, WV: Shepherdstown Register, Inc. for the Woman's Club of Harpers Ferry District, 1979), pp. 12-14.

and another of three-fourths of an acre. On this property, the Wagers attempted to control the mercantile business at Harpers Ferry during the early nineteenth century. In 1818, family matriarch Catherine Wager claimed the 1796 land sale had been based on a verbal agreement stipulating the United States would allow no retail store on public property and persons living on Wager property would have a monopoly on the mercantile business.[5] The government did not support Mrs. Wager's claim, but until the 1830s, the family did control virtually all privately-owned property at Harpers Ferry and, therefore, had considerable influence in town. Exemplifying the attitude the Wagers had is an advertisement Catharine Wager ran in the Farmer's Repository in March 1819, offering Harpers Ferry "for rent, on the premises, to the highest bidder."[6]

The Wager property along High Street north of the stone steps probably was not part of the profitable lease arrangements the Wagers instituted for their holdings along Shenandoah Street to the confluence of the two rivers. In the first four decades of the nineteenth century, this land largely was vacant. Available documentation suggests only four buildings, most or all likely built within the decade, were standing there in 1840.[7]

Harpers Ferry underwent a transformation in the 1830s, however, that set the stage for more extensive development of the Wager property. About 1830, the Charles Town, Smithfield, and Harpers Ferry and the Frederick and Harpers Ferry turnpikes opened. The Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, begun in 1828, reached Harpers Ferry in 1833, while the Baltimore and Ohio

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[5]Decius Wadsworth to Hon. J. C. Calhoun, 15 April 1820, Reel 19, 12: 1204-5; Wadsworth to James Stubblefield, 19 September 1818, Reel 14, Vol 2, p. 163; Stubblefield to Wadsworth, 8 April 1820, Reel 21, Vol 4, pp. 345-50.

[6]Farmer's Repository, 3 March 1819, p. 3, col. 4.

[7]The four were a frame building on Lot 53A and another on 54B, both standing in 1836, a brick building on 54A, and a stone building on 55B. See Snell, "Wager Lot No. 53," p. 7; "Wager Lot No. 54," pp. 4-6; "Wager Lot No. 55," p. 4.

Railroad, also begun in 1828, crossed the Potomac River late in 1836. Earlier that year, the Winchester and Potomac Railroad opened. Thus, travel by road to several nearby towns, by river to the District of Columbia, and by rail from Winchester to Baltimore became easier.[8]

The event most directly affecting the development of the lots on High Street was the insolvency of James Bate Wager, Catharine's son and one of the heirs to the family holdings in Harpers Ferry, in the 1830s. Wager's financial troubles brought the court-ordered division of the Wager property among James, his brother Gerard, and sister Sarah Ann Swayne. In 1835, James M. Brown platted the Wager land, at which time Wager Lots 53, 54, 55, and 56 were created. Over the next several years, the lots assigned to James Wager, among them Lots 53 and 54, were sold.[9]

Division and sale of a portion of the Wager holdings in the late 1830s opened up the downtown area of Harpers Ferry for new development. Within a few years, the strip of land along the west side of High Street became built up. Buildings were constructed on these four lots, and subdivision of these lots when the Wagers sold or leased the property led to further development. (This includes Wager Lots 53A and 54B on which Park Building 3, discussed in a separate report, stands.) In the two decades preceding the Civil War, the west side of High Street became a collection of small shops and eating/boarding establishments. A shoemaker, saddler and harness maker, tailor, and general flour and feed store proprietor were among the shop owners operating on these lots during the 1840s or 1850s. A tavern/boarding house was located at the uphill end of this strip, near the intersection of High Street and the public walk. The Green

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[8]Dave Gilbert, Where Industry Failed: Water-Powered Mills at Harpers Ferry, West Virginia (Charleston, WV: Pictorial Histories Publishing Co., 1984), pp. 35-41.

[9]Charles W. Snell, "The Business Enterprises and Commercial Development of Harpers Ferry's Lower Town Area, 1803 to 1861" (Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, 9 April 1973), pp. 8-9.

House, another tavern, was located near the middle of this strip, across from the new alley leading to Potomac Street and the musket factory. Similar establishments were located across High Street, thus creating an enclave of taverns and craft-oriented businesses distinct from the stores occupying buildings along Shenandoah Street. The upper floors of the buildings on Wager Lots 53 to 56 served as residences, either for the families of business owners or other tenants.[10]

Like Harpers Ferry as a whole, these lots and their occupants were affected first by John Brown's Raid and then by the Civil War. During John Brown's Raid, Wager Lot 56 occupant Thomas Burley was killed by one of Brown's men. Martha Cutshaw, living on Wager Lot 54A, reportedly witnessed his murder from her window, then ran out the back door of the building for Dr. Nicholas Marmion (living behind her, across the walkway) and a Catholic priest. Martha's husband George meanwhile was taken by one of Brown's men.[11]

With the outbreak of civil war in 1861, many armorers moved north or south to manufacture arms for the Union or the Confederacy, any many other inhabitants also departed, fleeing the devastation descending upon the town. Among them were the Cutshaws, who moved to Charles Town. The town changed hands several times before the Union army finally established control. Troops and blacks who congregated in areas controlled by federal troops occupied many buildings in town. For example, by February 1864, "contraband" occupied the Cutshaw brick store and residence on High Street. The following month, black barber Anderson Jackson rented the building from the United States government, which had taken over abandoned property in Harpers Ferry. Jackson remained for nearly a year until the building became

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[10]For information on other High Street businesses, see for example Snell, "The Business Enterprises and Commercial Development of Harpers Ferry's Lower Town Area, 1803 to 1861" and Jill Y. Halchin, ed. Archeological Views of the Upper Wager Block, A Domestic and Commercial Neighborhood in Harpers Ferry (U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, 1994).

[11]Barry, pp. 51-2; Farmers Advocate, 26 May 1906, p. 4, col. 1.

"Untenantable."[12] In other cases, buildings were damaged. The building on the northern half of Lot 55 (designated 55B) reportedly was "nearly demolished" during the Civil War.[13]

Following the war, the Cutshaw family returned to Wager Lot 54A, where they lived until about 1880. George Cutshaw evidently resumed his tailoring business, probably in the same shop below the residence where he had worked before the war. Bridget Burley, Thomas' widow, lived with her family on the northern half of Wager Lot 56 (designated 56B) until the early 1880s. Wager Lot 53B evidently was vacant until the 1890s, and use of the buildings on Lot 55B and 56A is not known. For several years, Lot 55A, the site of the old Green House tavern, may have been occupied by cooper Turner Freeman, a black man who held a lease on the building from 1870 to 1875 (See 36).

Freeman was not the sole black connected to the west side of High Street. As was mentioned earlier, late in the war barber Anderson Jackson occupied the Cutshaw building. The 1894 Sanborn Map indicates another barber was located there in the early 1890s. As the only known barbers in Harpers Ferry were black (a fact in keeping with the virtual monopoly blacks had on the barbering business in southern towns until the end of the century), it is likely this barber was a black man. In 1898, Patsy Hunter and Cora Higgins, two black women, lived on the Swayne property (Wager Lot 55). A laundry, another type of business blacks successfully entered, was located in Wager Lot 56B according to the 1912 Sanborn Map. This business may have belonged to Storer College graduate Charles Warfield and his brother-in-law.[14]

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[12]Statement of Abandoned Property at Harpers Ferry and Bolivar, 24 February 1864, No. 19698, Park Reel 242, Frame 93; Lease, United States to Anderson Jackson, 1 March 1864, No. 17925, and Report of Rents Collected January 1865, No. 18725, Reel 242, Frames 30 and 32; Report of Rents Collected in March 1865, No. 18148, Reel 242, Frame 46.

[13]Virginia Free Press, 13 December 1869, p. 3, col. 3.

[14]Sanborn Map, Harpers Ferry, 1894 and 1912; Virginia Free Press, 20 July 1898, p. 3, col. 4; Farmers Advocate, 24 August 1907, p. 2, col. 3; Howard N. Rabinowitz, Race Relations in the Urban South, 1865-1890 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1980), p. 85.

The most profound post-war impact on the west side of High Street came in 1898.

> Three large buildings of brick and two of stone were burned, . . . The total loss incurred by the fire is estimated at $7,000, and among those who sustained the heaviest losses are the following: The Brent Nichols property [Wager Lot 53A], the most valuable in the block, . . . The Richard Doran heirs, property [Wager Lot 54B] . . . The Joseph Renner property [Wager Lot 54A] . . . The Swain property [Wager Lot 55].[15]

Only the frame building on Wager Lot 53B, nearest the stone steps, and the buildings on Wager Lot 56 seem to have been unscathed by this fire. While new construction would shortly follow on the Nichols and Doran property (Park Building 3), the Swayne property remained in ruins and the Renner property remained vacant for two decades.

At the turn of the century, a tin shop, stove store, and plumber were located in three buildings on Wager Lot 56. The fourth was a dwelling. Over the next two decades, a cobbler, harness maker, launderer, carpenter and funeral director, and shoe repairer variously had businesses in these buildings.[16] In the 1920s, the former Wentzell tobacco shop was moved from the extension of High Street south of Shenandoah Street to Wager Lot 54A and converted for use by jeweler William Kronk.[17]

Although part of the west side of High Street remained in use, much of this area was visibly in decline through the twentieth century. In 1908, the town council passed a motion that the Swayne heirs be notified to "clean out and board up their old Foundations on High St." Yet, as late as the 1930s, the walls of the stone building (destroyed by fire in 1898) on the northern

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[15]Virginia Free Press, 20 July 1898, p. 3, col. 4.

[16]Sanborn Map, Harpers Ferry, 1902-1912; Plan and Profile of Proposed Construction of Class "A" Road State Project 3034, Harpers Ferry District, Jefferson County, 1921.

[17]Mary Johnson, "Lots 1 to 7, Block A, to Lot 1, Block B, Shenandoah Street (Part of the Old Arsenal Yard) Harpers Ferry National Historical Park" Special History Study (First Draft, National Park Service/University of Maryland Cooperative Agreement, 20 December 1994), p. 148.

part of their Wager Lot 55 still stood.[18] Sanborn maps from 1922 and 1933 record the two brick and stone buildings on the Burleigh property (Wager Lot 56B) as vacant. The northernmost one was dilapidated by 1922, and photos from the late 1920s and early 1930s show gaping holes in both buildings. The condition of these buildings was such that in 1930 the town council decided to inform Thomas Burleigh his High Street property opposite Cummings' house was a nuisance and request he have the two "old houses" removed.[19] In 1949, the Community Service Committee suggested buildings at the top and bottom of the stone steps be removed, a possible reference in part to the frame building on Wager Lot 53B.[20]

When the United States Congress passed legislation in 1944 for the creation of a national monument at Harpers Ferry, the west side of High Street north of the stone steps contained three buildings (Park Building 3 on Wager Lots 53A and 54B; a small frame building, Park Building 4, on Lot 53B; and the old frame jewelry store, lately used for a black church, Park Building 2) and the ruins of other buildings that had once lined this side of the street. In the early 1950s, title to individual lots was acquired by the State of West Virginia for the park.

Because the primary thematic focus of the new national monument was John Brown and the Civil War, plans were made to remove buildings constructed after the war. Park Building 4 evidently was already in ruins and quickly was torn down. Later, Park Building 2, still in "relatively sound" condition was removed in 1957.[21]

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[18]Harpers Ferry Town Minutes, Vol 1891-1909, p. 555; Sanborn Map, Harpers Ferry, 1933; NHF-670 (Figure 19), probably taken in the late 1920s or about 1930.

[19]Sanborn Maps, Harpers Ferry, 1922 and 1933; HF-1630 (Figure 22) and HF-1631 (Figure 23), from the 1930s; Harpers Ferry Town Minutes, Vol 1910-1934, p. 529.

[20]Harpers Ferry Town Minutes, Vol 1935-1955, p. 349.

[21]Cathy Gilbert, Maureen DeLay Joseph, and Perry Carpenter Wheelock, Cultural Landscape Report: Lower Town Harpers Ferry National Historical Park (Department of the Interior, National Park Service, National Capital Region, 1993), p. 3: 131; Explanatory sheet accompanying Architectural Base Map of Harpers Ferry, 13 September 1955, NM-HF-3055; Computer database Building Histories, Park Building 2 and 4, NPS Ownership.



Figure 2. Sanborn Map, Harpers Ferry, November 1894.

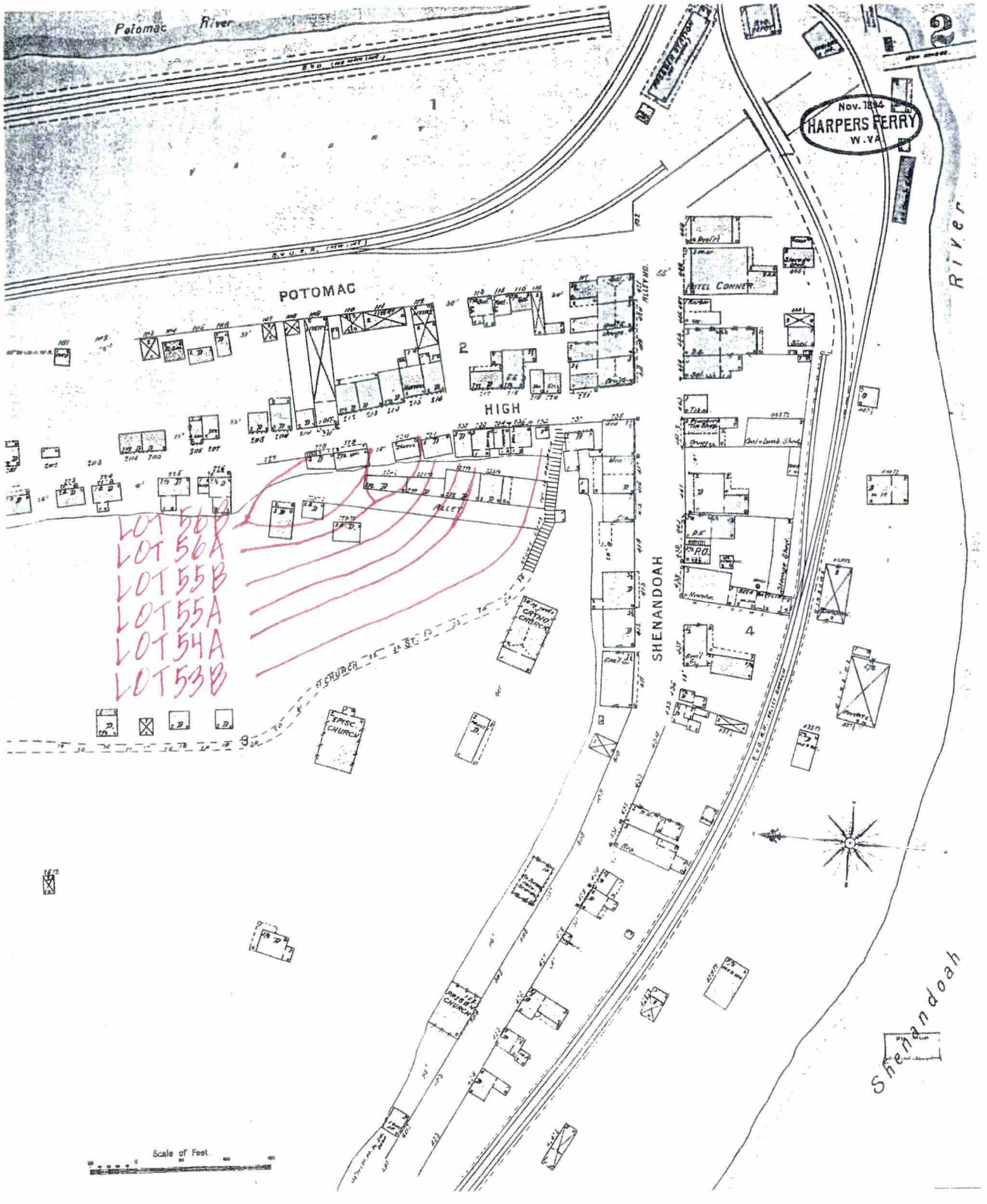


Figure 2. Sanborn Map, Harpers Ferry, November 1894. MARKED COPY

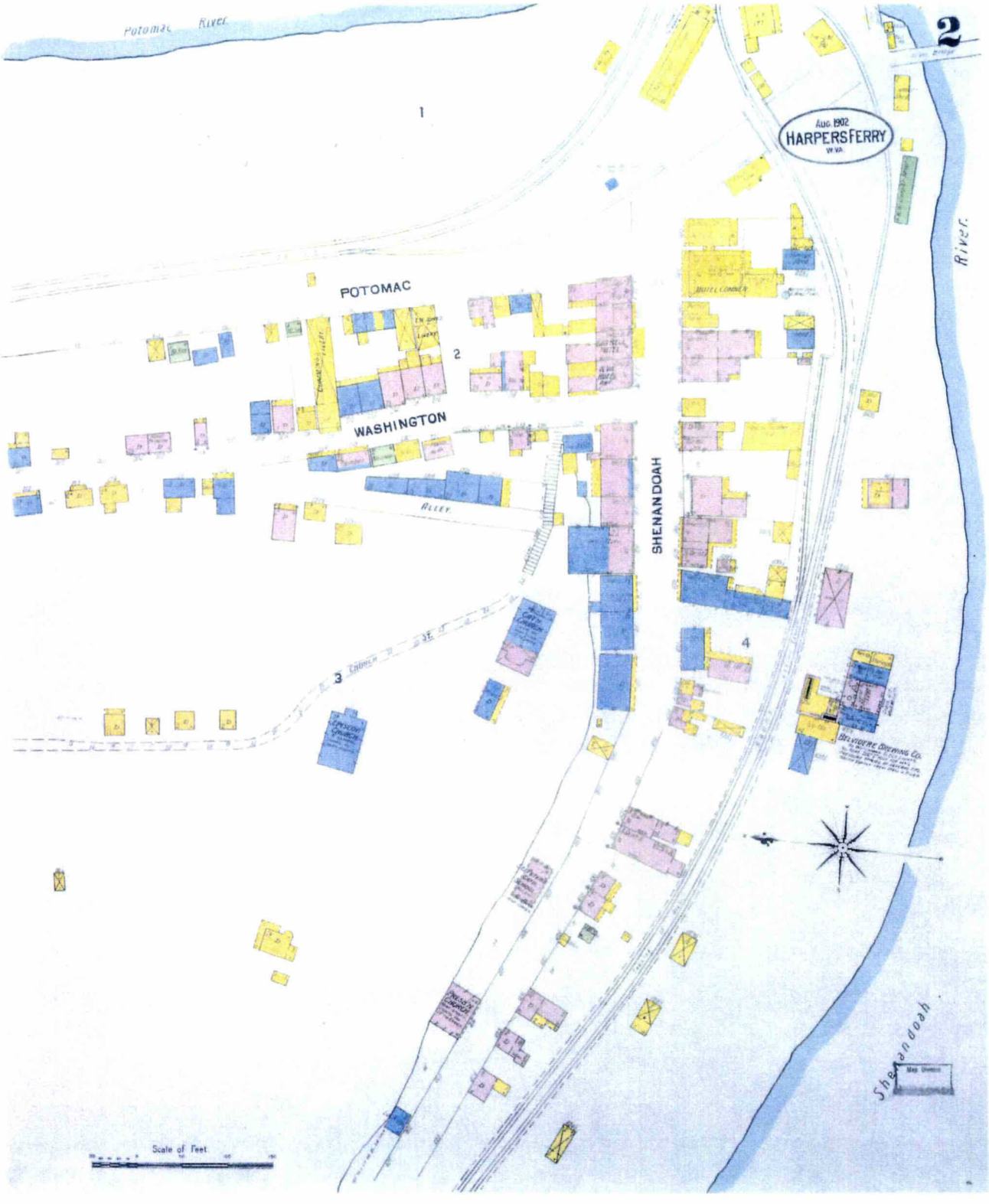


Figure 3. Sanborn Map, Harpers Ferry, August 1902.



Figure 4. Sanborn Map, Harpers Ferry, September 1907.

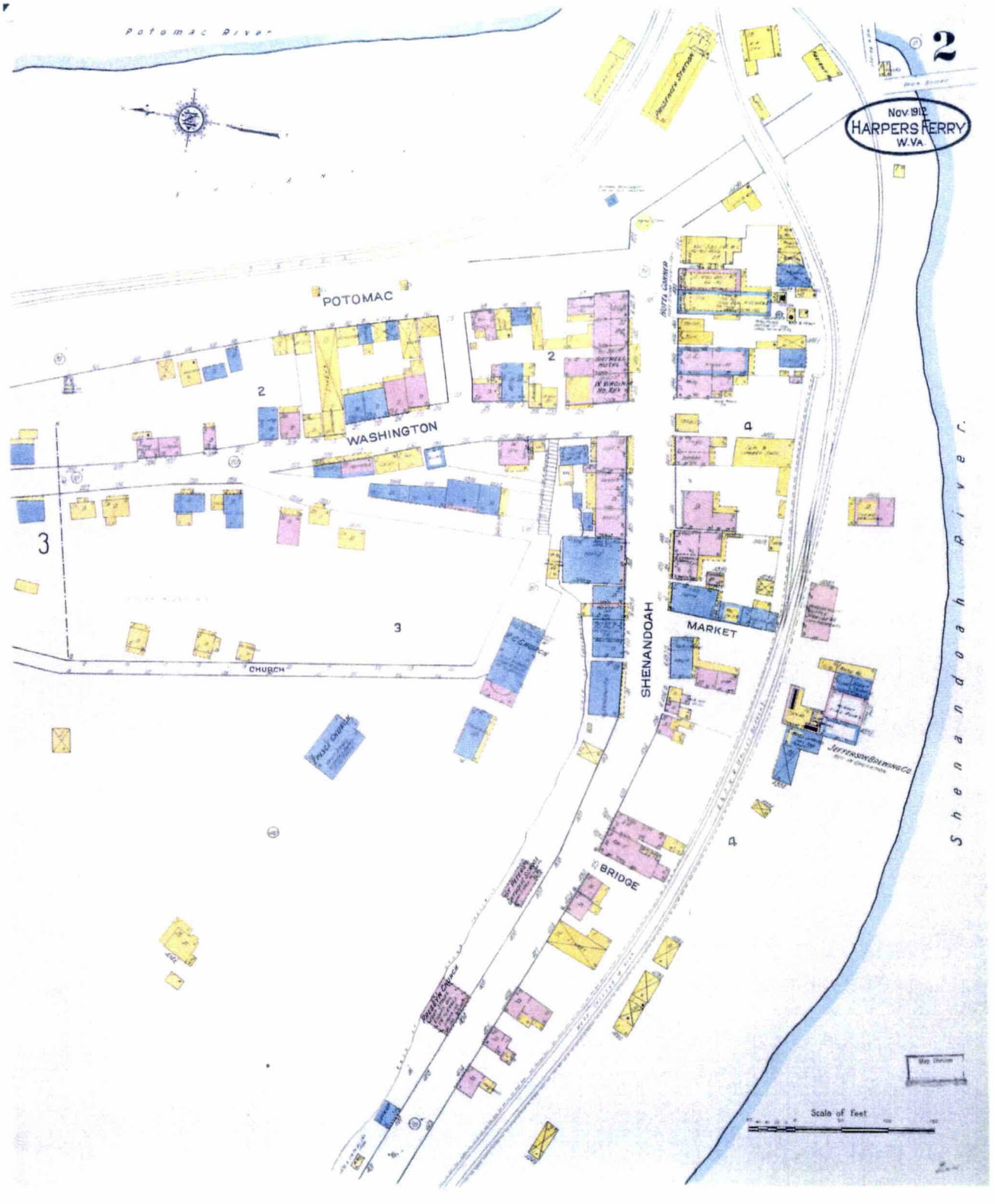


Figure 5. Sanborn Map, Harpers Ferry, November 1912.

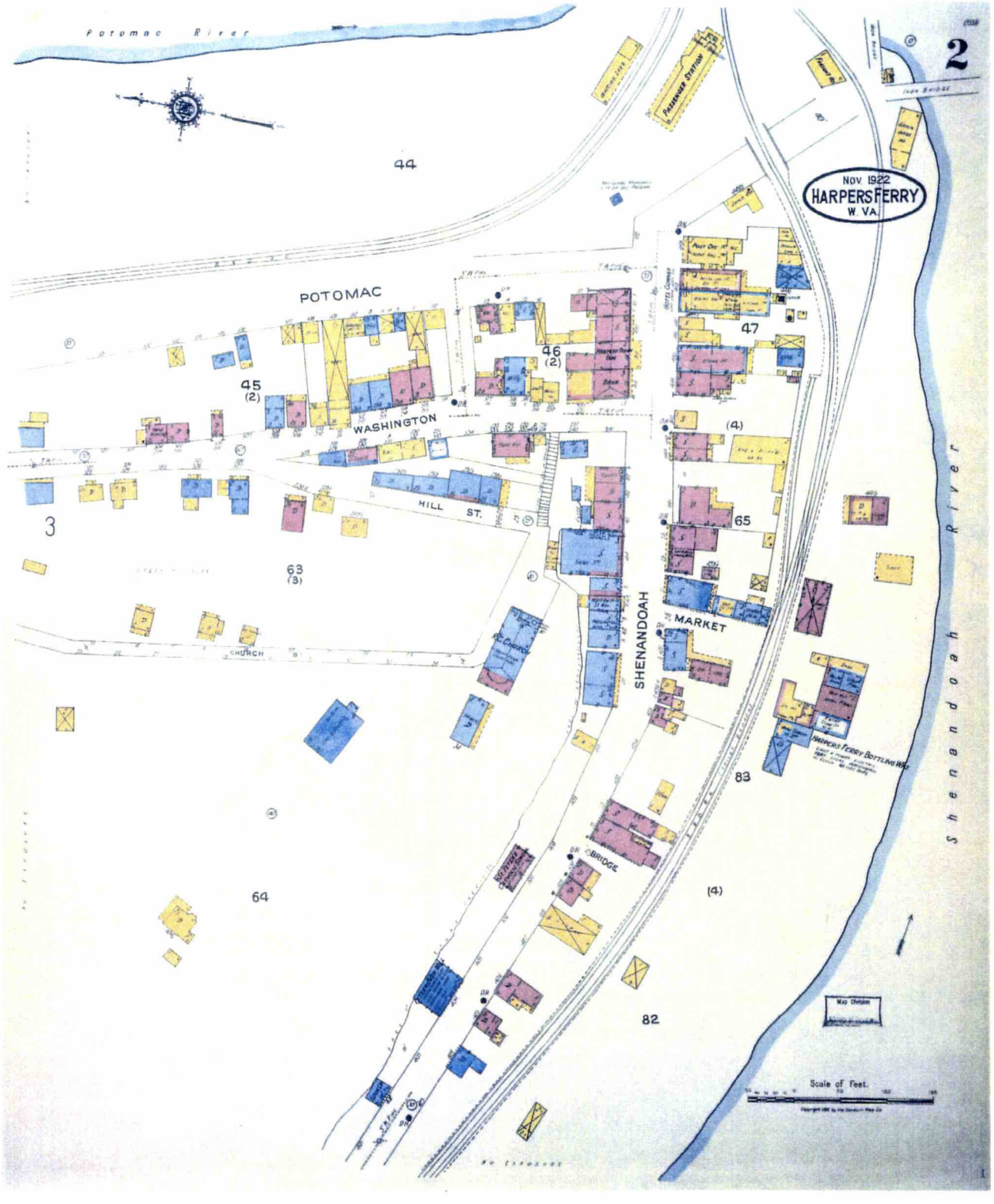


Figure 6. Sanborn Map, Harpers Ferry, November 1922.

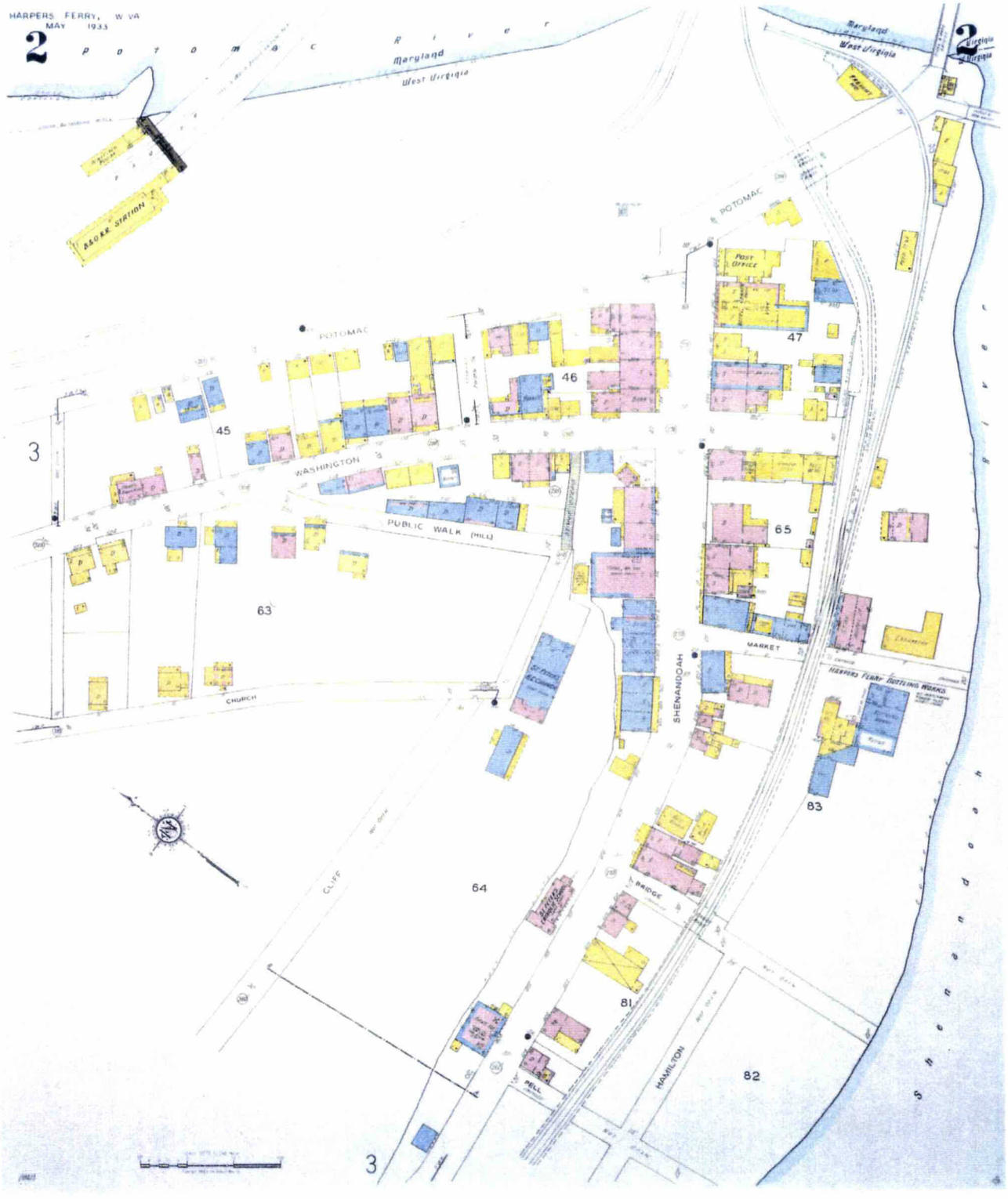


Figure 7. Sanborn Map, Harpers Ferry, May 1933.

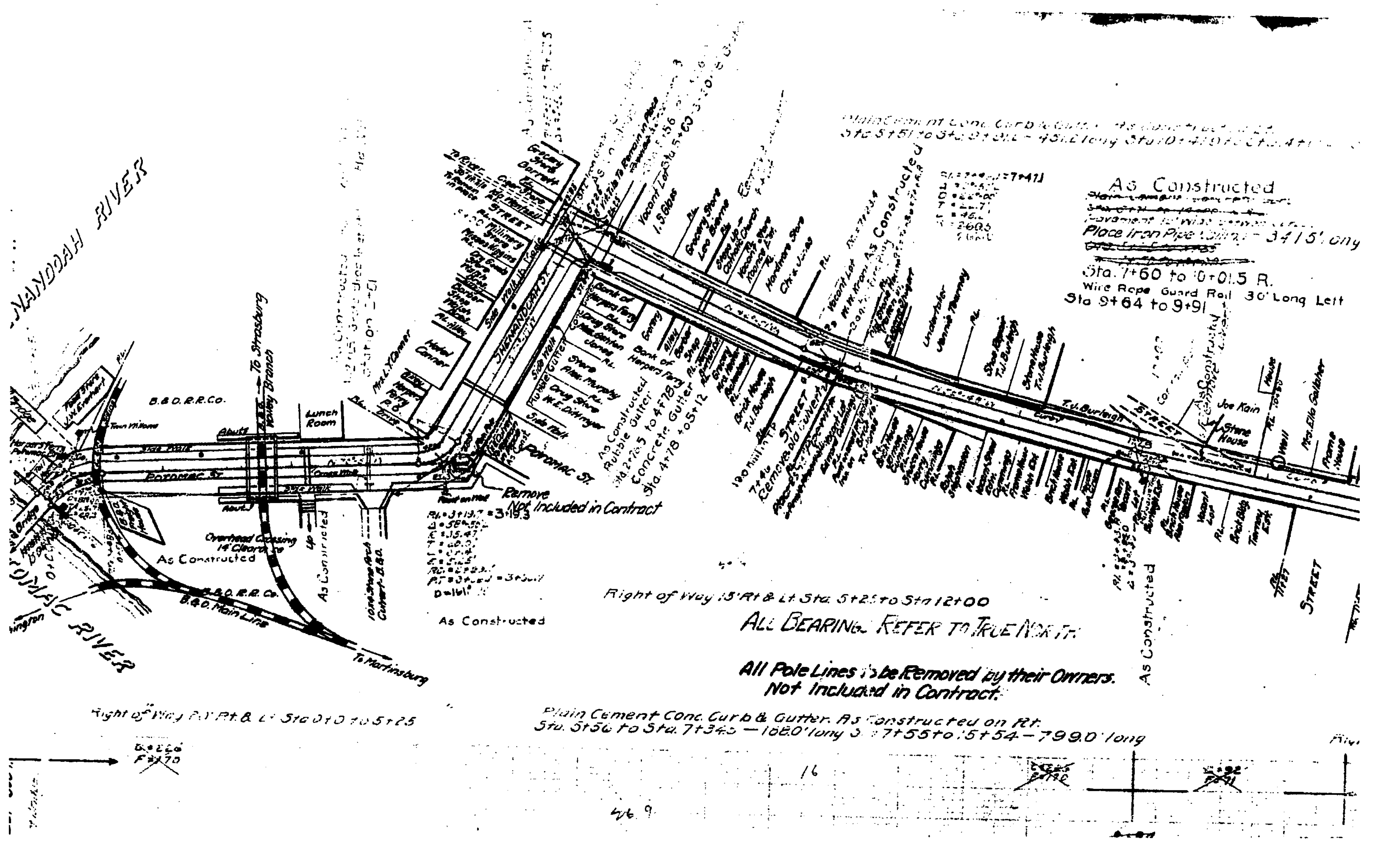

As Constructed
Place Iron Pipe
Sta. 7+60 to 10+01.5 R.
Wire Rope Guard Rail 30' Long Left
Sta 9+64 to 9+91
Right of Way 15' Rt & Lt Sta. 5+25 to Sta 12+00
All Bearings Refer to True North
All Pole Lines to be Removed by their Owners.
Not Included in Contract.
Plain Cement Conc. Curb & Gutter. As Constructed on Rt.
Sta. 5+56 to Sta. 7+345 — 168.0' long
Right of Way
Remove
Not Included in Contract
As Constructed
Rubble Gutter
Concrete Gutter
Potomac St.
Potomac St
Shenandoah St.
Side Walk
Street
Lunch Room
Hotel Conner
B.&O. R.R. Co.
B.&O. Main Line
To Martinsburg
To Strasburg
Valley Branch
Overhead Crossing 14' Clearance
Bank of Harpers Ferry
Drug Store
T.J. Burleigh
Joe Kain
Stone House
Well
Mrs. Ella Galliher
Frame House
Grocery Store
Hardware Store
Catholic Church
Undertaker
Shenandoah River
Potomac River

Figure 8. Plan and Profile of Proposed Construction of Class "A" Road, State Project 3034, Harpers Ferry District, 1921.

INDIVIDUAL LOT HISTORIES

Wager Lot 53B

From the mid-1700s, this lot was part of Robert Harper's holdings at the confluence of the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers. His heirs retained this property when they sold much of Harper's land to the United States in 1796. In 1835, a division of the Wager property was made among the three children of John Wager, Jr., in order to apply son James' inheritance toward the settlement of his debts. In that division, James Wager received Wager Lot 53. This lot fronted 48 feet on High Street, as recorded on a plat prepared by James M. Brown.[22]

In pursuit of a court order to sell James Wager's holdings, on June 18, 1836, Lot 53 was sold to James Duncanson and Philip Coons, the latter a local merchant and prominent member of the community.[23] Not for nearly four years, however, did special commissioners Andrew Kennedy and Joseph T. Daugherty issue a deed. Nine days after receiving a deed, Duncanson executed a deed of trust for his half-interest in this lot, as well as Lot 46, on behalf of Coons, who had signed a $500 note for Duncanson. In November 1842, trustee George Sappington sold Duncanson's half-interest to Edmund Chambers for $350, making Chambers and Coons co-owners of Lot 53.[24]

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[22]Partition of Wager Land, Deed Book 29, p. 140.

[23]From the 1830s to the 1850s, Coons variously was an active Democrat, president of the Shenandoah Bridge Company, director of the Harpers Ferry Savings Institution, and a member of the masons and the town council. (Virginia Free Press, 19 May 1830, p. 3, col. 4; 23 January 1840, p. 3, col. 1; 13 July 1843, p. 3, col. 1; 9 May 1851, p. 2, col. 2; Constitutionalist, 1 May 1839, p. 3, cols. 6 & 7)

[24]Andrew Kennedy and Joseph T. Daugherty to James Duncanson and Philip Coons, 1 January 1840, Deed Book 24, p. 215; Deed of Trust, James Duncanson to George Sappington, 10 January 1840, Deed Book 24, p. 94; Sappington to Edmund Chambers, 12 November 1842, Deed Book 27, p. 61.

Chambers sold his interest to Thomas T. Earnshaw and fifteen other men for $400 in April 1844. Three days later, on May 2, Coons sold his interest to Esau Wood and twenty-five other men for $650. In all likelihood, these men were part of some group (perhaps political or fraternal), but the nature of their interest in Wager Lot 53 is not known. Both the Earnshaw and Wood groups failed to meet the terms of deeds of trust they had executed the day of purchase.[25] Coons reacquired his interest in May 1845, while the other half-interest was sold to William H. Moore, armory inspector and son of master armorer Benjamin Moore, in August.[26]

On January 16, 1849, Coons and Moore formally divided Lot 53 into two portions. Coons received the northwestern portion, fronting 28 feet, 3 1/2 inches along High Street, while Moore received the remainder. Coons' portion held a two-story frame building referenced in deeds since 1840, and Moore's held a "single frame building." The brick chimney along the partition line was included in Moore's part, although Coons received the right to use it until such time as Moore tore it down. The two buildings clearly were attached.[27] (Coons' portion, designated Lot 53A by Charles Snell, is discussed in a separate report on Park Building 3).

William Moore sold Lot 53B to Coons in February 1850. Less than a month later, Coons sold this lot to George Koonce for $600.[28] Koonce, a Bolivar merchant as early as 1837, served

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[25]Edmund Chambers and wife Mary to Thomas T. Earnshaw, et al, 29 April 1844, Deed Book 27, p. 126; Philip Coons and wife Anne C. to Esau Wood, et al, 2 May 1844, Deed Book 27, p. 177.

[26]Isaac Fouke to Philip Coons, 1 May 1845, Deed Book 27, p. 481; William Chambers to William H. Moore, 18 August 1845, Deed Book 28, p. 236; Spirit of Jefferson, 23 August 1844, p. 1, cols. 2 & 3; Merritt Roe Smith, Harpers Ferry and the New Technology: The Challenge of Change (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), p. 299.

[27]Partition, Philip Coons and wife Anne C. and William H. Moore and wife Laura F., 16 January 1849, Deed Book 30, p. 497.

[28]William H. Moore and wife Laura F. to Philip Coons, 21 February 1850, Deed Book 31, p. 81; Philip Coons and wife Annie C. to George Koonce, 11 March 1850, Deed Book 31, p. 82.

as constable for Harpers Ferry district for many of the fifteen years preceding the Civil War.[29] In addition to his ownership of Lot 53B, within a few years Koonce had acquired a part-interest in several other properties along this side of High Street when he and two other men purchased leaseholds on Lot 55A and 56A in 1857 and 1858 respectively (See pages 42 and 36). Shortly after the war, Koonce served as a Republican state senator, and in the 1870s he was Harpers Ferry's mayor and councilman.[30] Later, Koonce moved to a farm in the Halltown vicinity, where he died in July 1908.[31]

Koonce owned Lot 53B through all these years, but how the property was used for most of this time is not known. Nor is it known when the frame building standing on the lot when William Moore and Philip Coons partitioned Lot 53 in 1849 was removed. A photograph taken in May 1886 (HF-787, Figure 13) shows this lot was vacant. Within eight years, however, a small, one-story frame building stood here. According to the 1894 Sanborn Map (Figure 2), the building was a dwelling. A portion of this small building, with a "Hoe Cake Soap" sign on the front shutter, is visible in a photograph (Figure 9) of the Stone Steps taken about 1900.[32]

An advertisement from the July 4, 1896, issue of the Harper's Ferry Sentinel indicates a business occupied the premises. Charles Koonce, a butcher and the son of property owner George Koonce, advertised,

> MEATS, PROVISIONS, AND CANNED GOODS Stone Steps, High Street. Meat delivered three times a week: Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays. Choice meats

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[29]Virginia Free Press, 19 January 1837, p. 3, col. 4; 7 May 1846, p. 3, col. 1; Seventh Census (1850), Bolivar, p. 397; Eighth Census (1860), Harpers Ferry, p. 218.

[30]Virginia Free Press, 10 January 1867, p. 2, col. 4; 24 January 1867, p. 2, col. 4; 11 November 1869, p. 3, col. 1; 23 January 1875, p. 3, col. 1; Spirit of Jefferson, 11 January 1876, p. 3, col. 2; 9 January 1877, p. 3, col. 2.

[31]Spirit of Jefferson, 28 July 1908, p. 3, col. 4.

[32]The "Hoe Cake" sign also appears on this building in HF-1739, taken before the 1896 work on St. Peter's Catholic Church.

> and provisions at lowest market prices is our motto. Highest market price paid on all kinds produce. Try us.[33]

The location of Koonce's meat shop on Lot 53B is indicated by several postcards issued shortly after the turn of the century and a recently-acquired photograph taken about 1900 for the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, the latter clearly showing an arched sign "CHAS. KOONCE MEATS AND PROVISIONS" on the roof of the building (Figure 9).[34]

The 1907 Sanborn Map (Figure 4) lists a meat shop on the premises, but the 1912 map (Figure 5) indicates the building was then vacant. By then, Charles Koonce had gone into the meat business with Edward Fry. Previously, he was general manager of the business before Fry dissolved his partnership with a man named Smith in 1909. In 1910, Fry and Koonce were located on property owned by the Walsh family.[35]

Use of Lot 53B between 1907 and the 1920s is unknown. A map made about 1922 in preparation for the construction of a Class "A" state road to include High Street states the Koonce property held a vacant store (See Figure 8). The 1922 and 1933 Sanborn maps (Figure 6 and Figure 7), however, show an unspecified store was located there. By the latter date, the original frame structure evidently had been replaced by, or enclosed within, a new frame building. The 1933 map shows a larger, one-story building encompassing the entire width of the lot from Building 3 to the north to the stone steps on the south and extending deeper onto the lot.[36]

The change to the frame building possibly occurred shortly after the 1924. According to

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[33]Harper's Ferry Sentinel, 4 July 1896, p. 4, col. 5. Also Tenth Census (1880), Bolivar District, p. 29; Thirteenth Census (1910), Harpers Ferry, p. 187.

[34]See also HF-434-a5 and HF-133.

[35]Farmers Advocate, 24 April 1909, p. 2, col. 2; 21 May 1910, p. 2, col. 3.

[36]West Virginia State Road Commission, "Plan and Profile of Proposed Construction of Class 'A' Road State Project 3034, Harpers Ferry District, Jefferson County," WV Department of Highways.

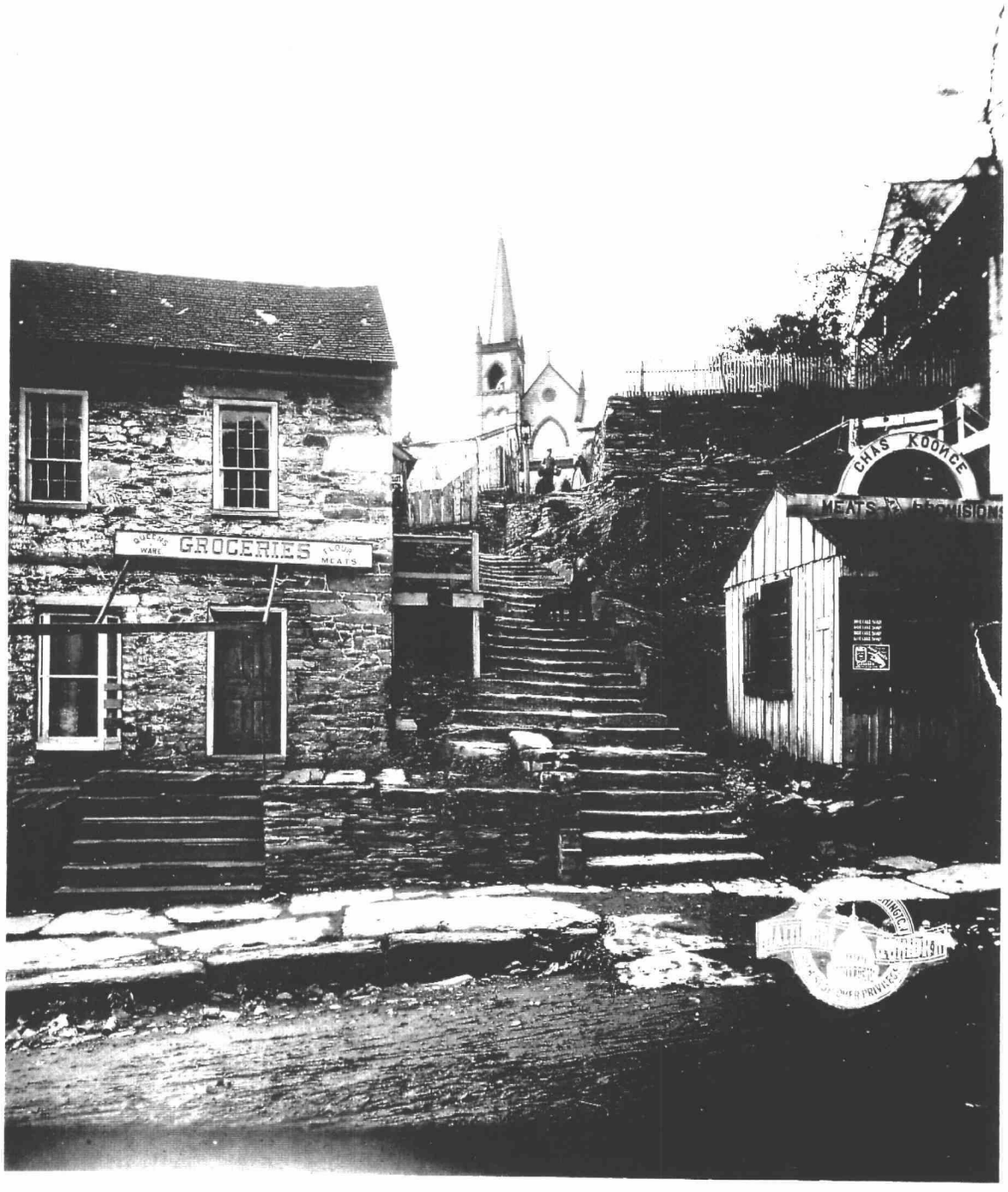


Figure 9. Charles Koonce's meat shop on Lot 53B appears in this circa 1900 view of the Stone Steps. Photograph received from Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Museum.

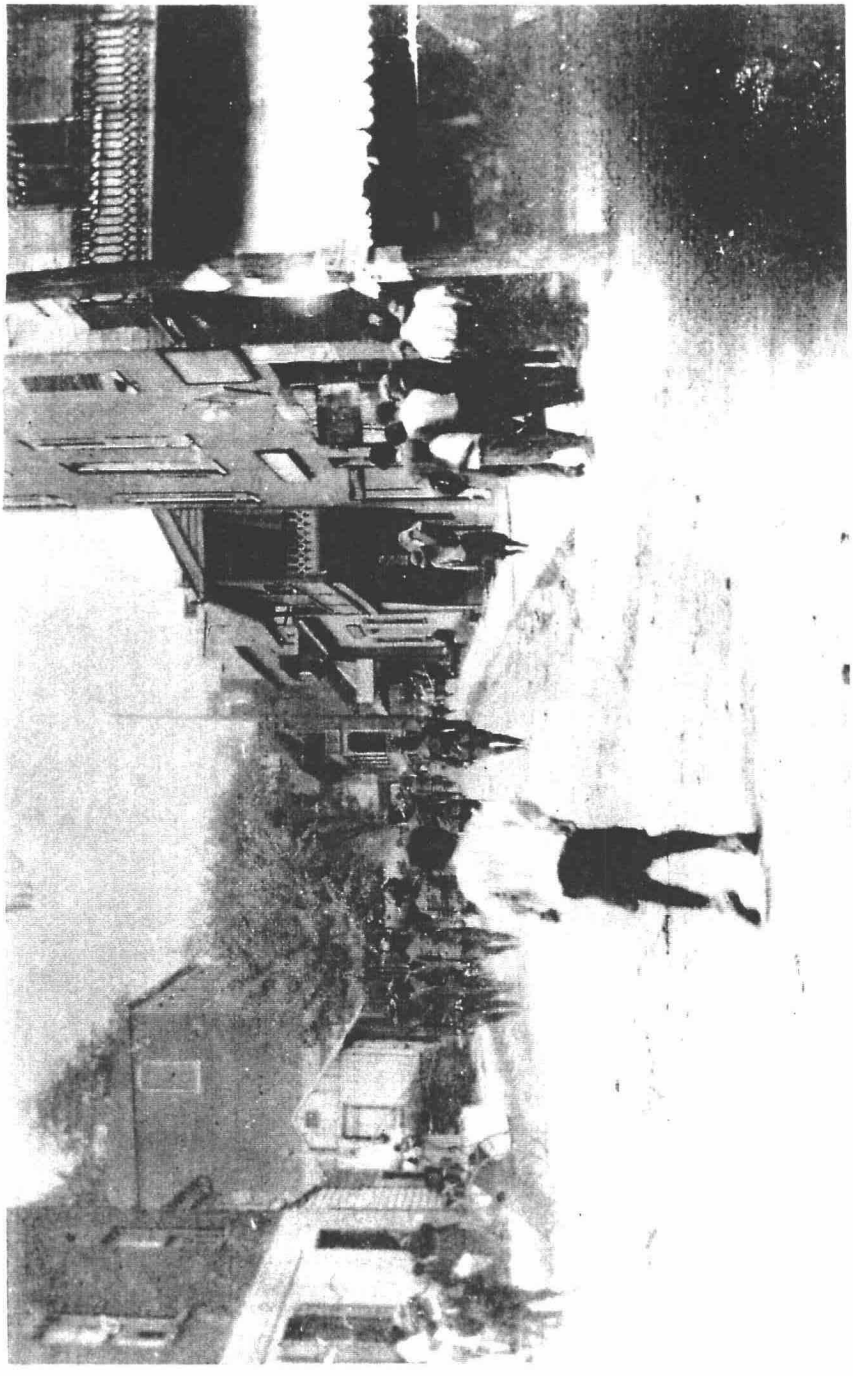


Figure 10. HF-378. Ca. 1910. The small frame building on the left is Koonce's meat shop.

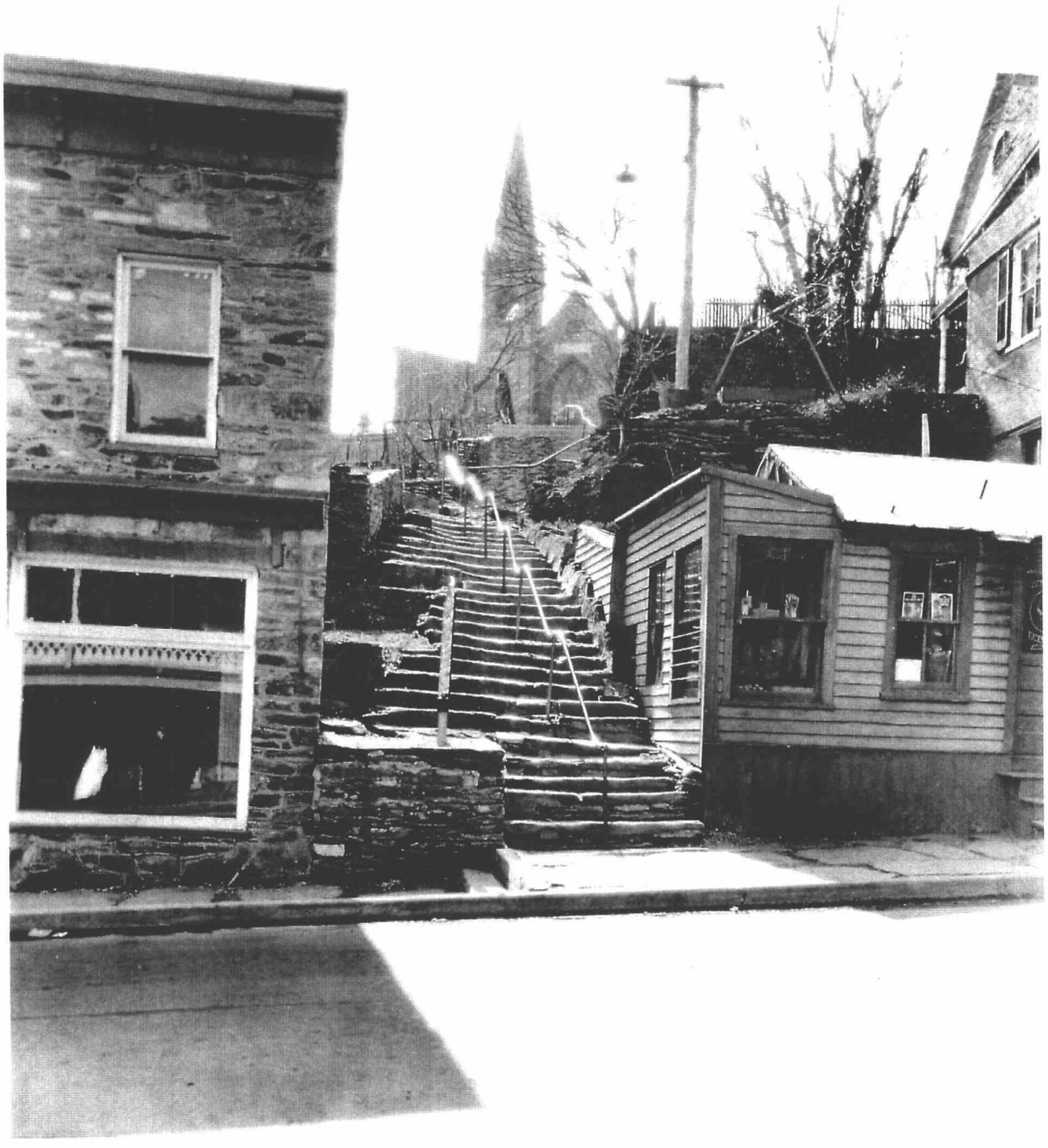


Figure 11. The frame building to the right of the Stone Steps in this 1920s photograph was C. M. Larue's shoe repair shop. Photograph received from the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Museum.

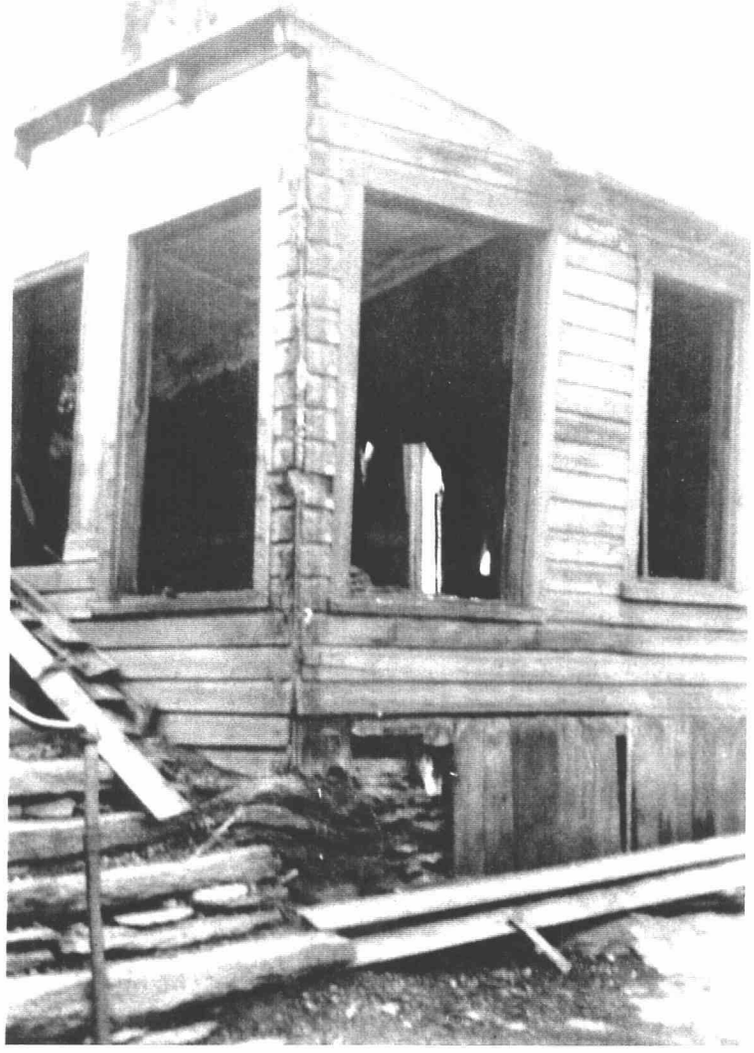


Figure 12. NHF-178. The frame building on Wager Lot 53B prior to removal.

Rosalie Lloyd, her father Columbus Larue moved his shoe repair shop to the building just uphill from the Stone Steps after that flood. Its location on Lot 53B is proven by a 1920s photograph (Figure 11), which shows a sign for shoes on the building and the partial name "C. M. La . . ." at the righthand edge. Larue remained at this location until the death of his wife Mattie in 1930, at which time he moved to Martinsburg, West Virginia.[37]

Through these years, the property belonged to the Koonce family. When George Koonce died in 1908, Lot 53B passed to his heirs. They retained title until 1953, when by sale or court order this property was transferred to the State of West Virginia. The property was described as follows:

> BEGINNING at a point in the westerly side of High Street corner to Jones; thence S. 37 deg. 27' E. 24 feet to the public walk; thence along the public walk S. 55 deg. 00' W. 34.8 feet to a point; thence along the public walk S. 82 deg. 00' W. 18 feet to a point on the easterly side of the public walk; thence along the public walk N. 28 deg. 00' W. 16 feet to a point; thence N. 53 deg. 08½' E. 47 feet to the beginning.[38]

The ruins of the frame building on Lot 53B, designated Park Building 4, were removed in 1954.[39]

Wager Lot 54A

From the mid-1700s, this lot was part of Robert Harper's holdings at the confluence of the

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[37]Notes on conversation of Patricia Chickering with Rosalie Lloyd, 13 December 1993.

[38]Order, State of West Virginia vs heirs of Idella Koonce, et al, 12 January 1953, Deed Book 191, p. 143; Howard Koonce and wife Frances J. to State of West Virginia, 31 October 1953, Deed Book 195, p. 540.

[39]Computer database of Building Histories, Building 4, NPS Ownership.

Potomac and Shenandoah rivers. His heirs retained this property when they sold much of Harper's land to the United States in 1796. In 1835, a division of the Wager property was made among the three children of John Wager, Jr., in order to apply son James' inheritance toward the settlement of his debts. In that division, James Wager received Wager Lot 54. This lot fronted 41 feet on High Street, as recorded on a plat prepared by James M. Brown.[40]

In October 1837, Wager, his wife Mary, and special commissioners Andrew Hunter and Joseph T. Daugherty deeded Lot 54, "with the buildings and houses thereon," to George Cutshaw, who had been operating a tailoring establishment in Harpers Ferry since at least 1831.[41] A May 1840 deed of trust indicates Lot 54 then held "two houses[:] one a frame building & the other a brick building."[42]

In January 1840, Cutshaw advertised that he had moved his tailoring business "to the basement story of his dwelling house, on High Street."[43] Two years later, Cutshaw executed a deed of trust to Isaac Fouke to secure a debt due Richard Doran. This document placed in trust the part of Lot 54 which held a brick building belonging to Cutshaw, "who now resides in said brick building."[44] In July 1843, Cutshaw sold the southeastern portion of Lot 54 (Lot 54B, discussed in a separate report on Park Building 3) to Richard Doran, but he retained the part on which this brick building stood.[45] Cutshaw's building is described as a three-story brick building

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[40]Partition of Wager Land, Deed Book 29, p. 140.

[41]Andrew Hunter, Joseph T. Daugherty, James B. Wager and wife Mary to George Cutshaw, 5 October 1837, Deed Book 22, p. 254; Virginia Free Press, 1 September 1831, p. 3, col. 4.

[42]Deed of Trust, George W. Cutshaw to Isaac Fouke, 22 May 1840, Deed Book 24, p. 289.

[43]Constitutionalist, 8 January 1840, p. 3, col. 6.

[44]Deed of Trust, George W. Cutshaw to Isaac Fouke, 20 January 1842, Deed Book 25, p. 364.

[45]George W. Cutshaw and wife Martha J. to Richard D. Doran, 25 July 1843, Deed Book 26, p. 412.

in an 1855 deed of trust.[46]

George W. Cutshaw emerges in historical documents as an active member of the Harpers Ferry community before the Civil War. Cutshaw was a director of the Harpers Ferry Saving Institution in the 1830s, an active Whig in the 1830s and 1840s, and a member of the town council in 1851 and 1852. He also was a member of the Oddfellows, commissioner of school elections, and trustee of the Harpers Ferry Female Institute.[47]

The 1850 census indicates the Cutshaw household contained seven people: tailor George W. (42), Martha (31), Francis (16), Beheltha (14), and Wilfred Cutshaw (9), and Dennis Helfast (19), and Milton Robinson (21), both tailors. These two men no doubt worked for Cutshaw, as the manufacturing census reveals three men, paid an average $40 a month, were employed at Cutshaw's tailor shop making goods annually worth $2,000. A decade later, George, Martha, and Behethem comprised the Cutshaw household. Cutshaw reportedly owned $1,500 in real estate and $100 in personal property. The Cutshaw family still lived in the brick building on Lot 54.[48]

After the Civil War erupted in 1861, Cutshaw fled to Charles Town. In February 1864, a preliminary report was prepared for the United States government, listing abandoned property in Harpers Ferry and Bolivar. That document indicates the three story brick building belonging to George W. Cutshaw was in "poor order" and occupied by contraband.[49] On March 1, 1864, the government rented the building to Anderson Jackson for a year for an annual rent of $60,

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[46]Deed of Trust, George W. Cutshaw and wife Martha J. to Archibald M. Kitzmiller, 1 December 1855, Deed Book 35, p. 184.

[47]Virginia Free Press, 12 May 1836, p. 3, col. 5; 7 July 1836, p. 3, col. 4; 12 July 1838, p. 3, col. 5; 16 May 1839, p. 2, col. 5; 29 February 1844, p. 2, col. 2; 11 March 1847, p. 3, col. 1; 9 May 1851, p. 2, col. 2; Spirit of Jefferson, 12 September 1848, p. 3, col. 6; 21 October 1851, p. 2, col. 2; 11 May 1852, p. 2, col. 1; 25 May 1852, p. 3, col. 4.

[48]Seventh Census (1850), Harpers Ferry, Population Schedule, p. 414; Manufacturing Schedule, 28th District, p. 10; Eighth Census (1860), Harpers Ferry, p. 196.

[49]Statement of Abandoned Property at Harpers Ferry and Bolivar, 24 February 1864, No. 19698, Park Reel 242, Frame 93.

payable monthly. Jackson apparently operated a barber shop in the building.[50] Census records indicate Jackson was a black man whose family consisted of his wife Lucy, and children Emma, Charles, and Anderson.[51] The building may have suffered damage between January 1865, when Jackson still occupied the building, and March, when a report described Cutshaw's building as "Untenantable" and indicated it was being repaired for use as a local, special agent office.[52]

Following the war, George and Martha Cutshaw returned to Harpers Ferry. In 1870, they probably were living in their brick building on Lot 54. The census indicates tailor George and his wife Martha comprised one household in the building. The other household consisted of Isaac Stokes, a farm laborer; his wife B. Goldsmith, the Cutshaw daughter Behethem; Martha J. Stokes, their daughter; and Wilford and Carrie Chambers, the children of Cutshaw's daughter Fannie and her husband George Chambers.[53]

In January 1873, George Cutshaw placed his house and lot on High Street adjoining the west end of Michael Doran's property, being the "same property now occupied" by Cutshaw, in trust to E. W. Wilson to secure a $150 debt owed Reason Cross.[54] Cutshaw continued to live there until he moved from Harpers Ferry about 1880. In August 1881, Archibald Kitzmiller, with whom Cutshaw had placed the building in trust in 1855, advertised the upcoming sale of the property according to the terms of that deed of trust. This notice indicates the three-story brick

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[50]Lease, United States and Anderson Jackson, 1 March 1864, No. 17925, and Report of Rents Collected January 1865, No. 18725, Reel 242, Frames 30, 32.

[51]Ninth Census (1870), Bolivar Township, p. 478, p. 57 of Harpers Ferry.

[52]Report of Rents collected in March 1865, No. 18148, Reel 242, Frame 46.

[53]Ninth Census (1870), Bolivar Township, p. 462, p. 25 of Harpers Ferry; Virginia Free Press, 19 November 1857, p. 2, col. 7; 24 December 1868, p. 2, col. 5; Tenth Census (1880), p. 17, p. 8 of Bolivar.

[54]Deed of Trust, George W. Cutshaw to E.W. Wilson, 3 January 1873, Deed Book A, p. 13.

house on High Street was "lately occupied by said Cutshaw as a residence and tailor shop."[55]

Reason Cross, for whom Cutshaw had executed another deed of trust in 1873, filed suit against Kitzmiller, apparently to prevent the sale of Cutshaw's property solely on Kitzmiller's behalf. This suit led to a decree by the circuit court in March 1882 ordering the sale of the property. Sale of this property was advertised several times over the next year.[56] At the May 30, 1883 sale, Charles Lloyd purchased the property. Lloyd evidently failed to comply with the terms of the sale, as the property was offered again in 1884. On that occasion, W.S. Cockrell, a local doctor, bought the portion of Lot 54 holding Cutshaw's three-story brick building for $350.[57] Cockrell owned the northern portion of Lot 54 until September 1892, when he sold the property to Joseph H. Renner for $600.[58]

Renner evidently rented the building out, as the 1894 Sanborn Map (Figure 2) indicates a barber occupied the premises. The name of the barber is not known, although it probably was one of four barbers--all black--listed on the 1892 voter registration roll for the Harpers Ferry precinct. These four men were James Brunswick, Absolom Herrod, Anderson Jackson, and Harry H. Rideout. Brunswick was located on Shenandoah Street, leaving Herrod, Jackson, the son of the Anderson Jackson who operated a barber shop on the site during the Civil War, and Rideout as possible occupants.[59]

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[55]Spirit of Jefferson, 30 August 1881, p. 2, col. 3. Cutshaw is referenced in local newspaper references as late as 1878 as a resident of Harpers Ferry, but his name does not appear on the 1880 census.

[56]Spirit of Jefferson, 22 August 1882, p. 2, col. 4; 8 May 1883, p. 2, col. 4.

[57]Virginia Free Press, 31 May 1883, p. 2, col. 4; Spirit of Jefferson, 8 January 1884, p. 2, col. 4; 19 February 1884, p. 2, col. 4; Daniel B. Lucas and William H. Travers, special commissioners, to W. S. Cockrell, 25 March 1886, Deed Book O, p. 534; 1892 Voter Registration.

[58]W.S. Cockrell to Joseph H. Renner, 3 September 1892, Deed Book Z, p. 512.

[59]Sanborn Map, Harpers Ferry, 1894; 1892 Voter Registration Roll; Harpers Ferry Sentinel, 16 July 1898, p. 2, col. 6.

In June 1896, Renner deeded the property to his daughter Laura V. Rockenbaugh.[60] Two years later, in July 1898, fire swept through five buildings located on the west side of High Street and damaged several nearby properties. Among the burned buildings was the "Joseph Renner property, valued at $800, insured for $600."[61] This building was completely destroyed by the fire. The 1902 Sanborn Map (Figure 3) indicates a small, one-story frame structure had been erected on the site. This building, used as a warehouse in 1907, was gone by 1912.[62]

Laura Rockenbaugh and her husband Reason sold Lot 54A to Margaret Shugart in January 1909 for $125. Shugart held the property until February 1921, when she sold it to Sandy Hook residents William W. Kronk and his wife Mary, again for $125. Evidently because the width of the lot specified in the deed from Shugart to the Kronks incorrectly gave the width along High Street of Lot 54B rather than this lot, two more deeds were executed in December 1924 to clarify Kronk's title.[63]

By this time, an interesting change had occurred on Lot 54A. In January 1923, the Farmers Advocate reported,

> The old Wentzell Cigar Shop has been purchased by Leo O'Beirne and is to be pulled up to a vacant lot on High street by our General Contractor O. M. Scarlett. It is safe to say that much attention will be paid to the process as we are all interested in such unusual sights. Who knows but what a future millionaire will start in business there?[64]

In April, O'Beirne finished excavation of the High Street lot to which he intended to move

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[60]Joseph H. Renner to Laura V. Rockenbaugh, 22 June 1896, Deed Book, 81, p. 395.

[61]Virginia Free Press, 20 July 1898, p. 3, col. 4.

[62]Sanborn Map, Harpers Ferry, 1902, 1907, and 1912.

[63]Laura V. Rockenbaugh and husband R.S. to Margaret D. Shugart, 9 January 1909, Deed Book 177, p. 519; Shugart to William W. Kronk and wife Mary E., 28 February 1921, Deed Book 120, p. 46; Kronk to Shugart, 10 December 1924, Deed Book 125, p. 283; Shugart to Kronk, 11 December 1924, Deed Book 125, p. 284.

[64]Farmers Advocate, 6 January 1923, p. 8, col. 3.

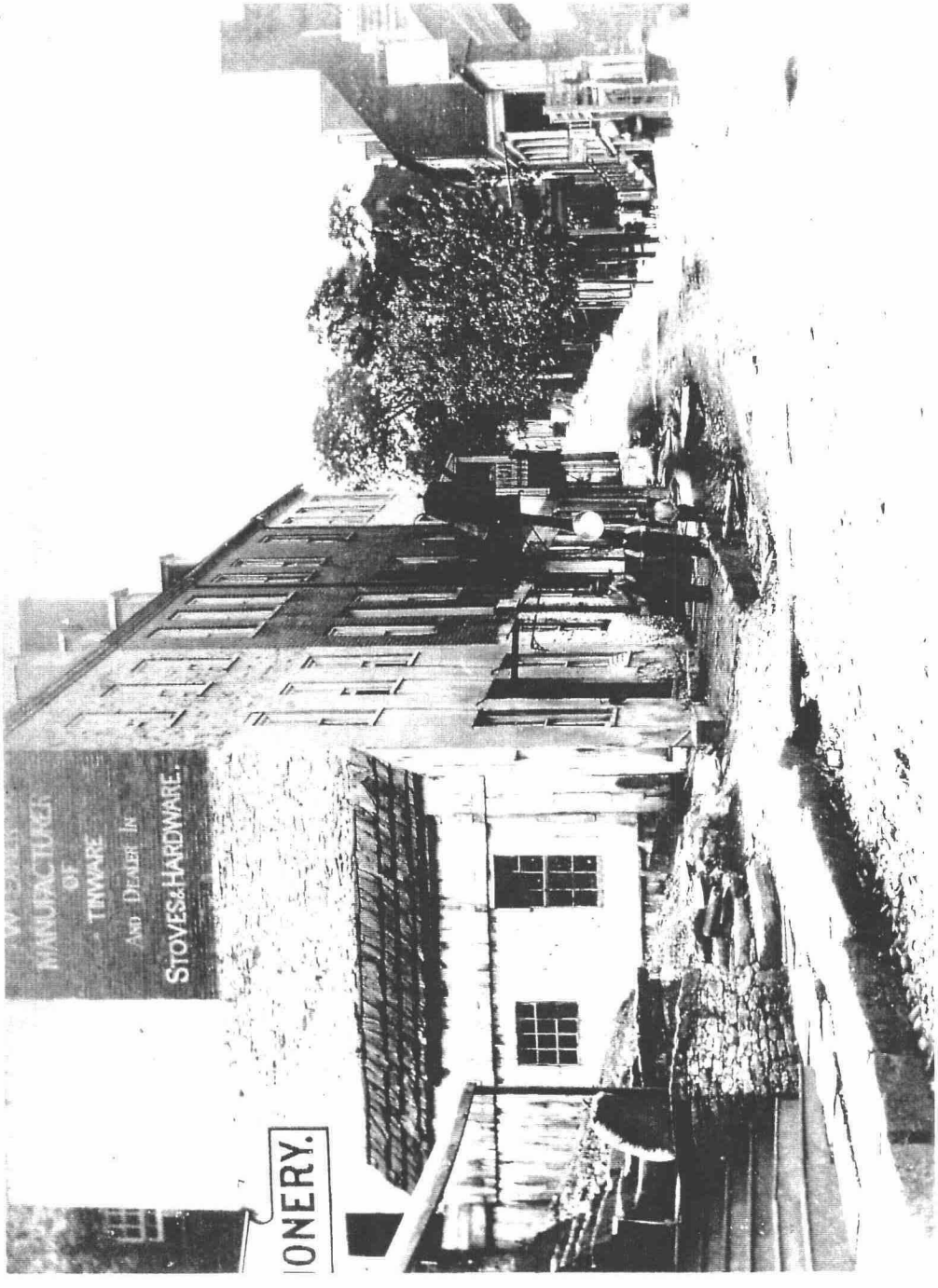


Figure 13. HF-787. May 1886 view of High Street. On the left are buildings on Lots 53A, 54B, 54A, and 55A.

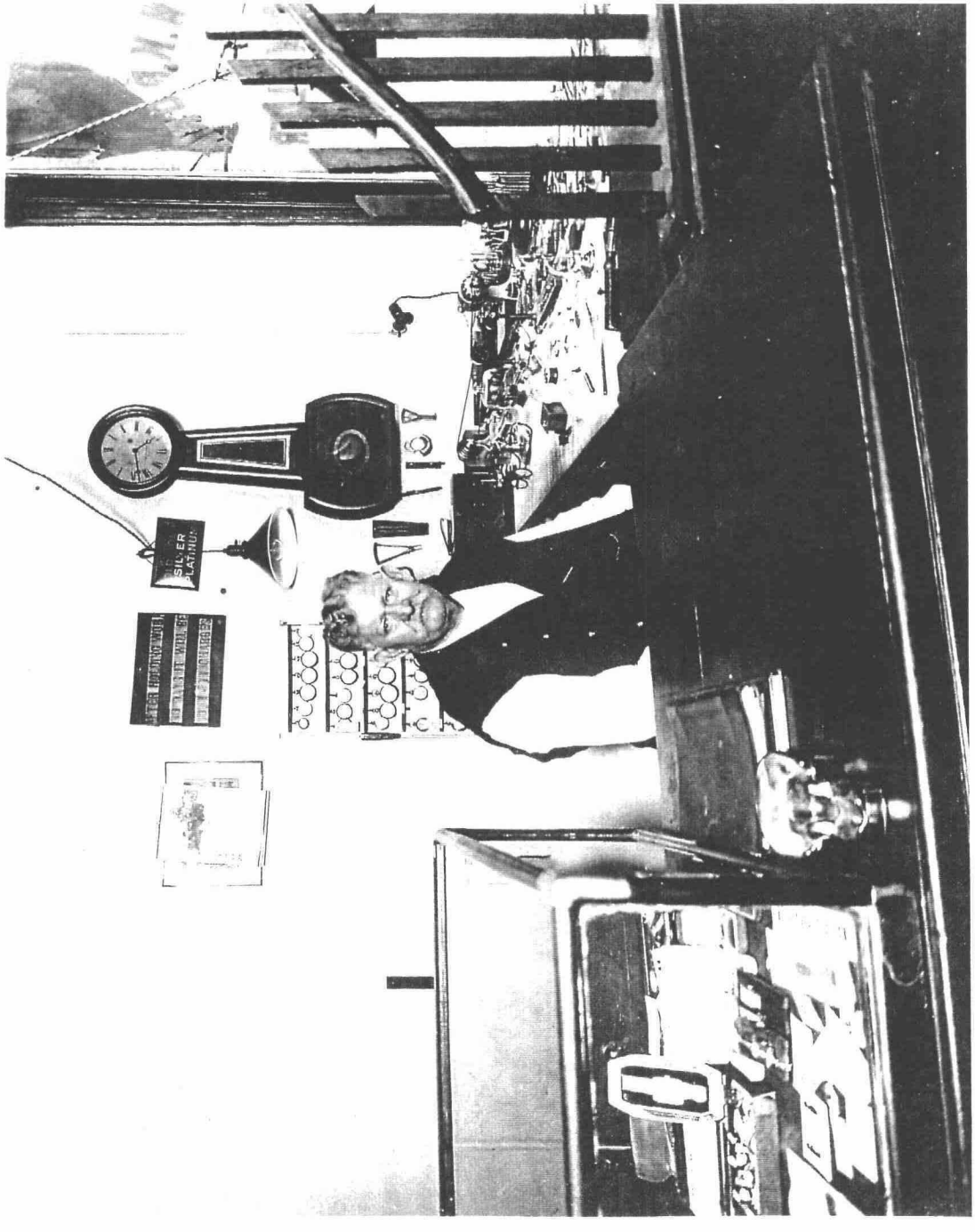


Figure 14. HF-1197. William Kronk in his jewelry shop, ca. 1933.



Figure 15. NHF-172. Building 2 in 1956.



Figure 16. HF-1733. The alley in back of Lots 54 to 56, ca. 1880s.

Wentzell's store from its location in the middle of High Street south of Shenandoah Street. By November, Kronk had moved his jewelry and watch repair shop from the opposite side of High Street (Building 14), where he had been located since the 1910s, to the former Wentzell Cigar Shop, "which was moved some time ago and remodeled into a very attractive and neat building."[65]

O'Beirne retained title to the building until 1927, when he sold a "certain one and one half story fram [*sic*] building situate on high street on the North-west portion of lot No. 54" to William Kronk for $1,000.[66] The store documented on the 1933 Sanborn Map still was Kronk's jewelry store, as a photograph (HF-1197, Figure 14) taken circa 1933 shows Kronk in his store.[67]

William Kronk died in April 1949 at his home in Sandy Hook. According to his obituary, Kronk maintained his business in Harpers Ferry "until a few years ago," after which he worked from his home.[68] In June 1949, the Kronk heirs deeded the northwest portion of Lot 54, containing a one and one-half story frame building, to Charles W. Demory. This deed indicates William Kronk previously had sold the property to Demory at an unspecified date. That deed had been lost, however, necessitating another document. A month after receiving a second deed, Demory sold the property to Frank R. Long for $10.[69]

In November 1952, Frank Long and his wife Marion sold the property to the State of West Virginia. The conveyed property was described as follows:

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[65]Farmers Advocate, 14 April 1923, p. 1, col. 1; 3 November 1923, p. 1, col. 5; Kira Ramakrishna and Patricia Chickering, "Historic Structures Report, Historical Data Section Update, Building 14, The Burton Jewelry Store" (draft, November 1993), pp. 11-12.

[66]Leo O'Beirne to William W. Kronk, 10 February 1927, Deed Book 128, p. 306.

[67]The information on the back of this photograph states the man was Earl Kronk, William's son, but the age of the man makes it likely it was William instead. The name Kronk is clearly visible on the window.

[68]Spirit of Jefferson, 5 April 1949, p. 2A, col. 2.

[69]Ella Kronk et al to Charles W. Demory, 1 June 1949, Deed Book 177, p. 84; Demory to Frank R. Long, 12 July 1949, Deed Book 177, p. 87.

> Beginning at a point on the west side of High Street and corner to lot 55; thence S. 37 deg. 27' E. 26 feet to a point; thence S. 54 deg. 5' W. 38.33 feet to a point; thence N. 28 deg. 00' W. 21 feet to a point; thence North 52 deg. 33' E. 37 feet to the beginning.[70]

The explanatory sheets accompanying the 1955 Architectural Base Map of Harpers Ferry indicate the building on this lot, Park Building 2, had been occupied by the "'Gospel Chapel' (Col[ored])." A newspaper notice from 1951 notes the Gospel Chapel was located on High Street across from the post office. The pastor was Rev. Richard Bowers. Subsequent notices available as late as January 1955 describe its location as the corner of High and Shenandoah streets, a description which may have been more general than literal.[71]

Building 2 was demolished in 1957 at a cost of $3,600.[72]

Wager Lot 55A

From the mid-1700s, this lot was part of Robert Harper's holdings at the confluence of the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers. His heirs retained this property when they sold much of Harper's land to the United States in 1796. In 1835, a division of the Wager property was made among the three children of John Wager, Jr., in order to settle the debts of son James. In that division, Noah H. Swayne and his wife Sarah Ann, daughter of John Wager, received Wager Lot 55, fronting 54 feet on High Street, as recorded on a plat prepared by James M. Brown.[73]

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[70]Frank R. Long and wife Marion B. to State of West Virginia, 11 November 1952, Deed Book 190, p. 208.

[71]General Information on Buildings, accompanying Architectural Base Map of Harpers Ferry, NM-HF 3055; Spirit of Jefferson, 9 September 1951, p. 2A, col. 3; 13 January 1955, p. 4B, col 1.

[72]Computer database Building Histories, Park Building 2, NPS Ownership.

[73]Partition of Wager Land, Deed Book 29, p. 140.

In 1840, Noah and Sarah Ann Swayne granted George W. Cutshaw a ten-year lease at a $20 annual rental to Lot 55, except for the northwest portion previously leased to Hillary Allison (See Lot 55B). Allison's lease was for a 32-foot portion, meaning approximately 22 feet was left for lease to Cutshaw. In 1845, Cutshaw assigned his lease to William C. Kirkhart, who in turn conveyed the lease to John Gibson in July 1847.[74] No known buildings stood on the property at that time.

John Gibson had been engaged in the boating business, transporting goods such as fish, salt, plaster, flour and vegetables, to and from Harpers Ferry since at least 1839. In the early 1840s, Gibson and his sister Virginia owned leaseholds on property near the point containing a store and warehouse.[75]

Gibson's easy access to seasonable goods may have induced him to purchase the lease on a portion of Lot 55 in 1847, where his building stood the following year. In November 1848, Gibson advertised his eating establishment, the "Green House," on High Street. Here he offered "Oysters in every variety, Either fried, roasted, or stewed--together with every other article in season. His Bar is supplied with the choicest kinds of LIQUORS."[76]

John Gibson died in August 1853, and an appraisal of his estate reveals the following information about the Green House. It was a three-story brick building valued at $1,100. The property was furnished with six arm chairs, a stove, two spittoons, a settee, a clock, six pint glass decanters and 42 quart glass decanters. A mulatto girl was connected with the property as well.

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[74]Lease, Noah H. Swayne and wife Sarah Ann to George W. Cutshaw, 16 May 1840, Deed Book 24, p. 88; William C. Kirkhart to John Gibson, 1 July 1847, Deed Book 29, p. 114.

[75]Virginia Free Press, 18 April 1839, p. 3, col. 4; 29 April 1847, p. 3, col. 3; 11 May 1848, p. 3, col. 1; Charles W. Snell, "Historic Building Site Survey Report of the Lot South of the Winchester & Potomac Railroad Tracks: The Gault House Saloon" (Harpers Ferry National Monument, 7 October 1959), pp. 8-10.

[76]Virginia Free Press, 23 November 1848, p. 3, col. 3.

Gibson left his property to his wife Ann Amelia only so long as she did not remarry. In case of her remarriage, his property was to go to his mother-in-law Rhoda A. Keenan.[77]

In January 1856, the Green House, advertised as suitable for a dwelling or a hotel, was offered for rent or sale by Gibson's estate.[78] Not for a year and a half, however, did the estate sell the property. In July 1857, Gibson's executor sold the leasehold on the Green House for $486 to Joseph E. Clagett, Charles Johnson, and George Koonce. The deed describes the building as a "two story brick building over a stone basement."[79]

Clagett was a local druggist and physician, Johnson a merchant, and Koonce town constable. Apparently, none of them lived in the Green House, so they probably were renting it out.[80] In November 1870, Clagett, Koonce, and Johnson's administrator sold the leasehold to Turner Freeman. Three months later, Freeman executed a deed of trust to John G. Cockrell to secure the $425 owed these three men.[81]

Turner Freeman had been one of the free blacks living in Jefferson County before the Civil War. By 1870, Freeman (51), a cooper, was living in Harpers Ferry with his wife Sarah (50), and family George (19), Minon (18), Jane (33), and Tae (14).[82] When Freeman failed to pay the money due on the Green House, trustee John Cockrell sold the leasehold to Noah and Sarah

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[77]Virginia Free Press, 11 August 1853, p. 2, col. 7; Appraisal of the personal property of John A. Gibson, Will Book 14, pp. 74-7; Will of John A. Gibson, probated 15 August 1853, Will Book 14, p. 8.

[78]Virginia Free Press, 17 January 1856, p. 2, col. 7.

[79]Joseph L. Duckwall to Joseph E. Clagett, Charles Johnson, and George Koonce, 18 July 1857, Deed Book 37, p. 324.

[80]Eighth Census (1860), Harpers Ferry, pp. 192, 202, 218. Based on census location, Charles Snell suggests the William Small and James Wigginton families were living in the Green House in 1860 ("Wager Lot No. 55," p. 7).

[81]Deed of Trust, Turner Freeman to John G. Cockrell, 22 February 1871, Deed Book C, p. 86.

[82]Virginia Free Press, 2 August 1849, p. 3, col. 3; Ninth Census (1870), Bolivar Township, p. 457, p. 16.

Ann Swayne in 1875 for $280, thus placing title to both the building and lot in the same hands.[83]

The 1894 Sanborn Map indicates the Green House was being used as a dwelling. Either Patsy Hunter or Cora Higgins, two black women, or both of them may have occupied the house. In July 1898, a terrible fire swept along this side of High Street, destroying five buildings. Among them was the "Swain property, probably worth about $800; no insurance; occupied by Mrs. Patsy Hunter and Mrs. Cora Higgins." Clearly, this statement refers to Lot 55, but it could have referred to the building on the southern or northern end, or both. The newspaper account continued, however, by noting the "building adjoining Mr. Cassell's tin store, was occupied by Mr. Thomas Roderick as a dwelling." This statement suggests Roderick lived on Lot 55B and, therefore, indicates Hunter and Higgins lived in the Green House. While the ruins of the building on Lot 55B remained for several decades, the Green House was completely destroyed by the fire.[84]

The Swayne family owned Lot 55 until 1924, when it was sold the Harry Rockenbaugh for $150. In 1951, F. J. Beckwith, deputy commissioner of forfeited and delinquent lands, sold the property to Leslie D. Jones for delinquent taxes.[85] Jones and his wife Eva sold it to the State of West Virginia in May 1953. The conveyed property was described as follows:

> BEGINNING at a stake at the northeast corner of Lot No. 54; thence N. 42 deg. 42' W 57 feet to a point on the west side of High Street; thence S. 47 deg. 18' W. 26 feet to a point on the east side of the Public walk; thence S. 41 deg. 40' E. 18 feet to a point; thence S. 28' deg. 00' E. 36 feet to a point; thence N. 52 deg. 33' E. 37 feet to the beginning.[86]

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[83]John G. Cockrell to Noah H. Swayne and wife Sarah Ann, 26 June 1875, Deed Book C, p. 309.

[84]Virginia Free Press, 20 July 1898, p. 3, col. 4.

[85]Francis B. Swayne et al to Harry Rockenbaugh, 17 October 1924, Deed Book 125, p. 176; F.J. Beckwith to Leslie D. Jones, 15 October 1951, Deed Book 185, p. 417.

[86]Leslie D. Jones and wife Eva K. to State of West Virginia, 16 May 1953, Deed Book 193, p. 223.

Wager Lot 55B

From the mid-1700s, this lot was part of Robert Harper's holdings at the confluence of the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers. His heirs retained this property when they sold much of Harper's land to the United States in 1796. In 1835, a division of the Wager property was made among the three children of John Wager, Jr., in order to settle the debts of son James. In that division, Noah H. Swayne and his wife Sarah Ann, daughter of John Wager, received Wager Lot 55, fronting 54 feet on High Street, as recorded on a plat prepared by James M. Brown.[87]

In February 1839, the Swaynes gave Hillary Allison a 10-year lease for a portion of Lot 55, consisting of 32 feet off the northwest end of the lot "now in possession of said Allison." The lease was not to take effect until April 1840, more than a year away.[88] The fact Allison was in possession of the property at that time suggests a building already stood on the site in 1839. While Charles Snell believed the building probably was built by the Wager family before 1835, it more likely was built by Allison himself, as he owned both the house and the leasehold when he wrote a will in 1854. The earliest description (from 1854) indicates Allison's building was a two-story stone building. That description is repeated in an 1858 deed for an adjoining piece of property.[89]

It is not known whether Allison ever lived on the property. While he was living alone in Harpers Ferry in 1840, a decade later he lived in Bolivar.[90] Hillary Allison died in 1857, at

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[87]Partition of Wager Land, Deed Book 29, p. 140.

[88]Lease, Noah H. Swayne and wife Sarah Ann to Hillary Allison, 1 February 1839, Deed Book 24, p. 86.

[89]Snell, "Wager Lot No. 55," p. 4, also remarks attached at front of report; Will of Hillary Simpson Allison, written 17 November 1854, probated 17 March 1857, Will Book 15, p. 169; Deed of Trust, Abraham Fleming to Isaac Fouke, 11 February 1854, Deed Book 34, p. 112; Isaac Fouke to George W. Chambers, George Koonce, and John W. Sturdy, 12 June 1858, Deed Book 38, p. 87.

[90]Sixth Census (1840), Harpers Ferry, p. 236; Seventh Census (1850), Bolivar, p. 401B.

which time the leasehold and building on Lot 55 were appraised at $600. In his will, Allison left the building and lease, together with the household and kitchen furniture to James Jones Russell, the young son of John Russell and Hillary's niece Margaret Jones Russell.[91] The Russell family probably never lived in the building, as in 1860 Margaret and her children were living in Bolivar.[92]

According to the Virginia Free Press, in December 1869, J. D. Potterfield sold a house on High Street belonging to James Russell of Charles Town to a Mr. Waters of Loudoun County for $200. This building well may have stood on Lot 55. The newspaper indicates the property had a ground rent of $25 a year, the same amount stipulated in the Swayne lease to Hillary Allison in 1839. Furthermore, a deed executed by James Jones Russell on December 4, in which he conveyed the leasehold of Hillary Allison to Susan C. Russell, refers to a public sale held the previous day and states the building was sold for $200, the same amount Mr. Waters bid. Susan Russell was the daughter of Levi Waters of Loudoun County, suggesting a possible link between her and the Mr. Waters who bought the building at public auction. The building Waters bought reportedly was nearly demolished during the war.[93] How Susan Russell used the building is not known, and she sold her leasehold to Noah and Sarah Ann Swayne in 1880.[94]

The 1894 Sanborn Map indicates Hillary Allison's stone house was in use as a dwelling. In July 1898, a terrible fire swept along this side of High Street, destroying five buildings. Among them was the "Swain property, probably worth about $800; no insurance; occupied by

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[91]Will of Hillary Simpson Allison, Will Book 15, p. 169; Appraisement, 16 May 1857, Will Book 15, p. 220.

[92]Virginia Free Press, 18 October 1855, p. 2, col. 7; Eighth Census (1860), Bolivar, p. 228.

[93]Virginia Free Press, 12 November 1846, p. 3, col. 1; 13 December 1869, p. 3, col. 3; James Jones Russell to Susan C. Russell, 4 December 1869, Deed Book 5, p. 312.

[94]Lease, Susan C. Russell to Noah H. Swayne and wife Sarah Ann, 19 June 1880, Deed Book H, p. 492.

Mrs. Patsy Hunter and Mrs. Cora Higgins."[95] While this statement clearly refers to Lot 55, it is not certain whether it was the building on the southern or northern end, or both. The newspaper account continued, however, by noting the "building adjoining Mr. Cassell's tin store, was occupied by Mr. Thomas Roderick as a dwelling." This statement suggests Roderick lived on Lot 55B, while Hunter and Higgins lived in the Green House on Lot 55A. While the exterior walls of Hillary Allison's house withstood the fire, subsequent Sanborn maps list the building as a ruins without a roof (See NHF-670, Figure 19).

The Swayne family owned Lot 55 until 1924, when it was sold the Harry Rockenbaugh for $150. In 1951, F. J. Beckwith, deputy commissioner of forfeited and delinquent lands, sold the property to Leslie D. Jones for delinquent taxes. Jones and his wife Eva sold it to the State of West Virginia in May 1953 (See page 37 for a description of Lot 55).[96]

Wager Lot 56A

From the mid-1700s, this lot was part of Robert Harper's holdings at the confluence of the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers. His heirs retained this property when they sold much of Harper's land to the United States in 1796. In 1835, a division of the Wager property was made among the three children of John Wager, Jr., in order to settle the debts of son James. In that division, Gerard B. Wager received Wager Lot 56, as recorded on a plat prepared by James M. Brown. Wager would own this lot until his death March 26, 1848 at his home near Martinsburg.

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[95]Virginia Free Press, 20 July 1898, p. 3, col. 4.

[96]Francis B. Swayne et al to Harry Rockenbaugh, 17 October 1924, Deed Book 125, p. 176; F.J. Beckwith to Leslie D. Jones, 15 October 1951, Deed Book 185, p. 417; Leslie D. Jones and wife Eva K. to State of West Virginia, 16 May 1953, Deed Book 193, p. 223.

Title then passed to his heirs.[97]

In April 1842, Abraham Fleming received a 99-year lease from Gerard B. Wager for a portion of a lot on High Street. Although the lease records the lot as Lot 54, historian Charles Snell concluded it must have been Lot 56, since Wager did not own Lot 54 and other references suggest Fleming was located on Lot 56. By this lease, Fleming received the southeastern portion of the lot, fronting 31 feet on High Street, "now occupied by Flemming & upon which he has lately built a house."[98] A deed of trust executed by Fleming in 1843 because he was "unable to meet his engagements" indicates the house on High Street in which Fleming lived was "a two story brick dwelling house," but an 1853 advertisement and subsequent references document Fleming's house as a three-story building. Either Fleming added another story between 1843 and 1853 or the earlier description was inaccurate.[99] This third story afforded access to the walk at the rear of Lot 56, thus providing another entrance to the building.

Located on the first floor were storerooms occupied by Fleming as a general flour and feed store. The Fleming family lived upstairs. In 1850, the household held flour dealer Abraham (45), Susan (45), John C. (10), Jesse B. (5), Harriet (3), armorer Robert H. Fleming (17), and Sarah Bateman (19).[100]

In 1853, Abraham Fleming, having evidently decided to leave Harpers Ferry, offered his dwelling house and store for rent and requested anyone owing him money to settle with Isaac

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[97]Partition of Wager Land, Deed Book 29, p. 140; Virginia Free Press, 5 May 1848, p. 2, col. 7; Will of Gerard B. Wager, C.J. Faulkner Papers, T.T. Perry Collection, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, Virginia.

[98]Lease, Gerard B. Wager to Abraham Fleming, 1 April 1842, Deed Book 26, p. 79.

[99]Deed of Trust, Abraham Fleming to John Colin Unseld, 18 July 1843, Deed Book 26, p. 396; Virginia Free Press, 25 August 1853, p. 3, col. 1.

[100]Virginia Free Press, 14 July 1853, p. 2, col. 7; Seventh Census (1850), Harpers Ferry, p. 414B.

Fleming, possibly a brother.[101] In February 1855, when Fleming advertised the upcoming sale of the three-story building and ground lease, a Mr. Kirby occupied the dwelling under a lease that would expire April 1.[102]

In 1854, Abraham Fleming, then a resident of Washington, D.C., placed the High Street building and ground lease in trust with Isaac Fouke to secure a $500 debt due George Atkinson. In April and again in May 1858, Fouke advertised the public sale of Fleming's three-story brick building, consisting of a dwelling above and two storerooms below, together with the ground lease from Gerard Wager.[103] George W. Chambers, George Koonce, and John W. Sturdy purchased the building and leasehold in June; six months later, Chambers conveyed his interest to Sturdy.[104]

The portion of Lot 56 (approximately fronting twenty-five feet on High Street) immediately north of Fleming's building apparently remained under the control of the Wager family. Whether a building stood on this site when Fleming acquired a lease in 1842 for the adjacent property is not known, but this portion of Lot 56 held a two-story brick building a few years later. In 1854, in pursuance of Gerard Wager's will, several buildings were offered for sale. Among them was a two-story brick building situated on High Street between Thomas Burley's brick house and Abraham Fleming's building and bounded in the rear by a public walk.[105]

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[101]Virginia Free Press, 14 July 1853, p. 2, col. 7; 21 July 1853, p. 3, col. 2.

[102]Spirit of Jefferson, 20 February 1855, p. 3, col. 4.

[103]Deed of Trust, Abraham Fleming to Isaac Fouke, 11 February 1854, Deed Book 34, p. 112; Virginia Free Press, 1 April 1858, p. 2, col. 7; 20 May 1858, p. 2, col. 5.

[104]Isaac Fouke, trustee, to George W. Chambers, George Koonce, and John W. Sturdy, 12 June 1858, Deed Book 38, p. 87; George W. Chambers to John W. Sturdy, 3 December 1858, Deed Book 38, p. 205.

[105]Virginia Free Press, 16 February 1854, p. 3, col. 1. Snell incorrectly believed this lot held the brick building on the north, which appears on late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century maps, but that building stood on the Burley property (Snell, "Wager Lot No. 56," p. 5).

In October 1851, Edward Smith advertised his saddlery and harness making business on High Street. A year and a half later, Adam Whip informed his old customers he had returned to Harpers Ferry (he had moved to Charles Town in 1841) and opened a saddle and harness making business in Mr. Smith's old shop adjoining Abraham Fleming's grocery.[106] Whip was still located in this building in February 1854, when the building's sale was advertised. Whip died the following month after a five-month illness. In April 1854, Whip's executor sold the household and kitchen furniture, a lot of saddler's benches and tools, new saddles, harness, collars, and bridles.[107]

No further information on these two buildings until after the Civil War has been uncovered. In 1864, Ellen Wager, Gerard Wager's widow died in Charles Town. A year later Gerard Wager's administrator notified debtors and creditors of Wager (dead for nearly twenty years) to settle up.[108] An appraisement was made of Wager's real estate in 1866 and the Fleming portion of Lot 56A was valued at $400. By that time, the lease (last known owner being John Sturdy) had been forfeited. The portion occupied by Adam Whip in the early 1850s, described in the appraisement as the "Residue of Lot No 56 Except that Sold to Boreley," was valued at $500.[109]

About 1869, S. Howell Brown prepared a plat of Gerard Wager's Harpers Ferry property. The document combines both the aforementioned parts of Lot 56A. "Being the south end of original lot of that number[, it] has a front of 56 3/4 feet on High St. and runs back with No. 55,

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[106]Virginia Free Press, 18 March 1841, p. 3, col. 4; 23 October 1851, p. 3, col. 2; 7 April 1853, p. 3, col. 1.

[107]Virginia Free Press, 16 February 1854, p. 3, col. 1; 16 March 1854, p. 2, col. 7; 23 March 1854, p. 3, col. 1.

[108]Virginia Free Press, 31 August 1865, p. 3, col. 4; 7 December 1865, p. 2, col. 6.

[109]Appraisement of Real Estate of G.B. Wager, 1866, C.J. Faulkner Papers, T.T. Perry Collection, Virginia Historical Society.

20 feet, and with Mrs. Boerley 18 feet."[110] Brown's plat probably had been prepared as a result of a suit brought by Lucy Wager, Walter Taylor, and wife Ellen Wager Taylor against the administrator and devisees of Gerard B. Wager seeking partition of Wager's property. (Lucy and Ellen were two of Gerard Wager's children; the others were Catherine Schilling and Mary Elizabeth.) In 1869, the court decreed the sale of Gerard Wager's real estate at Harpers Ferry. Although not specified in the announcement of the sale, the southern part of Lot 56 (the Fleming and Whip site) probably was offered for sale at that time. Either the sale never transpired, or this part of Lot 56 was not sold, as it remained in the ownership of the Wager heirs for two more decades.[111]

Only one clue to the use of either of the two buildings during these two decades has been uncovered. A photograph (HF-79, Figure 17) of the public walk behind the buildings on the south side of High Street, probably taken about 1880, shows a black women at the rear, third-floor entrance to the old Fleming building. Black families are known to have occupied buildings on Lot 55 in the 1890s, so perhaps this building was similarly occupied.[112]

In 1885, M. Elizabeth Wager executed a deed of trust for her interest in this lot, then containing two brick buildings.[113] Four years later, Lucy Wager filed suit on behalf of herself and other creditors of the late Ellen Taylor against the heirs of Taylor, the heirs of the late Catherine Schilling, Mary E. Wager, and other parties, seeking a partition of Taylor's interest in

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[110]Plat and Description of Wager property at Harpers Ferry by S. Howell Brown, 27 October 1869, C.J. Faulkner Papers, T.T. Perry Collection, Virginia Historical Society.

[111]Virginia Free Press, 30 April 1869, p. 2, col. 6; 5 December 1867, p. 2, col. 5; 30 July 1868; Spirit of Jefferson, 27 November 1917, p. 2, col. 1.

[112]Virginia Free Press, 20 July 1898, p. 3, col. 4.

[113]Deed of Trust, M. Elizabeth Wager to L.A. Montague, 14 July 1885, Deed Book O, p. 120.

Gerard Wager's estate. Anthony Busey, beneficiary of a deed of trust executed by Schilling, also filed suit, seeking a partition of the Schilling interest.[114] As a result, the Wager property, including part of Wager Lot 56, was offered for sale in October 1889. This portion of Lot 56, known as the "Wager Office Lot," was "improved by a BRICK OFFICE," then unoccupied.[115] At that sale, J. Garland Hurst became the owner of part of Lot 56 described as follows:

> Beginning at the corner of the swayne lot on High Street (fig 1) and extending with said street fifty-six feet nine inches to Mrs. Boerley's corner (fig 2) thence back with her lot 18 feet to the Public Walk (fig 3) with it to the Corner of the Swayne lot (fig 4) and thence with it twenty feet to the beginning.[116]

Interestingly, although this parcel contained the land on which two brick buildings reportedly had stood as recently as 1885, only one, the brick office, is mentioned as standing on the property in 1889. The term "Wager Office" suggests a member of the Wager family used this building at some time, although no documentation of such use has been uncovered.

In 1894, Hurst sold his portion of Lot 56 to James F. Cassell, who executed a deed of trust to secure the purchase money due Hurst.[117] A native Pennsylvanian, Cassell first appears in Harpers Ferry in 1889, when he married Peach Smith. In the mid-1890s, Cassell was a member of the Harpers Ferry town council, and he was a local businessman for several decades.[118]

Cassell improved the property after buying it in 1894. While the 1893 Land Book indicates a building valued at $150 stood on the property, the 1894 Land Book notes a $250

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[114]Virginia Free Press, 4 April 1889, p. 2, col. 4; Papers in the suit of Anthony Busey vs Lucy Wager, et al, Attic, Jefferson County Courthouse.

[115]Virginia Free Press, 17 October 1889, p. 2, col. 3; Description of Wager Lots by S. Howell Brown, 18 May 1889, Papers of the case of Anthony Busey vs Lucy Wager, et al, Jefferson County Courthouse.

[116]Frank Beckwith, T.C. Green, F.W. Brown, special commissioners, to J.G. Hurst, 22 February 1890, Deed Book U., p. 329.

[117]J. Garland Hurst and wife Lizzie T. to James F. Cassell, 14 February 1894, Deed Book 76, p. 105; Deed of Trust, James F. Cassell to Cleon Moore, 14 February 1894, Deed Book 76, p. 106.

[118]Virginia Free Press, 22 August 1889, p. 3, col. 4; Spirit of Jefferson, 14 January 1896, p. 3, col. 3; 12 January 1897, p. 2, col. 1.

improvement had been made to Cassell's land. This improvement may have included demolition of extant structures and construction of new buildings. No brick building stood on this property in 1894 but a building of some sort had stood on the property in 1893. In 1894, a two-story frame building, with a storefront on the first floor and three windows across the front on the second floor, stood on the old Fleming site, while an area about 28 feet wide along High Street to the north of this new building was vacant.[119]

The 1894 Sanborn Map reveals a stove store occupied the frame building on Cassell's property. Cassell evidently occupied the site before the frame building was constructed. Photographic documentation (HF-1285, Figure 18) shows one of the brick buildings still standing on Lot 56A but also shows a sign for James Cassell, tin and sheet iron ware.[120]

An advertisement in the April 27, 1895 issue of the Harper's Ferry Sentinel indicates James F. Cassell was a

> DEALER IN Cooking And Heating Stoves, Ranges, Furnaces, AND Sexton's Fire-Place Heaters, Also GASOLENE [*sic*], OIL AND OIL GAS COOKING AND HEATING STOVES, Finche's Patent Chimney Tops, All kinds of Pumps, Terra Cotta, Wrought and Cast Iron Soil Pipe, Dietz Tubular Street Lamps, Charcoal, Iron and Steel Roofing.

He also carried a "FULL LINE OF TINWARE, ROOFING AND SPOUTING."[121]

Between 1894 and 1902, James Cassell enlarged his building. The Sanborn Map from the latter year reveals a second building stood on the portion of his lot that had been vacant in 1894. This newer building, also frame, had a doorway flanked by two windows on the first floor and a single window on the second. While the older structure still housed stoves, a tin shop occupied

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[119]Jefferson County Land Books, 1893 & 1894; Sanborn Map of Harpers Ferry, November 1894. See NHF-670, taken in the 1920s.

[120]At some point during the 1890s, Cassell also was located in Park Building 44 (See HF-446, taken before 1900).

[121]Harper's Ferry Sentinel, 27 April 1895, p. 1, col. 1.



Figure 17. HF-79. The public walkway behind the buildings on the west side of High Street, ca. 1880s.

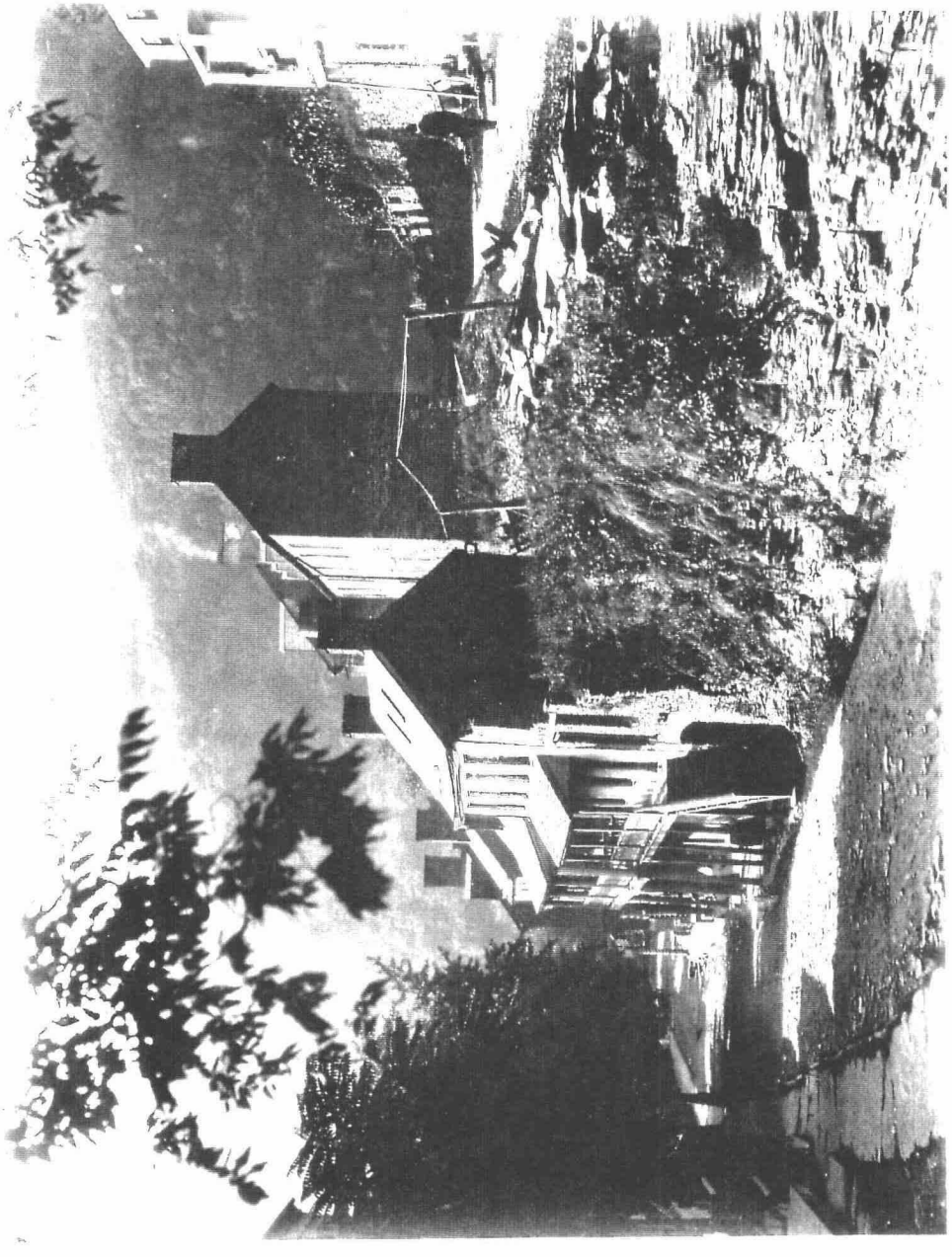


Figure 18. HF-1285. Looking down High Street, ca. 1889. The two buildings on Lot 56B appear near the center. Portions of buildings on Lots 56A and 55B are visible as well.

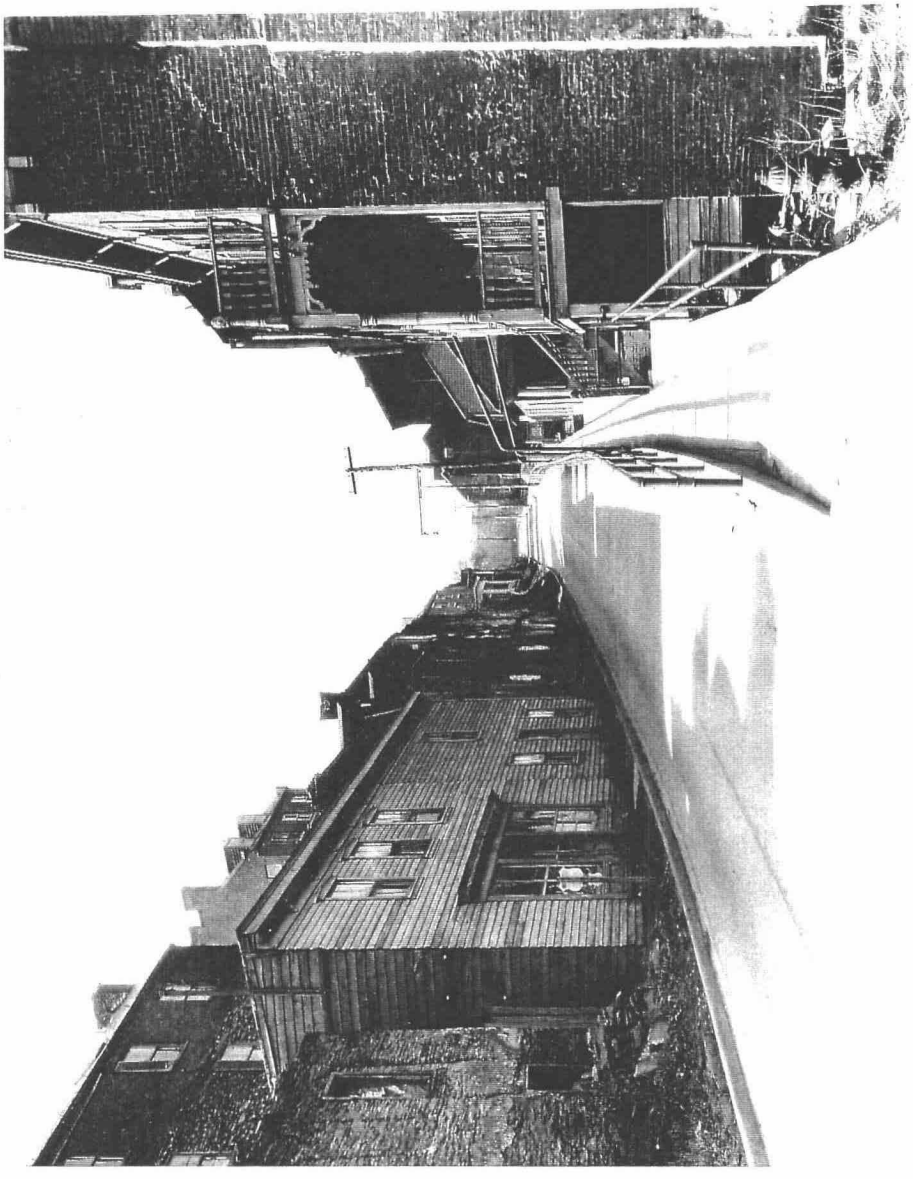


Figure 19. NHF-670. View of High Street in the late 1920s. On the left are the ruins of the stone building on Lot 55B, the frame building on 56A, and the two buildings on 56B.

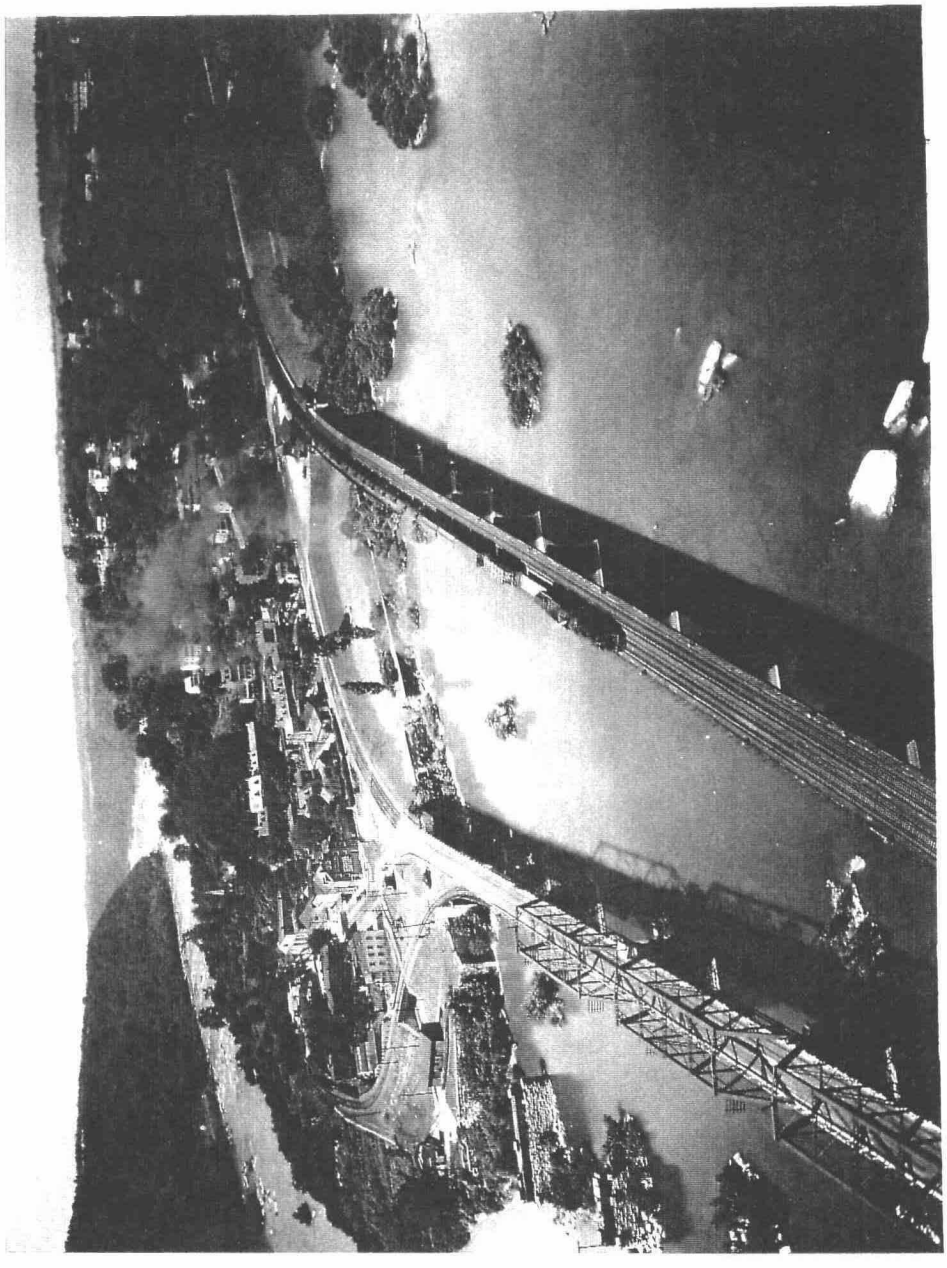


Figure 20. NHF-723. View of Harpers Ferry from Maryland Heights, mid-1940s, shows the frame building on Lot 56A.

the newer section. Both likely were part of Cassell's business.[122]

Cassell went bankrupt early in 1904. In February, by order of the United States Court for the Northern District of West Virginia, trustee Gerard D. Moore offered several lots owned by Cassell for sale. Among them was his High Street property, "improved by A TWO-STORY FOUR-ROOM FRAME BUILDING lately occupied by said cassell [*sic*] as a STOVE and TINWARE STORE HOUSE."[123] The following month Moore executed a deed, conveying this portion of Lot 56 to Joseph F., Edward M., and Mary J. Tearney, and Elizabeth Hurst for $500. These four individuals were the heirs of Edward Tearney, to whom J. Garland Hurst had assigned the debt due from Cassell for the purchase of the property in 1894.[124]

The 1907 Sanborn Map (Figure 4) indicates the northern half of the frame building on Lot 56 was vacant while the southern half held a tin shop. While Cassell conceivably was the occupant to which the Sanborn Map referred, another explanation is more likely. A June 1912 advertisement for J. W. Wilson's harness shop, probably located on Lot 56B, indicates Wilson's High Street shop adjoined Thomas Beale's tin shop. Thus, Beale likely occupied the building on Wager Lot 56A. Cassell likely had moved to Park Building 44, which also housed a plumber and tin shop in 1907.[125] By 1912, the portion previously occupied by a tin shop was vacant and the northern half was occupied by a carpenter (See Figure 5).

In April 1911, the Farmers Advocate reported, "J. L. Dailey & Son have rented the

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[122]See NHF-670.

[123]Spirit of Jefferson, 9 February 1904, p. 2, col. 4.

[124]G.D. Moore, trustee, to Joseph F. Tearney, et al, 5 March 1904, Deed Book 94, p. 240.

[125]Sanborn Map 1907; Farmers Advocate, 22 June 1912, p. 2, col. 6. No other records suggest Beale may have had his store on High Street. For a number of years, he had a tinware store on Shenandoah Street, including his own property on Block B. Beale moved from that in the mid-1890s, however. (See Mary Johnson, "Lots 1 to 7, Block A, to Lot 1, Block B, Shenandoah Street" p. 152).

carpenter shop on High St. of the Tearney heirs and have laid in a supply of material for repairs of all kind."[126] Carpenter and undertaker Joseph Dailey was a native of Jefferson County and had lived in the Harpers Ferry area since at least 1860. In 1880, Dailey established a funeral business, originally located on Shenandoah Street. Dailey may have moved his undertaking business to High Street in 1911 along with his carpenter shop, as he probably produced coffins at that shop.[127] At that point, however, Dailey's business did not revolve exclusively around undertaking. Newspaper items from 1910 and 1911 indicate Dailey also did construction work, and his 1912 obituary reveals Joseph Dailey was a house joiner who had built several houses in town.[128]

After Dailey's death in September 1912, his wife Annie, proprietress of the West Virginia House, and two of their sons continued the undertaking business.[129] In time, although his mother owned it, son Jesse took over management of the funeral business. In October 1921, Jesse Dailey advertised his mortuary and show rooms, new equipment, motor hearse, and a female assistant. The hearse had just been acquired from Piqua, Ohio, late in September. Licensed in West Virginia, Virginia, and Maryland, Dailey opened a branch in Brunswick, Maryland, in 1922, but he assured local residents he would give personal attention to his headquarters in Harpers Ferry.[130]

While Dailey's undertaking business probably was located on Lot 56A from 1911, it

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[126]Farmers Advocate, 15 April 1911, p. 2, col. 3.

[127]Eighth Census (1860), Harpers Ferry, p. 266; Tenth Census (1880), Harpers Ferry, p. 3 (p. 6); Farmers Advocate, 29 October 1921, p. 4, cols. 5 & 6; Randall's Business Directory of Winchester, Berryville and Front Royal, Va., Charlestown, and Harper's Ferry, W. Va., 1892-93 (Martinsburg, WV: John C. Randall, pub.), p. 53.

[128]Farmers Advocate, 28 May 1910, p. 2, col. 3; 6 May 1911, p. 2, col. 4; 14 September 1912, p. 2, col. 2.

[129]Farmers Advocate, 16 October 1909, p. 3, col. 6; 14 September 1912, p. 2, col. 6; Harpers Ferry Times, 1 June 1906, p. 5, col. 1.

[130]Farmers Advocate, 1 October 1921, p. 8, cols. 1, 3 & 4; 11 February 1922, p. 8, cols. 1 & 2.

definitely was there in 1922. That year, a plan of the proposed construction of a state road from Washington Street in Bolivar down High Street in Harpers Ferry indicates the Jennie Tearney property was occupied by an "undertaker."[131] The Sanborn Map for that year (Figure 6) indicates a store occupied the southern half of the building but that the other portion was vacant. The 1933 map (Figure 7) indicates both portions were occupied by unspecified stores.

In a December 1920 division of Tearney property, Belle Tearney, the widow of Joseph Tearney, one of the four Tearney heirs who had acquired title in 1904, relinquished her interest in the High Street property. Of the other three owners--Edward M. Tearney, Mary J. Tearney, and Elizabeth Hurst--Hurst had just died, and Edward and Mary, or Jennie as she was called, inherited their sister's interest.[132]

Although the 1922 highway map lists only Jennie Tearney as an owner, her brother Edward probably still held a half-interest. Jennie Tearney died in May 1924, leaving her property to nephew Edward J. Tearney, who died within a year. Immediately, Frances Tearney filed a lawsuit in Circuit Court against William V. Marmion, Eugenia Tearney, Joseph Tearney and wife, John Tearney, Belle Tearney, Pete Steveson, and Oliver H. Bair Company. Frances Tearney claimed to be the common law wife of Edward J. Tearney and demanded a share of the estate left him by Mary Jane Tearney.[133] In June 1925, a Lis Pendens was recorded affecting one-half of several Tearney properties in Harpers Ferry and Bolivar. Another Lis Pendens was filed in January 1925, to subject these properties to Edward J. Tearney's debts and to establish Frances

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[131]West Virginia State Road Commission, "Plan and Profile of Proposed Construction of Class 'A' Road State Project 3034, Harpers Ferry District, Jefferson County," 1922, WV State Department of Highways, Charleston, West Virginia.

[132]Partition, Edward M. Tearney, Mary Jane Tearney, and Belle Tearney, 18 December 1920, Deed Book 119, p. 409; Spirit of Jefferson, 7 December 1920, p. 5, col. 4.

[133]Farmers Advocate, 24 May 1924, p. 1, col. 2; 17 January 1925, p. 1, col. 1; 13 June 1925, p. 1, col. 5.

Tearney's claim based on Edward Tearney "having contracted to convey all his real estate to said Frances Tearney in consideration of her services." Lot 56A is not specified in these two documents, clearly an oversight as subsequent events reveal.[134]

Following the dismissal of her suit by the Circuit Court in February of that year, Frances Tearney had a third Lis Pendens executed to be in effect while she filed a appeal to the Supreme Court. Apparently, the Circuit Court had denied her claim on the basis that a will Edward Tearney wrote in Pennsylvania did not meet the requirements of West Virginia law. The Supreme Court determined the document could be enforced as a contract, thus reversing the Circuit Court opinion. Sent back to the Circuit Court, the case was decided in October 1928, when the court ordered the public sale of several pieces of the Tearney property. Among the properties offered at the December 17, 1928 sale was a "Lot improved by a Two-Story Frame Building on High Street, occupied by Jesse Dailey." Reverend Edward Tearney offered his half-interest at the same sale.[135]

Ralph Stephenson placed the highest bid on the Tearney part of Lot 56, but he subsequently defaulted on payment. Finally, in August 1931, special commissioners Forrest W. Brown and John T. Porterfield deeded the property with frame building to Harry Rockenbaugh.[136] Photographs from the 1930s to about 1950 document the continued presence of this building, although use of the building during these years has not been determined. (The Dailey funeral home

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[134]Lis Pendens, Frances Tearney vs William V. Marmion, administrator of Edward J. Tearney, Eugenia Tearney, Joseph Tearney and Mrs. Joseph Tearney, John Tearney & Belle Tearney, Pete Steveson, and Oliver H. Bair Co., 3 June 1925, Deed Book 126, p. 42; 25 January 1926, Deed Book 126, p. 530.

[135]Lis Pendens, Frances Tearney vs William V. Marmion, administrator of Edward J. Tearney, Eugenia Tearney, Joseph Tearney and Mrs. Joseph Tearney, John Tearney & Belle Tearney, Pete Steveson, and Oliver H. Bair Co., 5 February 1926, Deed Book 127, p. 6; Farmers Advocate, 19 March 1927, p. 1, col. 2; 1 December 1928, p. 4, col. 4.

[136]Forrest W. Brown and John T. Porterfield to Harry Rockenbaugh, 24 August 1931, Deed Book 136, p. 405.

moved to Fillmore Street, Camp Hill, sometime before 1945.)[137]

In January 1953, the taking of the property by the State of West Virginia was ordered by Jefferson County Circuit Court in suit against Aldridge Rockenbaugh, Harry's son, and any other interested parties. This portion of Lot 56 was described as,

> BEGINNING at the corner of Lot No. 55 as shown on said plat, with High (Washington) Street; thence N. 42 deg. 42' W. 59.07 feet to a point; thence S. 47 deg. 18' W. 23.5 feet to the public walk; thence along the public walk S. 41 deg. 40' E. 59 feet to the northwestern corner of Lot No. 55; thence along the northerly side of Lot No. 55 N. 47 deg. 18' E. 26 feet to the beginning.[138]

Wager Lot 56B

From the mid-1700s, this lot was part of Robert Harper's holdings at the confluence of the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers. His heirs (the Wager family) retained this property when they sold much of Harper's land to the United States in 1796. How long the Wagers retained control of the northern portion of Lot 56 (56B) is not clear. In 1835, a division of the Wager property was made among the three children of John Wager, Jr., in order to settle the debts of son James. In that division, Gerard B. Wager received title to Wager Lot 56, as recorded on a plat prepared by James M. Brown. Wager may have owned this lot until his death March 26, 1848 at his home near Martinsburg, at which time title would have passed to his heirs.[139]

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[137]Spirit of Jefferson, 5 December 1945, p. 1, col. 5. See HF-1630 (Figure 22), HF-1631 (Figure 23), both probably taken in the 1930s; NHF-723, probably taken between 1942 and 1947. A photograph owned by Larry Jones and probably taken in the late 1940s (based on his likely age in the photo) shows a portion of this building on the far left.

[138]Order, State of West Virginia vs Aldridge Rockenbaugh, 12 January 1953, Deed Book 191, p. 154.

[139]Partition of Wager Land, Deed Book 29, p. 140; Virginia Free Press, 5 May 1848, p. 2, col. 7; Will of Gerard B. Wager, C.J. Faulkner Papers, T.T. Perry Collection, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, Virginia.

Gerard Wager or his heirs probably sold the property before the Civil War. When historian Charles Snell documented the site in 1958, he believed Gerard Wager had a brick building constructed on this site after 1843. In reality, there were two buildings on this portion: a two-and-one-half story brick building and, nearer the intersection of the public walk and High Street, a three-story stone building. Snell mistakenly concluded Lot 56 held three rather than four buildings and that the two and a half story brick building was the one occupied by Adam Whip in 1854 (See page 42).[140]

The first reference to any buildings on the northern part of Lot 56 comes from the 1854 sale notice for an adjoining lot. According to that notice, the two-story brick building located on Lot 56A stood between Abraham Fleming's (southern portion Lot 56A) and Thomas Burley's brick house (Lot 56B).[141] No documentation of a construction date for either the brick Burley building or the stone building to its north has been found, although both probably were built between 1835 and 1850. A building certainly was in place in 1850, when the census taker recorded the Burley family three households after the Fleming household. The Burley household held laborer Thomas (32) and his wife Bridget (32), both natives of Ireland, Mary (6), Charles (4), and Elizabeth (2).[142]

Thomas Burley, a native of County Roscommon, Ireland, evidently arrived in Harpers Ferry about 1841, when his name appeared on a list of letters at the post office. Harpers Ferry chronicler Joseph Barry described him as "a man of great physical strength," "blunt, straight-forward . . . [and] very popular on account of his love of fun." Barry stated Burley had a grocery

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[140]Snell, "Wager Lot No. 56," p. 6.

[141]Virginia Free Press, 16 February 1854, p. 3, col. 1;

[142]Seventh Census (1850), Harpers Ferry, p. 414B.

store and was in "very comfortable circumstances."[143]

Other documentation indicates the money came from a tavern and boarding house run by Bridget Burley. In July 1854, having "induced his said wife to manage & keep a tavern boarding house out of which from her excellent care & labor considerable money was made," Thomas Burley (or Boerley) placed several pieces of property in trust for Bridget's benefit and deeded her outright some personal property. Placed in trust were two parcels on High Street (Lots 29 and 36), two parcels on Camp Hill, and property owned at Gulf Mills. Also included were "one thousand shad, sisc [*sic*] thousand herring, 1 dray, a lot of plank, & lumber and all the household stuff & furniture & bar & bar fixtures now in the dwelling house & tavern on High Street where said Boerley lives."[144] Although the reference to the tavern on High Street is not site specific, Snell concluded it was located on Lot 56.[145] Whether the tavern was located in the brick Burley house, the stone building to its north, or both is not known.

Thomas Burley did not deed his wife the house or any part of Lot 56, meaning either he did not own the property in 1854 or he did not wish to transfer it to Bridget. At some point before 1866, and most likely before the Civil War, Thomas or Bridget Burley received title to the northern half of Lot 56; this sale is mentioned in the appraisement of Gerard Wager's real estate in 1866. The Burley portion must have included both the brick building and the stone building adjoining it on the north, as the portion of Lot 56 still owned by the Wager family in 1869 (only 56 3/4 feet on High Street) was not large enough to have included the brick building and

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[143]Barry, pp. 84-5; Virginia Free Press, 8 July 1841, p. 3, col. 4.

[144]Deed of Trust, Thomas Boerley and wife Bridget to Michael Doran, Deed Book 34, p. 134.

[145]Snell, "Wager Lot No. 56," p. 9.

subsequent records list the Burley family as owners of the entire northern portion.[146]

Thomas Burley was killed by John Brown's raiders in 1859, but Bridget Burley continued to live on Lot 56. The 1860 census lists her as a merchant and indicates she owned $1,500 in real estate and $600 in personal property. Her sons Charles (14) and Thomas (8), daughter Elizabeth (11), and Mary Donoho (9) lived with her that year.[147] Bridget Burley, son Thomas, and later his family, probably were still living here in 1870 and 1880. The occupant of the second building on the Burley lot is not known, but on the 1870 census, the dwellings on either side of the Burley family were listed as vacant.[148]

In 1881, Bridget Burley purchased Wager Lot 16 (with Park buildings 5, 16 and 16A) on the opposite side of High Street and nearer the intersection with Shenandoah Street. Shortly after this purchase, she and her son may have moved from Lot 56.[149] At any rate, Bridget Burley (Burleigh) died in 1894, the same year the Sanborn Map indicated the brick building on Lot 56B was vacant and the stone building was being used as a dwelling.[150]

Photographic documentation from the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries show both buildings had two-story porches. The earliest available photograph, from circa 1870, shows a roofless second story to the porch fronting the stone building. A roof did cover the porch of the brick building. Originally, access to the upper porch of both buildings was made via a single

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[146]Appraisement of the Real Estate of G.B. Wager, 1866; Plat and Description of the Wager Property at Harpers Ferry by S. Howell Brown, 27 October 1869, C.J. Faulkner Papers, T.T. Perry Collection, Virginia Historical Society. Son Thomas Burley (or Burleigh) was documented as owner of the entire portion when a plan for the construction of a state road was prepared in 1922.

[147]Barry, 51-52; Eighth Census (1860), Harpers Ferry, p. 195.

[148]Ninth Census (1870), Bolivar Township, p. 25 of Harpers Ferry; Tenth Census (1880), Harpers Ferry, p. 10.

[149]Kira Ramakrishna and Pat Chickering, "Historic Structures Report, History Section, Package 118, Buildings 5, 7, 16 and 16A, White Hall Tavern, The Roeder Store and the Roeder House and Annex" (Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, 3 November 1993), pp. 19-20.

[150]Virginia Free Press, 17 October 1894, p. 3, col. 3.

stairway rising northward from the junction of the two buildings. By about 1890, however, the stairway, now rising southward, had been moved to the northern end of the stone building, providing access solely for that building. By then, a roof covered the porch on that building. Interestingly, photographs show the ruins of a brick structure on the north side of the stone building.[151]

While the brick building was vacant in 1894, it was occupied by a plumber in 1902; the stone building was still a dwelling. Conceivably, James Cassell, the owner and occupant of the southern portion of Lot 56, was using this building. Cassell operated his stove and tinware store on that property. He also was engaged in plumbing work and might have needed additional space for that business.[152]

By 1907, a cobbler had moved into the brick building. Five years later, in 1912, the building was occupied by a harness maker, probably J. W. Wilson.

> New Harness and Repair Shop Opened. I am prepared to do all kinds of work in Harness Making and Repairing. I being 40 years experienced to the trade. Try me by giving me your work. All work will receive prompt attention. J. W. Wilson. High St, adjoining T. W. Beall's Tin Shop, Harpers Ferry, W. Va.[153]

Wilson was still in business six months later, when he advertised the availability of whips, horse boots, and blankets at Wilson's Harness Shop, but no subsequent record has been located.[154]

That same year, the stone building adjoining it on the north was occupied by a laundry. The only launderer known to be operating on High Street in that time period was Charles Johnson,

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[151]HF-33 (Figure 21) taken circa 1870; HF-1285 (Figure 18) taken early 1890s.

[152]Thirteenth Census (1910), Harpers Ferry, p. 186; Sanborn Map, Harpers Ferry, August 1902.

[153]Farmers Advocate, 22 June 1912, p. 2, col. 6.

[154]Farmers Advocate, 7 December 1912, p. 2, col. 5.

but a 1913 advertisement for his business indicates he then was located in the Tearney building, thus eliminating Johnson from consideration as the occupant.[155] However, according to the Farmers Advocate, another laundry had opened in Harpers Ferry in 1907. In August, the Harpers Ferry correspondent reported,

> A very worthy co-partnership has been formed by Charles Warfield, colored, with his brother-in-law, Mr. Crane for the prosecution of the laundry industry in our town and I certainly can't see why everything being equal, with respect to price and quality of work, they should not be liberally patronized by their home people. They have the latest apparatus for such work, and are favorably located. Deliveries will be made Wednesdays and Saturdays. They clean and press ladies and gentlemen clothing also.[156]

Warfield, a graduate of Storer College, had been working as a laundryman since at least 1900. The 29-year old lived with his grandmother Mary Robinson, father James Warfield, wife Margaret, and daughter Pauline. A 1912/1913 business directory indicates the Star Laundry, as Warfield's business was called, was still in operation at that time.[157]

A map prepared about 1921 in preparation for construction of a Class "A" state road in Harpers Ferry records no use for the site of Warfield's laundry, merely describing the building as a stone house. At the same time, it indicates a shoe repair business was located in the brick building. According to the Sanborn Map, neither building was occupied in 1922. This map lists the former as vacant and indicates the latter was dilapidated. The two-story porch fronting both buildings and the stairway leading to the second floor were gone.[158]

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[155]Farmers Advocate, 19 July 1913, p. 2, col. 5.

[156]Farmers Advocate, 24 August 1907, p. 2, col. 3.

[157]Twelfth Census (1900), Harpers Ferry, p. 76B; Storer Record, November 1898; West Virginia Gazetteer and Business Directory 1912-1913, p. 341. No mention is made of Johnson's laundry, suggesting it may not have opened until 1913.

[158]Plan and Profile of Proposed Construction of Class "A" Road State Project 3034, Harpers Ferry District, Jefferson County, 1921; Sanborn Map, Harpers Ferry, November 1922.

The deteriorated condition of these buildings is borne out by several photographs from the 1920s and possibly early 1930s, the later ones showing gaping holes in the buildings.[159] Furthermore, in February 1930, the town council, deeming the Burleigh property a nuisance, passed a motion to request Thomas Burleigh have "those 2 old houses" removed.[160] Burleigh evidently did not act on this request before his death in December 1932. The 1933 Sanborn Map records these buildings as old and vacant. Furthermore, land books continued to record a building value.[161]

Thomas Burleigh's heirs failed to pay taxes on the property in 1936, leading to its transfer to the State. In October 1952, F. J. Beckwith, deputy commissioner of delinquent lands, sold the property to Joseph Thompson, husband of Thomas Burleigh's daughter Louise.[162] In January 1953, the Jefferson County court ordered title to the property be transferred to the State of West Virginia. The portion of Lot 56 thus conveyed was described as follows:

> BEGINNING at a stake on the west side of High Street S. 42 deg. 42' E. [N. 42 deg. 42' W] 59.07 feet from the corner of Lot No. 55; thence N. 47 deg. 20' E. [N. 47 deg. 20' W] 150.50 feet to a stake at the intersection of the east side of the public walk and the southwest side of High Street; thence S. 37 deg. 50' E. 141 feet to a point in the east line of the public walk; thence S. 41 deg. 40' E. 5 feet to a point; thence N. 47 deg. 18' 23.5 feet to the beginning.[163]

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[159]See NHF-670 probably from the 1920s (Figure 19), HF-1630 (Figure 22) and HF-1631 (Figure 23), all taken about 1930.

[160]Harpers Ferry Town Minutes, Vol. 1910-1935, p. 529.

[161]Spirit of Jefferson, 14 December 1932, p. 1, col. 4; Land Book (1936). Later land books list a building value; however, these books reference the property in relation to it being sold to the state for non-payment of taxes for 1936 and probably to not reflect current conditions. The buildings probably were gone by the late 1930s or early 1940s (See HF-1666, dated between 1936 and 1949.)

[162]F.J. Beckwith to Joseph J. Thompson, 20 October 1952, Deed Book 191, p. 546; Spirit of Jefferson, 11 April 1929, p. 1, col. 3.

[163]Order, State of West Virginia vs all parties unknown, 12 January 1953, Deed Book 191, p. 130; Deed of Correction, 18 May 1953, Deed Book 193, p. 233.



Figure 21. HF-33. High Street, ca. 1870.

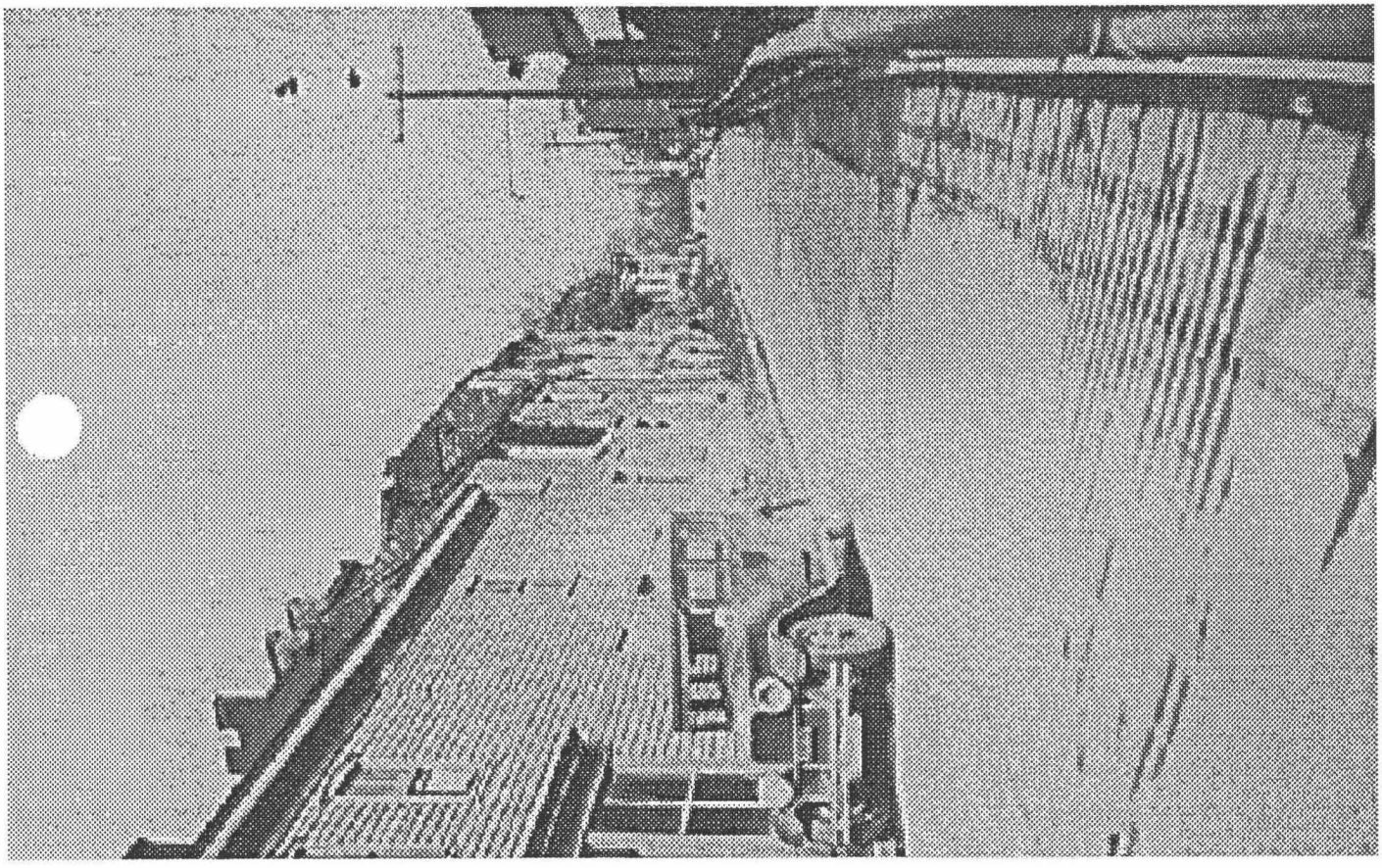


Figure 22. HF-1630. Looking up High Street, 1930s.

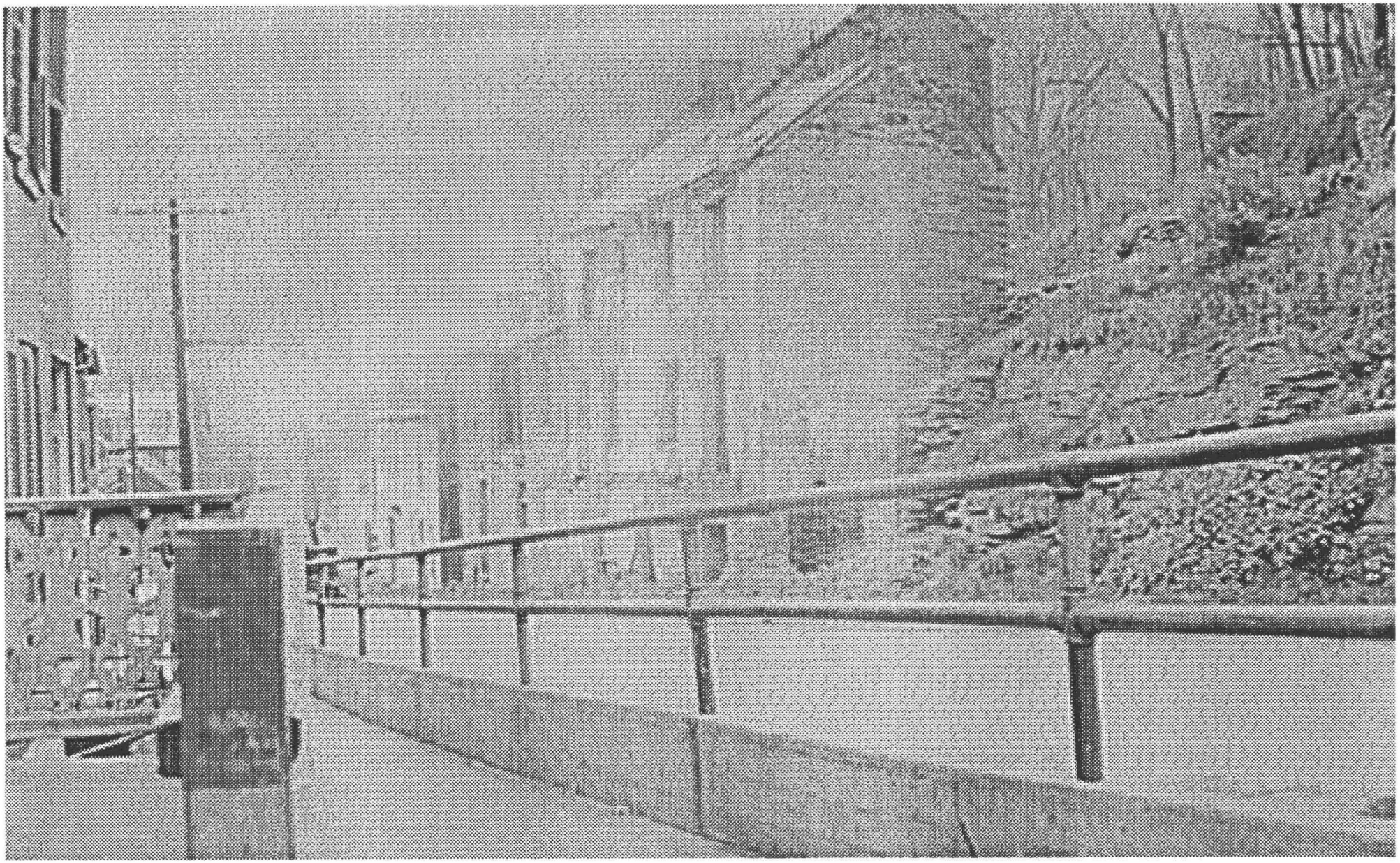


Figure 23. HF-1631. Looking down High Street, 1930s.

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