

Capsule Summary
SM-659
Morris/Gibson Store
Avenue
Private

c. 1901

The Morris/Gibson Store has been a landmark in the crossroads community of Avenue ever since it was built in the first decade of the twentieth century. In 1901 Andrew Jackson Morris purchased a two acre tract near the intersection of Colton's Point and Hatchet Thicket Roads. Taking advantage of the ideal location, Morris erected a two story, gable front, frame building to house his general merchandise enterprise. In addition to the building, Morris moved a one story building that was located at the present site of the Victory Bar (SM-656) and attached it to his new store. The combination of these two buildings made the store one of the largest in the area. In addition to the store Morris also built a dwelling (SM-662) for his large family as well as a movie house (SM-663). Together, these buildings provide a rare glimpse into the multi-faceted landscape of crossroads commerce in the early twentieth century.

In 1935, Andrew Jackson Morris died and day to day operation of the store briefly fell to his wife Grace Catherine Hill Morris. Between 1936 and 1957 the store was handled by a her children and their spouses which included Polly and Francis Gibson from 1936-1953 and Charles and "Bebe" Gibson from 1953-1957. In 1957 the store and accompanying house were sold. The store has since closed and the building has fallen into disrepair. The original store counter and shelving were removed and are currently located at the St. Clements Island Museum in Colton's Point. Scars on the floor and walls of the old store indicate where the shelving and counter originally were. Other interesting details on the building include the strongly built door on the north side and the bars over the windows on the main elevation. Like other stores in the seventh district, such as the Oakley Post Office and Store (SM-603) and the Bailey/Ellis/Millison Store (SM-657), security was a constant concern as its relatively isolated location made it a prime target for local thieves who could operate without concern for policing authorities.

SM-659, Morris/Gibson Store
St. Mary's County
Maryland Comprehensive State Historic Preservation Data

Historic Context

Geographic Organization:	Western Shore
Chronological/Developmental Period:	Industrial/Urban Dominance, 1870-1930
Historic Period Theme:	Architecture Economic

Resource Type

Category:	Building
Historic Environment:	Rural Crossroads
Historic Function and Use:	General Store
Known Design Source:	None

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Part of Bluestone

and/or common Morris/Gibson Store (pref.)

2. Location

street & number W side of Colton's Point Rd. just across int. w/Hatchet Thicket Rd.

not for publication

city, town Avenue vicinity of congressional district 7

state Md county St. Mary's TM-46, G-5, P-7

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

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

name Lewis J. and Sara E. Mills

street & number Morris Pt. Road telephone no.: 301-769-3364

city, town Abell state and zip code Md 20606

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. St. Mary's County Courthouse liber MRB 466

street & number folio 107

city, town Leonardtown state Md

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. SM-659

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date of move _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

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

Contributing Resource Count: 1

Situated in the rural crossroads community of Avenue, Maryland is the Morris/Gibson Store. Built c. 1901 just west of the intersection of Hatchet Thicket and Colton's Point Roads, the store is oriented on an east/west axis and occupies a flat, one acre parcel. Visually and historically linked to the Morris/Gibson House (SM-662) and the Morris/Gibson Movie House (SM-663), the store retains much of its historical environment. The parcel is bounded to the east by Colton's Point Road, to the north by the Morris/Gibson House, to the west by a wood tract, and to the south by the old Avenue Sunoco station. The store remains linked to the aforementioned house via a concrete walkway that leads to the store's north door.

The Morris/Gibson Store is a two story, three bay commercial building with a gable front entry. The building's circular sawn, braced-frame rests on a series of brick piers that form the foundation. The horizontal clapboard is fastened to the frame with wire nails. At the juncture of the wall and roof is a boxed cornice. Sheathed with corrugated metal, the gable roof features a single brick chimney flue that protrudes from the middle of the building. In the 1980s a cinder block wing was added to the south side of the store replacing an earlier wing.

The front or east elevation consists of the store's gable front. On the first floor, the fenestrations is composed of a centrally located panelled door flanked on either side by six-over-six, double-hung sash windows that exhibit vertical metal bars. All of these bays are shaded by a porch that is supported by a series of four, large, square columns (one has since fallen away). Cornice returns frame a centrally located, second floor, six-over-six window. The south side of the east elevation is dominated by the c. 1980s cinder block addition. This addition replaced an earlier one story frame building that was moved to this location and attached to the store. According to oral tradition, the building occupied the present site of Long's Boat Shop/Victory Bar (SM-656). This masonry addition is pierced by a single door.

The north elevation's fenestration consists of a six-over-six window and a four panel door. Similar to the door found at Richard Carroll Ellis' Grist Mill in Bushwood (SM-609), the entry is heavily constructed with each of the four panels exhibiting diagonal battens.

The west elevation consists of the main block's rear gable end and the side of the 1980s addition. The main block is pierced by a six-over-six window on both the first and second floors. The addition does not feature any openings.

The south elevation is composed of the addition's gable end. It consists of a large metal garage door that is also glazed.

While the interior was not accessible at the time of the visit, the original interior could be seen through the window. From this vantage point, scars on the walls and floor reveal where the original shelving and countertop were located. Both the shelving and countertop were removed and installed into a permanent exhibit at the St. Clements Island Museum at Colton's Point.

8. Significance

Survey No. SM-659

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

Specific dates _____ **Builder/Architect** _____

check: Applicable Criteria: A B C D
and/or

Applicable Exception: A B C D E F G

Level of Significance: national state local

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

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SM-659, Morris/Gibson Store
St. Mary's County
8.1 Significance

Chain-of-Title

(All deeds are located at the Land Records Office, St. Mary's County Courthouse, Leonardtown, Maryland unless otherwise noted.)

Reference: Liber MRB 466, Folio 107

Grantee: Lewis J. and Sara E. Mills

Grantor: James K. and Clare Ann Raley

Date: April 3, 1989

Notes: The describes the tract as containing the old Gibson store and beside the former Avenue Sunoco Station.

Reference: Liber DBK 269, Folio 132

Grantee: James K. and Clare Ann Raley, et al

Grantor: Joseph Clement Mattingly

Date: April 1, 1977

Notes: The tract here is listed as being Parcel #1.

Reference: Liber CBG 111, Folio 287

Grantee: Joseph Clement Mattingly

Grantor: James G. and Alice Marie Thompson

Date: January 15, 1964

Reference: Liber CBG 70, Folio 189

Grantee: James G. and Alice Marie Thompson

Grantor: Grace M. and Charles F. Gibson

Date: July 19, 1957

Reference: Liber CBG 65, Folio 48

Grantee: Grace M. and Charles F. Gibson

Grantor: Grace H. Morris, et al

Date: August 20, 1956

Notes: Here the tract is listed as being Part of Blue Stone and consisting of 85/100 of an acre.

Reference: Liber JMM 9, Folio 329

Grantee: Grace H. Morris

Grantor: Alma M. Ellis et al, heirs of Andrew J. Morris

Date: October 26, 1935

Notes: The deed notes two parcels and it appears that the Morris's purchased their dwelling house and store lot in 1901 from Thomas and Jane A. Shoemaker.

Reference: Liber EBA 2, Folio 87

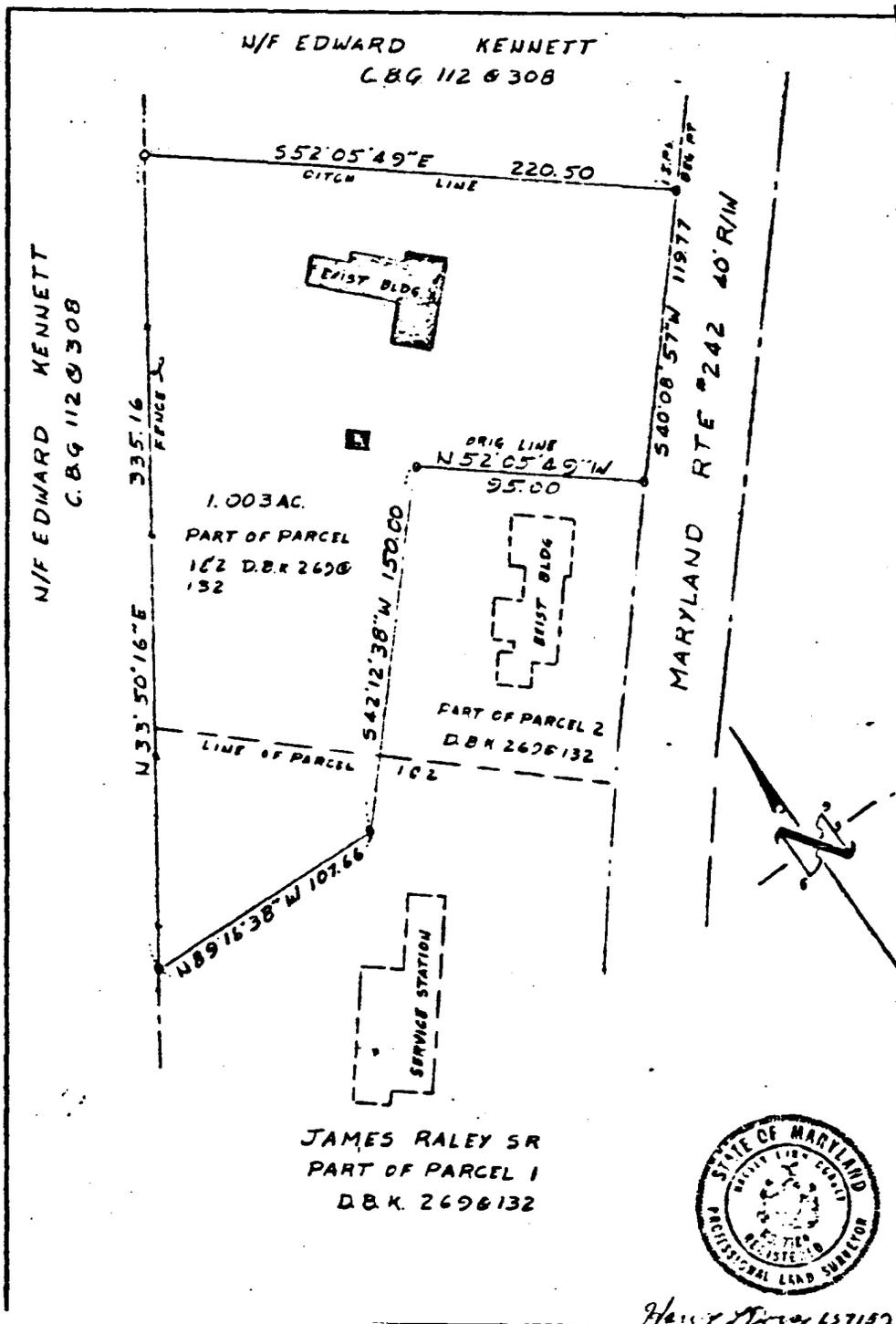
Grantee: Andrew Jackson Morris

Grantor: Thomas and Jane A. Shoemaker

Date: April 19, 1901

Notes: Described as being part of the farm called Blue Stone, the tract is listed as containing 2 acres.

SM-659, Morris/Gibson Store
 St. Mary's County
 8.2 Significance



1977 plat showing the Morris/Gibson Store. St. Mary's County Land Records, Liber MRB 286, Folio 23.

SM-659, Morris/Gibson Store
St. Mary's County
8.3 Significance

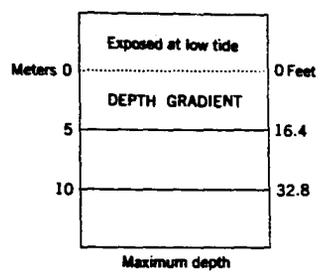
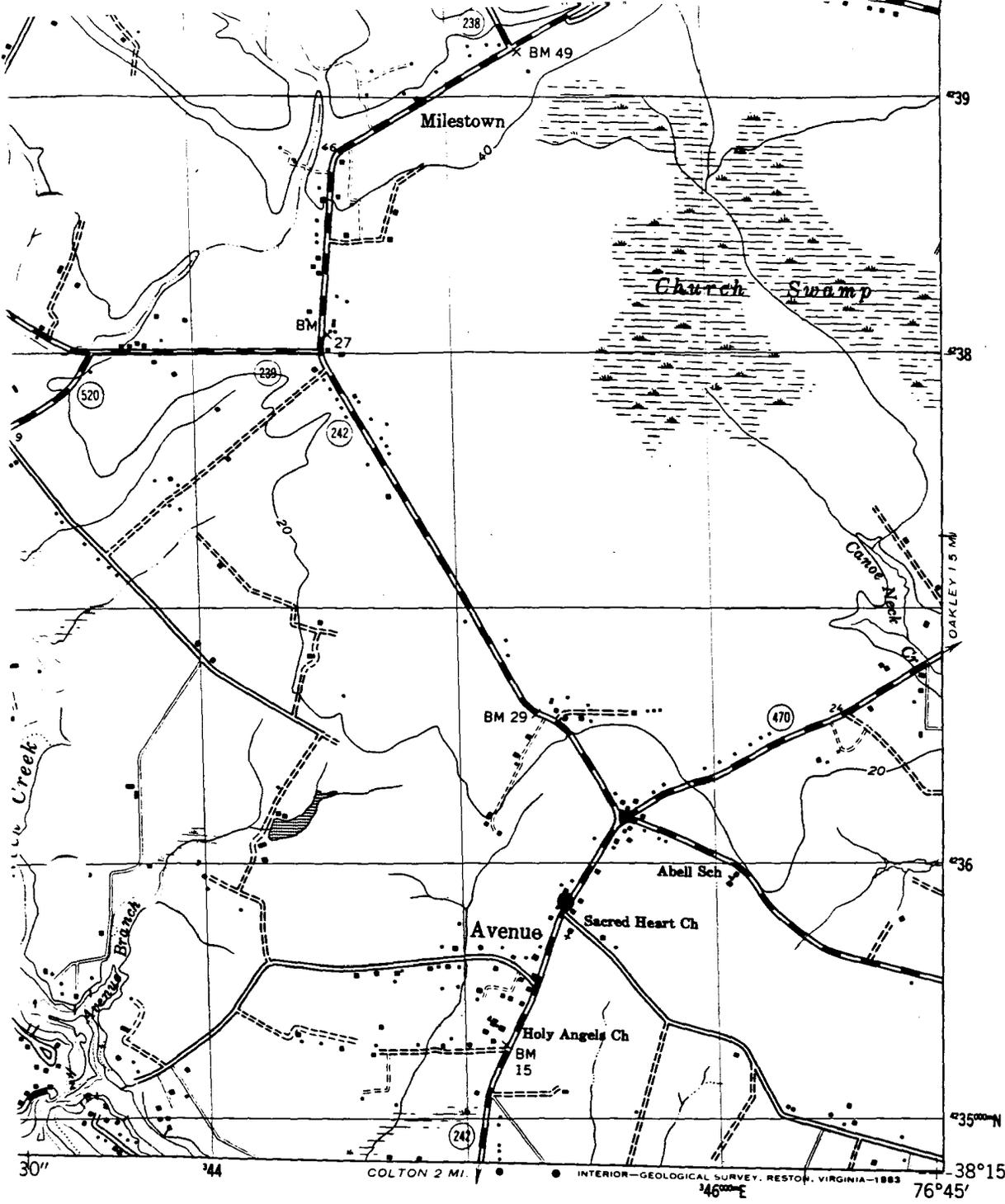


East elevation of the store prior to the demolition of the addition in the 1980s. Photograph part of the St. Clements Island Museum photographic collection.

- 5 1.5240
- 6 1.8288
- 7 2.1336
- 8 2.4384
- 9 2.7432
- 10 3.0480

To convert feet to meters
multiply by .3048

To convert meters to feet
multiply by 3.2808



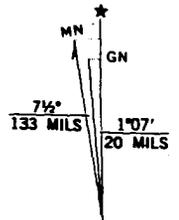
COLTON 2 MI. INTERIOR—GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA—1983

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Medium-duty ——— Light-duty ———

Unimproved dirt - - - - -

○ State Route



ROCK POIN
38076-C7-TE

1943
PHOTOREVISI
BATHYMETRY A
DMA 5660 IV SE-E

SM-659, Morris/Gibson Store
Avenue
St. Mary's County
Rock Point Quad

1ST CLEMENTS ISLAND
5660 IV NW





