

T-321  
Samuel F. Nichols House  
Oxford  
Private

c. 1885

Prominently standing on the east side of South Morris Street is the Samuel F. Nichols house, a three-story Second Empire dwelling erected around 1885. Capped by a mansard roof pierced by three gabled dormers on each slope, the Nichols house is also distinguished by a two-story pavilion centered on its south wall. Featuring square corners on the first floor and a polygonal shape on the second, the pavilion is trimmed with Victorian brackets and ogee profile panel moldings. Unusual to the Nichols house is the front porch, which is incorporated within the main block rather than extending out from it. The second floor of the house is supported by a series of stout paneled columns. The position of the house directly along the sidewalk demanded that the porch be cut out of the main body of the building.

This peculiar architectural design undoubtedly stemmed from the building's former use, which was mixed between a commercial storefront on the first floor and domestic spaces on the second and third floors. The 1891 Sanborn-Perris Insurance map depicts the outline for the house with the addition of a dotted line extending out into the street. The dotted line indicated the presence of an awning. The insurance map also indicates that the building served a mixed use as a dwelling and a place to purchase "notions." By 1901 the designation for the commercial use had shifted to "Paints, Oils, and General Supply."

Samuel F. Nichols is listed in the Talbot County land records in 1885 for the purchase of this lot from the Workingman's Permanent Building and Loan Association of Talbot County. He was identified in the deed as "of the City of New York, but temporarily residing in Talbot County." Samuel F. Nichols apparently decided to stay for a long-term residence with the construction of the three-story Second Empire house and commercial venture housed there. While the first floor of the main block was devoted to the business, the second and third floors were employed as domestic spaces. Finely executed marbleized slate mantels improved each of the second floor parlors, which are joined by large double door opening fitted with pocket doors. Particularly unusual to the double parlors is the south wall pavilion, which was built with separate interior entrances that open into the space within the bay.

Samuel F. Nichols conveyed the leasehold interest in the property to his son William D. Nichols in 1899, and he held title to the house and lot until his death in 1933. Ownership then passed to his son William D. Nichols, Jr. and his wife Eva S. Nichols, who sold the family residence in 1964.

MARYLAND HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN INFORMATION

RESOURCE NAME: Samuel F. Nichols House

MHT INVENTORY NUMBER: T-321

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DATA

1. Historic Period Theme(s): Architecture
  
2. Geographic Orientation: Eastern Shore
  
3. Chronological/Development Period(s): Industrial/Urban Dominance  
1870-1930
  
4. Resource Type(s): Single-family dwelling  
(incorporating former store)

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

## MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Survey No. T-321

Magi No.

DOE  yes  no

### 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Samuel F. Nichols House

and/or common

### 2. Location

street & number 217 South Morris Street  not for publicationcity, town Oxford  vicinity of congressional district First

state Maryland county Talbot

### 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<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 Steven R. and Patricia A. Wheaton

street &amp; number 217 South Morris Street telephone no.:

city, town Oxford state and zip code MD 21654

### 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Talbot County Clerk of Court liber 742

street &amp; number Talbot County Courthouse folio 713

city, town Easton state MD 21601

### 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties

date  federal  state  county  local

pository for survey records Maryland Historical Trust

city, town Crownsville state MD 21032

# 7. Description

Survey No. T-321

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

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

The Samuel F. Nichols house is located at 217 South Morris Street in the center of Oxford, Talbot County, Maryland. The two-and-a-half story, three-bay Second Empire frame dwelling faces west and the shallow hip of the mansard roof is oriented on an east/west axis.

Estimated to date around 1885, the two-and-a-half story, side hall/double-pile frame dwelling is supported on brick foundation with an excavated cellar. The exterior is clad with a layer of asbestos shingles, and the mansard roof is covered with wood shingles on its steep slopes and standing seamed tin on the top. Attached to the back of the house is a two-story service wing supported on a low brick foundation and it is covered with asbestos shingles and an asphalt shingle roof.

The west (main) elevation is an asymmetrical three-bay facade with a side entrance and flanking single-pane sash windows. The entrance wall is set back from the plane of the front wall to allow for the engaged front porch. Evenly spaced across the front wall are stout paneled columns finished with simply molded capitals and bases. The entrance to the porch, now located on the south end, was formerly positioned on the front wall in line with the main entrance. The side entrance, located in the north bay to the house, features a heavily molded four-panel door with arched top panels. The front door is framed by multi-pane transom and sidelights, and an original door bell knob is fixed in the north door surround. The adjacent windows are filled with single-pane sash windows that replaced the original two-over-two sash. The windows are flanked by louvered shutters. The second floor is lighted by three evenly spaced single-pane sash windows flanked by louvered shutters. Trimming the base of the mansard roof is a boxed cornice marked by widely spaced brackets. The cornice is enhanced further by bed and crown moldings. Piercing the mansard roof are three evenly spaced gable roof dormers filled with single-pane sash windows.

The south facade is a three-bay elevation dominated by a two-story pavilion that fills the center bay. The pavilion follows a square fronted shape on the first floor and a five-sided polygonal form on the second. A mid-level cornice divides the two floors. Paired as well as single one-over-one sash windows pierce the pavilion. The second floor polygonal bay features ogee profile panel moldings and eave brackets. Flanking the pavilion are single pane sash windows that light the first and second floors. Piercing the roofline are interior brick stacks that rise above the mansard roof. The mansard is also defined by three gable roofed dormers. The north side of the house is less elaborate with no pavilion and fewer windows. Three gable roofed dormers define the mansard roof.

Extending to the rear and covering a large part of the east (rear) wall is a two-story dining room and kitchen wing that is contemporaneous with the main block. A shed roofed porch, now partially enclosed, extends across the south side. A heavily molded four-panel door with arched top panels pierces the south wall. The porch roof is supported on tapered square paneled posts. The sawn baluster railing has been restored.

(Continued)

## 7.1 DESCRIPTION

Samuel F. Nichols House, T-321  
217 South Morris Street  
Oxford, Talbot County, Maryland

A four-panel door located in the west end of the porch opens to a steep ladder providing access to an excavated cellar.

The interior of the main house retains much of its original late 19th century woodwork, including a continuous turned baluster staircase that rises to the third floor. A body turned newel post and a long series of turned balusters support a molded handrail. The stringer is embellished with a scrolled decoration. A wide door opening in the hall partition has fully glazed double doors. The door and window openings are framed by molded surrounds typical of the last decades of the nineteenth century. The double parlor is one large room, and according to the owner, was originally used for a commercial purpose. An early 20th century oak mantel with side columns and mirrored overmantel, not original to the house, has been fixed to the fireplace wall. Ogee molded baseboard trims the perimeter of each room.

The second floor is divided into four rooms with the side passage separate from a small room at west end that has been converted into a bathroom. The south passage wall is uneven and features a rounded corner that provides a transition between a narrow and wider sections of the hall. On the south side of the hall are two large parlors separated by a partition pierced by large nine-panel pocket doors. Idiosyncratic to this house is the manner in which the interior of the centrally positioned bay window is resolved between rooms. A segmental arched opening in each room provides access to the space within the bay. The bay window is not partitioned, thereby leaving the space open between rooms. Each room is also distinguished by slate mantels that retain their marbled finish. Brown marbled panels flank an arched firebox opening that is filled with a brown marbled insert and iron grate. Incised gold lines highlight the brown marbled panels. Contrasting with the brown panels is a black background featuring finely painted white marbling.

The third floor is divided in a similar manner with a small room at the west end of the hall and two rooms to the south. Four-panel doors are framed by molded surrounds and each room features a ogee molded baseboard.

# 8. Significance

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

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

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

Prominently standing on the east side of South Morris Street is the Samuel F. Nichols house, a three-story Second Empire dwelling erected around 1885. Capped by a mansard roof pierced by three gabled dormers on each slope, the Nichols house is also distinguished by a two-story pavilion centered on its south wall. Featuring square corners on the first floor and a polygonal shape on the second, the pavilion is trimmed with Victorian brackets and ogee profile panel moldings. Unusual to the Nichols house is the front porch, which is incorporated within the main block rather than extending out from it. The second floor of the house is supported by a series of stout paneled columns. The position of the house directly along the sidewalk demanded that the porch be cut out of the main body of the building.

This peculiar architectural design undoubtedly stemmed from the building's former use, which was mixed between a commercial storefront on the first floor and domestic spaces on the second and third floors. The 1891 Sanborn-Perris Insurance map depicts the outline for the house with the addition of a dotted line extending out into the street. The dotted line indicated the presence of an awning. The insurance map also indicates that the building served a mixed use as a dwelling and a place to purchase "notions."<sup>1</sup> By 1901 the designation for the commercial use had shifted to "Paints, Oils, and General Supply."<sup>2</sup>

Samuel F. Nichols is listed in the Talbot County land records in 1885 for the purchase of this lot from the Workingman's Permanent Building and Loan Association of Talbot County.<sup>3</sup> He was identified in the deed as "of the City of New York, but temporarily residing in Talbot County." Samuel F. Nichols apparently decided to stay for a long-term residence with the construction of the three-story Second Empire house and commercial venture housed there. While the first floor of the main block was devoted to the business, the second and third floors were employed as domestic spaces. Finely executed marbelized slate mantels improved each of the second floor parlors,

<sup>1</sup> Sanborn-Perris Insurance Map, Oxford, 1891, Maryland State Archives.

<sup>2</sup> Sanborn-Perris Insurance Map, Oxford, 1901, Maryland State Archives.

<sup>3</sup> Talbot County Land Record, 100/305, 28 January 1885.

## 8.1 SIGNIFICANCE

Samuel F. Nichols House, T-321  
217 South Morris Street  
Oxford, Talbot County, Maryland

which are joined by a large double door opening fitted with pocket doors. Particularly unusual to the double parlors is the south wall pavilion, which was built with separate interior entrances that open into the space within the bay.

The Samuel F. Nichols house is a fine example of Second Empire domestic design, and its history of mixed residential and commercial use demonstrates how many storekeepers used their lots during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.



T-321  
Samuel F. Nichols House  
217 South Morris Street  
Oxford, Talbot County, Maryland  
Chain of title

742/713                      Ingrid O. Blanton

to

1/13/1993                    Steven R. Wheaton  
Patricia A. Wheaton

599/266                      Kenneth J. Scully  
Ellen B. Scully

to

5/1/1985                      Ingrid O. Blanton

571/531                      Richard N. Walton  
Suzanne D. Walton

to

2/19/1983                    Kenneth J. Scully  
Ellen B. Scully

391/413                      William D. Nichols, Jr.  
Eva S. Nichols

to

1/10/1964                    Richard N. Walton  
being a piece or parcel of land conveyed to William D.  
Nichols, et ux. By T. Hughlett Henry, widower, 2/12/1947,  
271/227, No. 5 in said deed  
The leasehold interest in said lot having been acquired by  
William D. Nichols from Samuel F. Nichols, 7/18/1899,  
William D. Nichols died intestate, 2/23/1933

T-321  
Samuel F. Nichols House  
217 South Morris Street  
Oxford, Talbot County, Maryland  
Chain of title continued

Page 2

Lease  
107/227

Sarah T. Anthony, Trustee

to

1/1/1887

Samuel F. Nichols, State of New York

Deed  
100/305

The Workingman's Permanent Building and Loan  
Association of Talbot County

to

1/28/1885

Samuel F. Nichols (of the City of New York, but  
temporarily residing in Talbot County)

Lease  
TH 99/187-189

Sarah T. Anthony

to

7/12/1884

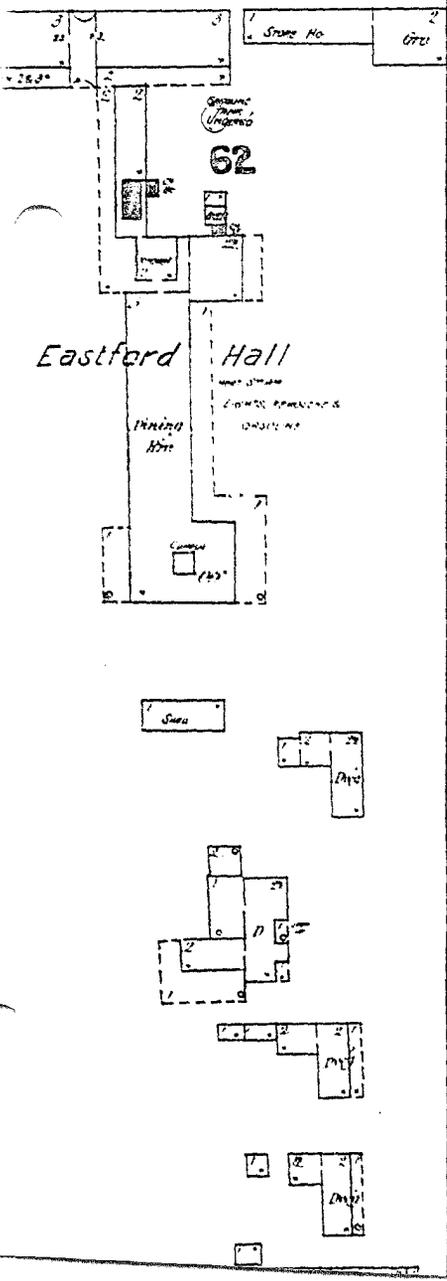
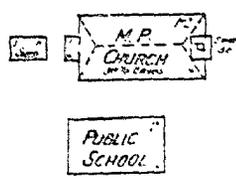
The Workingman's Permanent Building and Loan  
Association of Talbot County

\$15.00

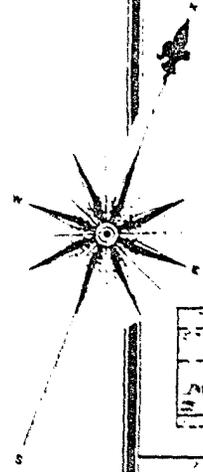
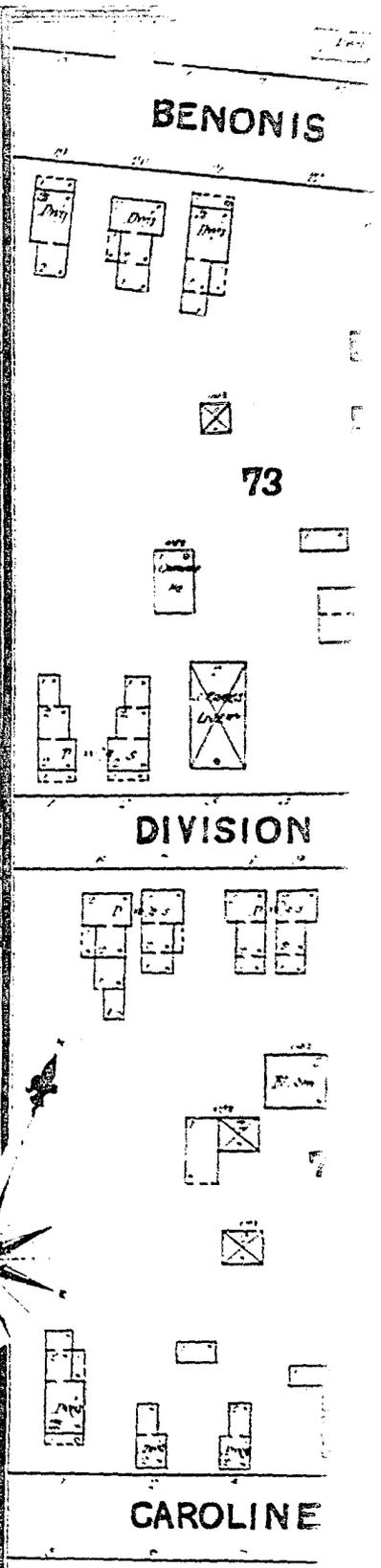
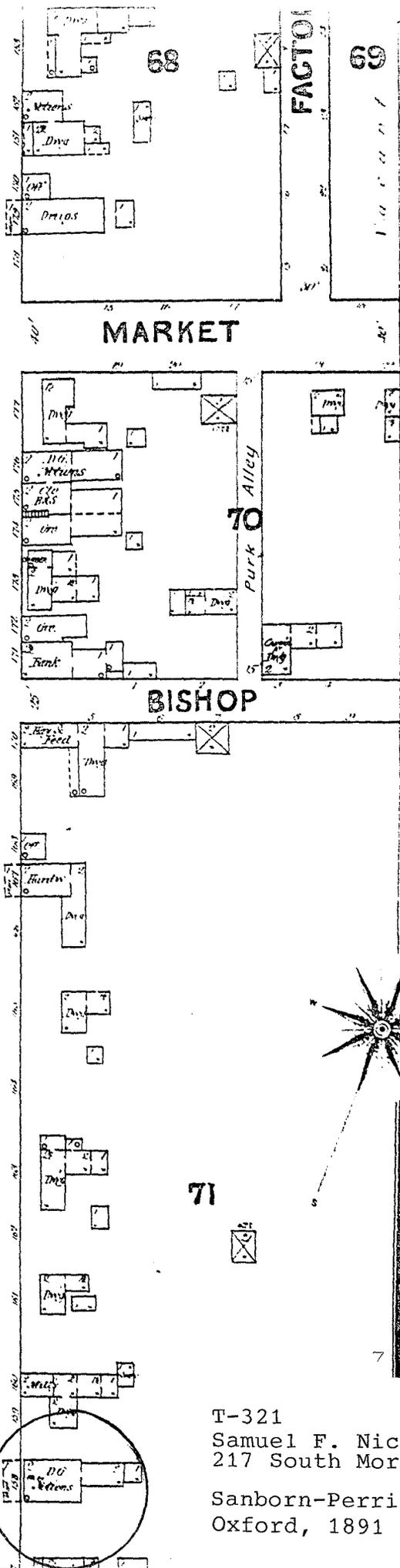
Second Empire-style house  
217-~~317~~ Morris Street  
Oxford  
(Late 19th Century)

T-321

For such a small town, Oxford possesses a large number of Second Empire style buildings: Sandaway (T-317), the Robert Morris Inn (T-249), and this house on Morris Street, whose tall mansard roof, punctuated by gable-roofed dormers, and chimneys, is particularly dramatic.



MORRIS

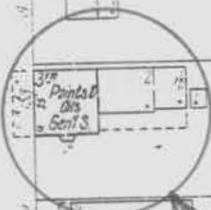


T-321  
Samuel F. Nichols House  
217 South Morris Street  
Sanborn-Perris Map Company  
Oxford, 1891

PERRIS

SOUTH

71



MORRIS

12

WILSON

68

FIRE ENGR

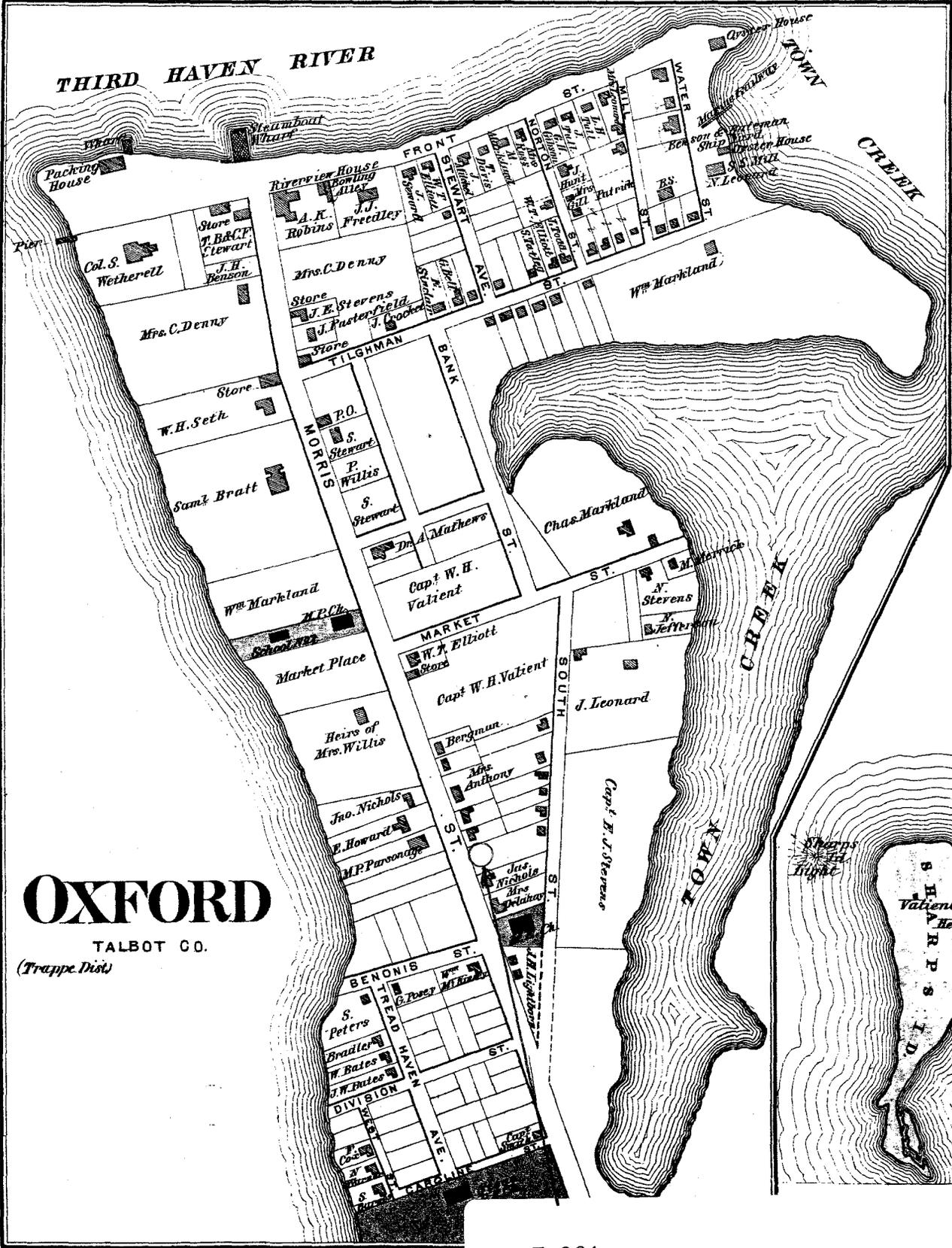
MARKET

60'  
14

T-321  
Samuel F. Nichols House  
Oxford, Talbot County, Maryland

Sanborn-Perris Map Company  
1901

W. T. ELLIOTT, Dealer in Dry Goods, Groceries, Hardware, Glassware, Hats, Caps, Boots, Shoes, and Notions.  
 A. C. MULLIKIN, Teacher and Farmer.  
 JAMES N. WEBSTON & SPEAKMAN, Proprietors of Steam Saw Mill. Manufacturers of Native Lumber. Custom Sawing done to order. Mill near Hambleton.



T-321  
 Samuel F. Nichols House  
 217 South Morris Street

Lake, Griffing, and Stevenson Atlas  
 1877



T-321  
Samuel F. Nichols House  
217 South Morris Street  
Oxford, Maryland Quadrangle  
1942



T-721

Samuel F. Nichols House

Oxford, Talbot County, Md.

Southwest elevation

4/90, Paul Touart, PHOTOGRAPHER

N.E./M.D. HISTORICAL TRUST

1 of 1



FLAT-11

.10 x 1.40

50% ~~75%~~ 321

T-321

(14)

p 227

7/16/99