

T-958
Alexander Matthews House
Oxford
Private

c. 1887

The Alexander Matthews house, erected around 1887, was designed with a side hall/double-pile plan, repeating a house form common to the Eastern Shore for over one hundred years. Built with its narrow three-bay gable end facing the street, the late nineteenth century house boasts an original turned post porch. As established by this long-used building form, the front door was located in an end bay. It provides access to the side stair hall that is flanked on the left by a parlor and to the rear by the dining room. The house survives with portions of its late nineteenth century woodwork, which includes a turned baluster staircase as well as an elaborate factory-made mantel in the dining room.

Construction of this gable-front house is placed around 1887, immediately after the lot was purchased by Alexander Matthews in December 1886. The transfer price of \$333 and 1/3 dollar would not have included the lot and a two-story house. A dwelling of appropriate size is designated on the Sanborn Insurance map issued in 1891. Mathews (sic) is listed in the 1880 U. S. Census for Talbot County as a physician, resident of Oxford, with his wife Anna E. Mathews and Henry Spencer Mathews. Matthews family ownership of the house and lot continued until 1922 when Susan Spencer Mathews, Henry's daughter, sold the property to J. McKinney Willis in 1922.

MARYLAND HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN INFORMATION

RESOURCE NAME: Alexander Matthews House

MHT INVENTORY NUMBER: T-958

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

**Maryland Historical Trust
State Historic Sites Inventory Form**

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF
HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Survey No. T-958
Magi No.
DOE yes no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Alexander Matthews House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 302 South Morris Street not for publication

city, 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	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 Mr. and Mrs. Robert A. Mackenzie

street & number 302 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 Map 400, p. 731
liber 828

street & number Talbot County Courthouse folio 680

city, town Easton state MD 21601

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date federal state county local

pository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. T-958

Condition		Check one	Check one
<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 Alexander Matthews house stands at 302 South Morris Street in the southern residential district of Oxford, Talbot County, Maryland. The house faces east with the principal gable roof oriented on an east/west axis.

Dating around 1887, the two-story, three-bay side passage/double-pile frame house is supported on a brick foundation and the exterior is sheathed with aluminum siding. The steeply pitched gable-front roof is covered with asphalt shingles. Attached to the back of the house is a two-story kitchen, which has been extended further by a modern living room wing.

The east (main) elevation is a three-bay facade with a side entrance and flanking two-over-two sash windows. A heavily molded four-panel front door is topped by a three-light transom and two-light transom with a panel below. Aluminum shutters flank the windows. The first floor is sheltered by a chamfered post front porch embellished with decorative sawn corner brackets. Lighting the second floor are three evenly spaced two-over-two sash windows flanked by louvered aluminum shutters. Piercing the gable end is a single two-over-two sash window. The edge of the roof is defined by a slightly extended eave with short returns at the base. Rising through the roof is a centrally positioned brick chimney.

The south side of the main block is marked by a symmetrical fenestration with pairs of evenly spaced two-over-two sash windows on each floor. The north side, on the other hand, is defined by single two-over-two sash windows that fill the western bay. The balance of the wall is blind. The west gable end of the main block is covered by the rear two-story kitchen wing.

The interior of the late 19th century house retains a large portion of its original Victorian woodwork. Rising against the north wall of the passage is a turned baluster staircase. A boldly turned newel post and a series of turned balusters support a mahogany handrail. The stringer is embellished with a scroll decoration. The stair passage provides access to the front parlor and rear dining room. Plain door surrounds frame the door and window openings. On the west wall there was a hole in the chimney stack for a stove pipe. A cornice has been added to this room. The dining room extends across the full width of the house. Fixed against the inner wall is a Victorian mantel embellished with decorative scrollwork along its frieze and molded pilasters down each side. The mantel shelf is curved and molded. Fixed in the northeast corner is a four-panel door that opens into the space under the staircase. Chair rail and cornice moldings have been added to the room. The kitchen interior was remodeled during the past fifteen years.

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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

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.

The Alexander Matthews house, erected around 1887, was designed with a side hall/double-pile plan, repeating a house form common to the Eastern Shore for over one hundred years. Built with its narrow three-bay gable end facing the street, the late nineteenth century house boasts an original turned post porch. As established by this long-used building form, the front door was located in an end bay. It provides access to the side stair hall that is flanked on the left by a parlor and to the rear by the dining room. The house survives with portions of its late nineteenth century woodwork, which includes a turned baluster staircase as well as an elaborate factory-made mantel in the dining room.

Construction of this gable-front house is placed around 1887, immediately after the lot was purchased by Alexander Matthews in December 1886.¹ The transfer price of \$333 and 1/3 dollar would not have included the lot and a two-story house. A dwelling of appropriate size is designated on the Sanborn Insurance map issued in 1891.² Mathews (sic) is listed in the 1880 U. S. Census for Talbot County as a physician, resident of Oxford, with his wife Anna E. Mathews and Henry Spencer Mathews.³ Matthews family ownership of the house and lot continued until 1922 when Susan Spencer Matthews, Henry's daughter, sold the property to J. McKinney Willis in 1922.⁴

The Alexander Matthews house contributes to the historic nature of South Morris Street with its late nineteenth century two-story gable-front, side hall form along with the decorative nature of its turned post porch.

¹ Talbot County Land Record, TH 104/460, 1 December 1886.

² Sanborn Insurance Map, 1891, Maryland State Archives.

³ Tenth Census of the United States, 1880, Population Schedule for Talbot County compiled by Helen E. Seymour, 1997, p. 119.

⁴ Talbot County Land Record, 192/276, 27 April 1922.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. T-958

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

Quadrangle scale _____

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A
 Zone Easting Northing

B
 Zone Easting Northing

C

D

E

F

G

H

Verbal boundary description and justification

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

state	code	county	code

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Paul B. Touart, Architectural Historian

organization Private Consultant date 4/23/98

street & number P. O. Box 5 telephone 410-651-1094

city or town Westover state Maryland 21871

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
 Shaw House
 21 State Circle
 Annapolis, Maryland 21401
 (301) 269-2438

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
 DHCP/PHOD
 100 COMMUNITY PLACE
 CROWNSVILLE, MD 21032-2023
 514-7800

T-958
Alexander Matthews House
302 South Morris Street
Oxford, Talbot County, Maryland
Chain of title

Map 400, Parcel 731

828/680 Robert A. Mackenzie
 Elizabeth B. Mackenzie

to

5/1/1996 Robert A. Mackenzie

 Lot 27' by 121'

JTB 591/479 Terrance E. Billings, M.D.

to

9/20/1984 Robert A. Mackenzie
 Elizabeth B. Mackenzie

589/171 Janet L. Ewing

to

7/13/1984 Terrance E. Billings, M.D.

564/36 James B. Foster, Jr.

to

5/3/1982 Janet L. Ewing

T-958
Alexander Matthews House
302 South Morris Street
Oxford, Talbot County, Maryland
Chain of title continued

Page 2

454/380	Margaret Greenhaugh, Substituted Trustee U/W of Aubrey B. Harris
	to
7/1/1971	James B. Foster, Sr.
245/447	William LeRoy Dobson, City of Wilmington, Delaware
	to
12/2/1939	Aubrey B. Harris, Talbot County
JDS 24/416	Last Will and Testament of Myrtle M. Thompson
	to
11/15/1937	William LeRoy Dobson
CBL 213/88	William H. Thompson Lillian Thompson, et al.
	to
1/10/1928	Myrtle M. Thompson
	\$ 1,500.00

T-958
Alexander Matthews House
302 South Morris Street
Oxford, Talbot County, Maryland
Chain of title continued

Page 3

195/176 J. McKenny Willis and wife

to

4/20/1923 William H. Thompson

192/276 Susan Matthews

to

4/27/1922 J. McKinny Willis

Lots 2 and 3

Will Book
18/177

Last Will and Testament of
Henry Spencer Matthews

to

Probated
3/19/1913

Susan Spencer Matthews
Emory Harrison Matthews
Eleanor Spencer Matthews

FCW 133/165

William B. J. McKenzie

to

3/20/1900

Henry Spencer Matthews

T-958
Alexander Matthews House
302 South Morris Street
Oxford, Talbot County, Maryland
Chain of title continued

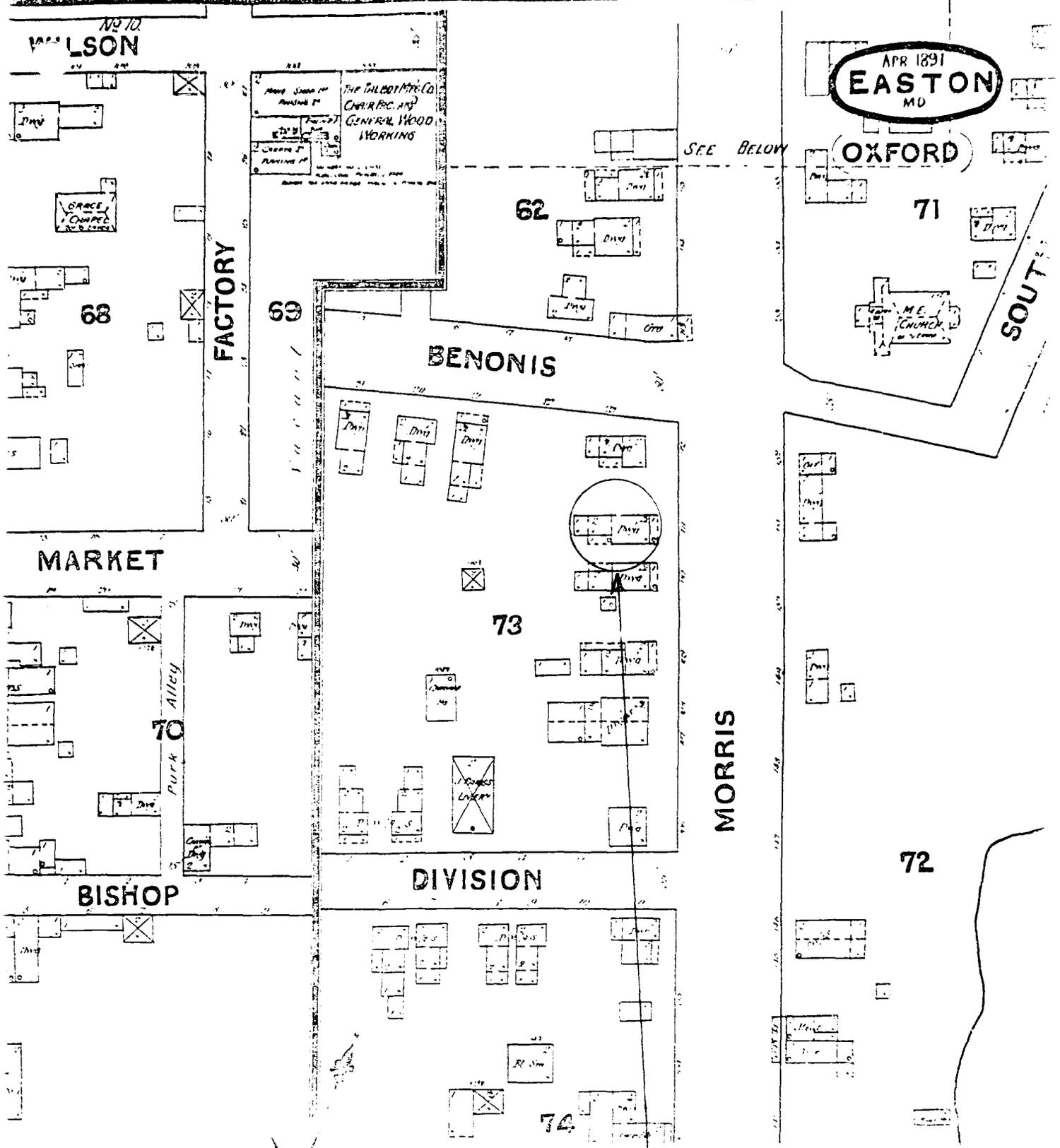
Page 4

TH 104/460 Charles F. Stewart
 Annie R. Stewart

to

12/1/1886 Alexander Matthews

\$333 and 1/3



APR 1891
EASTON
 MD

(OXFORD)

SEE BELOW

SOUTH

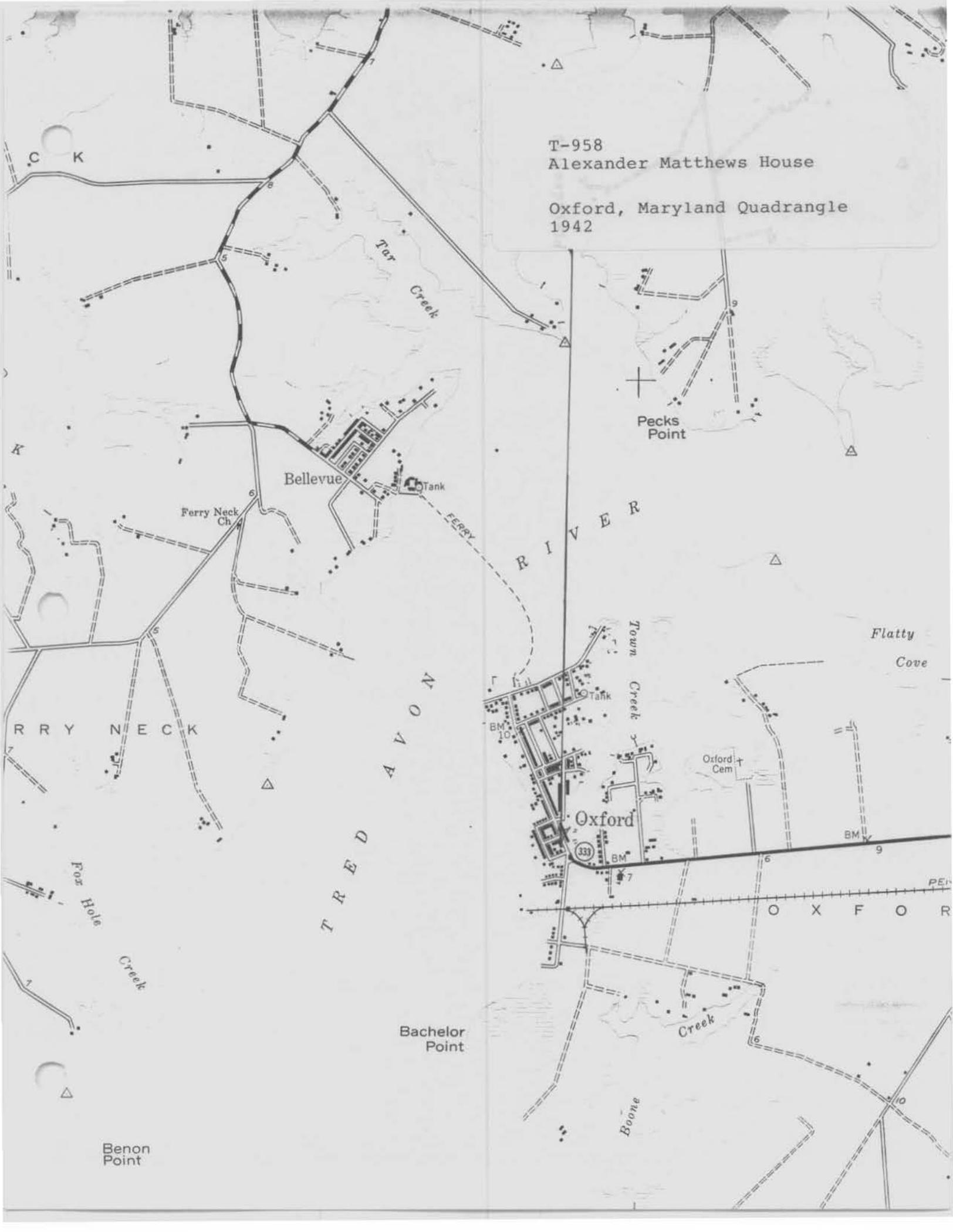
MORRIS

T-958
 Alexander Matthews House
 302 South Morris Street
 Oxford, Talbot County, Maryland

1891

T-958
Alexander Matthews House

Oxford, Maryland Quadrangle
1942





T. 958

ALEXANDER MATHIENS HOUSE

OXFORD, TALBOT COUNTY, MD.

EAST ELEVATION

9/98, PAUL TOURANT, PHOTOGRAPHER

NEG. / MD. HISTORICAL TRUST

1 OF 3



T- 758

ALEXANDER MATTHEWS HOUSE
Oxford, Talbot Co., MD

SOUTHEAST ELEVATION

5/98, PAUL THOMAS, PHOTOGRAPHER
NEE. / MD ITS STORAGE TRUST

2 OF 3



T-958

ALEXANDER MATTHEWS TRUST

OXFORD, TARRANT CO., MD.

SOUTHEAST ELEVATION OF PORCH

5/98, PAUL TARRANT, PHOTOGRAPHER

NEE / MD HISTORICAL TRUST

3 OF 3