

T-964
Benson-Stewart House
Oxford
Private

c. 1880

Historically identified as the Stewart-Benson house, this hyphenated name recognizes two families that have been the principal owners of this well-preserved North Morris Street property. Construction and finish features of the house indicate that it was erected around 1880 and built on land that had been in the Stewart family since the first years of the nineteenth century. Similar to many Oxford houses erected after the Civil War, the two-story side hall/double-pile dwelling features a sidelighted front entrance and a turned baluster staircase. The exterior of the hip roofed dwelling survives largely unaltered and is a fine example of late nineteenth century house design as implemented in this Talbot County town.

Responsibility for the construction of the house is attributed to Thomas B. or Charles F. Stewart, two brothers who held a large number of Oxford lots during the fourth quarter of the nineteenth century. Thomas B. and Charles F. Stewart partitioned their holdings in May 1883, and this house and lot were awarded to Thomas. Thomas B. Stewart retained sole ownership of the property until it was transferred into his wife, Mary's name in 1924. In May of the following year, Mary V. Stewart, then a widow, sold the house and lot. The next long-term owners were William L. and Sara V. Benson, who purchased the house and lot in September 1943. William L. Benson was a long-time owner and operator of the Tred Avon ferry.

MARYLAND HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN INFORMATION

RESOURCE NAME: Stewart-Benson House

MHT INVENTORY NUMBER: T-964

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-964

Magi No.

DOE ___yes ___no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Stewart-Benson House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 315 North Morris Street ___ not for publication

city, town Oxford ___ vicinity of congressional district First

state Maryland county Talbot

3. Classification

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

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

name Mrs. Sara V. Benson

street & number P. O. Box 1 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. 683
liber 256

street & number Talbot County Courthouse folio 165

city, town Easton state MD 21601

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date ___ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

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 Stewart-Benson house stands at 315 North Morris Street on the north side of the town of Oxford, Talbot County, Maryland. The two-story, three-bay side hall/double-pile frame house faces east with the medium pitched hip roof oriented on an east/west axis.

Estimated to date around 1880, the two-story, three-bay by two-bay frame dwelling rests on a continuous brick foundation and the exterior is clad with weatherboard siding. The corners of the rectangular main block are trimmed with narrow pilasters. Covering the medium pitched hip roof is a layer of asphalt shingles. Standing in the back yard is a gable roof garage covered with a combination of vertical and horizontal board siding.

The east (main) elevation is a three-bay facade with a side entrance and flanking two-over-two sash windows. The heavily molded four-panel front door is framed by a three-light transom and three-light sidelights with a panel below each sidelight. The two bays to the south are filled with two-over-two sash windows that are flanked by louvered shutters. Sheltering the entire first floor is a single story chamfered post porch covered with a seamed metal hip roof. Stretching between the posts is a square baluster handrail featuring a molded handrail. The second floor is lighted by a series of three two-over-two sash windows that feature louvered shutters as well. The top of the front wall is finished with a wide frieze board under a boxed cornice. A crown molding trims the top of the cornice. The hip roof is pierced by an off-center brick stove chimney.

The north and south sides of the house are defined by two-over-two sash windows flanked with louvered shutters on each floor. The northwest first floor window has been altered to a casement style opening for the kitchen. Extending from the west side of the main block is a single-story pantry and back porch.

The interior retains a portion of its fourth quarter of the nineteenth-century woodwork. The principal feature is a turned baluster staircase rising along the north wall of the side passage. The turned balusters and a turned newel post support a molded handrail. On the adjacent hall wall a beaded edge surround frames the parlor door opening. Passage into the rear dining room is provided through a widened door opening. Remaining in the dining room is a bracketed shelf over a block stove hole. Located in the northwest corner of the first floor is the kitchen, which was restyled during the 1940s. The second floor is divided into four rooms that open off a narrow passage. The two principal bedrooms are located over the parlor and dining room, while a small room is located at the front end of the hall. A bathroom was created from space at the west end of the hall. Modest changes have been made to the bedrooms with the introduction of closets.

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: 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.

Historically identified as the Stewart-Benson house, this hyphenated name recognizes two families that have been the principal owners of this well-preserved North Morris Street property. Construction and finish features of the house indicate that it was erected around 1880 and built on land that had been in the Stewart family since the first years of the nineteenth century. Similar to many Oxford houses erected after the Civil War, the two-story side hall/double-pile dwelling features a sidelighted front entrance and a turned baluster staircase. The exterior of the hip roofed dwelling survives largely unaltered and is a fine example of late nineteenth century house design as implemented in this Talbot County town.

Responsibility for the construction of the house is attributed to Thomas B. or Charles F. Stewart, two brothers who held a large number of Oxford lots during the fourth quarter of the nineteenth century. Thomas B. and Charles F. Stewart partitioned their holdings in May 1883, and this house and lot were awarded to Thomas.¹ Thomas B. Stewart retained sole ownership of the property until it was transferred into his wife, Mary's name in 1924.² In May of the following year, Mary V. Stewart, then a widow, sold the house and lot. The next long-term owners were William L. and Sara V. Benson, who purchased the house and lot in September 1943.³ William L. Benson was a long-time owner and operator of the Tred Avon ferry.

¹ Talbot County Land Record, 96/312, 28 May 1883.
² Talbot County Land Record, 197/283, 9 January 1924.
³ Talbot County Land Record, 256/165, 10 September 1943.

T-964
Stewart-Benson House
315 North Morris Street
Oxford, Talbot County, Maryland
Chain of title

Map 400, Parcel 683

256/165 J. Clarence Leonard
 Daisy B. Leonard

to

9/10/1943 William L. Benson
 Sara V. Benson

CBL 2125/306 William E. Mitchell
 Josephine P. Mitchell

to

9/10/1928 J. Clarence Leonard
 Daisy B. Leonard

203/464 Mary V. Stewart, widow

to

5/30/1925 William E. Mitchell

T-964
Stewart-Benson House
315 North Morris Street
Oxford, Talbot County, Maryland
Chain of title continued

Page 2

197/283 Thomas B. Stewart

to

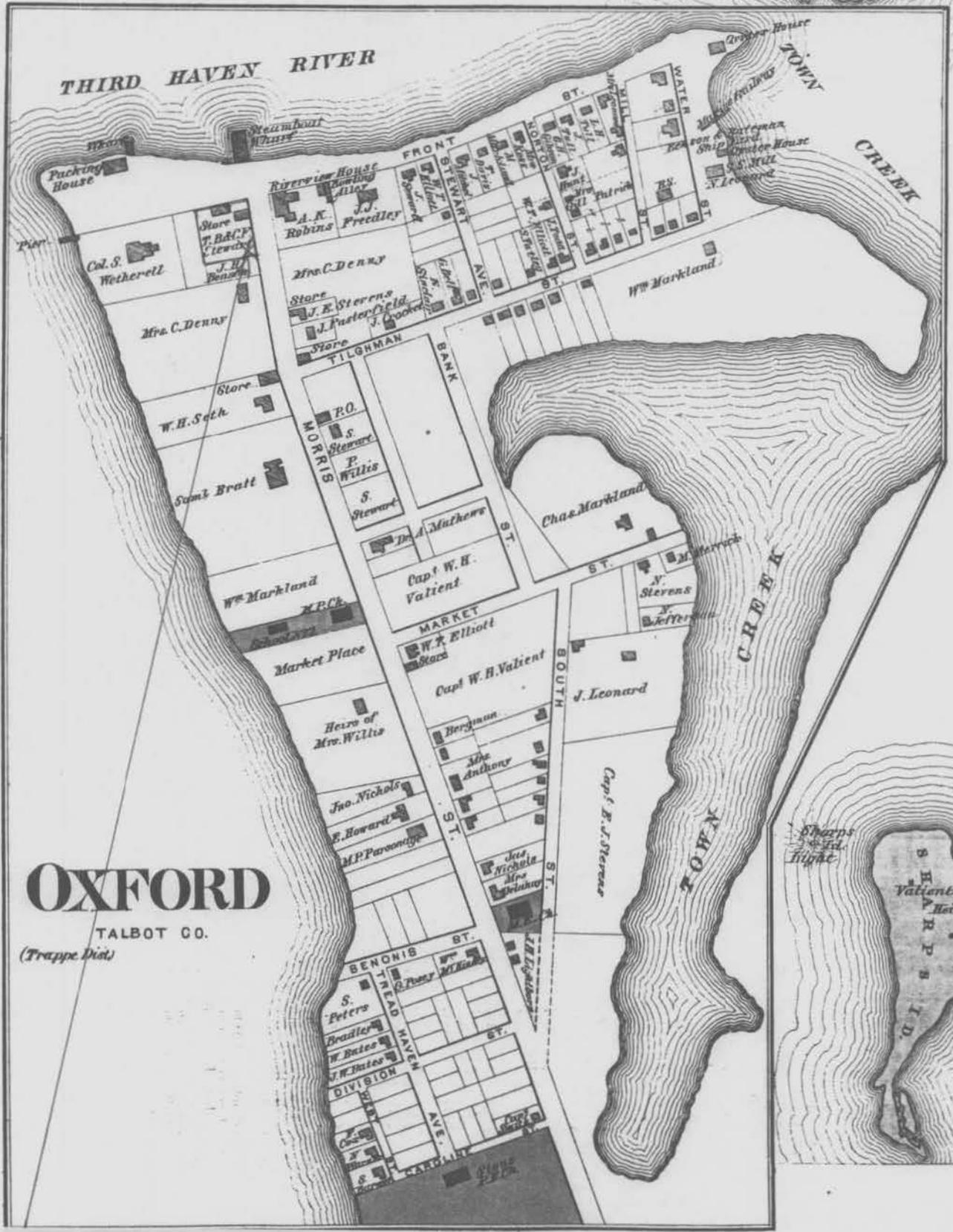
1/9/1924 Mary V. Stewart, wife of
Thomas B. Stewart

T.B.S 1 mentioned in a deed of partition 28 May 1883
96/312

96/312 Deed of Partition by Charles F. Stewart and Annie R.
Stewart and Thomas B. Stewart

5/29/1883 Whereas Charles F. Stewart and Thomas B. Stewart
being heirs of Henry Stewart

JAMES N. WELTON & SPEAKMAN, Proprietors of Steam Saw Mill. Manufacturers of Native Lumber. Custom Sawing done to order. Mill near Hambleton.



T-964
 Stewart-Benson House
 Lake, Griffing, and Stevenson Atlas
 1877

Third Haven River

(OXFORD)

FRONT

APR 1891
EAST
MD

RIVER VIEW
HO.

63

J CROCKETT
COAL & WOOD
YARD

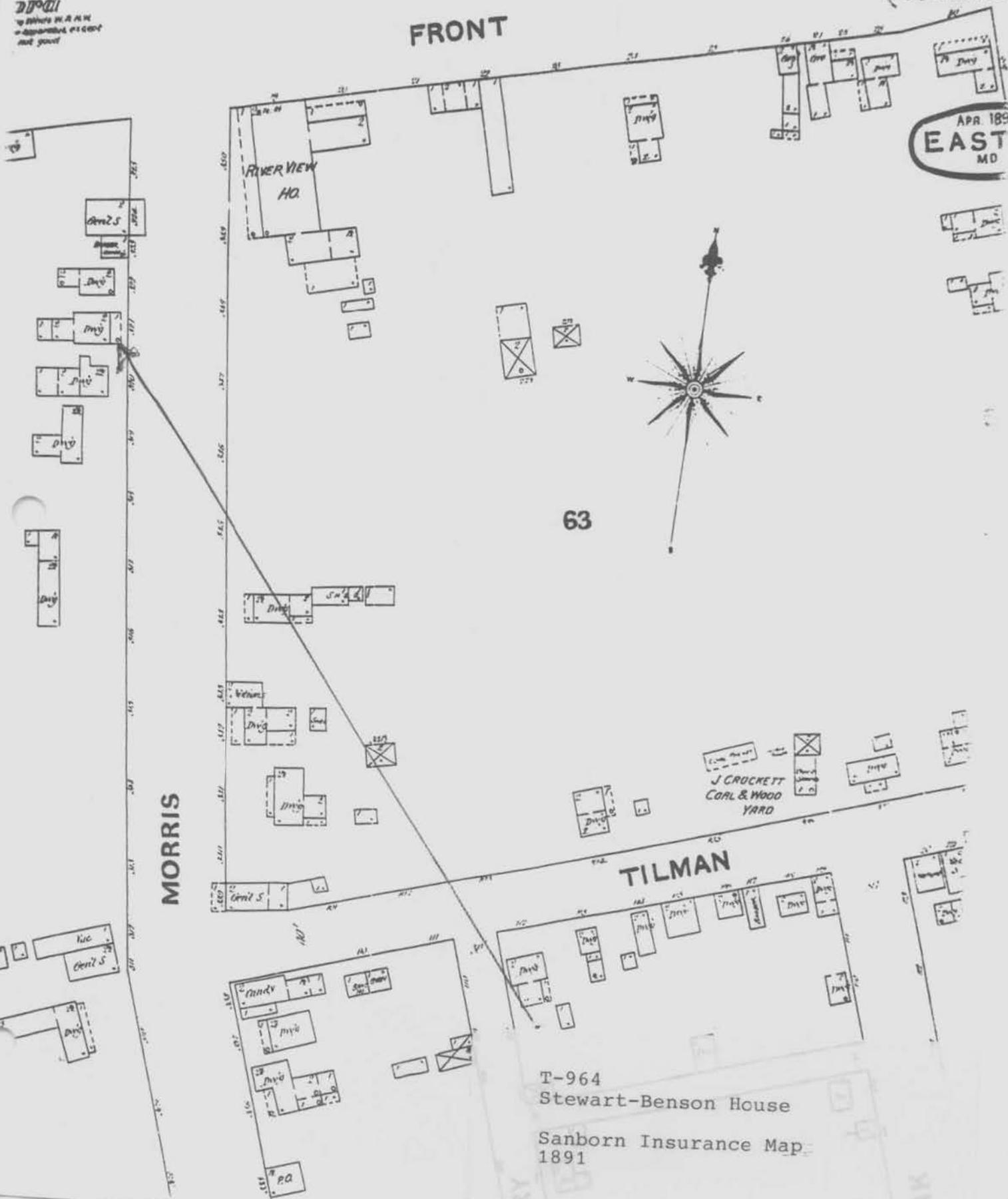
TILMAN

MORRIS

T-964
Stewart-Benson House

Sanborn Insurance Map
1891

NOT
to show H. A. H.
to show H. A. H.
not good





T-964
Stewart-Benson House
Oxford, Maryland Quadrangle
1942



T-964

STEWART-BROWN HOUSE

Oxford, Tenn. - Cr. and

NORTHEAST ELEVATION

6/98, Paul Towart, Photographer

NEE, PAID 175-48-00 TOWART

1 01 1