

WO-271
Benson-Morris House
Snow Hill
Private

c. 1830

The Benson-Morris house is one of the oldest dwellings to remain standing in the western residential district of Snow Hill. Estimated to date to the second quarter of the nineteenth century, perhaps around 1830, this two-story, four-bay dwelling is finished with late Federal and Greek Revival style woodwork.

The earliest history of this town property is inexact, but the property was held during the 1850s by Eliza L. Benson, who purchased the house and lot from Samuel H. Jarman, Sheriff of Worcester County, in September 1852. The property had been involved in a court case that dated as far back as 1837 between Ann D. Wilson and Thomas A. Spence, late of Worcester County. When Eliza Benson acquired the property in 1852 the deed mentioned the land being the lot on which the said Eliza now resides. Eliza L. Benson began to sell part interest in the house to Maria J. Morris in the winter of 1860. The Market Street property remained in Morris family hands until May 1927. The current resident, another long-time owner, has held the title to the property since 1947.

HISTORIC CONTEXT INFORMATION

Resource Name: BENSON - MORRIS HOUSE

MHT Inventory Number: WU-271

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA:

1) Historic Period Theme(s):

ARCHITECTURE

2) Geographic Orientation:

EASTERN SHORE

3) Chronological/Developmental Period(s):

AGRICULTURAL - INDUSTRIAL TRANSITION

4) Resource Type(s):

(1815-1870)

STANDING STRUCTURE

1. TOWN DWELLING

7. Description

Survey No. W0-271

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input checked="" 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 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.

Historically identified as the Benson-Morris house, this two-story single-pile frame house stands at 302 West Market Street in Snow Hill, Worcester County, Maryland. The two-story, four-bay frame dwelling faces southeast with the gable roof oriented on a northeast/southwest axis.

Estimated to date to around 1830, this two-story, four-bay frame house rests on a low brick foundation, and it is sheathed with a layer of plain weatherboards. The medium pitched roof is covered with asphalt shingles. Attached to the west gable end is a single story one-room plan wing, and a shed addition stretches across the back of the house. The property extends back to the Pocomoke River.

The southeast (main) elevation is an asymmetrical four-bay facade with an off-center entrance and flanking nine-over-nine sash windows. The six-panel front door, covered by louvered shutters, is topped by a four-light transom. The entrance is covered by a single-bay gable roofed porch supported on Tuscan columns. Louvered shutters flank the windows as well. The second floor is pierced by four unevenly spaced six-over-six sash windows. Rising through the center of the main block is an internal brick chimney stack.

The east gable end is lighted by nine-over-six sash windows on the first floor and six-over-six sash on the second floor. The west gable end is partially covered by the single-story one-room plan wing that formerly housed the kitchen. A single six-over-six sash window defines the south side.

The interior of the house has not changed significantly since the early nineteenth century. The main block is divided unusually into three rooms with a short cross hall, containing a corner stair, that fronts a bedroom. A large living room, extending the full depth of the house, is located to the west of the hall. The woodwork throughout the house dates to the early nineteenth century and displays late Federal and Greek Revival stylistic forms.

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: <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.

The Benson-Morris house is one of the oldest dwellings to remain standing in the western residential district of Snow Hill. Estimated to date to the second quarter of the nineteenth century, perhaps around 1830, this two-story, four-bay dwelling is finished with late Federal and Greek Revival style woodwork.

The earliest history of this town property is inexact, but the property was held during the 1850s by Eliza L. Benson, who purchased the house and lot from Samuel H. Jarman, Sheriff of Worcester County, in September 1852.(EDM 5/170) The property had been involved in a court case that dated as far back as 1837 between Ann D. Wilson and Thomas A. Spence, late of Worcester County. When Eliza Benson acquired the property in 1852 the deed mentioned the land being the lot on which the said Eliza now resides. Eliza L. Benson began to sell part interest in the house to Maria J. Morris in the winter of 1860.(WET 2/62) The Market Street property remained in Morris family hands until May 1927.(SMC 56/449) The current resident, another long-time owner, has held the title to the property since 1947.(16/322)

WO-271
BENSON-MORRIS HOUSE
MABEL JONES HOUSE
302 West Market Street
Snow Hill, MD 21863

CHAIN-OF-TITLE

16/322

Faye Rothenstein
Benjamin Rothenstein

to

7/24/1947

Mabel L. Jones

CWN 10/159

G. Randolph Mount
Ethel J. Mount

to

6/27/1946

Faye Rothenstein
Benjamin Rothenstein

SMG 56/449

Mary A. Morris

to

5/19/1927

G. Randolph Mount
Ethel J. Mount

GHR 2/370

Edward R. Benson

to

9/25/1866

Mary A. Morris, and after her death to
husband Francis P. Morris and to daughter
Mary A. Morris "all my undivided interest
in and to the House and parcel of land in
the Village of Snow Hill

WET 2/62

Eliza L. Benson

to

2/7/1860

Maria J. Morris \$180 undivided half interest

BENSON-MORRIS HOUSE
MABEL JONES HOUSE
302 West Market Street
Snow Hill, MD 21863

2

commonly called the "Steam Mill Lot"

WET 3/124

Eliza L. Benson

to

12/3/1861

Edward R. Benson \$400

EDM 5/170

Samuel H. ~~#3#~~ Jarman, Sheriff

to

9/14/1852

Eliza L. Benson \$360

Whereas at a county court of Worcester County begun and held at Snow Hill Town on 2 Nov. 1837, a certain Ann D. Wilson recovered against a certain Thomas A. Spence, late of Worcester County, yeoman, as well as the sum \$2,770--it being the lot on which the said Eliza now resides.



Jas. Purnell

I. T. Matthews

Sturgis

Stevenson
H. S.

Presby. Parsonage

Wm. W. H. Brown

Open Mills

RIS

ST.

H. S. Stevenson

Public School No 5

L. Vairne

G. C. Townsend

GUNBY ALLEY

E. F. Richardson

J. M. Larrey

F. W. Marshall

MARTIN

Geo. C. Townsend

Geo. M. Tishier

J. W. Smith

ROAD

MARKET

WATER ST.

Geo. S. [unclear]



Benson - Morris
No. 271

CHURCH ST.

Dr. G. W. Bishop
&
E. R. Richardson

Richardson
Geo. W. Covington

G. T. Bratton

J. E. O. Ametery

G. W. Covington

H. J. Clarville
A. Nelson

P. E. Parsonage

T. Z. Johnson

J. E. Timmons

Mrs. C. J. Hack

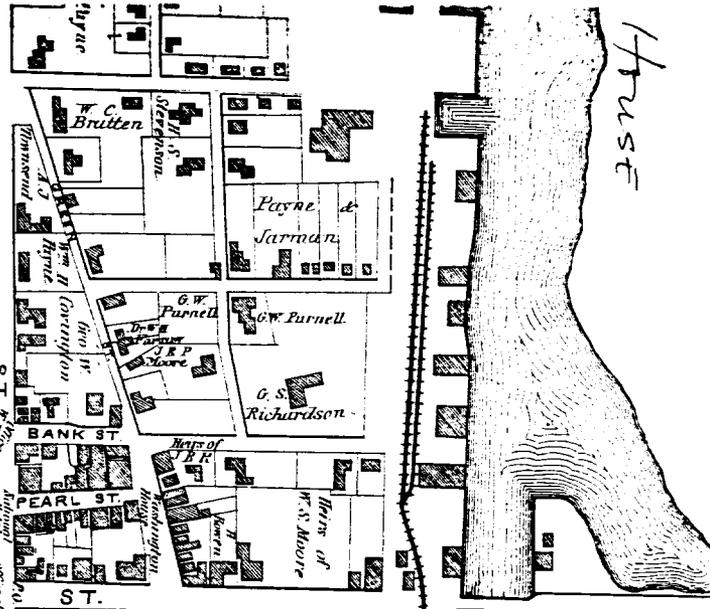
T. B. Messick

J. R. Franklin

G. W. Covington
Dr. G. W. Bishop
Mrs. B. Powell

J. H. Selby
J. B. Messick
M. E. [unclear]

FRANKLIN ALLEY
Richardson



HUST

WASHINGTON ST.

H. J. Clarville
Capt. S. H. Wilson

Mrs. A. W. Jenkins

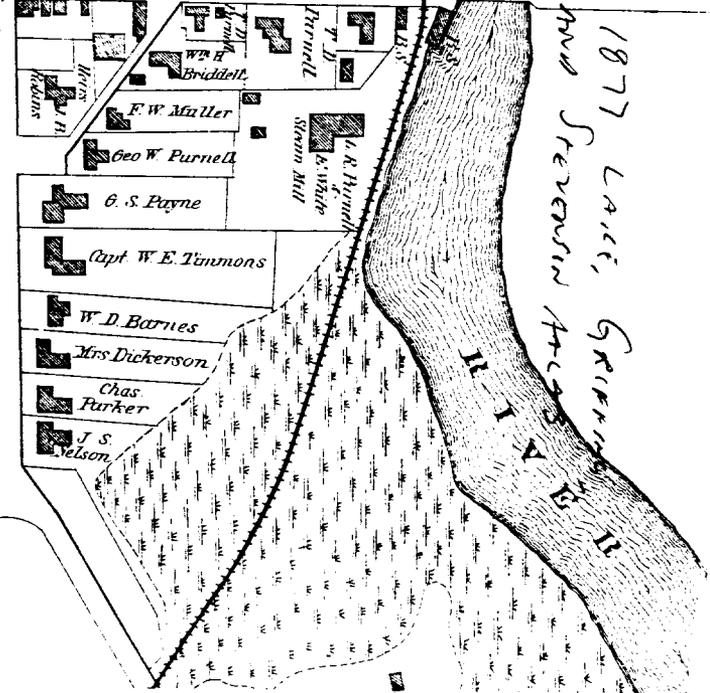
S. H. Jarman

Dr. J. S. Aydelott

Mrs. A. Jenkins

Mrs. H. Jones
M. A. Jones
G. D. Johnson

M. E. Ch. & Cemetery



1877 Latt, Green and Severin Acres

J. F. Collins
Capt. P. Smith
John Purnell
L. B. Purnell
J. Sturgis

COLLINS ST.
J. R. P. Moore

J. A. Purnell
Capt. P. Smith
John Purnell
L. B. Purnell

ST. [unclear]

F. W. Muller

Geo. W. Purnell

G. S. Payne

Capt. W. E. Timmons

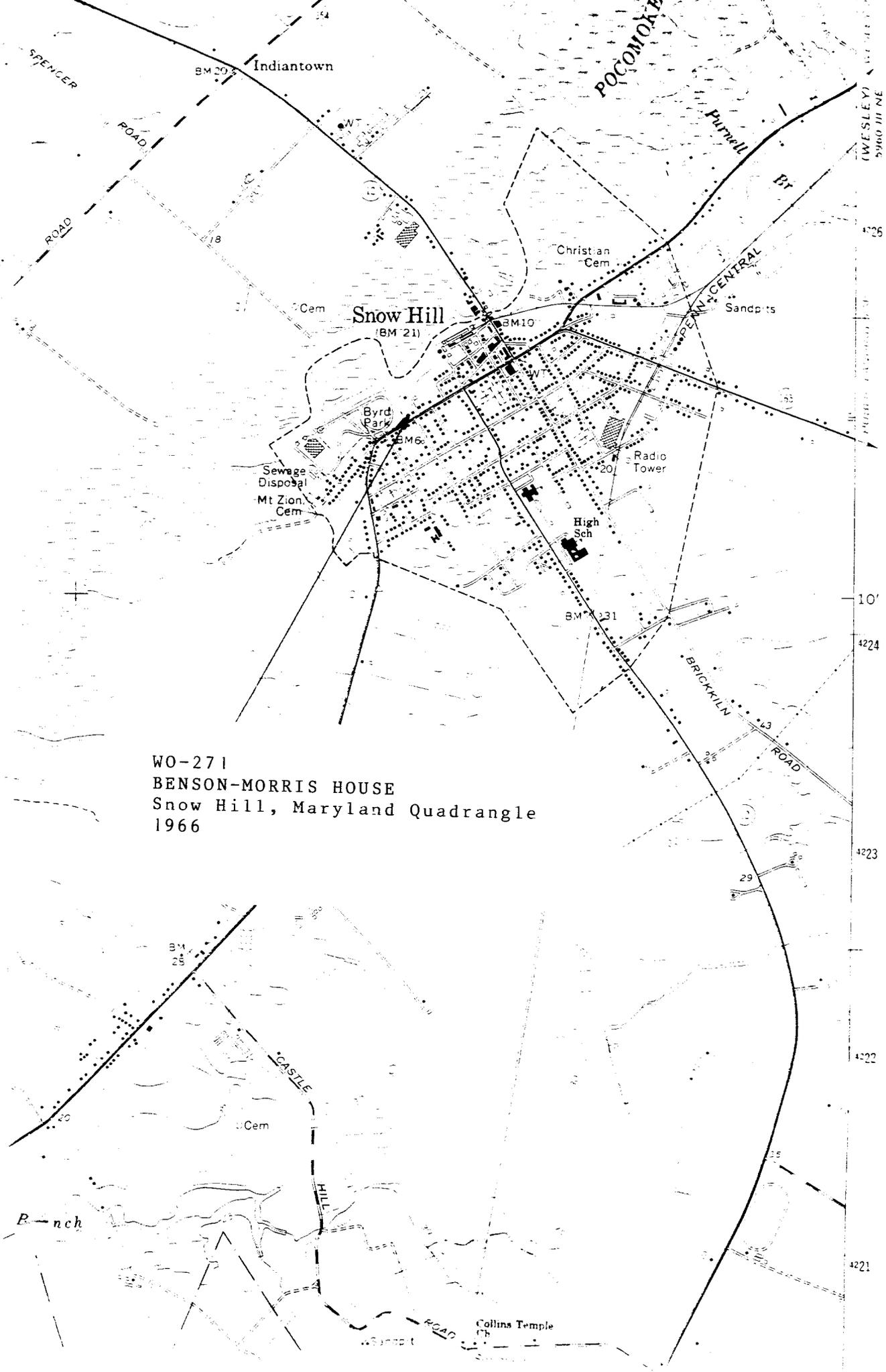
W. D. Barnes

Mrs. Dickerson

Chas. Parker

J. S. Nelson

WO-271



WO-271
 BENSON-MORRIS HOUSE
 Snow Hill, Maryland Quadrangle
 1966

4226
 10'
 4224
 4223
 4222
 4221