

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. S-510

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic W. E. Gibson & Bro. Packinghouse (Site)

other

2. Location

street and number Jersey Road not for publication

city, town Crisfield vicinity

county Somerset

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

name Robert P. Evans III

street and number P. O. Box 468 telephone 410-968-1717

city, town Crisfield state Maryland zip code 21817

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Somerset County Clerk of Court liber 427 folio 435 Parcel 4

city, town Princess Anne tax map 102 tax parcel 189 tax ID number

5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- Contributing Resource in National Register District
 Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
 Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
 Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
 Recorded by HABS/HAER
 Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT
 Other: _____

6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function	Resource Count
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	Contributing
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> defense	<input type="checkbox"/> buildings
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> site		<input type="checkbox"/> domestic	<input type="checkbox"/> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> structures
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	<input type="checkbox"/> objects
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> Total
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	
		<input type="checkbox"/> landscape	
		<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture	
		<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
		<input type="checkbox"/> social	
		<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
		<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	
		<input type="checkbox"/> unknown	
		<input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use	
		<input type="checkbox"/> other:	
			Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory

7. Description

Inventory No. S-510

Condition

excellent deteriorated
 good ruins
 fair altered

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

The W. E. Gibson & Bro. packinghouse formerly stood on Jersey Island in the City of Crisfield, Somerset County and was demolished during the late 1980s. The packinghouse stood between the former properties of George A. Christy on the south and a boat slip on the north. The two-story, four-bay brick packinghouse had a principal exposure to the northwest. The primary documentation for the W. E. Gibson & Bro. property is an historic image that dates around 1920 along with the series of Sanborn Insurance maps.

Built around 1905, the two-story, four-bay, common bond brick packinghouse was distinguished by a decorative Victorian brick cornice with projecting pilasters at each corner. The first and second stories were lighted by an asymmetrical fenestration of single-pane sash windows with double rowlock segmental arches spanning the openings. A centrally located door provided access to the first floor. The corner pilasters stretched to the underside of a decorative, corbelled brick cornice that embellished the top of the parapet wall. Ball finials fixed atop small brick bases accented the top of each pilaster.

The northeast side of the packinghouse was a stepped parapet wall with single flue stacks rising through the top of the parapet.

8. Significance

Inventory No. S-510

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> social history
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime history	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

Specific dates

Architect/Builder

Construction dates

Evaluation for:

National Register

Maryland Register

not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

The firm W. E. Gibson & Bro. was a principal packer of seafood in Crisfield, and its packinghouse on Jersey Island stood in a line of prominent structures along the city's harbor entrance. Documented by an early 20th-century image, the building was similar to the old Christy Company packinghouse that remains standing on Jersey Island. The building was demolished in order to create a parking area between the remaining buildings.

HISTORY AND SUPPORT

William E. Gibson and his brother Benjamin surface in the public records as Crisfield oyster packers in 1892 with the purchase of the Dixon Oyster house, located in the section of town known as "Jersey."¹ The Gibsons paid \$2,000 for oyster packinghouse and property which their family retained for nearly one hundred years. The W. E. Gibson & Brother firm, packing oysters as well as crab, appeared in a listing of Crisfield businesses printed in the *Maryland Gazetteer* the same year.²

The Gibson brothers financed the construction of a new brick packinghouse between 1911 and 1917, according to the Sanborn Insurance maps published in those years.³ In 1913, a number of well-known crab packers in Crisfield organized a corporation known as the American Sea Food Company to better the conditions of the soft crab industry. With headquarters in Crisfield, they planned to handle the soft crab business at all points along the coast with branch houses in North Carolina and Virginia as well as Crisfield. It was hoped that the consolidation of several large firms, including W. E. Gibson & Brother, that the industry could be handled to a better advantage for all concerned, and that the marketing of soft crabs could be improved to the benefit of the catcher as well as the shipper. W. E. Gibson was treasurer of the new organization.⁴

The Sanborn Insurance maps show W. E. Gibson & Bro.'s oyster and crab house on Jersey Island, and

¹ Somerset County Land Record, HFL 11/88, July 2, 1892.

² *Maryland Gazetteer, 1891-92*, Vol. II, Baltimore: R. L. Polk & Co.

³ Sanborn Insurance Maps, 1911 and 1917, Microfilm at the Nabb Research Center for Delmarva History and Culture.

⁴ "Have Formed Company," *The Oysterman and Fisherman*, March 1913, p. 33.

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Name W. E. Gibson & Bro. Packinghouse
Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 1

notations indicate the second floor was used as a sail loft.⁵ By the time the 1917 map was issued a second packing house had been divided for various tenant firms to pack oysters, and tenement housing for oyster shuckers had been built on the back of the lot. An inlet for vessels to access the leased oyster houses bordered the property on its northeast side and 10th Street provided access to downtown Crisfield by way of the Jersey bridge.

The Gibson packinghouse property on Jersey Island remained in family hands until 1986 when it was acquired by R. Preston Evans and his wife Carolyn.⁶ The old Gibson packinghouse was demolished to provide for additional parking space between the former Christy building and the boat slip next to the old L. R. Carson building. The entire complex is now the facility of H. Glenwood Evans and Son.

⁵ Sanborn Insurance Map, 1911, microfilm at the Nabb Research Center of Delmarva History and Culture.

⁶ Somerset County Land Record, 363/635, December 30, 1986.

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Name W. E. Gibson & Bro. Packinghouse
Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 2

W. E. Gibson & Bro. Packinghouse
Jersey, Crisfield, Somerset County, Maryland
Chain of title

Parcel Four of Five owned by Robert P. Evans III

427/435

R. Preston Evans and Carolyn H. Evans

to

2/1/1995

Robert P. Evans III

Plat 7/8/1945, BLB 132/67

...being all that land owned by the heirs of William E. Gibson and Benjamin F. Gibson in the Jersey section of Crisfield listed on Tax Map No. 10-9-12 and being that property conveyed to William E. Gibson and Benjamin F. Gibson, HFL 11/88

363/635

Aldine Gibson, et al.

to

12/30/1986

R. Preston Evans and Carolyn H. Evans

\$45,000 ...bounded on the south by Jersey Road on the west by the lands of R. Preston Evans and Carolyn Evans on the north by the Crisfield harbor on the east by the lands of John W. Parks, Jr. and John L. Parks

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Name W. E. Gibson & Bro. Packinghouse
Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 3

HFL 11/88

Thomas J. Dixon

to

7/2/1892

William E. Gibson and Benjamin F. Gibson

\$2,000 W. E. Gibson & Brother

all that piece or parcel of ground situated in the town of Crisfield, Somerset County, Maryland and in that part of said town known as Jersey and commonly called the Dixon Oyster House being fully described in a deed to the said Thomas J. Dixon from the Commissioners appointed by the Circuit Court for Somerset County to value and divide the real estate of Nathaniel Dixon, deceased

Maryland Gazetteer, 1891-92, Vol. II, R. L. Polk & Co., 112 North Charles St. Baltimore, Maryland

W. E. Gibson & Bro., oysters and crab

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. S-510

Maryland Gazetteer, 1891-92, R. L. Polk & Co., Baltimore, Maryland.

Sanborn Insurance Maps, various issues, microfilm at the Nabb Research Center of Delmarva History & Culture.

Somerset County Land Records, various volumes, Somerset County Courthouse.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property 1/4 acre

Acreage of historical setting 1/4 acre

Quadrangle name Crisfield, Maryland

Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

The historic metes and bounds of this property are coincidental with the current boundary of the parcel.

11. Form Prepared by

name/title	Paul B. Touart, Architectural Historian, and Virginia Jenkins, Business Historian, CBMM		
organization	Private Consultant	date	12/10/2001
street & number	P. O. Box 5	telephone	410-651-1094
city or town	Westover	state	Maryland 21871

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties 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
DHCD/DHCP
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023
410-514-7600

S-510, W. E. Gibson & Brother
Sanborn Insurance Map, 1885

SEE
WALLET

River

Somers Cove

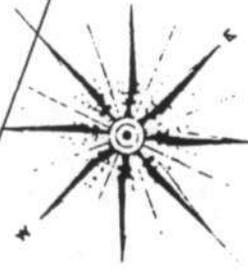
J.A. STUBBS
OYSTER HO.
Negro
Tenants 2d.
702

B.S. CHURCH
OYSTER HO
Dmrs
702

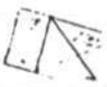
RIGGIN BROS.
OYSTERS
CRABS
Tenants 2d.
700

OYSTER HO.
Tenants 2d.

G.S. MCCREDDY
Oyster Ho.
Shops
Dmrs 2d.



12



No. 2.

SHEET

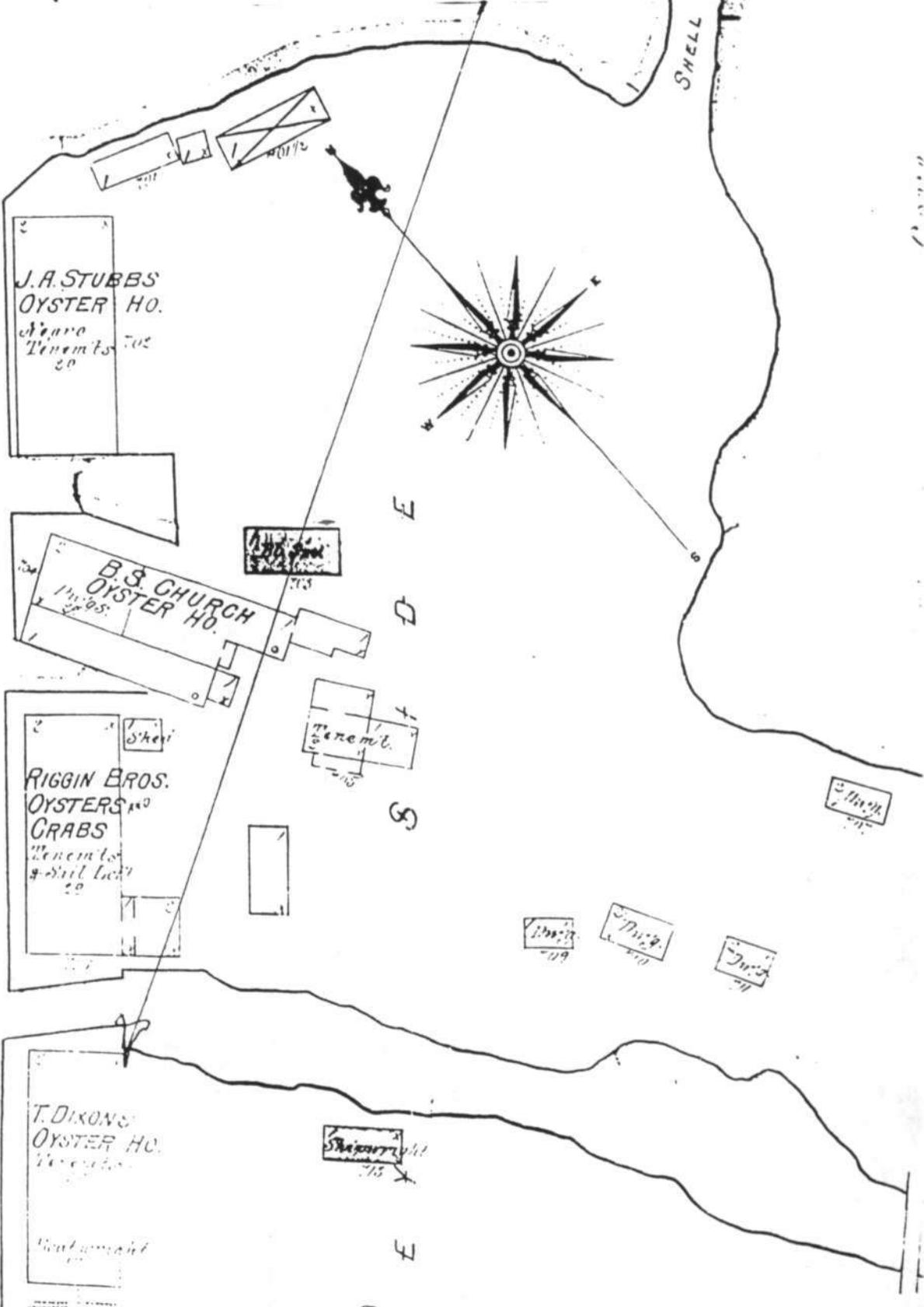
SEE

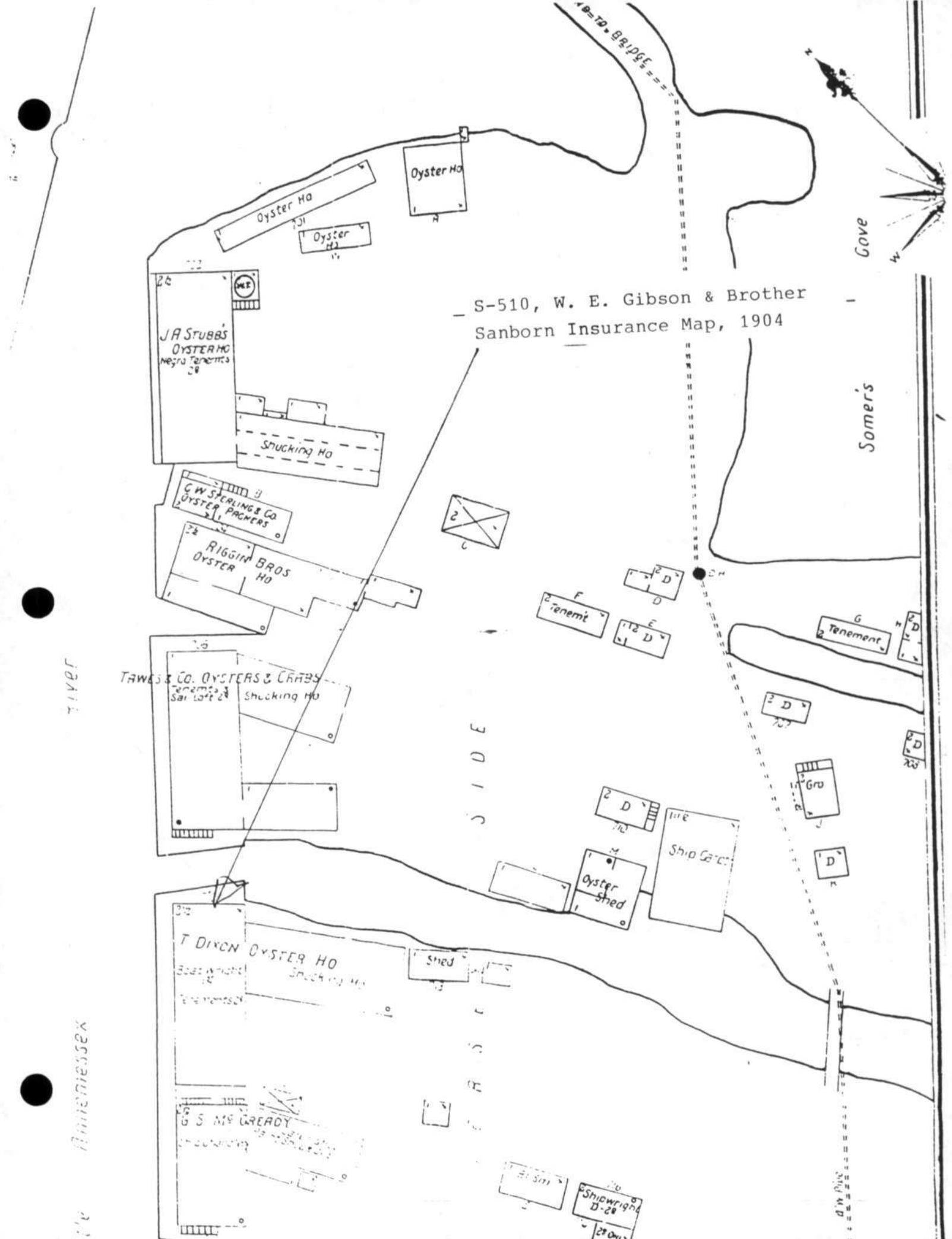
River

UNIVERSITY

S-510, W. E. Gibson & Brother
Sanborn Insurance Map, 1891

ROAD TO BRIDGE
SHELL





S-510, W. E. Gibson & Brother
 Sanborn Insurance Map, 1904

RIVER

MISSISSIPPI

SIDE

Grove

Somers

26
 JA STUBBS
 OYSTER HO
 Negro Tenement

SHUCKING HO

GW SPALING & CO
 OYSTER PACKERS

28
 RIGGIN BROS
 OYSTER HO

26
 TAWES & CO OYSTERS & CRABS
 Shucking HO

370
 T DIXON OYSTER HO
 Shucking HO

G S McCREADY

Oyster HO

Oyster HO

Oyster HO

2
 C

F
 Tenement

D
 D

G
 Tenement

D
 D

Sho. Care

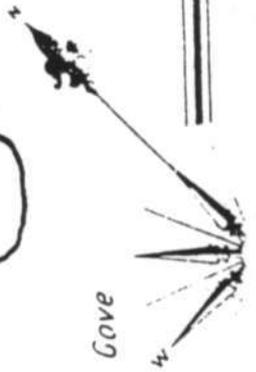
Oyster Shed

Shed

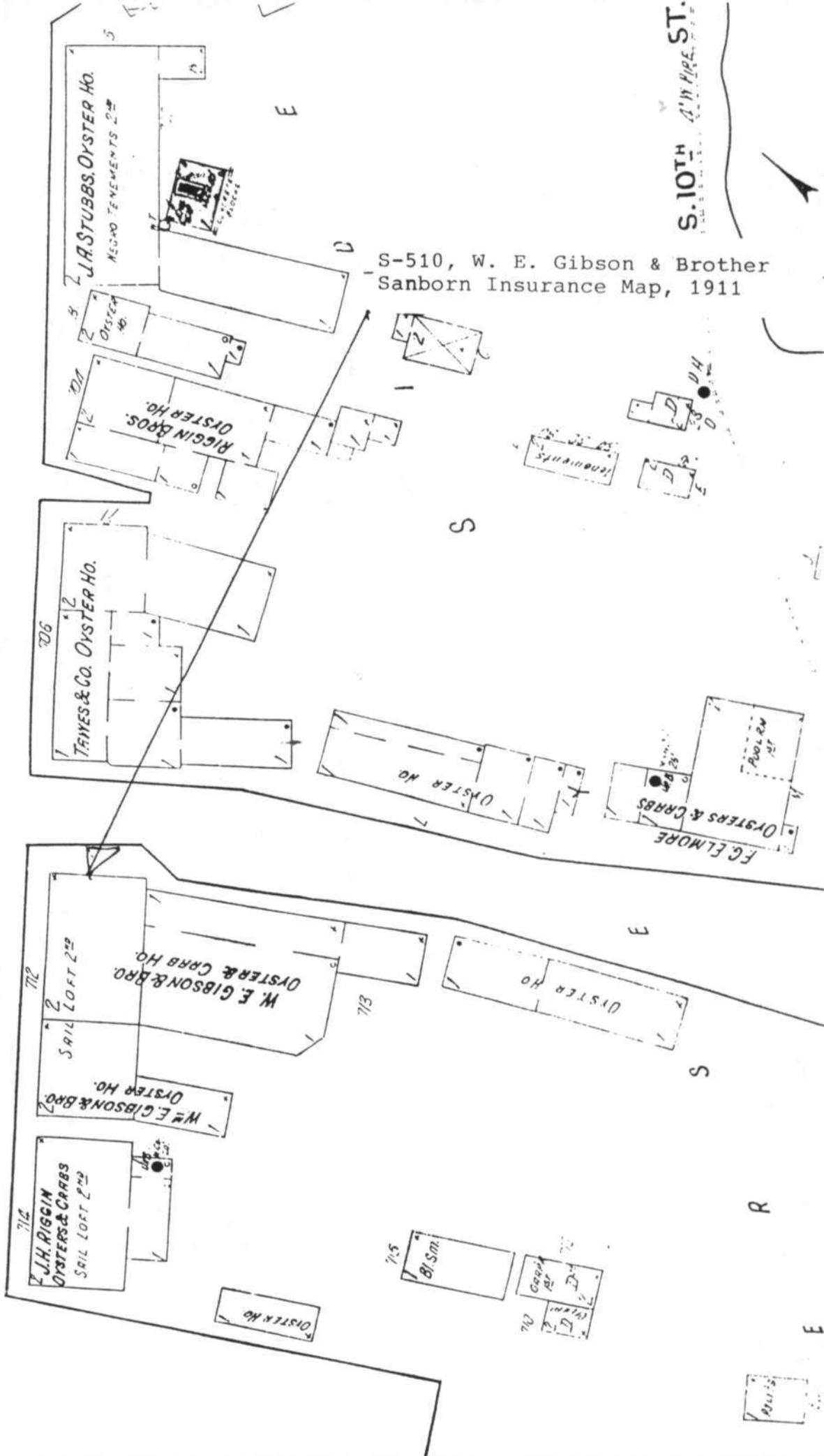
Gro

D

Sho. Care
 D-28



Little Annessex River

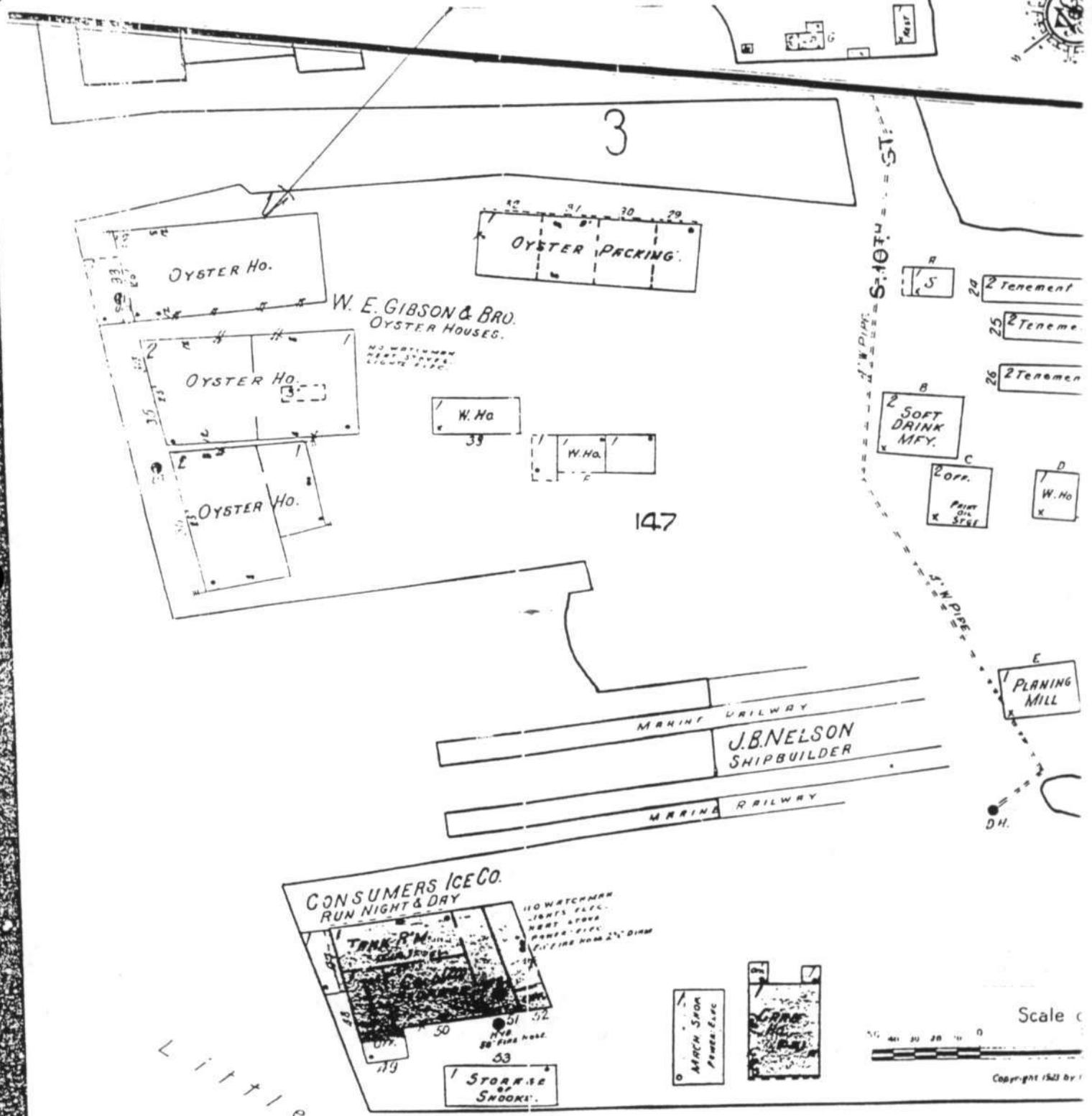


S-510, W. E. Gibson & Brother
Sanborn Insurance Map, 1911

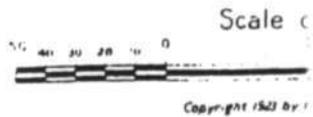
S. 10TH FIRE ST.

BCC FISHERY CO
OYSTER HO.
SHEPHERD

S-510, W.E. Gibson & Brother
- Sanborn Insurance Map, 1923



Little



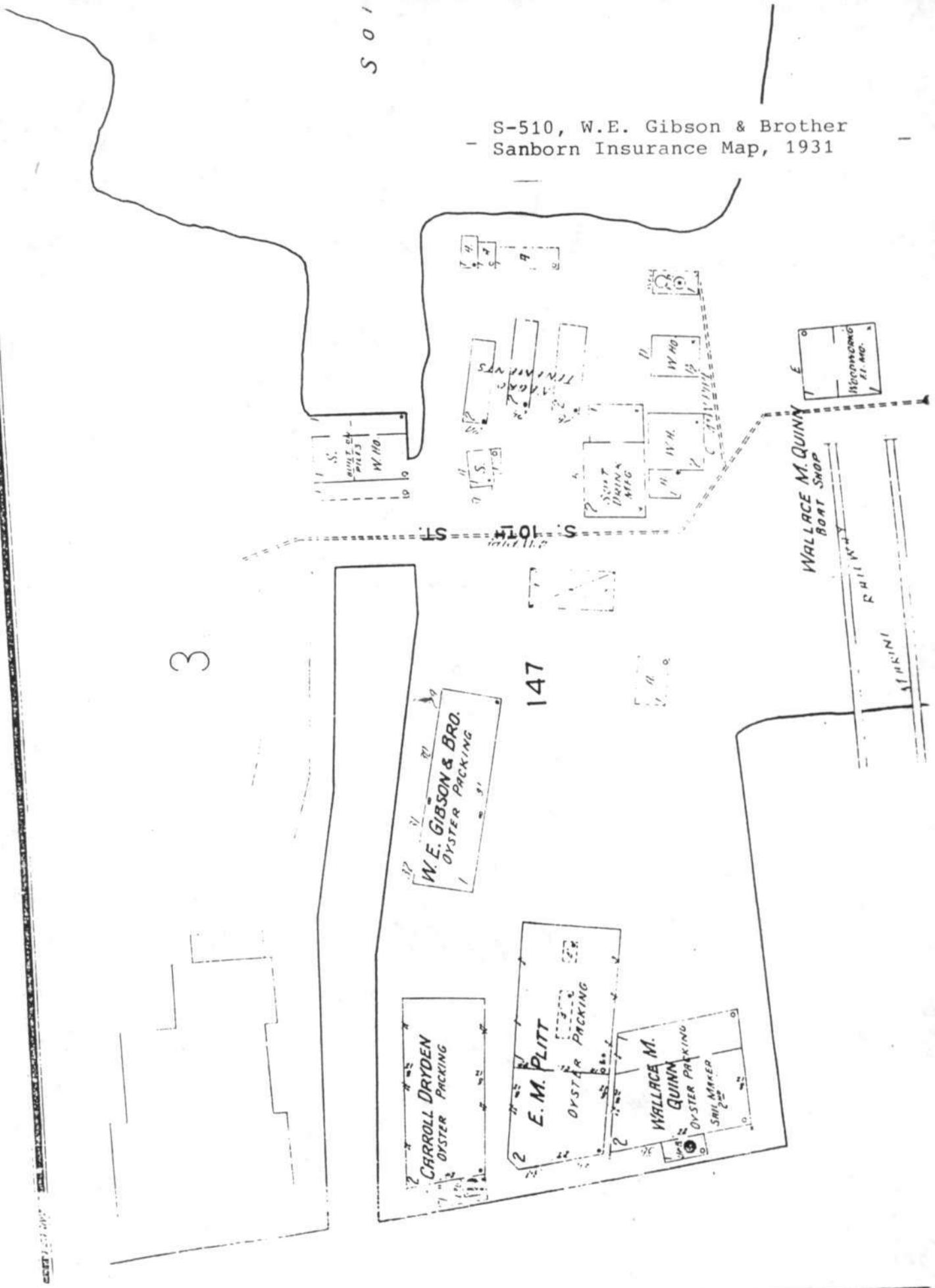
Annemessex River

Little Annemessex River

3

S 0 1

S-510, W.E. Gibson & Brother
Sanborn Insurance Map, 1931



W.E. GIBSON & BRO.
OYSTER PACKING

CARROLL DRYDEN
OYSTER PACKING

E. M. PLITT
OYSTER PACKING

WALLACE M.
QUINN
OYSTER PACKING

WALLACE M. QUINN
BOAT SHOP

S. 10TH ST

147

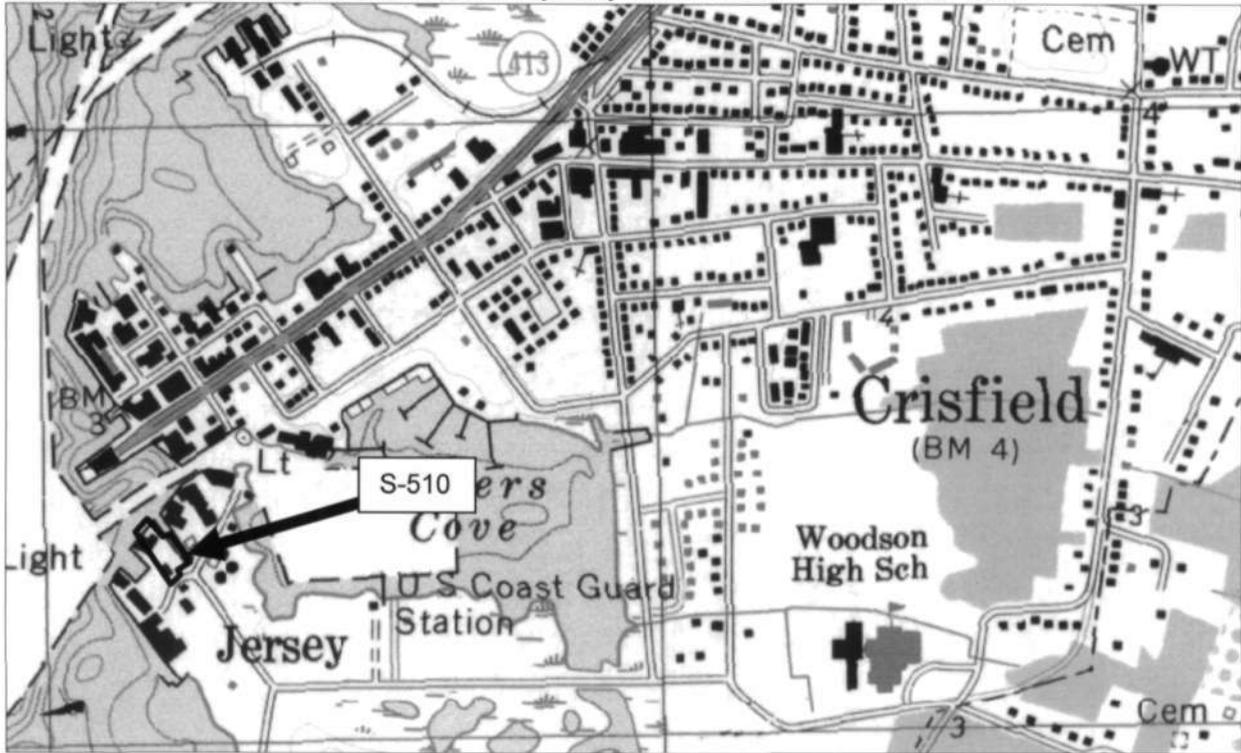
QUINN

S-510

Demolished late 1980s

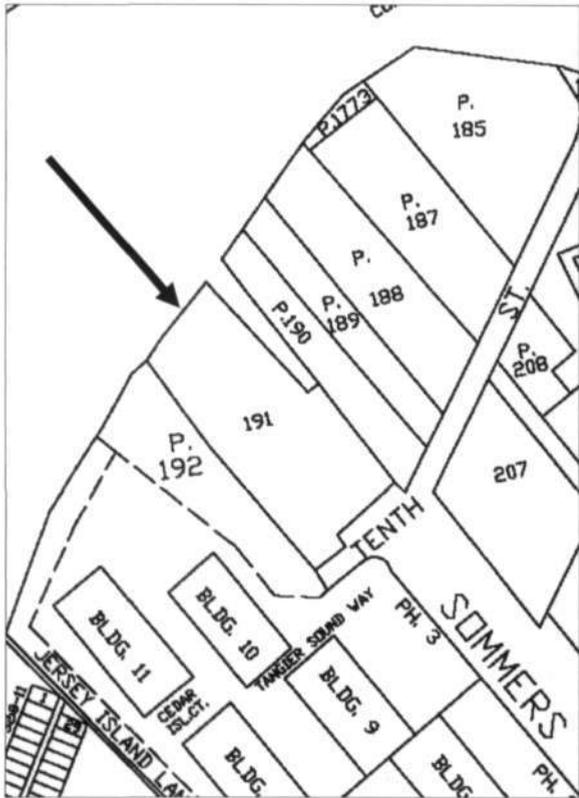
W.E. Gibson & Bro. Packinghouse, site

Crisfield quad 1968, Photorevised 1980, Bathymetry Added 1986, Minor revision 1992



Tax Map 102, p. 191

National Web Map Service 6" Orthophoto Map, c. 2010



52°30"

124000m F

765000 FEET (VA) 425

426

50'

JANES ISLAND STATE PARK

JANES ISLAND

Gulf

ANNE MENSEN

RIVER

Creek

LITTLE

Jenkins

Jersey Island

Lawson Marsh

Ware Point Marsh

Crisfield

(BM 41)

Woodson High Sch

Somers Cove

J.U.S. Coast Guard Station

Jersey

INDEFINITE BOUNDARY

Sackertown

Lawsonia

Radio Tower

Byrdtown

Ware Point Marsh

S-510, W. E. Gibson & Bro. - Sit
Crisfield, Maryland Quadrangle
1968

Mariners

Johnson

Cem

Cem

Cem

Pumping Sta

Peyton Sch

Light

Hop Pt

Light

Light

Light

Hammock Pt

Light

Little Ware

Tide

Masseu

Light Gut

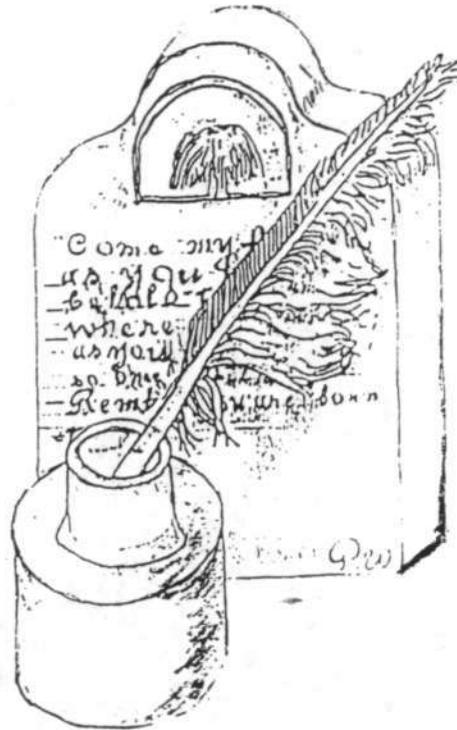
Landing

Creek

Radio Tower

Cem





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5-510

W. E. GIBSON AND BRO.

PACKERS

