Legal Description	SCT: 05 T:32 N R: 16 E L	OT: 003 BLK: 004 Original Townsite	Site:	24HL1301
Address	331 First St			
Current Owner	BNSF Railway Company, Oxford Bar INC			
Private	✓ Current Owner Address	331 First St, Havre, MT 59501-3505		
□ NAD 83 ✓ NA	AD 27	Historic Name Oxford Bar		
Zone: ## Easting:	597682 Northing: 5378470	Common Name Oxford Bar		
☐ Moved? ✓ Est	imated Documented	Date of Construction 1906 Estimated	✓	
Date of Move:		Documented		
Quad Name:		Building Changes 1992 remodel and awning		
Footprint:		Architect		
Oxford Bar	Records Hill County Courthous	Builder Original Owner attributed to Martin Mertz Original Use Bar, rooms Present Use Bar Foundation: Stone Exterior Walls: Brick, Synthetic St Roof: Composite Other Materials:		
Havr Grits	Records, Hill County Courthous e Hill County Library: , Guts, and Gusto. A History o Directories and Sanborn Fire I			

Havre Daily News, various years.; The Plaindealer, various years.; The Promoter, various years.; The Havre Daily Promoter, various years.

Physical Description This two-story brick stretcher course building faces south onto First Street and has been modified at the first story with a stucco finish. The main entrance is centered, recessed, and flanked by octagonal windows. An entrance to the upstairs on the east end is inset with an original door and transom. A fabric, modern canopy extends the full façade. The building has four second-story window bays separated by pilasters. These pilasters are narrow with double knee brace design at the top that extend to the cornice of the facade. The pilaster at the west side has a semi circle designed element on top of the knee brace at the roofline. The mid-century windows at each of the two center bays are ribbons of three, four-light casements with header brick lintels. Stone bands divide each bay horizontally above the windows. The pressed metal cornice features ornate doubled brackets above each pilaster. The rear of the building has delivery doors and a canopied entrance.

Historical Significance

The property appears to have been owned by Martin Mertz and his family from 1905 until 1939. The 1910 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map shows the building of stone construction on the first floor which housed a billiards establishment with a bowling alley in the basement. In the early years, it was occupied by Jerry M. Ryan and Peter D. Jamieson's Billiards. Jamieson, as well as several businessmen, represented Havre's first ward at the county convention that established Hill County in 1911.

The 1920 map indicates the building served as a card room and soft drink establishment. The second floor was used continuously as a rooming house through the historic period and beyond. The 1929-1930 Polk Directory indicates the C. S. Reading Room was located here and Emma Mooney was the proprietor of the upstairs rooms. In the 1930s, the building was occupied by the Mint Rooms and Star Beauty Shop, and Van's Radio Repairing in the 1940s.

The owner of this building from 1939 to the 1960s were descendants of the O.J. Ober family who also owned a building across the street that burned in the Fire of 1904. He was from a large family involved in a business known as G.A. Hullfish and Ober Company and was a driver for the same in the 1910s. The Obers also owned Ober Flats, an apartment building at Seventh Avenue North on the corner of Third Street.

In 1942, the Oxford moved to this location at 331 First Street which was managed and later owned by Chuck Collier. Collier began a career with the Oxford earlier as a shoe shine boy, soda jerk, and broom pusher, moving his old shoe shine stand into this building. The original Oxford Saloon was also destroyed in the Fire of 1904 and located at the southwest corner of Fourth Avenue and First Street. Frank Cowan owned the bar with partner, Charles Boles, until Frank left the bar business in 1928. Cowan came to the area in 1880, filing a homestead claim which was later sold. He became a director for the gas company in Havre, president of the Montana National Bank, and a Hill County Commissioner, among other roles. The bar has remained the "Oxford" for 66 years.

Integrity

The building has experienced modification which may be reversed. It does retain original mass and materials of construction. The pilasters are original elements and the windows at the second story are from the historic period. Though the building has undergone changes to its original design, especially at the first story, it retains sufficient integrity to convey its significant historic and architectural associations.

Statement of Significance

The building has historic significance because it exemplifies the changes in occupancies often found in small town's downtowns. It is interesting that it also has served as a bar for several years. The building displays changes reflective of modernization to encourage patronage. The building is representative of the commercial development in downtown Havre through the first half of the twentieth century. Its Western Commercial elements, still visible across the second story, are a significant architectural contribution to the downtown.

Form Prepared By	Becki Miller, M. Stalkamp, Gary Wilson, Candi Zion
Preparer Address	
Date Entered	

Picture:



Торо Мар

