

CH-803

c. 1910

Harry Wheatley Farm

Dentsville vic.

Private

The Harry Wheatley Farm is a well-preserved agricultural property in the vicinity of Dentsville.

The farm was established in 1910 and consists of 156 acres on a narrow parcel extending from the end of Edelen Road to Zekiah Swamp to the west. A two-story Victorian dwelling, one story tenant house, and an array of agricultural buildings are found on the site.

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. CH-803

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic Harry Wheatley Farm

other

2. Location

street and number 12142 Dr. Edelen Road not for publication

city, town Dentsville vicinity

county Charles

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

name Richard H. Wheatley

street and number 12142 Dr. Edelen Road telephone 301-934-2606

city, town La Plata state MD zip code 20646

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Charles County Courthouse tax map and parcel: 45 p. 19

city, town La Plata liber WR folio 2654

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
- Other

6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function	Resource Count
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	Contributing Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	<u>5</u> <u>0</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> defense	buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> domestic	sites
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> education	structures
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	objects
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	<u>5</u> <u>0</u> Total
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	
		<input 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
			<u>0</u>

7. Description

Inventory No. CH-803

Condition

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good | <input type="checkbox"/> ruins |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fair | <input type="checkbox"/> altered |
-

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

The Harry Wheatley Farm is a well-preserved agricultural property in the vicinity of Dentsville. The farm was established in 1910 and consists of 156 acres on a narrow parcel extending from the end of Edelen Road to Zekiah Swamp to the west. A two story Victorian dwelling, one story tenant house, and an array of agricultural buildings are found on the site.

The dwelling faces southwest and is found at the end of a long straight lane surrounded by flat open fields. The dwelling is essentially an I-house with a service wing extending from the northeast elevation creating an overall L-plan. Notable features include a hipped roof and a typical and a decorative center gable adorned with fishscale shingles and a lunette window. The one-story full-width porch extending the width of the façade is supported by turned posts accentuated with scrollsawn brackets. Windows appear to consist of original 2/2 double-hung wood sash.

A one-story tenant houses stands directly on Edelen Road and is approached before arriving at the lane to the main dwelling. The house is 1 1/2 stories with a steeply pitched roof. Shed additions extend from the eave elevations. Original features include a metal roof and wood siding.

A number of tobacco barns and other typical agricultural outbuilding are found on the property that appear to date from the early to mid 20th century. Although access to the site could not be obtained by the owner, because the site appears to possess considerable significance, the site was photographed from the public right of way.

8. Significance

Inventory No. CH-803

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" 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 industry	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:	

Specific dates 1910 **Architect/Builder** unknown

Construction dates 20th c.

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 reports, complete evaluation on a DOE Form - see manual.)

The Harry Wheatley Farm is believed to be a significant early 20th century farmstead in Charles County. Because of the economic stagnation after the Civil War, domestic architecture up until the time of the second World War remained largely conservative. Balloon frame construction for domestic buildings became the standard but the ornamentation and elaborate floorplans seen in other parts of the State and Nation, were kept to a minimum. Side gable structures were most common, so the presence of a hipped roof I-house combined with the well preserved ornamental details such as fishscale siding, make this a noteworthy example of rural Victorian architecture in Charles County.

Tobacco has been the main cash crop in Charles County since the initial European settlement in the 17th century. After the Civil War, the agriculturally based economy in Charles County remained depressed and tobacco prices consistently fell until the end of the 19th century. This steady decline encouraged many farmers to diversify their interests and expand production of those items that had once been solely for family consumption. In the early 20th century, automotive and road improvements opened up new markets for farm products. This meant that honey, nuts, orchard products, poultry, dairy and livestock could now be quickly and efficiently transported to larger markets. Local and state officials recognized the potential impact of new technologies on the depressed agricultural economy of southern Maryland and quickly proposed several infrastructure improvements.

Despite this diversification, tobacco continued to be extensively cultivated. After the turn of the 20th century, tobacco prices began to rise and continued to do so throughout mid-century, creating a flurry of increased production. Rapid increases in production led to new barn construction. These new barns were adapted to respond to market trends as well as advances in agricultural technology. Both barn size and design were affected. Single and double drive-through isles found on the gable walls, gambrel roofs and an overall massive sizes characterized mid-20th century tobacco barns.

Further fieldwork is required, but the tobacco barns on the Wheatley Farm appear to fit written descriptions of 20th century Maryland tobacco barns in its overall dimensions and orientation. The February 1946 issue of Maryland Tobacco Grower suggested placing the long side of the structure toward the prevailing wind, while another account recommended the long wall to the south. In March of 1951, W.W. Garner described Maryland tobacco barns as typically 24 - 36 feet in width with a length a multiple of sixteen feet. A 36x140 foot barn, 17 feet high would hold 47,000 plants of 5 acres worth of tobacco, a manageable amount for a farm family with the help of seasonal laborers.

Although a system of tenancy had been practiced in Charles County since its formal establishment in 1658, it was not until after the Civil War that tenancy became a predominant labor system, leaving a distinct mark on the cultural landscape. Following the Civil War, Charles County suffered the same fate as most of the southern states. The basis of the economy, slave labor, was gone. Land ceased to be cultivated, credit collapsed and many planters fell deep into debt. The turmoil of the Reconstruction Era continued in Charles County well into the twentieth century. Despite the collapse of the slave-based tobacco economy following the Civil War,

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No CH-803

Name Harry Wheatley Farm

Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 1

Charles County and most of the surrounding counties retained their dependence on tobacco cultivation. Tenancy was a logical intermediate step for planters in need of farm laborers and a large population of skilled recently freed slaves who owned little or no property. While some diversification did occur, the reliance on agriculture, mainly tobacco, remained throughout the nineteenth and into the twentieth century. Through the latter part of the nineteenth century, tobacco values remained depressed, insuring that the small tenant farmers and share-croppers struggled in a cycle of perpetual debt to landowners.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. CH-803

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property 156

Acreage of historical setting 156

Quadrangle name La Plata

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

the property is associated with Charles County Property Tax Map 45, Parcel19.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Cathy Hardy/Historic Preservation Planner

organization Charles County Planning

date 2/13/2003

street and number 200 Baltimore Street

telephone 301-396-5815

city or town La Plata

state MD zip code 20646

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
410-514-7600

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Inventory No. CH-803

Section 9 Page 1

Harry Wheatley Farm
name of property
Charles County, MD
county and state

Major Bibliographic References:

Brown, Jack D., et al. *Charles County, Maryland, A History*.
Charles County Bicentennial Committee, 1976.

Charles County Land Records, Charles County Courthouse, LaPlata, Maryland.

Hardy, Cathy Currey. "Phase III Final Report Charles County Historic Sites Survey."
Charles County Planning. July 2002.

KCI Technologies, Inc. *Draft--Historic Context For the U.S. 301 Southern Corridor
Transportation Study*. August 1996.

Klaphor, Margaret Brown. *The History of Charles County, Maryland*.
LaPlata, MD: Charles County Tercentenary, Inc., 1958.

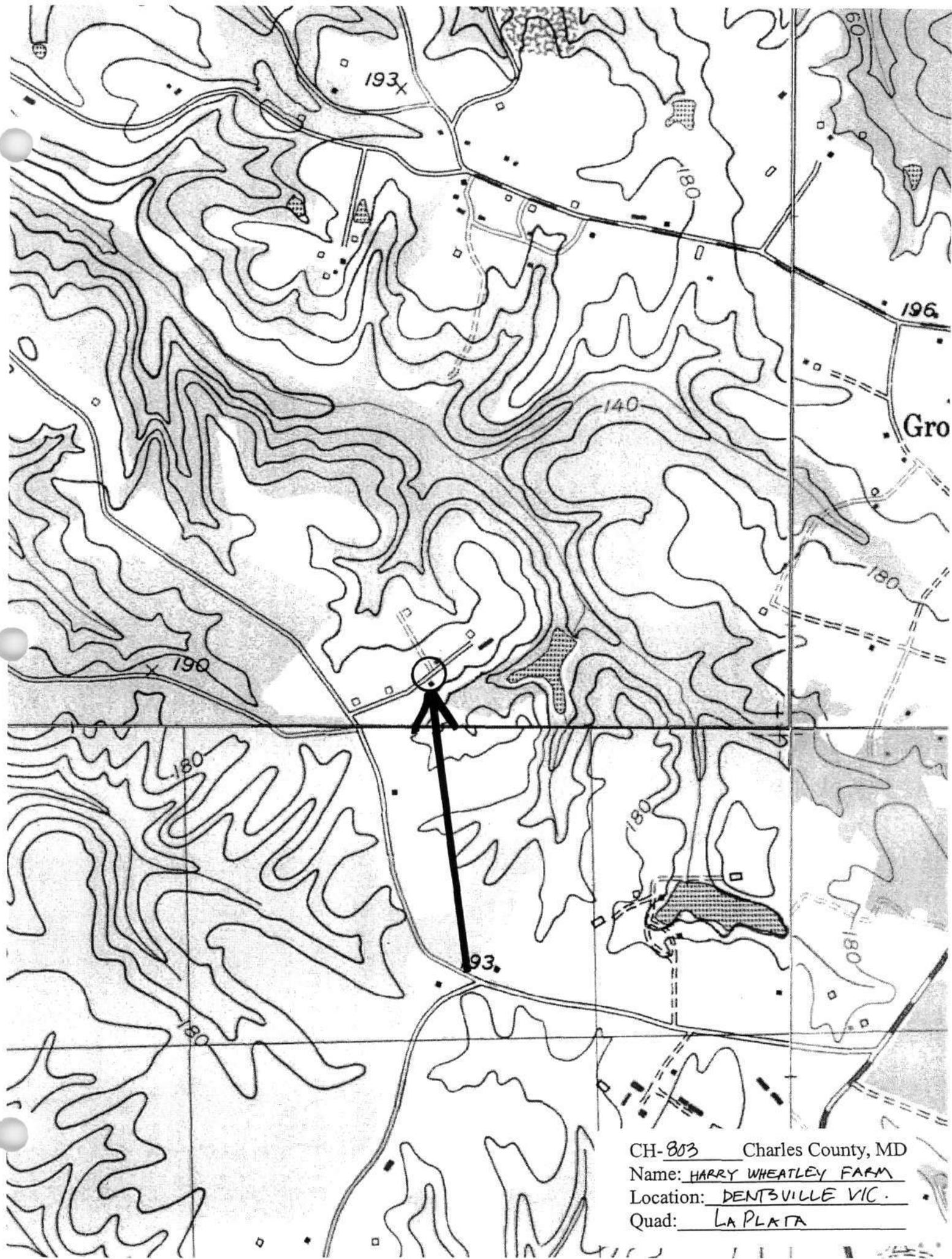
Lewis, J. Frank & Company. *The Maryland Directory*. 1880. Baltimore

Wasch, Diane Shaw. "The Cultivation and Curing of Tobacco in Maryland." Paper prepared for
the Office of Research, Survey and Registration, Maryland Historical Trust. On file at the
Maryland Historical Trust Library, Crownsville, MD.

Maps

Griffith, Dennis. *Map of the State of Maryland Laid down from an actual Survey of all the
principal Waters, public Roads, and Divisions of the Counties therein....* Philadelphia, PA: J.
Tallance, Engraver, June 6, 1795.

Martenet, Simon J. *Martenet's Map of Maryland and the District of Columbia*. Baltimore, MD:
Simon J. Martenet, C.E., 1865; revised 1885.



CH-803 Charles County, MD
Name: HARRY WHEATLEY FARM
Location: DENTSVILLE VIC.
Quad: LA PLATA



CH-803

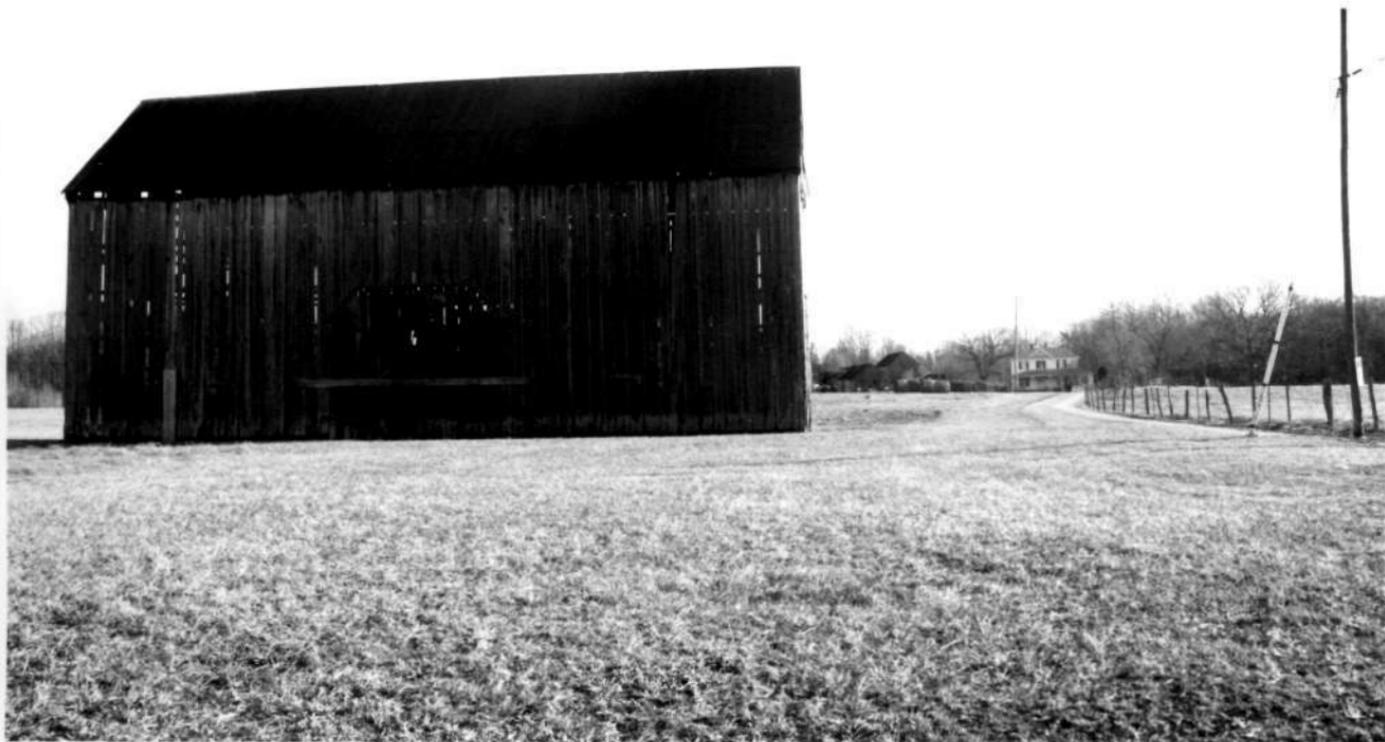
Harry Wheatley Farm
Dentsville, vic

1/2004

C. Hardy

MD SITE

HOUSE, LOOKING E
10F3'



CH-803

Harry Wheatley Farm

Dentsville, vic.

1/2004

C. Hardy

MD SHPO

HOUSE & BARN, LOOKING E

2 OF 3



CH-803

HARRY WHEATLEY FARM
DENTSVILLE VIC.

1/2004

C. HARDY

MD SHPO
LOOKING N

30F3