

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY  
HISTORIC SITE SUMMARY SHEET

Survey #: P.G. #65-4 Building Date: 1915

Building Name: William Forney House

(MD 212)

Location: 8511 Riggs Road, Adelphi, Maryland

Private/Residence/Occupied/Good/Inaccessible

Description:

The William Forney House is a tall, narrow, two-story gable-roofed frame structure on a heavily-treed site. The main block of the house is three bays by two; entrance is in the central bay of the three-bay main west facade. There is a one-story, shed-roofed porch across the west facade; it is approached by a flight of steps and has a railing and turned posts with plain curved brackets. Both the porch and main roofs are of patterned tin and are flared at the eaves; the eaves are highlighted by exposed rafter ends. There is a central corbelled brick chimney at the ridge. The house is covered with German siding painted grey. Windows are 2/2, double-hung sash, with white painted surrounds and red shutters. A one-and-a-half-story, one-bay, gable-roofed rear wing extends to the east, at right angles to the main block. The rear wing also has a patterned tin roof, flared eaves and German siding; there is a corbelled brick chimney north of the ridge. Across the east gable end is an enclosed one-story shed-roof porch.

Significance:

The William Forney house is an example of a simple vernacular dwelling of the early twentieth century. Although of a common type, it is distinguished by flared eaves, a feature which is not commonly found in houses of its type in Prince George's County. It stands on part of a 50-acre farm which was purchased by John Forney in 1877. Within a year, Forney deeded the farm to his wife; after her death, the farm was divided (in 1914) among her five children. William C. Forney was allotted a 4.9 acre parcel which fronted on the county road between Adelphi Mill and Mt. Pisgah Methodist Church. On this lot he built (in 1915) the subject house just a short distance north of his parents' house. In the half century since that time, the area has developed into a residential community of modern dwellings. William Forney's house, by its small size and modest but distinctive vernacular styling, stands out as a noticeable landmark among them.

Acreage: 4.9 acres

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

## 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic William Forney House

and/or common (indicated in 1974 survey as John Forney House)

## 2. Location

street & number 8511 Riggs Road, (Maryland Route 212)  not for publication

city, town Adelphi  vicinity of congressional district 5

state Maryland county Prince George's

## 3. Classification

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

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

name Mrs. Herbert Putnam

street & number 8511 Riggs Road telephone no.:

city, town Adelphi state and zip code Maryland 20783

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Prince George's County Courthouse liber 6054

street & number Main Street folio 229

city, town Upper Marlboro state Md.

## 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title Prince George's County Inventory of Historic Sites

date 1974  federal  state  county  local

repository for survey records History Division, MNCPPC

city, town Riverdale state Md.

# 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<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 William Forney House is a tall, narrow, two-story gable-roofed frame structure on a heavily-treed site. The main block of the house is three bays by two; entrance is in the central bay of the three-bay main west facade. There is a one-story, shed-roofed porch across the west facade; it is approached by a flight of steps and has a railing and turned posts with plain curved brackets. Both the porch and main roofs are of patterned tin and are flared at the eaves, the eaves are highlighted by exposed rafter ends. There is a central corbelled brick chimney at the ridge. The house is covered with German siding which is painted grey. Windows are 2/2, double-hung sash, with white painted surrounds and red shutters.

A one-and-a-half-story, one-bay, gable roofed rear wing extends to the east, at right angles to the main block. The rear wing also has a patterned tin roof, flared eaves and German siding; there is a corbelled brick chimney north of the ridge. Across the east gable end is a one-story shed-roof porch which has been enclosed; it has an entrance in the central bay, and is covered with German siding.

# 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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) local history
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

**Specific dates** 1914 **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.

The William Forney house is an example of simple vernacular dwelling of the early twentieth century. Although of a common type, it is distinguished by flared eaves, a feature which is not commonly found in houses of its type in Prince George's County. It stands on part of a 50-acre farm which was purchased by John Forney in 1877.<sup>1</sup> Within a year, Forney deeded the farm to his wife; after her death, the farm was divided (in 1914) among her five children.<sup>2</sup> William C. Forney was allotted a 4.9 acre parcel (Lot #2) which fronted on the county road between Adelphi Mill and Mt. Pisgah Methodist Church. On this lot he built (in 1915) the subject house just a short distance north of his parents' house (no longer standing).<sup>3</sup> After his death in 1933, his house and lot were sold.<sup>4</sup> In the half century since that time, the area has developed into a residential community of modern dwellings. William Forney's house, by its small size and modest but distinctive vernacular styling, stands out as a noticeable landmark among them.

### Notes

- 1 Prince George's County Land Records HB #13:45
- 2 Ibid HB#14:20; #98:293
- 3 cf. plat, Prince George's County Land Records #98:293; Prince George's County Tax Assessments E.D. #2 and #17, 1890 to 1915.
- 4 Prince George's County Estate file #5243; Land Records #405:209.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Cf. Chain of Title

Cf. Notes, Item #8

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 4.9

TM 32 parcel 10

Quadrangle name Washington East, D.C.-MD Section A

Quadrangle scale \_\_\_\_\_

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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D	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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E	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
---	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------

F	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
---	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------

G	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
---	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------

H	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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### Verbal boundary description and justification

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Susan G. Pearl, Research Historian, and Lois Sniderman		
organization	Historic Preservation Commission	date	August 1985
street & number	c/o County Planning, MNCPPC	telephone	952-3521
city or town	Upper Marlboro	state	Md.

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory 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  
Shaw House  
21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 269-2438

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

P.G. 45  
1700455504

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

John Forney House

OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

8521 Riggs Road

CITY, TOWN

Adelphi

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Prince George's

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

**OWNERSHIP**

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

**STATUS**

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES RESTRICTED
- YES UNRESTRICTED
- NO

**PRESENT USE**

- AGRICULTURE
- MUSEUM
- COMMERCIAL
- PARK
- EDUCATIONAL
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- ENTERTAINMENT
- RELIGIOUS
- GOVERNMENT
- SCIENTIFIC
- INDUSTRIAL
- TRANSPORTATION
- MILITARY
- OTHER

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Prince George's Co. Courthouse

Liber #:

Folio #:

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Upper Marlboro

STATE

Maryland

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

**DESCRIPTION**

<b>CONDITION</b>		<b>CHECK ONE</b>	<b>CHECK ONE</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED    DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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**DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE**

This is a most unusual, small, two-story frame house. It is tall and quite narrow, but has three bays on its main (west) facade. There is a central door, and an open, one-story Victorian porch across the front. Both the porch and main roofs are of patterned tin, and have "kicks" or upturned edges at the eaves. This is a feature seldom seen in this area and, added with the rest of the house's features, it gives a decided Oriental flavor to the building. There is a central stove-chimney stack. Windows are 2/2, with painted frames, and siding is German. A two-story ell, with side porch, extends to the rear.

**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 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

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This seems to have been the house of John Forney, as shown on Hopkins' 1878 Atlas. One John W. Forney was a Radical Republican member of the U.S. Congress, after the Civil War. It is possible that this may have been the same person, as many influential Washingtonians had "country seats" in the area. Regardless, the house is most noteworthy for its architectural value.

Chain of Title

William Forney House  
P.G. #65-4

- #6054:229  
15 Feb. 1985  
Deed Pearl E. Putnam, surviving tenant by the entirety of Herbert G. Putnam who died 28 Oct. 1981, to her son, Maurice Ray Putnam; 4.91 acres, being lot #2 in the division of the real estate of Lizzie Forney as per plat recorded #98:294; same property described in #485:48.
- #485:48  
5 Oct. 1937  
Deed James and Beatrice Hemphill to Herbert G. and Pearl E. Putnam, as tenants by the entirety; 4.91 acres as per plat recorded in #98:294; same which grantors acquired by #405:209.
- #405:209  
9 July 1934  
Deed Freida Dyer, widow of William C. Forney, and William W. Dyer, her husband, Edna M. and John M. Link, Marion Forney, unmarried, and William D. and Carrie L. Forney, heirs of William C. Forney, deceased, to James Hemphill; 4.91 acres as per plat recorded #98:294; same land which was partitioned by #98:293.
- #5243  
1933  
Estate file Estate of William C. Forney who died intestate 6 Nov. 1933; deceased's real estate consisted of approximately 5 acres in Chillum District; heirs-at-law were widow, a son and two daughters.
- #98:293  
12 March 1914  
Deed By this deed of partition John Forney, widower of Lizzie Forney, deceased, and her children, John P. Forney, Lizzie Forney Shuey, Henry J. Forney, Lena Forney Thomas and William C. Forney, divided her real estate into ten equal parts and conveyed a share to each heir; lots #2 and #9 were conveyed to William C. Forney; same property which the deceased acquired by HB #14:20.
- HB #14:20  
2 Sept. 1878  
Deed John Forney to Lizzie Forney; 50 acres, being lot #2 of the subdivision of a part of Hoskissons Lot and Cramphins Lot; same property conveyed by EWB #1:98 and the same which the grantor acquired by HB #13:45.
- #HB #13:45  
20 Oct. 1877  
Deed For \$1,500 Thomas H. and Annie Walsh to John and Lizzie Forney of DC; 50 acres, lot #2; same property conveyed by EWB #1:98 and the same conveyed by Edward Simms to the Trustees of St. Vincent's Orphan Asylum.
- FS #4:329  
5 Oct. 1866  
Deed For \$1,250 St. Vincent's Orphan Asylum to Thomas H. Walsh; 50 acres, lot #2, same property conveyed by EWB #1:98 and the same which grantor acquired by deed from Edward Simms.

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

- 1) Hopkins' 1878 Atlas.
- 2) RECORDS OF THE COLUMBIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, (1963-65), Wash., D.C.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

\_\_\_\_\_

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_\_\_

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

Michael F. Dwyer, Senior Park Historian

ORGANIZATION

M-NCPPC

DATE

8/20/75

STREET & NUMBER

8787 Georgia Ave.

TELEPHONE

589-1480

CITY OR TOWN

Silver Spring

STATE

Maryland

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RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust  
 The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
 Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
 (301) 267-1438





P.G. #65-4

William Forney House

Prince George's County, MD.

Lois Snyderman

May 1985

West elevation

Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD.



P.G. #65-4

William Forney House

Prince George's County, MD.

Lois Snyderman

May 1985

East elevation

Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD.



P.G.#65-4

William Forney House

Prince George's County, MD

Lois Snyderman

May 1985

North elevation

Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD



NAME # 65-4 JOHN FARNEY HOUSE

LOCATION 8521 RIGGS Rd ADELPHI, Md

FACADE W

PHOTO TAKEN 8/20/75 MDWYER