

WI-358  
Radburn Farm  
Riverton vicinity  
Private

Early to mid 19th century, 1947-50

Radburn Farm is named after the 1688 “Radburn” patent for this tract of land that borders the Nanticoke River southeast of the village of Riverton. The six-part house that distinguishes this property was conceived and built during the late 1940s by Benjamin Scott Bennett, who incorporated and reworked a nineteenth-century dwelling that had been owned by his grandmother.

Familiar to most northern Wicomico County residents, Scott Bennett entered into the sawmill and lumber business during the Depression. From lumber he cut at his mill, he erected two large chicken houses on his property and entered into the poultry meat business, then still in its infancy in Wicomico County and nearby Delaware. The wholesale markets for chickens were located in Philadelphia and New York where the chickens were shipped live. Years of raising chickens combined with a lot of luck in fluctuating wholesale markets provided Scott Bennett with a level of success not shared by many farmers during the lean years following the Depression.

In May 1942 Scott Bennett acquired 140 acres of the Radburn tract which included his grandmother’s house. During the late 1940s and early 1950s, Scott Bennett significantly reworked the family house in an ambitious building program that expanded the house four to five times its original size. Inspired by restoration work ongoing at Williamsburg, Virginia, the redesign of the old farmhouse borrowed on the stepped or “telescope” house forms typical of the peninsula. The six-part dwelling was stretched out in a long series of gable roofed sections that had hyphens in between the principal living

and working spaces. Exterior brick chimneys were included in several locations, and decorative end boards similar to other Eastern Shore houses trim ends of the cornices.

MARYLAND HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN INFORMATION

RESOURCE NAME: Radburn Farm

MHT INVENTORY NUMBER: WI-358

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DATA

1. Historic Period Theme(s): Architecture
  
2. Geographic Orientation: Eastern Shore
  
3. Chronological/Development Period(s): Modern Period 1930-
  
4. Resource Type(s): Single-family dwelling

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF  
HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Survey No. WI-358  
Magi No.  
DOE  yes  no

## 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Radburn

and/or common Scott Bennett Farm

## 2. Location

street & number 11095 Riverton Road  not for publication

city, town Riverton  vicinity of congressional district First

state Maryland county Wicomico

## 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" 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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

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

name Marcus N. and Jean S. Ruff

street & number 11095 Riverton Road telephone no.:

city, town Mardela Springs state and zip code MD 21837

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Wicomico County Clerk of Court Map 5, P. 70  
liber 829

street & number Wicomico County Courthouse folio 565

city, town Salisbury state MD 21801

## 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records

city, town state

# 7. Description

Survey No. WI-358

<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 Radburn farm is located at 11095 Riverton Road southwest of the village of Riverton, Wicomico County, Maryland. The two-story frame house faces southwest with the gable roof of the main block oriented on a northwest/southeast axis.

Incorporating a nineteenth century house, the Radburn dwelling is a six-part frame house that was extensively enlarged and reworked during the late 1940s and early 1950s. Supported by a low brick foundation, the exterior is clad with beaded vinyl siding, and the various gable roofs are covered with asphalt shingles. The oldest part is the two-story portion at the south end of the long five-part house.

The front of the house is a three-bay facade that has been rearranged with the front door blocked by an exterior corbeled base brick chimney and the entrance moved to a single-bay side addition on the northwest corner. Replacement six-over-six sash windows fill the remaining openings on the first and second floors. The base of the gable roof is boxed and the gable ends are flush. Sheltering the southeast corner is a single story screened in porch covered with a flat roof.

Attached to the northeast (rear) wall is story-and-a-half wing two bays across by one room wide. Six-over-six sash windows light the first floor and gabled dormers that interrupt the roofline illuminate the second floor. Rising through the gable end is an interior brick chimney stack. Extending from the northeast gable end of the wing is a single story, two-bay by one-room plan hyphen that joins a story-and-a-half section that was formerly a two-car garage. The hyphen is lighted by six-over-six sash windows as well. Trimming the ends of the cornices are decorative end boards.

This story-and-a-half portion is turned on a perpendicular axis to the roof of the other sections to the south. Six-over-six sash windows light the first floor and large gabled dormers illuminate the second floor. Rising on the northwest gable end is a large corbeled shoulder brick chimney with six-over-six sash windows to each side. The gable end are finished with a molded bargeboard that terminates with a decorative end board. The southeast gable end is marked by a bank of modern windows that were installed in the place of former garage doors when this section was converted to living space.

Attached to the northeast end of the former garage is another single story hyphen that joins a story-and-a-half garage to the rest of the house. The current garage is turned on a perpendicular axis to the other roof lines. Gabled dormers light the second floor. Sheltering the inside corner of the garage and adjacent hyphen is a shed roof porch supported on square posts.

The interior was not seen but described as fully reworked during the 1950s.

# 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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

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.

Radburn Farm is named after the 1688 “Radburn” patent for this tract of land that borders the Nanticoke River southeast of the village of Riverton. The six-part house that distinguishes this property was conceived and built during the late 1940s by Benjamin Scott Bennett, who incorporated and reworked a nineteenth-century dwelling that had been owned by his grandmother.

Familiar to most northern Wicomico County residents, Scott Bennett entered into the sawmill and lumber business during the Depression. From lumber he cut at his mill, he erected two large chicken houses on his property and entered into the poultry meat business, then still in its infancy in Wicomico County and nearby Delaware. The wholesale markets for chickens were located in Philadelphia and New York where the chickens were shipped live. Years of raising chickens combined with a lot of luck in fluctuating wholesale markets provided Scott Bennett with a level of success not shared by many farmers during the lean years following the Depression.<sup>1</sup>

In May 1942 Scott Bennett acquired 140 acres of the Radburn tract which included his grandmother’s house.<sup>2</sup> During the late 1940s and early 1950s, Scott Bennett significantly reworked the family house in an ambitious building program that expanded the house four to five times its original size. Inspired by restoration work ongoing at Williamsburg, Virginia, the redesign of the old farmhouse borrowed on the stepped or “telescope” house forms typical of the peninsula. The six-part dwelling was stretched out in a long series of gable roofed sections that had hyphens in between the principal living and working spaces. Exterior brick chimneys were included in several locations, and decorative end boards similar to other Eastern Shore houses trim ends of the cornices.

This house deserves listing in *Category A* due to its architectural and historical merit.

<sup>1</sup> *Salisbury Times*, June 14, 1958. “Sharptown Native Makes Real Go of Chickens”

<sup>2</sup> Wicomico County Land Record, JWTS 241/143, 7 May 1742.



WI-358  
Radburn Farm  
11095 Riverton Road  
Riverton vicinity, Wicomico County, Maryland  
Chain of title

Map 5, Parcel 70

829/565                      Caper Acres, Inc.

to

11/1/1974                    Marcus N. Ruff  
Jean S. Ruff

JWTS 607/4                   Richard E. Cullen  
Willis L. Hancock, trustees

to

2/26/1965                    Caper Acres, Inc.

Sold at public auction, 8/28/1964

JWTS 413/96                   Benjamin Scott Bennett  
Nancy Marshall Bennett

to

1/30/1956                    Richard E. Cullen  
Willis T. Hancock, trustees



This life country place was once the home of Scott Bennett's grandmother. Completely remodeled, with four

large fireplaces, it is a good example of what taste and loving care can do for our old homes. The Bennetts

have four Robertas.

# Sharptown Native Makes Real Go Of Chi

In much the same manner that the early settlers of Maryland must have tackled their homesteads, Scott Bennett, Sharptown native, went into the chicken business. No one helped him, and no one showed him how — he just went. And a beautiful home, and complete contentment with his way of life have been its result.

Mr. Bennett grew up just at the worst of the depression. He worked in New York for a time, and shipped out in the Merchant Marine. When jobs there became non-existent, he returned to Sharptown and set up a small saw mill. Lumber then brought the fancy price of about 12 to 15 dollars a thousand, and Mr. Bennett says that sales met the pay roll.

**THE CHICKEN** industry in Delaware at that time was in its first steps of successful growth, and Scott thought that he could do as well as his friends over there. In 1937 he sawed and planed his own lumber, and built two houses of 12,000 birds capacity. They are still standing and in use.

There was no one else in this neighborhood in the chicken business, and Scott learned by doing. Prices at that time were about 15 to 16 cents a pound, but feed and biddies were quite reasonable. The problem of the early days was a market. All birds went live to Philadelphia and New York and the slightest glut of this limited point of sale sent prices in to a tail spin.

"We never know if we were going to be able to sell our chickens once we had them grown," said Mr. Bennett. "I certainly was lucky in those days. Guessed right more than half the time, and spent as much time talking and trying to find out market conditions and places to sell as I did in growing tremendously. The more we grow, the more we tell the world about Eastern Shore poultry, the more outlets we are going to have. The Poultry Exchange at Selbyville has been a big help to the chicken farmer. Now he knows that he can move his birds, no matter what. The growth of the processing in-

dustry on the Shore is another great stabilizer. The more the Shore produces, the better off we will be."

**THE INTRODUCTION** OF mechanism in chicken growing, the finer quality of the baby chicks, and improvement in housing have helped Scott to produce more and better chickens than ever before. His first birds took from 14 to 15 weeks to mature, now he gets them to market in nine. His labor is less, guesswork on market conditions is gone. It's a manufacturing process now, says Mr. Bennett.

"We're not farmers any longer, we're manufacturers. Every principle of mass production that applies to the factories in Detroit will help us here on our Wisconsin farms."

Mr. Bennett's estimate of an efficient operation is about 100,000 birds capacity. The cost of setting up such a plant? Perhaps \$100,000 at today's prices. Mr. Bennett is now producing about 75,000 birds, and hopes to get up to 100,000 in the future.

**MR. BENNETT HAS** taken the profits from his chicken industry and remodeled his grandmother's old home into one of the most attractive places on the county.

## 100 Youngsters Get Swimming Lessons

About 100 youngsters a day have taken advantage of the free swimming lessons given by the Red Cross instructor at Cherry Beach for the last two summers. On a sandy, roadside section of the beach on the Nanticoke River, not only the rudiments of this essential skill were taught, but also more advanced techniques.

Six classes of certificates were awarded to qualified youngsters. Beginners, intermediate, and advanced swimmers, junior life savers and senior life savers.



Atley Langford and son, Mark. Return Wi

## Professional Shore Guide Comes Home To Native T

For 30 years Atley Langford was a paid captain at Gibson Island, sailing racing yachts, and large pleasure schooners. A native of Sharptown, he must have inherited some of the skill of the nineteenth century ship captains, for on one 3-meter boat he won 17 races out of 19 starts.

Capt. Langford has returned to Sharptown, where he is at present a commercial fisherman with his son Mark. They operate a typical narrow shad canoe, and in the spring, from February on, set

for rock, and shad, by heavy spring rains, but much fresh water down that these brackish water reluctant to swim far. About eight boats were out of Sharptown when the rain is on the home in town, but the supper for some species equal to a fresh out-shad.

Capt. Langford says it is necessary for local game long to an abundant supply of expanded duck hunting, river below Sharptown, nearby, broadens the plenty of opportunity, mixtures of birds. It has been excellent for years. This ducking is a good hunting, and birds, and the rent of the property, but the rest of

## Fine Trucking Service Keeps Sharptown On Main Lines

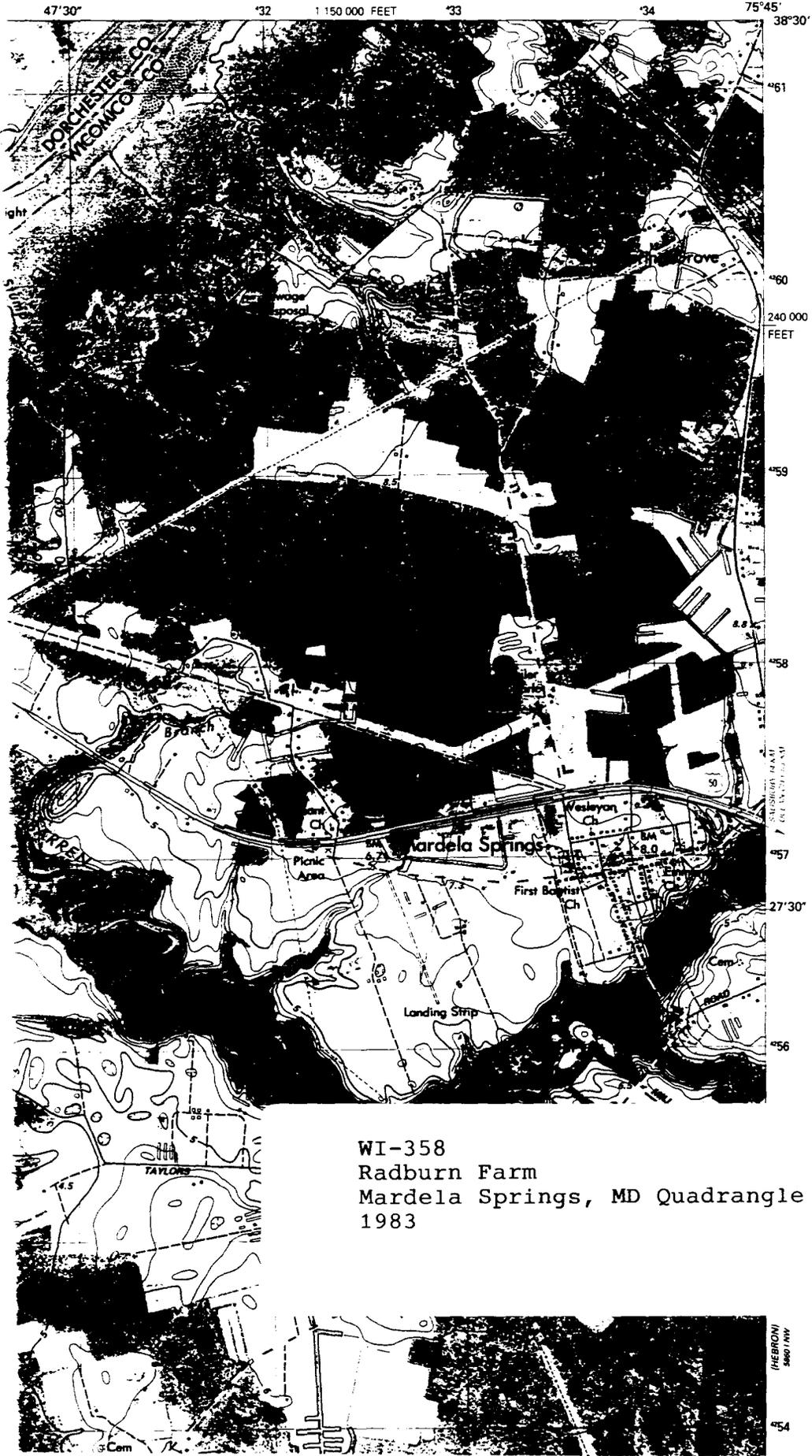
A new stretch of smooth, wide pavements connects the five miles between Sharptown and Route 50. It is only 18 miles of Salisbury, 90 to Baltimore and 100 to Wi-

other overnight delivery from Baltimore. When you travel from New York and Newark. Come, Bennett, and the Candy Co. are available for



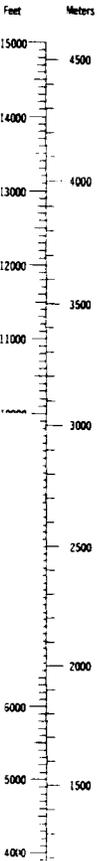
MARDELA SPRINGS QUADRANGLE  
MARYLAND  
7.5 MINUTE SERIES ORTHOPHOTOMAP (TOPOGRAPHIC)

581 2 SW  
(SHARP DOWN)



WI-358  
Radburn Farm  
Mardela Springs, MD Quadrangle  
1983

CONVERSION  
SCALES



(HEBRON)  
8460 1/4 IN