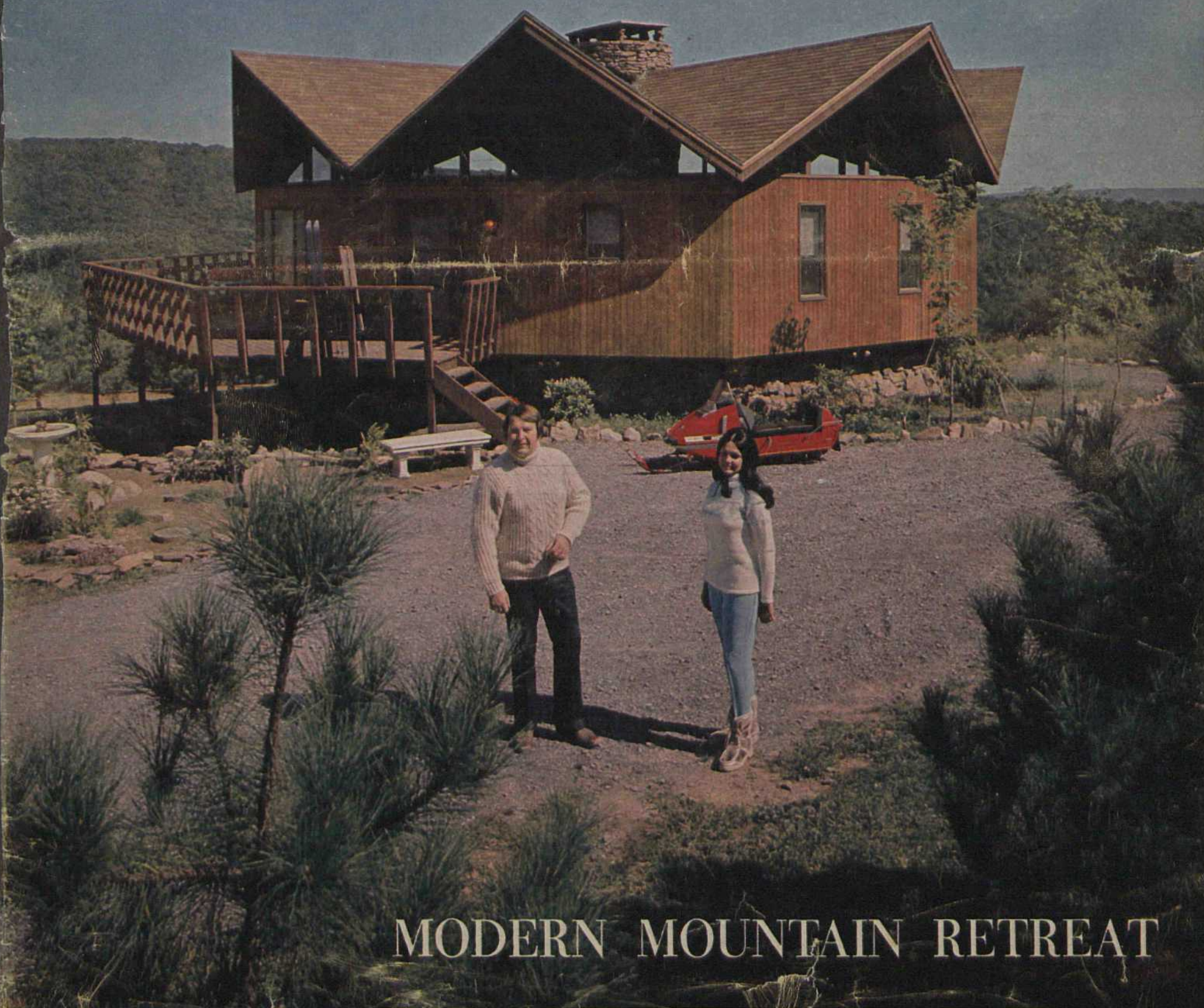


THE SUN MAGAZINE

Sunday

THE SUN BALTIMORE, MD.

NOVEMBER 5, 1972



MODERN MOUNTAIN RETREAT

I Remember ...

Tussock Hopping, Squirrels, Ducks, a Millionaire



Mr. LaFleur

Mr. and Mrs. Elmer LaFleur pause with some of the squirrels they shot during a hunt on the Eastern Shore decades ago. Mrs. LaFleur hunted like her husband—with a double-barrel.



By ELMER LAFLEUR

NOT many days past, my wife and I spent some time with our old friends Armand and Beulah LaPauze in Trappe, in Talbot county on the Eastern Shore. One of the nicest things about our stay was the wandering tours we made around Fishing Bay, the Nanticoke River, the stretches of Hurley's Marsh, which lies between Vienna and Elliott Island.

The familiar sights brought back to life some old and very fine memories. We used to hunt all through that area, shooting in the dry marsh for squirrels, going after ducks in the wet marsh ponds, in a technique we called tussock hopping.

Frequently I took my wife, Marie. She enjoys the outdoors as much as I do. She is the Lady of Fashion in the picture above. That's me with her.

Those heavy costumes we wore were quite practical. They felt good in the evening, when the cold wind came in off the water and hit you like the edge of a knife. We were even glad to have them through the heat of the day, when the mosquitoes attacked. I've never seen such mosquitoes. Some looked big as eagles coming at you. And some were so small and persistent they could crawl through the eyelets in your boots and bite you through two pairs of heavy woolen socks. One item of equipment

not shown here is the netting we often had to wear over our heads for protection.

We took the ladies whenever we could, for squirrel shooting in the dry marshes. We left them home when we went for ducks, because that took us through some pretty rough country.

There was a crowd of us who went often together. Curtis Palmer, my partner in a tire and speedometer repair shop we ran. Dr. Bob Bay, Erasmus H. Kroman, both good friends. Jack Bentley, of the old International League Orioles, who played in alternate games as pitcher and first baseman, and was pretty good in either spot. He must have been. The New York Giants bought him.

In good weather we drove to the Eastern Shore. In bad weather we rode the passenger boats. And Atley Lankford, whom we hunted with, would pick us up at the dock. Atley is still a top-notch guide, even though he has slowed up a little since his 81st birthday.

Atley trapped muskrat in Hurley's Marsh, and most frequently we lived in his trapping camp shack out in the marshes. Nothing fancy, but we slept warmly there, and we turned out some pretty good meals on the little wood-burning stove.

Some shooting we did from duck blinds, but usually we went tussock hopping. Atley would know which of the many marsh ponds the ducks were favoring at the time. Early in the morning, we'd make our way through the

marsh, which was usually soft and soupy, hopping from one tussock to another. Often these hummocks were tufts of marsh grass no bigger than a dinner plate. Quietly, we moved up to this pond and that, hid in the brush, and waited for the ducks to come in.

In those days of the early 1920's, it wasn't unusual to see a square-acre of ducks come winging in at one time. There were pintails, redheads, canvas backs, mallards, blacks and a few geese. Bag limit was 25 ducks, and quite often we were able to shoot our limit.

At the opening of one season, a millionaire presented us with one of the finest days of shooting we ever had, although he didn't know it at the time.

EVERYBODY baited good duck spots in those days. Our crowd chipped in and bought as much corn as we could afford to throw out a few days before the season opened. The two millionaires, who owned big expanses of marsh on both sides of Atley's grounds, brought in shelled corn by the barrel, and really loaded their areas with it. Both men were bringing in guests for opening day.

One millionaire drove out to his grounds the day before to make sure everything was ready. To his horror, he noticed that the trails to many of the duck ponds had to be negotiated in several places in mud that was knee deep.

He couldn't have his guests wading through the muck like that. He had his groundskeeper make a quick trip to a

sawmill for a load of planks. Within a few hours, workmen had spanned all the deep mud spots along the trails with 2-inch wooden planking. Now the guests could walk all the way to any duck pond on a dry trail.

We knew how heavily the millionaire up-wind had baited his ponds. We didn't think many ducks would pass up all his heavily baited spots and move on down to where we were. But then, when the sun came up, that's exactly what they did. The ducks would wing it up-wind from us, then veer away, avoiding the millionaire's acres like poison. Where did the ducks land? All around where we hid. If we hadn't observed the bag limit, I'm sure we could have shot a hundred apiece.

We didn't learn until later in the day that the ducks were being frightened away from the millionaire's marshes by all that freshly sawed, shining white wooden planking he'd layed out. Workmen went out later and covered the planks with mud to camouflage them. Even so, it was two or three days before the ducks got over their fright and began feeding there again.

I'm a little stiffer in the joints than I used to be. I don't know how far I could get into a marsh by tussock hopping. But when I think of the sun coming up over the marsh ponds, hearing the voices of a thousand hungry ducks in that quiet, orange colored part of the new day, I'd like to have another go at it. □

Rehabilitation Center

Continued from Page 15

hearing defects can be alleviated. The hospital's division of biomedical engineering can develop job aids, and is, in fact, working on a gadget to help the paralyzed ticket-taker hold the tickets so he can tear them and return the stubs to the patrons.

Dr. Cohen, looking at the department from the point of view of the hospital, emphasizes the advantages of rehabilitation to general patient care. Getting to stroke, cardiac and surgical patients early in their treatment with physical and occupational therapy prevents some of the problems secondary to the primary ailment, problems like immovable joints, psychological depression and muscle weakness and waste.

In addition, the department is affiliated with several teaching institutions. It provides clinical training for medical students at the University of Maryland and at the Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health, and in cooperation with Montebello State Hospital it provides residency training in physiatry for doctors at the University of Maryland School of Medicine. Students from colleges in Boston, Ithaca, Philadelphia and Baltimore receive clinical training in physical therapy at the Schoeneman center. From the University of Puget Sound, Virginia Commonwealth University and Community College of Baltimore they come for training in occupational therapy. Students of speech and hearing at Loyola and Towson State study at Sinai too. The department also trains nurses specializing in rehabilitation nursing.

The department also holds group exercise sessions for patients suffering from the results of stroke and heart and Parkinson's disease and group sessions for their spouses too, to help them understand the problems and the treatment. In association with Sinai's Department of Community Medicine it offers home care to patients in the immediate area of the hospital. Its social workers try to alleviate some of the disruptions in the family due to the disability and look for social and monetary resources for the patient.

Why then is the department sometimes referred to as "the fake and bake shop" by physicians who do not refer their patients to it?

"Ignorance of what can be done for the disabled patient" is Dr. Cohen's answer. "Physiatry is a relatively young specialty," he says, "and this is a young institution." Some doctors equate the center's work with the kind of treatment provided by self-taught practitioners and charlatans in the past and confuse diathermy, a heat treatment Dr. Cohen calls "a preliminary to therapy," with the actual therapy.

YET Dr. Cohen can point to solid results: Mr. Smolkin's trainees, some of them "individuals who came here because no one else knew what to do with

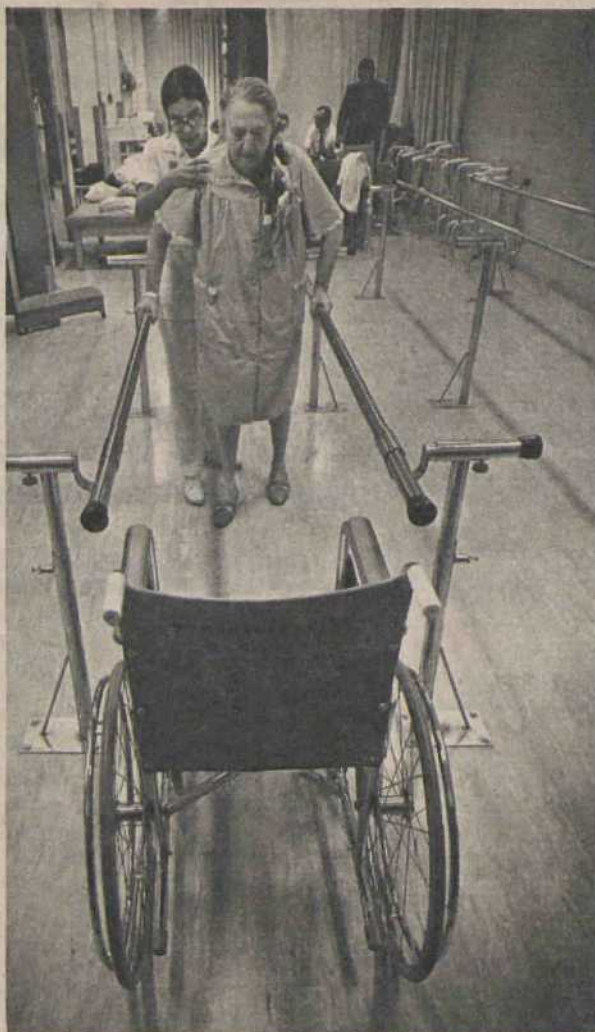
them," working at decent jobs. Miss Halperin's patients, learning to take care of themselves, maintaining their self-respect. Mr. Woolf, walking slowly with a cane and leg brace, but walking just the same, and planning on returning to work in the near future. And a housewife, the author of the following letter, who recently got artificial legs at the Schoeneman center and was trained in their use:

"Dear Dr. Cohen,

"Let me begin by apologizing for the lateness of this note, but I have been on the 'go' since I got my new legs and I've just sat down. . . . I can't begin to tell you how grateful I am to everyone connected with your department. Had it not been for you and your staff I'm sure I wouldn't be doing the things I am. . . .

"Your department is absolutely fantastic. You're all great. Your program for re-education of tasks most people take for granted, such as walking, is a blessing.

"May God bless you and help you continue your wonderful work. Again I thank you for what you have done for me." □



Ruth Goldsmith navigates set of parallel bars with assistance from Martha Lumb.

LANE BRYANT BUDGET FLOOR

special sizes 16½ to 28½

knit pantset,
pretty with lace
999

The tailored pantslook comes to softer, feminine terms with accents of white lace on rayon knit, bonded to acetate. High-collared tunic over pullon pants in blue, red or green.



COME IN! PHONE! OR MAIL THIS HANDY ORDER COUPON TO:

LANE BRYANT

MU. 5-5030 • 330 N. Howard, Baltimore, Md. 21201
Eastpoint • Westview

Please send me the pantsuit pictured:

SIZE _____ Color _____ 2nd Color Choice _____

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____ (please print) PHONE NO. _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____

Charge ☐ Check ☐ Money Order ☐ C.O.D. ☐ 11-5

please add 4% Maryland Sales Tax

AMERICA'S first multimillionaire, an Eastern Shore Marylander, lies today in a lonely and neglected grave.

His name was Richard Bennett 3d. He lived in Queen Annes county, which has completely forgotten him. But in the early Eighteenth Century, that name was a household word.

He was Maryland's greatest land baron, its largest ship owner, its most important merchant and financier. He owned more slaves, more cattle, more hogs, more horses, more plantations than any other man. And in an era when tobacco was king, he was by far its biggest grower on the Eastern Shore.

When he died in 1749, the *Maryland Gazette* saluted his many charities in a glowing obituary and said "he was supposed to be the richest man on the continent." Jeremiah Banning of Talbot county later phrased it more poetically. He wrote:

"On the fertile banks of Wye River once dwelt poor Dick o' Wye, the richest man in North America."

Bennett's lengthy will made many families wealthy and provided the basis for some of the great Maryland estates renowned in later days. It was a model of generosity to his slaves, his employees and his debtors. Even so, the will precipitated one of the bitterest legal battles in provincial history.

He was also a man with the courage of his convictions, a practicing Roman Catholic in a period when Maryland was making a mockery of its boasted religious toleration by persecuting Catholics both legally and socially. While many were denying their faith and even leaving the Roman church for fear of losing their estates, he openly protested anti-Catholic laws and gave financial and moral support to Catholic priests, who then were forbidden even to say mass in public.

All in all, he was a man of whom the young colony of Maryland, which had not too many heroes, could well be proud.

Yet the state in whose history he looms so large has done nothing to honor his memory. No schools, parks or buildings are dedicated to his name. No plaques commemorate him. No roadside marker points out the spot in Queen Annes county where he lived and died. Even the spit of land called Bennett's Point, his sole geographical memorial, is usually attributed to his grandfather, who never lived there.

His house on Bennett's Point, which reportedly stood until the 1930's, has disappeared. And his tombstone, while it still exists, until recently could be reached only by fighting one's way through poison ivy and grunting pigs.

Why?

Perhaps the answer lies in the all-but-forgotten life story of this most uncommon man.

Richard Bennett 3d was born September 16, 1667. His father, also named Richard, had died four months before—drowned in the Wye River while duck hunting, according to tradition. The boy thus inherited his father's estate at the

moment of his birth, with his mother, who had been Henrietta Maria Neale, as trustee.

The estate was not a large one. It consisted of some land, houses, a few slaves, three indentured servants and assorted livestock including "ten cows and a bull." He also inherited property from his grandfather, Richard Bennett, who had been Oliver Cromwell's hatchet man both in Virginia and Maryland during the violent struggles of the 1650's between roundheads and cavaliers.

Young Richard and his sister Susanna, a year older, were not fatherless for long. Within two years Henrietta Maria Neale Bennett was married again, this time to Philemon Lloyd of the famous Wye House Lloyds.

As mistress of Wye House, Madam Lloyd (the "Madam" was a title of high respect, roughly equivalent to "Lady" in England) became the most glamorous woman of her day. Her beauty, strength of will and character are legendary. So many descendants were named for her that Hulbert Footner, in his "Rivers of the Eastern Shore," called her "the great ancestress of the Eastern Shore."

She quickly showed her new husband a sample of her stubborn will. Although he was a staunch Protestant, she remained a Roman Catholic and brought her two Bennett children up as Catholics. Philemon, equally stubborn, insisted that the eight children she bore him be raised as Protestants. He even wrote a stern injunction to that effect in his will, indicating he didn't quite trust the lovely and strong-minded Henrietta.

She also defied Eastern Shore public opinion by her open and ardent espousal of Roman Catholic causes at a time when Catholicism was linked to treason against England and Catholics were a tiny minority (there were only about 80 in all of Talbot county as late as 1710). After Philemon Lloyd's death, Wye House itself was raided in 1689 by a band of armed men led by Richard Sweatnam, a local carpenter, who seized its arms and ammunition on the pretext that Madam Lloyd might use the weapons to arm the Indians in a pro-French uprising. Henrietta Maria coolly faced the raiders down, took Sweatnam to court and got a return of the arms and an apology.

HER religion hardly affected her social standing. Her background, wealth and beauty dazzled the rustic ladies of Talbot county society. Not only was she the daughter of one of Lord Baltimore's chief lieutenants in Maryland, but her mother was said to have been a lady-in-waiting to King Charles I's queen, Henrietta Maria, for whom the colony itself as well as Madam Lloyd was named. For proof, she had her famous mourning ring which, according to tradition, had been given to her mother by Queen Henrietta Maria after Charles I was beheaded by order of Oliver Cromwell. (The ring is now at the Maryland Historical Society in Baltimore.)

All this was heady stuff to Talbot county belles who had never journeyed farther from home than St. Marys or the raw new capital village of Ann Arundel town; and the fact that both of Henrietta Maria's husbands were the sons of militant Cromwell supporters

only served to make her a more romantic figure.

So nobody snubbed her when she continued to attend mass even after the establishment of the Anglican Church in the wake of the Protestant Revolution of 1688 in England. She did more than that: She supported the activities of "Popish" priests with gifts of cash and land, and is said to have financed the building of the first Catholic chapel in Talbot county, at the now-vanished town of Doncaster near Wye House.

As one historian put it, "she threw over the Roman Catholic priests the protection of her long social standing in Maryland. . . . No Archbishop . . . could have been more of a stay and prop to American Catholicism than this estimable woman."

Such was the environment in which her oldest son, Richard Bennett, grew to manhood—stepson of a strong-willed and politically powerful Protestant, son

studied at a Jesuit school in Paris. No known portrait exists, nor letters or diaries telling of his private affairs. One source says that he was married twice, but this is not confirmed elsewhere. The wife who was buried beside him, Elizabeth (Rousby) Bennett, was many years his junior. They had no children, or at least none who survived to adulthood.

Of his business affairs, however, the records have a great deal to say. Beginning about 1700, Bennett collected land and estates with a passion which seems almost neurotic. Between then and his death in 1749, his name appeared literally hundreds of times in the land records of Talbot, Queen Annes, Dorchester and Kent counties, mostly as buyer or mortgagor, and quite often as forecloser on the plantation of a less fortunate neighbor.

At the same time, Bennett was building a business empire unlike anything Maryland had seen before. He was one

OZYMANDIAS BESIDE THE CHESAPEAKE

Richard Bennett was at one time the richest man on the continent, and now there's only a gravestone

Story by DICKSON PRESTON

Illustration by JOSEPH C. OVERSTREET

of an equally strong-willed and equally powerful Roman Catholic. From his earliest years he was exposed to the casual arrogance of an aristocracy which ruled Maryland by right of birth; and yet, because of his religion, he was not quite a part of it.

It may have been his mother's death in 1697 which spurred him into his lifelong pursuit of wealth—or was it a search for security? At any rate, just about that time his name began appearing in the records as a buyer of land all over the Eastern Shore.

Bennett was then 30 years old. We know little about his personal life before that, and not much afterward. No record of his schooling has been found, although there are hints he may have

of the few in Maryland who operated their own stores—more like today's wholesale houses—which imported finished goods direct from England and traded them to the provincial planters for tobacco and other raw materials. Most of these were operated by factors, like Oxford's Robert Morris, who were mere managers for England's great commercial trading houses. But Bennett was his own master, and profited accordingly.

Bennett also built his own fleet of ships for use in English, West Indies and coastal trading. Again, this was unusual. Of the hundreds of vessels which transported Maryland tobacco to England and brought back almost everything the colonists used from shoes to carriages, only a few were owned by Marylanders.



This is an excerpt from "Wye Oak: The History of a Great Tree," a book to be published by Tidewater Publishers, Cambridge, Md., this fall.

Richard Bennett, alone or in partnership, was the chief shipowner on the Chesapeake.

What motivated him is, from this distance, difficult to understand. He was already rich by the standards of his time. He could have enjoyed the pleasant if somewhat crude life of a country gentleman, spending his days at fox hunting and horse racing, his nights at drinking and cards. Many an Eighteenth Century planter did so.

But some internal seed seemed to drive him to collect more and more land, more and more money, more and more economic power. In this single-mindedness he was like a Twentieth Century business tycoon. Perhaps he was the first of the breed.

His half-brother's example may have influenced him. By 1697 young Edward Lloyd 2d was already launched on a political career which was to make him county commissioner, justice of the peace,

pending, plunged from 3 cents to a penny a pound. Many went bankrupt; others were anxious to sell out and move on to Pennsylvania and North Carolina, where prospects looked brighter.

Into this gloomy climate stepped Richard Bennett, moneybags in hand. He was buying when almost everyone else was selling—a good way to get rich, if you have the capital to hold on for the long term.

So great was his acquisitiveness that he did not particularly care what methods he had to use. He bought much land for tobacco, the common currency of the time; but if that was not acceptable, he could pay in pounds sterling, as few other buyers could. He was a good man to approach for a loan, having plenty of cash on hand; but if the loan was not repaid promptly, he would foreclose without mercy and take the borrower's home. Some land he picked up for nothing because its owner had neglected to

term "Sweatnam's Mill" in the legislative act creating Queen Annes county in 1706.

But Bennett, through complicated legal maneuvering, proved in court that neither Barrowcliff nor the Sweatnams had ever held a valid title to the mill. Instead, the land on which it stood was part of a tract called Wilton—and Wilton, as you might expect, had just been bought by Richard Bennett. So William Sweatnam found himself a mere tenant in the mill which even the Maryland Assembly thought he owned.

When he acquired Wilton and the Wye Mill, it might be added, Bennett also took possession of a good-sized oak tree a few hundred yards down the road from the mill. It was a white oak, perhaps 165 years old, with a peculiarly broad and handsome crown. People said it had been there since the road was only an Indian trail.

Richard Bennett may never have paid it any attention, except perhaps to be grateful for its shade on a July afternoon, but he was the owner of the Wye Oak for the next 44 years. Certainly he would have been astounded to be told that two and a half centuries later, the tree would be world-famous—and he would be forgotten.

The Wye Mill affair, which took place in 1705, shows Mr. Bennett at his most ruthless. But he was not always the hard-headed businessman. For instance, there was the celebrated drinking bout at York Courthouse, in which he upheld the honor of Roman Catholic toppers in a two-day elbow-bending contest with the Rev. John Lillingston, a Protestant Episcopal clergyman.

These two, with ten others, dropped in on York one day in 1692 with the intention of showing their disrespect for the current government of the province of Maryland by holding a mock convention during a session of the court. It was exactly like a modern hippie protest—even to the long hair of the participants.

York was at that time Talbot's county seat. Aside from a brand-new courthouse, it had little else, and the court building doubled as a tavern so the learned justices would not be without refreshment while they expounded the law.

THE protest group took a room on the upper floor of the courthouse-hostelry. After several drinks, according to later testimony, they got bored with just sitting around, and marched downstairs to interrupt a session of the court with loud cries and rude gestures. They were thrown out bodily.

Many drinks later, they marched downstairs again. When they found that the justices had retired, they got their horses, rode them into the courtroom and tied at least one to the rail of the judge's bench. Then they went outside and playfully placed members of their own group into the pillory and stocks kept nearby for punishment of wrongdoers. They fell to fighting among themselves. There was conflicting testimony as to whether the Rev. Mr. Lillingston was involved in the melee.

Next day they decided to have a picnic. They ordered large quantities of food and drink brought out to a spot on the south bank of Skipton Creek, where York

was located, and according to the evidence given by William Finney, later Talbot county sheriff, "there they drank that day at the point till they were so drunk that they fell together by the Ears and Michael Earl flung Joseph Greene into the water."

On the evidence of tavern keeper John Salter, who identified both Mr. Lillingston and Bennett as being among the roisterers, they eventually were arrested and taken to St. Marys for trial. There Mr. Lillingston and perhaps others were found guilty, but finally all were freed as a gesture of clemency "on account of His Majesty's happy success and late victory against the French," with whom the British as usual were at war.

Mr. Bennett later was in the forefront of a more serious protest, this one against the anti-Catholic laws which the General Assembly voted in the early 1700's.

IN 1706, he was one of four Catholic leaders who appeared before the Assembly to beg for delay of a new law threatening Catholic priests with jail if they performed mass or attempted to persuade any person to "embrace and be reconciled to the Church of Rome." The Governor's Council, led by his half-brother, Edward Lloyd, turned down the plea.

Queen Anne later modified the law by executive order, reportedly because she feared the Catholics might move away from Maryland and take their portable wealth with them. But in the colony itself the religious climate grew worse instead of better.

In 1718 Marylanders were denied the vote unless they took an oath declaring, among other things, that "I abhor, detest and abjure, as impious and heretical, that Damnable Doctrine and Position, that Princes may be excommunicated (or that any foreign) . . . Prelate . . . hath or ought to have any . . . authority, Ecclesiastical or Spiritual, within the Kingdom of Great Britain or any of the Dominions thereto belonging."

This was too much for any Roman Catholic to swear to. Mr. Bennett and his friends, including Charles Carroll, began seriously to look for a more friendly place to live. Mr. Carroll, on a visit to Paris, applied to the French King for a grant of land in French America on the Arkansas River. Apparently he asked for just about the entire present-day state of Arkansas.

"The extent of the tract startled the Minister when Mr. Carroll pointed it out on the map," reported J. Thomas Scharf in his 1879 "History of Maryland." "He considered it too vast to be given to a subject; and Mr. Carroll was obliged to return without having gained the concession."

So Richard Bennett was still a resident of Maryland when in September 1749, he lay upon his deathbed in a bedroom of the estate inelegantly named Morgan's Neck in Queen Annes county. He was 82 years old and had been sinking fast since breaking his hip in a fall from a horse a few months earlier. Clearly it was time to think of giving away the fortune he had spent a lifetime accumulating.

But who would be his heir? All Mary-
Continued on Page 22



provincial assemblyman, president of the Governor's Council and, for five years, de facto governor of Maryland.

AS a Roman Catholic, Bennett could not hope for such a political career. Even the Calverts were barred from Maryland after 1689 until they agreed, in 1715, to raise the infant Lord Baltimore as a Protestant. But despite the harsh anti-Catholic laws, nothing prevented him from using his energy and ambition to build a fortune. And so he did.

He came upon the scene at a perfect time for a man with money and the yen to buy. The early Eighteenth Century was a time of depression and disillusion for Maryland's planters. The price of tobacco, on which the economy de-

pendent, plunged from 3 cents to a penny a pound. Many went bankrupt; others were anxious to sell out and move on to Pennsylvania and North Carolina, where prospects looked brighter.

One such example is the way in which he acquired the Wye Mill, which had been built at the head of the East Wye River prior to 1672 (and which still is operating today).

The mill was operated by William Sweatnam, son of the same Richard Sweatnam who had treated Bennett's mother so rudely in the arms raid of 1689. Richard Sweatnam had purchased it—or thought he purchased it—from Edward Barrowcliff, and had left it to his wife and son, William, on his death in 1697. So widespread was the belief that the Sweatnams owned it that it was

Oscar
CAPLAN
and Sons



*There is joy in giving
There is pride in owning
the world's finest watch*

PATEK PHILIPPE

Completely hand finished with every part of "Observatory" quality, the watch you purchase took eight months to make. There are 20 jewels in its precision movement, and even the winding crown, spring bars and strap buckle are of 18 K gold.

*shown, 18 K gold ladies' watch
with blue colored gold dial,
surrounded by gem diamonds,
\$3,100*

OSCAR CAPLAN AND SONS

Jewelers at the Bench Since 1905

BALTIMORE
231 N. HOWARD ST.
685-8800

TOWSON
616 YORK ROAD
823-5995

EASTON, MD.
TIDEWATER INN
822-1553

CREATORS OF ORIGINAL JEWELRY

ATTEND THE WATERFOWL FESTIVAL

Friday, Saturday, Sunday
Nov. 10, 11, 12
EASTON, MARYLAND

Sponsored By The Waterfowl Festival Committee
of Talbot County in conjunction with Ducks
Unlimited.

Tie Tack
or Charm



Official
Medallion

We are proud to have been selected to make this
official medallion for the festival. It may be pur-
chased at the festival or ordered from us by mail

now. In Sterling silver, \$5
In 14K. Gold, \$25.

Please specify Tack or Charm and
Include 75 Handling Charge.

OSCAR CAPLAN AND SONS

Jewelers at the Bench Since 1905

BALTIMORE
231 N. HOWARD ST.
685-8800

TOWSON
616 YORK ROAD
823-5995

EASTON, MD.
TIDEWATER INN
822-1553

CREATORS OF ORIGINAL JEWELRY

America's First Tycoon

Continued from Page 21

land was atwitter over that. Bennett had no children; his wife had died before him; and of his close relatives, half were Catholics and the other half Protestant supporters of the hateful anti-Papist laws.

To heighten the suspense, Bennett had ordered his old will destroyed and a new one prepared for his signature. It was a long and complicated document, running to 16 handwritten pages, naming 275 actual or potential beneficiaries, disposing of an estate estimated as high as 200,000 pounds sterling — the equivalent of millions of dollars by today's standards.

Yet there were some who whispered that the old man did not know what was in it. The name of the chief beneficiary had been changed without his knowledge, these gossips said.

The half dozen witnesses who gathered at his bedside on September 25 thus had a vexatious question to decide. Had his mind gone? Or was he still rational enough to sign his will and know what he was doing? More than a few family fortunes hinged on their decision.

The evidence which met their eyes was disconcerting. Bennett's cheeks were sunken, his breathing stertorous, his sight and hearing almost gone. According to eyewitness testimony, he did not recognize his old friend, Richard Tilghman. When the new will and a pen were handed to him, "bystanders were obliged to repeat it to him that it was his last will

he had in his hand. . . . If not directed (he) would have signed his name on the written part of the will."

However, all witnesses agreed that he did sign, and that he did publish (declare aloud) that the document was his last will and testament.

Still the key question remained: Had he known what was in the testament he signed? Had he, a Roman Catholic, been aware that the will named as his chief heir not any of his Catholic blood kin, but the outspokenly anti-Papist son of his half-brother, Edward Lloyd?

Nine days after his death on October 11, the will was presented for proving before Daniel Dulaney, commissary of wills in Annapolis. This usually was a routine procedure—but not this time.

FOUR of the witnesses swore "on the Holy Evangelists of Almighty God" that they believed Bennett "had been of sound and disposing mind and memory" when he signed his name. But a fifth witness, James Tuite, refused. Mr. Tuite said he thought the testator "was not in his senses" at the time.

Later the Rev. Richard Archbold, a Jesuit priest who had administered the last rites to Bennett, filed a deposition generally supporting Tuite.

In spite of these two witnesses, Commissary Dulaney (whose own step-children were major beneficiaries under the disputed document)

certified the will and named Edward Lloyd its executor.

This brought an immediate cry of foul from the Catholic descendants of Bennett's sister Susanna, whose second husband had been Col. Henry Lowe, a nephew of Lord Baltimore. Within days five of them filed a formal "petition of libel" against Lloyd, challenging the validity of the will. All had been granted legacies, but they claimed Mr. Bennett's signature had been obtained by deceit or "violence." The entire will should be thrown out, their petition said, making them as the nearest blood relatives the sole heirs.

In effect, they wanted to rewrite the economy of the Province of Maryland.

The case dragged on in the courts, which then were not much faster than they are now. After about a year, Governor Ogle named a commission to hear evidence. Much later, after a great deal of testimony, the commission announced its decision—which was to approve the will exactly as it originally had been.

So the greatest exchange of property in Maryland history up to its time finally took place. Nearly 25,000 acres of land went to scores of beneficiaries (Bennett had given away another 3,000 acres a few days before his death), plus thousands of pounds sterling in cash bequests and additional thousands in debts forgiven. Var-

Continued on Page 24

After struggling down a back road and through a field of grunting pigs, the author uncovered this lonely gravestone, all that remains of Richard Bennett's many millions.





From *Kellogg's*...a new-fangled way to make old-fashioned stuffing.

Now all you need to make great-tasting stuffing is a pan; water; butter or margarine; fifteen minutes; and Stuf™ Stuffing Mix (a delectable combination of seasonings, spices and toasted herb-flavored croutons).

And since now you don't need a bird to make it, no law says you only serve stuffing with poultry. So we made two kinds of Stuf

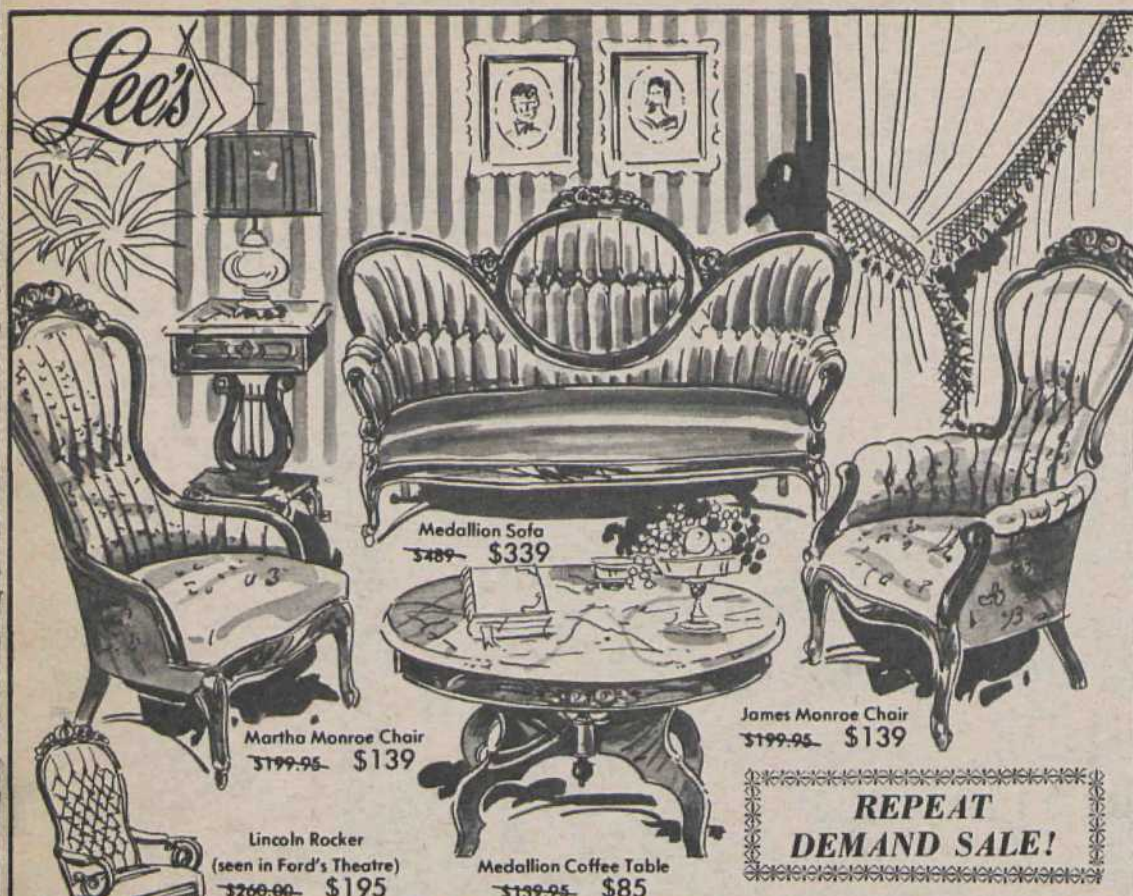
Stuffing Mix. One is specially seasoned to serve with chicken. And one is specially seasoned to serve with meat. Imagine! Pork chops 'n "Stuf". Meat loaf 'n "Stuf". Even scrambled eggs 'n "Stuf".

Come to think of it, wouldn't stuffing taste good with whatever you're cooking up next?

Cut along dotted line



STORE COUPON		
7c	<p>The 15 minute stuffing mix you make in a pan</p> <p>Chicken</p>	<p>The 15 minute stuffing mix you make in a pan</p> <p>Meat</p>
<p>SAVE 7c</p> <p>with this coupon on your next purchase of Kellogg's Stuf™ Stuffing Mix (either flavor).</p> <p><small>MR. GROCER: We will redeem this coupon plus 3¢ for handling when terms of this offer have been complied with by you and the consumer. For payment, mail coupons to: DEPT. K, P.O. BOX 1172, CLINTON, IOWA 52732. Coupon will be honored only if submitted by a retailer of our merchandise or a clearinghouse approved by us and acting for, and at the risk of, such a retailer. Invoices proving purchase of sufficient stock to cover coupons presented for redemption must be shown upon request. Any sales tax must be paid by the consumer. Only one coupon redemption per package. Offer good only in the United States and void where prohibited, licensed, taxed, or restricted by law. Coupon subject to confiscation when terms of offer have not been complied with. Cash value: 1/20 of 1¢.</small></p> <p>KELLOGG SALES COMPANY</p>		
<p>(OFFER LIMITED TO ONE COUPON PER PACKAGE PURCHASED)</p> <p>S 2 10 74 07</p>		



Medallion Sofa
\$489- \$339

Martha Monroe Chair
\$199-95- \$139

James Monroe Chair
\$199-95- \$139

Lincoln Rocker
(seen in Ford's Theatre)
\$260-00- \$195

Medallion Coffee Table
\$199-95- \$85

**REPEAT
DEMAND SALE!**

SALE... "Victorian Pieces"

- Mahogany frames • Hand Carved
- Imported Carrara Marble Tops
- Velvets • Damasks • Tapestries

25% OFF



Cathy Clark Love Seat
\$359-95- \$259.95



Emily Marshall Chair
\$176-00- \$125



George Marshall Chair
\$190-00- \$139



Laurie House Rocker
\$119-95- \$69.95



Marble Top Wall Table
\$174-00- \$133



Ann Todd Chair
\$89-00- \$69



Katherine Smith Chair
\$210-00- \$154



Plain Rim Cigarette Table
14" diameter 18" high
\$39-95- \$25



Paula Stevens Table
28x46x17 1/2"
\$275-00- \$185



Ann Bradstreet
Coffee Table
18 1/2 x 36" diameter
\$245-00- \$182.50



James Smith Chair
\$220-00- \$165



Carolyn Russell Chair
\$100-00- \$69.95



Phillip Moore Table
22x33 1/2 x 28"
\$169-95- \$118



Martha Davis Plant Stand
top 14" diameter
and 36" high
\$59-95- \$38

Shop Monday & Thursday nites till 9 P.M. Other days till 6 P.M.

A NICE PLACE TO VISIT

Lees of Howard Street

FREE PURCHASER PARKING NEXT DOOR ★ 10 N. HOWARD STREET

Richard Bennett

Continued from Page 22

ious business enterprises, including Bennett's profitable slave trade, were disposed of. Most of his plantation overseers were given homes for life. Counting the slaves, who received new clothes and shoes, a thousand or more people benefitted.

But the man who benefitted most of all was the man about whom the nasty rumors had been circulated. Edward Lloyd 3d, who already had been rich, was immeasurably richer.

READING the will today (a copy is on file at the Hall of Records in Annapolis), it is impossible to believe that it was a complete fraud. Nearly every clause has the unmistakable stamp of Richard Bennett's personality—the individual and rather touching last wishes of a lonely old man.

The central question remains: Why did Richard Bennett, after a lifetime of upholding his Roman Catholic faith, reverse himself on his deathbed and make Edward Lloyd, who disliked and distrusted Catholics, his primary heir?

The answer seems to lie in the fact that Lloyd, like Bennett himself, was a tough and practical businessman. The two had been partners in several enterprises. Of the five Catholic contestants, on the other hand, four were mere females, and none had been close to Bennett in his lifetime. When it came to disposing of so vast and complicated an empire, Richard Bennett was what he had always been—a businessman first and a religious partisan afterward.

In the summer of 1972, I went looking for Richard Bennett's grave. Like the man himself, it seemed to me to have been curiously forgotten—almost as if a deliberate curtain of silence had been drawn. Guide books had nothing about it, and no one I talked to in the Queen Annes Historical Society had more than a vague idea where it might be.

I did find an 1886 article from the Baltimore American which described the grave at that time as lying in a patch of briars and weeds near the road at the southern tip of Bennett's Point. With that for guidance, my wife and I set off down the Bennett's Point road.

As we drove south, it grew steadily narrower and bumpier, until finally it showed signs of giving out alto-

gether. I had asked about old tombstones at several farmhouses along the way with no result, but when I saw a young man washing a car in his side yard, I decided to give it one more try.

"I'm doing some historical research," I told him. "Any old gravestones around here?"

"Yep," he said "Right over there, behind the white fence."

We walked in the direction he had indicated. The "white fence" turned out to be of weathered boards, with bits of once-white paint clinging to them. It was enclosed in a larger field, and as I climbed the fence to this one, an old sow got to her feet, grunting morosely. Several smaller pigs eyed me warily.

Inside the fence was a rectangular plot, perhaps 25 feet square, completely overgrown with poison ivy, honeysuckle, Virginia creeper and small trees. I could see the corner of a stone marker peeping out from under the vines. So in I went, and with a stick began prying at the poison ivy in an effort to read the name on the marker.

It was, I soon discovered, "Dorothy Carroll." This was a letdown, since I then knew of no Dorothy Carroll who might have been buried beside Richard Bennett. Had I found the wrong cemetery?

But a second stone brought my hopes back. This bore the name "Elizabeth"—and Richard Bennett's wife had been Elizabeth Rousby. Abandoning the stick, I began tearing with my hands at the poison ivy which formed a thick mat over the third gravestone.

IN a few minutes, I could see what appeared to be a coat of arms. Then, beneath that, words: "Here lieth the body of . . ." I gave a big yank at the ivy, and suddenly the name was visible:

RICHARD BENNETT, ESQ.

The grave of Maryland's first multimillionaire had been uncovered at last—bedecked with poison ivy and surrounded by a pig sty.

This fall the pigs are gone and the vines are being trimmed away. A developer has bought Bennett's Point and is converting it into deluxe 5-acre home sites, with a yacht basin and private guard service.

Richard Bennett, who in his lifetime stood on the lonely eminence of wealth, may yet find peace in the company of his Twentieth Century peers. □