

with Alice Scott teaching.

School Board minutes of Jan. 11, 1927, note: "Colored people were heard concerning the erection of a new colored school at Purcellville. Action was postponed." A twenty-year postponement, as the eight-room George Washington Carver School wasn't built until 1947, on seven acres bought for \$2,000 from Joe Cook's heirs in 1945. In the fall of 1967, black and white children went to school together at Emerick Elementary.

PURCELLVILLE's first church opened in 1893. Before, Baptists attended Ketocin, Methodists went to Harmony, Presbyterians to Waterford, and the two Catholics took the train to Leesburg. Blacks attended Mt. Olivet Baptist or Grace Methodist, both at Lincoln. By 1880, Eliza Benedum, Josephine Janney, and Linda Pancoast taught Sunday School at a platform set up in Dillon's Woods, and by 1885, this school had been moved to an old frame house on the pike. On occasion, between 1884 and 1893, a Friends or Presbyterian service was held at the Purcellville School.

Joseph Dillon donated a quarter acre "for the purpose of erecting thereon a house of worship for the Presbyterian Congregation" about 1892, and a cornerstone bearing that date was laid on Oct. 8. Terry Hirst remembers the ceremony: "All I saw were parasols." By Jan., 1895, The Rev. E. L. Wilson held Presbyterian services the first and third Sundays, with other denominations, chiefly Methodists, filling in. The church was called the 'Free Church'—open to all denominations. By Oct., 1902, The Rev. J. M. Clymer held Presbyterian services the first and third Sundays, with The Rev. E. Sydenstricker holding Methodist services on the second and fourth Sundays.

The Rev. F. A. Strother, newly appointed pastor to the Hamilton Circuit in April, 1903, remarked: "We are especially impressed with the situation at Purcellville . . . the spiritual needs of that community are distressing and great to an unusual degree." That July 2 the Purcellville Methodists organized, and on Oct. 27 bought the Free Church from the Dillon heirs and Presbyterian trustees for \$625. In the fall of 1924, evangelist E. J. Bulgin led a revival at the Bush Meeting Tabernacle, and pastor F. T. Ridgeway noted: "About 550 who were saved or reclaimed during this meeting . . . 103 . . . have united with our church."

Mary E. and Joseph Dalton Dillon had donated land for a new building on July 29, 1919, and on this land in 1925, contractor Clarence Case and stonemason Wilmer Baker began a new church. Its cornerstone, inscribed "Bethany M E Church 1925," was laid Nov. 29, as the "Purcellville quartette sang stanzas from the 'Ceremony of Laying Corner Stones.'" Elizabeth Beall Miller suggested the church be named Bethany—that location beyond the Jordan where John baptized. Its first service was a prayer meeting, held Aug. 21, 1929.

THE REV. S. Roger Tyler founded a "Mission at Purcellville"—its first mention in Sept., 1910—and held monthly services in Hampton's Hall. Land for an Episcopal Church had been donated by Maria B. and Dr. Fenton M. Nichols, Nov. 12, 1908, and in 1911, Arch Simpson built St. Peter's, pitching its roof like a Norwegian stave church to let snow slide off quickly. Mrs. Nichols probably suggested the name—Peter is the apostle of hope. The Rev. Harry B. Lee of Charlottesville celebrated the first service, Nov. 13, 1911, and The Rev. Roberts Coles was the first pastor.

In spring, 1921, ladies of St. Peter's, spearheaded by Louise J. Nichols, decided to honor Loudoun men who had died in the Great War. She sent out eighty-five requests for donations and received eighty-four affirmative replies. For \$550 they brought a bronze bell, and at its dedication, July 16, 1922, The Rev. T. D. Hamari spoke: "I name thee Loudoun in honor and memory of all those who served a great cause." 'New' St. Peter's was built in 1963, its first service held that Dec. 1.

FATHER VAN Ingleman, a Belgian priest who had been beside his brother as he was killed in the trenches, held the first Catholic services at the home of Gertrude and Notley Ball prior to 1920. Once or twice a month, Father Van would buggy in from his Falls Church home. That

"Minutes School Board,"
p. 289.

William T. Smith of Lincoln,
member of the school board
for Mt. Gilead District,
suggested the name.

THE FREE CHURCH
OF 1893

The deed was never recorded,
and the transaction is first
mentioned in LCDB 7X, 479
(1903).

Washingtonian, Oct. 1, 1892.
Ibid., Jan. 5, 1895.

The Free Church was probably
built by either Sam Davis,
John Milton, or Arch Simpson.

Hamilton Enterprise, Oct. 10,
24, 31, 1902.

[Glenn G. Williams], "A Brief
History of Bethany Church."
(From the July 7, 1963,
60th-anniversary observance
program.)

From an unnamed source:
"Dr. Bulgin sure could preach.
He took half the money in
Purcellville with him.

LCDB 9H, 259.

Leesburg Loudoun Times-
Mirror, Dec. 3, 1925.

Bethany: Hebrew for 'house
of unripe dates or figs.' In
the KJV (John 1:28).
Bethany is called Bethabara.

Mother churches were St.
Paul's, Hamilton (1877); and
Mt. Calvary, Round Hill (1892).
LCDB 8H, 258.

Peter: Greek for 'rock.'
Mirror, Nov. 10, 1911.

Ibid., June 1, 1921.

From records of St. Peter's
and Louise Jourdan Kilgour
Nichols, Sept. 26, 1977.

From Constance Lyon, May
5, 1975, Sept. 22, 1977.

LCDB 9L, 448.

Times-Mirror, June 9, 1921.
The announcement was
relegated to the back page.
Bishop O'Connell's name was
spelled "O'Connor."

The Capuchins: Founded
about 1525 and in Virginia
since 1654, were named for
their hoods, called Capuchinis
in Italian.

Lina Grace Baber, The History
of the Purcellville Baptist
Church (1974).

LCDB 9X, 436.

The Mother Church was
organized ca. 1870; built 1880.

LCDB 10N, 128, 129.

From Rachel Rector Jasper,
Sept. 24, 28, Oct. 1, 1977.

LCDB B13, 472.

Herald, Sept. 29, 1949.

The Friends Meetinghouse
(1894-1911) soon became a
Free Church, with varied
Christian services held monthly.

From Billy W. Harper, Virginia
Mary Smith, The Rev. Wallace
P. Odum, Sr., Oct. 20-28, 1977.

From David Verner Voss,
Sept. 23, 1977. The six
families: Elwood & Rosalie
Grow, Kenneth & Francis
Lowrey, Charles & Elizabeth
Lueck, Lester & Anita Walter,
Jim & Betty Wiley, and
Robert Whitton.

THE EMANCIPATION ASSOCIATION, CA. 1898

A situation aggravated by the
1889 election of Gov. Philip
W. McKimney and a return
to ante bellum attitudes.

LCCB-1, 285.

Minutes of the Emancipation
Association of Loudoun,
April 9, 1899-Incomplete
and from Thomas E.
Thompson, Aug. 10, 1977.
John E. Berry, Aug. 11, 1977.
Mimic Rector, Sept. 30, 1977

Oct. 20, the Balls gave land for a church to The Right Rev. D. J. O'Connell, Bishop of Richmond. Clarence Case built the building, its cornerstone engraved "A. D. 1921." Bishop O'Connell dedicated the church that June 5, and took Father Van's suggestion in naming it St. Francis de Sales, for the noted Francois (1567-1622), Bishop of Geneva, whose works of mercy and heroic virtues were extraordinary. Since Sept. 1, 1967, when St. Francis de Sales became a parish, the Capuchin Order has cared for the church.

DR. BULGIN's great fall revival of 1924 led Dr. C. P. Hutchison, Fleet H. James, and Paul P. Popkins to invite other Baptists to a Dec. 21 meeting at Hampton's Hall. There they organized the Purcellville Baptist Church, with services held by The Rev. R. P. Rixey every third Sunday. Pastor Rixey preached his first sermon on Jan. 18, 1925. On April 26, 1926, The Rev. Charles T. Taylor became pastor, and that Aug. 23 the congregation purchased two lots from Hannah H. and George W. Laycock for \$390, with Clarence and Otto Kelly of Bluemont building the church in 1927-1928. On Nov. 25, 1928, The Rev. Taylor led the first service in the new building.

CHRISTIAN services—Baptist mostly—were held intermittently at the Willing Workers' schoolhouse in the twenties and thirties, but the Purcellville black community remained without a church until early 1943, when The Rev. Otis L. Jasper held Methodist services at the Grace Church (Lincoln) parsonage. The church had bought the property—land of Samuel Allen—at auction on May 20, 1933. Eight hundred dollars of the \$1,150 purchase price was secured by a loan from Clarence L. Robey. But as the property was more than two miles from the Lincoln Church, it wasn't used too often. So in 1942, the Washington Annual Conference called The Rev. Jasper to Grace Church to organize an annex church at Purcellville. And at the old parsonage, he held the first services early in 1943. Work began on the present church in spring, 1949, with its date stone reading: "Grace Methodist Church Annex May 29, 1949." The Rev. Jasper held the first service, April 30, 1951.

ON AUG. 15, 1949, the "Pentecostal Church" bought a parcel of land from Elsie and G. B. Wolford, and that month The Rev. C. M. Wood led outdoor evening services on the property. Complaints about "loud" singing and responses prompted Mr. Wood to reply: "If you'll prove by the Word of God that our making noise is wrong, I'll quit. . . ." The Assemblies of God Church formally moved from the Silcott's Springs Orthodox Friends Meetinghouse, where it had met since 1936 under The Rev. William T. Norman, on Easter Sunday, 1954. The Rev. Melford W. Secord held that first service in a newly completed basement. Under pastorship of The Rev. David M. Slye, Sr., the church was completed in 1964.

SIXTY-FOUR years after Presbyterian services ended at the Free Church, that faith, led by The Rev. David Voss, met at 'old' St. Peter's on Oct. 2, 1966, and the following March 19 organized their second Purcellville church. Six families contributed funds to buy St. Peter's from its former congregation. So old St. Peter's became St. Andrew, a name chosen by its congregation for two main reasons: Andrew was Peter's brother and brought Peter to Christ (John 1:41); St. Andrew is a patron saint of Scotland, a cradle of American Presbyterianism.

BEING A SLAVE once was no hardship if you've overcome—the message of the Emancipation Association of Loudoun, organized before 1899. They first gathered at F. G. Welch's farm near Hamilton, and then at various farms and woods between Purcellville and Swampoodle. Throughout the Aug. weekends, their peers would tell how a black could cope with the situations of that day.

On Dec. 10, 1909, they officially incorporated as the "Loudoun County Emancipation Association." Its purposes were listed: "To establish a bond of union among persons of the Negro race, to provide for the celebration of the 22nd day of September as Emancipation day, or the day of Freedom, to cultivate good fellowship, to work for the betterment of the race, educationally, morally, and materially." Among its twelve directors, five were from Purcellville: vice-president Luther Stewart, Jacob Dade, Henry Jackson, John Lewis, and

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Dennis Pierce. In Jan., 1910, they bought ten acres in Purcellville from Eliza R. and Eli W. Birdsall for \$1,250. Sallie Hatcher gave them an old log cabin from her place, and Lewis R. Rector and Lyndon McWashington dismantled it. They brought it to their grounds, and Joe Cook rebuilt it—their first headquarters.

August meetings, held under a tent, now lasted a week. Five hundred often came to the Emancipation Grounds—an excursion from Washington and Baltimore, or a walk from North Fork. Whites would arrange for blacks to use their horse and buggy. Admission, 25 cents; children under twelve, free. And with the proceeds, black congregations would build their parsonages and pay their conferences. In 1914, Arch Simpson built a tabernacle to hold 1,200. Admission remained the same until 1931—then 50 cents. Elder Solomon Lightfoot Micheaux preached; Charlotte Haxall Noland spoke. Bands played and horsemen jostled. Interest waned by 1936, with the last program held in 1970. During its last years, programs were held the Saturday closest to September 22.

MR. JOE JANNEY, the jeweler, lost a leg at First Manassas, and the rest of the war drove a wagon team. In his shop, about 1885, he had four shelves of books on loan—Loudoun County's first public library. For 25 cents a year you could borrow all you want, or else it was 5 cents a book—with a heavy penalty for overtime.

In 1899, Lillian Davis, Virginia B. Hirst, Linda Pancoast, and Mary Virginia Smith organized a collection of 407 listings. Charles Dickens led with eighteen titles, William Thackeray was next with eight. Membership went up to 50 cents a year or 5 cents a book. You could borrow for two weeks, and after that the fine was 2 cents a day. The library was in Pancoast's store until the May 23, 1900, fire, and then, like the post office, it bobbed about.

In June of 1936, Laura A. Cornwell, in honor of her husband Jacob, and Edna H. Ray and Eva. H. Wimer, in honor of their mother, Allie Hampton, gave land for a new library. Public Works Administration funds paid forty-five percent of the \$24,670 cost, the remainder locally donated, largely through Gertrude L. Robey's persistence. Our library, designed by townsman Delos H. Smith and built by L. J. Keller and Sons of Knoxville, Md., was completed Sept. 13, 1937.

IT'S JAN., 1886—nearly a decade after Alexander Graham Bell's invention—and poles and wire of The Virginia and Maryland Telephone Co. link Lincoln and Purcellville to Lovettsville and Berlin. The line was one of the first three in Loudoun: the others, from Clarke's Gap to Waterford, and from Middleburg to The Plains. By May, lines were strung "from Purcellville to Union via Lincoln, Silcott's Springs and Philomont."

EVERYWHERE west of town was Dillon's Woods or the Big Woods. You could hike through to the Blue Ridge and never see daylight. Gypsies—dark, like Southern Europeans—camped along the pike. If you were footloose, they'd pay you to travel with them to take care of their horses. Their wagons and harnesses were brightly colored, usually black and red. Sometimes they'd winter by a farmer's field, by a haystack. By spring there'd be a mudhole of manure, enough to cover a forty-acre field. Gypsy men liked to stay home and gamble; the women went off to beg and tell fortunes. Once a year, at Christmastime, gypsy bands from all over would come together.

John Davis, up at the mill, nicknamed everyone. Places also had nicknames. The low place on the pike, in the center of town, was *Polecat Hollow*. Anything west of the Hillsboro Road was on *The Hill*; the kids called it *Billy Goat Hill*. The black section of town was *The Line*; blacks called it *The Colored Line*—the boundary between the whites. After the post office was put in Taylor's shoeshop—nearly a mile east of the downtown—people began to call that area *Middletown*, 'half way' between Purcellville and Hamilton.

Blacksmith Isaac 'Ike' Ballenger was the town's first vet—they called him a 'horse doctor'—from about 1883 to 1897. He knew everybody's horse, and would buy draft horses and sell them into the cities. A horse wouldn't last more than three years down there. Ike would buy

THE LIBRARY, CA. 1885

Joseph Janney was the son of Asa Janney.

Enterprise, Feb. 17, 1899.
The first names, and many more, provided by Julia Monroe's wonderful memory.

"Catalogue, Purcellville Library, Purcellville Va." [before 1903]

Washingtonian, May 26, 1900.

LCDB 10W, 37, 38.

Minutes Town of Purcellville, Virginia, Feb. 3, Dec. 1, 1936.
Times-Mirror, Aug. 20, 1936; June 17, 1937.

Charles Elbert Compher recalls that when his dad, John W., heard they were going to talk over a wire from Berlin to Purcellville, "he didn't believe it would succeed."

Mirror, Jan. 27; May 27, 1886.
New York City had phone service in 1879.

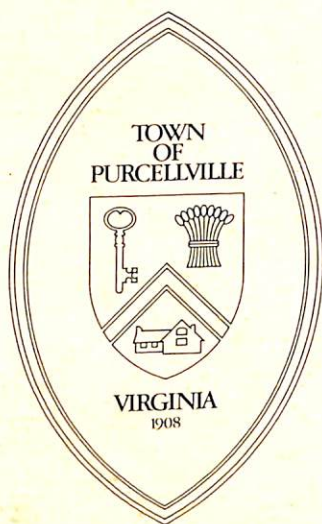
PEOPLE AND PLACES

Nick Hampton's portable sawmill began felling Dillon's Woods in the fall of 1901.

Mainly from Allin Tibbs, June 13, 1977.

The Story of Purcellville

Loudoun County
Virginia



Eugene M. Scheel

Sponsored by the First Virginia Bank - First National
of Purcellville, Virginia, in celebration of its
75th Anniversary, 1902-1977

