

25 June 1986

TO: DICK MURPHY

FROM: DON WILSON *DW*

SUBJECT: BACON RACE (THE NAME)

*Don - I did not
copy as you're
going to update -
plz make copy of
update for place
name file*

Attached is what I have been able to find (with Katherine Conner's help) regarding the history of Bacon Race Church. The name is still a mystery.

I found Samuel Jackson's deed to the Baptist Society, 12 May 1798 (Deed Book Z, page 295) in which he conveyed three acres. The measurements of the boundaries are given, but they include such landmarks as "south side of the road by the meeting house," and "the road to Occoquan Mills." From this deed it appears a church was on or near the site before this date. Jack Ratcliffe (the late local historian) estimated the church at 1797 on his map. Frances Jones' study of local tax records showed the property had been used for a church since 1794, although she judges the present building dates (on architectural clues) to ca. 1880. She says the source of the name Bacon Race is "unknown."

The earliest document I have found that gives the church its present name is John Wood's 1820 map of Prince William County, which calls it Bacon Race Meeting House. As you can see from the attached reports and news stories, there are a lot of discrepancies in the history of the church. Ren Conner says the present church was built in the early 19th century; Jack Ratcliffe says the first church was built about 1845. The article by Betty Calvin says the original church was built in 1782, which is probably too early for this congregation although there was a Baptist Society in the Occoquan area as early as 1776. No one has done a thorough job of sifting all the evidence, including Baptist records at other locations.

I checked several indexes to tax lists and census records, but could find no one living in Prince William County during the late 1700s or early 1800s named Bacon. I conclude that it was probably not named after a family of that surname. My guess is that the name is of some colloquial origin. It might commemorate some event that took place nearby in early days. What could it be? The Oxford English Dictionary says that bacon generally means the back and sides of the pig, cured by salting, drying, etc. It formerly also meant the fresh flesh now called pork. Sometimes it meant simply the carcass of a pig, or rarely, a live pig. "Bacon" idiomatically also meant a rustic, a clown (a bacon-eater). Race also has several meanings including a contest of speed (running or on horseback), and a channel or bed of a stream, especially an artificial channel leading to a mill. I notice on the 1820 map Peak's Mill (from a man surnamed Peak) nearby, lying on a stream now called Crooked Run, as well as as early as 1798 judging from a deed I saw. Whether it has any connection with "Bacon Race" I cannot tell. You can make up your own story about its origin.

Although Nathaniel Bacon (1676) visited various parts of Virginia, he is not known to have been in this area, so it is doubtful that he could be the source. Also, the part of Prince William in which the church is located was not opened to settlement until an Indian treaty was signed in 1722. My best guess at the moment: There may have been a race track near the church (common in colonial days). Could the usual prize have been a bacon?

Wolf Run Shoals

Bull Run

Bacon Race Road
Wolf Run Road

Occoquan Road
(? extension of old Bicker Rd)



Bacon Race Meetinghouse

Davis Ford

Peak's Mill

Dumfries Road
(Cott's Ford Road)

Dart's Ford Rd

from
John Wood's map of Prince William County
(1820)

Hookey Road

Fowell's

Spring Ford

Spring's Road

Occoquan Road

Jackson's Mill
Peun...



Sign on peeling door attempts to keep people out



While the Bacon Race Church building crumbles, families keep un

Staff photos by Kevin Manning

Potomac News 2/23/1977

He's promised to return to old Bacon Race Church

By EILEEN MEAD

Followers of Elder W.M. Smoot of Bacon Race Church have respected his deathbed wish that no one else be allowed to preach in the church because he planned to return someday.

Smoot died in 1938 and is buried in the churchyard. Now many of those who waited for his return are buried by his side, but still the church waits.

The roof now has lost its shingles and the light and rain and snow filter through the large cracks to fall on the rotting family pews, built by each family which belonged to the church.

The clapboards of the building are now weatherbeaten and some are coming loose. To keep out vandals the windows were boarded up years ago. The paint

on the door is peeling and a "No Trespassing" sign attempts to keep visitors out.

The graveyard is kept up by families who have loved ones buried there and bright plastic flowers can be seen from the now well traveled Davis Ford Road.

Elder Smoot was considered to be an educated man who had a printing press in his home in Occoquan's Mt. High area. He was extremely strict, especially in his rules dealing with women in the congregation and his monthly church pamphlets which date at least from 1911 are filled with admonitions to his congregations.

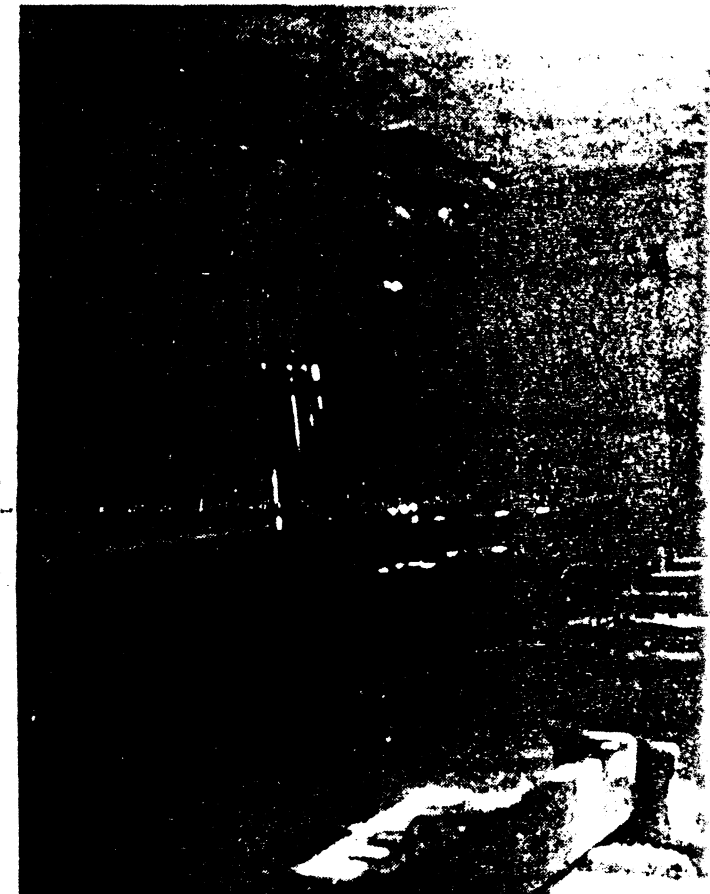
One of his teachings was that no religious services were to be conducted at gravesides, so the caskets were brought into the church for services.

It is said that because of his request that no other pastor preach in the church, his own burial services were held outside, but not by his graveside.

The existing church is the second built on the site. The original Bacon Race Church was built in 1782 and is thought to be one of three churches of the Baptists of America constructed by Andrew Broadus who lived from 1770 to 1848.

Civil War histories refer to the Bacon Race Church which was used as a supply depot of Col. Wade Hampton's brigade and the reserve position of Major S.D. Lee's battalion during the winter of 1861-62. The original church may have been burned.

The Smootite Church was placed in trusteeship in 1963



Family pews, rotting walls and ceiling



REFERENCE



While the Bacon Race Church building crumbles, families keep up the graveyard

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Prince William Public Library
Manassas, Va.

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Historic Bacon Race Church

BY BETTY CALVIN

It sat amid the beautiful hues of autumn - a small, abandoned church surrounded by a cemetery filled with markers with old Prince William County family names. Most of its windows were boarded up; a small but bold no trespassing sign on its front door warned outsiders to stay out.

This was the scene that greeted several of the members of the County Historical Commission recently when

they paid a visit to the site known from pre-Civil war days at Bacon Race. The Commission is gathering together the fragmented story of the history of the site and hopes to be permitted to restore the present building or at least erect an historical marker on the grounds.

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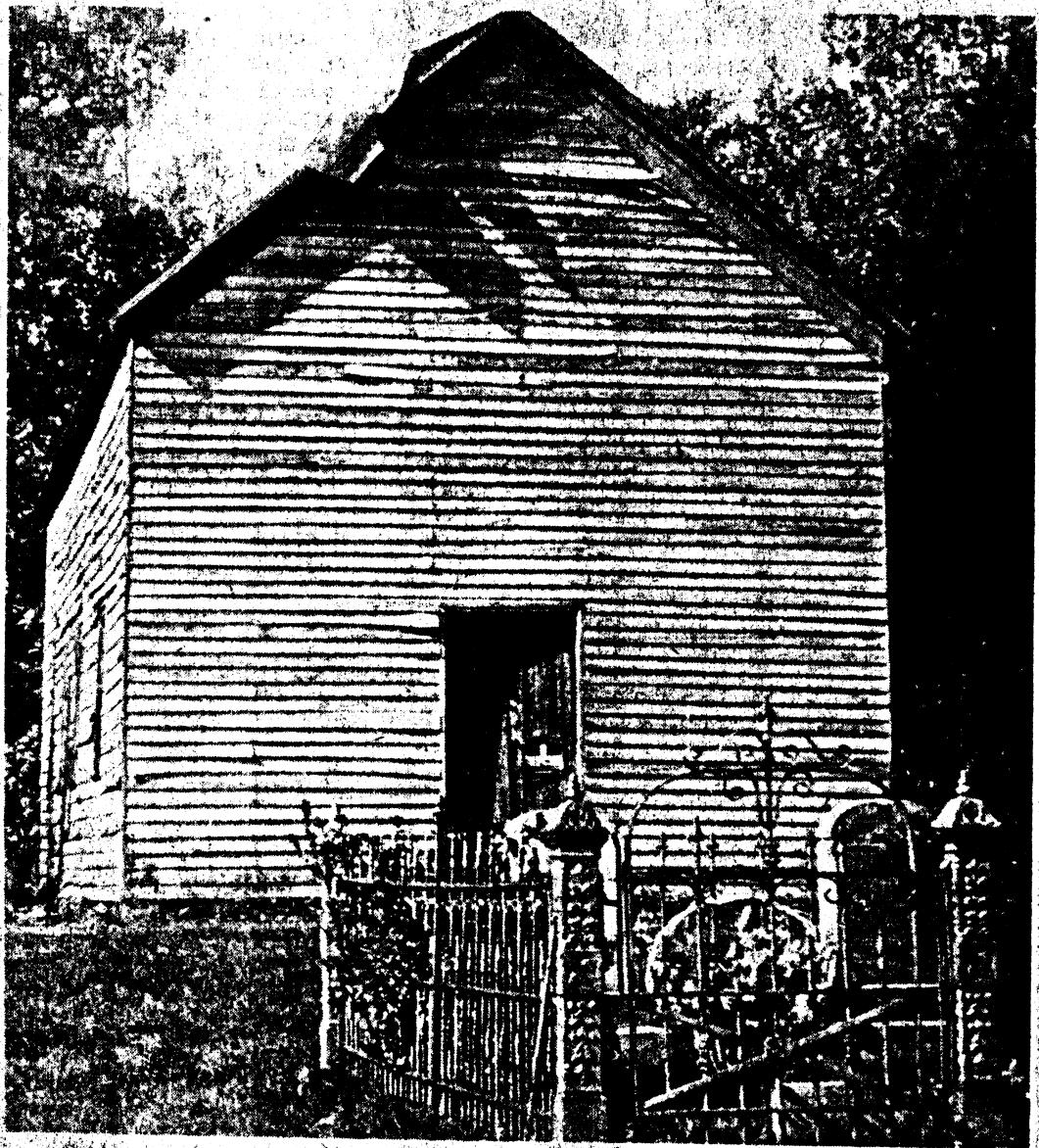
Andrew Broaddus, who lived from 1770 to 1848. Although many of the old timers know the area, located on the Buckhall road near its intersection with Rt. 642, as Oak Grove, civil war histories refer also to a nearby site which at that time was called Maple Valley. Bacon Race was prominent in the Battles of Manassas as a supply depot of Col. Wade Hampton's brigade and the reserve position of Major S.D. Lee's battalion

during the winter of 1861-62. Descendants of recent members of the church are not sure what became of the original building at Bacon Race; it may have been burned. The present church became known as the Smootite Church because it was directed by the Rev. W.M. Smoot, an educated man who lived with his family in the Mt. High area of Occoquan.

The Smootites, who were variously called Independent or Old School Baptist, had two other churches, the Beulah Church in Occoquan and a church in Quantico. These have since been destroyed. The Historical Commission fears

that the late Bacon Race fate is not soon. His important Prince Will last of the by prese artifacts sti family pev

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Pre-Civil War Bacon Race Church and Its Cemetery

REFERENCE

VIRGINIANA FILE JUN 11 1980

VA. P. Wm. Co. History

POTOMAC NEWS Wednesday, November 5, 1969 Page A-5.

PWC - CHURCHES
(BACON RACE)

Church Object Of Restoration

during the winter of 1861-62. Descendants of recent members of the church are not sure what became of the original building at Bacon Race; it may have been burned. The present church became known as the Smootite Church because it was directed by the Rev. W.M. Smoot, an educated man who lived with his family in the Mt. High area of Occoquan.

The Smootites, who were variously called Independent or Old School Baptist, had two other churches, the Beulah Church in Occoquan and a church in Quantico. These have since been destroyed. The Historical Commission fears

that the last remaining one, at Bacon Race, will meet the same fate unless it can be restored soon. Historians feel it is important to the history of Prince William County that the last of the Smootite churches be preserved. Among the artifacts still remaining are the family pews, made by each family in the congregation.

Although not many facts are available about Elder Smoot, children of his parishioners recall that he was very strict, especially in his rules dealing with the women in the congregation. He called the church the Anti-Means Old School Predestinarian or Bible

Baptist Church and his monthly pamphlets which date at least from 1911, are filled with admonitions to his congregation. One of the teachings still recalled is that no religious services were to be conducted at gravesides.

His pamphlets were printed on his own press, which later was found in Occoquan. He also was said to have been a director of the old Bank of Occoquan.

Smoot lived from 1848 to 1938; his wife died several years previously. They are buried in the churchyard. One of the

stories about Smoot relates that, on his deathbed, he asked that no one else be allowed to preach in the church because he planned to return someday. Even his own funeral services had to be preached in the yard—the story goes on—because some of the parishioners wouldn't allow the others to hold the funeral inside the church.

Many years ago several families contributed funds so that the church grounds would be perpetual care. As far as can be determined, these funds have not been utilized. As membership in the church dropped, an issue as to who was responsible for the church was raised. Circuit

Court Judge Paul Brown, now deceased, appointed Allen Barbee and Arthur Carter of Manassas as trustees in 1963. The Historical Commission hopes to work with these men in finding ways to restore the present building or at least erect a marker commemorating the history of the site.

Still living in the area—in addition to Carter and Barbee—are some of the survivors of the church's members: Mrs. Ada Maxfield, her sister, Mrs. Lily Milstead and their brother, Lawrence Fairfax; and the daughters of the late Francis M. Pearson—Mrs. Mable Richardson and Mrs. Mary Still.



BACON RACE MEETING HOUSE, located at the intersection of Rts. 610 and 663 near Hoadly, is the second building on the site, the original having been built about 1845 by the Baptists under Andrew Broaddus. During the war, this site was the supply depot of Colonel Wade Hampton's brigade and the reserve position of Major S. D. Lee's battalion of artillery during the winter of 1861-62.



BETHEL METHODIST CHURCH, located on Rt. 640 at the intersection of Rt. 610 at Hoadly, was built about 1850 on lands donated by Burr Glascock. It was used as a hospital during the war and badly damaged, but it was restored. It is now in danger of being removed for a highway project.

Sacred to the memory of Sarah Ann Trone, relict of Peter Trone, who departed this life May 16th, 1857, in the 89th year of her age.

"Princes, this clay must be your bed
in spite of all your towers,
the tall, the wise, the reverend head
must lie as low as ours"

On County 640, 3.5 m. from State 234 the road forks, County 640 (R) and County 610 (L).

On County 640 (R), 2.1 m., is *BETHEL CHURCH* (L), a simple building standing in a grove of oak trees. The church was built in 1850 on land donated by Burr Glasscock and his wife Emsey, who expressed the wish that here it would be possible "to preach and expound God's word." It is said that the building was erected by the hands of devoted members of the congregation. Here again a church was used as a hospital during the War between the States. At the end of the war it was necessary almost completely to rebuild the structure. Once more the church was raised as a labor of love.

Near the church stands the *GLASSCOCK HOUSE*. Originally built of logs and containing only three rooms, the house has been considerably enlarged, though much of the old woodwork and a few brass locks remain to tell the story of its antiquity. Prior to ownership by the Glasscock family, the house was occupied by Pettits, Milsteads, Tansills, Fosters, and by James and Sophia Robbins. During the War between the States this house served as a Federal headquarters. In the burying ground are the graves of Burr Glasscock (1812-1896), Emsey Glasscock (1816-1885), James Henry Glasscock (1875-1893), Lou L. Glasscock (1855-1914), Susan A. Glasscock (1847-1921), Mary E. Glasscock (1851-1921), Aquilla Asberry Glasscock (1857-1927), M. I. Glasscock (1849-1928), Isabel L. Gulick Glasscock (1849—), Myrtle A. Glasscock (1879-1888), James Henry Glasscock (1873-1893), Ernest L. Glasscock (1877-1891), and John W. Lake (1820-1903).

Near the Glasscocks was one of the several Tansill places in this community. Martha Virginia Gregg (1835-1857) and Isaiah Bland (1876-1893) are buried here, but in the graveyard there is not one Tansill inscription.

From the fork of County 610 and County 640, County 610 leads (L) to *HOADLEY* 2.8 m., where it crosses County 642 and continues northward for about 3 miles to *WOLF RUN SHOALS* on the Occoquan.

Near Hoadley is the *SITE OF BOWLING GREEN*, locally known as the Holland Place. Near the ruins of the house is the burying ground containing tombstones memorializing Henry Holland (1783-1832), Mary F. L. Holland (1809-1897), and Annie E. Lipscomb (1874-1925).

The *SITE OF THE ISAAC MILSTEAD HOME* is also in this neighborhood. Though all trace of the house is gone, the tombstone of Isaac Milstead, who "died January 26th, 1876, aged 98 years," stands lonely guard.

Prince William: The story of its people & its places
(1941)

On County 642 is the *SITE OF PEAKESVILLE*, where rotting logs indicate the location of several outbuildings but where no vestige of the original house is to be found. Though the outline of the family burying ground is still visible, no inscriptions mark the resting places of Peakes who once lived here. A few miles northward on the banks of the Occoquan is the site of a grist mill, known as *Priest's Mill*, which continued to operate well into the twentieth century. The antiquity of the mill is evidenced by a bill of sale from William Champe to John Peake dated 1735 and mentioning the mill. In an indenture the tract is described as belonging to John Peake and his wife Mary, who purchased it in 1721 from Wansford Arrington, who is known to have received in 1716 several grants from the proprietors of the Northern Neck.

Also on County 642 are the ruins of the *LUTHER PEARSON PLACE*, standing in a tangle of vines and underbrush. In the county records appear the names of Thomas Pearson and Captain Simon Pearson, who took up land in present Fairfax County in 1706 and in 1739 respectively. Many of the legended stones in the old burying ground are undecipherable, but inscriptions to the following people can be read: John Pearson (1811-1889), Rachel Carter Pearson (1817-1888), Luther Edward Pearson (1846-1907), Martha Pearson Grough (1842-1862), Mary F. Steele (1859-1935), William Steele (1850-1904), Wilmer N. Steele (1880-1904), Virginia B. Steele (1889-1899), and "J. P. 1817."

A short distance north of Hoadley on County 610 near Bacon Race Church is the *PETTIT PLACE*, now in ruins. At the rear is the burying ground, enclosed by a wire fence and overgrown with honeysuckle. Among the legible inscriptions on tombstones are those to the following people: Alexander Pettit (1846-1877), Lewis W. Pettit (1840-1920), Sidney B. Pettit (1849-1904), Ernest Pettit (1880-1902), Mary E. Beach (1851-1915), and R. W. Beach (1866-1913).

North of Bacon Race Church, near the Occoquan, is the *SIMPSON PLACE*. The story-and-a-half house is now unoccupied, though traces of the once beautiful garden are discernible, as are the remains of 14 farm buildings close by. Unfortunately, the oldest tombstones in the burying ground have inscriptions that cannot be read. Those of more recent date, however, are inscribed to the following people: Catherine A. Simpson (1817-1872), John R. Simpson (1847-1903), John W. Simpson (1815-1888), Robert E. Simpson (1855-1931), Hattie V. Simpson (1867-1926), Emma G. Ashford (1852-1914), Silas E. Ashford (1850-1917), William F. Simpson (1844-1846), Julia F. Simpson (1855—), Thomas J. Simpson (1821-1898), Dorcas C. Simpson (1857-1933), and Mary Simpson.

Also near the Occoquan is the *HUGH DAVIS PLACE*, likewise unoccupied. The far view of the countryside, once visible from the elevation on which the house is situated, is now obscured by thickly overgrown fields. The interior woodwork of the rooms shows the painstaking handicraft of a more leisurely day, and each hearth before the two large fireplaces is constructed of a single stone.

No description of the church itself 107

I. F. WOODYARD/Born Aug 27, 1853/Died June 4, 1907
(F:) I F W

HOSEA R./Son of/I. F. & A. E. WOODYARD/Born/Apr 19,
1883/Died/Aug 21, 1899 (F:) H R W

PEARL V./Daughter of/I. F. & A. E. WOODYARD/Born/
Feb 3, 1885/Died/Dec 6, 1902 (F:) P V W

(shaft) WILLIAM H. SMOOT/1809-1895/HIS WIFE/ANN
SMOOT/1811-1886/THEIR DAUGHTER/MARIA L. SMOOT/1850-1885/
SMOOT/WINFIELD S./SMOOT/1852-1930/THEIR SON/WALTER S./
SMOOT/1901-1921/ALSCINDA A. SMOOT/DIED 1887 (F:) A S

ALSCINDA SMOOT/DIED 1887

SARAH WINNETTE/1837-1907

DANNIE H./Son of/W. H. & HARRIET/REID/Born/May 28,
1902/Died/Feb 10, 1905

GEORGE T. PETTIT/Born May 22, 1833/Died Oct 20,
1907 (F:) G T P

J. L. PETTIT/Born Aug 9, 1840/Died Jan 4, 1905/
49TH VA. REG. CO. B

In memory of/WM. T. PETTIT/Husband of/HATTIE PETTIT/
Dec 13, 1873/Mar 3, 1900

MAE A. ARRINGTON/B NOV 16, 1880/D NOV 9, 1881 (F:
unmarked)

S. A. ARRINGTON/Born/Mar 4th, 1817/Died/Jan 20, 1900/
At rest (F:) S A A

REID/MARION THOMAS REID/May 16, 1874/September 2,
1888 (F:) M T R

NOTES: Cem. is reserved to Trustees of the Occoquan
Church of Anti-Means Old School Predestinarians, or
Smootite Baptist sect. Original church was built in
early 19th Cent. on three acres donated by Samuel Jack-
son; present structure, reduced to a hull, postdates
Civil War.

Some markers lack dates and are therefore not listed
here. There may be additional unmarked burials.

Church was on circuit with Occoquan and Independent
Hill and served large rural area.