



**VIRGINIA**  
**HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION**

File no. 76- 69
Negative no(s). 5169

**SURVEY FORM**

Historic name Bacon Race Church and Cemetery Common name AKA Oak Grove Church  
 County/Town/City Prince William County  
 Street address or route number 5213 Davis Ford Road, Occoquan, VA 22125

USGS Quad Occoquan Date or period c1880  
 Original owner Trustees of Bacon Race Church Architect/builder/craftsmen  
 Original use Church  
 Present owner Trustees of Occoquan Church of Source of name Unknown  
 Present owner address Anti-Means Old School Source of date Architectural evidence  
 Predestinarian, Occoquan, VA 22125 Stories 1 story  
 Present use Church not in use; cemetery is. Foundation and wall const'n Stone foundation; frame wall  
 Acreage 2.90 acres construction  
 Roof type Metal-covered gable roof.

State condition of structure and environs Building is in deteriorating condition; grounds are fairly well kept.

State potential threats to structure Neglect, vandalism.

Note any archaeological interest Civil War camp said to be near the earlier church.

Should be investigated for possible register potential? yes  no

Architectural description (Note significant features of plan, structural system and interior and exterior decoration, taking care to point out aspects not visible or clear from photographs. Explain nature and period of all alterations and additions. List any outbuildings and their approximate ages, cemeteries, etc.)

This moderately large (22'x48'), one-story, gable-roofed, braced-frame church is clad with wide weatherboards, previously painted white. Shutter pins are present on the plain, trimless, miter-cornered jambs on either side of the 6/6 sliding sash windows. The double front door in the east end consists of two moulded panels per door. The building has a plain wide frieze, a box cornice, and single cornerboards. The trim was apparently painted dark green. The door was dark brown.

The interior walls and ceiling are plastered. The floors are fairly wide tongue and groove pine. There is tongue and groove wainscoting around the interior. Pews and pulpit are present. The pulpit has a paneled front.

The church is in very bad condition: the roof is missing in places; some of the siding has fallen off; the interior is a shambles; plaster on the walls and ceiling has cracked and fallen away from the lath; and window panes are missing.

The church sits on a c3-acre parcel and is surrounded on three sides by a cemetery containing approximately 200 burials. The whole property is enclosed by a wire fence.

Interior inspected? Yes.

Historical significance (Chain of title; individuals, families, events, etc., associated with the property.)

In 1798, Samuel Jackson sold or donated 3 acres of his property for the church at the western end of Bacon Race Road, and at the intersection of Davis Ford Road. According to tax records, the property has been used as a church since 1794. It has been variously known as Oak Grove Church and Bacon Race Church. One published source states, however, that the first church on the site was erected in about 1845 by Andrew Braddus (1770-1848), who also founded the Antioch Church at Waterfall in western Prince William County and a Baptist church at Dumfries.

Located near Wolf Run Shoals on Bull Run, and on the road to Minnieville and also the road to Dumfries, the church, which preceded the present church building, not surprisingly, was involved in the Civil War. In 1862, Col. Wade Hampton's Brigade camped in this vicinity to defend the Occoquan crossing at Wolf Run Shoals. The site was the supply depot of Hampton's brigade and was the reserve position of Maj. S.D. Lee's artillery battalion during the winter of 1861-62.

The present Bacon Race Church was built in the late 19th century through the efforts of Rev. William Smoot. Reverend Smoot had two other churches besides the Bacon Race Church, the Beulah Baptist Church in Occoquan and the Quantico Baptist Church at Independent Hill. Reverend Smoot's loyal followers were called "Smootites." Other branches of the Old School Baptists in the area were the "Clarkites" and the "Badgers." Reverend Smoot's chief rival was Rev. T.D.D. Clark, whose followers, naturally, were known as "Clarkites," and worshipped

(Continued)

HISTORY (Cont.)

BACON RACE CHURCH AND CEMETERY

(Cont.)

at Union Baptist Church <sup>across from</sup> ~~near~~ Quantico Baptist Church. There were only minor theological differences between these three groups of Southern, or "Hardshell," Baptists. Neither the Smootites nor the Clarkites, however, believed in using the organ, preferring instead to "raise a tune," or sing their hymns unaccompanied.

Reverend Smoot is buried in the church cemetery. The legend surrounding this very powerful preacher arose, in part, from his death-bed announcement that he would one day return to preach at Bacon Race Church, and his request, dutifully adhered to by his supporters, that until his return no one else should be permitted to preach there in his absence.

The earliest known burials in the church yard date to about 1880. The cemetery contains approximately 200 graves, including among them many Confederate soldiers' graves. Among the family names that can be read off the stones in the cemetery are the Reids, Davises, Arringtons, Smoots, Fairfaxes, and Ledmans.

In 1974, the church's 4.2-acre parcel was reduced by 1.3 acres, which were deeded to the Virginia State Highway Commission.

PUBLISHED SOURCES (Cont.)

Fish, H. Bradford and Frank Green, "Davis Ford Road: A Path Linking the Past to the Future," in Washington Post, 27 March 1980.

Ratcliffe, R.J., This Was Prince William (c1978), p. 24.

Hanson, Joseph Mills, Bull Run Remembers (c 1953), pp. 57-60, 67, 68, 74, 75.

Mead, Eileen, "He's Promised To Return to Old Bacon Race Church," in M. J-M 23 <sup>Feb</sup> ~~Nov~~ 1977.

Sources and bibliography

Published sources (Books, articles, etc.; with bibliographic data.)

WPA, Writers Program, Prince William, the Story of Its People and Its Places (c1941), pp. 46, 51, 107. (Continued, page 2)

Primary sources (Manuscript documentary or graphic materials; give location.)

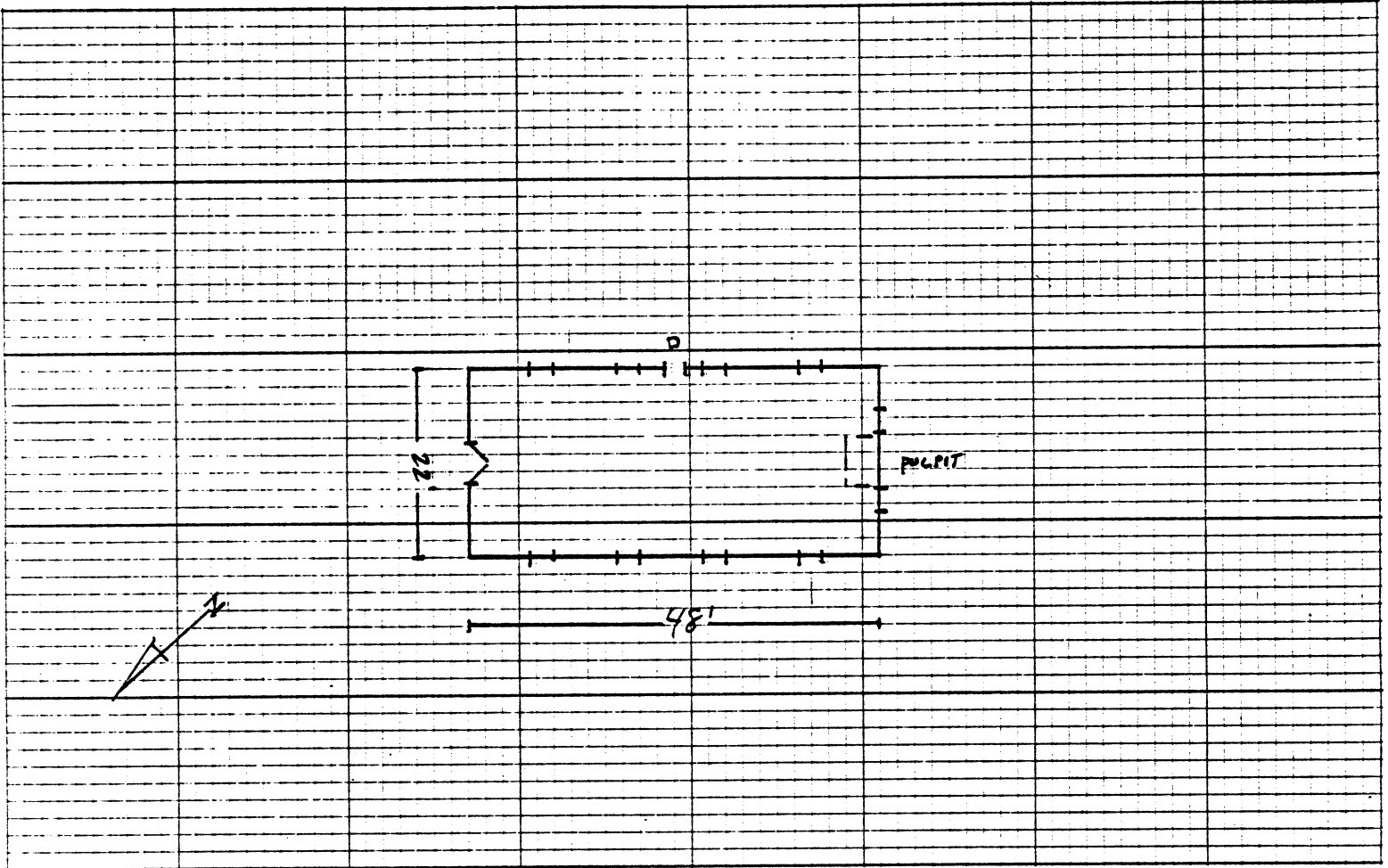
State Library may have photo of church taken c1940 in WPA collection.

Deed in Prince William County Courthouse, D.B.Z., p. 295.

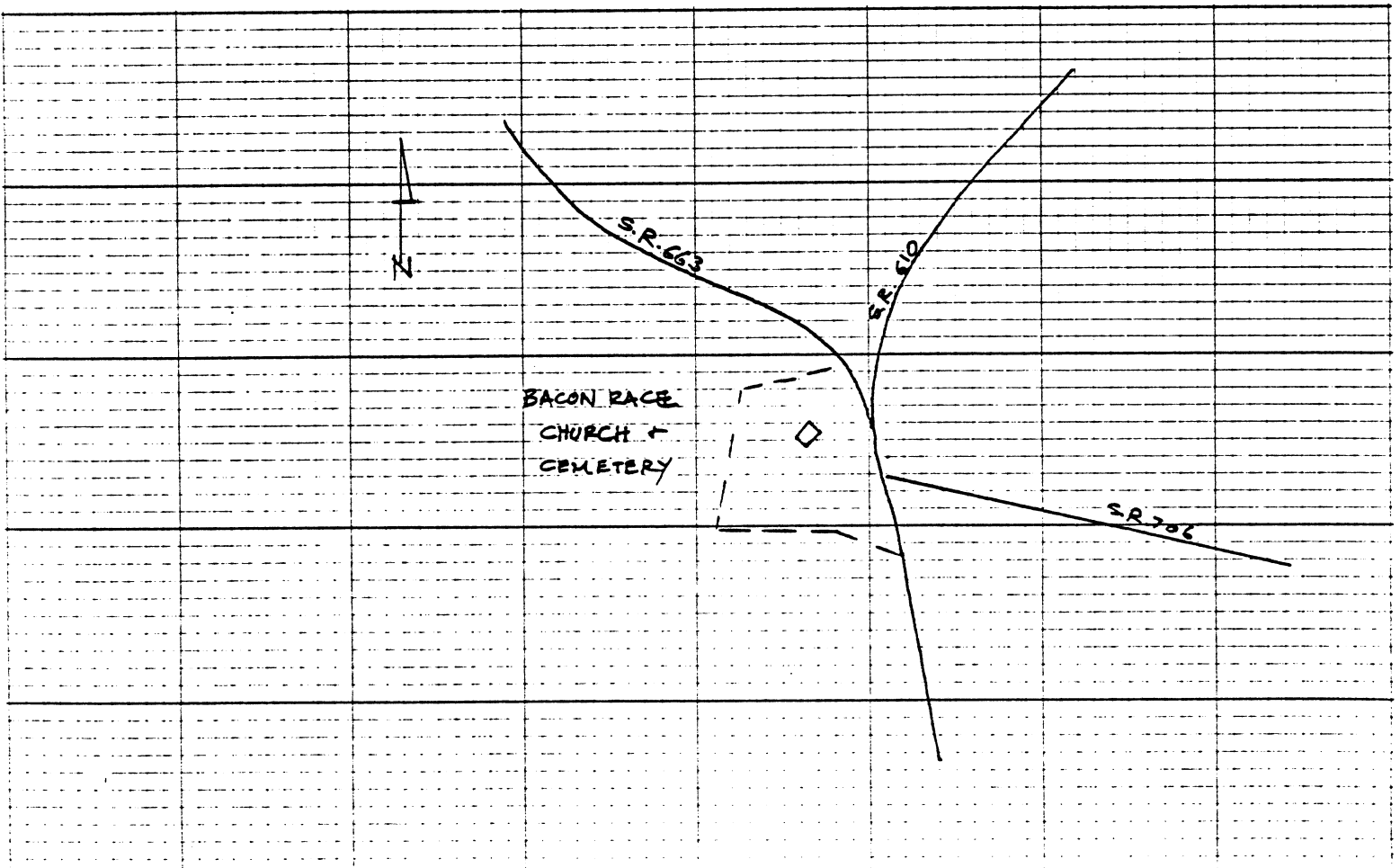
Names and addresses of persons interviewed

E.R. Conner, III, Manassas Museum.

Plan (Indicate locations of rooms, doorways, windows, alterations, etc.)



Site plan (Locate and identify outbuildings, dependencies and significant topographical features.)



BACON RACE  
CHURCH +  
CEMETERY  
76-257

Occoquan Quad.

