

HISTORY OF BELLE-HAVEN CHURCH - - by James Luck, Jr.

Things happen in our daily routine of living that seem, at the time, to be only local and for the time being. But in looking over 50 years and seeing some things outstanding, some entirely forgotten, others remembered but dimly and garbled in that remembering. And in seeing how seemingly inconsequential things fit into the great scheme we are compelled to think that in the just everyday doings and deeds of men there is the hand of the Supreme Architect, overruling, guiding, directing both to will and to do of His good pleasure in our daily doings. We see men laboring in the woods, the brick yards, quarries, steelmills, cloth mills and elsewhere without much thought of the final use and ending of the work of their hands. We see the finished product rejected, seemingly good material lying neglected by the wayside, some used but once and apparently still good for much service, some worn out by constant use and some broken and cast aside in hurry and bustle of modern life.

We see the completed structure and in admiring its beauty, struck by its convenience and adaptness for intended use, its strength and staunchness, we forget about what happened to them. The same things happen to human material used in the building life. But on reflection we see these things had to be brought about the desired end. This would bring sad thoughts today but for the promise that the tiny sparrow does not fall without its Creator knowing and the very hairs of our head are all numbered.

For most of those who helped to bring about Belle-Haven are passed on to their reward and today but few remain to relive those bright and active days and this recalls a newspaper clipping. A scientist lectured on space and the worlds there, showing that there are suns and their accompanying universe as much larger than ours as our sun is larger than this earth and that no one knew the limits and contents of space.

At the end of the lecture, a lady came to him and said, after citing the above quotation, "Do you think that the God that did such wonderful things can care a thing about us?" The savant replied "That depends entirely on how big a God you worship." I like to think of my God as being big enough and great enough to build and operate these

girls, (old ladies now), still live on the farms as in 1883.

During this summer (1885) W. B. Lynn's brother, A. T. Lynn, but recently joined the Baptist Church in Alexandria, came to visit W. B. and heard of the little schoolhouse and what was being done around his birthplace. Fired with a zeal to tell the "old, old story" he made an appointment and began to preach regularly in the new schoolhouse. Thomas and Isabelle Woolfenden offered an acre of land across the road for a church. Miss Ella V. Weedon, the teacher at Holmes' school, took up the idea. After some work among the neighbors, she got them to have an oyster supper Thanksgiving night at Mr. Woolfenden's and so the first money for the church to be raised. How many such affairs and how else the money was raised goes without saying. For money was scarcer then than now and we think we are hard done by. Men raised large families in those days on 50 to 75 cents a day and a day then meant from sun up to sun down, not 9 or ten hours. In November 1885 Rev. Lynn baptized Mr. and Mrs. Robert A. Abel and Francis Jones. Ruth E. Glascock, Margaret A. Wright and Anna E. DeWitt were received by experience, a total of six persons.

December 20, 1885, Rev. Lynn called a council of ministers and deacons at the little schoolhouse. After due examination, these six people were organized into a regular Baptist church, to quote the record. They called Rev. A. T. Lynn as their pastor. Mrs. W. B. Lynn suggested that as Isabelle Woolfenden had given a part of her home place for the church, it be named "Belle's Home" and so Belle-Haven Church was born and christened. Since then the earthly tabernacle of Isabelle Woolfenden has been deposited in its mother earth in the S. W. corner of this cemetery. May her earthly home be left in peace and security until the Great Architect decrees otherwise.

The record now skips a whole year. In the meantime, the community has been busy with the Lord's work as well as their own. A church building has been started. During June 1886 Margaret Abel, John Carter, sr., Mary Carter; in July Annie M. Jones and Georgia A. Jones; in September Lewis E. Jones and in October Laura Lunsford and Nannie Lunsford were received into the

Bro. Luck resigned because of age and ill health in Sept. 1915. His resignation was not accepted and Bro. E. G. W. Keys was elected to assist Bro. Luck Nov. 1915, succeeding him at the latter's death and continued as treasurer until his death in May 1933.

E. C. DeWitt elected treasurer May 1934 and still serves.

Nine men have been chosen for Deacons during these fifty years: Robt. A. Abel and John Carter elected Nov. 1885; James Luck, sr., in Dec. 1888; L. E. Jones in July 1890; L. M. Storke and E. G. W. Keys chosen April 1908; Maurice Abel and Jas. Luck, jr., April, 1911. Although there is no record of his selection, Bro. Raymond Miller was made a deacon about 1926 or 1927.

These men were selected by ballot at the regular business meetings and a council called together ordained them as deacons at the time of or shortly after their selection. The last three remain, the others having filled their place in God's scheme of life have passed on to that "building not made with hands."

In our Sunday school work many of our members have been engaged. How many have been teachers and other workers we can not now tell but in these 50 years, 15 have served as Superintendents. A great many have passed to their reward and but few remain. As we read the list, to us older ones, familiar figures come to our minds eye characteristic words, gestures and poses flash before us as in memory we recall them. There was evidently a Sunday school during 1886. We seem to have a dim recollection, but the record gives L. E. Jones as the first superintendent selected by this church in May 1887 and we all, that is those of us whose heads are touched by the winter of life, recall the kindly old man. Never an orator, sometimes impatient with our youthful thoughtlessness, but he had a way with children, and we all loved him and he served our Sunday school many years successfully, then comes John Morath, J. T. Tubbs, Jas. Luck, jr., W. T. Russell, C. W. Dod-

son, Maurice Abel; C. W. Storke, Arthur Luck, Albert Hays, Mary DeWitt, Nettie Wright and Ray E. Wood, the present incumbent.

Many of our members have come to us through the Sunday school and looking back over these fifty years, we should be encouraged to go in our Master's service.

Six men have been licensed to preach the Gospel, according to Baptist tradition, by this church. Five are still actively engaged with our Father's business. They are: Norman Luck, licensed August 1890; Arthur Taylor, September 1891; W. E. Lowe, April 1894; J. Murray Taylor, May, 1894; C. W. Storke, April 1910, and James Luck, sr., Jan. 1894 and whose work ended in April 1917.

These men have gone to and fro over our country with the good tidings. Who can tell where the influence of this old church will end. Lowe and Storke were ordained ministers of the Gospel according to Baptist custom at this church. Lowe in April 1902 and Storke the fifth Sunday in June 1912.

So today we come to mark the fiftieth year of our church life. Many more things might be said of the flow and ebb of communal life, of the trials and troubles of our church life which come to all churches; of things done and not done, of how we dug a well on the school lot, put an addition on our building, of series of meetings that stirred the community to its core, but time forbids and what's done is in the hands of God. For the future of Belle-Haven, that too is in His hands. We pray for many years of usefulness to this locality. So, confident that our God, who sees the sparrow fall, will bring about what He has planned for Belle-Haven. And knowing that whatever that is, it is best, we bequeath to the coming generations the mantle our fathers left to us. May God richly bless them in their work at Belle-Haven.

In His name,
JAMES LUCK, Jr.

MILK RANKS AS LEADING PRODUCT

Washington Dairy Executive Praises Dairy Industry.

Milk is the second most important farm crop in this region and proved to be a most stable source of farm income during the depression, states Henry N. Brawner of Chestnut Farms-Chevy Chase Dairy Company. The combined farm income from milk in Maryland and Virginia amounted to \$26,872,000 in 1934; only tobacco, which netted the farmers \$28,457,000 last year, surpassed milk as a source of farm income in these states, according to Mr. Brawner.

Brawner stated that the farm price for milk locally was practically double the national average price of 3.13 cents. This results because a larger percentage of the production of Maryland and Virginia producers can be sold in bottles. Dairy farmers receive their highest price for milk sold in bottled form. Since one of the objectives of the Sealtest System Laboratories, under whose supervision Chestnut Farms-Chevy Chase milk is to be sold, is to emphasize the value of bottled milk as a food, Sealtest advertising should in time be instrumental in increasing dairy farmers' income, in Brawner's opinion.

Mr. Brawner continued:
"Milk is not only one of the most

important cash crops in this region, largest single source in the United States last year to show agricultural income been one of the sources of income to our people during the depression.

"By 1932 the production of Maryland and Virginia had declined to their 1929 income from milk, how per cent of its 1929 income, more, despite the fact that the farm income from milk still holds the lead in these states. Last year producers 67.3 per cent of the total income in these states corresponding a cent for all farm products.

"I believe I am confident that the Sealtest is the first organization concerted nation the per capita milk. When this organization's program test bottled milk the doorstep of consumers. Since the average price the milk is primarily companies being creating portion duction in fluid the Sealtest the sale of bottled milk a beneficial effect come."

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worship." I like to think of my work as being big enough and great enough to build and operate these vast worlds so accurately that men have and can calculate their course and position within a fraction of a second of time and place and still be big enough to see the tiny sparrow in its fall and remember how many hairs it took to cover our heads decently. So we look back over 50 years and each thinks his own thoughts.

In the fall of 1883 two such little incidents came about. Luck and Morath moved a saw mill onto their recently bought land and W. B. Lynn found himself with growing girls who must go to school. The latter incident occasioned no comment as growing families were common in those days and each had its own problems. The former excited some comment for it gave work to a few men and teams. Incidentally it was the second steam saw mill in lower Prince William County and sawed here and there in this locality for 30 years. The Lynn girls had a long walk to school either way they should go; too far for little feet. So Mr. Lynn got busy getting a schoolhouse nearer them. We might mention that the public school system was just getting under way in lower Prince William. Luck agreed to saw the lumber free if the neighbors would bring the logs. Thus the Belle-Haven community took its first communal steps and shortly a tiny schoolhouse, crude but useful, appeared on a 1-2 acre of land given by Mr. and Mrs. M. C. Holmes. The neighbors celebrated its advent with a Xmas tree. The Xmas of 1884. But this is not a church you say! Wait, God's plans unfold slowly but none the less surely.

The first warm spring Sunday afternoon of 1885, three young ladies went for a walk down the old Bell-fair Mill road from Ben Murphy's, Anna DeWitt, Annie Murphy and Lizzie DeWitt. Recalling recent doings as girls have a way of doing, Holmes school Xmas tree came in for comment. Said one, "Why can't we have Sunday School and preaching in our new schoolhouse?" Again W. B. Lynn rides into the picture, and the girls put the proposition up to him. Sure the house was built by the people for the people, go ahead. But a minister? Mr. Lynn was sure Mr. Lieber, a retired Methodist minister living about 2 1/2 or 3 miles south of the new schoolhouse, would be glad to speak to them when he could. So the request was sent and Mr. Lieber preached the first sermon at what was to be Belle-Haven Baptist Church. Incidentally these three

October Laura Lunsford and Nannie Lunsford were received into the church by baptism. These were called together for a business meeting Saturday before the second Lord's Day in November 1886. They elected Robert A. Abel and John Carter, sr., Deacons and L. E. Jones as Clerk, and called Rev. A. T. Lynn as Pastor for the coming year and the record is continuous from then on until 1915 when meetings for business seem to have become irregular and were mostly called meetings. In these 50 years, 178 persons have been received into this church. The high tide came about 1912 or 1914 when there were 77 names on the roll. Exactly how many should be on our roll today is not known at this time.

In fifty years Belle-Haven has had 8 pastors: Rev. A. T. Lynn, 1885 to Dec. 1889; Rev. A. J. Cummings, 1889 to Dec. 1914; Rev. R. P. Rixey, 1915 to Apr. 1917; Rev. B. Grimsley, June 1, 1917 to summer 1918; Rev. J. A. Golihue, Aug. 1918 no record when he left; Rev. C. W. Storke, supplied during 1922; Rev. Noel J. Allen, Feb. 1923 to Oct. 1930; Rev. J. M. Taylor, Nov. 1930 and our present pastor.

During the fifty years we have had six clerks:

L. E. Jones elected Nov. 1886, served to Jan. 1894, re-elected Feb. 1894, died Jan. 1900, served 14 years; J. M. Taylor elected Jan. 1894 and served 1 month and resigned;

James Luck, jr., appointed assistant clerk Mar. 1899 because of illness of Clerk Jones. Elected Feb. 1900, resigned Nov. 1915—one year as assistant clerk for Bro. L. E. Jones and 15 years as clerk;

Maurice Abel elected clerk December 1915. Bro. Abel signed his last record Feb. 4, 1923. Bro. Abel moved away and Miss Gertrude Liming was elected to fill the vacancy, but no record appears with her signature;

October, 1929, James Luck, jr., began acting clerk and continued until relieved by Bro. Ray E. Wood May 5, 1934. Bro. Wood is the present clerk.

Belle-Haven has had but 4 treasurers:

Robt. A. Abel elected Nov. 1886. His last report appears Jan. 1890. Bro. Abel asked for a letter of dismission Nov. 1889 and no record of him appears after 1890;

James Luck, sr., seems to have been appointed or elected Jan. 1890, as the clerk records he paid in money for the pastor's salary but no record of election appears until Dec. 1890. He served until his death in April 1917. In Jan. 1894, W. E. Lowe was elected treasurer and served one month when he resigned, and Jas. Luck, sr., was again made treasurer.

Thurs. Oct. 10, 1935

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