

Scarrotts Meeting House

contributed by
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In 1758, the land on which Scarrotts Meeting House stood was owned by John Poindexter. He owned some 800 acres in two 400-acre tracts between Goldmine Creek and the north branch of Contrary Creek and another 400 acre tract on the north fork of the James River.

Poindexter's will¹ was written on the 10th of January 1758 and probated at a court held at Louisa Court House on the 22nd of May 1758. He divided the 400 acres tract on Goldmine Creek between his sons Thomas and William - Thomas getting the upper 200 acres and William getting the lower 200 acres. the 400 acre tract on the James River to be equally divided between his younger sons Richard and Joseph when they came of age.

His instructions concerning the four hundred acre tract on the north branch of Contrary Creek are of interest.

"ITEM. It is my will and desire that my executors sell and dispose of all my lands on Contrary River except one hundred acres whereon John Scarrot[t] lives which I desire that my estate will make him a good right to. ITEM."

No deed from the Poindexter estate to John Scarrot has been found. The 400 acre tract on Contrary remained in the Poindexter family until John and William Poindexter, the surviving executors, sold the tract to Thomas and Sally Gardner in a deed dated 19 March 1792.² This deed carried no reservations and no mention of Scarrott's Meeting House. Yet the meeting house had been in use at least since 1777.

The tone of John Poindexter's special request that his executors provide what amounts to a lifetime home with 100 acres of good land for his friend John Scarrott indicates that he was held in high esteem by the family and also would imply that he was an elderly man.

Nothing has been found in the Baptist records concerning Scarrotts connections with the very early Baptist movement, but it is felt that he was indeed one of its pioneer teachers.

Very few records pertaining to the Scarrotts Meeting House still exist. According to Semples *History of Virginia Baptists*, Scarrotts Meeting House was "constituted in the year 1777 under the ministry of John Waller of Spotsylvania County.

Waller was succeeded by Elder William Dawson for a short time to be followed by Elder Henry Goodloe. By the same authority it was said that Scarrotts had 54 members in 1810.

In January of 1807, Thomas and Sally Gardner sold off a 19 acre tract to Thomas Bibb with a reservation of "one half acre on which the Scarrotts Meeting House stands."³ This gives the first clue as to its actual location.

Twenty years later, Thomas and Fanny Bibb of Spotsylvania County sold the same 19 acre tract to Ann Gardner "with the reservation of one half acre

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on which Scarrotts Meeting House stands".⁴

In May of 1833, Ann sold the 19 acre tract to Simeon Keesar with no mention of any reservations for the meeting house. Keesar was a leather tanner by trade and operated a tannery on this land for the next twenty or so years.

Scarrotts was located on the west side of the main road that ran from "New Bridge" on the North Ann River (Route 208) to Garretts Tavern, known later as Centreville by way of the Nelson or "Contrary Bridge".

This road ran SE from Route 208 at a point where the Marvin Ware land corners with the Allah Cooper Mine property (about one-half way between Wares Cross Road and Route 652) passing by Scarrotts on the north side of Contrary Creek just before reaching "Contrary Bridge". Shortly after crossing the creek the road divides - the left road going to Garretts Tavern and the road to the right going to the Davis Tavern (Old Tolersville, now Mineral). This was the "long route" from "New Bridge" to Garretts Tavern routed up the creek to avoid the Woods and Dickinson Swamps on the lower end of Contrary Creek.

1.Louisa County Will Book 2 p. 27.

2.Louisa County Deed Book G p. 177, 9 April 1792.

3.Louisa County Deed Book L p. 114, 28 Jan. 1807.

4.Louisa County Deed Book R pp. 51-52, 10 Feb. 1827.