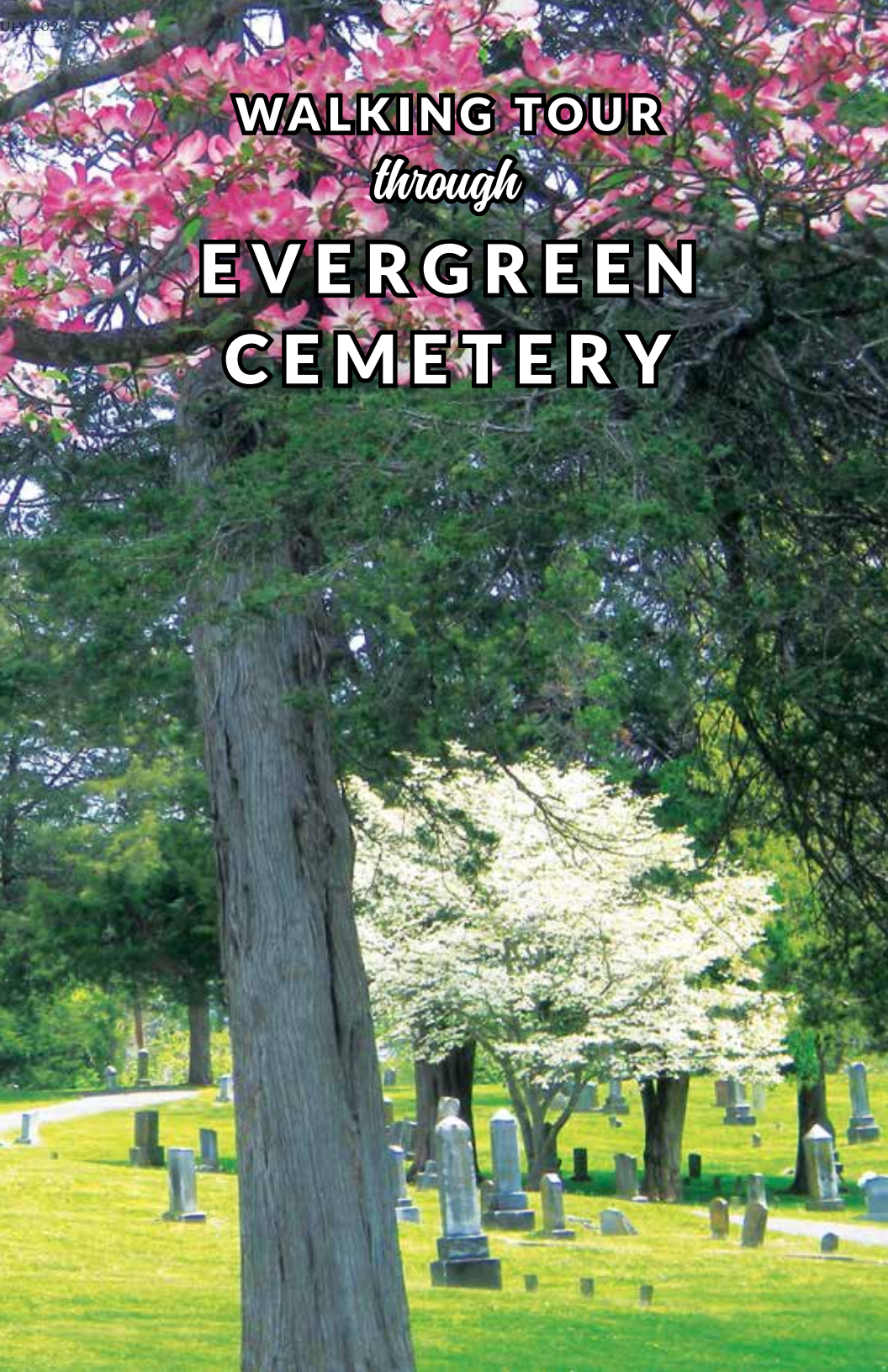


JULY 2023

WALKING TOUR
through
EVERGREEN
CEMETERY



Key to the Evergreen Sites Highlighted in This Booklet



- | | | | |
|----|---|----|---------------------------------------|
| 1 | Alfred W. Pleasants, M.D. | 23 | Earl and Samantha Poindexter |
| 2 | Dr. Alfred W. Pleasants Jr. | 24 | Andrew Charles Jordan |
| 3 | Theodore C. DeLaney Jr. | 25 | Nelson Franklin |
| 4 | Unknown African American Woman | 26 | James Benjamin Lewis Jr. |
| 5 | Alfred Douglas Winfield | 27 | Stewart Alexander Chandler |
| 6 | Alexander L. Banister | 28 | John Cosby |
| 7 | Preston A. White | 29 | Ferdinand Turner |
| 8 | John B. Thompson | 30 | James Austin Harris |
| 9 | Andrew Washington | 31 | Mitchell Gooch |
| 10 | Harry Lee Walker and Eliza Bannister Walker | 32 | Joseph W. Murchison |
| 11 | Levi Miller and Hannah Kenney | 33 | Alvie E. Rowland |
| 12 | James A. McQueen | 34 | James L. Woodford |
| 13 | Lewis Bolen | 35 | Clarence Wood and Nannie Walker Wood |
| 14 | Rosalya Mack Wiggins | 36 | Alexander B. Wood and Freddye H. Wood |
| 15 | Preston Hinton | 37 | Joseph M. Wood Sr. |
| 16 | William Henry Hinton | 38 | Joseph D. Evans |
| 17 | Brown Colbert Borgus | 39 | Wonderful P. Pettigrew |
| 18 | Walter L. Sanderson | 40 | Deacon J. A. Pettigrew |
| 19 | William A. Massie | 41 | Forrest Beal |
| 20 | Zack Franklin | 42 | Jefferson Shields |
| 21 | Walter William Lyle | 43 | Isaiah Nugee Harris |
| 22 | Hughey E. Johnson Sr. | 44 | Pierson Alexander |

Historic Lexington Foundation Welcomes You To Evergreen Cemetery

LEXINGTON'S first known cemetery for African Americans, where the enslaved as well as the area's substantial free Black populace were buried, dates to the early 19th century and was located on land bordered today by Marble Lane, Washington Street and Lewis Street. That cemetery became town property in 1876 and was closed about 1880, when it was nearly full. Some of the graves were moved here to Evergreen Cemetery, although record-keeping was poor for burials in the original cemetery and for reinterments here. In 1946 the town of Lexington subdivided the original cemetery and houses were built on the site.

Today, the handsomely landscaped, 5½-acre Evergreen Cemetery is the final resting place of many of our area's prominent African Americans. They include physicians, educators, business and civic leaders and military veterans who served in America's wars from World War I through Vietnam.



1 ALFRED W. PLEASANTS, M.D.
(1877–1940)

Prominent physician in Lexington.



2 DR. ALFRED W. PLEASANTS JR.
(1911–90)



Physician who assumed his father's medical practice. His wife, Jacqueline, was a leading figure in Lexington's African American and Democratic political circles.



3 THEODORE C. DeLANEY JR.
(1943–2020)

Ted DeLaney started as a lab custodian in Washington and Lee University's chemistry department in the 1970s. His potential soon became apparent, and before long Ted had a W&L degree and went on to a secondary-school teaching career (upstate New York; Asheville, N.C.). He landed in William & Mary's Ph.D. program and when he had that degree, he came back to Lexington and taught at W&L — history, especially African American history — until just before his death from cancer in 2020. By then he had become, as the *New York Times* put it, the "conscience of a university which he loved and criticized in equal measure." His legacy is properly commemorated through scholarships, endowments, a research center at W&L, and social outreach programs throughout Rockbridge county.

Photo by Kevin Remington for W&L



4 "ANCIENT JANE," UNKNOWN AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMAN (MID-1800s?)

On a day of brilliant sunshine in May 2019, a horse-drawn hearse pulled into Evergreen, and on it was a hand-made coffin bearing the remains of an unknown African American woman, probably only in her twenties, whose bones had been discovered to great



Courtesy of The News-Gazette

surprise by workers who were excavating to build the new courthouse. There were no clues to anything about her, so the community named her Ancient Jane. We sang "Amazing Grace" that afternoon and gave her a Christian burial because it was what she deserved and it was all that we could do.

5 ALFRED DOUGLAS WINFIELD (?-1933)

Virginia Corporal 808 Pioneer Infantry WWI

6 ALEXANDER L. BANISTER (?-1926)

Corporal Kansas US Army WWI

7 PRESTON A. WHITE (?-1942)

Virginia Private First Class 511 Engineers WWI

8 JOHN B. THOMPSON (1867-1942)

John Thompson was an entrepreneur in a category with the Walker and Wood families. He was an owner of the historic Knights of Pythias Building, where he also operated businesses, and a deacon of First Baptist Church as well. Thompson Court and Thompson's Knoll, both near Lylburn Downing School on Diamond Hill, are named for him.



9 ANDREW WASHINGTON (1896-1968)

*Virginia Sergeant Company B
306 Service Battalion
Quartermaster Corp WWI*

**10 HARRY LEE WALKER
(1875-1941) and
ELIZA BANNISTER WALKER
(1874-1939)**

In 1911 Harry Walker, one of Lexington's most successful businessmen, opened a butcher shop on North Main Street, where he sold the hickory-smoked cured hams for which he was widely heralded. Later, with his partner Clarence Wood, the shop sold provisions to both W&L and VMI. Eliza Bannister Walker, born in Murat, left her mark

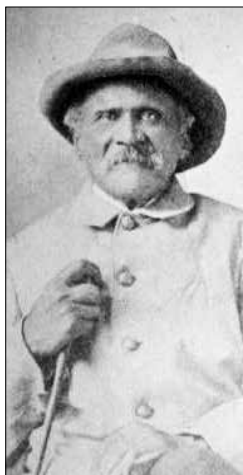


The Walkers

on culture and civic activism, not commerce. Maintaining sensitivity to tradition, she pressed hard on contemporary issues ranging from school funding to wage fairness. In 1917, the Walkers acquired Blandome, the handsome Italianate mansion at the top of Henry Street (and now listed on the National Register of Historic Places), and with their descendants owned it into the 21st century.

11 LEVI MILLER (1836–1921) and HANNAH KENNEY (?)

Hannah Redd Kenney may be the oldest person buried in Evergreen, although her birthdate is not known. Census reports show that she was enslaved near Brownsburg before 1830, and she is buried here next to her son, Levi Miller (pictured), who was gifted as an orator and preacher and was brought into service with the Confederate Army.



12 JAMES A. McQUEEN (1891–1961)

Virginia Cook Company D 310 Labor Battalion Quartermaster Corp WWI

13 LEWIS BOLEN (1895–1948)

Virginia Private First Class 308 Pioneer Infantry WWI

14



ROSALYA MACK WIGGINS (1930–2021)

Rosa had a distinguished 45-year career in New York City's Child Protective Services Department, perhaps the most demanding job in that city's public service. She retired to Lexington, where she became a stalwart trustee of the First Baptist Church and a member of the Lexington Planning Commission. A highlight was her tenure as a board member of Historic Lexington Foundation.

15 PRESTON HINTON (1895–1958)

Virginia Cook Company A 367 Infantry WWI

16 WILLIAM HENRY HINTON (1894-1955)

Private US Army WWI

17 BROWN COLBERT BORGUS (1897-1963)

*Virginia Private 13 Company
155 Depot Brigade WWI*

Brown Borgus had an extraordinary career at Virginia Military Institute — 36 years as head waiter in the dining hall, where despite the challenges of the food, he became a legend among VMI cadets. A plaque in Crozet Hall commemorates his decades of service and the admiration of his cadets.



18 WALTER L. SANDERSON (1890-1955)

Virginia Private 513 Battalion Engineer Corps WWI

19 WILLIAM A. MASSIE (1892-1960)

Virginia Private 510 Service Battalion Engineer Corps WWI

20 ZACK FRANKLIN (1893-1946)

Virginia Private 158 Depot Brigade WWI

21 WALTER WILLIAM LYLE (1893-1973)

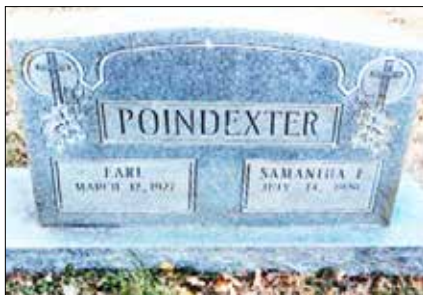
Virginia Private US Army WWI

22 HUGHEY E. JOHNSON SR. (1924-93)

A custodial supervisor at Virginia Military Institute, Hughey Edward Johnson Sr. was prolifically involved in Lexington civic life — as a member of the city school board, First Baptist Church, Friends of the Library and the Montessori School.

23 EARL POINDEXTER (1927-2006) and SAMANTHA POINDEXTER (1929-2018)

Mr. Poindexter was a World War II veteran, a barber for 50 years, a trustee of Randolph Street United Methodist Church, a Prince Hall Mason and a life member of the Lexington Life Saving Crew. Mrs. Poindexter was a cosmetician and gifted photographer, a member and chairman of the Lexington School Board, chairman of the Lexington High School Joint Committee, trustee of



what was then Stonewall Jackson Hospital, and Mother of Randolph Street United Methodist Church.

24 ANDREW CHARLES JORDAN (1917-2011)

Member of Lexington Town Council.

25 NELSON FRANKLIN (1896-1951)

Virginia Private First Class 338 Service Battalion Quartermaster Corps WWI

26 JAMES BENJAMIN LEWIS JR. (1929-2018) and MARY COLBERT LEWIS (1931-2020)



J. B. "Benny" Lewis was Lexington's first Black elected city official (City Council, 1969) and became vice mayor in 1976, using his consid-



Photos by Lbrady

erable influence to promote the much-needed revitalization of downtown Lexington in partnership with Historic Lexington Foundation. He paid keen attention to the needs of the community, especially the Diamond Hill and Green Hill neighborhoods. In 1968 he helped establish the Rockbridge Area Housing Corporation. He and his wife, Mary, ran the J. B. Lewis Funeral Home here for 50 years. An affable man, he was also a jazz saxophonist. Mary was a teacher of music in the Rockbridge school system for many years.

27 STEWART ALEXANDER CHANDLER (1891-1971)

Private US Army WWI

28 JOHN COSBY (c. 1820-90)

Virginia Wagoner 338 Service Battalion Quartermaster Corp WWI

29 FERDINAND TURNER (1891-1961)

Virginia Private Company D 365 Infantry 92 Division WWI

30 JAMES AUSTIN HARRIS (1896-1953)

Virginia Private 155 Depot Brigade WWI

31 MITCHELL GOOCH (1895-1918)

Company E 810 Pioneer Infantry / Camp Green, N.C.

His tombstone's poignant inscription reads:

"Brief, brave and glorious was his young career."



32 JOSEPH WILLIAM MURCHISON (1914-92)



A native of Petersburg and graduate of Virginia State University, Joe Murchison was a veteran of World War II and longtime employee of the *Lexington News-Gazette*. He was a trustee of Randolph Street United Methodist Church and a civic leader whose service ranged from the Lexington School Board

to the NAACP, Boy Scouts and American Legion.

33 ALVIE E. ROWLAND (1922-89)

Private US Army WWI



34 JAMES L. WOODFORD (1897-1945)

Virginia Private 158 Depot Brigade WWI

35 CLARENCE WOOD (1889-1957) and NANNIE WALKER WOOD (1900-93)

Nannie Walker Wood was the daughter of Harry Lee Walker and Eliza Bannister Walker (see entry 10). After marrying Nannie, Clarence became his father-in-law's business partner in Walker & Wood Bros., suppliers of provisions to Lexington's two colleges and several fraternities. His eclectic interests also included real estate, an insurance agency, the editorship of the *Lexington Star* and even an ice cream parlor. After he died, Nannie Wood managed the family businesses until her own death. They owned Blandome at the top of Henry Street for many years and greatly improved the property, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



36 **ALEXANDER B. WOOD (1929-2015) and
FREDDYE H. WOOD (1934-2023)**

Alexander Wood (right) was the son of Clarence and Nannie Wood. He and his wife, Freddye, were the last African American owners of historic Blandome on Tucker Street.



Sketch by Bruce Macdonald

37 **JOSEPH M. WOOD SR. (1894-1985)**
Sergeant US Army WWI

38 **JOSEPH D. EVANS (? - 1925)**

39 **WONDERFUL P. PETTIGREW (1895-1923)**
Virginia Private US Army



He died at the age of just 28. Having been made deaf by artillery fire in World War I, he was apparently unable to hear a watchman's warning and was shot to death. He has two markers here.



Rockbridge Historical Society

40 **JOHNSON A. PETTIGREW (1862-1937)**

Mr. Pettigrew was known as Deacon because in 1883 he founded the local lodge of the Odd Fellows, on whose board he served the rest of his life. For many years he

was chairman of the board, a deacon, and treasurer of First Baptist Church (where one sees the window, shown at the right) — and a trustee of this cemetery as well.



41 FOREST BEAL (1887–1978)

US Army WWI



42 JEFFERSON SHIELDS (1829–1918)

Jeff Shields (below) worked for James Edmondson, a local politician and businessman, and was said to have served with him in the Confederate Army. Shields



built the first house in Centerville, which can be seen today at the top of Short Street, behind the new courthouse.

43

ISAIAH NUGEE HARRIS (1893–1963)

*Virginia Private 36 Company
155 Depot Brigade WWI*



44

PIERSON ALEXANDER (1896–1971)

*Virginia Private First Class
803 Pioneer Infantry WWI*



J. M. Thompson's stone (detail)





HLF encourages you to visit other important area cemeteries. In addition to Evergreen, cemeteries whose repair and upkeep are supported by the Foundation include Oak Grove in Lexington dating to 1789, resting place of more than 6,000 souls including educators, members of Congress, two governors, many military officers, business and civic leaders and others; McDowell Cemetery in Fairfield, where members of a key family of

politicians and leaders in law, medicine and education are buried; and Falling Spring Presbyterian Church Cemetery near Glasgow, where the graves of many influential Rockbridge leaders over three centuries are located. Like Lexington's Evergreen Cemetery, another Evergreen Cemetery, this one in Glasgow, bears witness to the number of African American soldiers who fought for their country in two world wars; so does Asbury Methodist Church Cemetery in Brownsburg, in northern Rockbridge. Green Hill Cemetery, overlooking Buena Vista, tells a story of the numerous young children who perished from influenza around the time of World War I. Many of the stones there are topped with lambs, the sign of innocence. Timber Ridge, New Providence and Oxford are but a few of the historic Presbyterian churches in Rockbridge with noteworthy cemeteries.

Historic Lexington Foundation



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