

Bottskill Baptist Church History Minute

Church Historian Ken Perry

July 2026- Joseph L. Peacock

Something that I've always been curious about was how many of our former pastors chose here as their final resting place. The answer begins to unfold with the names of four of them on our stained- glass windows. Add to them Leonard W. Cronkhite and recently, David M. Crosby, which makes six.



To complete the answer, I copied the names appearing on the plaques in our entryway and compared them to my book of cemetery listings. The answer still remains six. Where the other ministers came from and where they ended up is a fascinating story, too lengthy for here. And, as I conducted that search, I discovered an article in an August 1955 issue of The Saratogian which noted the original installation of what they termed our "pastoral roll plaque."

One person who stood out for his brief service, only a year, someone I refer to as "the least among them," was here for just 1945. He was Joseph L. Peacock, who was born in Paisley, Scotland and immigrated here in 1881 at the age of 8. In many instances, what appears to be insignificant holds within it something substantial, which was the case with him.

The Peacock family spent their summers at a cottage in Northfield, Mass., a village in Franklin County near the

Connecticut river and the New Hampshire border. The local weekly paper, The Northfield Press, mentioned in Sept. 1943, that Mr. Peacock was retiring from his 3 years of service at the Federated Church of Saxtons River, Vt., to "make his future home at Glens Falls, N. Y. to be near his daughter and her husband, who is located in the ministry there."

He would reside on Pearl Street. Whether you are familiar with Glens Falls or not, Pearl St. is a short and very wide street that runs perpendicular to Lawrence St., where the former Post-Star newspaper and the Troy Shirt factory were located, and Maple St.



On the corner of Pearl and Maple streets is the First Baptist Church of Glens Falls. As it happens, Carolyn Peacock's husband was W. Gordon Poole, who became the pastor there in 1939, serving for ten years. In city directories, the Pooles lived at 94 Maple St. while Rev. Peacock lived at 14 Pearl St.

Pastor Peacock first served from 1899 to 1901 at Norwood, R. I. Ordained in 1900, he was a graduate of Brown University and received his Masters from Harvard in 1902. He graduated from Andover Newton Theological

Seminary in 1903, located in one of the outlying cities of metropolitan Boston. Andover Newton was also the same location where W. Gordon Poole studied at a later date.

From 1903 to 1908, pastor Peacock was at the Cavalry church in Westerly, R. I., and afterwards was head librarian for another eleven years in Westerly. At that point, he was tapped to become president of Shaw University. Founded in 1865 and located in Raleigh, N. C., Shaw University was one of our nation's historically Black colleges, like Howard University.



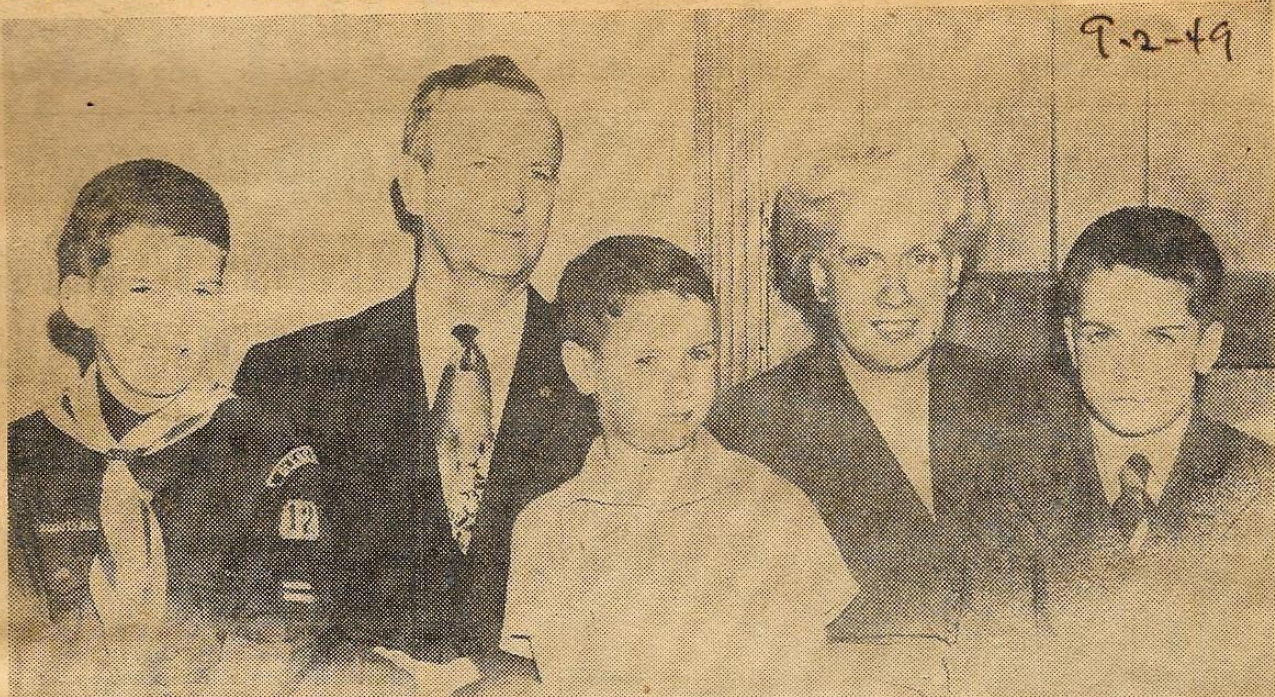
Among some of its most recent alumni was James E. Clark, who served as Howard's president from 1968 to 1989. Other alumni were the civil rights activists Josephine Bacon and Julian Bond; and former N. Y. Congressman, Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. In 1951, the Pittsburgh Courier ran an article about the induction of Shaw's sixth president, citing it as "one of the nation's leading Baptist ministries". Included among the three former presidents present at the induction ceremonies was Joseph I. Peacock.

After 11 ½ years at Shaw, pastor Peacock served seven years at a church in Tarboro, N. C., before accepting a call to Saxtons River.

During his time in our area, he was a guest speaker at area churches, including the Argyle Presbyterian, and here, where he became an interim for 1945. Upon leaving Bottskill, the Friends Meetinghouse on Saratoga Avenue in South Glens Falls, tapped him to serve there, beginning Oct. 1, 1946. When he left Glens Falls, the local newspaper noted him as "one of the few men of Glens Falls listed in Who's Who in America."

Rev. W. Gordon Poole and Family Leave City

9-2-49



The Rev. and Mrs. W. Gordon Poole and children, Joseph, left, John, center, and David, right, left yesterday for Raleigh, N. C., where they will reside. The Rev. Mr. Poole, former pastor of the First Baptist Church, will enter Columbia Uni-	versity in September to pursue a course of study in hospital management. Mrs. Poole was a former member of the Choral Club, the Woman's Civic Club, Inc., Friends in Council, Glens Falls Club of College	Women, Jackson Heights Parent Teacher Association and the United Council of Church Women. The Rev. Mr. Poole was a member of the Rotary Club, Adirondack Ministerial Association, Glens Falls Council of Churches and the Jackson Heights Parent Teacher Association.
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After leaving his ministry in Glens Falls, W. Gordon Poole went to Columbia University to continue studies to become a hospital administrator. He had formerly been a graduate of Wake Forest, and his wife, Carolyn Peacock, was a graduate of its sister school, Meredith College, which was probably one of several ties that lead to their meeting. She was also an administrator at Meredith, and St. Mary's Junior College. Her brother, Leishman Peacock, which was the middle name of his father, served as president of two colleges, the University of Ottawa, in Kansas, and Kalamazoo College, in Michigan. Her other brother, Arthur, was a physician for 30 years at Moorestown, N. J.

The Pooles and the Peacocks returned to Raleigh, N. C., where the Pooles and Leishman Peacock are buried, but Rev. Peacock was buried with his wife, Edna Arnold, who died in 1927, at Westerly, R. I.

A family of educators, ministers and physicians, for his brief pastorate here and in our area, the legacy left by his family, let us remember Joseph L. Peacock.

