

145
SENECA C.M.E. CHURCH CEMETERY
BEHIND 13215 VIOLETES LOCK RD
SENECA

Montgomery County Cemetery Inventory

ID: 145

Name: Seneca C.M.E. Church

Alternate name:

Address: ~~River Rd. & Violet's Lock Rd.~~ ^{Violettes} behind 2 story white house # 13215

Town: Seneca

ADC Map Page 26 Grid F-9

Type
 Religious
 Family
 Private
 Other

Association
 Free black
 Enslaved
 Ethnic
 Prehistoric

Setting Rural Urban Suburban Forested Other

Condition Excellent Good Fair Poor

Negative Impacts (vandalism, dumping, neglect, encroachment, etc)

Approximate no. of burials 68+ Date range of burials 1935 - present

Description (markers, materials, arrangement, landscaping, fence, paths and roads, etc.)
*Many unmarked. Post and wire fence on 2 sides.
Mowed. Surrounded by woods. Down gravel drive
from white house.*

Surveyor(s) Janet & Anne Survey date Dec 4, 2004
Photographer _____ Date _____ Photo no. _____

Current owner _____
Address/Phone No. _____

Historic Status Locational Atlas ID _____ National Register
 Master Plan ID _____ Other _____

UTM _____

Additional sources of information:

07
26

SENNECA C.M.E. CHURCH CEMETERY AT VIOLET'S LOCK
Directions: Route 190 West, River Road, left on Violet's Lock Road,
behind 2-story white house near river. [A.D.C. Map: Montgomery, page
29, grid coordinates C-3.] **Condition of cemetery:** Unknown. Active
cemetery. **Earliest known death:** 1935. **Most recent death:** Present.
Date transcribed: 1982. **Location of transcribed records:** Montgomery
County Historical Society Library, 42 West Middle Lane, Rockville,
Maryland 20850. **Comments:** Over 32 marked graves.

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SENNECA CME CHURCH CEMETERY
BEHIND 13215 VIOLETES LOCK RD
SENNECA

From a paper by Susan Houser
4/15/01

Diane.
Snoffer

THE HISTORY OF NINETEENTH CENTURY
BLACK CHURCHES IN MARYLAND AND
WASHINGTON, DC (by Nina H. Clarke)

Seneca Colored Methodist Episcopal Church

Violet's Lock Road
Seneca, Maryland

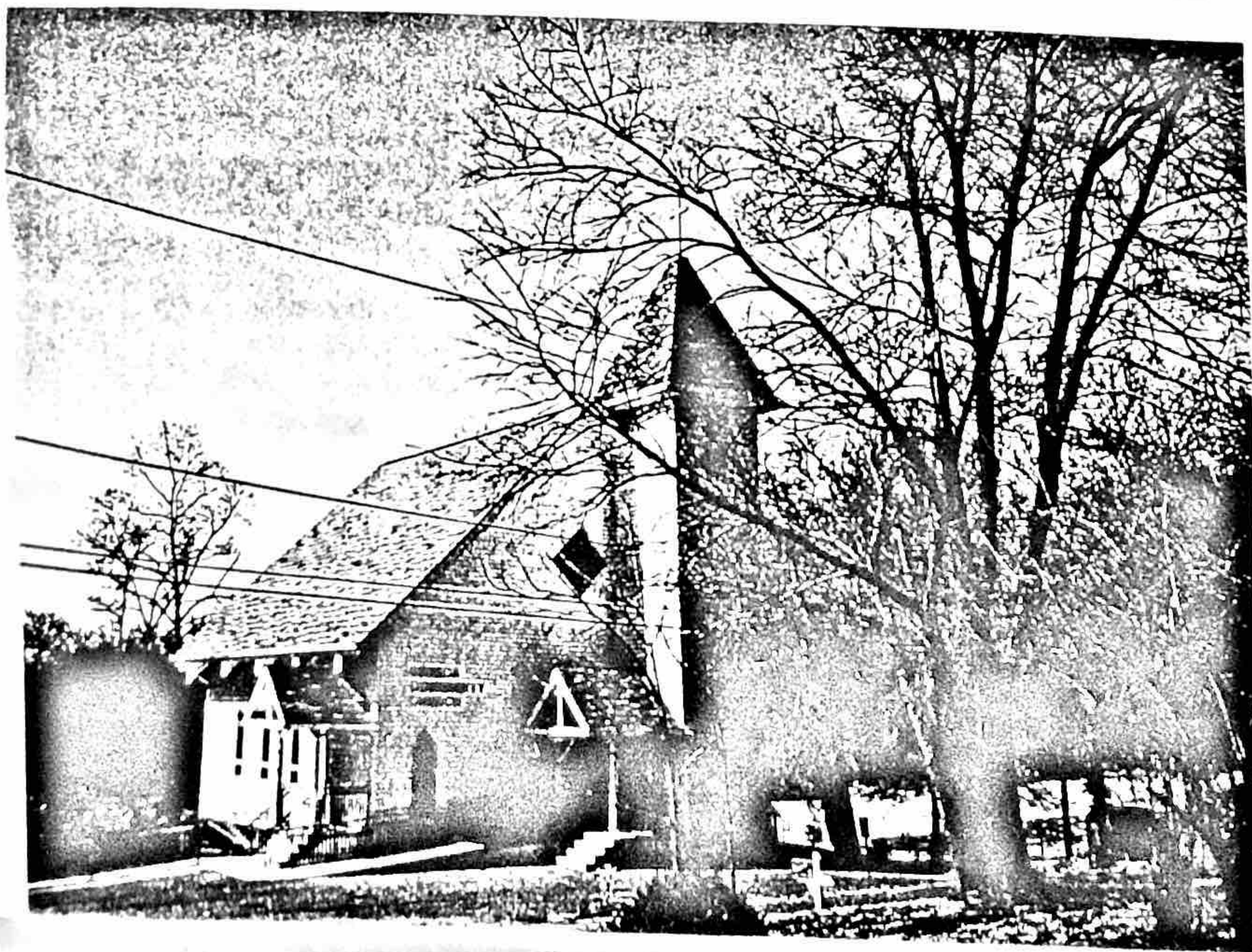
The Seneca Colored Methodist Episcopal Church was built in the late 1800s or early 1900s. It was a wooden clapboard building located on the east side of Violet's Lock Road in Seneca.

This church was an important part of the black community of Seneca. The community was dependent upon employment provided by the sandstone quarry owned by the United States government.²¹ A number of the early government buildings in Washington, D.C., were built from the stone from Seneca Quarry. It is now closed and the inhabitants seek employment in Washington, D.C., and the lower part of Montgomery County.

The men of the congregation built this little church. The people worshipped in private homes before they had a church building. A schoolhouse also occupied a part of the church site. This is where the black children attended school. The church cemetery was in back of the church. They are all decayed now.

This church had been a part of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. This congregation separated all black churches from its conference by 1870.²² They convened the Colored Methodist Episcopal conference for these churches.

In 1941, the Seneca congregation built a new church on Berryville Road. They separated themselves from the Colored (Christian) Methodist Episcopal Church. The church is now known as the Seneca Community Church.



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SENECA COLORED METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH
BEHIND 13215 VIOLET'S LOCK RD
SENECA

Seneca C.M.E. Church Cemetery



The top picture was taken from the back of the cemetery looking toward Violettes Lock Rd. One of the two sandstone markers is visible in the foreground. It is that of "Henry Jackson died Jan 3 189 (8 or 9) age 34". Next to him and out of frame, is "Henrietta Jackson died May 27 189 (8 or 9)". Other families represented include Clipper, Driver, Dorsey, and Thomas.

The bottom photograph was taken from the same position but looking left. In the woods is a recent stone for Lewis Heron. The other stones in this area are illegible sandstone markers now covered with leaves. Pictures of some of these are shown on the following page.



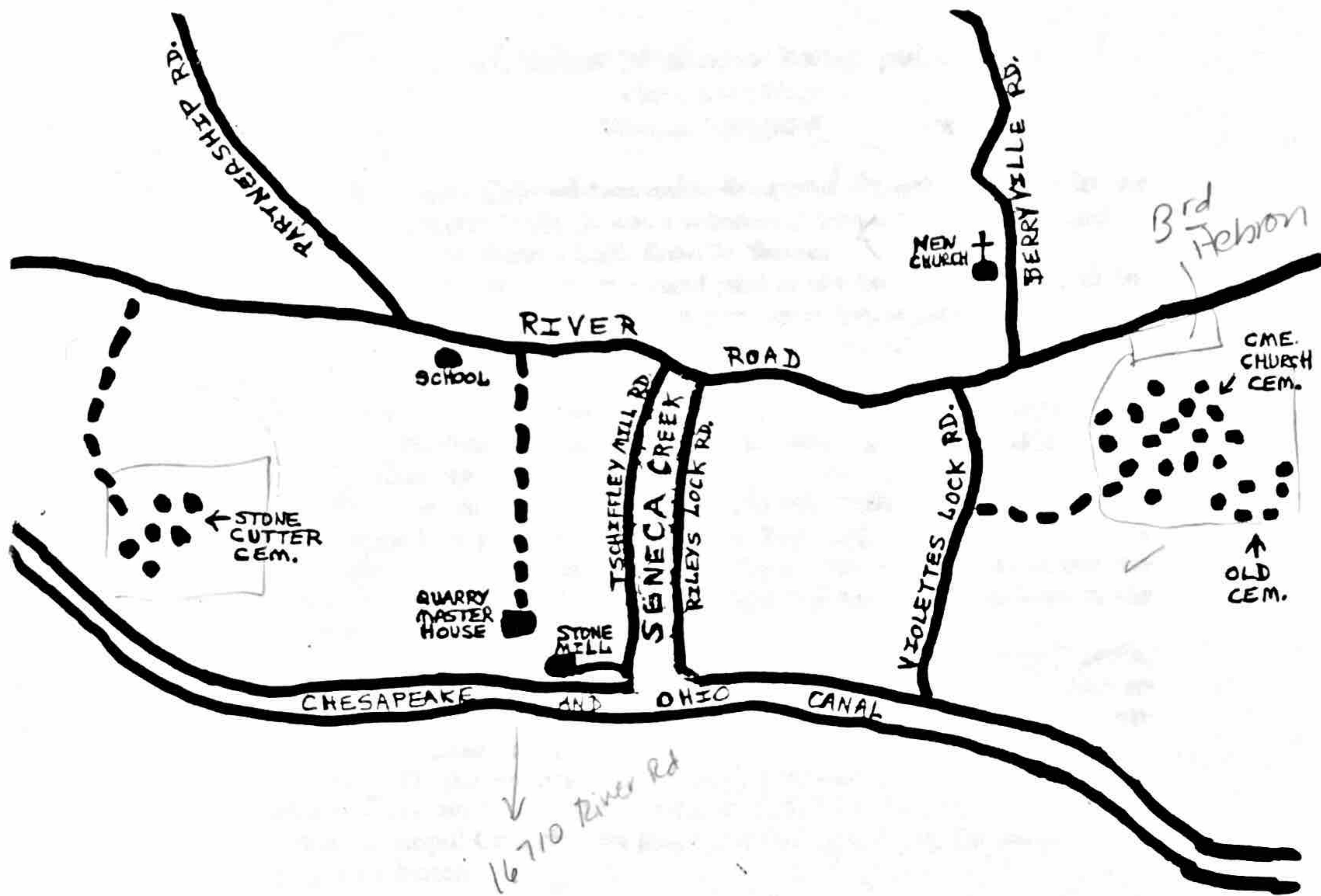
Heron? Third cem.

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SENECA CME CHURCH CEMETERY
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SENECA



SENECA, MD



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SENECA CME CHURCH CEMETERY
BEHIND 13215 VIOLETTES LOCK RD
SENECA

MARCH 11, 2006
MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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SENECA C.M.E. CHURCH CEMETERY
BEHIND 13215 VIOLETTS LOCK RD
SENECA

EILEEN...

THESE ARE EXCERPTS FROM
SUSAN HOUSER'S TYPESCRIPT
DEPOSITED IN THE MONTGOMERY
COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY (LISTED
IN THEIR CARD CATALOG).

SENECA, MD

A SENECA COMMUNITY

BOB KOPSCH

The African-American community in Seneca has a long and fascinating history that continues today. Descendants of the original families still reside in Seneca and the neighboring area of Berryville.

The founder of the community seems to have been Jack (John) Clipper, an ex-slave freed by Union troops in Virginia during the Civil War. He worked his way to Maryland where he met and married a servant named Martha Johnson.

They moved to Seneca and lived beside the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal until the 1889 Johnstown Flood caused the Potomac River to overflow. That necessitated a move to higher land.

Jack and Martha raised at least ten children. Their names appear in the 1880 and 1900 censuses.

Another early resident was Basil Jackson. His family must have lived nearby as they are buried in the same cemetery, high on the bluff above the stone-cutting mill.

The Clippers and Jacksons are defined as "daylaborers" in the census. This term covered farm work, stone-cutting, or any other jobs available on a daily or temporary basis. The census also indicates the names of their neighbors who probably worked at the mill or in the quarries.

These residents eventually were forced out of their homes as they were not landowners. Some bought land in the Berryville area.

As the community grew, the families wanted a church and schoolhouse. They were able to buy land on Violettes Lock Road and built the Seneca C.M.E. Church. A schoolhouse was added later, as was a cemetery. The old cemetery high on the bluff was difficult to reach and it made sense to establish a burial ground near the church. That cemetery still is being used although the buildings now have disappeared.

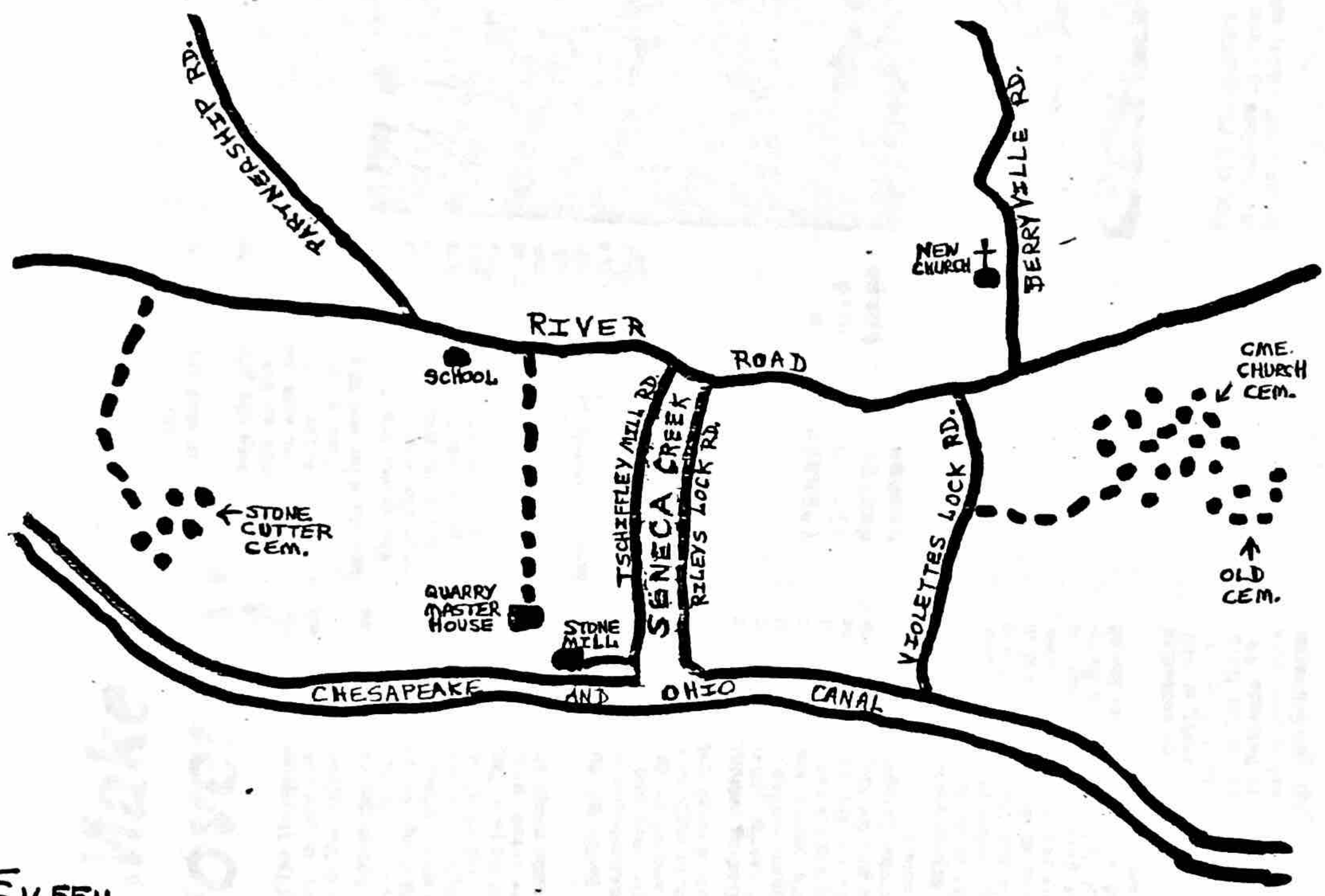
A new church was built on Berryville Road in 1941 and is known as Seneca Community Church. Many of the current members are descended from the original African-American settlers of the region.

I became interested in this area as I wanted to locate and photograph the cemetery on the bluff. That led to research on the Clipper family and interest in the entire community. The following pages include information from various files at the Montgomery County Historical Society. I supplied the color photographs and map. This booklet is an attempt to provide a reference aid to further research on the African-American community of Seneca.

Susan Emma Houser
4/15/01

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SENECA CME CHURCH CEMETERY
BEHIND 13215 VIOLETES LOCK RD
SENECA

SENECA, MD



EILEEN...

THIS MAP INDICATES THE
"STONE CUTTER CEM." WAS NEXT
TO OR VERY CLOSE TO THE
U.S GOVERNMENT QUARRY (PREVIOUSLY
CALLED LEE QUARRY). SEE THE MAP
I SENT YOU.

A CARTON IN THIS TYPESCRIP
INDICATES THAT THIS CEMETERY IS
500 YARDS FROM THE STONE CUTTER'S
MILL.

I SUSPECT THE MAP IS
MORE ACCURATE.

Bob Kapsca

Hiker, Son Make Grave Discovery

By ARLEE C. GREEN
Journal Staff

When do the county police lose interest in seven apparently fresh graves? Only when they find out that the persons in the graves have been there for over 50 years.

The county police received a report from a hiker last week that he found what he believed to be seven fresh graves near the C&O Canal in Seneca.

Frank Galdun of Rockville was hiking along the canal near Seneca with his two sons when they decided to detour to a path off the canal. About 500 yards from the canal, Galdun noticed a number of rocks set up in rows that looked like an old primitive burial ground.

In the middle of the cemetery, Galdun saw a bare spot around seven graves which gave them the appearance of being fresh. Thoughts of a mass killing went through his head.

Galdun called Lt. William Morri-

son of the Montgomery County Police who in turn called Cpl. Robert Saylor of the Rockville station.

Cpl. Saylor met Galdun where he works in Gaithersburg, and they walked along the canal to the path in the woods, where Galdun showed Cpl. Saylor the cemetery and the gravesites which were about 125 feet off the path. The graves, except for the seven, were covered over with underbrush about half-a-foot thick.

Cpl. Saylor felt the graves which were cleared down to the dirt could be new ones and dug into one grave several inches, thinking that the graves might be shallow, as the dirt formed seven mounds.

On finding nothing, Cpl. Saylor visited nearby homes. He saw the state game warden's car parked at a nearby country store. The game warden was not aware of the burial grounds, but the store owner was able to give the corporal the name of Benjamin Clipper of Berryville Rd. in Seneca.

Cpl. Saylor visited Clipper the next day at the National Institutes of Health where he works and Clipper told him that his church was interested in the cemetery and in possibly restoring the gravesites. Clipper gave the policeman the name of Upton Jackson of Berryville Rd. who has relatives buried at the cemetery.

The policeman then contacted Jackson who also works at NIH, and Jackson's older brother, Alphonzo, who works at the Naval Medical Center in Bethesda. The two brothers agreed to meet with Cpl. Saylor and Sgt. Carl Schwarzel

In his talks with the two brothers, Cpl. Saylor learned that they had walked back to the graves last May and cleaned away the underbrush that had grown over their relatives' graves.

Upon visiting the gravesites, the brothers assured the policemen that the graves were those of their mother, brother, two aunts, and other relatives, all of which had been there for over 50 years.

The graves are marked only by moderate sized rocks partially buried in the ground, with some of the graves having fancier markers made of concrete, with names and dates scratched in to them. The seven graves are only a portion of more than 100 graves in the cemetery, which according to the Jacksons, are mainly people who worked in the rock quarries along the canal more than a half-a-century ago.

("Annie J" was all that I could decipher on these stones.)



Journal Photo by Andrew S

7 Graves

COUNTY POLICEMEN learn from Upton and Alphonzo Jackson the fresh-looking graves in the picture are those of relatives who buried a half century ago near the C&O Canal in Seneca.

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MARCH 11 2006

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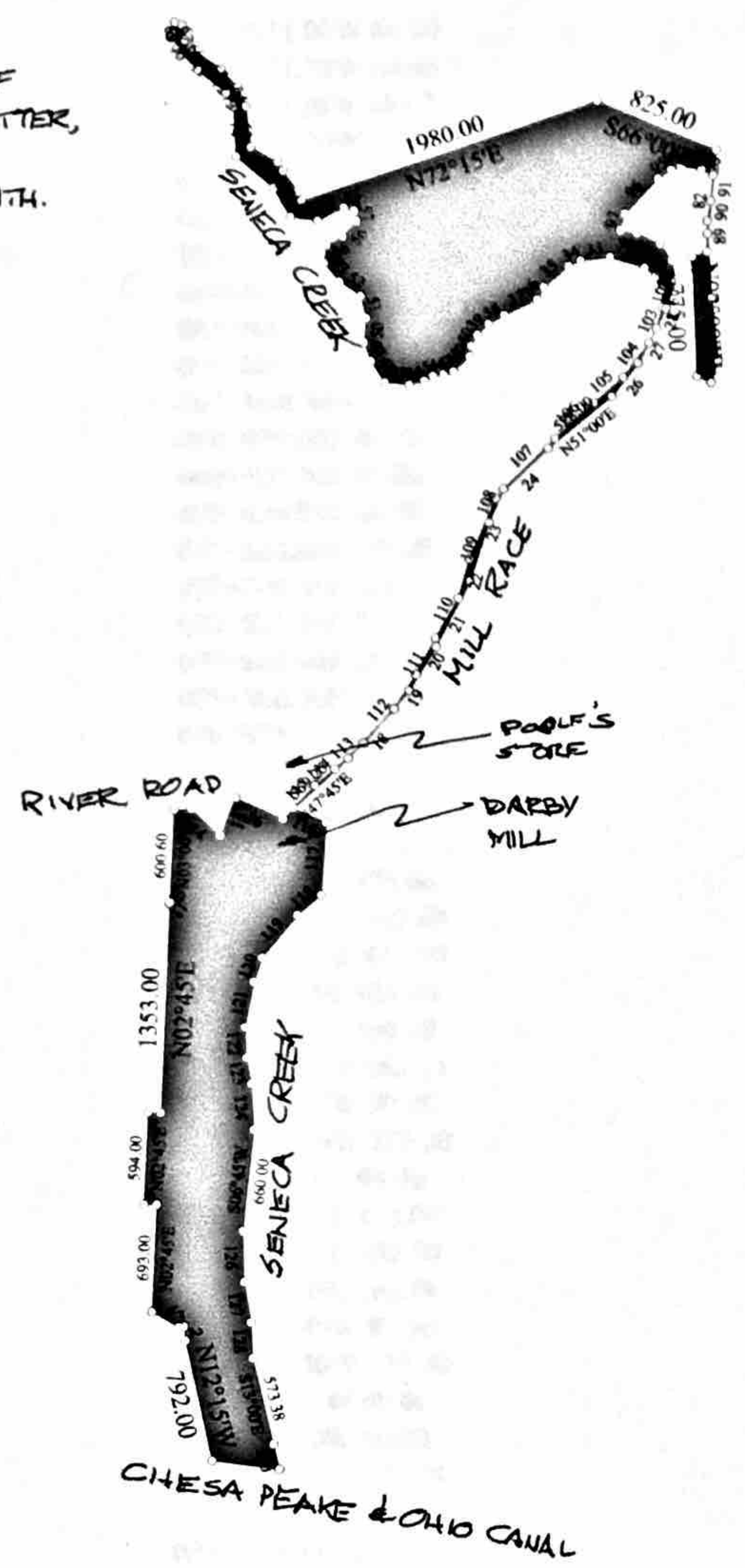


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145
SENECA CREEK CHURCH CEMETERY
BEHIND 13215 VIOLETTS LOCK RD
SENECA

EILEEN...
PER OUR DISCUSSION.
THIS IS AN EXAMPLE OF
THE OUTPUT OF DEED PLOTTER,
THE SOFTWARE I'VE BEEN
HAVING A LOT OF FUN WITH.

BOB KAPSC.



Title: Robert Dodge to John & Upton Darby (J.G.H. 7 Folio 1)	Date: 07-07-2006
Scale: 1 inch = 1500 feet	File: Dodge to John & Upton Darby - Mill Property (1855).des

Data and Deed Call Listing of File: Dodge to John & Upton Darby - Mill Property (1855).des

Tract 1: 62.634 Acres: 2728315 Sq Feet: Closure = n81.2152w 431.93 Feet: Precision = 1/76: Perimeter = 32764 Feet

001=N12.15W 792.00	057=N11.00W 66.00	113=S47.45W 247.50
002=N06.00W 90.75	058=N71.30W 66.00	114=S52.00W 165.00
003=S85.00W 33.00	059=S64.30W 189.75	115=S43.45W 198.00
004=N58.45W 198.00	060=N80.30W 173.25	116=S64.30E 231.00
005=N02.45E 693.00	061=N30.00W 214.50	117=S04.15W 470.25
006=N87.15W 82.50	062=N48.00W 313.50	118=S50.00W 198.00
007=N02.45E 594.00	063=N03.00W 321.75	119=S40.00W 354.75
008=S87.15E 82.50	064=N26.00W 99.00	120=S19.00W 165.00
009=N02.45E 1353.00	065=N50.00W 231.00	121=S11.00W 297.00
010=N55.15W 8.25	066=N42.00W 198.00	122=S02.00E 198.00
011=N34.45E 9.90	067=N04.30W 165.00	123=S10.00E 173.25
012=N03.00E 600.60	068=S70.00E 49.50	124=S03.00E 297.00
013=N88.30E 107.25	069=S07.30E 99.00	125=S06.45W 660.00
014=S46.30E 255.75	070=S39.00E 66.00	126=S01.30E 330.00
015=N22.30E 264.00	071=S54.00E 231.00	127=S09.00E 264.00
016=S64.30E 333.30	072=S40.45E 165.00	128=S03.00E 231.00
017=N47.45E 569.25	073=S21.30E 132.00	129=S13.00E 573.38
018=N42.45E 429.00	074=S06.00E 264.00	130=S13.00E 165.00
019=N33.00E 264.00	075=S60.30E 198.00	
020=N27.30E 264.00	076=S28.30E 66.00	
021=N30.00E 297.00	077=S35.45E 165.00	
022=N16.00E 264.00	078=S20.00E 66.00	
023=N23.15E 429.00	079=N72.15E 1980.00	
024=N46.30E 462.00	080=S66.00E 825.00	
025=N51.00E 528.00	081=S05.00W 127.88	
026=N38.00E 272.25	082=S06.30W 412.50	
027=N28.15E 251.63	083=S03.15E 423.00	
028=N16.15E 140.25	084=S05.30E 396.00	
029=N02.30W 115.50	085=S16.15W 152.63	
030=N22.00W 94.88	086=N64.15W 99.00	
031=N51.30W 90.75	087=N02.00W 775.00	
032=N71.45W 231.00	088=N73.00E 99.00	
033=S84.30W 189.75	089=N01.00E 198.00	
034=S66.15W 82.50	090=N09.30E 132.00	
035=S50.00W 208.00	091=N05.45E 165.00	
036=S29.30W 90.75	092=N62.45W 82.50	
037=S64.45W 231.00	093=N80.30W 132.00	
038=S61.00W 115.50	094=S70.15W 66.00	
039=S46.00W 99.00	095=S58.00W 99.00	
040=S28.45W 82.50	096=S44.00W 305.25	
041=S11.00W 66.00	097=S15.30W 111.38	
042=S46.45W 140.25	098=S79.00E 103.95	
043=S74.00W 66.00	099=S63.45E 165.00	
044=S83.00W 66.00	100=S34.30E 132.00	
045=S60.00W 66.00	101=S10.45E 132.00	
046=S77.00W 99.00	102=S19.00W 189.75	
047=N82.00W 156.75	103=S26.30W 247.50	
048=N32.15W 165.00	104=S37.15W 276.38	
049=N19.00W 132.00	105=S49.00W 247.50	
050=N05.15E 155.50	106=S47.30W 338.25	
051=N13.00W 148.50	107=S45.45W 462.00	
052=N55.15W 165.00	108=S23.00W 239.25	
053=N37.30W 156.75	109=S18.15W 396.00	
054=N08.45E 115.50	110=S27.00W 478.50	
055=N60.00E 115.50	111=S32.00W 330.00	
056=N41.45E 132.00	112=S41.00W 442.20	

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SENECA CME CHURCH CEMETERY
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