

The Stirewalt House

The building stands on the southern half of Lot 31 –one of the original half acre lots laid out for Peter Palsil who created the town of New Market, by Colonel Jacob Rinker back in 1785.

Abraham Savage had purchased the town lots from Peter Palsil and it was he who sold Lots 30 and 31 to Jacob Cunkle in 1792. Cunkle sold these lots in 1794 to David Kyle who in turn, sold off Lot 31 to William McDowell of Rockingham County for five pounds.

The heirs of William McDowell, John and Alice, then sold the lot to Jeremiah Evans of the town of New Market, for \$400 in 1809.



Two years later, the Evans family sold the lot to Jacob Savage for \$310. By May 1816, the lot had been purchased by Samuel Coffman for \$2500 which indicates that a substantial property had been built on the lot.

However, by 1838, when the lot was purchased by Rev. Jacob Stirewalt from Samuel and Mary Coffman, the price was only \$900. When Rev. Stirewalt died, his four tracts of land, which included Lot 31, the Upper and Lower Farm just outside the town, and Wood land on the side of the Massanutten Mountain, were assigned by the Commissioners of the Circuit Court to the children: J(erome) Paul, Maria C. and Ella (Elenora) –who had married Paul Bowman.

In February 1887, J. Paul and Maria C. Stirewalt purchased the share owned by Ella and Paul Bowman for \$569.86 and at the same time J.Paul split the Lot into half – Maria having the northern half and J.Paul the southern half with the right for J.Paul to use water from the well in the northern half of the Lot.

Maria sold her half of Lot 31 to M.A. Price in 1899, but the J. Paul Stirewalt's family retained possession of the southern half until 1978 when the heirs sold it to Philip James O'Melia, a single man.

He sold it in 1980 to Daniel and Jane Burke who in turn sold it in 1983 to Tom and Madonna Linski Sr. The Linski's divided the property into two apartments and sold it to Joseph R and M Patricia Bowman in 1993. For a period of time, while the Bowman's owned the property, the lower level was rented out to be used as a Caldwell Banker Real Estate Office.

In 2001, the Bowman's sold the entire property to Roy and Jeannette Muller, current owners, who use the downstairs level for their wholesale and resale business named "Shop Civil War".

The Stirewalt family members were ordained pastors for many generations. Captain John Stirewalt, born in Salisbury, Rowan County, North Carolina about 1779, was ordained August 10, 1829 during the Synod held in Salem Church, North Carolina, and after his death, his wife and four children moved to the farm that he had previously purchased near New Market, Virginia. His son, Jacob, born in 1805, was ordained a pastor in 1838 and served as pastor of Emmanuel Church in New Market, Mt. Calvary in the Shenandoah Parish, and St. Paul's in Jerome, - he married Harriet Melvina Henkel, daughter of Jacob Adams Henkel on January 8, 1833 in New Market. Their children included Rev Jerome Paul Stirewalt, born 1831, Rev. John N. Stirewalt born 1844, and Rev. Jacob L. Stirewalt, born 1848. Both Jerome Paul and John N. became prominent ministers in Page, Shenandoah and Rockingham counties, both serving as pastors at St. Matthews Lutheran Church in New Market..

The Henkel Press published Dr J. Paul Stirewalt's "History of Raders' Lutheran Church" in 1922.

*References: Reformation Lutheran Church – A BiCentennial History 1790 - 1990
Shenandoah County Deeds, Court House, Woodstock, VA
A History of Shenandoah County by John W. Weyland*