

# James Sellers and Barbara White

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## James SELLERS

Parents: Johanne Michel "Michael" Zeller / Sellers and Catherina Smyth (see their section)

Birth: abt. 1776 at Melrose, Rockingham Co., VA (8 miles north of Harrisonburg)

Death: bef. 1850 in Lee Co., Iowa

Burial: unmarked grave, Williamson Cemetery, Pleasant Ridge Township, Lee Co., Iowa

Faith: Methodist-Episcopal based on his father hosting Methodist Circuit Riders on his property

Wife: Barbara White; married November 8, 1796, Rockingham Co., VA

## Barbara WHITE

Parents: Christian Wise / White and Elizabeth Steinbracher / Stonebraker

Birth: January 31, 1774 in Middle Fork of Sleepy Creek, Berkeley Co., VA (now West VA)

Death: May 31, 1851 in Pleasant Ridge Twp., Lee Co., Iowa

Burial: Williamson Cemetery, Pleasant Ridge Township, Lee Co. Iowa

Faith: presumed Methodist-Episcopal

## How did Barbara White come to know James Sellers?

Barbara was about age 22 when she married James in Rockingham Co., VA. Her birth year is based on census records. The Christian White/Wise clan arrived in Rockingham Co., VA about 1788 per tax records and was still living in the Harrisonburg area at the time Barbara married James in 1796. The White clan did not migrate down to Washington Co., Tennessee until after the birth of their youngest child, Samuel L. White around 1800. At the time when Barbara met James, he was about 20 years old living in the Melrose area (Zenda Twp.), 8 miles north of Harrisonburg, VA on his father's property. Historical records show that around 1788, James father, Johanne Michael Sellers / Zeller, donated 1 acre land and built a meeting house on his property to hold services for the Methodist Circuit Riders that came through. Over time, the church was named Fellowship, became more organized under the Rockingham Circuit and the log building expanded to also be used as a school. I suspect that the Whites and Sellers became acquainted through Methodist Church affiliation and lived near each other in the vicinity between Melrose and Keezletown, Virginia. This area was predominately settled by Germans who migrated down from Pennsylvania. The White clan continued in the Methodist Episcopal faith for generations. It's unclear if James and Barbara White-Zellers converted to United Brethren "UB" faith when they moved from Virginia to Indiana and then onward west to Iowa. Two of their children, Delilah and Absalom, converted to UB (Absalom around 1830) as noted in their obituaries respectively. Absalom became a UB minister. For more info on the History of the Fellowship Methodist Church, by C.E. Armentrout, go to page 17.

James Sellers' first cousin, Ann Sellers (d/o Conrad Sellers and Elizabeth Helfry) married Joseph White on August 1, 1805, in Rockingham Co., VA. It is suspected that this Joseph White (b. abt. 1782) is the brother of Barbara White who married James Sellers and the son of Christian White and Elizabeth Stonebraker. According to the notes of David Jonathan White, great-grandson of Christian White, he states:

*"Christian White married Elizabeth Stonebraker. Both came from Germany after the Revolutionary War. They settled in Hagerstown, Maryland. They came to old Virginia, then to Washington County, Tennessee. Sons and daughters that I remember to heard talk of was:*

1. *Joe moved to Illinois, lost sight of him. I think Joe was a preacher*
2. *Sam moved to Ohio, had a son Charlie*

3. *John lived and died in Washington County, Tennessee. His first wife was Mary/Margaret O'Dell. His wife was Rosey Tipton. He died at Embreeville about 1850. He was about 75 or 80.*
4. *Kate lived and died in Washington County, Tennessee. She married Phillips Parks.*
5. *George lived and died in Washington County, Tennessee on the Cherokee. His first wife was Sally Nelson.*
6. *Jacob, my great uncle, died at Embreeville just after the civil war."*

SOURCE: [http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~tnunicoi/david\\_jonathan\\_white/david\\_jonathan\\_white\\_writings.html](http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~tnunicoi/david_jonathan_white/david_jonathan_white_writings.html)

The foregoing is extracted genealogist Michael Zeller's research: <http://wc.rootsweb.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=GET&db=muckham&id=I13332>

According to "*A Preliminary Study of the Descendants of Heinrich Zeller*" by Frank M. Sellers, Jr., 1984, he asserts that James was the son of Henry Sellers Jr. and Elizabeth \_\_\_ and that James married Barbara White in Rockingham Co., Virginia. Records prove James' marriage to Barbara White on November 8, 1796, as her father, "*Christian Weit*," was noted in a tithable in Rockingham Co, VA and the father of Barbara. However, James Sellers was not the son of Henry, but rather Michael Sellers (see his section), according to tax records.

The 1791 Tax List showed James being listed with his likely father, Michael Sellers, both noted "*a white male, at least 16 years of age*" and thus responsible for the tax. Based on the Tax List, James was at least 16 years of age in 1791 and thus Michael Sellers was responsible for the tax owed by James. On the 1791, 1792, and 1793 tax lists, Michael, Jacob, and James are listed in line and together. The "No marks" next to Jacob Sellers and James Sellers in 1791 and 1792 indicate that both were at least 16 years of age but either did not have taxable property or Michael was the one responsible for their taxes. And because of this, it can be assumed that Michael was their father. Additionally, Michael Sellers was listed with 4 horses in 1789, 1791, and 1792 while in 1793 he was listed with 3 horses. Consider the following tax rosters for James Sellers for the years 1791, 1792, and 1793 in Rockingham Co., VA:

June 19, 1789: District 10

Michael Sellers - 1 white male over 16 in household, 4 Horses

May 21, 1791: Richard Ragan's Company

Michael Sellers - 4 horses

Jacob Sellers - No marks

JAMES SELLERS - No marks

March 14, 1792: Richard Ragan's Company

Michael Sellers - 4 horses

Jacob Sellers - No marks

JAMES SELLERS - No marks

August 6, 1793: Josiah Harrison's Company (District 8)

JAMES SELLERS - 1 horse

Michael Sellers - 3 horses

Jacob Sellers - No marks

LAND: Four years before his father's death in 1812 in Rockingham Co., VA, Michael Seller's sold the parcel near Keezletown to "James Sellers" in 1808. James' brother, Andrew, inherited all of the land in Melrose and once James moved away, he acquired the Keezletown parcel as well. About a year after his father's death in 1812, James and Barbara White-Sellers left the area. According to the obituary of their daughter, Delilah Sellers-Davis, the family moved away in 1813, first to Kentucky and stayed for couple of years, then left for

Tennessee (about 1815) and then a few years later moved to New Albany, Indiana (located on the Ohio river across from Louisville, Kentucky) "*When 12 years of age, she, with her parents, moved to Kentucky, and two years later to Tennessee, and a few years later to New Albany, Indiana.*" (see her section for full obituary.)

LAND GRANT 1814: James Sellers received a Land Grant of 160 acres in Harrison Co., Indiana on December 14, 1814 with the "assignee of William Nance". He remained on the 160 acre farm for 25 years after which time, on April 18, 1838, he sold the parcel to St. Clair Young and moved west to Lanesville, Lee Co., Iowa.

According to the Bureau of Land Management, James Sellers patented several tracts of land in Lee Co., Iowa, Township 69, North Range #5:

- December 1, 1841: 80 acres, Lee Co., Iowa Territory (W1/2 SW 22/Twp 69, North 5 West, No 5th PM - IA Lee)
- December 1, 1841: 160 acres, Lee Co, Iowa Territory (NW 22/Twp 69 North 5 West, No 5th PM - IA Lee)
- December 1, 1841: 80 acres, Lee Co., Iowa Territory (W1/2 NW 15/Twp 69, North 5 West, No 5th PM - IA Lee)

CHILDREN: James Sellers and wife Barbara White had eight known children, six of whom were identified. 4 boys and 4 girls proven from two sources: First Census Records: 1810 Rockingham Co., VA Census showed 2 boys and 4 girls in the household. The 1820 Rockingham Co., VA Census showed 4 boys living in the household with 2 females. Daughters Elizabeth and Phoebe married prior to 1820 and left the household, thus leaving the two younger daughters at home. (See census info below).

Second, the 1892 Obituary of Delilah Sellers-Davis, daughter of James and Barbara White-Sellers which explained: "*she had three sisters and four brothers, all of whom are numbered with the dead except Absalom Sellers, who now resides in Topeka, Kansas, enjoying reasonably good health in his 80th year*".

The following children:

1. Elizabeth SELLERS-Mickelberry b: Abt 1797, Rockingham Co., VA
2. Phoebe SELLERS-Nance b: 28 OCT 1798, Rockingham Co., VA
3. Delilah SELLERS-David b: 13 JAN 1801, Rockingham Co., VA
4. Daughter SELLERS b. abt. 1804 Rockingham Co., VA
5. Daniel B. SELLERS b: abt 1806, Rockingham Co., VA
6. Rev. Absalom Alexander SELLERS b: 20 FEB 1808, Rockingham Co., VA
7. Son SELLERS b. abt. 1810 Rockingham Co., VA
8. Jackson SELLERS b. abt. 1814 in Rockingham Co., VA

CENSUS 1810 - Page 136, Line 577: James Sellers living in Keezletown, Rockingham Co., VA.

HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD - James Sellars

2 - Free White Males under age 10

1 - Free White Male ages 26 - 44

2 - Free White Females under ag 10

2 - Free White Females age 10 - 15

1 - Free White Female ages 26 - 44

CENSUS 1820 - Harrison Co., Indiana, pg. 65 - Line 12:

HEAD - James "Cellers"

2 - Free White Males up to 10 years of age

2 = Free White Males of 10 years of age but under 16

1 - Free White Male 45+ years of age

- 2 - Free White Females of 10 years of age but under 16
- 1 - Free White Female of 26 years of age but under 45
- 1 - Number of persons engaged in Agriculture

CENSUS 1830 : Franklin Township, Harrison Co., Indiana – pg. 118.

(Surname indexed as "Tellers" due to the enumerator's handwriting)

HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD - James "Tellers"

- 1 - Free White Male 15 - 20 years of age
- 1 - Free White Male 20 - 30 years of age
- 1 - Free White Male 50 - 60 years of age
- 1 - Free White Female - 5 to 10 years of age
- 1 - Free White Female - 50 - 60 years of age

CENSUS 1840: Township 69, North Range 5 West, Lee Co., Iowa –pg. 367, Line 1.

HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD - James Sellers

- 1 - Free White Male at least 70 years old but under 80
- 1 - Free White Female at least 70 years old but under 80
- 1 - Free Colored Male under 10 years of age
- 1 - Free Colored Female at least 10 years old but under 24

LAND GRANT 1840: On December 14, 1814, James Sellers received a land grant of 160 acres in Harrison Co., Indiana. He sold a portion of his land to St. Clair Young on April 18, 1838, and moving onward to Lee Co., Iowa. James' son, Absalom A. Sellers, was living next door. James Sellers sold their remaining land and personal items to son Absalom Alexander Sellers on September 9, 1844.

DEATH OF JAMES SELLERS: James Sellers died between fall of 1844 when he sold land to his son and before 1850 census. He has an unmarked grave at Williamson Cemetery north of West Point, Lee Co., Iowa

CENSUS 1850 - 28th Division of Lee Co., Iowa, Oct. 2, 1850 Page 347B; Dwelling #901/Family #901:

Absalom Sellars, Age 42, Male, Carpenter, Real Estate Value: \$1500, Born VA

James, Age 37, Female, Born IN

Barbara Sellars, Age 76, Male, Farmer, Born MD

Jane, Age 14, Female, Born IL

George, Age 10, Male, Born IL

Vastoe A., Age 10, Female, Born IL

Alexander, Age 6, Male, Born IA

Jemima, Age 4, Female, Born IA

Delila, Age 2, Female, Born IA

NOTE: James' wife, Barbara, was listed as living with son Absalom on the subsequent 1850 Census without James.

1851: DEATH OF BARBARA WHITE-SELLERS - Barbara is buried at Williamson Cemetery north of West Point, Lee Co., Iowa presumed next to her husband's unmarked grave and near her 3 grandchildren, children of Absalom.



“BARBARY  
Wife of  
JAMES SELLERS  
DIED  
May 31, 1851  
Aged 77 yrs  
4 mo”

SOURCE PHOTO:

<http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=30173700>

**Delilah SELLERS** – 3<sup>rd</sup> child of James Sellers and Barbara White

*Birth:* 13 JAN 1801 in Rockingham Co, Virginia

*Death:* 27 DEC 1892 in Oskaloosa, Mahaska Co., Iowa

Married Edward Davis

*Burial:* 28 DEC 1892 Davis / Bluff Creek Cemetery, West Des Moines Twp., Oskaloosa, Iowa

Edward and Delilah Sellers-Davis are buried in Bluff Creek Cemetery with marked plots. Bluff Creek Cemetery was once known as the Davis Cemetery and located on their old homestead. According to Delilah's Obituary (see below), it goes into detail about her life and reveals the migration of her family from Virginia to Kentucky to Tennessee to Indiana.

OBITUARY of Delilah (Sellers) Davis 1892 "*Saturday Globe*" newspaper in Oskaloosa, Iowa:

*"Died, Tuesday, December 27, 1892, Mrs. Delilah Davis, from pneumonia, at the age of 91 years, 11 months and 14 days, at the home of her son, Geo. W. Davis, of Oskaloosa, Ia. For the last ten years Mrs. Davis has been well and strong for one of her age until within the last month, but, from this trouble, medical was of no avail and early in her illness the impossibility of her recovery was evident.*

*Mrs. Davis, whose maiden name was Sellers, was born Jan. 13, 1801, on a farm in Rockingham county, Virginia. When 12 years of age, she, with her parents, moved to Kentucky, and two years later to Tennessee, and a few years later to New Albany, Indiana. She had three sisters and four brothers, all of whom are numbered with the dead except Absalom Sellers, who now resides in Topeka, Kansas, enjoying reasonably good health in his 80th year. Her last sister, Phoebe Nance, died about six years ago in her 89th year.*

*Mrs. Davis, in 1821, was married to Edward Davis, in New Albany, where they resided until 1836, when the opportunities for founding a new and future home drew them to the new state of Illinois on the bank of the Mississippi river in Hancock county. In 1840 there had been born to her six boys and three girls, some of whom had grown almost into maturity. About this time the new territory of Iowa became of interest, and in the spring of 1843, her husband with other Illinoisans, left his family and came into the new country that the red man had not vacated, and staked out a claim for a new home. After right to title was fully assured, he returned and prepared to move his family to the new location in Iowa.*



*It was on the morning of Nov. 1st, 1844, at sunrise, that they crossed the Des Moines river at the present site of Eddyville and camped on a small stream in the south part of Mahaska county, which Mr. Davis had visited the year before and given the name of Bluff Creek. Here they built the permanent home, lived happy and enjoyed all the luxuries that a frontier life could expect. All was joy and peace throughout this household. Game and wild fruit were in abundance. It was in this home that they bid farewell to the four oldest sons, who drove an ox team to California to seek a fortune in the gold-mining districts of that state. The joy of their life was unbroken until April 4, 1863, when death called from among the remaining group the husband and the father, at the age of 66 years.*

*Mrs. Davis has been, in more ways than one, a remarkable person. She was small in stature, but her strength and power of physical endurance is seldom equaled. Her memory, which was exceedingly good, had in store many historical facts which she could recall until within the last year of her life. She had many recollections of the war of 1812, and well did she remember the defeat of Bonaparte, at Waterloo, in 1815. The battle of Tippecanoe and New Orleans were engagements in which she had friends and of which she loved to relate.*

*Early in her life she became a member of the U.B. church, in which faith she remained a consistent member until her death. Her home life was one of self denial, and extended not only to her own family but also to her relatives and friends, and even the stranger who was in need found in her a charitable welcome to the best her opportunities offered.*

*She was permitted to see her nine children all grow to manhood and womanhood. Her oldest, Anna Logan, resides at Lomax, Ill.; Warren L. and John C. W. live near Oskaloosa, Kansas; Polly Dixon, her second daughter, died more than 30 years ago; Jackson died in Oregon 4 years ago; Alexander A. lives in Thurston, Oklahoma; Jane Streeter, youngest daughter, and Thos. L. live in Octavia, Nebraska; Geo. W., with whom she has made her home the greater part of the time since 1863, resides in Oskaloosa.*

*Burial occurred at the Davis Cemetery, on the old homestead in West Des Moines Tp., Dec. 28, at 2 o'clock P.M." ~~*

**Rev. Absalom Alexander SELLERS** 6<sup>th</sup> Child of James Sellers and Barbara White

*Birth:* 20 FEB 1808 in Rockingham Co., Virginia

*Death:* 4 FEB 1893 in Topeka, Shawnee Co., Kansas

*Wife:* Jane Harberson

*Married:* March 17, 1845 Henry Co., Iowa

*Faith:* Converted to United Brethren "UB"\* in 1830, served as UB Minister

*Burial:* Maple Grove Cemetery, Lecompton Township, Douglas Co., Kansas

\*The Church of the United Brethren in Christ "UB" is an evangelical Christian denomination based in Huntington, Indiana. It is a Protestant denomination of episcopal structure, Arminian theology, with roots in the Mennonite and German Reformed communities of 18th-century Pennsylvania, as well as close ties to Methodism. It catered to the German speaking community.

SOURCE: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Church\\_of\\_the\\_United\\_Brethren\\_in\\_Christ](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Church_of_the_United_Brethren_in_Christ)

**LAND:** Around 1814, Absalom moved to Harrison Co., Indiana, with his parents and siblings. Land Deeds in Harrison Co. show that he had several transactions there prior to relocating to Illinois and then onward to Lee Co., Iowa, around 1835. His parents, James and Barbara White-Sellers sold their land in Harrison Co., Indiana, and moved to Lee Co., Iowa, in 1838. Land transactions for Absalom Sellers in Harrison Co., IN are as follows:

- January 20, 1830: David W. Masselman to ABSALOM A. SELLERS, lot in town of Lanesville (Book F, page 412).
- November 24, 1830: James Armstrong to ABSALOM A. SELLERS, lot in town of Lanesville (Book G, pages 27, 30).
- October 1, 1832: ABSALOM A. SELLERS to Luke Coon, lot in town of Lanesville (Book G, page 464).
- September 10, 1834: ABSALOM A. SELLERS to William Sampson, lot in town of Lanesville (Book H, page 240).

A brief sketch of Rev. Absalom Alexander Sellers is cited in the book, *"History of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, Virginia Conference"* by A.P. Funkhouser, 1921. Chapter 19, Page 154:

<https://archive.org/details/historyofchurcho00funk>

*"A. A. Sellers was born in Rockingham county in 1808. He was converted at a camp meeting in Harrison County, Indiana, in 1830 and on that very spot preached his first sermon. In 1836 he joined Wabash Conference. Three years later he moved into Iowa, and in that state he "perhaps endured more hardships and made greater sacrifices to build up the Church" than any other missionary. When a presiding elder in 1850, he traveled 900 miles to make one round on his circuit, encountering frequent peril from storm and flood. Up to 1857 he had received only \$526.37."*

CENSUS 1840: Twp 69, North Range 5 West, Lee Co., Iowa Page 365.

HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD - Absalom Sellers

1 - Free White Male under 5 years of age

1 - Free White Male at least 20 years old but under 30

1 - Free White Male at least 30 years old but under 40

1 - Free White Female under 5 years of age

1 - Free White Female at least 20 years old but under 30

NOTE 1840: Absalom & family are living next door to his parents, James and Barbara (White) Sellers.

CENSUS 1850: 28th Division of Lee County, Iowa. Census - October 2, 1850, Page 347.

Dwelling #901/Family #901

Absalom Sellars, age 42, Male, Carpenter, Real Estate Value: \$1500, Born VA

Janes, age 37, Female, Born IN

Barham Sellars, age 76, Male, Farmer, Born MD (Barbara White-Sellers – mother)

Jane, age 14, Female, Born IL

George, age 10, Male, Born IL

Vesta A., age 10, Female, Born IL

Alexander, age 6, Male, Born IA

Jemima, age 4, Female, Born IA

Delila, age 2, Female, Born IA

NOTE 1850: Absalom's mother, Barbara White-Sellers, was living in the household under the misspelled as "Barham Sellers" noted as a "male."

CENSUS 1856: Iowa State Census, Pleasant Ridge Township, Lee Co., Iowa.

Dwelling #76 / Family #81

A. A. Sellers, age 48, Male, Married, 17 yrs in state, Born VA, UB Preacher, Pleasant Ridge Twp.

Jane C., age 43, Female, Married, 17 yrs in state, Born IN

George H., age 17, Male, 17 years in state, Born IL

H. J., age 12, Male, 12 years in state, Born IA  
Jemima, Age 10, Female, 10 years in state, Born IA  
Delilah, Age 7, Female, 7 years in state, Born IA  
Iowa, Age 2, Female, 2 years in state, Born IA

NOTE 1856: Son, Alexander was transcribed mistakenly with the initials of "H. J."

CENSUS 1860: Pleasant Ridge Twp, Lee Co., Iowa. - June 1860, Pg 248.

Dwelling #101 / Family #96

Absalom A. Sellers, age 52, Male, Farmer, Real Estate Value: \$3000, Personal Value: \$1075, Born VA  
Jane, age 47, Female, Born IN

George H., Age 21, Male, Farm Laborer, Born IL

Alexander J., Age 16, Male, Farm Laborer, Born IA

Jemima, Age 13, Female, Born IA

Delila, Age 10, Female, Born IA

Iowa, Age 6, Female, Born IA

CENSUS 1870: Lecompton Twp, Douglas Co., Kansas. Census July 26, 1870, pg 394B.

Dwelling #56 / Family #57

Sellers, Absalim, Age 62, M, W, Farmer, Real Estate Value: \$10,500, Personal Value: \$800, Born VA

Jane, Age 50, F, W, Keeping House, Born IN

Iowa, Age 16, F, W, Born IA

STATE CENSUS 1875: Lecompton Twp, Douglas Co., Kansas - March 1, 1875, Pg 24:

Dwelling #163 / Family #165

A. A. Sellers, Age 66, M, W, Minister, Real Estate Value: \$2000, Personal Value: \$25, Born VA, Moved to KS from IA

Jane, Age 62, F, W, Born IN, Moved to KS from IA

Ida May, Age 13, F, W, Born IA, Moved to KS from IL

NOTE 1875: Ida May was Absalom's granddaughter and the daughter of their son, George H. Sellers and Barbara Ellen Nelson. During the Civil War, George enlisted in the 30th Iowa Regiment in September 1862 but a month later became ill and died on October 30, 1862. Ida was 9 months old. Wife Barbara, re-married two years later on November 20, 1864, to Nathan Edison Moss and moved to Adams Co., Illinois. Barbara gave birth to an additional 4 children. She died on March 14, 1873, in Adams Co., Illinois and Absalom Alexander Sellers took legal custody of Ida May Sellers. 3 years later, Ida May Sellers married to John D. Jennings on June 29, 1878.

CENSUS 1880: Lecompton Twp, Douglas Co., Kansas - enumerated June 14, 1880, Page 149B.

Dwelling #172 / Family #180

Sellers, Absalom A., W, M, Age 72, Married, U.B. Minister, Born VA

Jane E., W, F, Age 67, Wife, Married, Keeping House, Born IN

WILL: On April 20, 1880, Absalom Alexander Sellers wrote his Last Will and Testament in Douglas Co., Kansas. He added two Codicils to the Will for two grand-daughters: the first on August 20, 1891 to include Ethel McBee, an adopted daughter of Iowa Sellers-McBee. The second, on August 18, 1892, to change his bequests to account for the death of his granddaughter, Lenna Hennessey (the daughter of Jemima who died in 1879). Absalom's daughter, Lenna died in 1892 at the age of 23.



Last Will and Testament of Absalom Alexander Sellers:

*"I, A. A. Sellers, having the shortness of life and the certainty of death, and being well advanced in years and of a sound mind, do make this my last will and testament.*

*First. It is my will that my funeral expenses and all my just debts be paid.*

*Second. It is my will that my beloved wife Jane E. Sellers have all my personal property.*

*Third. It is my will that my beloved wife Jane E. Sellers have all my Real Estate during her life time or widowhood.*

*Fourth. It is my will that at either marriage or death of my beloved wife Jane E. Sellers that all my remaining personal property and all my Real Estate be divided between my legal heirs as hereinafter specified.*

*Fifth. It is my will that so much as each one of my legal heirs have already received shall be accounted as so much of their several distributive shares in my estate.*

*First. I give and bequeath to my grand-daughter Ida May Jennings the sum of one hundred dollars.*

*Second. I give and bequeath to my grand-daughter Lenna Hennessey one hundred dollars.*

*Third. I give and bequeath to my grandson Alexander A. Hennessey one hundred dollars.*

*Fourth. It is my will that all the balance of my estate be equally divided between my other three legal heirs upon the following basis to wit:*

*First. My Son Alexander Sellers has received the following several sums, which is to be so much of his distributive share in my estate. Viz: one horse \$50.00. Two mules \$100.00. Thirty (30) acres of land 375.00. One house built on said land \$75.00. Total \$600.00. The above is to be his entire share in my estate unless there should be a balance left after my two daughters each receive an equal amount.*

*Second. My daughter Delilah Betts has received one half interest in one cow \$12.50. One horse \$25.00. One Cow \$20.00. One Cook Stove \$10.00 which is to be accounted as so much of her distributive share in my estate.*

*Third. My Daughter Iowa F. McBee has received one Bureau \$9.00, One lapene watch 9.00. Total \$18.00 which is to be so much of her distributive share in my estate.*

*Fourth. It is my will that the \$200.00 bequeathed to Lenna and A. A. Hennessey shall not be paid to their Father but be under the control of my Executor and paid over to them when they arrive at lawful age. Furthermore if either of them shall die before receiving said bequest it shall all be paid to the other one, but if both of them should die before receive said bequest the same shall be paid to my other legal heirs according to specifications in this will.*

*Fifth. It is my will that if Ida May Jennings should die before she receives the \$100.00 bequested to her, said bequest shall go to my other legal heirs, and in no case shall any of my estate descend beyond my grand-children.*

*Sixth. It is my will that if my daughter Delilah Betts should die before receiving her share in my estate, it shall not be paid to her husband, but be under the control of my Executor and paid to her children when they arrive at lawful age, but should either of them die it shall all be paid to the other one, but should both of them die their share in my estate shall be paid to my other legal heirs according to specifications in this will.*

*Seventh. It is my will that if my Daughter Iowa F. McBee should die before receiving her share in my estate, and leave no issue, her share in my estate shall not go to her husband, but shall be divided between my legal heirs according to specifications in this will.*

*Absalom A. Sellers*

*Attest: April 20, 1880.*

*I hereby appoint Jacob Steffey my Executor to settle the affairs of my estate according to the foregoing Will.*

*Absalom A. Sellers*

*August 20, 1891.*

#### **CODICIL**

*I hereby constitute Ethel McBee, a legal heir in my Estate so that if my Daughter Iowa F. McBee should die before receiving her share in my Estate, her share shall go to her adopted Daughter Ethel McBee.*

*Absalom A. Sellers*

*August 20, 1891*

*Attest: H.M Mason and Benj. Underwood.*

#### **CODICIL No. II.**

*Whereas after writing the above will I have sold all of my real estate, converting the value thereof into personal property, two thousand dollars is included in a coupon note and mortgage which together with all other personal property constitute an undivided sum for the support of myself and wife, and after our demise shall be paid, first, our funeral expenses, second debts if any found, third, legal fees of my Executor and Probate Court, fourth, \$100.00, specific bequest to Ida May Jennings if living, fifth #200.00 to A. A. Hennessy if living. All the balance of said sum to be equally divided among my three children, A J. Sellers, Iowa F. McBee and Dillie Betts, according to the plan of distribution found elsewhere in this will.*

*August 18th, 1892. A. A. Sellers*

*Attest: H. M. Mason B. Underwood”*

#### **OBITUARIES - Absalom Alexander Sellers**

*~~"The Topeka Daily Capital" dated Feb 5, 1893.*

#### **THE REV. SELLERS DEAD**

*Rev. A. A. Sellers died this morning at the residence of his youngest daughter, Mrs. John McBee, 1301 Van Buren street. He leaves an aged wife and three children, the oldest a son, A. J. Sellers of Oskaloosa, Kan.; Mrs. John Betts of Shorey, Ia., and Mrs. F. McBee of this city. He was sick only a week and passed away peacefully. Mr. Sellers was born in West Virginia, February 26, 1808. The funeral will occur at 12:30 o'clock today, and the interment will be at Lecompton.”*

~~“Lecompton Sun Newspaper, dated Feb 9, 1893.

*DIED SELLERS -- Saturday morning February 4th 1893, at Topeka Kans., at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Iowa McBy, Rev. A. A. Sellers passed peacefully away. At the time of his death Father Sellers lacked but fifteen days of being eighty-five years old. The deceased is well known by the entire community, especially the old settlers. The remains were conveyed to the Elmore St., Church where short services were held by Pastor Hope. The many friends of the good old man were allowed the privilege of gazing on his peaceful countenance for the last time. Then the remains were conveyed to Maple Hill Cemetery west of town where they were laid to rest by the side of his daughter and grand-children. Father Sellers leaves an aged wife, two daughters, a son and a host of other relatives and friends to mourn. But why should we mourn, with him immortality is no longer a hope but a blessed in his reward. With an abiding Christian faith that knew no wavering even in the last bitter moments of the severing of earthly ties, he has past on, not unto death but unto life eternal.”*

GRAVESTONE: Absalom Alexander Sellers and wife, Jane E. Harberson share a double headstone in Maple Grove Cemetery in Lecompton, Douglas Co., Kansas. The inscription reads:

REV. A. A. SELLERS Pioneer Minister of the U.B. Church

FEB. 20, 1808 FEB. 4, 1893

JANE E. His Wife JAN. 13, 1813 APR. 8, 1893

Their daughter, Jemima Sellers-Hennessey, (w/o Charles Patrick Hennessey who died Dec. 28, 1879) and her daughter, Lenna, d.1892 are buried next to them.

## Johanne Michael ZELLER / SELLERS

Born: Abt 1753

Death: Abt 1812 in Melrose Caverns, Zenda Twp., Rockingham County, VA

Wife: Catherina Smyth? (suspected but not proven).

Father: Johan "Peter" Zeller (b. 1722 Mottgers, Hesse, Germany – d. Aug. 1809 Rockingham Co., VA)

Mother: unknown

Source: <http://wc.rootsweb.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=GET&db=muckham&id=I380>

Children :

1. Sarah SELLERS b: 1765 in Rockingham Co., VA
2. Christina SELLERS b: Abt 1768 in Rockingham Co., VA
3. Michael SELLERS b: 1770 in Rockingham Co., VA
4. Jacob SELLERS b: Abt 1772 in Rockingham Co., VA
5. Andrew SELLERS b: 30 NOV 1775 in Rockingham Co., VA
6. James SELLERS b: 1776 in Rockingham Co.,VA -- married Barbara White
7. Mary SELLERS b. 1778 in Rockingham Co., VA

Johannes Michel Zeller became John "Michael" Sellers, after arriving in America from Germany. The last name is found in various court records either as "Sillers, Seller or "Sellars. Michael lived in Lancaster, PA for a time before moving to Virginia and finally settling in Rockingham Co., VA. In 1781, Johanne Michael Sellers was deeded land near what is now Melrose Station in Rockingham Co., by Governor Thomas Jefferson. Michael donated 1 acre of land to build a meeting house on his property and hosted Methodist circuit riders to hold services there. The original Fellowship United Methodist Church once stood on a portion his former land, as well as the Sellers Cemetery which is now overgrown and in poor condition. For more info on the History of the Fellowship Methodist Church, written by C.E. Armentrout, go to page 17.



PHOTO: The original Fellowship Methodist Church was built on Michael Zeller / Seller's property located off US Hwy 11, east of Dry Fork Run and Melrose Caverns, in Zenda Twp., Rockingham Co., VA (eastern side of I-81). There were several former meeting houses and a school built on Zeller's property. The one in the photo was erected abt. 1912 and burned in March 1955 and replaced with a brick structure which stands today about a half mile away on Fellowship Rd. The Sellers cemetery is located off Country Boy Road which has been dormant since 1967 and in poor condition. This is where Michael Sellers and wife are presumed to be buried with unmarked graves since the cemetery is located on their former property. Their son, Andrew, who assumed ownership of the estate, and wife, are also buried at the Sellers Cemetery, but their headstones, along with several others, were moved

over to the New Fellowship UM Church Cemetery where the graveyard is well maintained. For a complete roster of people interred in both cemeteries click the links:

Sellers Cemetery: <http://www.heritagecenter.com/cemeteries/cem/cem516.html>

Fellowship UM Cemetery: <http://www.heritagecenter.com/cemeteries/cem/cem8.html>

Michael Sellers died about 1812 and his entire homestead went to his son, Andrew, who served as the Executor of his father's estate. Andrew built his own home on the property and remained there until his death on October 21, 1859 (see his section for more info). Michael and wife are presumed buried in unmarked graves in the Sellers Cemetery. When Andrew died, he left the property to his son, Silem, and it was he that built an addition to his father's original house. Over time, the building deteriorated and in dire need of repair. In 1994, the land and house were purchased and a restoration began. The following article published in the Daily News Record, dated June 4, 1994, details some of the history and restoration of the former Seller house:

Daily News-Record ~~(Harrisonburg, VA) June 4, 1994

Renovation Uncovers Log House

By CHRIS EDWARDS News-Record Staff Writer:

*"Andrew Sellers had no chainsaw to cut the heavy, pine heartwood logs for his home near Linville. He had no tractor to haul either those logs or the blue limestone rocks that became the foundation and chimneys.*

*In the early 19th century there was not even anything we would call a road to Sellers' place, says William H. Groseclose, who is restoring the long-neglected frontier home.*

*Sellers probably brought what supplies he could with a wagon and mule. He mixed mud with horsehair to chink the green logs (which are of a size that could not be found today). Sellers had no slaves, though the nails he used may have been made at Monticello by the slaves of Thomas Jefferson.*

*It was Jefferson who in 1781, as governor, deeded the house's site to Sellers' father, Johan Michael Zellers (the spelling of whose German name was eventually Anglicized to Sellers). Sellers probably obtained both the lumber and the rocks from the field right around the cabin site, Kelly Wampler, Groseclose's contractor for the restoration, said as a crew was at work this week sawing and plastering.*

*I-81 is visible now over a wooded hillside from the home, near Melrose Station on U.S. 11. But in Sellers' time the farm was an isolated site, where Methodist circuit riders held services before building the nearby Fellowship United Methodist Church.*

*In 1859, Andrew's son, Silem, built an addition on the house for a total cost of \$136.01. (Laying the foundation cost him \$1.25.) Last year when Groseclose bought the house -- vacant for three years -- he found the addition "in bad, bad shape."*

*That's been torn down. And the log house itself appeared so dilapidated that some people recommended the wreckers' ball for it as well. But Groseclose and Wampler thought otherwise. They began its restoration, and construction of a new addition, this February.*

*The old home, in what a historic homes survey calls a "rustic Federal" style, features an opening for a 3-foot, 3-inch-wide "funeral door"; one to fit it is on order. Its two chimneys are stone below and brick higher up. Brick replaced limestone as weather wore the stone away, Wampler said. Both fireplaces had massive, now highly valued "Hessian" mantle pieces, which will go back into place when the work is done.*

*White clapboard siding placed by a previous owner has been removed, exposing the logs. They will be chinked with wire lathe, white Portland and lime, mixed with yellow sand for an off-white color, said Wampler.*

*"I'm going to be searching for bullet holes and arrowheads," he said.*

*Groseclose said he aims for the delicate, old-home fix-up balance of "restore it but make it livable." The home will combine rustic touches with things Andrew Sellers never dreamed of.*

*The wide front porch, where a swing will hang, has new, natural cedar log columns, complete with short stumps to hang flowerpots. Groseclose plans to hang an antique, cross-cut saw from a wall, and hang a kettle in a massive, new fireplace in the addition. He may cook bean soup there on a winter afternoon. But skylights above will be opened by motorized hinges, and shut by automatic rain sensors.*

*As many as 17 deer in a day have been counted in the fields visible from the house, where a bulldozer this week was digging a new pond. (No, hunting will not be allowed there.)*

*Groseclose navigated through weeds to show the Sellers' hand-dug, 28-foot well, still neatly lined with bluestones, and filled with 18 feet of water.*

*"I'll build a little deal with a rope and bucket," he said.*

*Groseclose, who chairs the regional board of First Union Bank and sits on the board of WLR Foods, says he's not sure what he will ultimately do with the house. His family does not expect to move into it. He and Wampler estimate the cost of restoring it -- a five-month project -- will be about a third higher than building an equivalent size (1750 square-foot) home from scratch.*

*But they both speak of preserving history as an end in itself. Groseclose -- in trying to explain that -- recalled a sense of awe he felt on a recent visit to the 12th century, East India building in the Netherlands.*

*"We think of this as being old," he marveled."*

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More info of Michael Sellers and his father Peter Sellers:

SOURCE: <http://wc.rootsweb.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=GET&db=muckham&id=I164>

In his 1984 book *"A Preliminary Study of the Descendants of Heinrich Zeller"*, Frank Sellers asserts that Peter Sellers (Michael's father) was probably born soon after the family's arrival in Philadelphia, PA, from Germany aboard the "Queen Elizabeth" in September 16, 1738. Thus Peter would be about 11 when the family migrated to Virginia in late 1749 early 1750. The family established their homestead at present-day Rockingham County in the area around McGaheysville and Elkton according to Mary Marie Koontz Arrington 1986 book *"Cradled by the Massanutten: The Zellers-Sellers Family"*. However, based upon the dates of early Virginia land transactions involving Peter Sellers, as well as those involving his father and brothers, records show that Peter was born either late 1733 or early 1734.

Dated June 13, 1755, in Augusta Co., VA, Peter Sellers purchased *"90 acres on the north side of the Shanando (Shenandoah) River"* for 10 Shillings. The area in which he purchased the 90 acres was in Augusta County until Rockingham County was formed from it in 1778. The location of the land "on the north side of the Shanando" puts it in the area roughly between present day McGaheysville and Elkton where the Zeller-Sellers were known to have first settled in Virginia. Peter was to pay "Free Rent" of 1 Shilling per year while cultivating and improving at least "3 acres per 50 in said tract of land", otherwise the patent became void and Peter would lose the 90 acres.



In his analysis, genealogist and Sellers descendant Michael Sellers, states that the land transaction proves that Peter Sellers was in present day Rockingham County and establishes his birth year as being prior to 1739. *“If born in 1739, as reasoned earlier in the works of Frank Sellers and Mary Arrington, Peter would've been only 16 years old in 1755. The key here is that he would not have been of legal age to receive the 90 acres land patent in 1755 if only 16. Peter possibly could've purchased land by 18, but it's doubtful that he alone would've made such a purchase for 10 Shillings at such a young age. Therefore, Peter was probably at least 21 when he purchased the 90 acres on June 13, 1755, which makes his birth year likely to have been 1733 or 1734 and therefore in Germany prior to the migration to America.”*

Source – by Michael Sellers: <http://wc.rootsweb.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=GET&db=muckham&id=1164>

**LAND:** The following transactions and records naming Peter Sellers listed in Augusta Co., Virginia and Rockingham Co. which was carved from Augusta in 1778:

Chalkley's Chronicles - Volume 1, Page 448: 1767-68 -- Land processioned by Augustine Price and Frederick Armontrout, viz: For Peter Teasler, for PETER SELLER, for Michael Shurle, for John Coutts, for Jacob Man, for John Man, for Jacob Herman, for Henry Long, for George Mellow, for Anthony Aeiler, for Jacob Nicholas, for John Hetrick, for HENRY SELLER.

Volume III, Page 274: - 15 September, 1758 - Henry Baughman's appraisal, by Valentine Pence, Daniel Price, PETER SELERS.

Volume III, Deed Book #9, Page 2

18th November, 1760. John Capbritton and Mary to Christian Dedor (signed Capterton), for 15 pounds, 275 acres between Shanandore (Shenandoah) and Picked (Peaked) Mountain, patented to John, 2d June, 1760; corner to survey of PETER SELLARS. Delivered: Andrew Lewis, 11th July 1785.

Volume III, Deed Book #9, Page 372

August 18, 1761: HENRY SELLER to PETER SELLER, for 30 pounds, 123 acres, 100 acres whereof patented to Henry, 10th March 1756; 23 acres part of tract whereon Henry now lives, on Shanando (Shenandoah) River. Delivered: JNO. SELLERS, August Court, 1776.

Volume III, Deed Book #15, Page 280

September 11, 1768: HENRY SELLER to ADAM SELLERS, for 60 pounds, 168 acres patented to Henry, 1st June, 1750, on Shanando (Shenandoah River), Philip Long's land; corner PETER SELLERS'; also 205 acres patented to Henry, 30th August, 1763, between Peaked Mountain and Shanando (Shenandoah) River; corner Stephen Hemsberger (Harnsberger). Teste: JOHN SELLER, Daniel ( ) Price, Jacob Hammer.

Virginia Land Office Patents - Augusta Co., VA:

“July 5, 1774, Peter Sellers, grantee. 183 acres on the north side of Shanando (Shenandoah) River and joining the lines of Adam Sellers, Christian Featers (Christian Teeter) and his own land.”

The Rockingham Co. Court Minutes cited from *"A History of Rockingham County"* by John W. Wayland. The following accounts were allowed for military supplies furnished for public service:

- PETER SELLERS, for 5 bushels corn, at 2s., Nov. 14, 1780; 5 bus. rye, at 2s.6d., Nov. 10, 1780.
- CONT LAND 3745 = 200ACRES PARTIALLY SATISFIED survey 6092 for 120 acres "waters of Eagle Creek" military dist, Ohio 2-7-1785 (ADAMS CO, OH/BROWN CO, OHIO)
- MICHAEL, ADAM, PETER, HENRY, JOHN SILLERS

- FEB 1781 = Patent Bk 1-Page 63= 106 ACRES ON WEST SIDE OF smiths creek By Daniel SMITHS land
- NOV 1781 = Rev War claim for selling Beef to Rev War
- 1785 = Bk 1 page 319= 60 acres on east side of Dry Fork on Smith Creek (recorded in Hampshire Co, VA/WV)
- 1788 Rockingham Co Tithables = Michael and male Jacob over 16
- 8-18-1812 Rockingham Co, VA Michael SELLERS estate, Exec = Andrew SELLERS
- Bond = Zebulon Harrison, Peter Zetty, Peter Henton

TAX: On the 1791, 1792, and 1793 Rockingham Co. Tax Lists Michael, Jacob, and James are listed in line and together. The "No marks" beside the names of Jacob Sellers and James Sellers in 1791 and 1792 indicates that both were old enough to be listed (at least 16 years of age) but either did not have taxable property or Michael was the one responsible for their taxes. It can be assumed that Michael was their father. It is also interesting to note that Michael Sellers was listed with 4 horses in 1789, 1791, and 1792 while in 1793 he was listed with 3 horses with the 4th apparently being owned by James. Also note that a "Michael Sellers" sold land to a "James Sellers" in 1808 in Rockingham Co. which is about 4 years prior to Michael's death in 1812. <http://www.binnsgenealogy.com/VirginiaTaxListCensuses/>

“Michael Sellers” is listed on the Tax Lists and Land Records in Rockingham County as follows:

1775: Felix Gilbert's List (Waylands) of Tithables for then Augusta Co., (now Rockingham) Virginia:  
MICHAEL SELLERS, 1 tithable

1788: Captain Richard Ragan's Company, No. 13  
MICHAEL SELLERS, 1 tithable, son Jacob, 4 horses

June 19, 1789: District 10 <http://www.binnsgenealogy.com/VirginiaTaxListCensuses/Rockingham/1789PersonalB/29.jpg>  
MICHAEL SELLERS - 1 white male over 16 in household, 4 Horses

Landowners in the Year 1789 (Wayland's "Virginia Valley Records")  
Michael Sellers - 106 acres

May 21, 1791: Richard Ragan's Company  
MICHAEL SELLERS - 4 horses  
Jacob Sellers - No marks  
James Sellers - No marks

March 14, 1792: Richard Ragan's Company  
MICHAEL SELLERS - 4 horses  
Jacob Sellers - No marks  
James Sellers - No marks

August 6, 1793: Josiah Harrison's Company (District 8)  
James Sellers - 1 horse  
MICHAEL SELLERS - 3 horses  
Jacob Sellers - No marks

1810 Rockingham Census: <http://files.usgwarchives.net/va/rockingham/census/1810rock.txt>

More info on Andrew Sellers, 5<sup>th</sup> child of Johanne Michel Zeller /Sellers and (Catherine Smyth?)

**Andrew SELLERS**

*Birth:* 30 NOV 1775 in Rockingham Co., VA

*Death:* 21 OCT 1859 in Rockingham Co.VA

*Burial:* Fellowship United Methodist Church Cemetery, Rockingham Co, VA

*Married:* Hannah Haga on 19 OCT 1799 in Rockingham Co., VA

*b:* 1779 in Rockingham Co., VA - d 12 NOV 1852 in Rockingham Co., VA

buried: <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=48116302>

CENSUS 1840 in Rockingham County, VA

Head of Household: Andrew Sellers

2 - Males 20-30 years old

1 - Male 60-70 years old

1 - Female 10-15 years old

1 - Female 60-70 years old

1 - Slave Male Under 10 years old

3 - Slave Males 10-24 years old

1 - Slave Female 24-36 years old

Note 1840: He is living three households away from his son, Michael Sellers.

CENSUS 1850 – District 56, Rockingham, VA – enumerated Nov. 4, 1850 – Pg. 123A.:

Dwelling #1707/Family #1710

Andrew Sellers, Age 74, M, Farmer, Real Estate Value: \$6000, Born VA

Hannah, Age 70, F, Born VA, Cannot read and write

Note 1850: Next door was their youngest son, Silem Sellers and family. Hannah (Haga) Sellers died two years later on November 12, 1852. Andrew Sellers died nine years later on October 21, 1859.



DEATH: 1860 Mortality Schedule for Rockingham Co., VA, for the year ending June 1, 1860, notes that Andrew Sellers was widowed and died at the age of 84 in November 1859 due to "Flux"\*; he was ill for 14 days prior to his death.

\*"Flux - An excessive flow or discharge of fluid like hemorrhage or diarrhea."

BURIAL: Photo is the gravestone of Andrew Sellers. The stone was moved from the original Sellers cemetery located off Country Boy Road less than a half mile from the church.

*In Memory  
of  
Andrew Sellers  
Born Nov.3-, 1775  
Died October 21, 1859,  
83y 10m 21d"*

SOURCE / PHOTO: <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=pv&GRid=48116302&PIpi=48699252>

Written by C. E. Armentrout

## The History of Fellowship Methodist Church

In 1788 Fellowship Methodist church dates its beginning when the blue print of the historic Rockingham Circuit was drawn by early church leaders. Pioneer Michael Sellers set aside one acre of land .

The beginning of the Rockingham Methodist Circuit In Michael Sellers home early Methodist services were held, and subsequently services were conducted in a wood arbor on said lot, at this spot a log school house was built and also used as a church. Rev. Peter Cartwright held the first services. In 1790 Bishop Francis Asbury came through Brocks Gap to Harrisonburg and organized the historic Rockingham Circuit with Dr. William Phoebus, pastor, and the Rev. Phillip Bruce of North Carolina. As the first presiding Elder-born in the midst of the noted Great Awakening and the Revival Movement started at Hampden Sydney and Washington and Lee. This service point was serviced by the Great Peter Cartwright, who held the first services in a log school house. When Fellowship Church was being erected , an old and life -long citizen of the community remarked that the house was rightly located. The alter was where he had always been told the ancient “Mourners Bench “ once was, where so many souls that were happily converted. Before the church was built services were held in what was called groove meetings.

In 1794 a school was organized by Bishop Asbury at Harrisonburg, later at Fellowship. Between 1788 and 1792, eight different preachers served with pony express zeal, the Rockingham Circuit composed of preaching points in three counties, Augusta, Rockingham, and Shenandoah, including Staunton, Mt. Hope, Port Republic, Taylor Springs, Keezletown, Harrisonburg , Fellowship, Red Banks and Woodstock. Asbury Memorial church is the oldest, Port Republic is the second oldest with Fellowship being the third oldest.

I think that is important to note at this time that education was regarded second to religion, in that time period.

In 1778 the site of Fellowship Methodist Church was selected on a knoll east of Dry Fork Run, situated east of Melrose Caverns on Michael Sellers land, formerly owned by pioneer John Harrison within his 1745 grant of 5,000 acres later owned in part by his son, Revolutionary War Captain Ruben Harrison, subsequently by his grandsons David Harrison and Nathaniel Harrison, adjoining the Sellers property when the Rockingham Circuit was formed. The site was chosen on the early Flat Gap Road which connected the two roads in Rockingham County, namely the 1727 Brocks Gap- Williamsburg Road. formerly an Indian trail, on the southwest and the 1745 Pennsylvania-Keezletown Road in sight of the depot of the historic Baltimore-Knowville Stage coach line, on the northeast, between the German settlement on Smith Creek and the English settlement on the west. Bishop Francis Asbury, in passing through the country on a preaching mission, preached at Fellowship in 1807.

Preliminaries For The Government Of The  
Fellowship Meeting Horse 1832



As this house was built for the purpose of social worship free for all religious denominations, we as trustees deem it our indispensable duty to admonish to the good people of this neighborhood and its vicinity, to be exemplary in all their deportment whilst attending on Divine service.

1<sup>st</sup> - We desire that the people would remain silent in the time of preaching both in and out of the house. If they do not they will be desired to leave the place and be exposed to the public, we are confident that no gentleman or lady would be guilty of such conduct.

2<sup>nd</sup> - Any person or persons who may come here at the time of preaching in a state of intoxication and disturb the peace of the Minister or the people will be made a public notoriety of, and dealt with according to law.

3<sup>rd</sup> - We earnestly request the people both male and female not to get on the benches with their feet as we deem it highly imprudent.

4<sup>th</sup> - We would be glad if those persons who make use of tobacco would dispense with chewing whilst in the house as the spittle is pernicious to the floor, clothing, and to decency.

5<sup>th</sup> - Do as you would be done by/

A friendly cooperation of the Brethren and friend generally and trustees particularly towards enforcing these rules is warmly insisted on

Trustees: David Houck, David Weaver

In 1843 there were approximately twenty members at Fellowship. Michael Sellers a grandson of Michael the pioneer, was listed as the "leader". By 1850 - 1852 there were fifty members many of them bearing the Sellers name or having married into the family. Arthur Woodly Henton said that the first church building had an outside door on the west side with stairs that went to a balcony. It was here the African American families sat during services. He said that large numbers had attended services. There was one black gentleman by the name of Watson who never missed a service and he always helped the ladies who drove the buggies, helping "a light" for the lights on their buggies and "parking" the horse and buggy and bringing them back again. This church served the community for fifty eight years.

On April 10, 1854 Andrew Sellers made a deed for the present plot of ground to be a place of worship. Upon which tract of the Sellers chapel and school stood, in preparation for the congregation erecting a new church building to the trustees of the General Methodist Conference without condition to be used for worship forever by the appointed ministers of the Methodist church of the Baltimore (now Virginia) conference, or its legal successor governing body. The new church was opened later that year, having been built by two local men, Mark Lawson who laid the rock foundation, and Ruben W. Harrison who did the carpenter work. The trustees were Jacob Cole, Peter Henton, William Sellers, Michael Sellers, Silam Sellers, Milton Harrison, and Ruben W. Harrison. The 1854 church was a white frame, with a front door that separated into two parts when opened, it had two stoves for heat and a balcony. According to tradition, great meetings were held, when great crowds gathered not only Harrisonburg, but also from surrounding country and religious fervor ran high. It is said that Hannah, the wife of Andrew Sellers,

attending a revival in the second meeting house -- often a long and crowded session --- went out into the chill November air; contracted pneumonia, and died in a few days. This structure served the congregation for fifty eight years. An interesting paper, written by Ruben Sellers, relating to the rules of conduct in the new church, requested that persons do not stand on the backs of the pews. Another stated that "Gentlemen will not spit on the floor.

In 1911, the Rockingham Circuit and McGaheysville were united and Reverend George W. Richardson was sent as preacher in charge, and after a year he named a building committee.

In 1912 a new church was built the pastor at that time was Rev. George Richardson and the building committee was C. E. Long, chairman, J. Owen Long, secretary, C. E. Armentrout treasure, C. B. Lawson, D. B. Reed and William H. Howard . The church was built by L. B. Morse. Dr. H. M. Canter preached the dedicatory sermon with the presiding Elder B. W. Bond officiating.

In 1912 after the new church had been completed the members held a picnic in the church yard and after lunch the men attached ropes to the rafters and pulled it down, and was a harder job than anticipated. This church had a bell tower, arched windows of stained glass, a declining floor, a raised choir loft enclosed with a railing, sliding doors to close off a section for Sunday School rooms, an arch in the front over the recessed pulpit which was enclosed with a curved kneeling bench and railing. The heat was provided by a floor furnace. The beauty of this church was unsurpassed in small country churches. In 1913, pews and other furniture was added and in early summer the church was dedicated. Dr. H. M. Canter preaching the dedicatory sermon, and the presiding elder, Dr. B. W. Bond, officiating at the dedicatory in the afternoon. A history would not be complete without mentioning three of the great- great grandchildren of Michael Sellers. During most of the forty - three years that this sanctuary was in use the congregation was fortunate to have the services of J. Owen Long, who directed the choir and played the piano; Ira Long who played the organ; and Bessie Long Koontz, who sang solos. All three had studied at the Shenandoah conservatory of music, then located at Dayton, Va. On special occasions Ira Long and Clyde Hasler played violins.

In 1932-33, with money furnished by the Ladies Aid Society, and a considerable part of the work furnished by the men of the church, the Social Hall was built and has been found to be a very valuable acquisition.

In December of 1938 electric lights were installed in the church and the Social Hall.

This was a great improvement and the lights are now being enjoyed by all those that attended Fellowship Church. After the Second World War Sunday School rooms were built.

In November 1946 Rose Chapman Sellers conveyed by deed, 2.162 acres of land to the Fellowship Church to be used for a cemetery as the church did not have a cemetery of its own at the time. The church cemetery is managed by the church trustees. One section of the cemetery was designated as a potters field. On March 25, 1949, David E. Sellers a great-great grandson of Michael Sellers., was the first person to be buried in the cemetery. March 28, 1955 a Saturday night, the church was destroyed by fire. The Daily News - Record listed the cause of the fire to have been due to electric wiring in the basement, although a coal furnace had been started in preparation for the Sunday service.



The corner stone for the new church was laid September 25, 1955.

The church lot deed was examined in 1956 and approved by a law firm and found to be without condition fully and as tact and legal for a bank loan to meet bank and conference requirements and conference requirements, and the Methodist Discipline.

In 1956, . A Gothic style brick church was built and separate social hall valued at nearly \$100,000.00 . The architect was D. P. Davis and the builder was Nielson Construction Company. Those serving on the building committee were H. G. Armentrout, chairman, Andrew H. Yancy, vice chairman, Miss Cary Bowman, secretary; George J. Yancy, building treasure ; S. W. Flook, and S. B. Shell.

The trustees were George J. Yancy, H. G. Armentrout, W.D. Maddox, John Hetton, S. W. Flook, J. Owen Long, Marvin Terry, F. F. Armentrout, Andrew H. Yancy, and S. Sellers Palmer. W. E Maddox was the Superintendent of the Sunday School during the building and after the building program.

With Sunday School rooms, water works, choir loft, pulpit, center alter, lectern, organ, communion rail, center aisle carpet, oak pews, a handsome tower on its northwest corner. Fellowship Church stands as beautiful poem in brick.

The official opening service was held May 6, 1956, at 2:30 p.m. and the consecration service June 10, 1956. Bishop Paul N. Garber, Ph. D.,L. H. D.; D. D., LL. D., of Richmond VA. a native of Rockingham Co.

Mrs. J. Owen Long led the MYF and the WCS which raised large sums of money.

From 1954- 60 Rev. J. Calvin Dugger served as district superintendent.

Pastor Dr. O. B. Michael gave the membership at that time as between 150 - 200. He served as pastor from 1954 - 1960 .

The debt was paid off during the superintendence of Dr. L. O. Willburn and under the pastorate of the W. L. Reeves and was debt free in 1962.

On December 7, 1970, Rose Sellers Chapman, being the last Sellers descendent to own the adjoining land deeded .307 acres to the trustees of the church to be used as a parking area.

On February 10, 1972 Rose Sellers Chapman donated .5 acres to expand the cemetery on the west side, which made a total of 2.662 acres. In the mid 1970's Rose had the graves of her parents, Jacob Benjamin Franklin, Catherine Sellers; her baby sister Irene Sellers, and her bothers, Silem Sellers, and David Sellers moved from the Sellers family.

This accounts for the reason that their deaths precede the date of the cemetery.

Cemetery near by located to the southwest of the current cemetery, and is just a short walk from the cemetery , it is also said that Michael Sellers home was located in this same general area.

Fellowship Methodist is today one of the most active in the area, many who break bread at it's alter today carry Michael Sellers' blood in their veins.

Fellowship Church stands within sight of highway 81 that runs north and south through the Shenandoah Valley.

God has truly blessed this historic congregation which has helped the American Methodist Church to gain more than 10,000,000 members with its scores of extension and mission boards, colleges, universities, to carry out the great commission of the Lord Jesus Christ.