

King Street Bridge Mural - Historical Background

Leesburg was and continues to be a town at the crossroads of two historically significant travel routes: from north to south, the Carolina Road (now Route 15- King Street) and from east to west, the Leesburg Turnpike (now the portion of Route 7 from Sterling to Leesburg). Established as a county seat in 1757 and originally called Georgetown, the name Leesburg came to be the following year- ostensibly named for the venerable Lee family of Virginia.

Bearing witness to three major wars, 18th and 19th century Leesburg experienced periods of great growth and prosperity due to its location as an agricultural and manufacturing hub. In the decades leading up to the Civil War, railroad lines slowly began to lurch westward from Alexandria. And by 1858, the construction had reached Loudoun. In May of 1860, the Alexandria, Loudoun & Hampshire Railroad Company guided its first passenger service into the Town of Leesburg. Owned and operated under different auspices in the 1870s, 80s and 90s, the line from Alexandria to Loudoun was known through these years as the Washington & Ohio; the Washington, Ohio & Western; and the Southern Railway. It was during this time that railroad construction slowly migrated to the outlying western towns of Paeonian Springs, Hamilton, Purcellville, Round Hill and finally Bluemont. The name with which we are more familiar – the Washington & Old Dominion Railroad – came into existence in 1911 as the Southern Railway merged with the Great Falls & Old Dominion line. *Harwood, 14,31,45.*

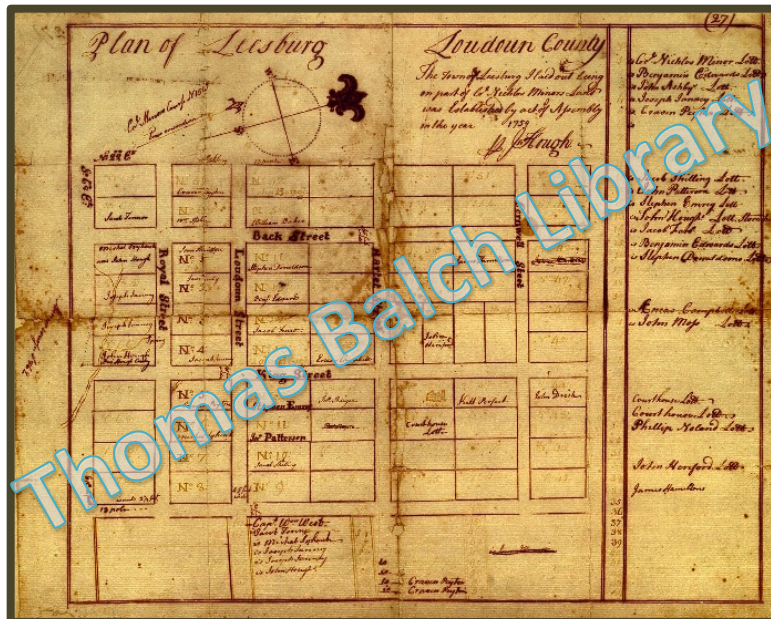
Under any name, the impact of rail upon the economy of Leesburg was undeniable. Manufacturing and trade prospered in and around the area of town colloquially known as the “Wharf” (an area that encompassed the 2 blocks north of Town Branch and the Railroad – sandwiched between the freight and passenger depots). This included through the decades: a grain mill, a lime quarry, a lumber company, an electric power company, a planing mill, a stationmaster’s home, stockyards and various other agricultural and warehouse structures.

McDonald, 51-64.

The Passenger Station- built in the 1880s or 90s in a Swiss design typical of other rail stations of the time- sat just west of Route 15 – parallel to Town Branch and very close to the current site of the King Street Bridge. A second station – the Freight Depot- built a few years later after the first freight structure succumbed to a fire – was located two blocks east of the passenger station, just west of what we now know as Harrison Street. Sadly the structure that was the Passenger Station no longer exists, but the Freight Depot was moved north several decades later and houses what is now Fireworks Pizza.

Twentieth-Century downtown Leesburg saw a gradual shift from manufacturing and agricultural to that of service and office uses. Many of the buildings in the “Wharf” area were either demolished or re-purposed. Some structures, such as the Freight Depot, the stationmaster’s house and the Saffer Mill were physically moved north to be part of the Market Station group of buildings.

The Washington & Old Dominion line ceased to operate as a rail service in 1968. And in 1977, the W & OD began the stages of its second life– as a Northern Virginia Park Authority site.

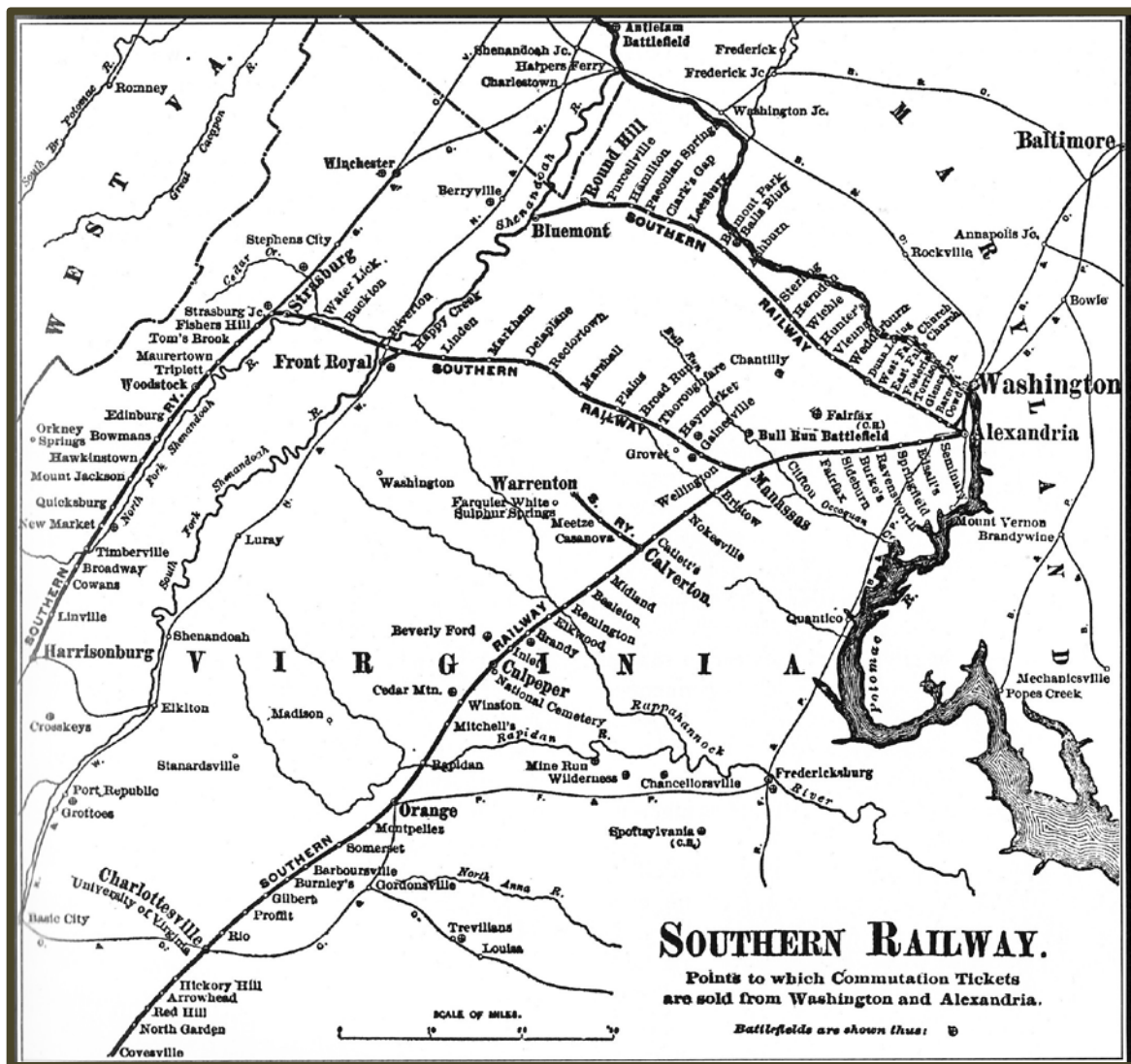


1759 John Hough Map. James Goode Photograph Collection (VC 0010), [Thomas Balch Library](#), Leesburg, VA.

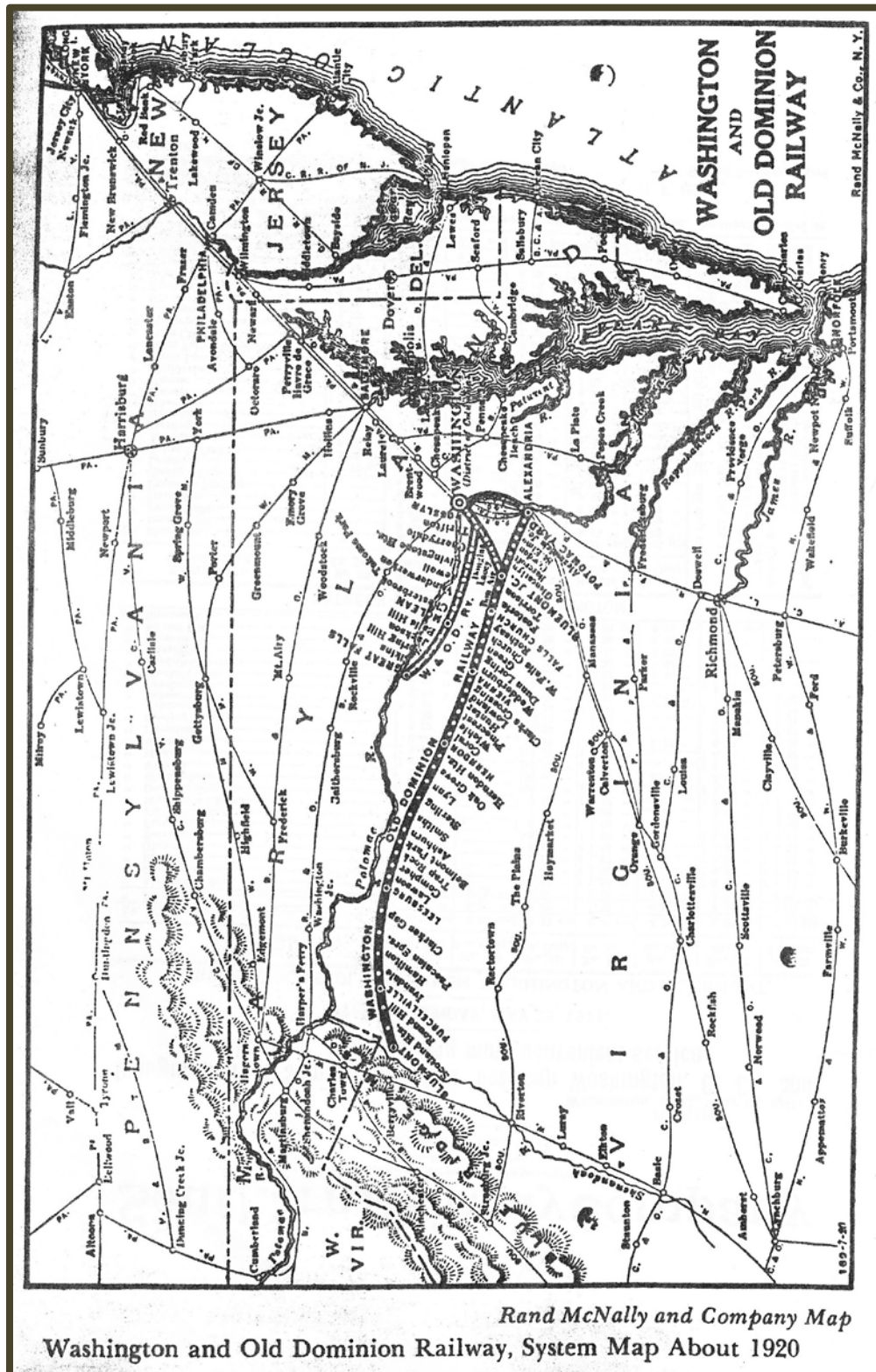
Railroad



Leesburg Passenger Station, ca. 1906. *Harwood, 28.*



Southern Railway Map. Harwood, 31.



W&OD Railway Map. Harwood, 43.

Southern Railway Company

Passenger Traffic Department.

CIRCULAR No. 9816.

File M 936

WASHINGTON, D. C., May 24, 1911.

Inauguration of Summer Schedule between Washington, D. C., and
Bluemont, Va., affording most convenient service.

EFFECTIVE SUNDAY, MAY 28, 1911.

COMPLETE SCHEDULE BETWEEN WASHINGTON AND BLUEMONT.

WESTBOUND. EASTERN TIME.	No. 121 Ex. Sun.	No. 129 Sun. Only	No. 131 Sun. Only	No. 123 Ex. Sun.	No. 125 Ex. Sun.	No. 133 Daily.	No. 119 Ex. Sun.
Lv. Washington, D. C.	8.10 am	8.55 am	9.15 am	1.30 pm	4.20 pm	5.05 pm	6.25 pm
" Alexandria.....	8.22 "	9.02 "	9.22 "	1.40 "	4.28 "	5.15 "	6.33 "
" Alexandria Jct.....	8.30 "	9.12 "	9.34 "	1.49 "	4.37 "	5.24 "	6.41 "
" Cowdon.....	f 8.35 "	"	f 9.38 "	f 1.53 "	"	f 5.29 "	f 6.44 "
" Barcroft.....	f 8.43 "	"	f 9.41 "	f 1.55 "	"	f 5.32 "	f 6.47 "
" Glencarlyn.....	8.45 "	"	9.43 "	f 1.57 "	"	5.35 "	6.50 "
" Torrison.....	f 8.46 "	"	f 9.44 "	f 1.58 "	"	f 5.37 "	f 6.52 "
" Fostoria.....	f 8.48 "	"	f 9.46 "	f 2.00 "	"	f 5.40 "	f 6.54 "
" Falls Church.....	8.49 "	"	9.49 "	2.04 "	"	5.43 "	6.56 "
" West Falls Church.....	8.52 "	"	9.53 "	2.07 "	"	5.49 "	6.59 "
" Dunn Loring.....	8.56 "	"	9.58 "	f 2.12 "	"	f 5.54 "	f 7.07 "
" Wedderburn.....	f 8.58 "	"	f 10.01 "	f 2.14 "	"	f 5.57 "	f 7.11 "
" Vienna.....	9.02 "	"	f 10.09 "	2.21 "	5.06 "	6.05 "	7.14 "
" Hunter.....	f 9.08 "	"	f 10.16 "	f 2.27 "	"	f 6.14 "	f 7.19 "
" Wiehle.....	f 9.14 "	"	f 10.24 "	f 2.34 "	"	f 6.24 "	f 7.27 "
" Herndon.....	9.20 "	"	10.31 "	2.41 "	f 5.10 "	6.34 "	7.34 "
" Sterling.....	9.29 "	"	10.40 "	2.51 "	"	6.45 "	7.43 "
" Ashburn.....	9.40 "	"	10.49 "	3.02 "	"	6.55 "	7.51 "
" Belmont Park.....	f 9.47 "	"	10.55 "	f 3.09 "	"	f 7.02 "	f 7.56 "
" Leesburg.....	9.50 "	10.22 "	11.00 "	3.16 "	5.39 "	7.07 "	8.05 pm
" Clarke's Gap.....	f 10.05 "	"	f 11.10 "	f 3.26 "	"	f 7.17 "	"
" Paeonian Springs.....	10.08 "	10.35 "	11.13 "	3.29 "	f 5.49 "	7.21 "	"
" Hamilton.....	10.13 "	10.40 "	11.18 "	3.34 "	5.54 "	7.24 "	"
" Purcellville.....	10.24 "	10.49 "	11.29 "	3.44 "	6.02 "	7.32 "	"
" Round Hill.....	10.34 "	10.56 "	11.38 "	3.53 "	6.09 "	7.38 "	"
Ar. Bluemont.....	10.45 am	11.05 am	11.50 am	4.05 pm	6.20 pm	7.45 pm	"

BETWEEN BLUEMONT AND WASHINGTON.

EASTBOUND EASTERN TIME.	No. 120 Ex. Sun.	No. 134 Daily.	No. 126 Ex. Sun.	No. 122 Ex. Sun.	No. 124 Daily.	No. 130 Sun. Only
Lv. Bluemont.....		5.50 am	7.15 am	12.15 pm	5.25 pm	6.45 pm
" Round Hill.....		5.59 "	7.23 "	12.25 "	5.35 "	6.53 "
" Purcellville.....		6.06 "	7.29 "	12.32 "	5.43 "	6.59 "
" Hamilton.....		6.15 "	7.36 "	12.40 "	5.54 "	7.07 "
" Paeonian Springs.....		6.18 "	7.39 "	12.45 "	5.57 "	7.11 "
" Clarke's Gap.....	f 6.21 "	"	f 12.48 "	f 6.00 "	"	"
" Leesburg.....	5.10 am	6.30 "	7.51 "	1.00 "	6.10 "	7.25 "
" Belmont Park.....	f 5.18 "	f 6.37 "	"	f 1.08 "	f 6.18 "	"
" Ashburn.....	5.25 "	f 6.44 "	"	1.15 "	6.23 "	"
" Sterling.....	5.31 "	f 6.55 "	"	1.24 "	6.28 "	"
" Herndon.....	5.43 "	f 7.02 "	f 8.13 "	1.30 "	6.34 "	"
" Wiehle.....	f 5.49 "	f 7.16 "	"	f 1.37 "	f 6.41 "	"
" Hunter.....	f 5.55 "	f 7.24 "	"	f 1.42 "	f 6.48 "	"
" Vienna.....	6.03 "	f 7.33 "	8.27 "	1.47 "	6.59 "	"
" Wedderburn.....	f 6.07 "	f 7.37 "	"	f 1.51 "	f 7.04 "	"
" Dunn Loring.....	6.10 "	7.40 "	"	1.54 "	7.07 "	"
" West Falls Church.....	6.15 "	f 7.46 "	"	1.58 "	7.12 "	"
" Falls Church.....	6.19 "	f 7.50 "	"	2.04 "	7.15 "	"
" Fostoria.....	f 6.20 "	f 7.52 "	"	f 2.06 "	f 7.17 "	"
" Torrison.....	f 6.23 "	f 7.55 "	"	f 2.08 "	f 7.19 "	"
" Glencarlyn.....	f 6.28 "	f 7.57 "	"	f 2.10 "	f 7.20 "	"
" Barcroft.....	f 6.29 "	f 8.00 "	"	f 2.13 "	f 7.23 "	"
" Cowdon.....	f 6.32 "	f 8.05 "	"	f 2.19 "	f 7.27 "	"
" Alexandria Jct.....	6.38 "	8.15 "	8.55 "	2.29 "	7.40 "	8.35 "
" Alexandria.....		8.21 "	9.02 "	3.37 "	7.47 "	"
Ar. Washington, D. C.....	6.55 am	8.32 am	9.15 am	2.50 pm	8.00 pm	8.55 pm

NOTE—Nos. 119 and 120 are electric motor cars running between Leesburg and Washington. No baggage carried on these motor cars except small hand baggage carried by passengers.

E. H. COAPMAN,
Vice President and General Manager
2000-5-24-1911. D.

S. H. HARDWICK,
Passenger Traffic Manager

H. F. CARY,
General Passenger Agent

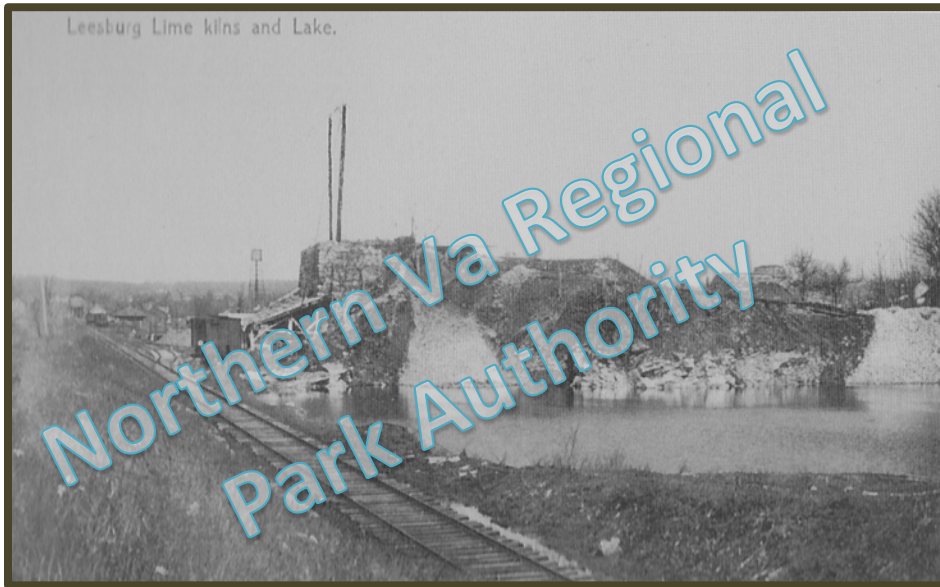


Passenger Station. McDonald, 54. Photograph, Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority.

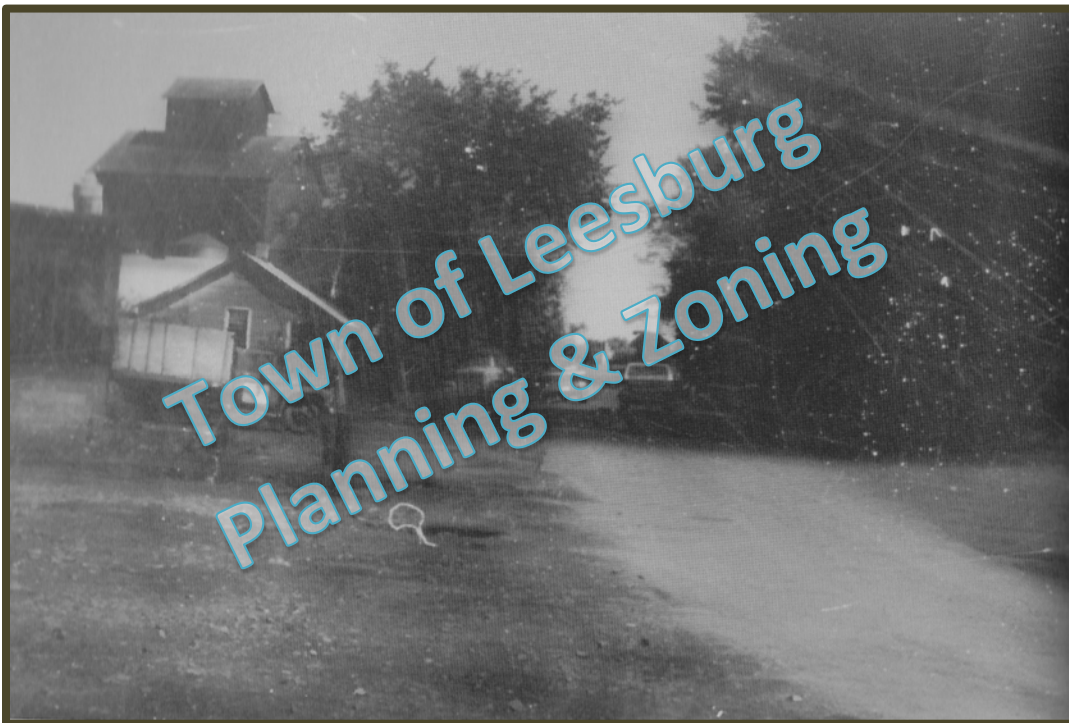


Freight Depot. McDonald, 55. Photograph, Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority.

Manufacturing



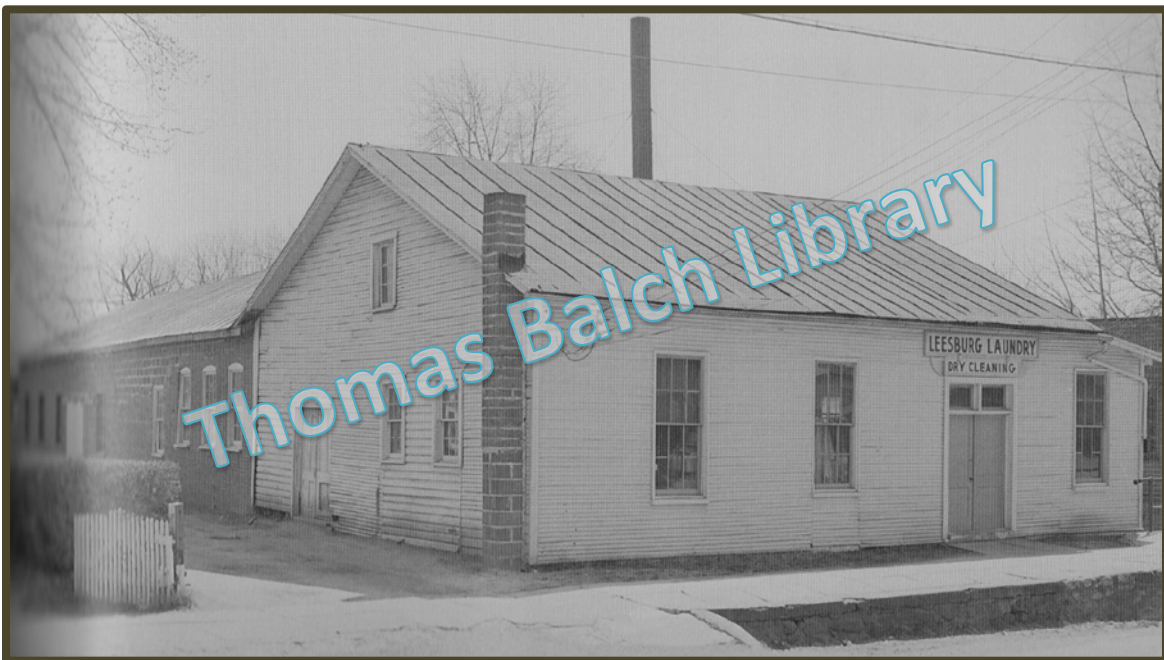
Leesburg Lime Company. McDonald, 56. Photograph, Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority.



McKimney/Saffer Mill & Stationmaster's house. McDonald, 60. Photograph, Town of Leesburg Department of Planning & Zoning.



Norris Brothers Planing Mill, ca. 1910. McDonald, 52. (VC_0015 Ethel Littlejohn Adams Photograph Collection. Thomas Balch Library, Leesburg, Va.)



Leesburg Laundry, ca. 1930. McDonald, 47. (VC_0003 Winslow Williams Photograph Collection. Thomas Balch Library, Leesburg, Va.)



J.T. Hirst Lumber Company. McDonald, 53. (VC_0003 Winslow Williams Photograph Collection. Thomas Balch Library, Leesburg, Va.)

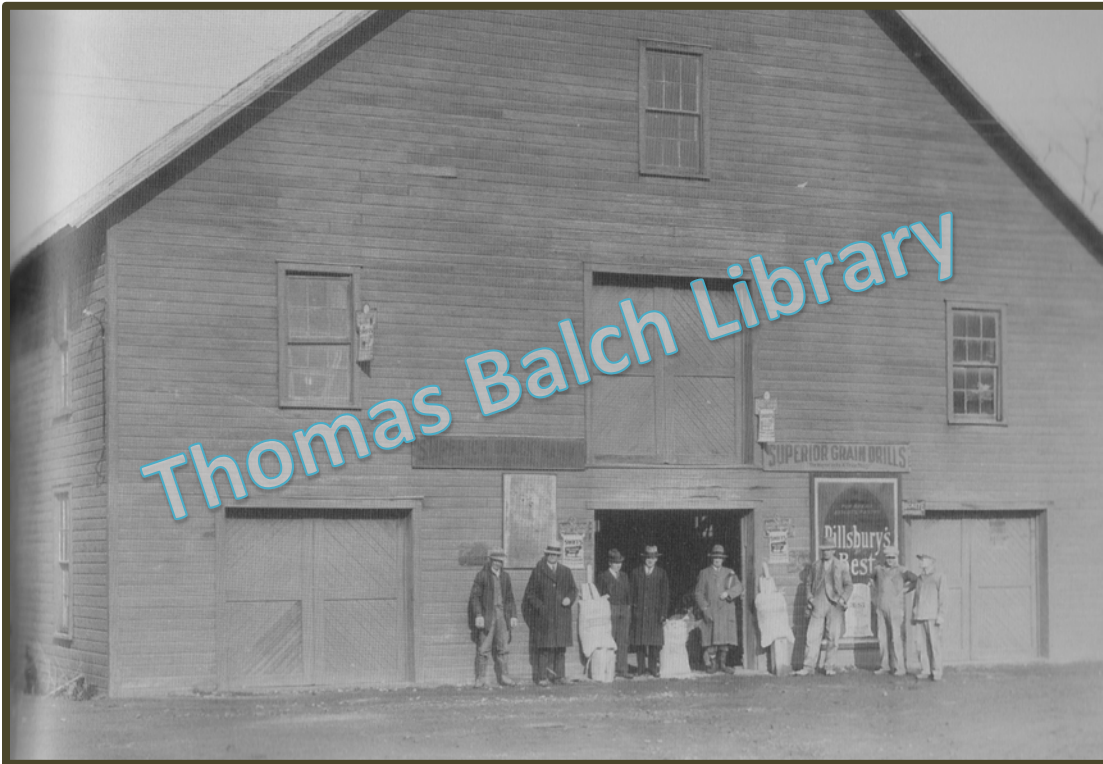
Agricultural



Loudoun County Livestock Market. McDonald, 59. Photograph, Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority.

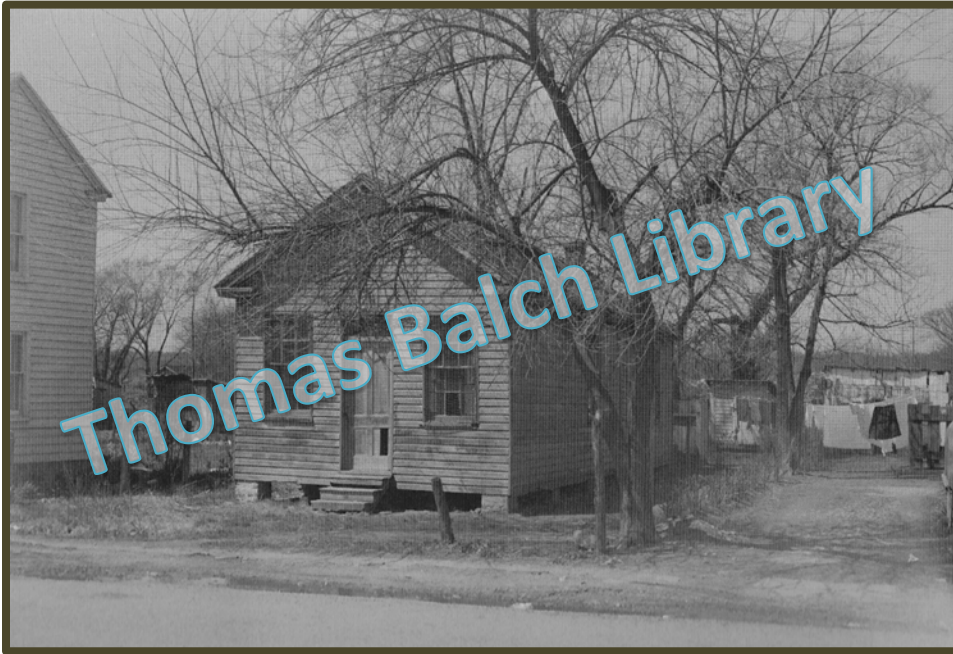


JT Hirst Lumber Company then later, a creamery. McDonald, 61. Photograph, Town of Leesburg Department of Planning & Zoning.

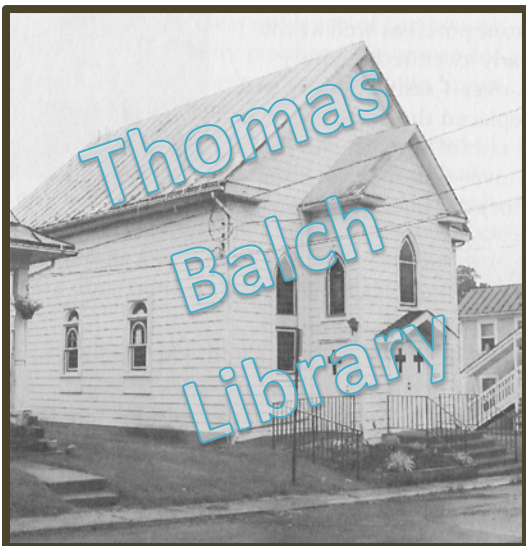


Agricultural warehouse. McDonald, 63. (VC_0001 Thomas Balch Library Photograph Collection. Thomas Balch Library, Leesburg, Va.)

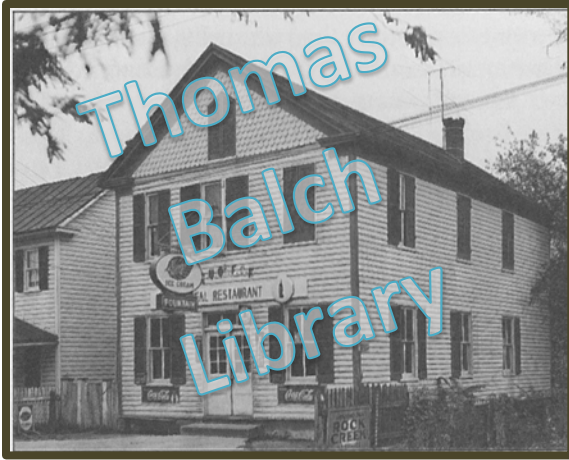
African-American



Bailey's Institute. McDonald, 16. (VC_0003 Winslow Williams Photograph Collection. Thomas Balch Library, Leesburg, Va.)



Providence Baptist Church. Smith, 108. (M_0016 Leesburg Architectural Surveys. Thomas Balch Library, Leesburg, Va.)



Odd Fellows Hall. *Loudoun County's African American communities*, 13. (M_0016 Leesburg Architectural Surveys. Thomas Balch Library, Leesburg, Va.)

Sources:

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VC_0001 Thomas Balch Library Photograph Collection. Thomas Balch Library, Leesburg, Va

VC_0003 Winslow Williams Photograph Collection. Thomas Balch Library, Leesburg, Va.

VC_0010 James Goode Photograph Collection. Thomas Balch Library, Leesburg, Va.

VC_0015 Ethel Littlejohn Adams Photograph Collection. Thomas Balch Library, Leesburg, Va.

*Available for research and/or purchase at the Thomas Balch Library for History and Genealogy in Leesburg, Virginia.