Dr George Louis Alphonso Pogue was born to Samuel and Lucy (Bannister) Pogue on January 31, 1888, in Fincastle, Botetourt County, Virginia. Located in the Roanoke region. Samuel Pogue was a Baptist preacher in the Fincastle Area, and Lucy Bannister was a midwife. When George was 8 years old the supreme court established the “separate but equal Doctrine” in the case Plessy V Ferguson. As a reaction to this ruling the Virginia state legislature began implementing Jim crow laws and segregating schools in 1902. This action also directly affected the Virginia state college, where George would later attend, curtailing the collegiate program and changing the schools name to the Virginia Normal and industrial institute.

In the first decade of the 20th century Dr Pogue attained a 2-year degree from Virginia Normal and industrial institute. while he was at school, he waited tables at a local restaurant and worked his way up to head water. This was all to help him pay his way through the two years of schooling that he could take. Noelle Woodcock research assistant at the Bedford Museum and Genealogical library says “It was at Virginia State College that he met Ethel Paige, the future Mrs. Pogue. He pressed his suit, one gathers, by seeing that she got special favors from the kitchen at the meals.”

So, while he was courting his wife, we was also working hard to ensure a bright future. Woodcock goes one to say, “Extra classes were offered privately, and he took them all enabling him later to transfer to Shaw University to study medicine.” He worked and studied hard and long to ensure that he could conquer the walls of his life. In 1911 George Graduated with a Doctor of medicine and in March of 1912 he was married to Ethel Page they moved too Bedford Virginia where he opened a pharmacy and medical practice that was integrated. In 1912. He specialized in skin ailments. It was likely on 111 s bridge street because Woodcock’s article states that it is in the same building that has since become Reynolds Clothing.

the NAACP was incorporated in 1911 with a mission outlined in their charter “To promote equality of rights and eradicate caste or race prejudice among citizens of the United States; to advance the interest of colored citizens; to secure for them impartial suffrage; and to increase their opportunities for securing justice in the courts, education for their children, employment according to their ability, and complete equality before the law” Dr Pogue Physically Joined the NAACP around the time that his family moved to Bedford.

Dr Pogue joined the army and served as leutenent of the 430th infantry Medical Corps.

In 1918 Dr Pogue assisted a cooperative of persons of color get their canned Tomatoes and snap peas sold in Baltimore. He reached out to W.E.B. Dubois. To ask for assistance. Below is the complete letter.

Bedford Virginia Dec. 21. 1918

Editor of crisis.
New York. N.Y.
“Gentlemen
I am writing to ask your assistance. We have a cooperative Negro Cannery for packing tomatoes and snaps. We have sold our entire pack to the government. Our pack was small 1 carload. The
government inspector gave us an excellent report when he examined them at the factory, but I hear unofficially that the government is turing down a great many car loads of tomatoes, and while we expect ours to be accepted we want to be prepared to have some one handle them if they are not. I thought that your office could put me in touch with a commission merchant in or near Baltimore, that is hwere we shipped. So that should we be turned down we can sell at as small a lost as possible.

I am a little worried as several want our cannery and one of the several has a brother who is a government inspector in Baltimore and if he ever sees our brand we are turned down. Any assistance will be appreciated.”

In 1946 Dr and Mrs. Pogue put themselves in the middle of a local controversy to ensure a placement which was viewed as optimal for a new school meant to serve children of Color. They wrote letters and gathered signatures for petitions. Dr Pogue was advised by a real-estate agent that the school board couldn’t purchase the land for the town location, for the asking price of 10,000$ that it was valued at, so he lowered the asking price to 3,000. After much debate, on February 8, 1951, the new high school was granted primacy in the utilization of battle school construction funds. And in March of 1951 the school board voted unanimously to build the school on the site that Dr Pogue fought for. The Pogue” s recommended Susie G Gibson to be the Jeanes Supervisor in Bedford and on that recommendation, she was appointed. The school would later be called the Susie G Gibson school.

Sometime in his later life George lost both legs. But he still saw patients, right until he physically couldn’t anymore. George and Ethel had four children that I could find record of. George Jr died tragically two years after he was born. Jacqueline Bernice, Elbert Hugo, and Barbara. While I couldn’t find a lot of information about his daughter, and I challenge any interested parties to take up the charge. I did discover that Elbert followed his father’s example and became a doctor as well. He also completed military service in World War 2 and served his own community in Elizabeth New Jersey for 50 years. George’s grandson also became a Dr who practices in New Britain. Connecticut who specializes in hematology and has served his community for 50 years. He is also accepting new patients.

Changing the world is a challenge, it is one that seems so daunting, the world as it is stands as a dividing wall. but Dr Pogue and his Wife Ethel understood that changing the world starts with changing yourself, then your responsibility becomes changing your community. Maybe on your own you can’t tear down the wall, but you might be able to build a ladder that scales it, or with some help you can open the gate. I hope that anyone reading this remembers Dr George Pogue and his Family. If every posting on my blog has a uniformed message it is that you can’t measure your impact. Stay tuned for the Wikipedia article which I will publish here, and obviously on Wikipedia as well.
George Pogue lifeline

Dr. Pogue gave up the drug store after having suffered a double leg amputation but continued to see patients at his home on South Street until his death in 1956.

Born in Botetourt County Virginia. January 31, 1888

Born in Botetourt County,

Plessy V Ferguson 1896 “separate but equal” supreme court case Dr Pogue was 8 years old

1902 Virginia state legislature revised the charter act to curtail the collegiate program and to change the name to Virginia Normal and Industrial Institute. This was also part of a broader effort to implement Jim crow laws and restrict voting rights as well as devalue predominantly black schools. Dr Pogue was 14 years old

Approx. 1908 Dr pogue attains a 2-year degree from virginia Normal and industrial institute. Said degree was given academic value in a revision of the Virginia state constitution that took place that year

Met Ethel Page at Virginia State College

Shaw Medical School May 1911

Died in Bedford Virginia on March 6, 1956

and in World War 2 as a member of the county selective service board.

Married ethel page March 28, 1912, certificate states the marriage happened in prince Edward county Virginia.

His first son George Pogue Jr was born December 11, 1912, the birth certificate states that he was born in Bedford.

Between march and December George moved to Bedford Connecticut

1912-13
He was about 25 years of age when he came to Bedford and opened the drug store on the east side of South Bridge Street, which was managed by his brother, Bill Pogue.

Served in World War 1 as a Lieutenant in the Medical Corps 430th infantry.

December 21, 1918, writes a letter to W.E.B. Dubois Requesting assistance and referral of a Baltimore merchant for the sales of packed tomatoes from a cooperative cannery in Virginia.
In 1947-1950 dr. Pogue was heavily involved in the decision of where to build a school for the people of Bedford. And helped gather signatures for a petition to build the school in the town. Dr Pogue owned land in town valued at 10,000$ but ultimately sold this land to the school board for only 3,000$ after a real estate agent cautioned him that the school board could not pay $10,000 for his land.


“History of VSU.” Virginia State University, 10 May 2021, www.vsu.edu/about/history/history-vsuvsu.php.


40 “Dr. G.L.A. Pogue,” Bedford Museum & Genealogical Library.

41 “Integrated 50 Years Ago Through Service,” Bedford Museum & Genealogical Library.


Richardson, “Susie G. Gibson High School,”