

**A History of Fairhaven, O.**

**by**

**Jeannette F. Hays**

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In 1805 an old Quaker gentleman by the name of Joseph Caldwell emigrated, with his family, from North Carolina and settled on what is now known as Section 9 Israel Twp.

In 1832 his son Jonathan laid out Fair Haven and had it recorded on April 20, of that year. At that time the western part of the village was a beautiful grove of sugar maples while the eastern part was an elm swamp.

Soon after the village was laid out a log tavern was built. Since the village was on the direct road to Cincinnati, many men and Conestoga Wagons stopped at the little tavern.

Farmers in south eastern Indiana and south western Ohio took their hogs, sheep, and produce to market over this route. The Conestoga wagons loaded with these things, were drawn by 4, 6, 8, or sometimes 10 horses with large fur collars and arches of bells. The bells were fastened on the hames.

It was the common law of the road at that time that if one wagon got stuck in the mud another teamster could not pass him up but must stop and try to help. The one that was stuck must unhitch his team and allow the other man to hitch his team to the wagon and then if he succeeded in pulling the wagon out he got the bells from the first man's horses.

Every night the tavern entertained many of these men and immense numbers of hogs and sheep were cared for in the barnyard. As travel kept increasing Mr. Hiram Evans replaced the little log tavern with the commodious brick building known as Bunker Hill Tavern.

It was a rambling old structure of many rooms, three stories high. The post boys rooms, hardly bigger than a closet, were tucked



under the eaves at the back of the house. There was a handsome stairway ascending to the third floor. The long barroom on the first floor was a symbol of hospitality and good cheer. The equally large and spacious ball room on the second floor often rang to the frontier music and the thump of square dancers or the more stately minuet.

Legend tells the story of old Gabe a <sup>former</sup> ~~frontier~~ slave, a fine singer and fiddler, who probably fiddled for the dancers.

AS the village increased in numbers and the surrounding countryside became more thickly settled, it became evident that there was need for a store. Captain Bonny of Oxford, Ohio erected the first store and Sylvester Stillson was the first store keeper.

Among his many wares , he was sure to have a good supply of snuff for the old ladies of that day. Many store-keepers operated the store in the years that followed.

In 1865 Mr. Edward Hawes returned from Iowa, where he had moved some time before, and started in the mercantile business again. He operated his store ~~for~~ <sup>again</sup> for the next 50 years and upon his death it was taken over by his daughter, Miss Laura Hawes. In 1917 she sold to Mr. Louis Foley, who had been helping her with the store since 1900.

At that time the store keeper bought most of his things in bulk and weighed and packaged them in his store. There were barrels of sugar, pickles, nails, coffee beans, (every home had a coffee grinder so they were sure something else was not added to thier coffee ) and then there was the cracker barrel, from which many a small hand ~~was~~ was given a free treat.



IN the 1830's and 40's many small businesses that made ~~that~~ made life easier for the citizenry came to Fairhaven. Charles Pierce began shoe making. John Silvers started a blacksmith shop, and Hamilton Briggs built a shingle factory. Then there were three tailor shops which furnished the men with the best of stylish clothes.

These were operated by Thomas Moore, Jacob Caldwell and David Lough. After them came Wolf Degginger and Greenfield. They were Jews and did a fine buisness here for many years. We think they must have occupied rooms in the north end of the Bunker Hill Tavern. As the older residents there used to tell how they hung geese in sacks and stuffed them with food so they would be fat and <sup>have</sup> big livers.

Mr Jacob Norris had a brick kiln and was ready at a moments notice to start firing bricks for buildings. He erected almost every brick building in the town. Stephen Jones had a saddlers shop where you could buy anything from a hitching strap to a fine saddle or a nice set of harness.

Mr. Fisher and Mr. Hunsaker had a Tin and Stove store and they made all kinds of tin ware and spouting. ( Mr. Fisher was the Grand-father of Russell McDivitt, Marion Fisher, and Nellie Iybrook and other descendents in our community.)

In the early 1840's Joel Eperly built a large pork slaughtering house where he carried on an extensive business in pork packing for several years. At the same time James Phillips had a cooper shop where he made barrels for the pork and lard packing business.

About the same time a saw mill<sup>d</sup> and grist mill were built. These were a great benefit to the people in this section of the country as they saved them many miles in traveling over very poor roads.



In the 1840's also a fine pike was built from Richmond to Hamilton and in 1847 a splendid wooden covered bridge was completed across Four Mile creek at the northern edge of the village.

The contractors and builders were John Wiley and Silas Glover, who also had a saw mill just south of the bridge.

It was a two lane bridge with a partition in the middle. For many years only one side of the bridge was used, especially at night, as Charles Pierce's sheep slept in the other. The bridge was painted red and known as the "old red bridge."

In the early days these words were painted on a board on the south end of the bridge

The genius of man is hard to discover

This bridge was built by Silas and Glover

Inside the bridge there was a notice which told people they should post no bills, drive no nails. At a later time someone had added "hang no horses by their tails." Horses shied at posters, especially if they were loose at one corner and were fluttering in the breeze.

Sleigh riders often had to get out and walk through the covered bridges because there was no snow in the bridges for the runners to glide on.

For 64 years it weathered the storms and gales. Then during a flood some of the abutments were loosened and washed out and the old bridge had to be repaired. When the repairs were finished the Co. Commissioners had it repainted white, much to the sorrow of the local citizens.

After the days of heavy motor truck travel in the 1930's the old bridge was struck many times by drivers who were in to much of a hurry to keep to their side of the bridge. About 4P. M. Friday May 4, 1940 the old bridge was struck by a trailer truck loaded with 12 tons of



potatoes bound from Michigan to Cincinnati. It knocked the entire east side out of the bridge and the truck went into the creek.

The commissioners decided against repairing the old covered bridge and put in a temporary one on piling, as they thought the road would be straightened before many years. However the temporary one is still <sup>accommodating</sup> the traffic.

At one time during its construction they felt pressured into working on the bridge on Sunday. A petition was circulated in the two churches one Sunday morning and also in the community and the Sundaywork was stopped.

About the time the pike was finished Mr. Vorhees of Hamilton received the contract to carry the mail from Hamilton to Richmond. His stage coach, in which he carried the mail, was drawn by four beautiful gray horses. He always drove through the street blowing his horn, much to the delight of the village youngsters.

This story was handed down by some old timer. At the time Mr. Robert Beckett hauled the mail from Hamilton to Fairhaven, there came a heavy snow. Bob had no sleigh but Mr. Jim Henry had. Jim offered to sell his sleigh for ten dollars or rent it for fifty cents a day. Mr. Beckett chose to rent and hauled the mail for 90 consecutive days in the sleigh. Sounds unbelievable now. One of Jim Henry favorite sayings was "the lame and the lazy are lucky" He no doubt felt lucky on the deal. We don't know how Mr. Beckett felt.

Mr. Gilbert owned the omnibus line and carried passengers through the town daily. He always drove six horses to the omnibus.

Over the years the town always had at least one Dr. and sometimes more.



The people early felt the need of a church in the village. The Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church at their meeting in Greenfield Oct. 1834 set off about fifty families from the Hopwell Congregation to be known as the Fair Haven Congregation. The people leased a one acre lot from Dr. Alexander Porter and built a brick church 60x55 feet. MR. David Ritchie was the contractor and builder. It was begun in the autumn of 1834 and finished in the spring of 1835. The first pastor was Jeremiah Morrow, son of a former Ohio governor. He began his labors in May 1835, and was pastor until 1842 when, on account of failing health, he resigned. The church was practically vacant from the fall of 1841 until ~~1842~~ the spring of 1845. The Presbytery met at Concord Ohio April 11 1845 and a call was made out for Rev. John Reynolds which he accepted. He began his labors in April 27, 1845 and died Sept. 3, 1846. In the spring a call was made out for Rev. J.Y. Scouller, and was accepted June 1847. He served the Church for 50 years

During his pastorate on ~~May 26 1858 the church for 50 years~~ <sup>May 26 1858 the Associate Presbyterian</sup> Church and Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church merged to form the United Presbyterian Church.

In 1867 the church was taken down, and a new brick one built on the same site. Mr. Coxon was the contractor and builder. (When Mr. Coxon was building the church Mr. Larsh, seeking information himself, said to Mr. Coxon many people have asked me how much you are getting for building this church? Mr. Coxon's answer was -the next one who asks you just say you don't know). However the records tell that the 70x43 foot structure cost \$5828.38 and was finished in Dec. 1867.

Church buildings were plain and unitarian. Four walls and roof that did not leak was all that was considered necessary. Solid pulpits and



and pews were not designed to please the eye nor be comfortable.

The worship was simple and austere. Sermons were for the most part doctrinal and aimed at teaching the believer about God and his designs for men. Congregational participation was at a minimum. Singing was restricted to the metrical verse on the Psalms without the aid of an instrument, except a tuning fork. Singing was for the glory of God, and if the one "lining-out" could not keep on the tune, it never seemed a serious problem. Important was the intent and the significance of what of what was being expressed--not the music.

According to the old Congregational Meetings minute book, on Aug. 23, 1890 a meeting was called for the purpose of considering a motion that the word "male" be stricken out of the church constitution. The vote showed 20 yes and 4 no. The motion was then made and carried that the amending be postponed until the next annual meeting. On Jan. 31, 1891 a vote was again taken and the motion carried. Next a paper was to be circulated among the absent members requesting them to vote. On Jan. 30, 1893 the amendment officially became a part of the constitution. Up until this time only the men of the church had been permitted to vote. ( I checked back through the church constitution and the word "male" had been crossed out ).

On Jan. 27, 1912 a motion was made and carried that an organ be bought for the prayer room, which was a small upstairs room. ( I understand that some of the older members refused to sing with it. ) As time went on however the organ and eventually a piano became an accepted part of the services.

In 1924 the prayer room was enlarged to accommodate facilities for a dining room



for a dining room and also be used for Sunday School classes.

In 1957 an annex was put to the north side of the church. It included rest rooms a kitchen and a large room for many congregational uses. It is known as Fellowship Hall, and has added greatly to the usefulness of the entire building.

The bid for it , including kitchen equipment, was let to Napier Bros. of Cottage Grove Ind. and was for \$17,892.17.

Few incidents have marked the history of this church. She has done her work quietly and has tried to meet her responsibilities arising from her surroundings and from the general progress of the age.

#### Methodists

In 1840 a few Methodists began holding meetings in Mr. Phillips cooper shop and also at the residence of Joseph Green. At that time the Methodist of this part of the country belonged to the Ohio Conference. Later the Cincinnati Conference was organized and this section was taken into it. They became part of the Camden circuit.

In 1852 Hannah Dunn gave the lot the church now stands on, to the people to build a Methodist Church. The contract was given to Joseph Kane and on Oct. 29, 1849 the completed 50x40 structure was dedicated, having cost \$900.

Storms of adversity however soon swept Fairhaven Methodism into discouragement and temporary oblivion. Within a year of completion the plaster fell from the ceiling, then came debt, embarrassment, court proceedings and finally on Mar. 12, 1855 the floor was broken down by a noisy railroad election meeting held in the church contrary to the order of the trustees.

Discouragement was so manifest that an effort to have the floor re-



paired failed and on Apr. 5, 1865 the trustees decided to ask the Camden Quarterly Conference to dispose of the building and discontinue the Fairhaven appointment.

Two years later, however, the Rev. G. H. Dart, 21 years old, succeeded in reviving the society. Braving the discouraging conditions, he arranged for a revival service and in due time had a dedicated congregation started again. The Church was repaired and from that time on Methodism had progressed continually.

In the summer of 1871 the Fairhaven and Sugar Valley appointments purchased the present parsonage lot of 1 1/5 acres from W. O. Swan for \$200. There the first parsonage was built. In 1903 and 4 it was moved for a barn and the present <sup>ub</sup> substantial parsonage erected. Pastor Chapman himself designed the whole structure.

On Oct. 18, 1873 at the quarterly conference the Sugar Valley and Fairhaven appointments were struck off from the Camden circuit and became a separate charge, having their own preacher in their own parsonage.

Early in 1882 the society was encouraged to launch a new building scheme and on April 4, 1883 the contract was let to R. C. Duvall and Wilson Pottenger for \$3,302. In June lightning struck the spire and caused damage which raised the total cost to \$3,500. The work was completed and on Sept. 2, 1883 the building was dedicated.

In 1923 under the pastorate of Rev. Lever the annex building was erected at a cost of \$3138. Most of this building was done by the men of the church. This additional 60x30, provided an excellent social life building and was dedicated on Dec. 27, 1923.

Since then the church has continued to faithfully serve the community.



### School

Religion and education usually go hand in hand, and as soon as the Associate Reformed Church was finished a school was started in their session houses. After a time that building became too small to accomodate the pupils. A frame building of two rooms was erected where the school-house now stands. In 1857 that was replaced by a larger brick building and in 1882 another building of two rooms was erected on the same old site. In 1891 a third room had to be added.

At that time they had grades 1. 2. 3. 4. in one room with one teacher; grades 5, 6, 7, 8, in another room with one teacher; and grades 9, 10, 11 in the third room with one teacher. For grade 12 the children went to McGuffey at Oxford, Ohio. Their tuition being paid by the local school unit.

This served their educational needs until 1914, when the old building was badly in need of repairs and additional space. The bid for the necessary repairs etc. seemed rather high so the Board of Education decided to ask for a bond issue and rebuild completely. The bond issue of \$7000. carried. They added to this \$3000. already on hands (money that had been collected from tuition pupils) to make the necessary \$10,000 for the new building. This building along with another of like size at a neighboring town, served the township for 12 grades of school until 1928.

In 1928 the State Dept. of Education indicated that the charter for High School would be revoked if additional facilities were not made available. At the general election the voters turned down a mill levy for a new building.

The fall of 1929 saw the children from grades 9, 10, 11, 12, being sent to neighboring schools on a tuition basis. A few went to McGuffey



at Oxford, Ohio, a few to Union School in College Corner Ohio, and the bulk of them to them to Dixon a neighboring school. A tuition of \$65. <sup>and the other schools</sup> a year, per pupil, was paid to Dixon <sup>by</sup> the State Dept.

The children were all of basically rural background and soon felt quite at home in their new surroundings.

As time went on State School Laws were changed, and children ~~ap~~ could no longer be sent to neighboring townships on a tuition basis, unless the local school unit wanted to pay the tuition. At that time school boards could consolidate townships without it being put to a vote of the people. In 1952, after several very heated school board meetings, Israel and Dixon Twp. were consolidated. The school boards in both townships resigned and the Co. School office picked a new five member school board to serve.

In the fall of 1953 the seventh and eighth grade children were taken to the Dixon building. Since then we have had just grades 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 left in the Fairhaven (Israel Twp.) building. Township population had grown to where we could comfortably use the entire building for the smaller children. <sup>Sept. 1964 - Fairhaven Bldg. Closed</sup> <sup>Dixon H.S. Taken to Eaton</sup> \* 1974 - The Big Shift.

During the Civil War the school house was a meeting place for the Ladies Societies which met to prepare boxes of clothing and food for the boys in blue. They also sent boxes to hospitals.

In the early 1890's the village and community erected a monument in the cemetery to the 18 boys whose bodies were never brought home. It is of Vermont Berry Granite with a granite cannon ball weighing 800 pounds on the top of it.

<sup>al</sup>  
The dedicat<sup>al</sup> address was given by Colonel Andrew L. Harris

\* K-1-2 - Bruce Bldg  
345,6 East "  
7,8 - Dixon "  
H.S. Eaton H.S. Bldg.

I went from Fairhaven To Dixon To Eaton Retired 19  
1964 1974  
I went back to teaching  
at Fairhaven in 1953 as a needed substitute for Mrs.  
Pethbone she died 1954



of the 76th O. U. I. Several of the boys belonged to his regiment.

The big winter time sport for the young people, was coasting from the school house down to the center of town. Then too there was also ice skating on the Four Mile Creek. IN the summer time there was picnics, ball games, and social gatherings to take up the free time. Of course each child had daily labors to be taken care of first.

Although Four Mile creek was admired by everyone, occasionally, in rainy springs, that admiration turned to fear. She sometimes got out of her banks and came rushing down the streets and occasionally into some of the houses.

In the 1850's the Four Mile Valley R. R. was graded from Hamilton to Fairhaven, but through rascality of some of the company officials, who disappeared with the money, it fell through with and the people lost their money.

The omnibus passenger services and the conestoga wagons were later replaced by carriages, buggies, and nice light wagons. Then in a short while the stage and omnibus horns were replaced by the horns of the horseless carriages that were beginning to appear.

As a result of the Industrial Revolution, the small businesses that were so necessary to a pioneer community, gradually gave way to the stores in the bigger towns. (Often the Co. store) The automobile and better roads made it possible for people to go a greater distance to supply their needs.

As time has gone on businesses in Fairhaven ~~has~~ have declined until today there is one grocery store owned and operated by Lester Gant and one garage, owned and operated by Herbert Jackson.

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