

HISTORY OF FULTON COUNTY, OHIO

By George P. Monagon and George M. Liscombe published in 1877



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was to be erected; of the trials and labor that it took to clear the forests and drain the swamps; of the courage, the fortitude and the strength that was given to survive the attacks of the ague and the fever. Here and there are left short written accounts of the early settlements made in Fulton county and the privations that those early settlers endured. They were written with authority for those who penned those lines lived among the early pioneers and received their statements face to face. Among those

Preface

Those earlier settlers of Fulton county, who endured the hardships of pioneer life and who blazed the trail for the splendid civilization and highly developed county that we have today, are all gone. None are left to tell the story of their journey through the wilderness, day after day in the ox cart to reach the tract of land they were to make their home. None are left to recount their experiences of the building of their log cabins out of the trees which grew on the very spot where the building

manuscripts that are of value and of which only a very few are in existence, is a history of Fulton county written by George P. Monagon and George W. Liscombe and published in 1877. Hon. Davis B. Johnson of Wauseon, O., has secured a copy of it and he has permitted it to be reprinted in this pamphlet form that it may be preserved for generations yet unborn. The Wauseon Republican reprints it as a contribution to the authentic history of the pioneers of Fulton County.

FRANK H. REIGHARD.

*Wauseon, Ohio,
Jan. 15, 1934.*

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Fulton County Formed

On the 28th of February 1850, the General Assembly of Ohio, by an act erected the County of Fulton with its present boundaries, from Lucas, Williams and Henry Counties.

All the criminal and civil suits which were and should be pending in the Counties of Williams, Lucas and Henry on the first Monday in April 1850, were to be prosecuted to final judgment in said counties as though said County of Fulton had not been erected.

All Justice of the Peace were to hold their offices until their service expired or until their successors were elected or commissioned for the County of Fulton.

All writs or other legal processes were to be styled as of the County of Fulton, on and after the first day of April, 1850. The legal voters residing within the limits of said County were to assemble on the first Monday in April, 1850, to elect officers of the County to serve until the next annual election in October, 1850. And the Courts were to be held at some convenient house in the Township of Pike, the place to be designated by the associate Judges of said County, until a permanent seat of justice shall be established within and for said County.

Laurens Dewey of Franklin County, Mathias H. Nichols, of Allen County and John Riley, of Carroll County, were appointed by the legislature of Ohio, Commissioners to fix and locate the seat of Justice in said new County of Fulton.

Accordingly under the provisions of this act, the people of both political parties met in convention at the house of Daniel Knowles, in Pike Township, about the last of March 1850 to

nominate officers of the county to be supported at the April elections. This convention was not fully characterized for harmony of purpose but in consequence of the weakness of the then old whig party to succeed in the election of a party ticket, they quietly submitted to a portion of the choice of said convention. That Convention made a choice of Mortimer D. Hibbard, of Dover, for Auditor; George B. Brown of Royalton, was chosen Sheriff; C. C. Allman of Delta, was chosen recorder; Nathaniel Leggett of Swan Creek, was chosen Treasurer; William Sutton, of Gorham, Christopher Watkins, of Fulton, and Jonathon Barnes, were chosen commissioners, and duly elected and qualified as officers of said new county, and severally entered upon the duties of their respective offices. The place having been fixed temporally for the business of the County at the house of Robert A. Howard, in Pike under said act creating the new County of Fulton. Nathaniel Leggett, of Swan Creek, John Kendall, of Franklin, & Alfred C. Hough, of Chesterfield, were chosen the first Associate Judges. Nathaniel Leggett refused to serve, Socrates H. Catley, of Swan Creek, was appointed to fill his place. Samuel Durgin, was appointed Clerk, and John A. Read, Prosecuting Attorney, and in the fall of 1850, Alfred C. Hough was elected to the Auditor's office and resigned his judgeship, and William T. Parmalee, of Chesterfield, and A. M. Flickinger of Gorham, filled said office successfully until the change in the Constitution of the State, in 1851.

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County Seat Located

Some time in the season of 1850, the locating Commissioners here to fore appointed by the legislature of Ohio, permanently fixed the seat of Justice at Ottokee, near the center of the County. Aetna, Delta, Spring Hill and Fluhart's Corners having been competing points before the Commissioners. The decision of, said locating Commissioners afterwards was confirmed by the people. The first election resulting in no choice, but bringing the second contest between Ottokee and Aetna, and upon the second trial resulted as aforesaid. The Commissioners of the County immediately thereafter proceeded to erect a Court House at, said new site, and the contract for building was duly awarded to A. H. Jordan of Royalton. Said Court House was afterwards burned July 16th, 1864, and again rebuilt in 65. Wauseon in 1863 and Delta in 1864 under an enabling act for the removal of the County seat were defeated. In 1869 Wauseon again entered the field under an act of the legislature for the removal of the County Seat, which was affected by a small majority, and as soon as a Court house was built, which I believe was in the latter part of the year 1871, or the beginning of the year 1872, the books and papers were all moved to Wauseon, the new County seat, and thereafter all business has been transacted at Wauseon, and is to day a flourishing town.

But to return to a historical enumeration of the earlier days within the present limits of the now County of Fulton, then the County of Wood, and other counties named, the first settlements began in the year 1833, at Phillip's Corners, Aetna, upon Bean Creek (Called Tiffin River) in the Township of Franklin; Delta and Swan Creek, and at Spring Hill in Dover Township.

At the time of the first settlement at these points from 1833 to 1836, there were many Indians roaming over and hunting in the

County, the most favorable game being Deer, Bear, Raccoon, Mink, Otter, the two latter killed mostly for their furs; Wild turkeys still being very plenty furnished food as well as sport for both the Indian and the pioneer White man.

The Indians upon this territory, were chiefly of the Pottowatomies tribe, extending through a part of the Maumee valley and north eastern Indiana and southern Michigan, they were the original owners of the soil. Tradition says, having inhabited this country for many generations.

Intermarriages with the Ottawas who inhabited Maumee valley proper and had occasionally taken place, so also with the Chippewas further up the peninsula. The intermarriages gave the Pottowatomies strength and powerful allies in war. The principal village in this County was located upon both banks of Bad creek, near Aetna in Pike Township, on the lands entered by Jacob McQuillen and Edward Howard, and now owned and embraced in the farm of the Hon. D. W. H. Howard, and occupying mainly the present site of his orchard and buildings. The site was favorable for an Indian village as the ground is high and rolling, and furnishing some of the finest springs of pure sweet water in the County. In 1834 at the date of the first settlement there were still in a flourishing condition, and bearing fruit, a number of very old peach trees, which no doubt were planted by early French traders. A more favorable site for an Indian village could not be found within the now circle of Fulton County.

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Historic Mounds

A very singular feature of this locality (which however is not uncommon in Northwestern Ohio) is a circle of mounds embracing within their circumference about three acres of land. Those mounds are each distinct and from thirty to sixty feet in diameter, and from two to three feet in height and were filled with the bones of human bodies, indicating that it was the site of an ancient burying ground, or of a battlefield where many had been slain. I learn from my much esteemed friend D. W. H. Howard, that not even a tradition existed among the Indians at that date, the time of its use, but tradition points somewhere down the vista of time, a great battle was fought between the inhabitants of the Mississippi and the east, and this burying ground was the result of this sanguinary strife. Time and the plow has lowered them somewhat, but are still plain to be seen. In uncovering one of these mounds for the purpose of building thereon, Mr. Howard tells me he found the bones and carefully collected and reburied them in other mounds. He is truly the friend of the Indian who can so carefully preserve the ashes of their dead.

This village was called Nesenowbo, or Junenowbo, which signifies in the language of the Pottowatomies, the two boys or twin boys. It was called by the whites twin Naba, which was not correct. There were a number of other smaller settlements, one on bean creek (in early days called Tiffin River) at the north part of the County, and one on the banks of Swan creek on the eastern verge of the County, it was a trading post kept by one Lakins who long since passed away, & his Indian customers to their happy hunting grounds.

Also at Spring Hill in Dover Township was situated one of the Indians favorite camping grounds, as its fine springs furnished

what to the Indians, was only second to his beloved fire water (Whiskey) pure sweet water. The remains of their dead may still occasionally be seen when turned up by the plow share, or thrown out by the spade.

History gives to us the hardships the early pioneers had in settling in this wilderness, the privations they endured, and the labor and toil to make for a growing family a home, living on hominy made from corn pounded in wooden mortars, and what wild meat might be obtained in their intervals of labor, but history does not record a case, that blood was ever shed by Indian hands within the precincts of this County, which in itself is very remarkable considering the nature of the Indian and the grievances they bore towards the white man for the encroachment made upon their domain, "to this land he held the right of the pre-emption the time whereof the memory of man ran not to the contrary, and superadded to this a patent from the great spirit which established his title on solid ground," (Lanman's Michigan) There were about three thousand Indians upon this territory at the commencing of the early white settlements, their manners and customs were the same as other tribes of Ohio or those who inhabited the Maumee Valley. They exchanged furs for other merchandise. In the treaties with our government after the extinguishment of the Indian titles to these lands, they were gathered together and removed beyond the Mississippi, the first leaving about 1828, and the balance at a later period 1832 or 1833; what few preferred to staying the land of their fathers have passed away, hence, to day we have no Indians upon the soil of Fulton County. Much might be written by the Historian of the habits, manners and customs, and the mode of living, not only of the Indian in his wild state, but of the hardy pioneers in the early settlement of this wilderness country that would be of interest to the present generation. Many of to day have but a very imperfect idea of the hardships and

privations endured by the early settlers.

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The First Settlers

All the territory of this County that originally organized from Lucas was styled York Township, which was afterwards since 1837 organized into the various subdivisions as now exist. In all probability Valentine Winslow, David Hobart, and Jacob McQuillin were the first resident white men in the now present limits of Fulton County, followed soon after by Eli Phillipps and wife, they settled in Royalton and are now residing upon the farm first settled upon. Messrs, Anson, Willard, James Trowbridge, and Wm Fraker in 1834 settled near Delta, York Township. Robert A. Howard, Daniel Knowles, John Scindell and James Dixon settled in what is now Pike Township. Joseph Applegate, Nathaniel S. Ketcham and William Smith (Sometimes called Uncle Billy) followed soon after by George Welch, Butler Richardson, Henry Jordan, Snow Carpenter, Jared Hoadley and Eli Phillips, who settled here in June 1833. West, the nearest white settlement was seventy miles and south at Waterville, on the Maumee.

M. D. Hibbard, J. J. Schnall, J. Walters, - Bennett, William Hoffmire and Pulu Lott, with some others settled Spring Hill, now in the Township of Dover, about this time; Judge Ambrose Rice, uncle to our late deceased brother, M. D. Hibbard, surveyed this territory. He was a bachelor, a very intelligent and estimable man. It is said that disappointment in early life caused him to leave the society of civilization and lead the life of a

recluse as it were. His profession as a surveyor confined him to the woods, for which he had as strong an attachment as the native of the forest. In summer, sleeping in the forest with the green carpet for his couch, and the clear canopy of heaven for his covering, and in the winter, bark and log huts hastily constructed, as security from the keen winds. It was through his influence that our late townsman, M. D. Hibbard came to this County, and by him was furnished a house at Spring Hill, where he spent some of his life.

As near as can be ascertained, George Wiers was the first white person born on the territory, and lived on what is now known as the Mullen Farm, in Pike.

A nephew of Lyman Parcher with a daughter of Aretus Knight were united in marriage by our venerable townsman Daniel Knowles J. P., in the very early history of the territory and probably the first, or at least among the first marriages that took place among the whites in the now present limits of this County.

Some among the oldest settlers of Swan Creek Township were David Williams, Thomas Gleason, William Sheffield, Aeldes Ney, and Thomas Fraker. Shortly after followed Hon. S. H. Cately, and others.

Swan Creek was organized from York Township in 1836. Franklin township was organized in 1842, while under the jurisdiction of Lucas County. As it now exists with the addition from Williams County, would comprise as its first settlers, Joseph Bates, Bruce Packard who settled on the Creek in 1835. John Shaffer and Adam Poorman in 1835; Joseph Ely, Asher Bird, S. B. Darby and William Youngs next followed in 1835 to 1837. Shortly after the arrival of Bird, he built a grist mill on Mill Creek, the ruins of which may be seen at this time. Among

some of the other early settlers of Franklin were John McLaughlin, Leonard Whitmore, John Bowser, Ozias Barnes and John J. Clark. Ransome Reynolds and Pollonia Crandall were the first persons married in Franklin township, were married by Mathews Borton, Justice of the Peace, of German. The first preacher upon the soil was John Bowser, United Brethern. Samuel B. Darby and Leonard Whitmore each in the early times in this County, kept a store on Bean Creek. Franklin was organized from German and Gorham Townships and additions since from Mill Creek and Brady Townships, Williams County.

A sister of John McLaughlin, away back in those early days, in preparation for the marriage, which was as natural then as in these times, done a washing in the morning, shelled one half bushel of corn, carried it on her head to Bird's Mill, a distance of two miles, had it ground, brought it back in the same manner, and from it baked a pudding for the feast the same evening-and was married the same day.

Fulton Township was organized at a very early date, embracing Amboy Township. Among its first inhabitants were Hiram Bartlett, John Blain, William Blain, and Charles Blain, the mother of whom lived with her son Charles and died some three years ago at the ripe old age of one hundred years. David and Jerry Duncan, Tunis Lewis, John Lewis and Charles Welch were among the first.

An incident in the life of Hiram Bartlett is here worthy of note; He early learned the hatter trade, and on arriving at twenty-one years of age (as it was customary to have birthday parties) he had a party to commemorate the event. Rum was customary at the side board and was drank freely by all members of the society in those days. On that day he took a bottle, filled with rum --no

fictitious stuff-- corked and sealed it, and then and there declared before the company present that he would never taste any alcoholic drinks during his life, unless to save his life, and not then until it was decided by a council of five doctors that it was necessary, if so decided that it was necessary, the bottle was to be opened and the prescription to be made therefrom. He died last fall. The bottle remains unopened and is now in the possession of his son Russell Bartlett.

Chesterfield Township was organized in 1837, embracing the now township of Gorham or all that part east of the Williams County line. The first man in the township was Chesterfield Clemens after whom the township was named. Amaziah Turner came from Putnam County, New York. I believe he settled here in 1835. Martha Turner, daughter of said Amaziah, was the first child born in the township. Alfred C. Hough and Harlow Butler were among some of the first settlers of this township.

Gorham was organized in 1838, from Chesterfield, and among its first pioneers were Gorham Cottrell and family, James Baker, George D. Kellogg, a man by the name of Worden, Philander Crane, Levi Crifford, Benjamin F. Dee, and others. The most of the early settlers of Gorham Township were poor and endured all the privations incident to a new wooded country. Their place of trade for Gorham, Franklin and German in those days, was done at Adrian, Michigan, and for milling at Medina and Canadagua just over the line.

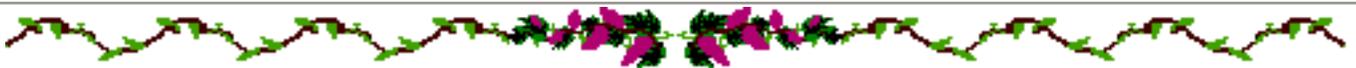
German and Clinton were organized at a very early date, the time of which and their settlements and by whom, I have been as yet, unable to obtain a correct history, such as I in confidence could present to the people. York township was the first organized township in the County having its organization while it belonged to the County of Wood. Its history within its present limits I

know but little about.

The first village lots laid out in this County were Aetna, in the township of Pike, and a man named Wilkinson with Edward Howard (Father of D. W. H. Howard) built thereon a block house as a trading post with the Indians. That same Block House is still standing at Aetna, but since boarded over upon the outside and new roof, and bids fair to be a monument of early pioneer life for some time to come. You of this period have but a small conception of the hardships of those early pioneers. Many living in rudely constructed cabins, ten by twelve feet or less, without any windows save the pulling out of a few chincking, with rudely constructed bed steads, using in many instances but one post with bed rails inserted in the logs in some corner, on which the slumber of your fathers and mothers was sweet as yours to day upon your spring couches and your carpeted rooms.

The growing strength and beauty of the County is in its agricultural interests, its wheat, corn, oats, hay, etc. The purity of its morals is maintained by the virtue and dignity of its women and the excellency of its schools; all of which is its present glory and future hope. May we ever look with feelings of pride on the American flag as it waves over a free people to day, beneath whose grateful folds, we have for one hundred years found a home, and may we be enabled to transmit this heritage to future generations, that the future prospects of the next Centennial year may be as propitious as ours is to day, for the future.

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Wauseon

Wauseon was laid out on March 1854 and named by J. H. Sargent, Esq. in honor of one of the principal Chiefs of the Ottawa Nation.

Wauseon, the Indian Chief --one fourth white blood--was removed by the Government west of the Mississippi and died in 1849. He was a noble Indian and highly respected. He stood six feet three inches in his moccasins, and was of fine form and well proportioned. The first building was erected on the fourth of April 1854. The proprietors of the town were Nat. Leggett, J. H. Sargent, William H. Hall and E. L. Barber.

The first train of cars passed through the place on the Air Line Road on the 20th day of July, 1854, at which time the population of the village was fifteen persons.

The first hotel in Wauseon was named the "Estelle House". The first land for a home in Wauseon was bought from Lorenzo Dow Bayes uncle Tom Bayes.

The first church was erected in the summer of 1855, by the Methodists. In the year 1863 and 1864, the Disciples built a Church; in 1864 the Congregationalists erected a church. In 1874 and 1875 the Methodists erected their present large and commodious church. In 1875 the Catholics fitted up their church, and in 1868 the Baptists built their church.

The first fire engine was purchased in 1863, and in 1875 a magnificent fire engine was purchased. Both good and used in case of necessity. The petition praying for the organization of Wauseon into an incorporated Village was received & filed with A. C. Hough, County Auditor, on April 11th, 1857. The

approval of the Commissioners of the County, Stephen Houghton, Joseph Ely, and George Taft was given at Ottokee, June 13th, 1857.

The first Council was composed of the following members; Mayor, Nat Leggett; Recorder, E. L. Barber; and councilmen, James Cornell, M. D. Munn, Thomas Scott, E. L. Hayes and Anson Huntington. The first meeting of the Council was held September 28th, 1858.

The population of the village in 1860 was three hundred and fifty persons, the present population is about twenty five hundred. The first white settler and actual resident of the site of Wauseon, was John Newcomer, who emigrated to the then wilderness in May 1844, and erected a log cabin and commenced the work of cleaning up and improving his farm, on which are now laid out two additions to the village of Wauseon.

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Delta

Mr. E. L. Waltz, editor and proprietor of the Delta Avalanche, who has been looking into the early history of Delta, furnished the following facts pertaining to the early settlement:

It is generally conceded that the first settler here, or what was then called the " Six Mile Woods" was a Mr. Meeker, who hewed away a place for his residence where S. H. Cately now lives. This was in the fall of 1833. In the spring of 1834 he was followed by others; Mr. William Fewlas and his brother, hailing from Long Island, New York, took up residence here, where Mr. William Fewlas yet resides.

James McQuillin was the first to settle on the site where the village of Delta now stands, sometime during the year 1834. His cabin stood near where the Presbyterian Church now stands, who also erected a saw mill on the creek, not far from the residence of H. E. Bassett.

From the best information at hand, we learn that the present business portion of Delta was never platted but was staked out in lots and sold to the purchasers in such size lots as was desired, and afterwards sold the location for streets. In later years numerous additions have been regularly laid out and recorded.

The mercantile business of Delta. And among some of the early tradesman were George Robinson, a brother of Mrs. M. H. Butler, who was the first man to bring a stock of goods to this vicinity. Meeker and Lewis were the first men to bring a stock of goods and sell them on the ground where Delta now stands, their store was kept in a cabin that stood where the Centennial Hotel stands. Daniel Cummings was the next to embark in the mercantile trade. Dr. White put up the building now occupied by

M.H. Butler and put in it what was then called a good store. John Kennedy next comes on the scene with a small store in a part of the building now occupied as a residence by Dr. Ramsey. Mr. Gates now of Delta, soon became a partner of Mr. Kennedy and from the little shops here mentioned have grown the business that is now seen in the village of Delta.

The growth of the village has been rather slow, as the country was new, and roads bad until about the year 1850, when a plank road was laid from here to Toledo. Following this a large flouring mill was erected, and large brick blocks have taken the place of round log cabin, and instead of the plank road we find the Air Line Division of the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railroad, and instead of the hamlet in the woods, we find a beautiful village of fifteen hundred inhabitants, adorned with churches, schools, and fine residences. Delta has the reputation of being the best market place in the County.

The first election held in the eastern part, if not in the whole County, was held on the Williams farm, two miles east of Delta. It is said by Mr. Fewlas that he went to the election, but the Judges were out in the woods hunting bee trees, consequently he did not vote.

On a petition of sixty residents of Delta, the village was incorporated, August 3rd, 1863. At the election the following officers were elected: Mayor, William Critzer; Clerk, Chas. Cullen; Members of Council, D. H. Pettys, J. T. Gates, A. M. Carpenter, O. T. Clark, and Simon Zimmerman.

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Archbold

This is a well to do little town of about 600 or 800 inhabitants, situated on the Air Line Division of the Lake Shore and Michigan railroad. It is in Fulton County, about 14 miles from Wauseon, the County seat, and about thirty eight miles from Toledo. This is probably one of the oldest towns in the County, and is surrounded by a beautiful farming country. Archbold is not behind in the way of manufacturing, as will be seen by a showing of its business and manufacturing establishments below. The town was originally settled by the French, and is still largely populated by that nationality. It was, we are told by Mr. George Ditto, first settled about the year 1839-and who, by the way, claims to have been the first settler in this community, hewed away a site for his mansion, a log cabin which was the commencement of the town. Others soon followed him and from the labors and toils of those old pioneers a fine productive country takes the place of a wilderness, and a thriving village emerged.

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