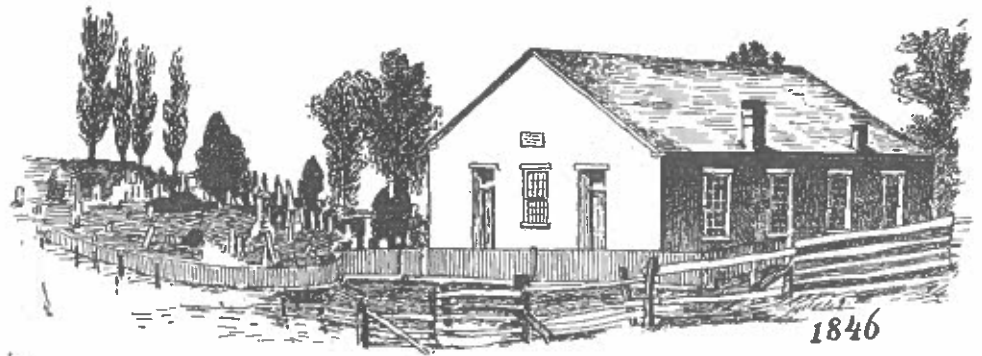




1812

PASTORS

- Rev. Abraham Scott ... S.S.
- Rev. Dr. McMillan "
- Rev. Jacob Lindley "
- Rev. James Arbuthnot "
- Rev. Joseph Anderson "
- Rev. Mr. Reed "
- Rev. Benj. Mitchell P.
- Rev. R.H. Holliday "
- Rev. John Moffat "
- Rev. J. D. Fitzerald S.S.
- Rev. D. H. Laverty P.
- Rev. J. J. Lane "
- Rev. J. G. Black "
- Rev. J. A. Bower "
- Rev. Walter L. Alexander "



1846

ELDERS

- John Cunningham } 1812
- John Moore }
- Wm. Keyser
- Jas. Greenlee
- John Rankin
- Jas. Milligan
- Andrew Anderson
- Wallace Milligan
- John S. Cratty
- Robert Merritt
- Joshua Keyser
- Matthew Wallace
- Wm. Thomas
- John Giffin
- P. A. Wise
- Ino. S. Keyser
- Elmer E. Tarbet



1890

ROCK HILL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



1817



1813

time to fill our vacant pulpit on many occasions
 October 17, 1943. His thought-provoking and in-
 teresting sermons have done much to hold our congregation
 together at intermittent times over the last nineteen
 years. His one hundredth sermon, delivered on October 13,
 introduced two main thoughts; the second one was
 directed to us the subsequent week, October 20. His text
 was the sixth verse of the thirteenth chapter of St. Mat-
 thew: "When the sower sows the seed, some fall on the
 ground and the seed is eaten by birds; some fall on
 rocky ground and when the sun comes up, they wither and
 because they have no root, they wither away." Certainly for all
 of us, Dr. Elbin has helped us sow deeper spiritual
 seeds; so that we may not fall when we meet temptation.

On our celebration date, October 14, 1962, he will
 have given us one hundred forty-one sermons, the equivalent
 of three years of service to Rock Hill Church. All
 of us know Dr. Elbin has a warm feeling in their hearts
 for him and a realization of his sincere and daily service
 as Master.

* * *

ELDERS OF ROCK HILL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

	Year Ordained	Died
Cunningham.....	1809	1844
Moore.....	1809	1854
Sam Keyser.....	1841	1856
W. Milligan.....	1841	1882
Greenlee.....	1841	1855
Rankin.....	1841	1868
Sam Keyser.....	1851	1886
W. W. Anderson.....	1855 ..	(membership to Bellaire, 1860)
W. Wallace Milligan.....	1856	1868



Dr. Paul N. Elbin is President of West Liberty State
 College, West Liberty, West Virginia, and in that capacity
 alone is a very busy man. But he has graciously given of



Rev. B. James Long
1929 1939



Rev. Louis E. Campbell
1941 1943



Rev. Howard L. Weir
1948 1957



Rev. Earl Barthlow
1957 1961

Elders (continued)

	Year Ordained	Died
Robert Merritt.....	1856	1884
Willaim Thomas.....	1856	1904
John S. Cratty.....	1859 ..	(membership Bellaire, 1
Matthew Wallace.....	1867	1890
John Giffin.....	1884	1911
P. Addison Wise.....	1884	1957
John S. Keyser.....	1892 ..	(moved to V field in 19
Elmer E. Tarbet.....	1892	1929
John Wallace Giffin.....	1912	1958
Joseph A. Giffin.....	1912	1962
Frank O. Wise.....	1912	1938
Charles W. Wise.....	1931	1958
Charles A. Nelson.....	1931	
Paul K. Greenlee.....	1949	
Earl Giffin.....	1949	
Theodore L. Wise.....	1949	
Rotary system adopted January 14, 1958		
Alva A. Dennis.....	1958	
Melvin C. Huffman.....	1958	
A. Paul Nelson.....	1959	
Carl A. Giffin.....	1960	
Roy J. Givens.....	1962	

The first twenty-five of these elders were elected to serve their church as long as they lived, and several of them gave many years to this work. Those elected under the rotary system are, of course, ordained for life though their actual term is limited in a sense.

There was an earlier time when the session's work was a little different than it now is. If a member did not live within the church's rules of behavior, it was necessary for that individual to appear before the session and give an account of himself. If found guilty a punishment was likely to be an appearance before the congregation with an acknowledgment of his wrongdoing and an expression of regret.

Methods of serving communion have changed too. I can recall that the communion table was set at the front in front of the church and the membership proceeded to partake of the Lord's Supper. Each was presented, when he came to the service, a small lead token marked with "L." which he surrendered at the altar. However, if his name had "not been consistent with session rules," his tokens were withheld.

It was in 1910 when the church started to use the presbyterian individual communion service. Before that time there was one large silver wine cup that was passed from one to another as they sat in the pews.

In 1958, as was becoming the rule in most Presbyterian churches, the rotary system of election and serving was adopted for both our session and board of trustees. This way more men, and possibly women too, could be better acquainted with the work of the governing of the church.

Each body, the session, the board of trustees, and the board of deacons also, is divided into three classes, one class being elected each year for a one-year term. No one can serve for more than six consecutive years, although he may be reelected after a year of one year.

Our first board of deacons was elected at our congregational meeting on January 10, 1961. Those who served

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| Earla Monahan | Russell Giffin |
| Frances Giffin | Robert Tarbet |
| Katherine Nelson | Russell Hathaway. |

* * *



Rev. John G. Black
1880 1886



Rev. J. P. Stoops, wife Alice
1909 1916



Rev. James Clark
1920 1922



Rev. James A. Norris
1922 1928

Years of Service

Abraham Scott.....Stated Supply....
 John McMillan, D. D. (organized St. Clairsville in 1798)
 Jacob Lindley.....Stated Supply....
 James Arbuthnot.....Stated Supply....
 Joseph Anderson...(installed at St. Clairsville in 1798)
 Mr. Reed.....Stated Supply....
 Benjamin Mitchell, D. D.....Pastor.....1834 - 1857
 R. H. Hollyday.....Pastor.....1858 - 1860
 John Moffat, D. D.....Pastor.....1861 - 1863
 J. D. Fitzgerald.....Stated Supply....1863 - 1864
 D. H. Laverty.....Pastor.....1865 - 1867
 J. J. Lane.....Pastor.....1868 - 1879
 J. G. Black, D. D.....Pastor.....1880 - 1886
 J. A. Bower.....Pastor.....1887 - 1889
 Walter L. Alexander.....Pastor.....1891 - 1908
 James P. Stoops.....Pastor.....1909 - 1916
 Robert Grant.....Pastor.....1917 - 1918
 James Clark.....Pastor.....1919 - 1921
 James A. Norris.....Pastor.....1922 - 1929
 B. James Long.....Pastor.....1929 - 1939
 Louis E. Campbell.....Pastor.....1941 - 1943
 Paul N. Elbin, Ph. D., D. D...Interim Supply...1943 - 1962
 Herbert H. Fuller.....Pastor.....1944 - 1946
 Howard L. Weir.....Pastor.....1949 - 1957
 L. Earl Barthlow.....Pastor.....1957 - 1961

TRUSTEES

Our church could not have endured nor progressed without a good Board of Trustees and those whose names are next listed have served the Rock Hill Church well in this capacity. When building or repair work is in progress the serving Board has unselfishly given many hours of work in one way or another. The same is true also of many others whose names do not appear here.

These are the ones who have served from April 1961 including our present Board. No earlier records were found.

Robert Merrit	George E. Galloway
Robinson Keyser	R. Elmer McAllister
James Alexander, Sr.	Charles W. Wise
William Greenlee	M. Wilbur Giffin
George K. Wise	Edgar E. Wise
Hugh Giffin	Everett J. Giffin
Wallace McAllister	J. Ernest Giffin
James E. Wise	Roy E. Tarbet
Alva A. Wise	A. Paul Nelson
A. B. Tschappat	Lewis Roth
R. Smiley Nelson	Russell E. Giffin
Austin McNiece	F. Merwood Giffin
John A. Wise	Roy J. Givens
George O. Robinson	Rollin Greenlee
John S. Keyser	Harry L. McAllister
Elmer E. Tarbet	John A. Galloway
Cyrus Wise	Alva C. Dennis
Joseph A. Giffin	Paul K. Greenlee

Trustees (continued)

ard K. Giffin	J. McClellan Thomas
A. Giffin	David G. Wise
rt J. Stolz	Chester D. Parker, Sr.
ernard Nelson	Dale D. Heil
lgar Wise	Jack Stroup
in C. Huffman	Henry Grammer
n M. Brannen	Richard Bailey
ld E. Nelson	

The last three given names were elected under the
ry system.

* * *

MINISTERIAL SONS and CHRISTIAN WORKERS

iam Wallace	W. V. Milligan, D. D.
ard Merrill	Robert Alexander, D. D.
s M. Alexander, D. D.	John W. Allen, D. D.
O. Wise	George W. MacMillan, D. D.
s Merritt	Robert Criswell
r S. Robinson	Ashbel G. Lane
as Merrill	Charles K. Alexander

Howard K. Nelson

James M. Alexander spent thirty-seven years in
ign mission work, a lot of this time having been

ceased pastors, elders, and ministerial sons of our church." Rev. Fred O. Wise (now retired, of Toronto, Ohio) had taken a great interest in an organ and had done a lot of work canvassing and raising the money to put this instrument in the new church. But after many years of rendering beautiful music, it was beginning to present problems and our thoughts turned to a new organ. The old organ had been hand-pumped by the young men of the congregation but in the early 1950's Rev. Howard L. Weir put an electric motor on it, thus relieving the young men of this chore. But there came a time when the old instrument had completed its useful service and plans were made for the purchase of the new Hammond organ which now graces our sanctuary. The purchase price was raised by canvass and donations and was dedicated August 31, 1958.

By the late 1950's the metal walls of the choir loft and church front were rusting through and after much deliberation that part of the church was renovated with beautiful wood panelling and new lights in the choir. A beautiful picture of Salman's Head of Christ was placed on the back choir wall as a gift from Mr. and Mrs. J. McClellan Thomas. This work was completed in 1961.

* * *

Rev. Benjamin Mitchell served both Rock Hill and Mt. Pleasant Churches for twenty-three years. When his age no longer permitted him to serve both churches, he resigned at Rock Hill and gave full time to the Mt. Pleasant congregation.

The Reverends Hollyday, Moffat, Fitzgerald, and Laverty served both Rock Hill and Bellaire until a time in 1866 when Rev. William Gaston was called to Bellaire.

We also shared Reverends Lane, Black, Bower, and Alexander with the Coalbrook church, Rev. Lane having effected their organization in 1875.

Rev. J. P. Stoops helped with the ministry at Hope Chapel.

Rev. B. James Long ministered at the Warnock church when his pastorate was at Rock Hill.

The Rev. R. H. Hollyday organized the First Church of Bellaire in 1860, it taking forty-one members from Rock Hill. Rev. J. J. Lane organized the Coal Brook Church, it taking fifty members from Rock Hill, and sixteen others following in a short time, making sixty-six in all. Also from Rock Hill has gone forth part of Wegee Presbyterian Church (now the Shadyside church) and part of Kirkwood Church. All this sorely taxed her strength, but her work continued and grew just the same.

On October 14, 1962, our membership numbers one hundred sixty-four. Our 1961 Sunday School report showed one hundred twenty members. Our total church receipts for 1961 was \$9562. Of this amount \$1,116 went to benevolences. This percentage is somewhat lower than that reported during Rev. Stoops' three-year period.

* * *

There has been no altering to the exterior of our church over these sixty years with the exception of new cement steps and curb, and the addition of the pines to the landscape. The large pine was planted in 1946 by the Builders Class as a memorial to Chester C. Braun, Jr., who gave his life for his country in Belgium in January of 1945.

When the church was built in 1903 it was decided not to have a basement--only a furnace room. In 1952 it was apparent we needed more Sunday School room and felt a basement was now the answer. Since we were now using two new gas furnaces installed in 1948 it was possible to go ahead with the basement idea. Most of the planning and work was done by church members and the board of trustees. Digging and removing the dirt was one of the first steps, and it was during this process that some more of Rock Hill's famous rocks came to light. Everyone labored hard and long and the project was successfully completed and dedicated by Rev. Howard L. Weir at the morning service on August 12, 1956. It would be hard to evaluate the labor but \$446 in cash was given by former members to help finance this project.

At the dedication of this church on August 26, 1903, there was also dedicated a lovely reed organ to "the de-

spent in India. James Merritt did Home Mission Work. Howard K. Nelson was a Christian worker having dedicated his life to the Moody Bible Institute work in Chicago

It has been noted throughout our history, in addition to the ministers mentioned here and Howard K. Nelson, that many lay people who spent their formative years under the influence of the Rock Hill Church and community have found, when they left our area, joy and satisfaction in doing God's work elsewhere in our country. For that we are deeply pleased and pray that Rock Hill may continue to exert this kind of influence.

We presently have a young member of our church, Polivka, enrolled under a Presbyterian scholarship as full-time student in Christian Education at Muskingum College, New Concord, Ohio.

Many young men and a few young women from our community have nobly answered the call to serve their country in war and peace throughout our history and here we honor them for their deeds so rendered.

* * *

MUSIC

Music has played an important part in our church services from the time of the precentor on down and here we would like to recognize the choir directors and organists who have given so many hours (and they only know how many) of their time to this endeavor. There have been others, we know, whose names we do not now have, have served in this way. The choir directors we know John Keyser, Charles W. Wise, Charles A. Nelson, and Donald (Wilma McAllister) Nelson. Our organists:

Jessie Wise (Lydecker)	Mildred Giffin (Duck)
Josephine Giffin (Drum)	Mrs. Lucy Wise
Helen Giffin (Dunfee)	Mrs. Virginia Galloway
Eleanor Wise (Goldsmith)	Mrs. Helen Keyser

* * *

Our congregation is happy to be able to here recognize what we may call "special" members, those among us whose days number more than eighty years. In fact, Mr. Helen Giffin is past ninety years of age and has been a member of the Rock Hill Church for seventy-four years.

The others are Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Roth, Mr. Charles Giffin, and Mr. Harry A. Dixon. We are proud to have them in our midst.

* * *

We find on our present roll the names of about sixty persons who are direct descendants of those consecrated persons who met and organized the Rock Hill Church on that morning in 1809. This is an interesting fact.

* * *

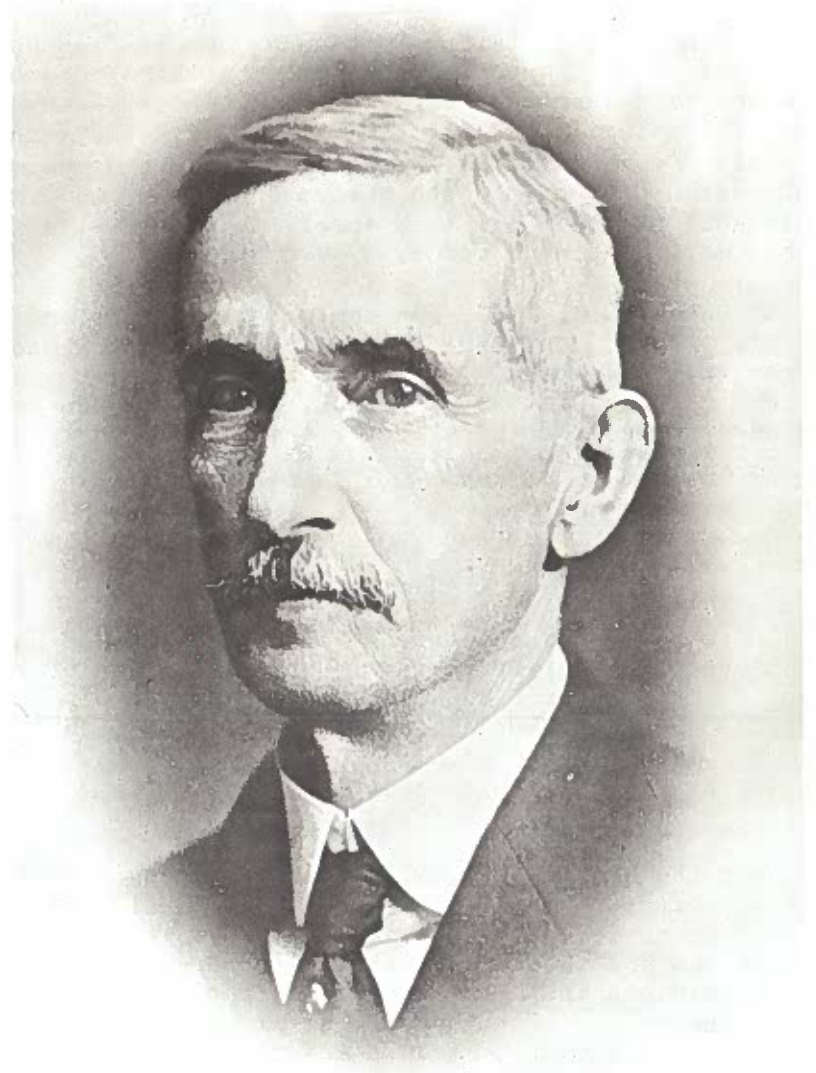
HOPE CHAPEL

During the pastorate of Rev. James P. Stoops came the beginning up of the work at Hope Chapel on McMahon's Creek (the area where our church was started many years ago.) In 1812 they had a faithful band of thirty members, an academy, a Sunday School, and a Christian Endeavor Society. A number of young people from Rock Hill attended meetings at Hope Chapel to help create interest. Miss Lina Thomas acted as superintendent of the Sunday School there for many years and a lot of credit for its success is due her efforts. Among many others who were faithful helpers over the years, we mention Helen Giffin who played the piano at their services and was a most faithful Sunday School teacher.

* * *

HAPPY HELPERS MISSION BAND

The children's missionary society, first known as the Society of Happy Helpers, was organized and developed by Mrs. Mary Bower, the minister's wife, in the year 1887. Mrs.



Rev. Walter L. Alexander
April 1, 1891 to December 6, 1908
Served Rock Hill and Coalbrook for 18½ years.

Two churches were built at Rock Hill during his pastorate here. A wonderful period of missionary effort.

Notice the faith with which this congregation acted. On July 1, 1902, only six days after the destructive fire, it voted to build a new church and seek a new location. The insurance carried amounted to \$2,400. on the building and \$600. on the furniture and had been adjusted to \$2,825.

After many pros and cons, as is always the case when a momentous decision must be made, on July 22, 1902 the congregation voted to build the new church at the intersection of the Tunnel Hill Road and the Rock Hill Pike (which had been rerouted at this point) on land donated by Mesdames Mary and Ermina Galloway. It is felt by many that this choice of location has played an important part in keeping our church in prominent existence.

A great part of the money that paid for this church was raised from ice cream socials and from suppers (oyster, chicken-waffle, and so on) given by the ladies in their homes.

The membership of our church in 1903 was one hundred eighteen, with one hundred sixty-four enrolled in the Sunday School.

In the nearly nineteen years of Rev. Walter L. Alexander's pastorate, Rock Hill built two churches at a cost of \$19,000 in labor, material, and money, and contributed to the Lord's work a total of \$34,612.00, an average of \$326.50 per member. Of this sum, \$5,073. was for missionary uses, an average of \$47.58 per member. The average membership for the nineteen years was one hundred six.

For three years of Rev. J. P. Stoop's pastorate (1909 was the year he came to Rock Hill) the contributions for missions were \$1,259 or \$415. per annum; and the total for the three years for all purposes was \$4,594. The average membership was one hundred eighteen.

Rock Hill has never been a large church. At one time one hundred ninety names were reported to Presbytery, yet the average membership for seventy years is close to one hundred twelve. This large list of names, in all probability, included the membership at Hope Chapel.

Since her organization in 1809 until 1882 Rock Hill had received into her communion about 600 members, had baptized about 600 persons of whom over 400 were children.

Walter Alexander, Mrs. Alice Stoops, and Mrs. James (all ministers' wives, carried on this interesting work. Miss Helen Giffin accompanied by Mrs. James Norris used to visit our one-room country school on Friday afternoons with a program of devotions and missionary stories, thus bringing the Word to children outside our church. There were periods of inactivity, but when Rev. and Mrs. Weir served our church in the 1950's, Mrs. Weir revived the missionary spirit in our youngsters and the L. S. D. Mission Band, for children aged six to fourteen years, was reactivated. When Mrs. Barthlow came to us as the minister's wife, she continued the good influence on these children. The Mission Band is now carried on under the guiding hand of Mrs. J. McClellan Thomas. These children have yearly (since the idea was developed) staked a cent in some missionary post. One year they sent their "cents" of ten dollars to Alaska; another year it went to the missionaries in southwest United States; and so on.

The letters L. S. D. should be explained, for they reflect the thoughts of the children who chose them. 'Do something new every day; See something beautiful every day; and Do something good every day."

* * *

YOUNG PEOPLE and CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR

About 1887 the young people of the church had organized into a society for general purposes in the church. Their first work was done when they helped repair the old church and then helped to build the new church of 1890, but they wanted to go on to something else.

In 1889 Charles Wise and P. Addison Wise went to the west to visit friends in Iowa and Nebraska. While in oil Bluffs, Iowa, they attended their first Christian Endeavor Meeting and were impressed with what they saw and heard. It was a consecration service and the young people themselves took part. These two young men came home and sought to turn their young people's group into a Christian Endeavor Society. Early in 1891 Eva Thomas Tarbet came back from school in Washington. There the Christian Endeavor Society had used the "Uniform Topics." Now that they knew they could get some materials for Christian Endeavor study, and opposition from the older church members was

ndling, Christian Endeavor flourished. These young
ple each Sunday evening had a devotional and study
iod. For fifty-five years they were an active group.
y contributed regularly to missions and also pur-
sed the first piano that was used in this church.

Christian Endeavor was known as such until 1945
n, in line with the Presbyterian policy of the day,
organization became known as Westminster Fellowship.

* * *

WESTMINSTER FELLOWSHIP

The present membership in this organization is now
y about ten but Westminster Fellowship continues to
ction as a guide for Christian living for these young
ks. In the absence of a minister, Mrs. Albert Polivka
been charge of this group since November 1961.

* * *

WOMEN'S MISSIONARY SOCIETY

Rev. J. J. Lane organized the Women's Home Missionary
society in 1875. This group for many years led the St.
irsville Presbyterial in their unselfish giving to mis-
sionary work. In a period from 1920 (and perhaps much
lier) until about 1938 the Missionary Society would
d daytime meetings and quilt all day to help meet their
ortionment to Presbyterial.

Our present-day group, still known as the Women's
sionary Society, has a membership of fourteen and sends
a total budget of \$290 yearly plus sewing and other
ts to home and foreign missions.

Here we must mention the part Rock Hill had in orga-
ning the Women's Home Mission work in St. Clairsville
sbytery. These excerpts were taken from a historical
tch written by Miss Mary Keziah Wise.

"If there were any women from St. Clairsville Pres-
ery on the first committee appointed in October 1882
the Synod of Ohio, they did not serve. But in the

"In her gradual development, Rock Hill reached out
her arms in all directions until she embraced nearly
fifty square miles. The Ohio River was the eastern bound-
ary; Wegee Creek and Jacobsburg, the southern; and
Wheeling Creek, the northern. Take this ten miles of
river line on the eastern border and let it sweep back
parallel with the river the distance of five miles and
you pass over nearly the extent of her territory.

"In 1890, owing to the fact that the walls in the
church were cracked and the foundation broken, it was
torn down and a new, though smaller, building was erected
a little further up the hill on a higher and more command-
ing site. This church was of modern build, of cruciform
shape, with large memorial windows in each end, one to the
first two elders, the other to the sainted first pastor,
the Rev. Mr. Mitchell. Some of the older men said when
this church was being built that this time they would
build for the young people and hoped it would last a hun-
dred years. It was dedicated June 3, 1891. Rev. W. V.
Milligan preached the sermon. It had been a hard struggle
for the handful of people with depleted wealth to build
this house.

(The site of this church built in 1890 is marked
now by the grave of Frank J. Nelson, Jr. The three
structures erected in the respective years of 1817, 1846,
and 1890 are all within the bounds of our present cemetery
as we know it in 1962.)

"But in a little over twelve years, during a terrific
rain and electric storm, it was struck with lightning and
burned on June 25, 1902. That was a time when the strong-
est heart might shudder. Nevertheless there were those
who could say amid all the darkness, that a missionary
church never dies, and that God ever leads his people on.
Then going back to the schoolhouse to worship, they took
courage, went forward and the church in which we now wor-
ship was built, furnished and paid for before it was of-
fered to the Lord our Master on August 26, 1903, at a
cost of thirteen thousand dollars."

6.

Footnote: Most of these first five pages have been the
historical accounts of earlier writers, identified in
the closing pages of this booklet. Editorial comments
are identified by parentheses. Subsequent material
was compiled to bring this account up-to-date.



Benjamin Mitchell, D. D.

January 4, 1834 to January 10, 1857

Rock Hill's first minister

Served Rock Hill and Mt. Pleasant for 23 years.

Strong advocate of stewardship and temperance.

Ten young men joined ministry during his pastorate.

His life was a strong favorable influence on the community.

spring of 1883 Mrs. Helen Black, Rock Hill minister's wife, was appointed, making now a committee of five, of whom declined to serve except Mrs. Black. She, being a comparative stranger in the Presbytery, cumbered with the cares of her family which included two children under three years of age, living three miles from a post office, and having little experience in mission work, hesitated. For nearly a year she did nothing.

"Then asking the aid of her own home Society in spring of 1884, they invited all churches in the Presbytery to a special meeting on August 28 for the purpose of organizing. She contacted ministers and ladies in forty churches, personally visiting twenty-two of them. When the eventful day arrived, delegates from but seven churches met for the organizational meeting and Mrs. Black, the head and heart of the whole movement, was able to leave her bed."

But with faith like Mrs. Black's the sad beginning moved on successfully. Three hundred thirty-three were present at the annual meeting in 1952. As of January 1, 1959, the old St. Clairsville Presbytery was expanded and changed to Muskingum Presbytery with new boundaries on every side. It was at this time that the two churches known officially as The Presbyterian Church in the United States of America and The United Presbyterian Church in North America united to become The United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.

* * *

LADIES AID

The session minutes of April 7, 1868 show that the ladies of the congregation indicated they would pay one-fourth of the \$800. preacher's salary and that they would pay for papering the church. The committee to solicit contributions for papering the church was made up of Mrs. James Alexander, Mrs. Peter Neff, Mrs. Robert Nelson, Mrs. William Thomas.

This was surely the first movement of the Ladies Aid spirit and we cannot discount the subsequent benefit that have been. Our church has always been carpeted from floor to wall, and besides the original it has had new carp

se. The money for this was raised by the Ladies' Aid. Few of the other things they have done over the years are here mentioned: Various things have been purchased for the parsonage, paper, blinds, paint, linoleum, heat-stove, to mention a few; napkins and plate for the communion table; choir robes for the junior choir; paid for installing gas in the Sunday School room and purchased a heating stove and hot plate; sponsored a community Halloween party for over twenty years; did Red Cross sewing and knitting during World War II.

Funds for these projects have been raised by rummage sales, resale of merchandise, traveling baskets, making butter to sell, bake sales, suppers, banquets, and fetes. For the last eight years the Ladies' Aid has raised about \$800 annually, and in addition to the things mentioned above has paid almost the entire cost of paneling the church front and choir loft, the new cupboards in the Sunday School room, new chairs purchased for the basement room and the upstairs Sunday School room, and \$500.00 for the purchase price of the new organ. There is always a good fellowship enjoyed while doing this work together.

* * *

SUNDAY SCHOOL

The Sunday School is a very vital part of our church organization, but we have not been able to find many recorded facts to incorporate here. There was a time when the Sunday School was held in the summertime only, and it was still the case in 1878. In 1879 there were fifty pupils enrolled; in 1889 the number had increased to ninety-two; in 1962 the enrollment is one hundred twenty. There is a record of one of the first annual Sunday School picnics observed in 1900, and we still enjoy these affairs yearly. They are held on our church lawn and grove.

It has been recalled that when Rev. James Clark was pastor he did a lot of work with the young people and Sunday School, and that there was a lot of response to his interest in this work.

Many of us are aware that facts and figures indicate that we are becoming too self-centered in our church and Sunday school work and that we need to be reawakened to a missionary spirit and to a sense of broader sharing with the world.

* * *

"In the year 1817, early in the spring, the congregation turned out, cut down trees, hewed logs, drew them together, raised them, and there stood the first church edifice ever built in this immediate vicinity. Its dimensions were about twenty-eight by forty feet. For a time it was used without a floor, and many years passed before it was ceiled overhead. This old house had walls of a good height, three windows on each side, and doors in the eastern end. Stoves were later added to give warmth in winter. Here the people sat in families--each family making its own pew. Some of these were high and some low, some were long and some short, some were rough and some smooth. What crooked aisles those must have been! From the well-made pew of the cabinet maker to the rude slab bench of the common farmer was a wide contrast. Here the congregation worshipped from 1817 to 1846.

"Rev. Benjamin Mitchell in 1834 became the first pastor of the church. All previous preaching had been done by stated supplies. Soon the capacity of the church was exhausted, the membership having increased to about eighty. They then decided to build a new and more pretentious house of worship. Some of the congregation objected to building on ground which they held only by a ninety-nine year lease, thirty years of which were already passed. Accordingly Mr. Joshua Keyser was appointed to visit all the numerous heirs of the Wallace family and get them to sign the deed which made Rock Hill Church the absolute owner of the acre which it now (1882) occupies.

"So in 1846 the old house was torn down and a new brick church, forty-five by fifty-five feet, was erected in its place on the same site. It was no doubt equal to any country church in Eastern Ohio, and for forty-four years it reflected credit and honor upon those who at that time said, "Let us arise and build."

(The church erected in 1846 stood on the spot identified, in 1962, by the gravestones of George K. Wise, Hugh Giffin, Alva A. Wise, John K. Wise, and others.)

"The building of this church in 1846 marked the half-way point in Dr. Mitchell's ministry. He began his labors here as stated supply in the spring of 1834. On the 14th of January 1835 he was installed pastor, which office he most faithfully filled for over twenty-three years. It was during this pastorate that ten young men answered God's call to them to do ministerial work.

"For some months the congregation worshipped at the same spot where it was organized. During this time, on bad days and in winter weather, they met in the house of Elder John Cunningham, which stood a few rods north of the old elm. It was soon found however that this place of meeting was not central. It was therefore agreed to move up the creek a mile and erect a "booth" near the southern end of the ridge on which the church (of 1882) now stands. That structure stood almost over the tunnel of the B. & O. Railroad north of Mr. John Robinson's house and directly east of Mr. Wallace's mill. The site is now marked by a few graves--the only witness that once a place of worship was there. In this little cemetery some of the original members of Rock Hill were laid to rest. The ridge at that point was very rocky, hence originated the name.

"The "booth" here erected was a little board structure about five by twelve feet. Four posts were planted, a cover put on, and boards were nailed around leaving a space in the side large enough for the minister to look out. The congregation sat on the outside and took the weather as it came. Hard by this "booth" was the forks of the road. Tradition states that here stood a row of three buildings, one of which was a blacksmith's shop. Next to the shop was a small dwelling where the minister lived and where Rev. Arbutnot built himself a little study about twelve by fourteen feet. Here he forged his theological thunderbolts while his next-door neighbor's anvil rang out with blows more material.

"In the course of time a new "tent" was erected near the summit of Rock Hill where divine services were held until the summer of 1817. (This new "tent" was located about the center of our present cemetery. How early preaching was commenced here is unknown but since the organization date is now recognized as early as 1809 it is possible this "tent" was used from four to seven years prior to 1817.) A gravestone here bears the date of February 1814, it being on the grave of Mr. Jacob Wise who was killed when thrown from a horse. The next grave was for Phillip Wise, a little child of Mr. George Wise's, who was accidentally shot in 1816.

"In 1814 the church having grown stronger began plans to build a regular house of worship. They accordingly took a lease of one acre of ground for ninety-nine years from Mr. John Wallace. (This lease covered one acre, the site of our present cemetery.)

SEMPER FIDELIS CLASS

The Semper Fidelis Class is the proud holder of a charter dated October 21, 1925. While some of the minutes of the class meetings have not been found, the important purpose of the organization is a monthly meeting of Bible study and planning ways to help the church and others. Their main projects for several years have been giving \$100. annually to a current church project; fixing a basket of food and buying clothes and toys for a needy family at Christmas time, or when needed, the year there was another such project; contributing to CARE; participating in the Feed A Baby program; sponsoring the Cradle Roll and presenting to every baby for the church family a Bible In Pictures book; purchasing needed furnishings for the Primary Sunday School room.

They annually entertain their families at a picnic and their Mothers, or guests, at a party in May. The first Mother's Day party was enjoyed in 1933.

Mrs. Charles A. Nelson is currently teaching the class as she has done for many years in the past. Her interest and direction has done much to keep the class active and aware of others' needs.

Mrs. Howard Weir and Mrs. Earl Barthlow, both minister's wives, were dedicated teachers of this class during their husbands' pastorates here.

* * * *

BUILDERS' CLASS

The Builders' Class was organized October 10, 1814, at a meeting at the manse. Twenty members were put on the original roll. The first officers were Nellie Giffin, President; Helen K. Giffin, Vice-President; Arminta I. Giffin, Secretary; and Clara Shepherd, Treasurer.

Some of the monthly meetings over the thirty-three year period have been summer picnics and covered dinners with husbands as guests.

Through the years money has been raised in various ways, such as selling household products and pie baskets.

rs, rummage sales, bake sales, and serving suppers to groups. By working together they have tried to be builders.

The money raised was used to help with the upkeep of manse and to help buy equipment for the church. Other projects were the making of baby layettes, packing baskets for the poor at Thanksgiving and Christmas. Every year they contribute to several fund raising drives, the American Bible Society, and Camp Presmont. For several years \$100 has been given annually to the church treasurer for special enterprises.

Through the years the teachers have been Mesdames Effie Giffin, Olive Giffin, Vera McAllister, and Bessie Giffin, who has been the teacher the last twenty years. The work of these teachers is remembered with a sincere appreciation of the study, time, and effort they have given to the class and their church.

Charter members still active are Mesdames Nellie Giffin, Lucy Nelson, Helen K. Giffin, Bessie Giffin, Effie Tarbet, Mabel Wise, and Katherine Nelson.

* * *

In addition to dates mentioned throughout our history these too have seemed important:

1866 -- The manse was built.

-- The church was incorporated, certainly a step not many congregations took in those early days.

1945 -- We published a monthly four-page newspaper and sent to those of our number, and several former members, who were serving with the armed forces.

-- The creation of a "Manse Fund", made possible by a gift from the estate of Mrs. Lizzie Nelson Bickerton, the main thought being that this would be a basic amount to build on for a new manse in the future.

-- September 2. The congregation passed a motion authorizing the trustees to offer the present manse for sale. What this might bring about is still uncertain, but no doubt will be history when next we observe an anniversary.

* * *

adopted on such occasions. There they were all answered with a ready good will that showed their hearts were in the work. The next step was to complete the organization by the election of elders who should rule over their spiritual interests.

"They chose two men well known in the community for their integrity and piety, John Cunningham and John Moore, who were then solemnly consecrated by prayer to the office of Ruling Elder. Then followed a prayer for God's blessing to rest on the work which had just been done in Christ's name. They prayed that their work might remain a strong and living monument for Christ; that its power might be felt for generations to come. How this prayer has been answered we are witnessing today. The solemn service was concluded with the benediction. All went away feeling that a great and good work had been done for the community.

"The folks who had gathered this day and organized a church neglected to choose a clerk and so we have no written record of their names or proceedings. But tradition says their names are as follows: John Cunningham, and wife; John Moore; John Simpson, and wife; William Merritt, and wife; James Simpson, and wife; Mrs. McKimmons; William Moore, and wife; John Livingston, and wife; Rachel Wiley; Mrs. Elizabeth McAllister; Mrs. Paxton; Mrs. Kelsey; James McGregor, and wife."

(In an article printed in the Presbyterian Banner in November of 1912 it is stated: "Of the names of the original members, said to have numbered twenty, we now know certainly only sixteen." Those omitted from the above list are Rachel Wiley, the wife of James Simpson, and James McGregor and wife. It has been learned that the naturalization papers of James McGregor and wife are dated 1817.)

"While looking at the growth of this church, we must bear these facts in mind: The country was but thinly settled; very little of the land was cleared, indeed it was probably not all entered yet; money was very scarce, which always makes hard times; and there were few ministers and hence their work was much scattered. All these discouraging features constrain us to say the great wonder is not that it grew so fast, but that it grew at all.

to their eyes until they had found a place for the Lord's house. And what a fit place that was to organize a church! Near by were the cool running waters; overhead the broad and graceful arms of the elm; a tree whose wide spreading branches, gracefully curved limbs, and massive trunk were well suited to represent the future widespread influence and the strong power their young church was destined to exert in this community. It was under an elm that William Penn made his famous treaty of peace with the Indians, and where he afterward laid out Philadelphia. It was under an elm that George Washington assumed the command of the Continental Army. And under an elm Rock Hill was organized! How beautifully this grand old tree is associated with the history of our country! How reverently it ought to be associated in our minds with what is strong and good and true.

"To Reverend Abraham Scott belongs the honor of being the first to bring a Calvinistic sermon to this community. What a strangely quiet spell must have settled down that morning upon that lovely valley as those early pioneers united their voices in the songs of praise! If we only knew which Psalm they sang! What a new experience for these woods and hills! Long had they echoed to the song of the Indian maiden as she wandered along the shore of the creek; often had they resounded with the wild shout of the Indian hunter as he joined in the dance on his return from a successful hunting season; again and again had they reechoed with the fierce warwhoop of the painted savage, for just across the creek was the camping ground which is called to this day (in 1882) "The Old Indian Field."** But never before had these hills and valleys heard a congregation lift up their voices in the songs of Zion. We know that those plain, simple-hearted people were glad for the privileges they enjoyed that day.

"When the sermon was ended, and prayer and singing had again engaged their hearts and voices, the minister called on all who desired the organization of a Presbyterian church in their community to rise. In a few moments twenty persons stood up in the congregation. The minister then put to these persons the form of questions usually

**"The Old Indian Field" was located between McMahon's Creek and what we now know as West 23rd Street, Bellaire.

REFERENCES

Information for the foregoing historical booklet of Rock Hill Presbyterian Church was secured from the following sources:

1. References to McMahon's Creek in Records of Ohio Presbytery as preserved by the Presbyterian Historical Society of the Upper Ohio Valley and kept in their library in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, a partial copy which follows:

"West Liberty, Oct. 17, 1809....Mr. Brice (John Brice pastor at Forks of Wheeling) was appointed to supplyat McMahon's Creek the first Sab. Nov'r."

"Cross Roads, April 18, 1810.....Mr. Rea (John Rea Beech Spring) was appointed to supply at McMahon's Creek the 3rd Sab. of May."

"White Oak Flats, Aug. 21st, 1810.....Application made for supplies from....., McMahon's Creek," etc

"Upper Buffalo, Oct. 16th, 1810.....Application was made for supplies from Washington, McMahon's Creek" "Mr. Joseph Anderson was appointed to supply at McMahon's Creek the 3rd Sab. of Dec'r."

"Chartiers, Dec. 18th, 1810.....Application was made for supplies from Yellow Creek,....., McMahon's Creek" "Mr. Ezekiel Glasgow was appointed to supply at McMahon's Creek the 4th Sab. of January."

"Raccoon, April 17th, 1811.....Applications for supplies were made from.....McMahon's Creek." "Mr. Michael Law was appointed to supply at McMahon's Creek the 4th Sab. of April."

"Crab Apple, June 19, 1811.....Mr. Law was appointed to supply at McMahon's Creek the 4th Sab. of July."

"Three Springs, Oct. 15, 1811.....Application was made for supplies from the congregations of McMahon's Creek and Stots' Settlement,....."

"Cross Roads, April 22, 1812.....Application was made by the congregation of McMahon's Creek for a part of Mr. A. Scott's ministerial labours, which was granted."

A Historical Sketch written for the Seventieth Anniversary Reunion in 1882 in handwriting identified as that of the minister's wife, Mrs. John G. Black.

A Sketch on the "Eldership of the Rock Hill Church" written by Matthew Wallace for the same Anniversary in 1882.

A historical account reprinted from "The Presbyterian Banner" in November 1912 prepared and read at the Centennial of the church earlier that year in August.

Also various information, accounts, and memoirs written by P. Addison Wise in 1944 and earlier, aided and abetted by Rev. Louis E. Campbell, who served our church and community from 1941 to 1943. Much was done by these two men to make the recording of our early history a reality.

The Presbyterian Historical Society of the Upper Ohio Valley has compiled and recorded these facts on Pages 4 and 5 of Bulletin #9, printed in March 1948, and thus made them history.

Through Mr. P. A. Wise's and Rev. Mr. Campbell's correspondence with this Society and the pondering of other recorded facts, the organization date of our Church has now been determined as 1809 under the name of McMahon's Creek (where the first gathering place was located) and changed to Rock Hill probably when the first church edifice ever to be built in this immediate vicinity was erected in 1817 on the site of our present cemetery. There are previous references to a "booth" set up after the first few meetings for the preacher's protection from the elements and a later a wooden construction, referred to as a "tent", which was possibly used as many as four to seven years prior to 1817.

To help reassure us and establish the 1809 date as being correct we have the contents of a letter, from the recorded Cunningham family history. This letter was written by the senior Mr. Cunningham in Berkley County, Virginia, to his son John in Belmont County, Ohio, one of the two first elders of our church. It was dated October 10, 1811 and in it is stated

".....I am glad to hear that you have got

Excerpts from: A Historical Sketch written for the Seventieth Anniversary Reunion in 1882 (and) An account prepared for the 1912 Centennial.

"On the north side of McMahon's Creek, nearly a mile above its mouth, seventy years ago stood a large elm. The site where this tree stood is not far to the north side of the B. & O. Railroad at the point where is now situated the dwelling of Mr. David Klee. Under this elm in the summer of 1809, as nearly as can now be discovered, on a pleasant Sabbath morning was gathered together nearly all the folk from the countryside, for word had gone out that a Presbyterian minister was to preach that day. There were present on that occasion some who came from curiosity that they might see what a Presbyterian minister looked like. They felt the need of the preaching of the gospel. It was this feeling that brought together those assembled that Sabbath day under that old elm tree.

"In the army of immigrants that invaded our land in its formative years were certain persons from Ireland, bearing the names of Cunningham and Moore and Livingston; and from Scotland by the names of McKimmons, McAllister, and Simpson; and others, whence we know not, by the names of Merritt, Paxton, and Kelsey; and of course there were others whose names we do not have. All of these settled in our eastern country until the Lord again set them going with their faces westward, a part of an army which no man could turn back. Finally they founded homes in that region which is now within a five-mile radius.

"Before the day of that first gathering, a neighbor had kindly drawn together some logs which were arranged in two parallel lines across which he laid a number of poles--on these the people sat to hear the word. They had assembled there not only to listen to the preaching of the gospel, but also to be organized into a church. Then on that Sabbath day under that old elm was effected the organization which has since been known as Rock Hill Presbyterian Church.

"Such an organization had for some time been desired by these pioneers. Years before they had left their old homes in Pennsylvania and Virginia where they had heard the Word preached regularly, and they would not give sleep

FOREWORD

On the occasion of the sesquicentennial of the organization of our church we have felt the necessity of compiling a history that will be available to members, friends, and other interested folks who may have worshipped with us at one time or another.

We hope that by recording these events and facts and something of the lives of the dedicated men and women who have served our Church in various ways that the goodness of their souls may be carried over into our thoughts and work in God's kingdom; and that Rock Hill may continue to be known as a real Christian community, and for its service to others.

So we recall the occasion that brought together our Christian ancestors one spring morning, we now believe in 1809. They were a group who felt the need to keep God in their lives, and to organize a church that others might hear too, even though they were only a scattered few.

Down through the years the Rock Hill Presbyterian Church has celebrated its organization date as 1812, hence the sesquicentennial observance in 1962. It seems clear now, however, that the Rock Hill church is a continuation of the church founded in 1809 at McMahon's Creek near the present site of Bellaire. Future anniversary celebrations may therefore be based on the earlier date. Young people of the present congregation may look forward to their church's 200th anniversary celebration in 2009, a date only forty-seven years in the distance.

the Gospel among you and I am glad to hear that you did your endeavor and I hope God will bless you for it and bless it to you. And for your office that you have got I hope God will guide you to act a conscientious part and to do justly....."

(Signed)
John and Agnes Cunningham"

7. Session records dating back to 1841 and also a history of the early days of the organization have just been discovered and made available to the present generation and is here set forth:

January 2nd 1861

By order of Presbytery the following record was made.
Report of Church of Rock Hill Presbytery of S Clairsville.

- | | | |
|------|---|--|
| 1st | Date of organization | 1812 |
| 2nd | Presbytery by which organized | Washington |
| 3rd | " subsequently belonged | Steubenville |
| 4th | " to which it now belongs | St. Clairsville |
| 5th | No. of members at organization | |
| 6th | Names of ruling Elders at organization | John Cunningham and John Moor (Moore) |
| 7th | Subsequently W ^m . Keyser, Jas. Milligan, Jas Greenlee, John Rankin, Joshua W. Keyser, Andrew W. Anderson, John W. Milligan, Robert Merrit, William Thomas and John Crat | |
| 8th | No. of male members at present | 42 |
| 9th | " " female " " " | 73 |
| | Total | 115 |
| 10th | Names of ruling Elders at present - Joshua W Keyser, W ^m . Thomas and Robert Merrit. | |
| 11th | Names and date of Pastor or Stated Supply | |
| | first stated supply | Rev. Abraham Scott
1812 to about 1820 |
| | 2nd stated supply | Dr. McMillen |
| | 3rd " " | Rev. Jacob Lindley |

4th stated supply Rev. James Arbuthnot
 5th " " Rev. Joseph Anderson
 6th " " Mr. Reed
 7th " " Rev. Benjamin Mitchell

for 6 mos.

commencing in spring of 1834. In-
 stalled Pastor Jan. 14, 1835 re-
 mained our Pastor 22 years or up to
 April 1857

8th Rev. R. H. Hollyday Pastor from June 1858
 to June 1860

9th Rev. John Moffat Pastor from Jan. 1st 1861
 to Jan. 1863

10th Rev. J. D. Fitzgerald stated supply
 Oct. 1st 1863 to April 1864, six mo.

11th Rev. D. H. Laverty present Pastor settled
 here May 1865.

Have a manse and Stable, probable value \$3300
 owned by congregation one year

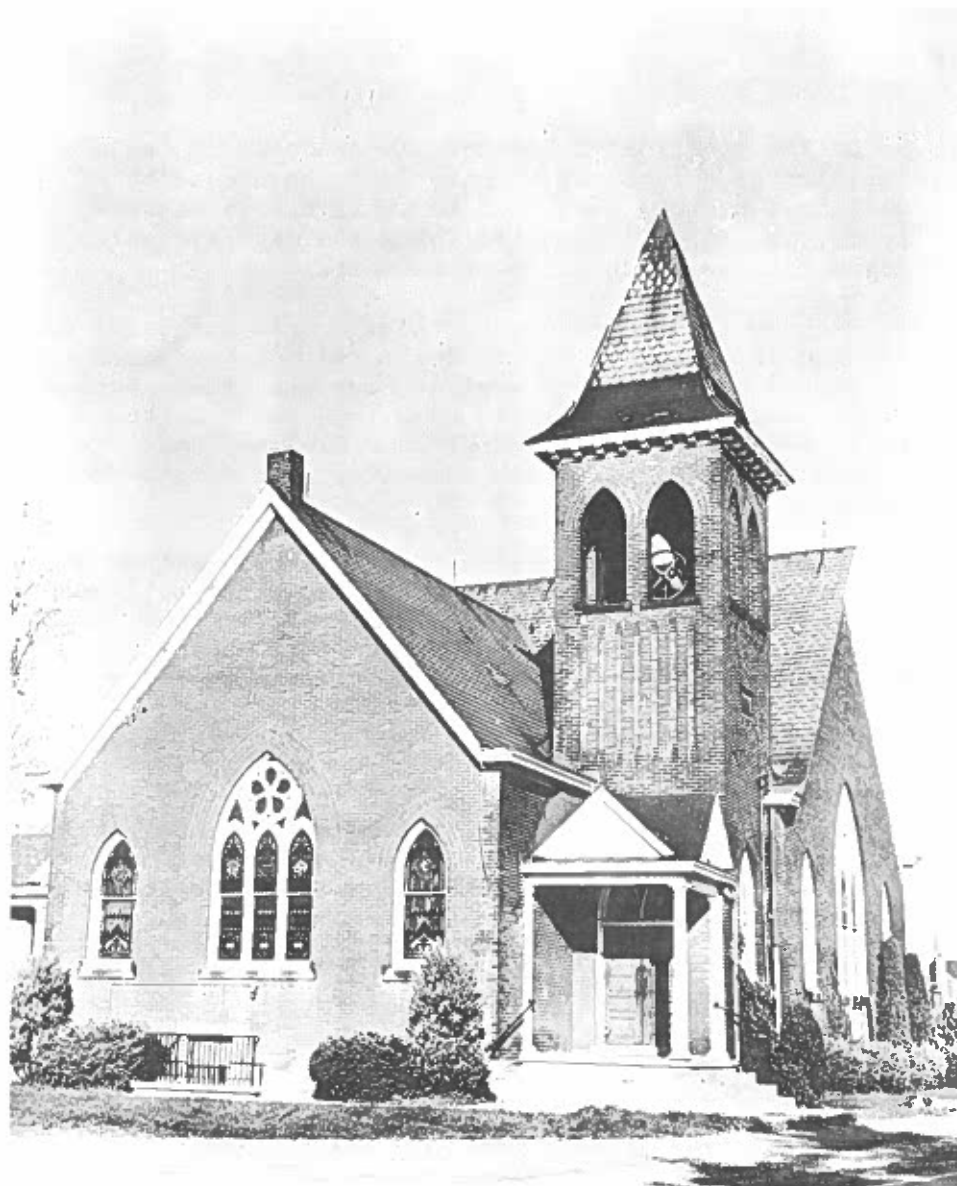
Have church building 44 by 60 ft
 probable value \$3000

Our first place of worship was under an Elm tree
 at McMahon's Creek where the first Calvinistic ser-
 mon was preached within our bounds. Next place of
 worship was about one mile further west where a tent
 that was called in those days was erected, probably
 10 ft. occupied some 4 or 5 years, thence North
 a mile was decided upon as a site for a House of
 worship upon which a house of hewed logs was built in
 probably 28 by 40 ft. occupied 28 or 29 years
 which site our present House now stands which was
 built in 1846.

Members of our Church who have become ministers,
 J. Milligan, Robert Alexander, James L. Merrit,
 W. Allen and James Alexander, the latter sent
 as Missionary to India.

We have sent out a colony of 41 who organized the
 First Pres. Church (Old School) Bellair Ohio. Also
 assisted in building them a House of Worship previous
 to their organization in 1860.

(signed) Robert Merrit, Clerk



Rockhill Presbyterian Church

8. Facts have been gleaned also from session records that have been preserved in more recent years. We have also had access to some minute books of the various organizations.

This booklet containing one hundred fifty-three pages of history of the Rock Hill Presbyterian Church was compiled for your information and pleasure by the 1962 History Committee, whose members were

Russell E. Gi
Chai
Katherine Nel
Theodore L. W
Loretta E. Gr

