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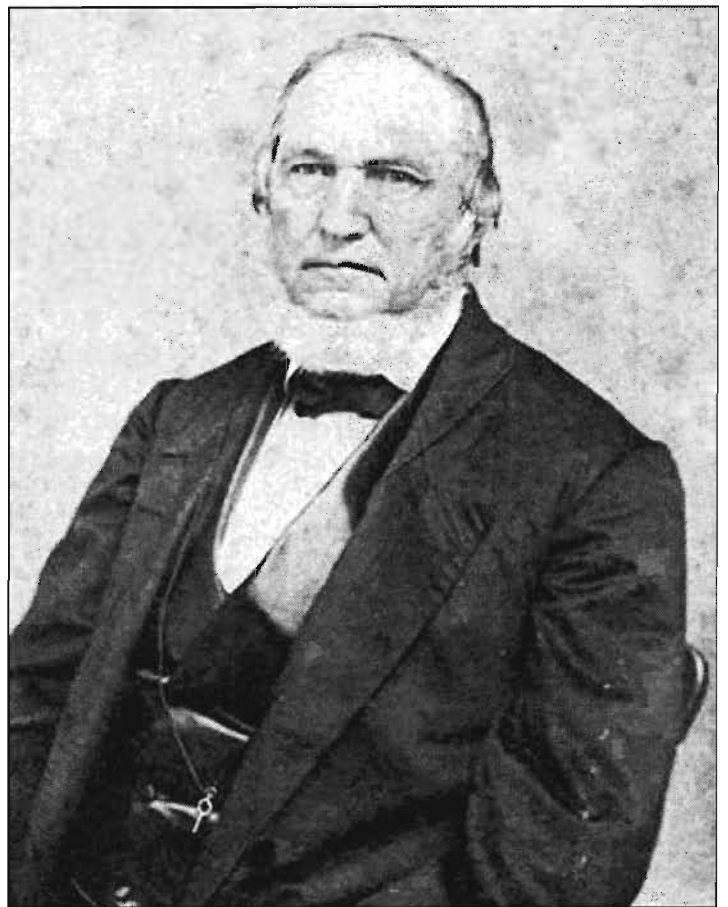
Religious roots of Granville's settlers

A background study on Jacob Little's History of Granville

The editors of The Historical Times are pleased to present Professor Richard Shiels's thoughtful exposition and analysis of the religious heritage that the early settlers to Granville brought with them from New England. Using his vast fountain of early American history, Professor Shiels helps all of us understand better from whence our village forebears came in matters theological. This essay is a slightly modified version of the general introduction which Professor Shiels wrote for the recently published mid-nineteenth century History of Granville written by the Reverend Jacob Little but until now never published in complete book form. Former Granville Historical President, Maggie Brooks, describes the importance of this Little's historical narrative in this issue.

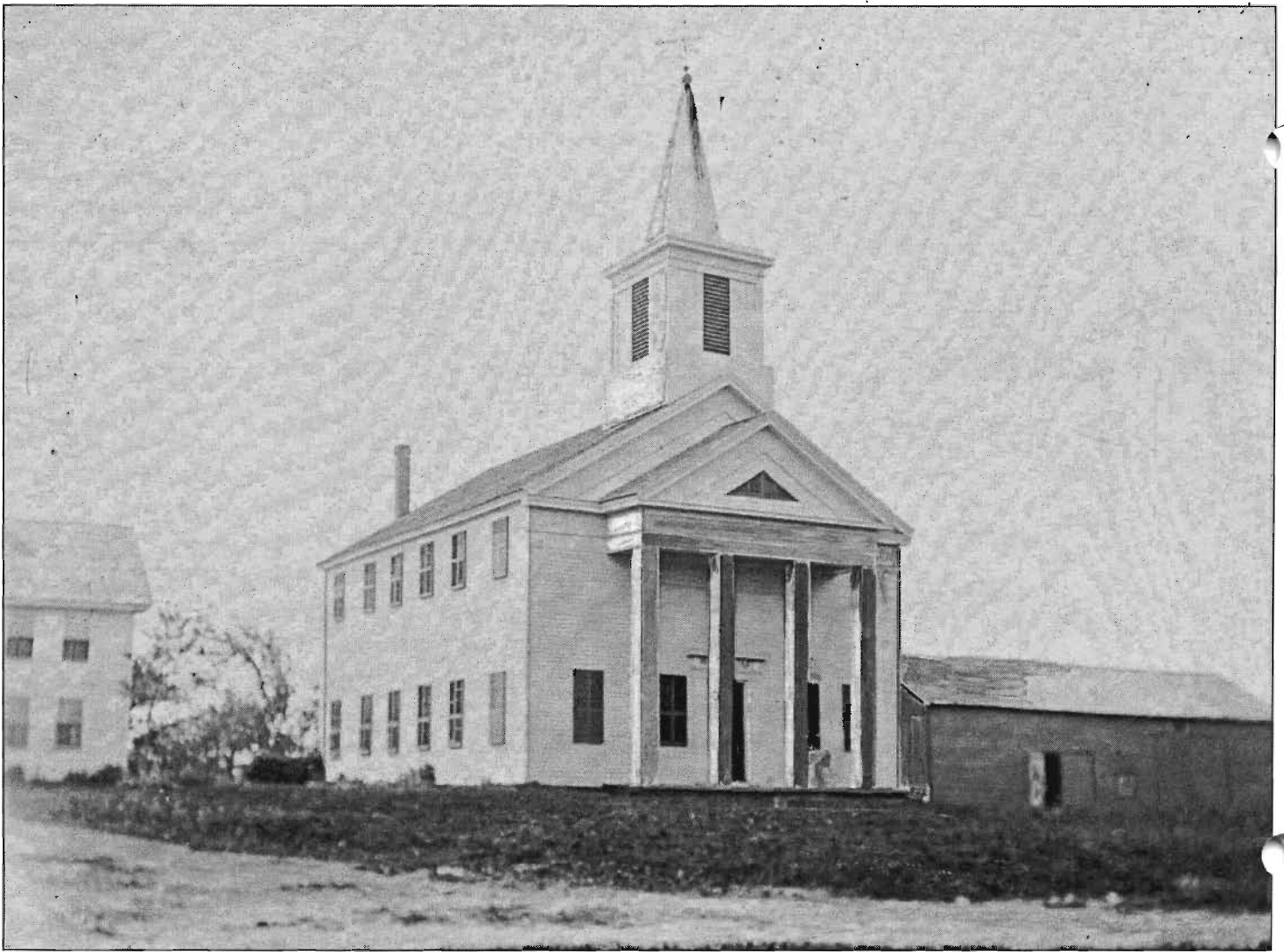
By **RICHARD D. SHIELS**
Associate Professor of History
The Ohio State University at Newark

Jacob Little came to Granville in 1827, twenty-two years after the town had been settled by people from New England, twenty-five years after Welsh settlers had come into the Township. He was a New England man himself, a minister, a graduate of Dartmouth with a theological degree. He came to interview for the position of pastor of Granville's church, which had recently splintered into four factions. He described the sparse audience that gathered to listen to him preach: one or



The Rev. Jacob Little

two people in a pew and "few old folks." He became the pastor of the church a year later and then held that position for thirty-eight years, becoming an absolutely



The is the “mother church,” the Congregational Church in Granville, Mass., which many of Granville, Ohio’s settlers attended before their move west.

key member of the Granville community.

Although he was not one of Granville’s first settlers, he was the first to write a narrative history of the settlement — which is the document reprinted here. Subsequent histories of Granville by Bushnell, Utter and myself have relied heavily upon the history he wrote. For his work as pastor, community leader and chronicler Jacob Little is a giant in the history of Granville.

A different member of the community might have written the history differently, of course. Achsa Rose, one of the first settlers who walked to Ohio with her children and her husband’s extended family in middle age, might have emphasized the hardships and the sacrifices that they had faced. Lucius Mower, who found iron ore in Raccoon Creek and built a prosperous furnace, might have focused upon Granville’s early

industrial promise. Charles Sawyer, a tanner who created a Baptist seminary for young ladies in Granville and then laid the foundation for what became Denison University, might have made education central to the story.

Two surviving letters remind us of Little’s purpose and perspective. Knowles Linnell found the work too narrowly Congregational. “There is quite too much detail running through the history after it commences with the history of the church in this place,” he wrote to Little when it first appeared. Little should remember that “this book... is to be sent broadcast over the land and to be read indiscriminately by all sects of Christians as well as those that make no profession.” Marvin Munson wrote to Little twenty years later than Linnell to ask for assistance in writing his own history of Granville. Little’s reply recognized his own ecclesi-

astical focus. "My object was to write a history of the congregational church," Little wrote to Munson, "yours of the place."

Given the nature of Jacob Little's history, an introductory review of religion in England and New England is appropriate. Given the obscurity of Little's viewpoint in our day, it may also be helpful to highlight and define some of his terms.

Religion in England as Found in New England: The Puritan Influence

Jacob Little presents the history of Granville, a small Ohio town, as the culmination of the Protestant Reformation in England and its legacy in Puritan New England. Certainly the subjects of Little's narrative had not forgotten the Reformation. The company of people who first settled Granville, Ohio came from Granville, Massachusetts and a few neighboring communities in the fall of 1805. Neighbors of theirs in New England, a company from Granby, Connecticut, had done the same thing in 2003 and settled the Ohio town of Worthington. The Granville group followed the same two-year schedule that the Granby group had followed, the same westward trail and even bought land in Ohio from the same speculator. However the make-up of the two groups was different in one respect: Worthington was settled by Episcopalians, a group descended from the Church of England that Henry VIII had created in the sixteenth century; Granville was settled by Congregationalists, a group descended directly from the Puritans who worked to change the Church of England and eventually left it.

Puritanism was a religious movement in Elizabethan England consisting of radical Protestants who considered the nominally Protestant Church of England too much like the Roman Catholic Church. Critics had called these people "Puritans" because they wanted to purify the Church of England by eliminating anything associated with Catholicism. Little identified with the Puritans and revered them. They had been Protestant Reformers as he was. They had been rigid and narrow by today's standards, but the same might be said of Jacob Little. Like him they were people of principle.

New England had been settled by Puritans in the early decades of the seventeenth century as every school child knows. Unlike what school children are often taught, however, these people had not come to America for religious freedom (virtually no one

believed in religious freedom at that date) but for religious purity, believing that God wanted them to create churches without Catholic officials (priests, monks, nuns, bishops, etc) or services (the mass) or festivals (Christmas, Easter and lesser festivals) or music or art. One important Catholic idea seemed especially wrong to them: the idea that all infants born into a Christian community became Christian by baptism. Puritans believed that children were born sinful and needed to be changed, converted. Conversion was understood to be an experience in which the Holy Spirit entered a person's heart. Of course it was an emotional experience. The convert felt guilt at first, and fear of eternal punishment; helplessness and humiliation upon realizing that only God can change a sinner's heart; and finally peace and joy that came with the assurance that God was doing so. As a pastor Little worked to convert people, even respectable people who belonged to his church and had been baptized as infants, because he considered that no one was a Christian without being converted. As an historian Little traced the lineage of Puritan descendants who believed as he did and others who had lost sight of this idea.

Requirements for Church Membership

Those Puritans who came to Massachusetts Bay in 1629 had made conversion a prerequisite for church membership. Everyone in the colony had been expected to go to church and to support the church, but only those who could claim to have experienced religious conversion had been granted membership status and given the privilege of taking communion and having their children baptized. Puritanism declined over time after Massachusetts Bay however. One measure of what the second and third generation called "declension" was simply that fewer and fewer New England people could claim to have been converted. Consequently churches changed the requirements for church membership and downplayed the need for conversion.

The Half-Way Covenant initiated in the 1660s created a second tier of membership that did not require a conversion. By 1720 many New England churches had reverted to the European standard that admitted anyone who was baptized to membership. Solomon Stoddard was the minister who first advocated returning to the older, pre-Puritan practice that did not require a conversion for church membership. Little's

first two chapters focus upon the “Stoddardean controversy” that arose when some Puritan descendants refused to follow what was called “Mr. Stoddard’s way.” Little was no Stoddardean. Little stood in the line of those who continued to require a conversion for church membership.

Revivals of religion erupted in the 1730s that reversed the decline in religiosity. Also called “Seasons of grace,” revivals were periods in which large numbers of people living in the same town were caught up in conversion experiences together. Revivals often featured hell-fire preaching and strong emotional reactions by new converts. The term “Great Awakening” was used for the years 1734-5 and 1741-2 because in these years waves of revivals swept significant numbers of cities and towns all at once. The first of these revivals erupted in Northampton, Massachusetts in 1734 — only a few miles up the Connecticut River from the site of Granville, Massachusetts. Northampton pastor Jonathan Edwards then led a series of religious revivals in neighboring towns.

What was his message? Edwards defended the traditional doctrines of Calvinism against the increasingly popular ideas called Arminianism. Calvinism, the teaching of the Great Reformer John Calvin, taught that God alone could change a sinner to be a saint; that God chose to save some (the “Elect”); that he did so by “Grace” and that no mere mortal could possibly resist God’s grace if it was offered. A Dutch theologian named Jacobus Arminius had differed with Calvin by asserting the doctrine of free will: human beings can choose to be Christian or not. This Arminian teaching had been declared heretical at the Synod of Dort in 1609 but remained alive and seemed increasingly popular in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in America.

Edwards wrote a narrative of the first revival entitled *The Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God* in Northampton, Massachusetts in 1735 which was published repeatedly, in Scotland and in England and then in the colonies. For more than a year revivals of religion spread up and down the Connecticut River before coming to an end for a few years. The movement began a second time in 1740 when a British preacher named George Whitefield arrived in Philadelphia and began travelling across the northern colonies. Suddenly everyone was talking about sin and

salvation and many were caught up in the experience of conversion, which Whitefield now called “the New Birth.” The colonies of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, New England and New York were “awakened,” it was said; many people were “converted” and many churches were “revived.”

The Decline of “Religious Enthusiasm”

Such “religious enthusiasm” declined again beginning in the late 1740s. The decades of political unrest which led to independence and the creation of the United States of America saw church membership fall to its lowest level before or since. “The Age of Reason” undercut the effects of the Great Awakening; politics and war seemed to displace traditional religion in the public consciousness.

In the middle of this second period of declension the town of Granville, Massachusetts was born. Several New England families moved from Durham, Connecticut, and other communities to western Massachusetts and settled Granville. These were Congregationalists, descendants of Puritans, but religion was not driving their migration. Indeed, religion was not strong in Granville, Massachusetts, or almost anywhere else in the Revolutionary or immediate post-revolutionary period. On the other hand, this was a fertile time for religious thinking by a small group of intellectuals. Theology flourished in the Connecticut River Valley as Congregational clergy continued trying to awaken their people and thought a great deal about their own lack of success. Few experienced conversion in these years, but a generation of theologians who admired Jonathan Edwards strove to develop his ideas and several new schools of theologians emerged at the very end of the eighteenth century.

Jacob Little’s *History of Granville* reflects the perspective of the “New Divinity,” a school of theologians following in the footsteps of Jonathan Edwards who re-asserted the importance of requiring a conversion experience for church membership. Throughout the history he speaks as a Congregationalist of this particular stripe. The theological issues that divided New England in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century remain important to him. His heroes are those who consciously strove to follow Jonathan Edwards. His opponents included the Stoddardeans but also others. Unitarians, who rose to dominance at Harvard in the 1820s, rejected emotional conversion experiences and

employed rational criteria to discard the traditional doctrines such as the Trinity or the dual nature of Christ, saying that such formulations were illogical. Methodists and Baptists, on the other hand, were not opponents but are misguided allies who embraced the importance of conversion but lacked the formal education that Little considered vital in a clergyman.

The first twenty pages of Jacob Little's history recount the religious developments and theological disputes within Massachusetts in the period 1736-98. The epochal events of American history in these years are never mentioned: the Stamp Act, Declaration of Independence, War for Independence, Constitutional Convention or the formation of a federal government. Neither does the Republican ideology of the American Revolution merit his discussion. The ideas that matter are theological. In Little's view, the true gospel of New England's Puritan founders had rested upon Calvinism and the belief that true piety always began with a supernatural religious experience. As God had raised Luther to counter Catholic errors in the Europe, He raised Jonathan Edwards to counter Arminianism and Stoddardeanism in New England.

Religion in Granville, Ohio at the Time of the Migration

The settlement of Granville, Ohio, coincided closely with what is called the "Second Great Awakening." After more than fifty years in which religious conversions and revivals of religion were rare, revival fires erupted again and spread across the landscape. The first revivals in this new age occurred in northern Connecticut and western Massachusetts — that is, in the neighborhood of Granville, Massachusetts. Seven waves of revivals swept New England and much of the new United States over the next three decades in the years 1798-9, 1808, 1823-4, 1818, 1824, 1827 and 1831. Granville, Massachusetts experienced one of the first revivals in 1798. A company of people that included converts from that revival settled Granville, Ohio in 1805 but not until they had covenanted together to form a church. The church they formed was itself revived in 1808, 1818, 1827-31 and 1837.

Were Granville's settlers pious people? William Utter seems to raise the question in his *Granville, Ohio. The History of An Ohio Town* (1956). There was no ordained clergyman among them. Only 27 out of 71 whose church membership in New England can be



Timothy Mather Cooley, The Granville, Ohio settlers' pastor in Massachusetts.

identified were church members. Across the nation the Enlightenment had taken a toll on religion. Church membership had reached its nadir in the 1780s. Americans in general were less pious than in 1740 or 1831. Membership statistics require an explanation, however. Little would want us to know that, at least in western Massachusetts in the 1790s, church membership was low precisely because standards of membership were high. Granville, Ohio's parent church in Massachusetts was not Stoddardean and did not recognize anyone as a church member without evidence of a conversion experience. Conversion was to become very common in the first third of the nineteenth century, but that trend was just beginning in 1805.

If Granville's settlers were not pious, it was not their pastor's fault. Timothy Mather Cooley had been their pastor who stayed behind in Granville, Massachusetts. He was a New Divinity Congregationalist much like

Little. He had grown up in Granville, Massachusetts, and lived there all his life. It was Cooley who led that town's revival in 1798, one of the first revivals of the new awakening. Like Jonathan Edwards before him, Cooley inspired revival fires elsewhere by publishing a revival narrative (his appeared in the newly created *Connecticut Evangelical Magazine* in 1801). Although he remained in New England, Cooley served as pastor to those who left. Even as they planned the mundane details of the journey, scouted out a place for the new settlement and purchased land from two speculators in New York, Cooley organized them into a church. Nearly thirty of them signed a covenant before leaving Massachusetts. Cooley assembled Congregational clergy from many towns for a worship service in which the new church was formally recognized and he personally preached to them, charging them to keep the faith in Ohio. Timothy Rose, who had been consecrated a Deacon by Cooley while still in Massachusetts, served as the spiritual leader as they moved west and planted their new church in Ohio.

Still the question remains: were Granville's settlers pious? Little tells us that they gathered for worship on their first Sunday together in Licking County, that on that occasion they read a copy of the sermon that Cooley had preached to them at the founding of their church and sang like angels. But nearly three years passed in Ohio before they installed a clergyman in their church and for several years after that they were dependent upon the Connecticut Missionary Society to pay most of the pastor's salary. Timothy Harris, the first residential pastor, is described as being stern and often sick. "His sins of levity must have been few," Little wrote of him. He did lead revivals in 1808 and 1818, adding 40 members to the church in the first and 21 in the second. He also presided over a lengthy discipline procedure that led to a young man being excommunicated for the sin of dancing. His congregation did replace the original log building with a plank structure in 1810 and a third building was under construction when Harris died of tuberculosis in 1821.

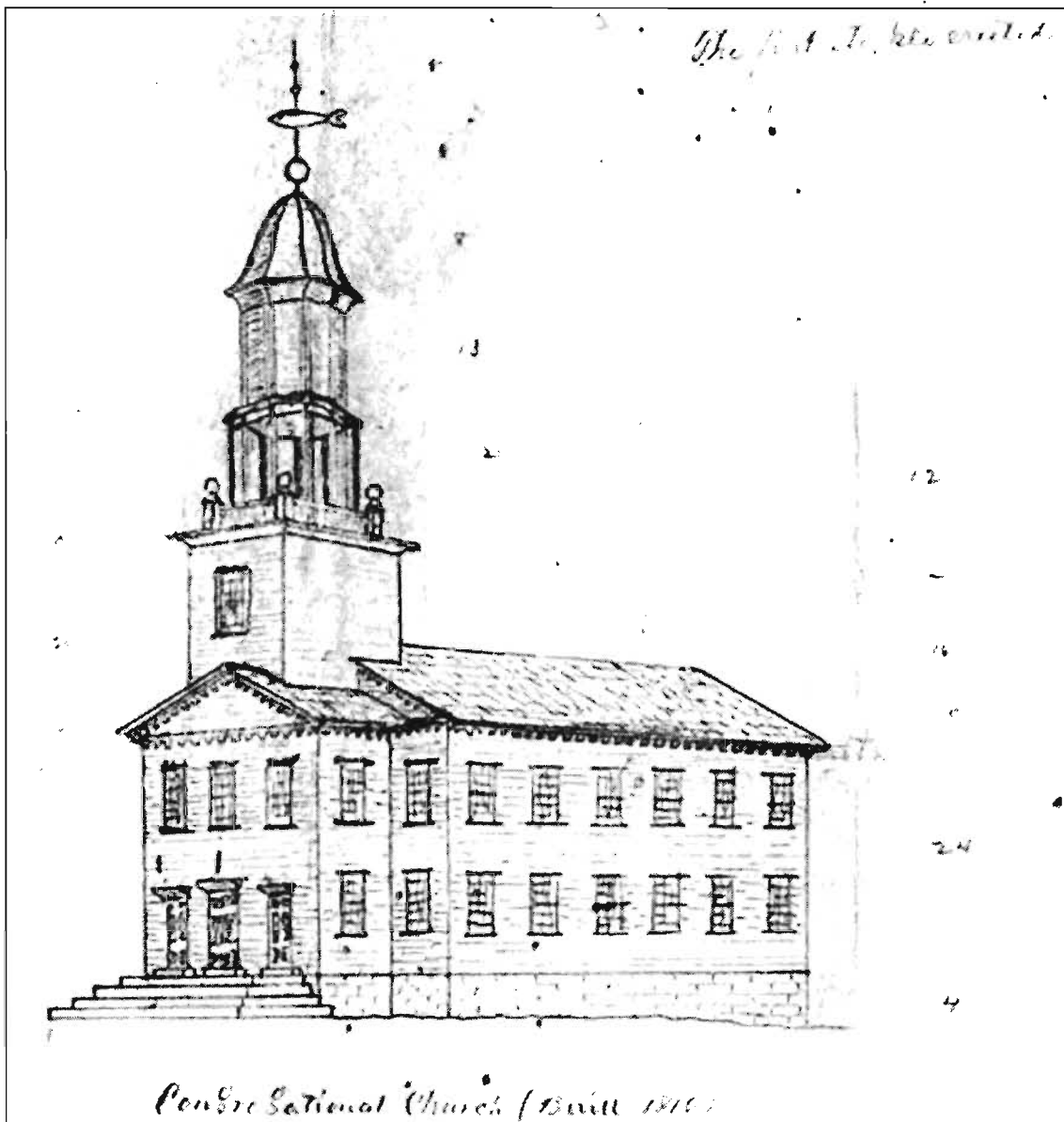
Ahab Jinks and the First Schism in Granville

Ahab Jinks, Granville's second residential pastor, was very different: affable, flexible, popular with many. Money to complete the church building that Harris had begun now became available from Granville businessmen who had no intention of attend-

ing worship services. Church membership rose from 115 to 193 in one year and there had been no revival, no surge in conversion experiences. A subscription to raise \$500 for the pastor's salary netted \$950. Even as the congregation finished its latest church building, Jinks proceeded to build himself a fine house. When he allowed the builders to work on his house on a Sunday morning, he split the church. This congregation which had claimed to be the one church for the entire community (even as it limited membership to those that met its standards) now splintered into four groups. It would remain for Jacob Little to put three of these groups back together again. The history which is reprinted here contains his account of how he did that and his description of the half-Congregational, half-Presbyterian church that he fashioned.

Jacob Little aspired to be the pastor for the entire town as Cooley had been in the parent community and Edwards had been in Northampton. However an important shift was happening across America which made his ambition unrealistic. Westward migration brought people to Ohio and similar states in very large numbers. The churches that had dominated colonial America (the Congregational, Episcopal and Presbyterian churches) could not keep up with the demand for clergymen in part because these churches required clergymen to be college educated. Further, the nation was moving in the direction of Jacksonian Democracy, abandoning deference to a college educated elite in favor of political and religious leaders who spoke the language of ordinary people.

In short, the future belonged to Methodists and Baptists in most new communities and not to the traditional churches. Methodist Bishop Francis Asbury was recruiting young men with no formal education by the hundreds, turning them into circuit riders and sending them out to convert their countrymen (and women and children) and organize them into Methodist classes, bands and churches. Smaller numbers of college educated clergy like Timothy Mather Cooley and his Congregational colleagues led the first wave of revivals in the new awakening and did so within the established Congregational churches of New England; within a few years, however, a very different kind of revival became common: the outdoor Methodist camp meeting led by young men Asbury recruited. By 1835 the Methodists, who had only organized as a church in 1783, were the largest denomination in the nation. The



This is an 1816 sketch of the Congregational Church to be built in Granville, Ohio, the forerunner of the First Presbyterian Church at the northwest corner of Main Street and Broadway.

second largest were the Baptists who also relied upon growing numbers of popular preachers, working class men with no formal education who might have never become clergymen in the formerly dominant Congregational, Episcopal and Presbyterian churches.

Dartmouth-educated Jacob Little, a spokesman for the New Divinity school of Congregational theology, came to Granville with what was becoming an old fashioned vision: a united community of Christians living together peacefully and righteously, worshipping in one church under the pastoral care of one minister. The largest group of settlers had come from Granville, Massachusetts, which had only one church and one pastor, a New Divinity Congregationalist. Many of the settlers had covenanted together to create a church and at first it had been the only church in

town (the township included a second, a Baptist church of Welsh settlers.) But the first Methodist circuit rider arrived within four years and there were camp meetings as close as Zanesville within five. By the time Little came to town the Methodists had established a "Granville Circuit," the Baptists had created a second church (consisting of people who were not Welsh) and both were worshipping in a new brick schoolhouse at the north end of Main Street. The Methodists had begun construction of their own church building in 1824 and, as noted, the town's original church had splintered into four groups. Little came to a town with six congregations with two buildings among them. None of the six had a resident pastor. Jacob Little was not called to be only pastor for the entire town but at least for the first year or two he was

the town's only pastor.

Moral and Educational Improvement as a Way of Life

Jacob Little and his contemporaries in Granville believed in improvement. They were energetic, ambitious and optimistic. Granville's settlers had not fled persecution or oppression in New England; they had come here to improve their own lots by increasing the size of their farms and the fertility of their soil. Log cabins had given way to plank and even brick houses before Little arrived. Work had begun on both the National Road and the Ohio canal — "internal improvements" as Henry Clay called them; Granville had a furnace, which manufactured iron stoves and implements. Granville had a library and, for a while, a bank. None of these improvements get much attention in Jacob Little's history, however. Little was committed to education, religion, righteous living and good order.

Ohio passed a Public School Law in 1825, two years before Little arrived. The town of Granville had operated a school from the very first winter of settlement, at first in a log cabin and, starting in 1820, in a large two-story building only a short distance behind the Congregational church. The new law prompted the proliferation of schools in all towns, however, and created a demand for teachers.

Jacob Little recognized the situation as an opportunity to improve society. He and his wife Lucy began holding classes of young women almost immediately after they arrived in town. His sister Emma was one of the first teachers in a school for young ladies that opened in 1827 in Dr. Cooley's office on Broadway. Under Little's leadership his flock opened a Congregational Male Academy in 1833, built what is now "The Old Academy Building" in 1834 and incorporated the "Granville Academy," a girl's school which first occupied that building, in 1836. By 1838 they were teaching 175 female students in a large frame building (said to be largest frame building in Ohio) on the current site of the Granville Inn and smaller numbers of male students in the Old Academy Building. Little described himself and Dr. W.W. Bancroft as "self-made trustees to employ teachers, find a room wherever we could and keep up the ladies'school." In the same period a Baptist named Charles Sawyer opened the "Granville Female

Seminary" in 1835 (later sold to St. Luke's Episcopal Church) and facilitated the creation of what became Denison University, a Baptist college, in 1831.

Education was a form of personal improvement long valued in New England. Puritans had been a literate lot, who started schools almost immediately after landing in Massachusetts. Puritan parents had been expected to read the Bible to their children regularly and church members had been proficient in theology. Little now created a network of Bible classes throughout Granville in addition to schools for students. His vision of a Christian community included a structure for neighbors to come together under his tutelage to study scripture. Bible classes were a form of improvement as well.

What was it Little wished to teach? Godly living and good order. These required discipline: weekly church attendance, daily Bible reading, years of study for young people. Drinking and dancing were discouraged because they were disorderly; they undercut discipline and self-control. Timothy Mather Cooley and Timothy Harris had preached against dancing, and Little did the same. In addition, Little preached against strong drink and organized a temperance society: the first total abstinence society west of the Allegheny Mountains. In 1831 Little's church voted to receive no one to new membership who drank, sold or produced ardent spirits.

Revitalizing Granville's oldest church, opening schools, training teachers, organizing neighborhood Bible studies, preaching against dancing and advocating abstinence from alcohol were all components of improving the moral fiber of society. Undoubtedly Little's most famous strategy, however, was the New Year's Day sermon. Jacob Little was best known for collecting data on the behavior of his fellow townspeople, counting the number of Bibles they owned, balls they attended and gallons of alcohol that they consumed, and preaching a sermon every New Year's Day replete with these statistics and the names of Granville's worst offenders. These sermons were public and were printed and were sold in book stores around the state and sometimes beyond state boundaries.

Such was the life work of Jacob Little, the author of the first written history of the village. For thirty-eight years he preached and planned and organized. Without a doubt he changed the lives of many and the moral tone of the town. He claimed that alcohol consumption in Granville fell from 10,000 gallons in 1827 to a tenth

of that in 1833. The number of “balls” or dances declined from six in 1827 to none at all in 1829 and 1830. Of course there was occasional resentment — perhaps more than occasionally. A group of young men once shot off a cannon in his yard, breaking the windows. Eventually a majority of the members of his church voted not to renew his call as their pastor and Jacob Little left town. But he earned and enjoyed the respect and affection of many. He must have in order to have stayed thirty-eight years and met with success so many times. Years after he had left he returned, his supporters held a celebration in his honor and he was feted to the tune of the Battle Hymn of the Republic with new lyrics that are printed in the Appendix. Little had both enemies and disciples.

The Legacy of Jacob Little on Granville’s Sense of Itself

What might we identify as Jacob Little’s greatest legacy? A revitalized church which stands tall as one of four English Protestant churches in the center of town? Schools which continued long after he departed and contributed to the creation of a village known for its educational institutions? A community moral code that sustained churches and long resisted taverns or the sale of alcohol in restaurants? Or the changed and committed lives of church members, academy students and other community residents who became missionaries, ministers, teachers or parents and citizens?

Among his greatest legacies is the History of Granville, first published as a series of 59 articles in the Hudson Observer, a Congregational magazine, in 1846. I have made the case that it is a partisan piece written for a denominational publication. He was a man with strong principles that may not be the same as

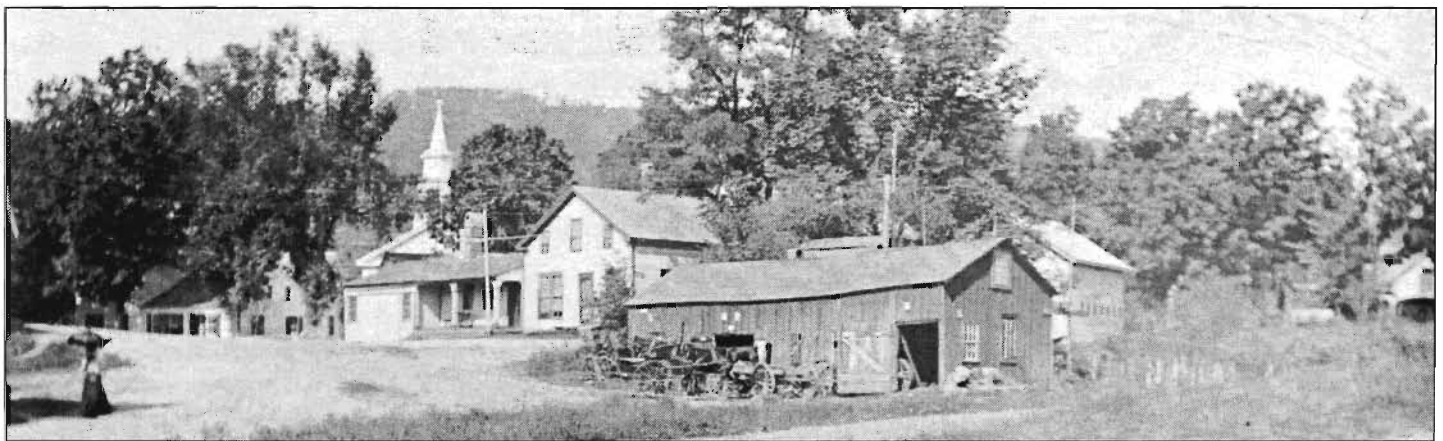
today’s readers. He arrived on the scene twenty-two years into the thirty years of history that he recounts. He lived in the midst of his subjects, struggled with some of them and worked hard to change many of the rest. He wrote approximately ten years after the final events that it describes and eighteen years before he left town. He was more optimistic about these people at the time he wrote than he would later become. After his removal, 1868, he wrote to Marvin Munson about his mindset when he wrote the History:

In my palmy days, I dreamed that my people would, in ages, if not centuries to come, be an intelligent, orthodox and influential church. I thought they had an origin worthy of such a people and their posterity would like to see it.

Not only is it true that someone else would have written this history differently, Little himself would have written it differently later in his life. “Of course,” serious historians might respond. There are no unbiased sources. Sources must be read with an appreciation for the author’s point of view.

Postscript on Jacob Little’s History of Granville

This holiday season, the Granville Historical Society offers an edition of the first history of our community to the public as a window into the mind of Jacob Little, one of Granville’s leading citizens for thirty-eight years; in addition, it is the earliest chronicle of our community, a source from which the other histories of the village depend radically. It is written by a man who had thought at length about the people he describes and had fashioned his own understanding of their narrative. It is the place we begin as we strive to understand our history for ourselves, and we invite our readers to join us in that endeavor.



A Granville, Massachusetts scene during the late 19th century.

Historical Society publishes minister's account of village's early years

By **MAGGIE BROOKS**

Granville Historical Society

Jacob Little, a long-serving minister who is most frequently remembered today for his New Year sermons enumerating the transgressions of his flock, wrote a history of Granville in 1845/46. It was originally published as a series of columns in the *Ohio Observer* and, along with new material, is being published in a book version by the Granville Historical Society.

It is available locally from the Society and at Reader's Garden Books. Cost is \$27, including tax.

Little's history is distinguished from later efforts because he could still speak with pioneer residents of the young village; his was the work that later histories were based upon. The history offers readers a window into the world of 19th century residents of Granville. Dr. Richard Shiels of Ohio State University has written an introduction, published in this issue of *The Historical Times*, that illuminates the various divisions among 19th century religions, as well as explaining Little's heartfelt care for his congregation's moral state.

Among the topics covered by Little are: the trek from Massachusetts; the Ohio frontier as they found it, including wildlife such as wolves and snakes; the War of 1812, whiskey and temperance; and the epidemics of cholera and typhus.

Several authors have contributed "content boxes" on topics such as the slavery question, the Ohio Canal, frontier diseases, and the great flood of 1834 in order to help 21st century readers understand what was common knowledge among Little's original readers.

The book is illustrated with photographs, maps, and line drawings, some published for the first time.

Laura Evans undertook the task of transcribing the newspaper columns in order to bring Little's history to life again. A member of the Granville Presbyterian Church where Little served from 1827 to 1863, she also is known by many researchers for her important work indexing the *Granville Times* newspapers and for her *Granville Sentinel* columns on local history.

Lance Clarke, a past president of the Historical Society, heads the book committee that undertook the

Appreciation to...

The following persons wrote, edited, or published the Jacob Little Granville history book:

- **Jacob Little** — Original author
 - **Laura Evans** — Recovered text from several sources, primarily columns in the *Ohio Observer*
 - **Lance Clarke** — Publisher
 - **Bill Holloway** — Editor in Chief; photographed artifacts and cuts
 - **Tony Lisska** — Editor; wrote content boxes
 - **Theresa Overholser** — Editor; wrote 20 content boxes, processed 19 photographs and cuts
 - **Dick Shiels** — Wrote introduction
 - **Maggie Brooks** — Wrote content boxes
 - **Robin Gibson** — Wrote content boxes
 - **Jeff Gill** — Wrote content boxes
 - **Alan Huggins** — Wrote content boxes
 - **Bill Kirkpatrick** — Wrote content boxes
 - **Brad Lepper** — Wrote content boxes
 - **Tom Martin** — Wrote content boxes
 - **Tony Stoneburner** — Wrote content boxes
- FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTORS:
- **Granville Foundation** — \$5,000
 - **Granville First Presbyterian Church** — \$1,000

project, which was also supported financially by The Granville Presbyterian Church and the Granville Foundation. The book was designed by Fishergate, Inc. and printed by Sheridan Books.

The Granville Historical Society considers the publication of books that document local history to be among its important missions. It also has published two other histories of the village, one by Dr. William Utter in 1956, *The Story of an Ohio Village*, and the three-volume set issued during the bicentennial of the village, *Granville Ohio: A Study in Continuity and Change*. Other volumes published by the Society include: *Unhitch the Horse, I'm Here*, and *Wild Turkeys and Tallow Candles*, both of which are first person accounts of life in the village.

The Settlers of Granville's Welsh Hills

Editor's Note: The following informative account of the Welsh Settlers coming to the Granville area before the Granville, Massachusetts settlers arrived in the fall of 1805 was written by Maggie Brooks. It is published in Jacob Little's History of Granville and is an excellent example of the many "Content Boxes" that have been written especially for this recently published edition of Little's History.

by **MAGGIE BROOKS**
Granville
Historical Society

In the late 18th century, England was very sensitive to the humiliating outcome of the American Revolution and was especially active in its efforts to suppress any movement for reform in its church or government. Among the exponents of the doctrines of religious freedom and reform were the sons of Thomas Philipps, who soon fled to Philadelphia to escape imprisonment. They convinced their father and his longtime neighbor and friend, Theophilus Rees, to join them. High taxes, bad weather and the military draft convinced many others to emigrate in those years. The Rees and Philipps' families purchased land in western Pennsylvania and moved to the new town of Beulah.

Although the full explanation for the abandonment of Beulah for the military lands in Ohio is unclear, in August of 1801 three members of the community went to examine the new tract. Rees purchased approximately 1,000 acres from Samson Davis on Sept. 4, 1801. Others purchased nearly 2,000 additional acres. Over the next few years, families continued to arrive in the Welsh Hills mostly from the Beulah community, but also from Oneida County in



A cabin in Granville, Ohio's Welsh Hills.

New York. Many residents of both communities had connections by blood or marriage and to the same area of Wales. Theophilus Rees had written a letter of recommendation for the Rev. John G. Roberts of Cambria County, Penn., to the church at Remsen, Oneida County. The opening of the Ohio Canal, and the abandonment of Beulah contributed to later immigrants coming primarily from New York or directly from Wales.

The residents were united by language and, in the early days, by their school and faith. The ridges of the hills also tended to keep them separated from their neighbors in the lower valley of Granville. William Harvey Jones in *The Welsh Hills* relates the following adage. "It has been said the first thing a Frenchman does in a new country is to build a trading post, an Englishman builds a blockhouse, and a Welshman builds a church. So in 1797, as soon as our Welsh colony had arrived in Cambria County (Penn.) they organized a church, which would later become the mother church of what is now known as the Welsh Hills Baptist Church."

The Welsh Hills Baptist Church was organized on Sept. 4, 1808, worshipping in private houses until 1809 when a log cabin was erected for church and school purposes on what is now the site of the Welsh Hills Cemetery. In 1814, Samuel Philipps deeded to the church land and a log school. It became the new home of the church until 1822 when it burned. Another log building was constructed in 1823 but it also burned in 1834. Meanwhile, a stone schoolhouse, built in 1825, had been used on alternate Sundays beginning in 1832 and served as the church after the second fire. In 1836 a building committee was organized and in 1840 services were held in a new, frame-meeting house. Soon after the turn of the 20th century, a more pretentious church was built on the site and the frame church was sold and hauled away for use as a cow barn. Beginning about 1880 a long succession of ministerial students from Denison University served the church as pastor.

As various immigrants arrived in the Welsh Hills, additional churches were organized and built. The Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Church was organized by settlers from Oneida County and Wales in either 1833 or 1835 according to differing accounts. Their church on Sharon Valley Road, the first frame building in the neighborhood, was built in 1837 at a cost of \$321.89. By 1952 there was only one surviving member of the congregation, Mrs. Hannah Evans Jones, and she turned the building over to the Granville Cambrian Society by quitclaim deed. Refurbished and cleaned up at that time, the church again fell into disrepair, was deemed unsafe, and was razed in the 1990s. The adjoining graveyard still exists and is maintained by the Newark Township trustees. Several artifacts from the church are in the safekeeping of the Granville Historical Society.

Isaac Smucker in his 1876 *Centennial History of Licking County* detailed the organization dates and church membership of six Welsh churches in Licking County. The Welsh Hills Baptist Church (1808) had 73 members; The Sharon Valley Calvinistic Methodist Church (1835) had 31; the Granville Welsh Congregational Church (1839) had 60; The Granville Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Church (1839) had 20; the Newark Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Church (1841) had 97; and the Newark Welsh Congregational Church (1841) had 140. Sunday school scholars ranged from a low of 30 at the Granville Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Church to a high of 115 at the Newark Welsh Congregational Church.

Thanks for the holiday decoration!

The Granville Historical Society thanks dependable volunteers Don and Terrie Hostetter, and Stout's Tree Farm, for the beautiful wreath adorning the museum's front door during the holiday season!



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Address comments, suggestions or queries to:

The Granville Historical Society
P.O. Box 129, Granville, OH 43023
740.587.3951

office@granvillehistory.org

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