

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
GODFREY ILLINOIS

Madison Co.

HABS NO. 25-10

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*Reduced Copies of Measured Drawings*  
PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA  
CENTRAL ILLINOIS DISTRICT NO. 25

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
EDGAR E. LUNDEEN DISTRICT OFFICER  
BLOOMINGTON ILLINOIS

ATTACHED  
FOLLOWS...

The Godfrey Congregational Church, of Godfrey, Illinois,  
formerly "The Church of Christ at Monticello."

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By Mrs. Cynthia Mason Sawyer, Godfrey, Ill. March 1934

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In 1829 an event occurred of great importance to Illinois and especially to this section of the State. In that year "The Yale Band" formed of seven Yale Students came West for the purpose of furthering religion and education. The names of these members are; Julian M. Sturtevant, Mason Grosvenor, Asa Turner Jr., William Kirby, Theron Baldwin, Elisha Jenny and John F. Brooks.

The journey from the East to Illinois took from four to six weeks. They were provided with outfits and guaranteed a salary of \$400.00 each.

Illinois College at Jacksonville and the labors of Julian M. Sturtevant are part of their monument.

Their influence also reached Godfrey, then known as Monticello, for Captain Godfrey, the benefactor of Monticello Seminary, having become acquainted with Theron Baldwin and being much attracted to him, made his acceptance of the Principalship of Monticello Seminary, the condition of building the Seminary.

Theron Baldwin was Principal of the Seminary from 1838 to 1844, when Philena Fobes who had been his assistant, became Principal of Monticello Seminary.

The names of Theron Baldwin and Julian M. Sturtevant have been thus mentioned as they, with others wrote the Constitution of the "Church of Christ at Monticello" later known as the Godfrey Congregational Church of Godfrey, Illinois, and Philena Fobes was a charter member of the church.

These names have also been mentioned because Monticello Seminary and the community worshipped jointly for 38 years. On November 2, 1839, the "Church of Christ in Monticello" later designated as the "Godfrey Congregational Church" of Godfrey, Illinois was organized in the Chapel of Monticello Seminary. Prayer was offered by Timothy Turner.

The formation of a church being the object of this meeting on November 2, 1839, letters were presented and accepted by the following persons:

Jabez Turner (From the Ref. Dutch Ch., Kinderhook, New York.)

Timothy Turner, Jairus Burt Turner, Ann W. Turner, Elizabeth W. Turner (From the Valatie, Kinderhook, Presbyterian Church, N. Y.)

James Howell, Anna D'Hart Howell, Sarah Howell (Ref. Dutch Ch., Beawenburgh, N. Y.)

Elizabeth Howell (Presbyterian Church, New Brunswick, N.J.)

Rufus G. Turner, Mary Ann Turner (First Presbyterian Church, Matteawan, N. Y.)

Edwin B. Turner (Cong. Church, Jacksonville, Ill.)

Catharine Ingham, Rebecca Ingham, Elizabeth Wilkins, Mary E. Gilman, Calvin Godfrey, (Presbyterian Church, Alton, Ill.)

John Mason, Sr. (Congregational Church, Castleton, Vermont.)

The following persons having been examined by the Moderator, as to their Christian character and experience, were also included in the organization, viz.:

Martin Ash, Maria Ash, Susan W. Miles, Caroline M. Baldwin, Benjamin Ives Gilman, Philena Fobes, Huldah M. Sturtevant, and Mary Marr.

At the organization, Rev. Theron Baldwin presided.

Then followed the reading of a Constitution, Confession of Faith and Covenant which were unanimously adopted. October 4, 1839 Theron Baldwin was called to the Pastorate which he accepted.

For more than 15 years the church remained without connection with any ecclesiastical body.

January 18, 1855 the Monticello Church united in full with the Alton Presbytery. The Church remained in this connection until June 3, 1860 when it unanimously withdrew from the Presbytery and resumed its original independent condition and so remained for 25 years.

On October 21, 1885 the church asked admission to the Springfield Association of Congregational Churches and was received into membership and continues this membership to the present time.

The name of "The Church of Christ at Monticello" by which it had been designated from the formation to this time, was changed to the "Godfrey Congregational Church" of Godfrey Illinois.

The Benevolences of the Church were always liberal and far reaching.

June 6, 1857 it was resolved that the following objects of religious benevolence be adopted:

American Sunday School Union.

American Bible Society.

American Board of Commissions for Foreign Missions.

American Foreign and Christian Union.

American Home Missionary Society.

Boatman's Society.

No mention is made in the records in possession of the Church of its erection. The Church was built in 1854 upon grounds belonging to the Monticello Seminary and is at this time held by the Trustees of Monticello Seminary. It was built for the "joint use of the Monticello Congregation and for the public uses of the Seminary." November 18, 1876, the records show that the "original cost of the church exclusive of land was \$11,035.07"

The church was built by the joint efforts of the community and Seminary and used jointly by them till January 27, 1877 when "our connection with the Seminary ceased in the joint use of the church for religious services when the Seminary withdrew the pupils from the common church edifice and provided for their religious instruction on Sabbath mornings in Seminary Hall."

No mention is made in either the church or Seminary records of an architect, but the Monticello Seminary records show on November 13, 1854 "the partial completion of a church under contract by W. H. Howell."

The date on the bell is 1857. It was cast by Meneely Bell Company, Troy, New York and shipped by water from New York to Alton and from there hauled to Monticello (Godfrey) on Captain Godfrey's ox-cart.

October 17, 1857, after discussion, "Brothers Godfrey and Corey were appointed a Committee to employ some person to ring the bell." The following are regulations for the ringing of the bell, October 17, 1857 (Alton Telegraph)

"There will be two bells for the morning service and one bell for the afternoon service on the Sabbath.

"The first bell of the morning service will commence ringing an hour before service begins and ring ten minutes. The second bell for the morning service will commence ringing 15 minutes before the time of service and will ring five minutes intermit five minutes and toll five minutes.

"The bell for the afternoon service will commence ringing 15 minutes before the time of service and will ring five minutes, intermit five minutes, and toll five minutes.

"There will be one bell for the Sabbath school to commence ringing 15 minutes before the time for the school and to ring five minutes. The time for the opening of the school to be indicated by three strokes of the tolling hammer.

"There will be two bells for service on week days, the first bell to commence ringing an hour before the time of service and ring 10 minutes, the second bell to be rung as on the Sabbath.

"In case of a death in the congregation, the bell is to be rung with the tolling of the age of the deceased, and at funeral to be tolled in the usual manner.

"The bell is to be rung daily at the hour of 12 o'clock noon for five minutes.

"The Sexton is expected to adhere with uniformity and precision by the watch, to these specifications until otherwise directed."

November 20, 1886 - "Permission was granted to put in a platform across the rear end of the audience room." At that time the pulpit was removed and stored in the balcony and the organ moved to the platform and thus the harmonious architecture of the interior of the building was destroyed.

The spire of the church was repaired in the fall of 1933. The spire was covered entirely with sheet copper from the platform at the base to the highest peak. Other parts of the tower below the spire were also covered with copper, retaining the contour of the original wood work as originally built. A copper finial, six feet in height was placed on top of the spire. The columns of the porch were repaired. A new porch floor was laid and new steps placed. The cost of the above repairs was about \$2,500.00

The contractor for this work was Mr. E. G. Yungck of Alton. He asked Mr. John M. Pfeiffenberger, also of Alton to assist in an engineering capacity in the strengthening of the tower, which he did.

Miss Cynthia Mason Sawyer  
O.H.S.M.

(Approved)

Edgar E. Lundeen

Reviewed 1936 Henry C. Forman

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An Addendum to:  
Godfrey Congregational Church  
Godfrey  
Madison County  
Illinois

HABS No. IL-25-10

PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

Addendum to GODFREY CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

HABS No. IL-25-10

Location: Godfrey, Madison County, Illinois

HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

The following information was recorded by Alexander Piaget and Charles van Ravenswaay at the time the photograph was taken:

Originated 1839, erected 1854.

PROJECT INFORMATION

The Piaget-van Ravenswaay Survey consists of a number of photographs, primarily of sites and structures in Missouri, which were taken before 1938 by Alexander Piaget and after that by Paul Piaget, both in conjunction with Charles van Ravenswaay. Photographs of buildings were incorporated into the HABS collection in 1985 by Laura Rupp and in 1986 by Deborah Fulton, HABS historians. A master list is available in the field records for MO-1800.