

Port Gibson Methodist Cobblestone Church (Site)
HISTORY SHEET
General Information

Name of Structure: Port Gibson Methodist Cobblestone Church

Address: 2959 Greig St. (SW corner with Granger St)

Parcel ID: (323689) 3.16-2-28.000

Atlas: 1852: "M Church", 1859: "M. E. Church"; 1874: "M.E. Ch.";
1904: "M. E. Church"

When Built/ Mason: 1835

When Razed: 1871 (and replaced on same site)

Why: Growing congregation

Original Owner: Church Trustees

Subsequently: N/A

Original Use: Church

Subsequently: Replaced by church on same site; still in use today

Photographs: None known

Description:

Design Details: Unknown. It was 30 by 40 feet, built of cobblestones, and cost \$1,600.

Mortar Details: Unknown

R e f e r e n c e s

Note: Notations of ? indicates that text on original documents was illegible.

12/5/1921 50th Anniversary Port Gibson Methodist Church

Rochester Democrat & Chronicle, MON 12/5/1921

Eight Former Pastors To Attend Celebration of 50th Anniversary of Port Gibson Methodist Church

[Rochester NY Democrat Chronicle 1921 - 7015.pdf](#)

"50th Anniversary of Port Gibson Methodist Church"

... The history of the local Methodist Church began with religious services held in the brick schoolhouse standing across the road from the present Halladay Corners schoolhouse. Soon a schoolhouse was built at Port Gibson and services were held there prior to 1833. In that year a great revival resulted in many conversions. The following year the society organized as a corporate body. Papers were drawn and the instrument

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signed by Oliver Phelps, first judge of Ontario County. Rev. Orrin Doolittle presided at the meeting and Samuel Munson, Aaron W. Turner, David H. Sherman, Lyman Clark, Peter B. Kocher, Manasseh R. Corwin and Samuel Morse were made trustees. The society was organized on April 8, 1834 as the First Society of the Methodist-Episcopal Church of Port Gibson.

At that time no pastor was stationed here, but many men officiated from Palmyra and neighboring places. At the close of one of the revival meetings one of the men offered ? dollars toward a new church building. This was the beginning of the effort which resulted in the erection of a new church edifice. The building was commenced that year and completed in 1835. It was 30 by 40 feet, built of cobblestones, and cost \$1,600. The names of some of the members at that time were Hiram Edson and wife, Joseph Johnson and wife Manasseh, H. Corwin and wife, Nathaniel Holmes and wife, Washington Beal, William Beal, ...

For several years the charge was ? the same pastor as the Palmyra church, but on August 14, 1852 the East Palmyra society withdrew. Quarterly services, however, were held together for another year. Later the pastor of the local church had charge of a class at Manchester Center, then known as Coonsville.

The last religious service was held in the old cobblestone church on March 26, 1871. At the quarterly conference of that year a building committee was appointed to superintend the construction of a new chichi which was to be built of brick on the old site. The brick was drawn from East Newark, the members of the church said those interested forming a bee to do the work. The v-section of the edifice began in Jun, 1871. Major Schutt had supervision of the work and the pastor, Rev. W. W. Banyan gave much time to the project.

The church is 35 by 65 feet, with an annex, 25 by 31 feet. Much of the work was done gratuitously. Making allowance for this, the cost of the new building was \$9,000. The dedicatory services were held on December 13, 1871, the German being preached by Rev. Benoni I Ives, D. D. who supervised the finances. In 1881 the edifice was struck by lightning and badly damaged. Repairs were made at once, together with improvements in the parsonage.

4/12/1934 100th Anniversary of Cobblestone Church

[Clifton Springs NY Press 1932-1934 - 0957.pdf](#) (Thursday, 4/12/1934)

Port Gibson Methodist Church Celebrates its 100th Anniversary

"The Port Gibson Methodist Episcopal church celebrated its 100th anniversary ... It was on April 7th that the church society was organized. Judge Oliver Phelps signed the papers. The first trustees named were Samuel Munson, Aaron W. Turner, David H. Sherman, Lyman Clark,

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Peter B. Kocher, Manasseh R. Corwin and Samuel Moore. Rev. Orrin Doolittle and Samuel Moore presided at that historic meeting.

The first church was of cobblestone and was erected in 1834 at a cost of \$1,600. Circuit pastors preached there in the early days. The final services were held there March 26, 1871, and in June 1871, the present brick structure was started. Bricks for it were baked in the kiln at East Newark.

Rev. W. W. Runyan was pastor at that time. The cost was \$9,000. Dedicatory services were conducted December 31, 1871. While Rev. W. C. Mattison was pastor in 1881, the church was struck by lightning and damaged. Repairs were made and at the same time extensive improvements made to the parsonage. ...

Today the church has a membership of 66. ... "

4/30/1971 100th Anniversary of New Church

[Geneva NY Daily Times 1971 Mar-Apr 1971 Grayscale - 1399.pdf](#) (Fri, 4/30/1971)

... PORT GIBSON — On Sunday, May 2, The Port Gibson United Methodist Church will observe its centennial celebration. The occasion will mark the 100th year of the present church, which was erected in 1871 on the site of a former church.

... A history of the church has been compiled by Donald Hyman, a member of the centennial committee.

Records show that the Methodist church at Port Gibson began religious services in a brick schoolhouse after 1825. The church later (1834-35) formally incorporated and build [sic] a church edifice of cobblestone. Final services were held in this cobblestone church on March 25, 1871, after which it was voted to tear down the old church and construct a new one. The cobblestone church was built at a cost of \$1,600. The new church, made of brick cost about \$9,000. ... "

5/27/1891 Epworth Circle Talk, History Beginning to End

Epworth Circle — About Port Gibson M.E. Church

[Newark NY Arcadian Weekly Gazette 1888-1891 - 0734.pdf](#) (Wed, 5/27/1891)

The regular meeting of the Epworth Circle will be held Friday evening, May 15, at the home of Mrs. Oliver B. Wilcox, with the following program: History of the Erie Canal; the early settlement of Port Gibson; the relation of the war of 1812 to Port Gibson; the relation of Mormonism to Port Gibson and vicinity, and the history of the Port Gibson Methodist church. A cordial invitation extended to all.

[Newark NY Arcadian Weekly Gazette 1888-1891 - 0747.pdf](#) (Wed, 5/27/1891)

Port Gibson Historically De-sected [sic]

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One of the most interesting social meetings at Port Gibson was held Friday evening, May 15, at the home of O.B. Wilcox. It was a meeting of the Epworth circle, and there were about 100 present. The spirit of the meeting wore a historical dress: and the papers read brought back many facts to the minds of the older inhabitants. One of the subjects was, "The early history of Port Gibson," by Walter S. Throop. Other subjects were "The building of the Erie canal and its history to the present day," by John McClelland; "History of the first M. E. church of Port Gibson, and its pastors to the present time," by Miss Jessie Terry. There were also some sketches on Mormonism which originated near there, read by Miss Nellie Terry. J. Allen Throop made some remarks about some of the things he can remember. Miss Eva Beal's class sang a number of old-time songs.

Handy references for checking person's names in article below:

<https://www.ontariocountyny.gov/DocumentCenter/View/752/Surrogate-Court-Records-1789---1926?bidId=>

<https://wayne.nygenweb.net/history/epalmethofficers.html>

<https://wayne.nygenweb.net/history.html>

3/30/1892 Port Gibson M.E. Church History Beginning to Present Day

[Newark NY Arcadian Weekly Gazette 1891-1893 - 0588.pdf](#) (Wed, Mar 30, 1892)

Port Gibson M. E. Church, It's History From the Beginning to the Present Day

Prepared and read before the Past ? Epworth Circle by Miss Jessie Terry.

"We are indeed to the late Gen. E. Bockoven, an aged member of our church, for much of the information given in the following history.

Many years ago, before there was a church, school house, canal, or even such a place as Port Gibson, the forests of this section were only broken by an occasional log house, and the people attended religious meetings in various places, some going to Palmyra, East Palmyra, etc. After a time a brick school house was built across the road from the present Halladay Corners school house, and meetings were held there; and still later at Port Gibson, a school house having been erected there.

In the year 1883 there was a great revival here and many were converted. A class must have been formed, for April 7, 1834, a meeting of the Methodist Episcopal church of Port Gibson was held in the school house of said village for the purpose of organizing a corporate body to take charge of temporal affairs of the society.

An instrument of incorporation was drawn up and signed by the presiding officers and two witnesses. This instrument, to which is attached the certificate of Oliver Phelps, the first judge of Ontario county, is recorded in the county clerk's office in Canandaigua, in Liber D, of Miscellaneous Records, Folio 93, and reads as follows:

We the undersigned, do hereby certify that on the 7th day of April, A.D. 1834 the members of the Methodist Episcopal church in the vicinity of Port Gibson, met at the

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school house in said village, pursuant to lawful notice, for the purpose of forming a ? body ? ? ? ? ? the temporalities of said church, and being convened the Rev. Orin Doolittle and Samuel Moore were elected to preside at the said meeting.

Resolved—First, that we have given ?

Resolved—Second, that Samuel E. Munson, Aaron W. Turner, David H. Herman, Lyman Clark, Peter B. Kocher, Manasseh R. Corwin and Samuel Moore constitute said trustees.

Resolved—Third, that the said trustees and their successors in office, be forever hereafter called and known by the name and title of the First Society of the Methodist Church in Port Gibson.

In witness whereof we have hereunto set our hands and seal this 8th day of April 1834.

Otis Doolittle,

Samual Moore.

At the time of the above incorporation no pastor was stationed here, but a number officiated who were on a circuit which also included Palmyra, East Palmyra, the Curtis school house and several other places. At the close of one of the revival meetings a Welchman [sic] who was present said: "We need a church here; we want a house in which to worship; and I will give \$5 toward it." This was the beginning of the enterprise for the erection of a church edifice. The building was commenced in 1834 and was completed the following year. Its dimensions were 35 feet wide by 45 feet long. It was built of cobble stone and cost \$1,600.

The names of some of the members of the church at that time were: Manasseh Corwin and wife, Hiram Edson and wife, Nathaniel Holmes and wife, Joseph Johnson and wife, Washington Beal, Martin Smith, William Beal, David H. Sherman, William Walker, Stephen D. Sherman, Emmons Hudson and mother, Of this lot, four are know to be still living.

For several years the Port Gibson and Palmyra societies were under the charge of the same pastor; but on August 14, 1853, the East Palmyra society withdrew. The two societies however, continued to hold their quarterly series together for another year. Subsequently the pastor at Port Gibson for six years had charge of a class at Coonsville, now known as Manchester Center.

For thirty six years the old stone church met every requirement for which it was constructed. At last it failed to meet the demands of a prosperous and growing community, and it was decided to replace it with a new one.

On Sunday March 26, 1871, the last religious service was held within its walls. At a quarterly conference held March 4th, 1871, a building committee was appointed to superintend the construction of the new church edifice. It was decided to build of brick on the old site. A bee was made to draw the brick from East Newark and the deadline with which some citizens responded to the call showed their deep interest in the work. The laying of brick began on the sixth of June the same year and as the work progressed it was watched with

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eager interest. The building committee surrendered the more immediate supervision of the work to Major Hiram Schutt one of their number.

The pastor Rev. W. W. Runyan, was always ready to proffer assistance and advice. His shoulder was first at every wheel, and the society is largely indebted to his energy and perseverance for the beautiful house in which we are permitted to worship. The main part of the church is thirty five feet wide by sixty five feet long with an annex on the south end twenty five feet by thirty one. One hundred and twelve thousand brick were used in its construction and its cost, making a fair allowance for work done gratis, was about \$9,000. The church was dedicated December 13, 1871, Rev. B. J. Ives, D. D. of Auburn, N.Y. preaching the dedicatory sermon.

During the summer of 1871, the parsonage, which is now over seventy years old, was moved to a convenient distance from the church and many other improvements were made.

The following spring a row of fifteen sheds was built at a cost of \$414.75 for the accommodation of teams. In 1881 the church was struck by lightning. About the same time various improvements were made in the parsonage through the efforts of the pastor, Rev. W. C. Mattison.

An Epworth League was organized by Rev. J. B. Sheerar June 10, 1890, and John McClelland Sen. was elected its president. The Epworth Circle, a literary social connected with the Epworth League, was formed November 21, 1890 under the pastorate of Rev. J. Easter.

This list given below of the regular ministers who were on the circuit, or have been stationed at Port Gibson is correct with the exception of a few blanks which we have not been able to fill. In 1834, Orin Doolittle and Cyrus Story; 1837, John Easter Sen.; 1838, Octavius Mason and Chauncey Baker; Ralph Bennett, J.T. Arnold, Wooser, Gideon Osborn, Gideon Lanning; 1841, Wilson Osborn and E. B. Fuller; 1842, E. B. Fuller; 1843, Allen Steel; 1844-45, Alpha Wright; 1846, John Mandeville; 1847-48, David Crow, Jr.; 1849; Jonathan Watts; 1850, Joseph K. Tuttle; 1851-52, Daniel S Chase; 1853, Sylvester L. Condon; 1854-55; Luther Norway; 1856-57, Delos Hutchins; 1858-59, James W. Wilson; 1860, Calvin S. Coats; 1861-63, John M. Bull; 1863-64, Nelson. A. DePew; 1865-67, M. Hotchkiss; 1866-69, J.A. Swallow; 1870-73, W. W. Bunyan, 1873-75, Charles H. wright; 1876-77, Chas. E. Hermans; 1878-80, W. C. Mattison; 1881-83, Robert Brewster; 1884, W.H. Hermans; 1885-87, M.J. Wells; 1888-89, J. B. Sheerar; 1890-92, J. Easter, Jr. Under the labors of these ministers the church has often been favored with precious revivals and additions to its membership,

The following presiding Elders have had the oversight of the charge: John Copeland, J.R. Alverson, Samuel Luckey, John Dennis, John G. Gulick, Joseph K. Tuttle, Jonathan Benson, Freeborn G. Hibbard, John Mandeville, Andrew Sutherland, Israel H Kellogg, Robert Hogoboom, F.G. Hobart, E.J. Hermann, U. B. Beebe, B.I. Ives, and L.C. Queal.

12/28/1871 Dedication at Port Gibson

[Newspaper Auburn NY Christian Advocate 1871 - 1878 \(407\).PDF](#) (12/28/1871)

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Dedication at Port Gibson.

If it be true that "a thing of beauty is a joy forever," the Port Gibson brethren, including their pastor, ought to be glad evermore. They have certainly one of the most chaste and faultless church edifices, of its size, in the East Genesee Conference. As one said, "it is a perfect pink of a church." It is a brick structure, 85 by 90 feet. This includes a Sunday-school room, which can be connected with the audience by doors opening behind the pulpit. The seats and wainscoting are of Canadian Ash, trimmed with black walnut, and finished in oil and shellac; showing to advantage the exquisitely beautiful grain of the wood. This fine material, from the highlands of Canada, should supersede, as it excels, all other wood in the finer parts of our church buildings. The windows are of stained glass, in beautiful symbolic patterns. They were made in Utica.