

**CHORUS OF LONG AGO.** This is the official photo, taken about 1920, of the Cambrian Glee Club of Venedocia, which will be holding a reunion this Saturday and Sunday at Venedocia. In the group were, left to right: Top row—Gordon Jenkins, Elliott Morris, Talmage Hughes, Dick Owens, Rufus Morris, Gaylord Jones, Dan Evans, Herb Davies, Harris Evans, Glen Owens, Joe Williams. Second row down—Rufus Thomas, Edward Jones, Stanley Roberts, Reese Morris, Les-

ter Cole, Wendell Morgan, Layton Jenkins, Telford M. Jones, Caradog Jones. Third row down—Howell I. Breese, Haydn Morgan, Haydn Jones, Howard Hughes, Maldwyn Jones, Luther Jones. Bottom—Roy Morgar ards. Elliott Morris, Talmage Hughes, Rufus Morris are now deceased. Not in the picture are five—Austin Pollock, Walter Lewis, Pal George, Thomas M. ris Lloyd.

## Cambrian Glee Club To Hold 25th Reunion This Weekend

**VENEDOCIA** — The Cambrian Glee Club, which made a name for itself in this area about 35 years ago, will be back together again this weekend.

Members of the glee club are expected to come here from all over the midwest for the organization's 25th reunion, scheduled for Saturday night and Sunday.

The club was organized in 1919, with Haydn Morgan as director and Austin Pollock as accompanist. For about three years, the group was willing to sing for any occasion within auto driving distance of Venedocia.

It gave about 25 concerts throughout this area, going as far away as Fairmont, Ind. Autos—and especially tires—were not the things then that they are now, or the club might have done a lot more singing.

The club's reunion banquet will

phos, with Rev Harry Griffiths, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Van Wert, as the speaker.

Ed Jones of Van Wert is in charge of reunion arrangements.

Sunday, the club will sing three numbers at the annual Welsh gymanfa ganu at the Salem Presbyterian Church at 7:30 p. m. Sunday.

It will again be directed by Hadyn Morgan, who will also be the director for the assembly singing for the gymanfa ganu. Since leaving Venedocia, Morgan has built a wide reputation as choral music authority and choral composer. He is now on the faculty of the Michigan State Normal College at Ypsilanti.

## The Markets

# Society And Clubs

6 Times-Bulletin, Van Wert, O., Mon., Nov. 20, 1967



**GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY**—Mr. and Mrs. J. Alford Breese will mark their 50th wedding anniversary at an open house observance slated from 2:30 to 5 p. m. Sunday in the Venedocia Presbyterian Church. The omission of gifts has been requested. Mrs. Breese is the former Frances Uhl. The couple exchanged nuptial vows Dec. 1, 1917, with the Rev. R. J. Williams officiating. Mrs. Breese has taught piano and served as church organist and accompanist for many years. The Breeses are active in musical circles of both the church and community. Mr. Breese has served as county commissioner. They are the parents of a daughter, Mrs. Robert (Jane) Evans of Greenville, and have two granddaughters. The couple spends the winter months in Bradenton, Fla. (Deal photo)

## Deaths And Funerals

### HENRY MORRIS

1980

PARMA HEIGHTS — Funeral services will be at 2 p.m. Monday in Harter and Son Memorial Chapel, Delphos, for Henry Morris, 93, of Parma Heights, formerly of Rt. 1, Delphos. The Rev. Von Giessler will officiate. Burial will be in Horeb Cemetery.

Mr. Morris died at 8 a.m. Friday in Parma Heights Community Hospital, Parma Heights.

He was born on Aug. 28, 1887, in Van Wert County, the son of Jenkin and Letitia (Jones) Morris.

Survivors include his niece, Mrs. Robert Bates of Parma Heights, with whom he resided.

He was preceded in death by two brothers.

Mr. Morris was a retired farmer. He was a member of Salem Presbyterian Church, Venedocia, and Hope Lodge, Delphos. He was a former trustee of the church and former Jennings Township Clerk.

Friends may call after 2 p.m. Sunday in the funeral home.

Preferred memorials are to the church.

Enjoy What You Do, He Advises

# Area Man Reaches His 90th Birthday

Sept 1971

By JUDY SAMPSON

Times-Bulletin Staff Writer

"When we moved to the area, I'm told my father had to clear 10 acres of trees in order to build a house. The area was all timber then," David J. Morris said as he reminisced about his 90 years. He will be celebrating his 90th birthday anniversary Tuesday.

Mr. Morris, who looks as though he might be only 60 years old moved northeast of Venedocia, near where he still lives, when he was only about the age of one.

He came to Van Wert County with his parents, Jenkin and Letitia Morris, from Jackson, Ohio, where he was born. His parents both came from Wales in 1878 and met and married in this country.

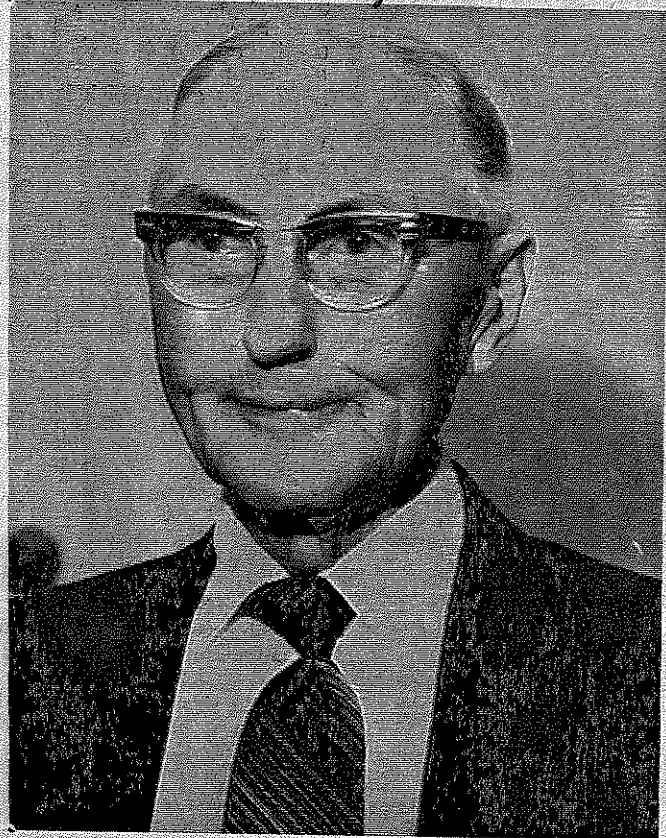
Able to speak only Welsh when he was five, he started school because there was a teacher who could speak Welsh, Miss Martha Gunsett of Van Wert. He attended school in a building which still stands on the Wren - Landeck Road, between the Middle Point-Wetzel and Horeb Roads. In fact, the now vacant building can be seen from Mr. Morris' front window.

He says he can still speak Welsh, but says there aren't very many other people in the area to converse with in Welsh any more.

**MR. MORRIS** is in excellent health and says he hasn't missed a meal in many years.

He tends to his well-kept yard himself and even takes care of a truck patch and a small garden.

Each week he makes a trip to town to get groceries and attends church regularly at the



David J. Morris

He said that his life was not an easy one, as his father died when he was quite young and being the oldest of three boys, he was required to do the work of a man when he was a boy.

One of his brothers, Henry, is still living. He is 84. Mr. Morris also has several nieces.

He and his wife were married

for over 61 years and lived in the same house where Mr. Morris still lives. Mrs. Morris died in 1970.

The most important thing in life, according to Mr. Morris, is God's blessing and what He has provided for us. He said he is thankful for many friends and good neighbors.

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**MR. MORRIS** is in excellent health and says he hasn't missed a meal in many years.

He tends to his well-kept yard himself and even takes care of a truck patch and a small garden.

Each week he makes a trip to town to get groceries and attends church regularly at the Salem Presbyterian church. He said he has been driving for well over 50 years and has never had even a scratch on his car.

Reading is a favorite pastime, but he says he tries not to do too much so he can save his eyesight, which is very good.

He also likes to watch television, particularly sports, but admits that he does not understand the professional sports.

Mr. Morris is a retired farmer. He did field work until past his 80th birthday.

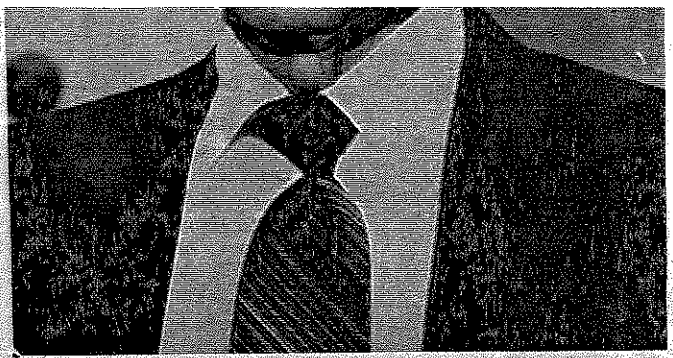
While actively engaged in farming, Mr. Morris had all types of livestock.

He noted that if someone had told him when he was a youth, of all the progress that has been made in his lifetime, he would not have believed it. He recalled that his father was one of the first farmers in the area to have a cultivator, which was pulled by a horse and that people came for many miles to see how it worked.

He also remembered that he and his wife were one of the first ones in the Venedocia area to sign up for electricity when it came.

\* \* \*

**"ENJOY WHAT** you do," was the advice that Mr. Morris gave. He said that he always enjoyed the things he did and nothing to excess.



**David J. Morris**

He said that his life was not an easy one, as his father died when he was quite young and being the oldest of three boys, he was required to do the work of a man when he was a boy. One of his brothers, Henry, is still living. He is 84. Mr. Morris also has several nieces.

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# Little Sears' Owner To Be 90 Years Old

By HAROLD COOK  
Times-Bulletin Staff Writer

**VENEDOCIA** — Henry Uhl of Venedocia, retired businessman, church and public official, will observe his 90th birthday Sunday with a family gathering that includes dining out, but he doesn't know where his two sons and brother plan to take him. They've kept it a secret.

Born Feb. 15, 1880, in Delphos, he was one of nine children of John and Sophia (Puchta) Uhl. One brother and two sisters are still living.

Mr. Uhl moved to Venedocia with his parents when he was six months old and has lived there ever since. He lives in the same house in which and his wife started housekeeping in 1907.

He attended the Venedocia grade school, which was one of six schools in York Township at the time. He said all you needed to learn in those days was reading, writing and arithmetic.

In 1907 he married Laura Pugh who was a schoolteacher. She died in 1960.

They raised two sons and a daughter. The boys, Glenn, is a music teacher in the Dayton School system, teaching at the same school with John Stuckey, son of Postmaster and Mrs. Nolen Stuckey of 787 Maplewood Drive. In fact the two Van Wert native schoolteachers went on a Michigan fishing trip together last summer. They reside in Oakwood, a Dayton suburb.

The other son, Raymond, lives in Columbus and works for the Hanna Paint Co. He is married to the former Bonnie Foote, daughter of Mrs. Joel R. Foote of 311 South Ave.

Mr. Uhl's daughter, Eleanor Morris, died in 1959. He has six grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren and a great-great-grandchild.

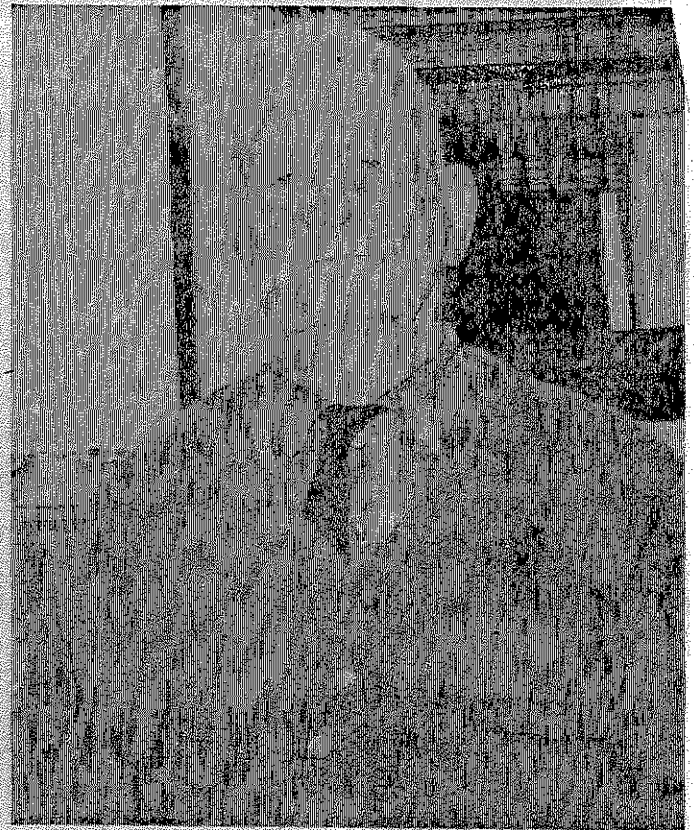
AS A boy, Mr. Uhl hired out as a farm laborer and also worked about three or four years for Jones and Jones Hardware in Venedocia. The firm specialized in roofing and spouting. Putting on a slate roof in those days was hard work, he said.

In 1905 Mr. Uhl started a

Mr. Uhl has enjoyed good health but his sight and hearing has failed. He has to read The Times-Bulletin with a magnifying glass.

He walks many times to the Venedocia business district and post office and misses the use of his automobile. He has lived alone since the death of his wife.

His brother, Albert Uhl of 375 W. Maple Ave., will join in the celebration Sunday with the two sons. One sister, Mrs. E. G. Smith of Muncie, Ind., is 94 years old but fell and broke a hip two weeks ago. The other sister, Mrs. Alfred Breese of York Township is spending the winter in the Bradenton, Fla. area.



**BIRTHDAY SUNDAY** — Henry Uhl of Venedocia will observe his 90th birthday Sunday with a family gathering. He is a retired Venedocia businessman and served as a church and public official. (Staff photo)

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In 1905, Mr. Uhl started a successful business venture, which was known as the Henry Uhl Company General Store but was affectionately called by some as the "Little Sears and Roebuck Store." He operated the store for 40 years, retiring in 1945. At that time he sold the store to the Morgan Brothers. It has changed hands about six times since then and presently is operated by Earl Good of Van Wert as Good's Market.

Mr. Uhl has been a member of the Salem Presbyterian Church for about 30 years, served as church treasurer for 20 years and was an elder of the church.

He served six years on the Venedocia Council and was village clerk for two terms.

His father was a shoemaker, one of three in Venedocia at the turn of the century. He remembers many changes in his lifetime in Venedocia and credits clean living with his longevity. Sold tobacco nearly his entire lifetime but never used it.

## HENRY UHL

1975 Henry Uhl, 94 of Venedocia, died at 7 pm Thursday at Van Wert Hospital.

He was born Feb 15, 1880 in Delphos, to John and Sophia Uhl. They moved to Venedocia when he was eight years old. Delphos Herald

Mr Uhl married Laura Pugh in 1907, and she died in 1960. JAN. 3, '75

Two brothers, Glenn of Dayton and Raymond of Columbus survive, and a daughter Eleanor Morris is deceased.

A brother Albert survives in Van Wert, and two sisters, Mrs J Alfred (Frances) Breese of Venedocia and Mrs E G (Margaret) Smith of Muncie, Ind, also survive.

There are six grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

Mr Uhl was a member of Salem Presbyterian Church of Venedocia.

He was a retired grocer.

Services will be 1 pm Sunday at Harter and Son Memorial Chapel, the Rev Von Geissler officiating. Burial will be in Venedocia Cemetery.

Friends may call at the funeral home from 2-4 and 7-9 pm Saturday.

## Delphos Herald June 7, 1960 DEATH CALLS AGED RESIDENT OF VENEDOCIA

Mrs. Laura Uhl, 81, wife of Henry Uhl of Venedocia, passed away at 3:15 a.m. today (Monday) in the Van Wert County Hospital in Van Wert.

A lifelong resident of the Venedocia community, she was born near the village on November 14, 1878 to Mr. and Mrs. Owen O.

Pugh. On May 2, 1907 she was married to Henry Uhl, who survives.

Other survivors besides her husband include two sons, D. Glenn Uhl, Dayton, O., and Raymond Uhl, Columbus, Ohio; six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren; and one sister, Mrs. Milton W. Jones, Racine, Wis. One daughter, Mrs. Elinor Morris died in March of 1959.

Mrs. Uhl was a member of the Salem Presbyterian Church of Venedocia.

Services will be held at 2 p.m. Wednesday in the Harter and Son Memorial Chapel with the Rev. Ellis Lloyd officiating. Burial will be made in the Venedocia Cemetery.

The remains will be at the funeral home where friends may call after 7 o'clock this evening.



## FOCUS ON THE FAMILY

Advice from Jim Daly  
& Dr. Juli Slattery  
B6

# Religion

BILLY C  
Q&As, 2012  
CALENDAR  
Upcoming  
HOROSCOPE  
What's in

na News [limaohio.com](http://limaohio.com)

Saturday, February, 11, 2012

Lifestyle/Special Sections Editor Adrienne

Pockets of the past:

# WELSH CHURCHES

Gomer United Church of Christ and Salem Presbyterian Church in Venedocia, Ohio.

Many of the churches in the area were built primarily by Welsh settlers, these two churches were settled by Welsh settlers. Their churches reflect heritage.

"no architect," said Davidington, a member of the Welsh Historical Museum, "we've been to Wales. Our churches are a lot like theirs do. I don't know what they call it — what the term is — but they look like castles."

These churches feature the same architecture, with square proportions and a square tower with a bell cast roof, which means the cross section of the roof is shaped like a bell.

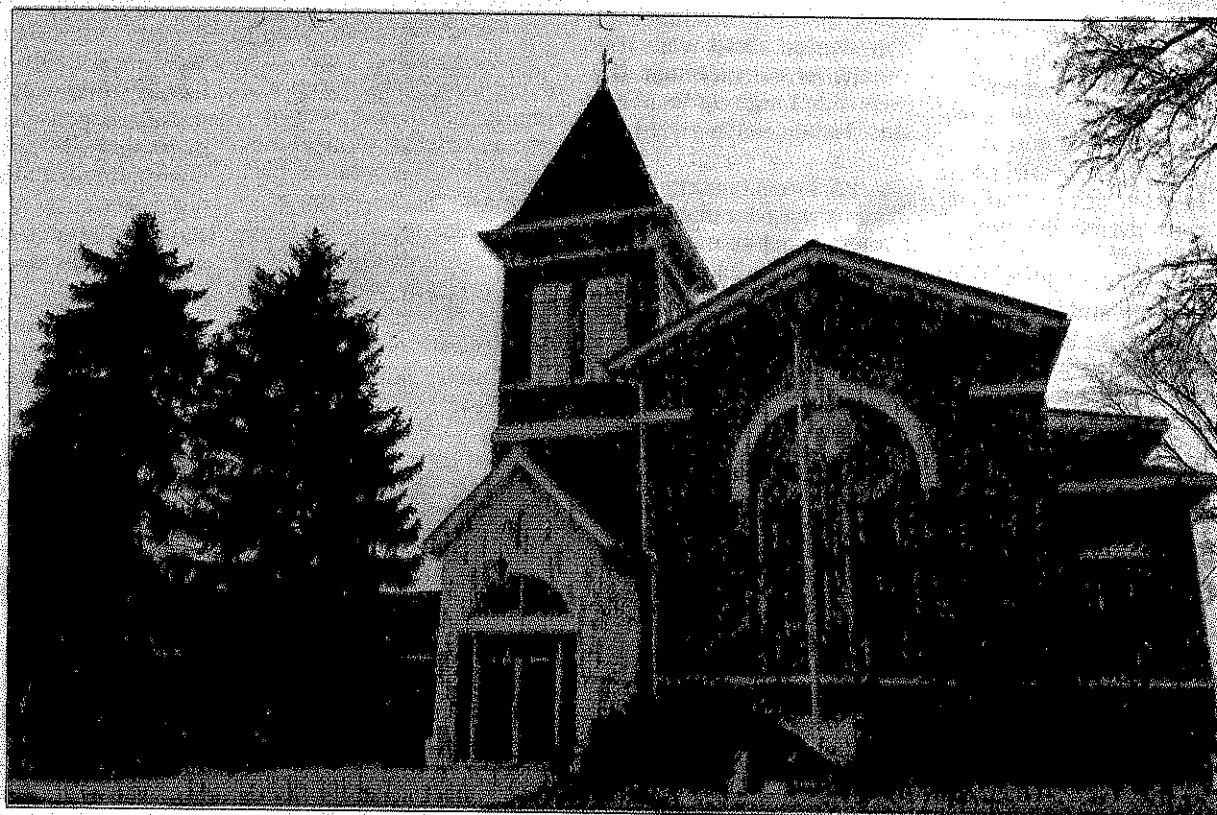
OF III



sanne  
woman

Lima News  
Respondent

Bright State University and she is doing doctoral work in geology at the University of Cincinnati. She found the churches unique to West Ohio during her extensive research into the area's culture and history. She said that both churches bear a striking resemblance to



JAY SOWERS photos • The Lima News

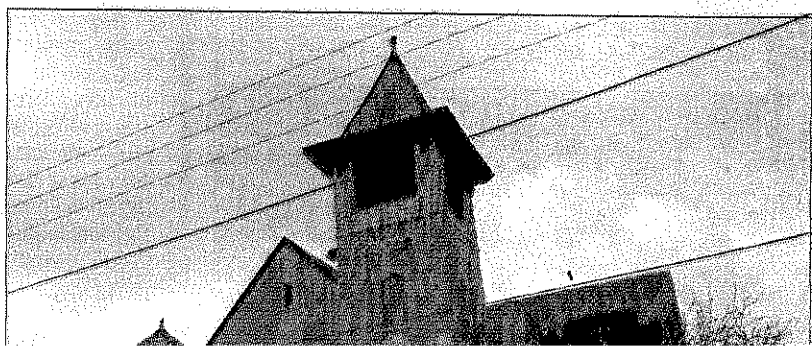
Gomer United Church of Christ, first known as the Welsh Church, sits along the east side of Gomer Road in Gomer.

familiar with the towns of Gomer and Venedocia. Both are proud of their heritage and take pains to preserve it. The histories of both churches are very similar, as well.

Three families made their way to the Venedocia area. It wasn't long until they started a church.

The first meeting of the Welsh Church was held in April 1848 and consisted of 12 members.

The first church building





**Rosanne Bowman**

The Lima News correspondent

bell cast roof which means the cross section of the roof is shaped like a bell.

Mary Ann Olding, who has worked for the Ohio Historic Preservation Office, holds master's degrees in English and history

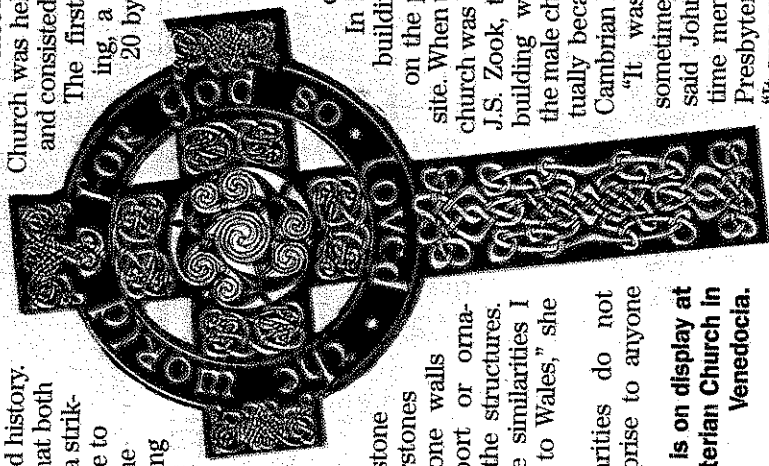
from Wright State University and has done doctoral work in geography at the University of Cincinnati, found the churches unique to Northwest Ohio during her extensive research into the area's architecture and history.

Olding said that both churches bear a striking resemblance to the churches she saw when visiting Wales.

"The two distinctive features of the Welsh churches are the bell cast roofs and the stone quoins (cornerstones of brick or stone walls used for support or ornamentation) on the structures. Those were the similarities I saw from Ohio to Wales," she said.

Those similarities do not come as a surprise to anyone

**A welsh cross is on display at Salem Presbyterian Church in Venedocia.**



**Gomer United Church of Christ, first known as the Welsh Church, sits along the east side of Gomer Road in Gomer.**

JAY SOWERS photos • The Lima News

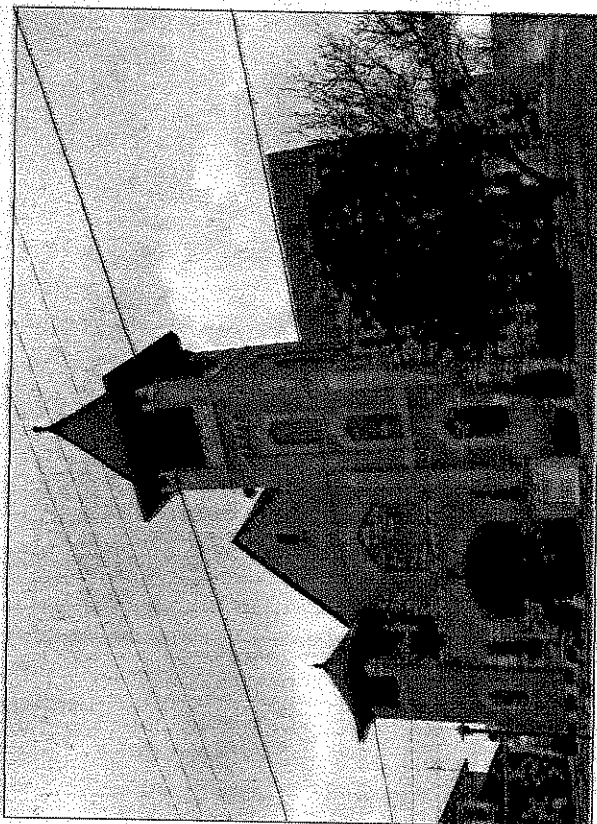
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The first meeting of the Welsh Church was held in April 1848 and consisted of 12 members.

The first church building, a frame building 20 by 30 feet in size, was built in 1853 across the street from the location of the present-day church.

In 1866, a brick building was built on the present church site. When the present day church was built in 1898 by J.S. Zook, the old church building was bought by the male chorus and eventually became known as Cambrian Hall.

"It was torn down sometime in the '60s," said John Lloyd, longtime member of Salem Presbyterian Church. "It was used as a com-



**It wasn't until well into the first half of the 20th century that services at Salem Presbyterian Church in Venedocia were spoken in English, instead of the Welsh language.**

munity center for a number of years. I remember as a little shaver seeing minstrel shows and town meetings there."

Over the years, little has changed to the outside structure of the church, which cost about \$11,000 to build originally.

"In about 1950, they put in a basement," Lloyd said. "Other than that,

See **WELSH CHURCHES** • B7



A view from the back row of Gomer United Church of Christ in Gomer.

JAY SOWERS • The Lima News

## WELSH CHURCHES • from B5

families joined them, the need for a church became apparent. In 1835, the 18 families living in Gomer decided to start meeting regularly on Sunday morning at the home of Thomas and Jane Watkins, and Rowland Jones hosted afternoon Sunday school classes.

It wasn't until 1841 that they built a small log church that was 20 by 30 feet in size on land given by James Nicholas.

David Nicholas, the son of James Nicholas, described the building in a written history: "It was a hewn log building made warm by chinking and daubing the cracks. Seats were of logs split in half with pegs for legs, all very substantial, but not very ornamental or comfortable."

After going through an intermediate brick church

building, the cornerstone of the current church was laid in 1872 by Edward Stephens. It cost about \$15,000 to build at the time. The church went through extensive remodeling in 1902. Electric lights were installed in 1914. In the late 1920s, a basement was excavated and a kitchen and heating were installed. Another major remodeling happened in 1972, when the entire interior of the church was redone from basement to roof. Extensive outside repairs were also done at this time.

Gomer United Church of Christ was known first as the Welsh Church. It went through several name changes before adopting its current name, Gomer United Church of Christ, in 1964, a few years after it merged with several other churches

to found the new denomination United Church of Christ.

In the beginning, both churches in Venedocia and Gomer spoke only Welsh during services. It wasn't until well into the first half of the 20th century that the churches abandoned the Welsh language during services.

Today, both churches are moving into the future while still remembering their Welsh roots.

**If you have a story idea or an item you feel the community would like to know about for the Religion section, please contact Rosanne Bowman at [rbowman3@woh.rr.com](mailto:rbowman3@woh.rr.com) or 419-516-6149.**

**Bowman**

The Lima News  
correspondent

for the Ohio  
Historic Pres-  
ervation Office,  
holds master's  
degrees in Eng-  
lish and history

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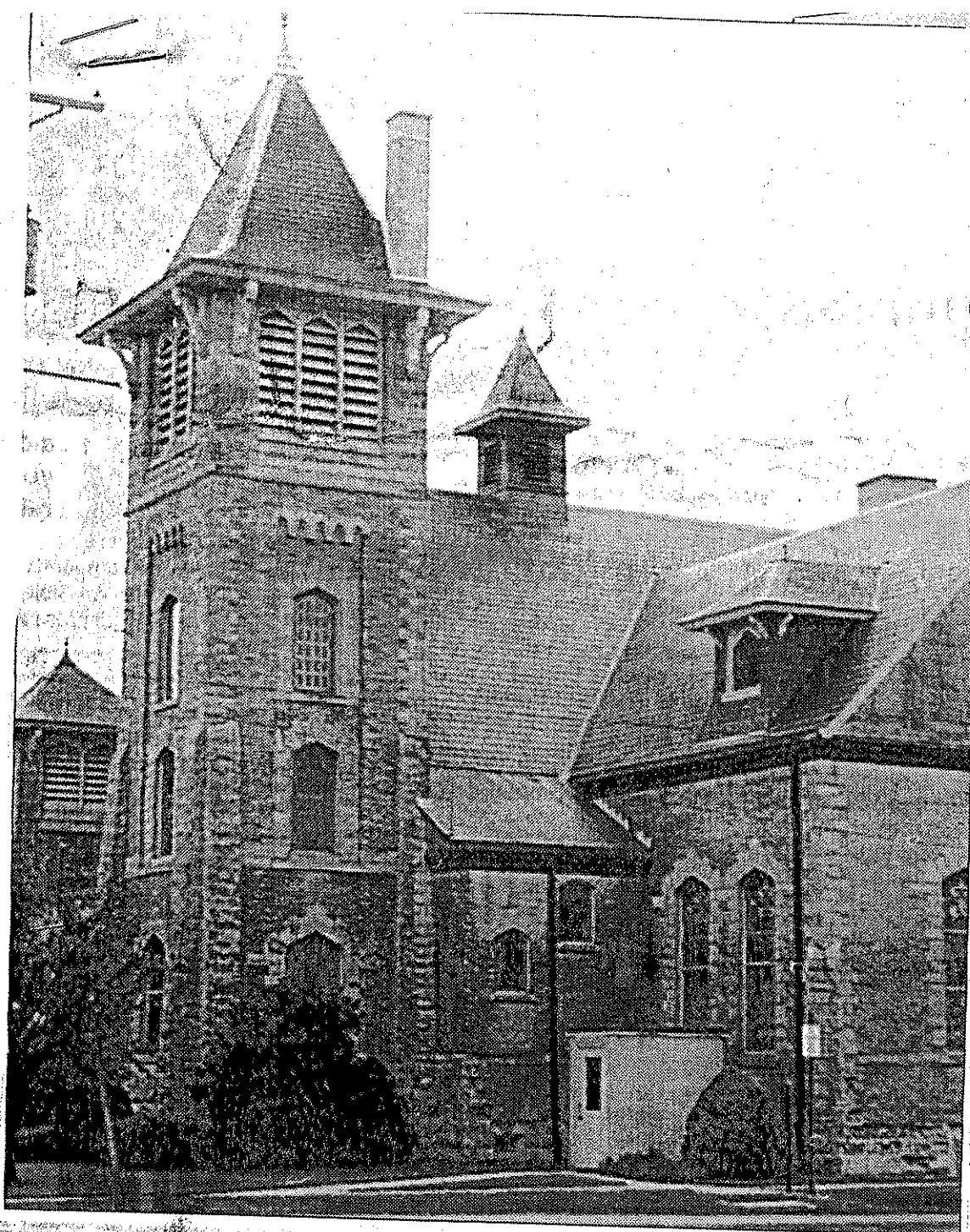
The first meeting of the Welsh Church was held in April 1848 and consisted of 12 members.

The first church building, a frame building



the Welsh





**Salem Presbyterian Church is celebrating the 100th birthday of the church building this year. The congregation itself is 150 years old.**

Martha Bigham/Times-Bulletin

the 100th birthday of its current church building.

Throughout this past year, the church has held special days to commemorate its Welsh heritage. Beginning March 1, which was Saint David's Day, the first Sunday of

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worship, Sunday school and prayer meetings, and according to the genealogy of the Bebb family, the congregation perfected the four-part singing that had been prohibited by the elders in North Wales.

Throughout the years, one of the ways Venedocia residents have tried to preserve their heritage has been through their unique style of four-part-harmony music.

Today, Salem Presbyterian Church continues to sing some of the well-known Welsh songs of their ancestors. They also organize an annual church festival called The Gymanfa Ganu, which literally means, "festival of singing."

"The dream of four-part singing is still strong and healthy today," noted David Evans, a descendant of the Bebb family. "The community and the church still honor the traditions of the people who settled here 150 years ago."

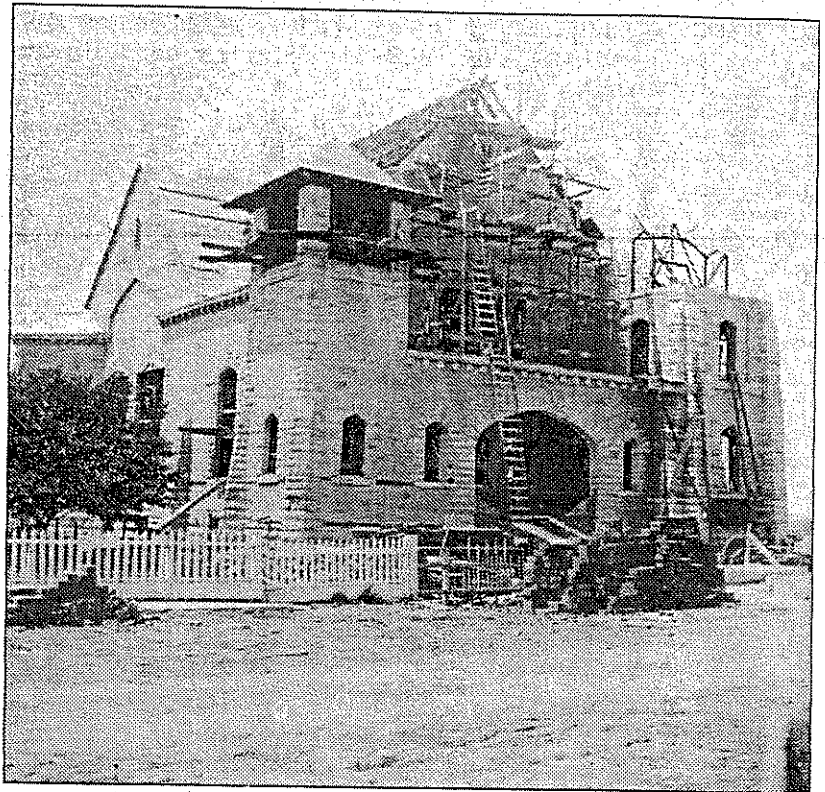
Evans feels the community has always held close ties with the church and its music program, noting that many musicians and vocalists have had their beginnings in the small burg.

Another Venedocia resident, Donald Richards, agreed. He commented that during the early 1900s, there were male choirs from Salem Presbyterian who won national competitions as they toured the country. Then, in the 1960s, when bell choirs became popular, Venedocia had its own bell choirs that entertained and ministered to many music lovers.

"The importance of music in the life of the congregation and community is also reflected in today's music program at the church," Rev. Pratt noted.

Not only is the community celebrating the 150th birthday of the original Salem Church established in Venedocia, it is also celebrating the 100th birthday of its current church building.

Throughout this past year, the church has held special days to commemorate its Welsh heritage. Beginning March 1, which was Saint David's Day, the first Sunday of



The construction of Salem Presbyterian Church began Nov. 8, 1897, and the completed building was opened and dedicated Oct. 15-16, 1898.

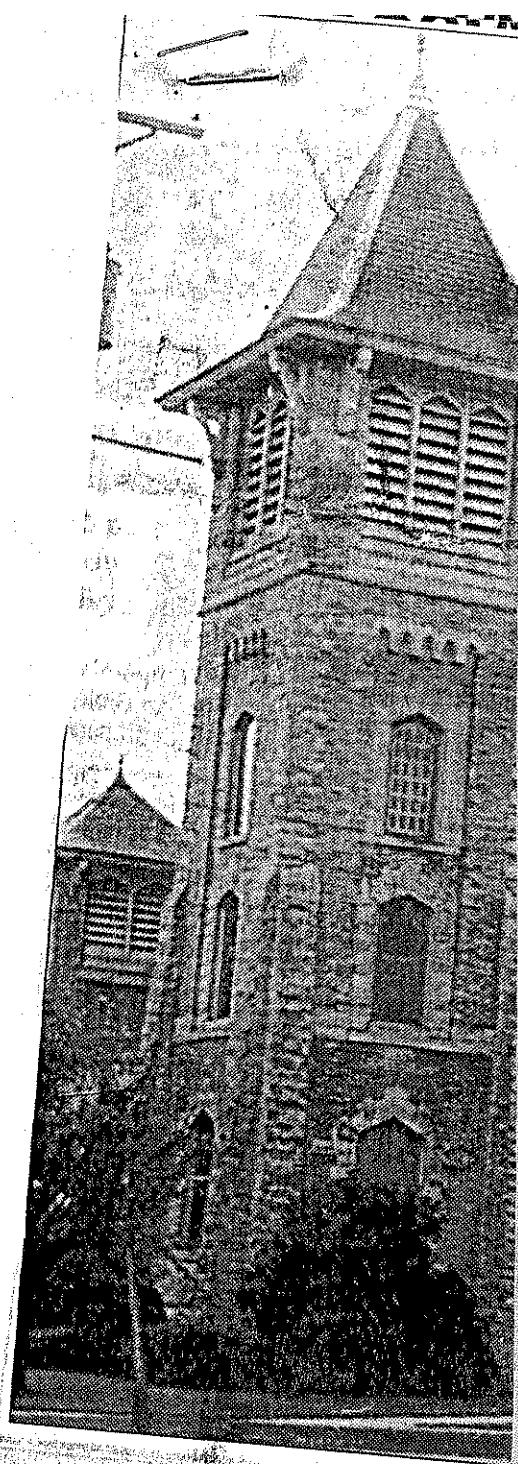
every month has featured special events focusing on different aspects of life in Venedocia and in the church. April featured missions, May — family, June — children, July — service to country, August — agriculture and September — music.

Last Sunday was the annual Gymanfa Ganu. The birthday celebration will conclude this weekend with a chicken barbecue from 4-6 p.m. Saturday at the Venedocia Lion's Club, followed by a concert at 7 p.m. at the church featuring vocalists from Wales — Dafydd

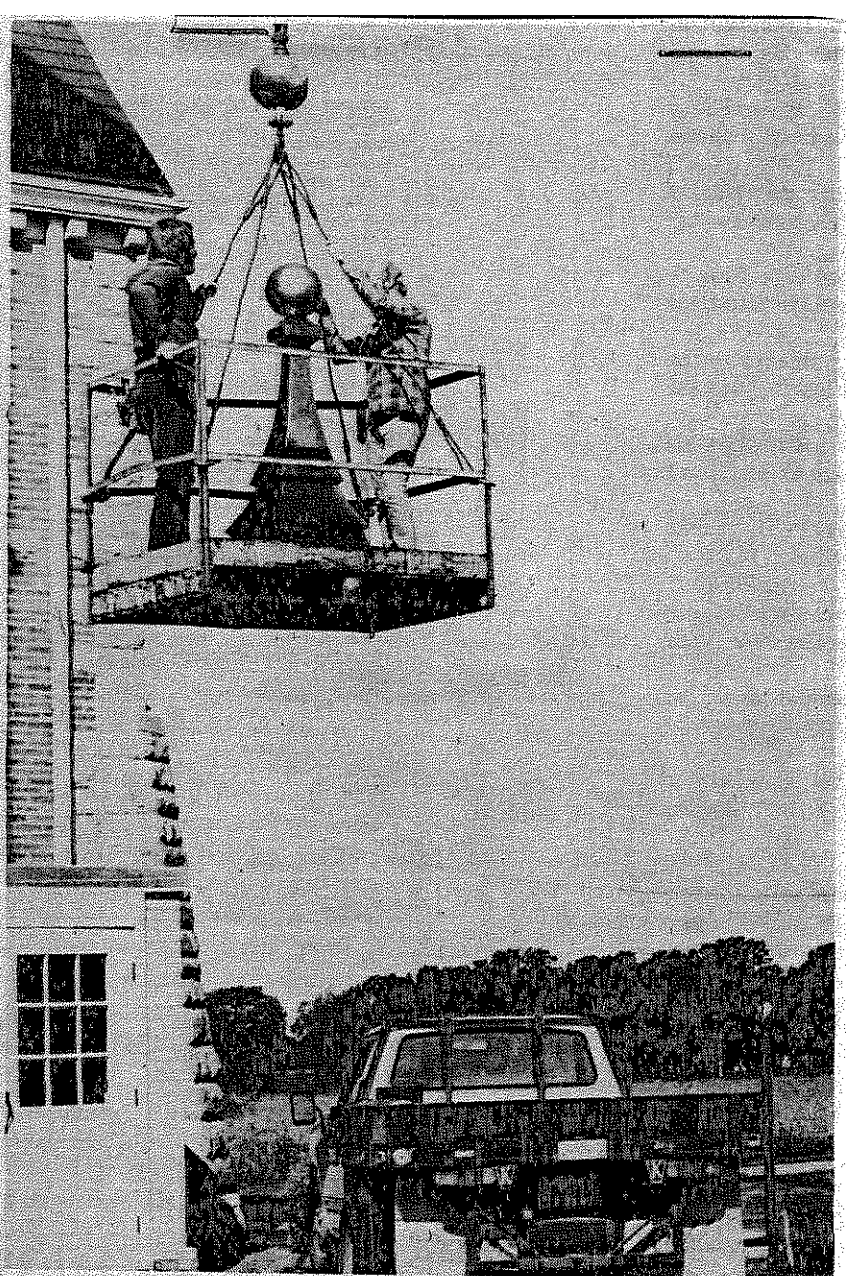
Edwards and his daughters.

On Sunday, Bartie Jones will return during morning worship to direct a reunion of the early bell choirs. The community and the church hope that the public will join them for their celebration.

The Rev. E. Joe Richards, former Venedocia resident, summed up the feelings of many Venedocia citizens when he said, "To have a Welsh ancestry is to have music in your soul, poetry in your blood, Welsh roots in your heart and God in your life."



Salem Presbyterian Church is celebrating its 100th birthday this year. The congregation itself is 150 years old.



**NEW STEEPLE INSTALLED** — Workers installed a new steeple atop the Salem United Presbyterian church in Venedocia Saturday morning, to replace the old one blown off by recent high winds. The new steeple, about 6 feet in height and 30 inches wide, consists of a 12-inch lead ball on top of a copper base. It was placed on top of the 95-foot structure by a crane from the C&C Mill Wright Co. of St. Marys at an approximate cost of \$1,500. (Times-Bulletin photo by Tim Fitzsimmons)

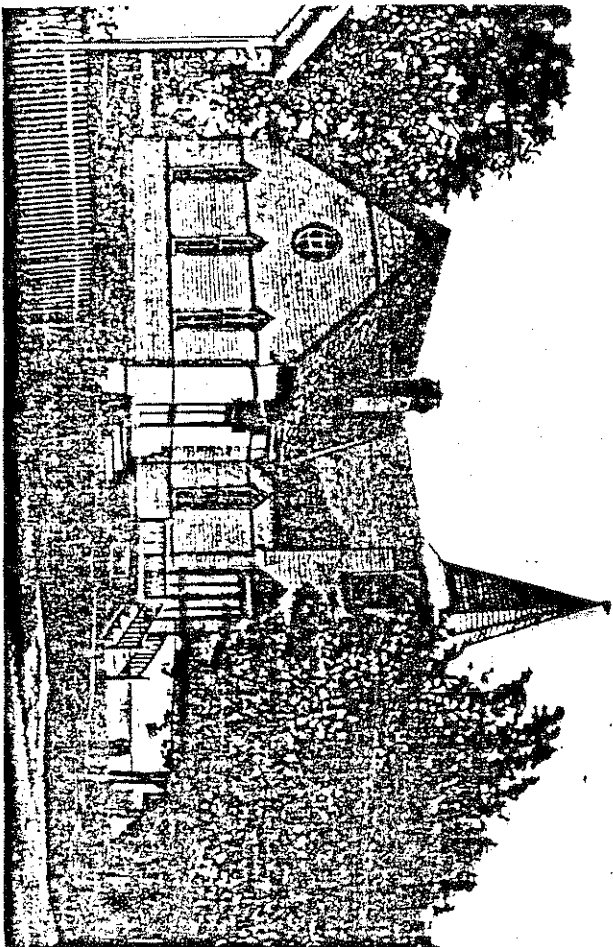
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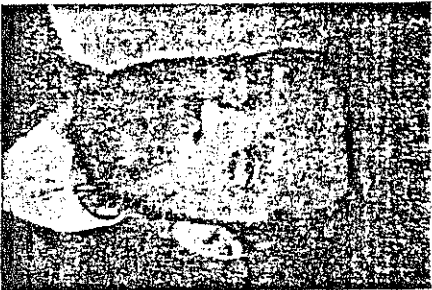
1884  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,  
VENEDOCIA, OHIO



# The Venedocia Presbyterian Church



J. J. Edwards



Daniel Evans Jones

*Venedocia  
Presbyterian  
Church*



William Surdival

Prior to 1885 there had been no religious services held in the English language in Venedocia. At this time, however, a number of English-speaking families had located in the village. There was Mr. Henry Dornan, employed by Williams Brothers, who operated a general store; Mr. Marcus Allison, a section foreman on the railroad; Mr. Henry Mash, a carpenter; Mr. David Knox, a carpenter; Mr. James Davis, the village blacksmith; and Mr. James Reed, a manufacturer of axe handles. These men, with their English-speaking families, and some others, felt the need of some kind of religious services.

A Sunday School was organized, and it met in a small brick school house which stood near the present parking lot across from the Salem Church. Mr. Henry Mash was chosen superintendent. This Sunday School met regularly for some months until several members, with their families, moved from the village. The Sunday School was then abandoned.

No other English religious services were held in Venedocia until 1895. In the early months of that year, through the efforts of Mr. J. J. Edwards, another English Sunday School was organized, with Mr. Edwards as superintendent. This school held its meetings in the old Cambrian Hall, which was located on the second floor of the Williams Brothers' store. This Sunday School was well-attended, and the enrollment was relatively large.

Mr. J. J. Edwards was not an ordained minister at that time, but at the insistence of some of the older members of the Sunday School he consented to give Bible talks at the close of the Sunday School session. This procedure made many of the members of the Sunday School feel the need of an organized church.

In the closing months of 1895 the Venedocia Presbyterian Church was organized, with the Rev. D. Evans Jones as pastor. Three elders were elected; they were: Messrs. J. C. Morris, E. S. Foster, and T. S. Morgan. The newly-organized church had thirteen members: Mr. and Mrs. E. S. Foster, and their children, Lizzie, Daisy, Charles, and Homer; Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Morris; Mr. and Mrs. T. S. Morgan; Mr. and Mrs. J. J. Edwards; and Mr. John Rees (Cleveland). John Rees was the first treasurer, and T. S. Morgan was the first clerk of session.

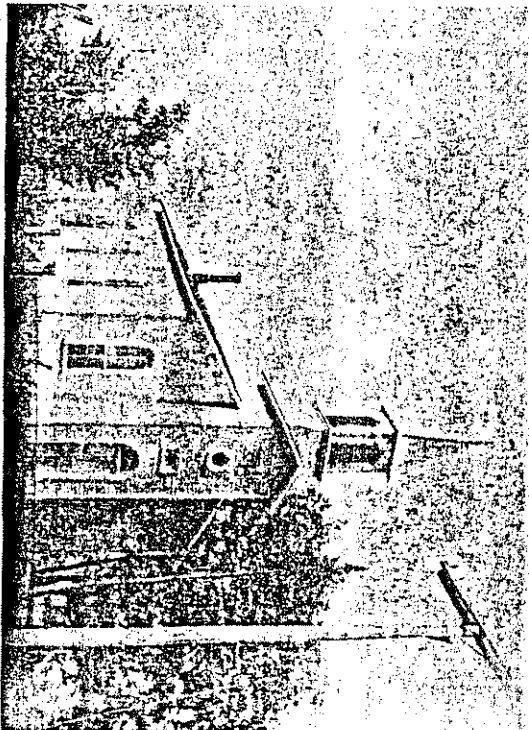
The church did not have its own chorister, and so John Foster came and led the singing. The organists were: Mrs. Kate Uhl Davies, Mrs. Pearl Foster Olafson, Mrs. Bertha Evans Uhl, Mrs. Hattie Blosser Wise, and Miss Elizabeth Uhl.

When the church was first organized, services were held on the second floor of the school house, which stood near the present Venedocia Recreation Field. The first church building was erected in 1896, and in 1911 the church was redecorated.

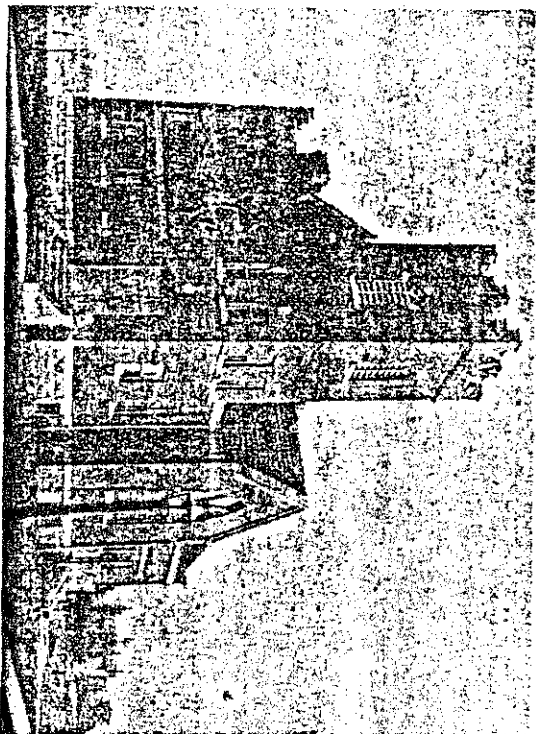
In the year 1911 Messrs. Henry Uhl, C. H. Foster, and D. C. Morris were elected elders. In 1913 the Rev. Daniel Evans Jones resigned as pastor, and moved to Cambria, Wisconsin.

In March, 1914, the Rev. William Surdival became the pastor of the church. On February 11, 1916, fire broke out, and the church was burned to the ground. The church was never rebuilt. For a while services were held in the hall above the store, and in the Salem Church on Sunday afternoons. In 1918 the members of the Venedocia Presbyterian Church united with the Salem Church.

# The Horeb Church



THE FIRST CHURCH



Isaac Edwards

Jewett Davies

D. M. Jones

Trevor Williams

A Sunday School and a Prayer Meeting were organized in the Horeb Community on June 24, 1864. The first Sunday School was held in the Daniel Jones home, which was located where the Horeb Cemetery is now located. In May, 1865, it was decided that the present house was too small. Daniel Jones donated one acre of ground on which was erected a log church, 20 by 28 feet.

The Rev. J. P. Morgan, pastor of the Salem Church, would come occasionally to preach and conduct services on Sunday evenings.

In 1873 a new frame church was erected. This church measured 30 by 40 feet, and it cost \$1,800.00.

The membership was in the Salem Church until June 15, 1881, when the Horeb Church was declared by presbytery to be an independent organization, with M. H. Morgan as elder. The church membership at this time was fifty-three.

The first pastor was the Rev. Isaac Edwards, who served from June 11, 1882, to April 13, 1887. He was followed by the Rev. D. Jewett Davies, who served from December 23, 1887, to December 20, 1891.

May 1, 1893, the Rev. Isaac Edwards returned to Horeb Church as pastor, and served until his death on June 3, 1898.

The Rev. David M. Jones was then called, and served from November 24, 1898, to January, 1907. During his pastorate a new brick church was erected; this church was dedicated in June, 1905.

The Rev. Daniel Evans Jones had charge of the church for one year, beginning April 15, 1907. He preached on Sunday afternoons.

Then the Rev. W. Trevor Williams was called. He began his pastorate June 20, 1909, and served until September, 1918.

In 1920 the Horeb Church united with the Salem Church.

Three missionaries went out from the Horeb Church. Mr. and Mrs. Rees F. Edwards went to China; and Miss Alice Jones went to India. From the membership of the church there came also three ministers: The Rev. D. Luther Edwards, the Rev. Joseph Richards, and the Rev. John Lloyd.

## CHURCHES.

### Zion Welsh Union Church.

This church is also a branch from the Salem Church, which was organized in August, 1863, when they were declared an independent church. Their church building is 27 by 32 feet, and located in York Township on section 28, five miles southwest of Venedocia. Their membership is about 60.

Rev. Hugh Pugh was their first minister, and Rev. J. P. Morgan their present pastor, who has served them for a number of years. Their Sunday-school is well attended, and a great auxiliary to the church.

### Mount Zion United Brethren Church.

This church was organized in 1859, with eighteen members, by Rev. Daniel Hindricks. They held their meetings in a school-house in the southeastern part of York Township for a number of years.

In 1867 or 1868 the society erected a log building 24 by 30 in the southeastern part of York Township, known as the *Cottonwood Church*, in which they have since worshipped. Their pastors have been changed every one or two years. The present pastor is the Rev. James Nicodemus. Some of the early members were Benjamin Van Eman, Miss Van Eman, Benjamin Goodwin, Charlotte Goodwin, and others whose names cannot be learned. Present membership about 22. The church has lost many of its members by removal and by death.

## JONESTOWN.

This village is a station on the Toledo, Delphos and Burlington Railroad, located four miles west of Venedocia, in York Township. The post-office is known as Tokio. It contains one grocery store, one saw-mill, and about half a dozen of dwelling houses.

## GAN EU PLANT

(Right) David Breese, 85, R. 1, Venedocia, stands before the window he and his sister, Jennie Rees, who was born in Wales, bought for the Zion church long, long ago. Like those in many of the windows in the two churches, the message is in Welsh: Mr. and Mrs. John D. Breese, Gan Eu Plant — by their children.

The church was at one time affiliated with the Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Church but merged with the Presbyterian Church in 1920.

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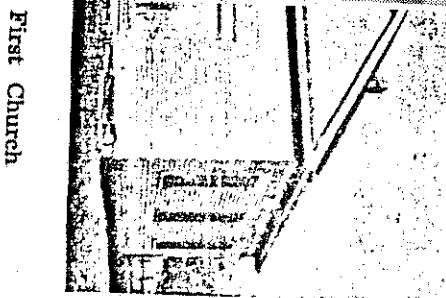
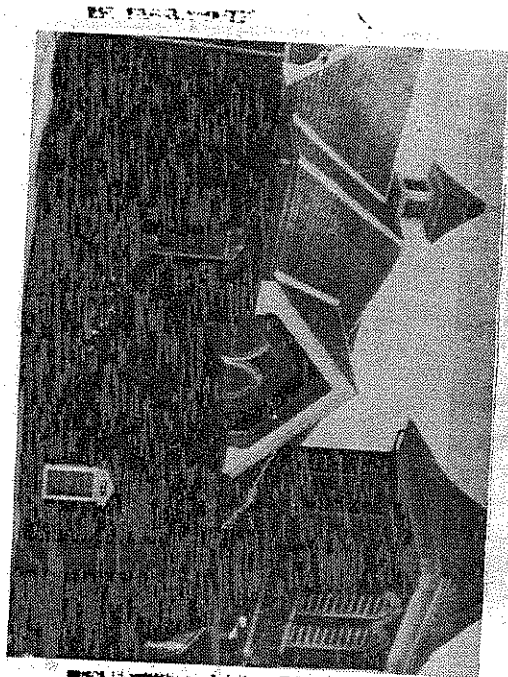
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Mrs John D. Breese

Born 1888  
85 years old 1973

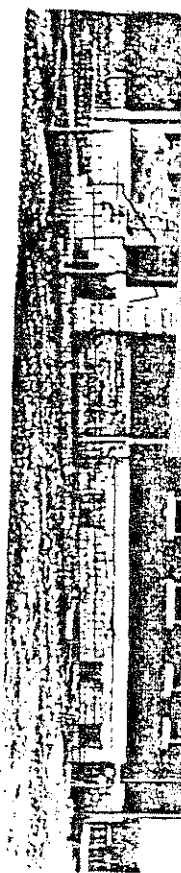
# The Zion Church



First Church

## TY DOW

... say the stained glass letters above the doorway of the Zion United Presbyterian Church, which sits by itself among the fields of southern Van Wert County. A delightful miniature of the Salem Church, Zion was built in 1902. Members of the congregation are so few they fear they may have to give up their own services and completely join the Salem Church. Ty DDown means: The House of the Lord.



ZION CHURCH TODAY

The arrival in this section of Van Wert County, in the spring of 1850, of four Welsh families from Cincinnati, Ohio, marked the beginning of the Zion community. This group, consisting of Abraham Jones, Hugh F. Jones, Thomas Hughes, and Griffith Goodwin, with their families, was supplemented during the next few years by the coming of several other families from Cincinnati, Jackson, and Newark, Ohio, as well as from Wales, Great Britain.

Records indicate that as early as 1854 religious services were regularly held at Abraham Jones' log house. Sunday School at first, and later, preaching services as well were held there. Upon the completion of the first church building in 1863, a "Union" Church was organized, consisting of both Congregational and Calvinistic Methodist elements, and named The Zion Church. In time, however, the Church became definitely affiliated with the Welsh Calvinistic Methodist denomination, and remained so until this body merged, in the year 1920, with the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A.

From its beginning, Zion Church has been a joint pastorate with the Salem Church of Venedocia. Following are the ministers that have served as pastors: the Reverends Hugh Pugh, John P. Morgan, Hugh Davies, R. Vaughn Griffith, Thomas Roberts, Edward Roberts, R. J. Williams, William Jones, W. T. Jones, and the present pastor, Gerald R. Johnson.

The present church edifice was built in 1902, during the pastorate of the Rev. Edward Roberts, and was dedicated October 11-12 of that year. It remains a monument to the consecration of the God-fearing and church-loving families of Zion of forty years ago, as well as to the faithfulness and devotion of its members since that day.

Throughout the years, Zion has been blessed with an unusually fine leadership. Its eldership has included the names of Abraham Jones, John Breese, Thomas Hughes, John George, D. J. Jones, John D. Breese, David E. Davies, G. H. Jones, Richard Edwin Jones, and Walter D. Lewis. E. Minor Davies, D. J. Breese, D. Elders, trustees, choristers, and organists have given generously of time and talent. Hosts of others, equally devoted, have rendered faithful service. The recording angel alone knows the measure of all this steadfast allegiance and devotion to Christ and His church at Zion.

(The above article was written by the Rev. W. T. Jones at the time of the Fortieth Anniversary of the Zion Church.)

1942

# Farming, teaching in Venedocia man's blood

By JIM LANGHAM

jlangham@vanwertvoice.com  
Lima News correspondent

**VENEDOCIA** — Times are changing for Venedocia retired schoolteacher Hugh Pugh.

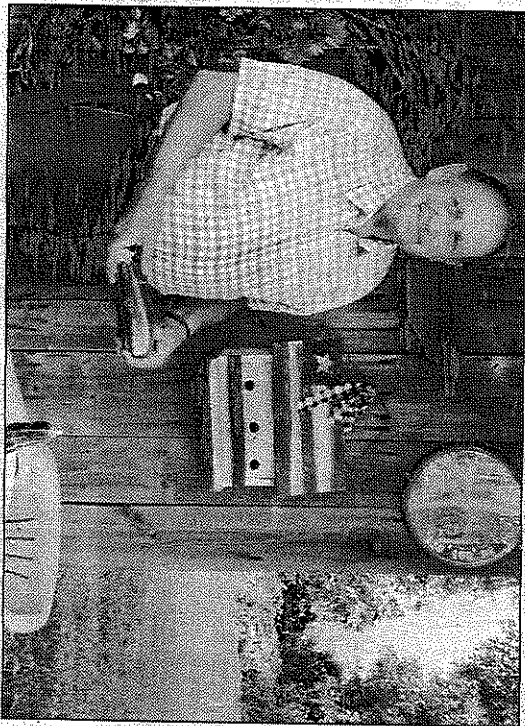
The church he and his wife, Evelyn, were married in is gone, as are the schools from which they graduated. In addition, the school he began teaching in is gone as is the building from which he retired.

But in spite of the changing world, one thing hasn't changed. The heart for his Welsh heritage is as pliable as the ground purchased by his ancestors that surrounds his rural Venedocia farm.

After all, his great-great-grandfather, Hugh Pugh, was the first minister at the new church when he came to the Venedocia area. His great-grandfather, Owen Pugh, homesteaded the family farm, which Hugh Pugh now shares with his son, Bobby Pugh. His grandfather, Hugh E. Pugh, and father, John Owen Pugh, also followed in the farming tradition.

"My grandfather farmed with horses when I was a kid," Hugh Pugh said. "We walked in these fields all around here. I followed behind him. Later my dad drove the tractor and Grandpa rode the cultivator."

"My boy has the chest where my great-grandfather (Owen Pugh) stored all of his belongings when he came into the area from Wales," Pugh said.



JIM LANGHAM • The Lima News

**Hugh Pugh's roots run deep in Venedocia. His great-grandfather farmed the land he now shares with his son. His father and grandfather also followed the farming tradition.**

"His name was on the barn when it was built in 1887. It was there until the Palm Sunday tornado took part of the top off the barn."

Of course, the one-room school located across the road from his farm was known as the Pugh School.

These days, hundreds of people in Van Wert County refer to Pugh as, "Mr. Pugh." Following high school, Pugh decided to follow his mother's footsteps as a schoolteacher. He taught first at Bath High School, then Van Wert, and finally in the Convey-Union school district at Wren, where he was elementary principal for 16 years. "Every time I hear someone

cows at the Van Wert County Fair for the past 61 consecutive years.

"My grandfather showed chickens at the Van Wert Fair," Pugh said. "He always told me to get things ready so we could leave here with the horse and wagons early in the morning," Pugh said. "He got to the fairgrounds about noon, unloaded the chickens, would be back home to milk by 6 p.m."

"When we were growing up we had Duroc hogs. We showed at both the state and county fair," Pugh said. "Dad was a horticulture grain judge. He judged at the state fair for 12 years. He made enough money at the state fair to buy his first hopper wagon. He got his first jersey cow in 1946."

These days, Pugh and his wife, Evelyn Pugh, janitor at Salem Presbyterian Church, invest most of their time in the lives of their children and grandchildren, who are carrying on much of the family tradition.

Their daughter, Kathy McCallow, is a surgical nurse in Lima, son, Owen Lloyd Pugh, is in his 30th year of school

**"Times are changing. Venedocia doesn't have the stores that it used to. But one thing hasn't changed and that's the fact that we're a close-knit family."**

— Hugh Pugh

teaching son, Eric, is in the military, son, Bobby, oversees the family farm and daughter, Karen, is a Mary Kay consultant and a bank teller at Van Wert Savings and Loan.

"Our family came to this country looking for opportunity and they found it. Education is very important to us. It's the one thing they can't take away from you," Pugh said.

"Times are changing. Venedocia doesn't have the stores that it used to. But one thing hasn't changed and that's the fact that we're a close-knit family," Pugh said. "We help each other out. We never have to worry about having an automobile. When we have need, we pass the word around. We always help each other."

Pugh said there are still times when he looks at the land and can seemingly visualize his grandfather walking ahead of him with a horse and plow.

"This land was a gift from our family heritage. We just keep passing it down," Pugh said. "It's the one thing that doesn't change in this world. You can comment on this story at [www.limaohio.com](http://www.limaohio.com)."