

IMAGES

...THEN AND NOW

From the Indian Hill Historical Society



**Buckingham Lodge
1861**

The History of the Broadwell House



The Broadwell House at 6955 Given Road was once the homestead of the John Broadwell family, early pioneer settlers of the Ohio River Valley. John, born in 1779, and his wife Phebe (nee Lindsley) had two sons (Mahlon and Henry) and possibly a daughter. The land where the house now stands was originally purchased by John Cleves Symmes under the terms of the Miami Purchase of 1788. After the 1795 Treaty of Greeneville and Ohio's statehood in 1803, emigration from the Atlantic seaboard states to Ohio increased dramatically.

The Broadwell family came from Morristown, NJ, a strategic crossroads during the Revolutionary War. John Broadwell and his cousins, Jacob and Moses (brothers) moved to Ohio at the turn of the 19th century. Lured west by the prospect of inexpensive land, they left their native state. In 1804 John purchased 160 acres from John Cleves Symmes. His cousins acquired land on the opposite side of the Little Miami River about seven miles away.

Though log cabins were common in the Ohio Country, John Broadwell used local limestone for his home. A two story building, it was originally four or five rooms. The house has a symmetrical façade, with two front doors facing east, each with a light transom. The doors are side by side, and have front windows beside them. The limestone walls are two feet thick and the foundation is made of stone. The front doors open into two main rooms, each containing a fireplace with a carved wooden mantle. Large interior end chimneys are built within the gable walls on the north and south sides of the house. A stairway in the southeast room leads upstairs to three rooms, two of which have fireplaces and mantels, smaller than those downstairs. All windows are 9/6 double hung sash. The gable roof has two equally pitched slopes. The rafters are notched and pegged at the peak. Doorways and windows are recessed, and the decorative lintels above them are formed by smaller inwardly splayed cut stones.

The home was inhabited by the John and Phebe Broadwell family until 1832, when the property was deeded to John's brother Lindsley Broadwell. Six months later, it was sold to Benjamin Carman, a brother-in-law of John and Lindsley. John, Phebe and the family moved nearer to other cousins. John and Phebe's tombstones are located in the Rose Cemetery on Mt. Carmel Road, less than ten miles from their first Ohio home.

No written record of John and Phebe has been found, but Broadwell relatives and heirs had prominent roles in local history. According to The History of Hamilton County (1881): (1) Jacob Broadwell was director of a company at Round Bottom; (2) Brothers Cyrus and Jacob Broadwell owned a boat store in Cincinnati where they had a flourishing business until 1840; (3) Lindley Broadwell and Ira Broadwell served terms as Columbia Township Trustees between 1803 -1881; and (4) Jacob Broadwell was on the executive committee of Hamilton County's first agricultural society.



John & Phebe Broadwell

The Broadwell House is simple, sturdy and durable. Its architecture is similar to two other circa 1800 buildings in the immediate area: Elliott House (9352 Given Rd.) and Waldschmidt House (7567 Glendale Milford Rd., Camp Dennison). Both of these are listed on the National Historic Register.

The Broadwell House was a private home throughout the 18th, 19th, and part of the 20th centuries. In 1941 the Trustees of the Cincinnati Country Day School purchased the house from the Carman family. It is currently located in the center of the school's campus. Additions to the house are on the southern and eastern sides. These include a kitchen/breakfast/laundry wing, an additional stairway to more bedrooms upstairs, and a large gathering room. These alterations modernized the structure. All changes are frame construction and easily distinguishable from the original abode. It is currently the residence of the Head of School.

The original Broadwell House is a relic of certain pioneer settlers in southwestern Ohio. That it still stands is a tribute to their labors of over 200 years ago, as well as to those who preserved it until now.