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Owner: City of Green

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Owner: City of Green

Exterior Photographs

Cemetery Overview





Owner: City of Green

Evangelical Marker – placed by the Evangelical Association in 1929 at the Centennial Celebration



Owner: City of Green

Site of the First Evangelical Church in Ohio (West of Pennsylvania)



Owner: City of Green

Description of the Property

The proposed local landmark includes three sections of a cemetery that are today listed as a single parcel by the Summit County Recorders Office. One section of the cemetery is still in use for burials. The parcel also includes the site of the first Evangelical Church in Ohio/first Evangelical Church West of Pennsylvania.

The Evangelical Association began in 1800 in Eastern Pennsylvania with the preaching of Jacob Albright. Jacob Albright was of German decent. Albright modeled his new faith from his experiences with the Methodists in Pennsylvania, but with the important difference that his sermons were given in German, which was generally unacceptable to the Methodists who used English exclusively. As the Evangelical Church was expanding throughout Pennsylvania, many Pennsylvanians where migrating west in search of land. Circuit Riders from Pennsylvania began entering Ohio to reach new settlers and Pennsylvania natives already familiar with the Evangelical Church. After the construction of the first church in Ohio in Greensburg in 1838, more Pennsylvania Germans migrated into Greensburg. The Evangelical Church followers in Greensburg were so numerous and prosperous that they were able to establish the Greensburg Seminary in 1855.

During the late 1800's the Evangelical Association became a large, successful, national denomination and Greensburg remained a loyal yet less populous Evangelical settlement. The Evangelical Association merged with the United Brethren in 1946 to form the Evangelical United Bretheran Church. The E.U.B. Church would eventual merge with the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1968 to form the United Methodist Church. The congregation of the Greensburg United Methodist Church today traces its roots to the first Evangelical Church in Ohio built on the land of the proposed designation.

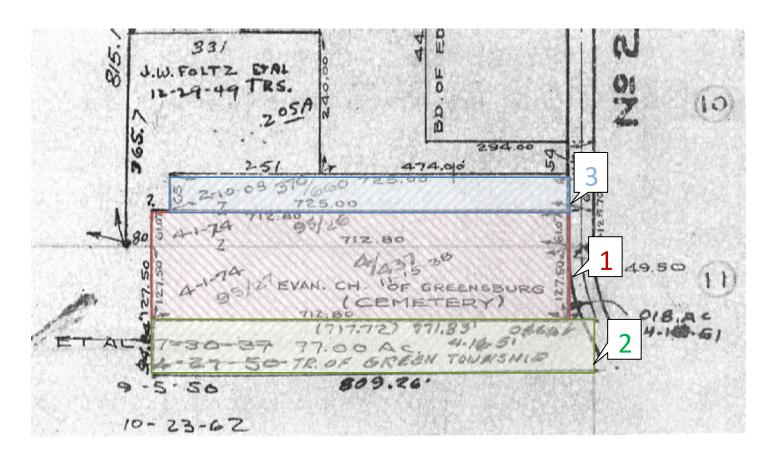
The first Evangelical Church in Ohio/first Evangelical Church West of Pennsylvania was constructed in late 1838 near the current cemetery entrance off of Thursby Road. In 1851 a new 45x60 church building was constructed in Greensburg. The old church building was moved from the lot in front of the cemetery to Greensburg in 1855 and was then used as a rooming house for students of the Greensburg Cemetery. The old church stood on the north side of the street a little east of the square and was used as a private residence until 1945 when it was replaced by a modern dwelling. In 1929 a stone marker was placed at the site of the first church on the front portion of the cemetery lot. The stone marker on the cemetery lot and the slight change in the appearance of the grass where the old church foundation was filled are the only remaining indication of the first Evangelical Church in Ohio.

Time Period of Significance

The time period of significance is at least 1838 through 1938. The time period begins with the construction of the church and first burials and continues through the time of the last burials of our early settlers and veterans and their descendants.

Owner: City of Green

Exhibit 1: Old Tax Map from Summit County Fiscal Office Indicating the Three Parcels Comprising Greensburg Cemetery



Available at http://scids.summitoh.net/gpaws2internet/.

Parcel #1 (red) – Deeded by Peter Thornton, 1838 (see Exhibit 2)

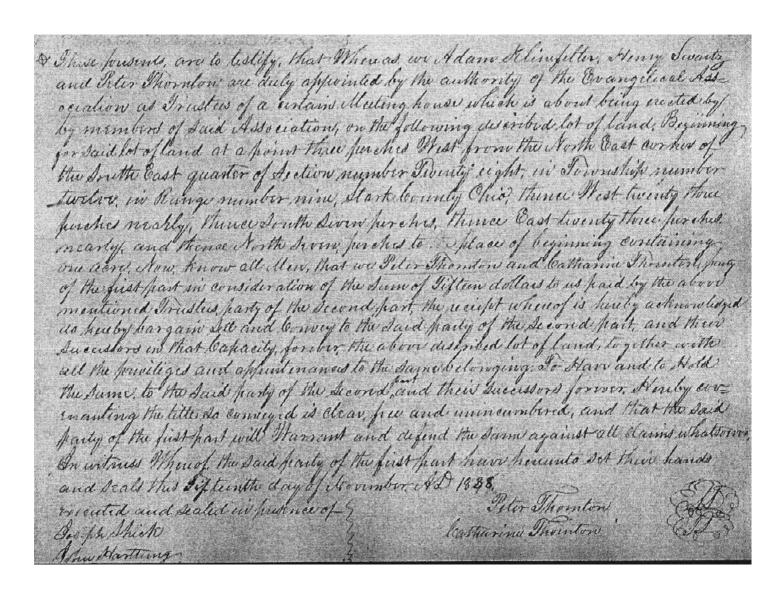
Parcel #2 (green) – Deeded by George Cougler, 1874 (see Exhibit 3)

Parcel #3 (blue) – Deeded by Jacob F. & Emma Boettler, 1908 (see Exhibit 4)

Owner: City of Green

Documentation of Age

Exhibit 2: Summit County Recorder's Office Deed Book 4, Pages 437-438, copy of deed indicating transfer of property from Peter Thornton to Adam Klinefelter, Henry Swartz, and Peter Thornton as Trustees of the Evangelical Association dated November 15, 1838.



Owner: City of Green

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Owner: City of Green

Exhibit 3: Summit County Recorder's Office Deed Book 95, Pages 26-27, copy of deed indicating transfer of property from George Gougler to Trustees of Evangelical Church of Greensburgh (Greensburg) dated April 1, 1874.

Know all men by these presents that we George Gongler and Mary unts of Sumuel Staver. Thomas Showmaker, John Klinger and Swarty grantees and as a board of brusties for the church property of the Evangelical church in and around the own of Greensburgh in Green township Summit ounty Ohis. The eard Grantors in consideration of ne hundred and fifty dollars su hand paid by the said grantees have bargained and sold and by these exents do grant and convey to the said grantees and to their successors in office and their assigns forever a Lot of land bring part of the north east quarter of Section no 28 in Said township of Gran and is bounded thus. Beginning at a post in the South line of said quarter Section, and 75 links north 871/2° West from the south east corner of said or section and uning thence along said south line north 87 1/2° West 8063 chains thence north 3° East 10,000 of a chain thence

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South 87/2° East 10. 80 63, chains thence South 3° west 10000 of a chain to the place of Beginning containing one acre of land with the appurtenances and all the estate title and interest of the said grantors therein. and the said grantors do hereby coverant and agree with the said grantees that at the time of the delivery hereof the said grantors were the lawful owners of the premises above granted and seized thereof in for simple absolute and that they will warrant and defined the above granted primises grantees and their successors and assigns forever In Witness to the foregoing conveyance the said grantors do hereunto set their hands and seals this first day of april a. 10. 1874 Signed Sealed and delivered in presence of us L. J. Swerten George Lougler Mary Lougler deal Home 10. Sweaten , seal The State of Ohis Personally appeared before me Summit County George Gongler and Mary Gongler his wife fruntors in the aforesaid deed and acknowledged the same to be their rolun. - tary act and deed and the said mary Gougler bring by me examined apart from her said hus-Known to her she declared that she voluntarily signed Scaled and acknowledged the same and that she is still satisfied therewith Witness my hand and seal this First-day of april a.D. 1874 Acceived Jany 7th 1875 Mus to Sweeten. Accorded Jany 25th 1875 Justice of the Peace George, the Payne Accorder

Exhibit 4: Summit County Recorder's Office Deed Book 370, Page 660, copy of deed indicating transfer of property from Jacob F. Boettler & Emma Boettler to Trustees of the Evangelical Association of North America dated October 13, 1908.

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Owner: City of Green

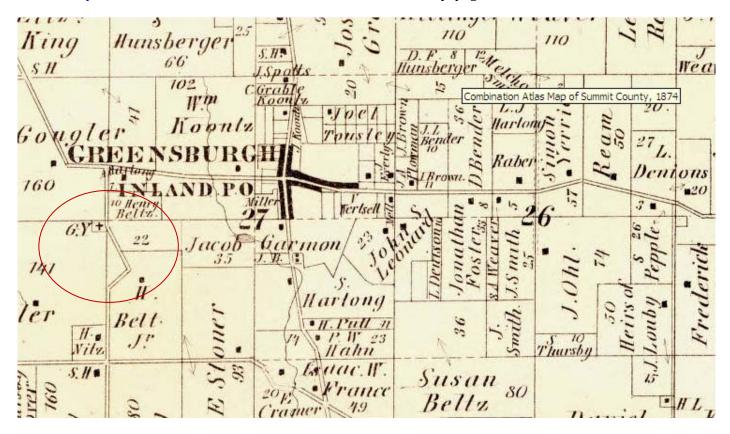
Exhibit 5: Copy of 1856 Map of Summit County, published by Matthews & Taintor, map of Green Township.

From http://www.summitmemory.org/cdm4/document.php?CISOROOT=/new-maproom&CISOPTR=228&CISOSHOW=208, Green Township, page 19



Exhibit 6: 1874 Map and Atlas of Summit County, Map of Green Township, Tackabury, Mead & Moffet, Philadelphia 1874, indicating a "G.Y.," graveyard, at the location of the subject designation.

From http://www.summitmemory.org/cdm4/document.php?CISOROOT=/new-maproom&CISOPTR=625&CISOSHOW=493, Green Township, page 118



Documentation of Historical Significance

Exhibit 7: Cemeteries of Summit Co., OH, Vol. 2, Summit County Chapter OGS, 1979 (inscriptions), available from Akron-Summit Public Library Special Collections.

This reference includes detailed information about Greensburg Cemetery including identification of grave inscriptions by location, either section and row or by lot.

At page 72 is a listing of the Green Township Veterans buried in Greensburg Cemetery listing name and war of 70 veterans of the wars of 1812, Mexican, Civil, Spanish, and World War I.

From page 73 to 92 is a geographically listing of inscriptions including names, birth date, death date, and age, if inscribed. On page 92 the following note is found:

"No effort has been spared to make the recording of this cemetery as accurate as possible. Esther Powell read the older inscriptions. Genevieve Bolin and Beverly Coss recorded the older part a few years ago. In the Summer of 1978, Russell and Genevieve Bolin recorded the entire cemetery with the help of friends, A. and G. Kungle, Mrs. L. W. Jacobs, and Dr. and Mrs. Robert Yohe. In 1979, Alan and Charlene Barden, literally, uncovered additional gravestones. All of the recordings have been correlated and arranged by Alan Barden."

The Green Historical Society holds a copy of the significant pages of this book.

Exhibit 8: Inscriptions from Greensburg Cemetery on Thursby Road, Copied by Capt. Jeremiah J. Garman, Postmaster of Greensburg, later postmasters added to list, Gift of Bev Coss on July 26, 2000, to Akron-Summit County Library Special Collections.

This reference is a ledger book organized alphabetically by the last name of the deceased. The entries include the name of the deceased and the date of death. It appears that the ledger began sometime after 1900 when the existing stone inscriptions in the cemetery were recorded in the ledger book. Then, as burials occurred, additional names and dates were added to the ledger in chronological order by date of death.

A listing of deceased name, date of death, and cause of death in order of date of death is found at the back of the ledger from 1958 to 1980.

A note is found on the "R" ledger sheet that states "Paved road west started 5/19/21."

The Green Historical Society holds a copy of the pages of this ledger.

Exhibit 9: Oldest Identifiable Stones



Dated 1842 Dated 1849 Dated 1848



Dated 1848 Dated 1855 Dated 1834

Exhibit 10: Description of Greensburg Cemetery from the *History of Summit County, Perrin,* 1892

From page 606, paragraph 1:

"The Evangelical church graveyard, about one half mile west of Greensburg, was started about the year 1836. Peter Thornton states he donated the first piece of this land to the church for cemetery purposes, and that his son, George Thornton, aged about twelve, as the first person buried there. In 1875, an additional acre of land was purchased from George Gougler, and added to this cemetery. Rev. Elias Stoeber was possibly the first person buried in the new addition."

Note that the Deed transfer from Peter Thornton to the Trustees of the Evangelical Association in 1838 states that the Trustees are "...Trustees of a certain meeting house which is about being erected..."

Historic Function & Significant Event

Exhibit 11: Description of the Site of the First Evangelical Church West of Pennsylvania

The First Evangelical Church built West of Pennsylvania was located at the front of the Greensburg Cemetery. The church is described in *The Evangelical Church in Ohio, by Roy B. Leedy, page 67 as follows,*

"Greensburg Church, First West of Pennsylvania. The site of the first Evangelical Church building was three-quarters of a mile west of the village of Greensburg. Here on the west side of the road is located a beautiful cemetery on the hillside, sloping toward the east. Between the road and the cemetery is a vacant lot where the church stood. It was a plain 28x40 "Versammlungshause" (meeting house) without Cornish and with neither tower nor bell. It faced eastward with a double door entrance in the front, a side door opening to the south, and three windows on each side.

The women entered the church from the side door and occupied the pews on the south side. They approached their pews from an aisle along the south wall of the building. The other ends of the pews were closed with a solid board petition along the middle aisle. The pews occupied by the men were fitted against the north wall so that the only entrance was from the central aisle. The men entered from the double front door and there was no intermingling of the sexes during worship services. A stove stood on each side of the room before the front pews near the side wall. There was an "amen corner" on both sides of the front part of the church — on the south for the women and on the north for the men. The rostrum was semi-circular in form; one step high with a railing used for the communion service, and the pulpit stand on a still higher platform."

Owner: City of Green

Exhibit 11: Centennial Celebration of the Evangelical Church in Ohio - Pilgrimage to Visit Site of the First Evangelical Church West of Pennsylvania & Placement of Stone Marker

The marker stone was placed at the location of the First Evangelical Church by the Evangelical Association during their Centennial Celebration in 1929. According to *The Evangelical Church in Ohio, by Roy B. Leedy, page 331*, "A centennial and home-coming was sponsored August 6-11, 1929, under the faithful labors of Merle A. Hayes.... On Saturday a large congregation witnessed the unveiling of a monument erected at the site of the first Evangelical Church building in Ohio." See pictures in *Leedy pages 330-331*, showing crowd gathered at Greensburg Cemetery to witness unveiling of the stone marker. Note this pilgrimage also travelled to the site of Greensburg Seminary and the Conrad Dillman home in 1929.

Owner: City of Green

Historic Persons: The Peter Thornton Family

Peter Thornton was born Monday, March 15, 1798 to John Thornton II, and his wife Magdalena (Witner) in Selins Grove, PA. In 1828 Peter arrived in Greensburg, OH. There he lived, married and raised six children of record. Records conflict as to whether Peter's first wife was Catherine; however she is buried along with him in the Greensburg Cemetery. In 1866 he re-married to Lydea, born in 1818, when she was 49 years old.

It is unclear which of Peter's wives is the mother of Peter's six children, George, Fannie, Henry, Mary, Louisa, and Leah. George, born in 1828 died in 1836 at 10 years old. After the death of George, Peter Thornton donated one acre from his farm for consideration of \$15.00 to the Evangelical Assoc. for the first meeting house (church) in Ohio, see deed recorded in Summit County Book 4, page 437. This one acre may have also been a burying ground for his first born, see description in *Perrin*.

Peter's occupation in the early census was that of a stocking weaver at the age of 72. Peter Thornton died Saturday, June 16, 1888 at 90 years, 3 months, 11 days. Peter Thornton was a long time member and supporter of the Evangelical Association. Several of his children were also members of the Greensburg Congregation of the Evangelical Association. The Thornton, Strawhecker (Peter's daughter Louisa was married to David Strawhecker) and Semler Families (Peter's daughter Fannie was married to Albert Semler) are all buried in Greensburg Cemetery.

Documentation of Architectural Significance

Burial Arrangement

The cemetery graves are positioned east/west. This orientation is common throughout the United States and throughout the world at Christian burial locations. According to *The Association for Gravestone Studies*,

"(i)n many, but by no means all, early New England burying grounds the graves are positioned east/west. This east/west orientation is the most common orientation in other parts of the country and world as well. The earliest settlers had their feet pointing toward the east and the head of the coffin toward the west, ready to rise up and face the "new day" (the sun) when "the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised" or when Christ would appear and they would be reborn."

Evangelical Centennial Marker Stone



The marker stone shown above was placed at the location of the First Evangelical Church by the Evangelical Association during their Centennial Celebration in 1929. According to *The Evangelical Church in Ohio, by Roy B. Leedy, page 331*, "A centennial and home-coming was sponsored August 6-11, 1929, under the faithful labors of Merle A. Hayes.... On Saturday a large congregation witnessed the unveiling of a monument erected at the site of the first Evangelical Church building in Ohio." See *Leedy pages 330-331*.

Gravestone Art

The gravestone art found in the Greensburg Cemetery reflects the Pennsylvania German heritage of the early settlers of Green and the religious beliefs of the Evangelicals in the 1800s.

Upward Pointing Hands

Many early stones in Greensburg Cemetery are inscribed with an upward pointing hand. On some stones, a flower (usually a rose) is present behind the upward pointing hand.

According to An A to Z Guide to Cemetery Icons by ISIS Publications, 2004-08, upward pointing hands signifies the hand of righteousness (citing Weeden). It also suggests the pathway or ascension and the elevated realms of heaven.









Shaking Hands

Shaking hands are common among married couples; indicating marriage, or farewell (*An A to Z Guide to Cemetery Icons by ISIS Publications, 2004-08, citing Reid*). Shaking hands can also suggest loyalty and friendship even after death and differs from the marriage symbol, in that the sleeves denote male and female in the latter (*An A to Z Guide to Cemetery Icons by ISIS Publications, 2004-08, citing Reid*).

According to The Association of Gravestone Studies, www.gravestonestudies.org, handshakes may be farewells to earthly existence or may be clasped hands of a couple to be reunited in death as they were in life, their devotion to each other not destroyed by death.



Other Notable Artistic Stones







A Sampling of Stones Representing the Variety of Tablet and Monument Styles and the Varying Inscription Styles





Owner: City of Green





Owner: City of Green

Description of the Current Condition of the Proposed Landmark

Many grave markers are missing, broken or sunken in Parcel 1 of the cemetery, but the grounds of the cemetery are maintained in excellent condition overall. Active burials are still occurring in Parcel 3 of the cemetery.

No structural remains of the First Evangelical Church in Ohio are present in the Greensburg Cemetery. The stone marker at the front of the cemetery and the slight change in the appearance of the grass where the old church foundation was filled are the only remaining indication of the first Evangelical Church in Ohio.

Documentation Establishing Ownership of the Proposed Landmark Designation

No owner is listed for the subject parcel but the mailing address is listed as Green Township Trustees on the Summit County Fiscal Officers GIS website.

