

WILLIAM BELL

William Bell, Sr., came to America with his family from England in 1767, settled in New Jersey and gave service in the Revolutionary war. Buried in Culpeper, Virginia in 1798. He and his son William Bell Jr. served in the same regiment.

William Bell Jr., married Mary Brady in New Jersey. He was born May 28, 1763. Immigrated to the "High Banks" below Chillicothe in 1798 with three sons Joseph, Josiah and Charles. Came to Greenfield in 1800. One of the first to build a house here. Next year, November 1801 he died. He was the first white man to be buried in Greenfield.

Charles Bell, the youngest son of William Bell, was born in Virginia. He married Elizabeth Jones. He became one of Greenfield's prominent pioneer merchants. Began in mercantile business in 1827 and remained in it until his death. Twice a year he made trips on horseback over the mountains to Philadelphia where he bought goods. He carried his money with him in saddle bags thru the sparsely settled country to the eastern market. The trip occupied six or seven weeks until the trains of the Baltimore and Ohio railroad crossed Paint Creek. He purchased dry-goods and groceries in Philadelphia returning by way of Pittsburg to buy iron, nails, steel, glass and other heavy goods. Goods purchased had to be sent by wagon thru to the Ohio River, thence by boat down to Ripley, Ohio from which point were wagnoned to Greenfield. It was necessary to buy large quantities of goods and of great variety. Goods arrived at hand two or three weeks after his return home. Year after year the western settlements were provided with the necessities and comforts of life in this manner. Charles Bell was a natural mathematician enabling him to form correct estimates on weights of horses and cattle or on material needed for the construction of a building. He was referred to as "The Town Scale of Greenfield" so unerring was his faculty for that kind of guessing. He was twice married. His first wife Elizabeth was the daughter of William Jones of Buckskin Township. They were married in the house now occupied by Mrs. Boyde Wilson. His second wife was Nancy, daughter of John Jones of Hillsboro, Ohio. There were four children to each marriage. His first house was built in 1822 next to where the Post Office now stands.

William Bell married Mary D. Hand a daughter of Dr. Jasper Hand of Hillsboro, Ohio and granddaughter of Gen. Edward Hand. He was also in the mercantile business. In 1876 he built the store room and building now occupied by the Home Grocery and the Elks Club rooms. Their home was where the Walker Funeral home now stands. Much of his fortune was lost by trying to improve Greenfield by bringing the Ohio Southern, now the D. T. & I., railroad thru Greenfield. There were six children to this marriage. His oldest son Charles E. Bell married Ella Harper of Burlington, Iowa, a daughter of William and Mary Lunbeck Harper. Charles assisted his father in the mercantile business. He died at the age of forty. One child, Mary, was born to this union. Mary Bell married Ernest Ellis. Living in Greenfield, Ohio