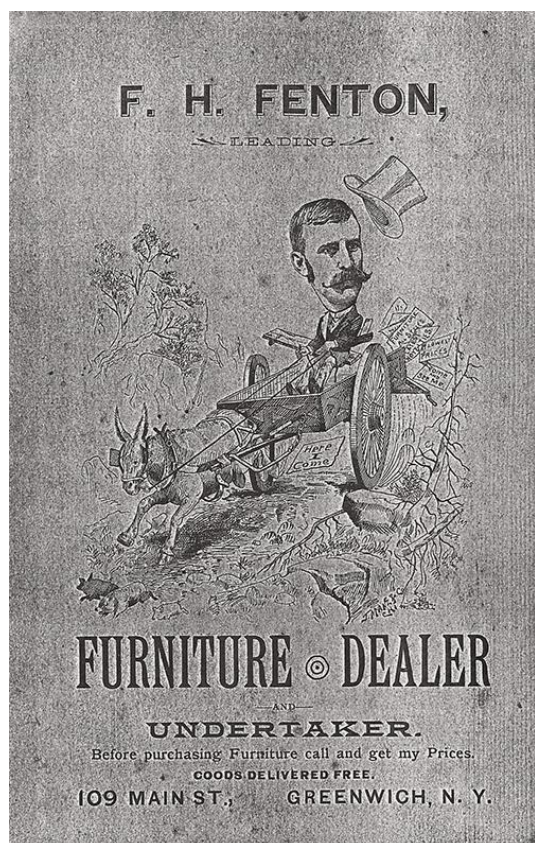


Bottskill Baptist Church History Minute

Church Historian Ken Perry

March 2025- Fred H. Fenton

This month's History Minute concerns Fred H. Fenton, a name found on one of the stained glass windows on the left side of the church. He's someone who always manages to raise a smile for me because I found a caricature of him as an ad in an early Greenwich directory in the Gill Room at the library.



Here he is, body all akimbo, with a top hat and his distinctive handlebar moustache, driving a wagon drawn by a donkey, some other animals running out of the way. A caption reads: "Here I come!" Now, here is somebody capable of making fun of himself and being the butt of a joke. And by all reports, he had just such an expansive, sunny, disposition.

He and his brother Adoniram were cabinetmakers, sons of Calvin Fenton and Hannah Burdick. His father is thought to be the first undertaker in this village. While his brother left for Ballston Spa, Fred remained here, operating a furniture store and undertaking business on Main Street. This building is still standing, it is now the parish hall of the Episcopal church, just opposite the parking lot of the old bank. Like the clothier, Michael Sonn, Fred Fenton also had a store in Schuylerville.

His spouse was Ida Garrett of Glens Falls, who was active here

in obtaining funds for the Baptist Missionary Convention. In early May 1913, Fred and Ida were touring the streets of Greenwich in a newly purchased 1913 Rambler touring car when he became stricken with a heart attack near the west end of Main Street, then called Elm Street. He directed Ida to shut off the engine and steer the car to the edge of the road, where he died.



1913 Rambler Touring car Fenton was driving at the time of his heart attack.

His business was later taken over by Frank Garrett, one of Ida's brothers, who continued to operate it as the Garrett Funeral Home.

Fred Fenton's sudden death was universally mourned, The Greenwich Journal noting on the front page of its May 7th edition that:

"Mr. Fenton was of a cheerful and happy disposition, and took great delight in giving pleasure to others. His home was a place of boundless hospitality, as was the summer home at Lake George..."



The Journal concluded: "Seldom has a death occurred in Greenwich which has caused such widespread regret... He was widely known, and was universally liked, and to the shock caused by his wholly unexpected death at a comparatively early age is added the realization that he will be greatly missed as a useful, public spirited citizen, an earnest Christian and a generous and kindly man."

For his memory and presence in this church, we remember Fred H. Fenton.