

The Covid-19 Pandemic in 2020 prevented the 150th year observance of Cridersville's incorporation—hence our 150th+1 Celebration in 2021.



150⁺¹ YEARS

Village of Cridersville

1870 — 2021

Although it was founded by the Ephraim Crider family in 1856, Cridersville did not officially become a village under Ohio law until it was incorporated in March 1870. Here is the story of how it happened.

On March 11, 1854 Isaac Crider, the oldest son of Ephraim and Polly Crider, and his wife Susanna purchased 80 acres in Duchouquet Township. They bought it from Samuel and Catherine Moyer for \$2000. Three weeks later, Ephraim and Polly Crider bought 80 acres just north of Isaac and Susanna's new property. They paid \$2000 to Joseph and Christiana Weaver.

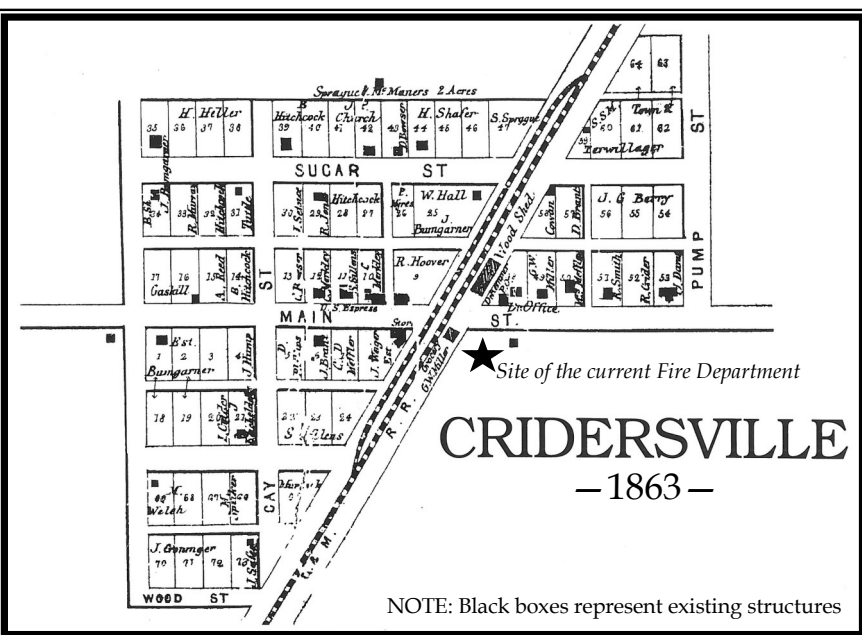
It is not certain if Ephraim and Isaac intended to establish a town when they first bought their land. The Dayton and Michigan Railroad had acquired a right-of-way for a new rail line from the Moyers and Weavers in 1853. In the spring of 1856 the Criders hired Harrison Maltbie, a local surveyor. On April 17, 1856 he surveyed the original town site for what they decided to name Cridersville.



Original 1856 Plan for Cridersville

There were a total of 24 lots in the new town. Seventeen faced Main Street and seven were on the north side of High Street. It is said that Main Street was platted on the path of the old Shawnee trail between the tribe's two reservations. The lots on Main Street belonged to Ephraim and the lots on High were Isaac's.

It was no accident that the east edge of town was platted on an angle. It ran along the right-of-way of the proposed Dayton & Michigan Railroad. When the railroad was completed in 1858, Cridersville was assured success. It provided the region with the transportation link it so badly needed. The village became the place local farmers could access markets. Home and business lots were more appealing in a community with rail service. Tax records of 1858 list vacant lots in Cridersville with a tax value of \$15 to \$25. The variation was due to their location on Main or High Streets and their proximity to the railroad—closer was better. The first train traveled through Cridersville—from Dayton to Lima—on April 12, 1858.



This map of Cridersville was made in 1863 when Abraham Lincoln was President and the nation was entering the second year of the Civil War. After the war ended in 1865, the village began to grow and prosper. By 1870 the population had grown to 167.



About the Crider Family

Ephraim Crider was the fourth of six children born to Abraham and Leah (Larrick) Crider. Abraham Crider's ancestors immigrated to America from Cantonberne, Switzerland in the early 1700s. They settled in what today is known as the "Pennsylvania Dutch" areas of Pennsylvania. The original spelling of their name was Kreider. It was likely changed to Cryder or Crider after arriving in America.

By the spring of 1800, Abraham Crider had moved from his family home near Schnitzcreek in southwestern Lebanon County, Pennsylvania to Frederick County, Virginia. There, on May 12, 1800, he married Leah Larrick. Abraham and Leah had six children—Sophia, David, Sally, Ephraim, Amelia, and George. Ephraim was born on December 25, 1805. By 1810 Abraham and his family had moved from Virginia to pioneer Ross County, Ohio.

On January 30, 1825, at the age of 19, Ephraim Crider married Mary Magdelene Dunkle. She was known as Polly and lived in neighboring Pickaway County. Over the next twenty-two years, Polly and

Ephraim would have ten children—Isaac, Eliza, Abraham, Hannah, Maria, Leanna, Rueben, Susan, Ephraim, and John. They moved to west central Ohio during the 1850s.

Building a Prosperous Community

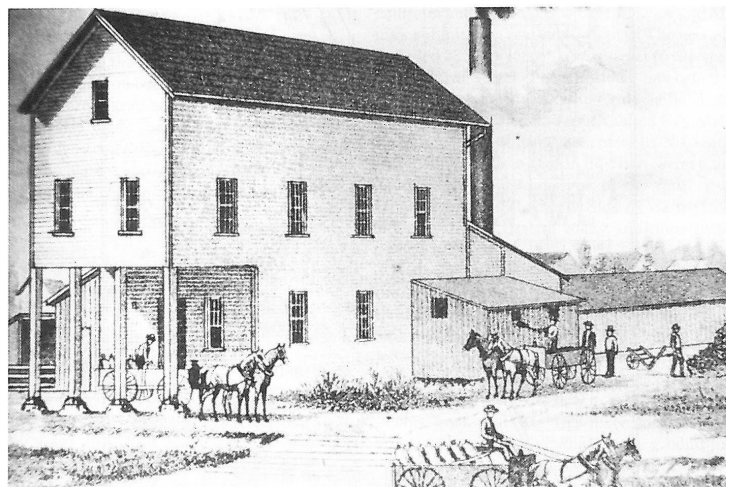
Historians credit Ephraim Crider as the first miller or grain processor in the area. He is thought to have built a steam-powered grist mill in 1859 on his farm adjacent to the village he and his son Isaac had founded in 1856. The mill was located on the north side of E. Main Street in the middle of the present 200 block.

The Crider mill was a large three-story frame structure with a tall smoke stack at the rear for the steam engine that powered the millstones. The grist mill was the place local farmers brought their corn and wheat to be ground into meal and flour. Ephraim sold his mill in 1877 for \$7,500.

Ephraim and Polly remained on their small 32-acre farm—the eastern most portion of the 80 acres they had purchased in 1854. By 1873 their farm became part of the village proper.

On December 3, 1880 Ephraim Crider died at age 74. Polly remained in Cridersville until her death on September 4, 1886. They are buried at the St. Matthew's Lutheran Cemetery.

It is interesting to note that although Ephraim did not live to see his son Abraham elected an Allen County Commissioner in 1882, Polly did. In fact, she was also proud to see her son-in-law, John Reichelderfer (Susan Crider's husband), elected Auglaize County Commissioner in 1884. During the last years of Polly's life, Abraham and John were helping to lead both counties.



The Crider Grist Mill on East Main Street

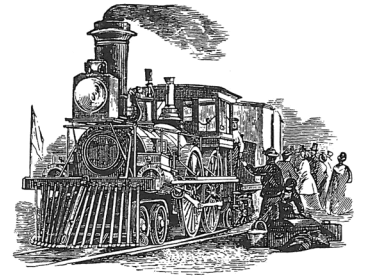
1870: A Time For Self Government

It was the summer of 1869. The Civil War had ended four years earlier. President Abraham Lincoln had been assassinated. His vice president, Andrew Johnson had succeeded him. In the spring of 1868 he barely escaped impeachment in the Senate by a single vote. In November 1868, Ulysses S. Grant, the *Hero of Appomattox* was elected the country's 18th President.

By 1869 it had been 13 years since Ephraim and Isaac Crider first platted their village in April of 1856. The construction of the Dayton & Michigan Railroad in 1858 meant success for their new town. The village had grown to a population of nearly 200.

A group of local residents gathered in the summer of 1869 to discuss incorporation. They likely talked about the need for local laws and self government. On August 24 forty six of them signed a petition asking the Auglaize County Commissioners to approve incorporation of Cridersville.

The petitioners were required by law to be qualified voters and residents of the proposed incorporation. Among the petitioners were two doctors, an undertaker, a dealer in farm implements, a blacksmith, two hotel keepers, a harness maker, the proprietor of a steam saw mill, three drygoods and grocery merchants, a furniture maker, a dealer in grain & livestock, the railroad agent and postmaster.



Cridersville Goes To War

The Civil War began on April 12, 1861 when Confederate artillery in Charleston, South Carolina opened fire on Ft. Sumter in the city's harbor. Three days later President Abraham Lincoln called for 75,000 volunteers to serve for three months.

Among the first to enlist from Cridersville were Lewis Spyker, Albert Shaw, and Reuben Crider. By March of 1865 nine others from the village volunteered to preserve the Union. Crider, Shaw, and Spyker were captured and spent a month in Richmond's notorious Libby Prison

before their release in a prisoner exchange. All 12 Cridersville volunteers returned home safely.

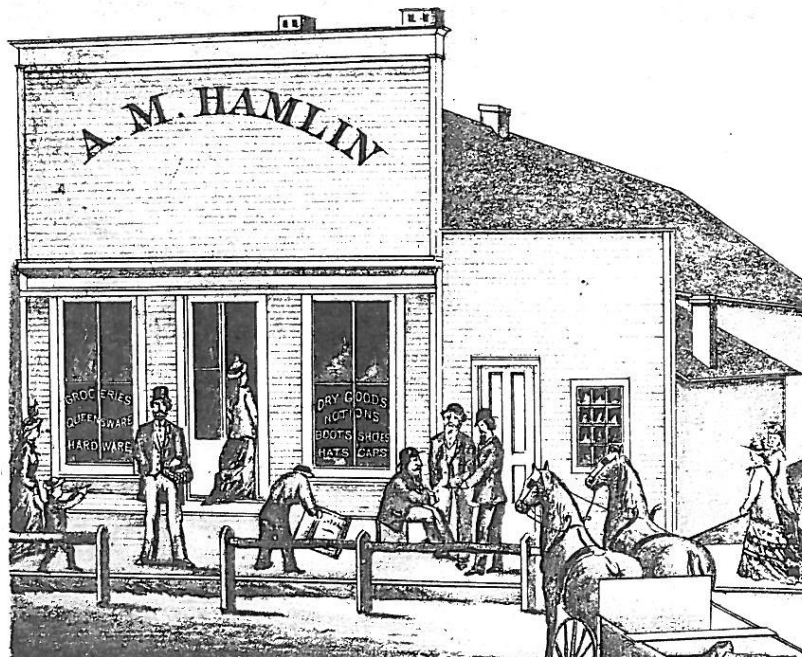
In June 1862 more than 2,400 Confederate cavalry under Colonel John Hunt Morgan terrorized communities in southern Ohio. Morgan's raid lasted only two weeks, but would be remembered for generations.

In September of 1862 Confederate General Kirby Smith's army seized Lexington, Kentucky and Ohio mobilized for invasion. Ohio's governor called for volunteers to defend Cincinnati. The Confederates withdrew to eastern Tennessee and Cincinnati was spared. The war was only 100 miles away. These were undoubtedly items of concern and comment in Cridersville.

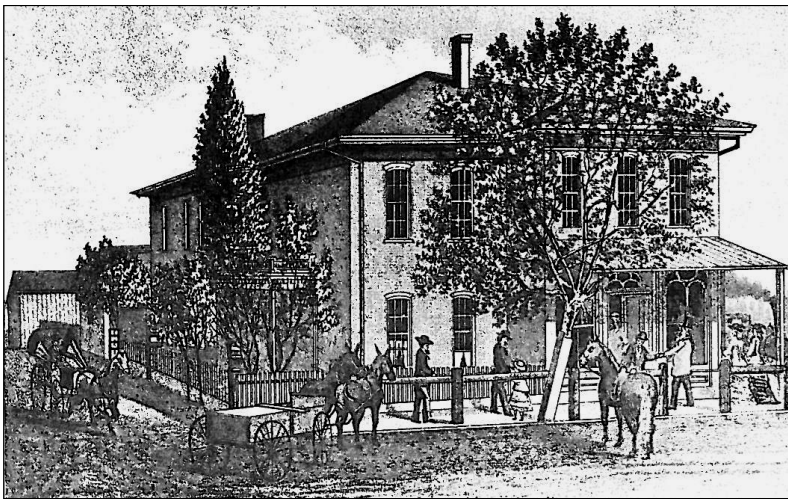


The petitioners chose N.A. Murdock, a local merchant, and R.D. Marshall, an attorney in Wapakoneta, to act as their agents in the incorporation proceedings. After a public hearing on December 9, the county commissioners approved the petition on December 17, 1869. It became official on March 21, 1870 when the petition and map were recorded by the county recorder. With this final act, Cridersville became a self-governing village, able to elect a mayor and village council, choose a marshal, and enact laws.

Over the past 151 years, Cridersville has prospered, grown and changed. We think the Criders would be pleased!



The Andrew M. Hamlin Store was located at 110 E. Main Street. It sold groceries, dry goods, boots & shoes, hardware, and notions. Mr. Hamlin was one of the signers of the petition to incorporate Cridersville in 1869.



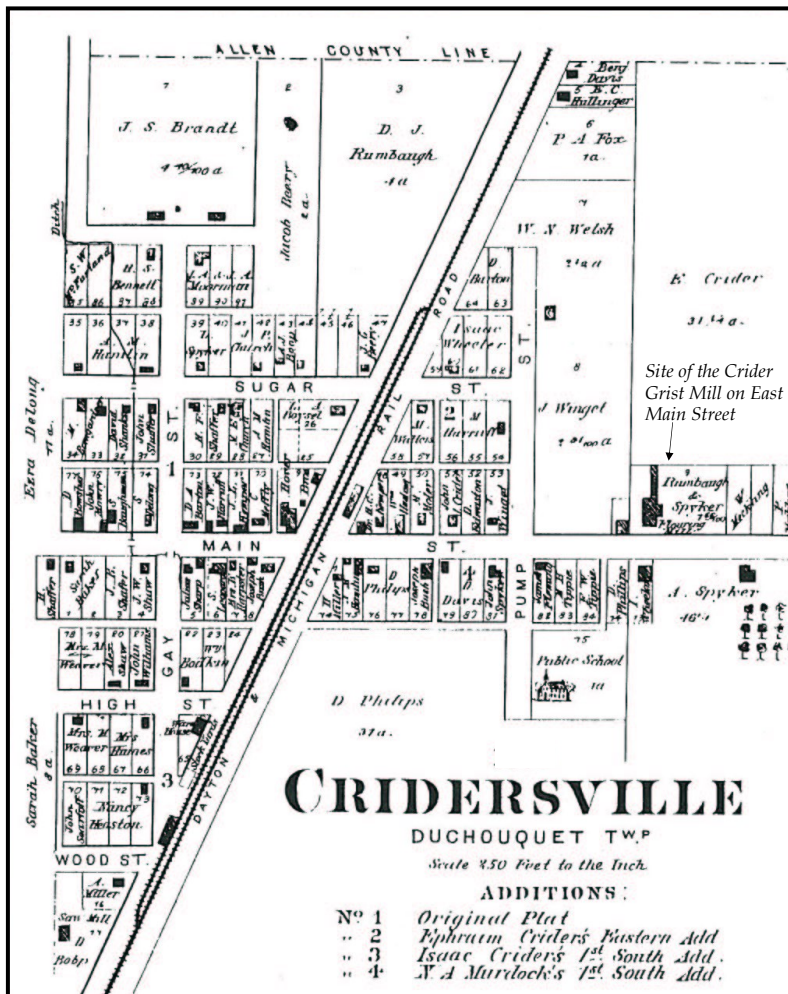
The Hoover Brothers General Store was located at 100 W. Main Street. A large, two-story brick structure, it was both store and residence. It remains today and is currently the location of Dotson Plumbing and Heating.

This is a publication of the CRIDERSVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

To learn more about Cridersville's past,
visit our local history museum at
111 W. Sugar Street, Cridersville, Ohio 45806

Open: 2nd & 4th Sunday, April-October, 1:00-4:00 p.m.

Special tours are available, call 419-645-4782



This map shows Cridersville in the 1870s just a few years after the incorporation of the village. Growth from the original 1856 plat had extended to the north and east of the railroad. By 1880, the population had grown to nearly 300.

The people of Cridersville had much to talk about in 1869. Below are a few topics they may have been discussing.

Baseball in America, as we know it today, began in the 1840s. By the Civil War its popularity had spread throughout the country. It is likely that baseball was being played in Cridersville. In 1869 the **Cincinnati Red Stockings** became the nation's first professional baseball team.

Many people were alarmed that paying the players would surely ruin what had become a popular amateur sport. The highest paid player on the new Red Stockings team earned \$1400 for the season (\$27,711 today).



In 1869 one of America's most popular new authors was **Mark Twain**. His second book,

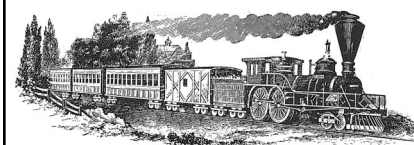
Innocents Abroad, was published that year. It was a highly humorous account of his travels in Europe. He is best known for his later books: *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876) and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884).



As the petition to incorporate Cridersville was being circulated in 1869, local women were not able to sign it. Women could not vote and therefore could not sign petitions. Wyoming's legislature gave the **women of their state the right to vote** in 1869 – the first in the nation. Voting rights for women was becoming a hotly debated topic. In 1920 the 19th amendment to the U.S. Constitution finally guaranteed the right to vote to all American women.



The single most significant event to occur in 1869 was likely the completion of the **first transcontinental railway**. When the Union Pacific and



Central Pacific tracks met in Utah, the east and west coasts were connected with a

continuous railway. The official driving of the last "golden spike" was celebrated with cannons firing and church bells ringing throughout the country.