



Olmsted 200

Two Centuries and More History of Olmsted Falls and Olmsted Township –
First Farmed in 1814 and Settled in 1815

Issue 102

November 1, 2021

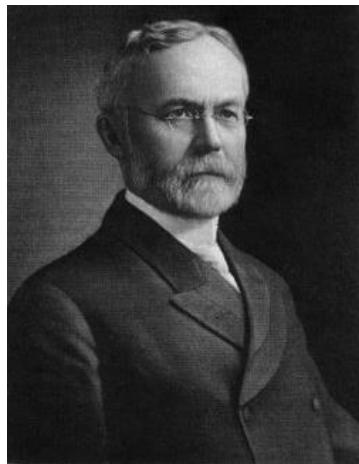
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Olmsted Native Created Patent Medicine Empire

Have you heard of Alka-Selzer and Bactine? How about One-A-Day Vitamins and Flintstone Vitamins? Sure, you have. But have you heard of Dr. Franklin Miles?

Probably not, even though he was born in Olmsted Falls, and he founded the company that developed those products.



Franklin Lawrence Miles was born 176 years ago this month on November 15, 1845, at least according to his obituary. However, the 1850 Census listed him as being six years old, which would indicate he was born in 1844. A school admission record and certain accounts of his life cite November 15, 1847, as his birthdate, so the year of his birth is not certain, but November 15 seems to have been the date.

No matter when he was born, Miles was the son of Charles Julius Miles and Electa A. Lawrence Miles, who both had connections to prominent people in the early years of Olmsted Falls and Cleveland. He was the nephew of Edward Stow Hamlin, who laid out the streets in downtown Olmsted Falls and named the main one going east-west Hamlin Street, which it remained until well into the 20th century before it was made part of Bagley Road. Miles's mother's sister-in-law, Lucretia, was the first wife of

Dr. Franklin Miles, born in Olmsted Falls, founded a company that created some of the best-known medical products of the 20th and 21st centuries.

Hamlin, who was a prominent lawyer and congressman. (More on Hamlin can be found in Issue 95 of *Olmsted 200* from April 2021.)

The father of Franklin Miles was the great-grandson of Major Lorenzo Carter, the first permanent settler of European descent in Cleveland. Judge Erastus Miles and Laura Carter, daughter of the major, were the parents of Franklin's father, Charles Julius Miles, who served as a clerk for the Ohio Legislature before he became a merchant.

Charles and Electa Miles and their family did not stay in Olmsted Falls very long. They moved to Columbus when Franklin was very young. By the 1850 Census, most of them were listed as living in Elyria. By then, Charles had traveled west. He didn't stop when he arrived in California. He became a customs house surveyor and guard at the Port of Honolulu in Hawaii, which still was referred to as the Sandwich Islands then.

Electa Miles was left on her own with Franklin, his younger sister Kate and younger brother Charles while her husband was away. She moved with her children to Cincinnati. In May 1856, four-year-old Charles died of pneumonia. In December that year, Kate died of smallpox at age nine. One month later, in January 1857, Electa died of tuberculosis, which then was known as consumption. Franklin, whose father still was in Hawaii, went to live with an aunt and uncle.

Charles Miles returned from Hawaii in 1860. He and Franklin then moved to Elkhart, Indiana, where Charles had worked as a merchant in the 1830s. He returned to running a store there with help from his son. One attribute Elkhart shared with Olmsted Falls: each was a stop along the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railway.

However, Franklin did not stay long in Elkhart. He first went to live with his uncle, A.G. Lawrence, in Adrian, Michigan. By the summer of 1864, he went on to Massachusetts, where he helped on the farm that served as the summer home of another uncle, Edward Stow Hamlin. He stayed on that fall and enrolled at the nearby Williston Seminary at Northampton. After a year at Williston, he moved on to Phillips Academy at Andover, Massachusetts, where he stayed until 1866.

Charles Miles died soon after Franklin entered Andover. Money from his father's estate and from his uncle, A.G. Lawrence, funded him as he continued his studies, but he also worked various jobs on the side. In the fall of 1866, Franklin Miles became a student at Sheffield Scientific School at Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut. In the fall of 1870, he moved to New York to study at the law school at Columbia College, which many considered to be the country's top law school at the time.

But instead of pursuing a career in law, Franklin Miles chose to go into medicine. That meant furthering his education even more, so in the fall of 1871, he entered the



Electa Lawrence Miles gave birth to Franklin Miles in Olmsted Falls.

medical school at the University of Michigan. While there, he “won the attention of medical faculty and fellow students by his close investigations and long hours of study,” according to the 1893 book, *Memoirs of Elkhart and St. Joseph Counties, Indiana*. The book also said that Miles was cited for “his determination to analyze subjects and understand every problem presented before casting it aside.” Between sessions at medical school, Miles studied back in Elkhart, Indiana, with Dr. Oscar Harrington, a local physician and surgeon.

Also in Elkhart, Miles met a local woman, Ellen Lighthall, and married her on April 22, 1873. Both were interested in studying medicine. That fall, they went together to Chicago to enter Rush Medical College. By May 1875, they completed their studies and returned to Elkhart to live and work. Franklin announced that he was especially interested in treating conditions of the eyes and ears. Later that year, on September 8, they had a son, Charles Franklin Miles.



This photo of Franklin Miles is dated sometime from 1885 to 1890. in Chicago.

Ellen Miles practiced medicine alongside her husband with an emphasis on obstetrics and other issues of women’s health, at least for a while. But that seems to have become more difficult for her as their family grew. She gave birth to a daughter, Marian, on July 20, 1878, and another daughter, Electa, on January 4, 1880.

Life changed for Franklin Miles in 1881, and it ended for Ellen Miles that August 24. She died from of what the *Elkhart Review* called “typho-malaria, aggravated by unusual bronchial and lung difficulties.” Franklin was left to raise three children ranging in age from 19 months to six years old. He also transformed his business from that of a smalltown medical practitioner to that of a medical entrepreneur. In 1893, he left his practice in Elkhart to open the Medical and Ocular Institute

Along the way, Miles devoted increasing attention to medical conditions associated with the nerves and the development of his own remedies. On July 18, 1882, he obtained a patent for a concoction he labeled “Dr. Miles’ Restorative Nervine,” which was intended to calm patients with nervous conditions. He marketed it initially through druggists in the Elkhart area and then expanded beyond that. His marketing employed company publications with testimonials from patients who spoke of being relieved of extreme nervousness, exhaustion, insomnia and loss of appetite.

Wanting to expand his distribution beyond the Elkhart area, Miles took on two partners in 1885. On October 28, 1885, they incorporated the Dr. Miles Medical Company. In addition to Restorative Nervine, the company’s initial products included

Restorative Nerve and Liver Pills,
Restorative Tonic and Restorative Blood
Purifier – all bearing the Dr. Miles name.

In February 1887, Miles's two partners sold their interests in the company and two new partners bought into it. Then, the company really took off with more employees to package and sell the medicine and advertising that spread to more newspapers in Indiana, Illinois and Ohio. The company added a product called the New Cure, aimed at addressing heart problems. In 1889, the company reorganized again and expanded further.

Meanwhile, Miles also promoted his view on other subjects, including human rights, children's rights and the establishment of controls on human breeding to discourage those not deemed physically, intellectually or morally fit. He did that mainly through the publication and distribution of his own pamphlets.

When Miles left Elkhart in 1893 to move to Chicago, he went big – literally. He set up his Medical and Ocular Institute on the 13th floor of the 21-story Masonic Temple Building, which had been built one year earlier in 1892. In 1895, it became the tallest building in Chicago after a clock tower was removed from the Board of Trade Building, which had been erected in 1885. Many people traveled to the top of the Masonic Temple Building just to see the view of the city. Thus, it was a high-traffic location, good for business.

Miles advertised through four-color pamphlets and other means that his institute offered treatment for a wide range of issues, covering the brain, nerves, heart, nose, throat, lungs, liver, stomach, bowels and eyes. He and his many assistants treated patients both in person and through the mail.



Restorative Nervine was the premier product of the Dr. Miles Medical Company.



Miles chose the Masonic Temple Building for the headquarters of his Miles Medical Association in Chicago.

By 1895, he renamed his Chicago institute the Miles Medical Association. He published a book called *A New Era Dawning in Medical Science* that described the clinic. He claimed to have records based on 30,000 patient case studies. He also remained physician-in-chief of the Dr. Miles Medical Company, which was still based in Elkhart.

On July 17, 1895, Miles married Elizabeth State, a woman about 20 years younger than him, who began working for him in Elkhart and followed him to Chicago. Soon after the marriage, she gave birth to a daughter, Frances, who lived less than nine years. She was partially paralyzed and never walked or talked.

Between 1897 and 1902, Miles seemed to have trouble deciding whether he preferred to be in Elkhart or Chicago. He moved his Miles Medical Association back to Elkhart, stayed just two years, went back to Chicago, and then returned in 1902 to Elkhart, where the Dr. Miles Medical Company, maker of Nervine and other medicines, had remained all along. By then, he had given the Miles Medical

Association an added name, the Grand Dispensary.

Accept This Special Trial Offer RFD

DR. MILES' NERVINE
Liquid or Effervescent Tablets

RELIEVES Sleeplessness caused by Nervousness, Nervous Irritability, Nervous Headache, Nervous Dyspepsia, Neuralgia, Hysteria, Travel Sickness. Dr. Miles' Nervine is harmless, relaxes the nerves and help nature bring you relief.

Nervine Tablets

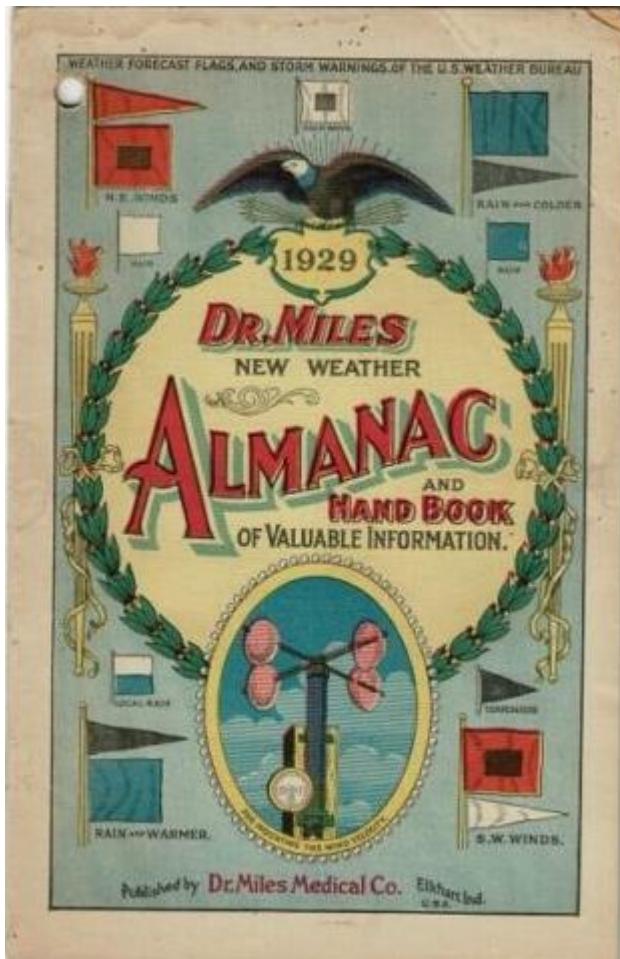
A Dr. Miles' Effervescent Nervine Tablet in a glass of water makes a sparkling, pleasant drink. In a few minutes over-taxed nerves relax. In the Nervine Tablet the time-tested Nervine formula is combined with Bicarbonate of Soda and Citric Acid, which tends to correct Acidosis, a frequent cause of Nervousness.

Nervine Liquid

For over 50 years, Dr. Miles' Nervine (in liquid form) has brought grateful relief to thousands of nervous people. Whenever you are nervous try Dr. Miles' Nervine. You will be delighted with the effective way it relieves nervous tension, relaxes your nerves and gives nature a chance to correct the trouble.

See Coupons on Other Side—Each Worth 15c to You

This card with two 15-cent coupons on the back was one means the Dr. Miles Medical Company used to market Nervine products.



The almanac begun by the Dr. Miles Medical in 1902 lasted four decades, well beyond the death of Franklin Miles.

large farm on the outskirts of Fort Myers. Among the other northerners who had chosen to settle, at least during winters, in Fort Myers was inventor Thomas Edison, who also was an Ohio native.

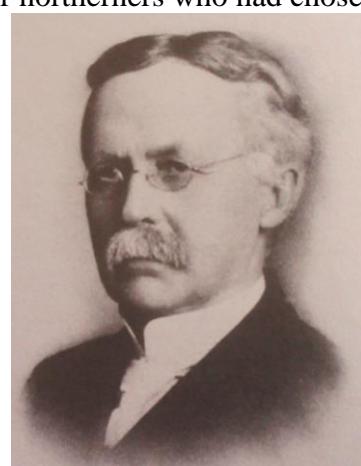
Back in Elkhart, Miles's business interests went on, but they suffered increasing criticism from the medical establishment. The Grand Dispensary closed in 1922, and the American Medical Association attacked some of the medications sold by the Dr. Miles Medical Company.

Franklin Miles died on April 1, 1929, at his home in Florida. After his funeral, his body was transported by train to Elkhart, where it was buried at Grace Lawn Cemetery, near the graves of other family members.

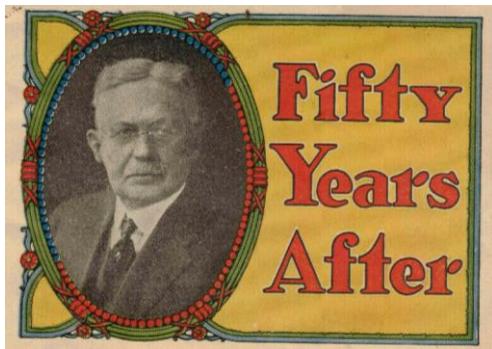
In 1902, the Dr. Miles Medical Company established the Miles Weather Observatory in Elkhart and began issuing a new publication, the *Dr. Miles New Weather Almanac and Hand Book of Valuable Information*. The almanac continued for another four decades.

In the early years of the 20th century, as he entered his 60s, Miles did quite a bit of traveling and soon grew fond of Florida, particularly Fort Myers, which he visited with his wife and friends in 1906. Later that year, he bought a large house with 16 rooms in Fort Myers. Long afflicted with periods of bronchitis and other lung ailments, Myers found the Florida winters were conducive to his good health. He also developed a passion for investing in thousands of acres of Florida land for agriculture and speculation.

Franklin and Elizabeth Miles began spending most of the year in Florida with only occasional trips back to Elkhart. They adopted a three-year-old orphan, Louise, and developed a



This photo of Franklin Miles was taken in 1905.



This marketing piece featured a photo taken of Franklin Miles in 1923, six years before he died.

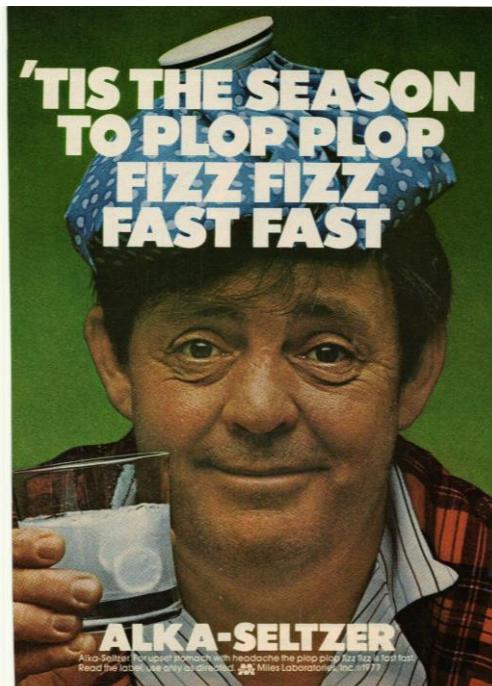
Laboratories. Other well-known products introduced by Miles Laboratories included One-a-Day Vitamins in 1940, Bactine in 1950 and Flintstones Vitamins in 1968. However, Alka-Seltzer remained the company's best-known product, especially when it was promoted through memorable advertising campaigns, such as the one in the 1970s that used the catch phrase, "plop, plop, fizz, fizz," which referred to the sound of two tablets dissolving in water.

In 1979, Bayer AG, a German company, acquired Miles Laboratories. In 1992, Bayer moved the headquarters of Miles Laboratories from Elkhart, Indiana, to the Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, area. In 1995, Bayer retired use of the Miles name from all its products. That was 110 years after Franklin Miles founded his company and 150 years after Miles was born (according to his obituary) in Olmsted Falls, Ohio. How many Olmsted residents over those decades consumed Nervine or Alka-Seltzer or other products from the company Miles founded without realizing Miles's Olmsted origin? That's impossible to say.



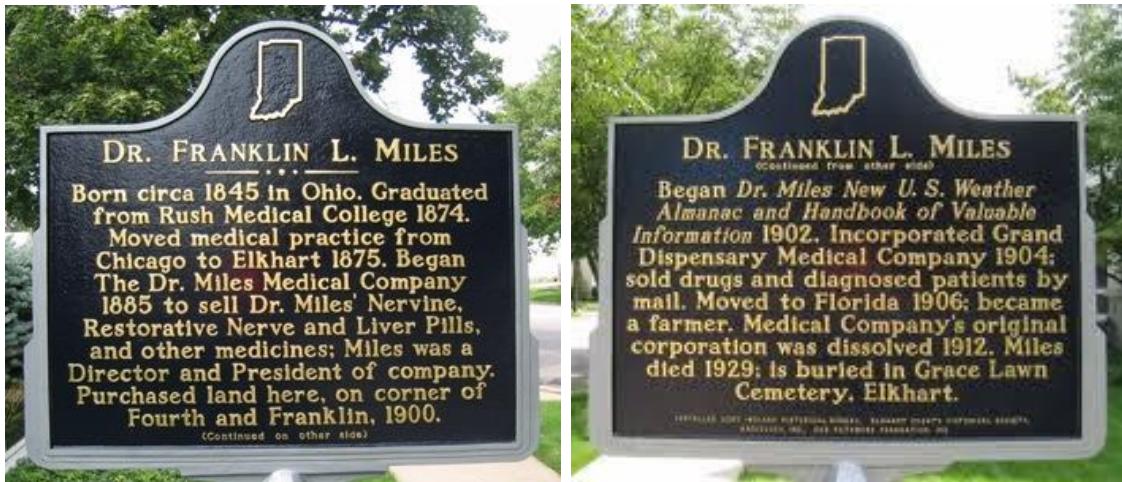
Although it was with products like Nervine that the Dr. Miles Medical Company became famous, the company became better known for other products after Miles's death. In 1931, two years after his death, the company introduced Alka-Seltzer for relief of heartburn, acid indigestion and stomach aches. The company registered the Alka-Seltzer name as a trademark with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office on June 9, 1931.

In 1932, the company changed its name to Dr. Miles Laboratories, which lasted until 1935, when it was shortened to Miles



Miles Laboratories used this ad in 1977 to sell Alka-Seltzer.

This undated postcard shows the Miles Laboratories factory when located in Elkhart, Indiana, and it manufactured such products as Alka-Seltzer. Many years later, after Bayer acquired Miles Laboratories, it moved the company's headquarters to near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.



This Indiana historical marker sits at the site where Franklin Miles set up the Dr. Miles Medical Company at 403 West Franklin Street in Elkhart, Indiana. The two sides of the marker provide a very condensed version of the life and accomplishments of Miles. The marker was erected in 2007.

Thanks go to David Kennedy for suggesting this story and providing much of the research.

So-called Witch's Grave Belonged to German Immigrant

Last month's story about the purported witch's grave at the old Chestnut Grove Cemetery stirred much interest in readers. Among their responses were suggestions for more information related to the grave. The best was a reference to a 2019 book called *Ghosts and Legends of Northern Ohio* by William Krejci. He wrote that he visited the grave with friends on his 18th birthday, which happened to be a rainy day.

"The site wasn't hard to locate, as the iron fence was still in place at that time," Krejci wrote. "In truth, my first impression was that this fenced-in area was actually a compost pile, as there were leaves and grass clippings piled within the enclosure. Furthermore, it seems so close to the edge of the cemetery that it was hard to believe anyone was actually buried there. It was pretty laughable to think that people were making trips out to a cemetery in Olmsted Falls to search for a compost pile. Debunking this story was going to be a breeze – or so I thought."

Krejci searched through cemetery records and maps, which helped him determine that the



Some people think this spot in old Chestnut Grove Cemetery has the grave of a witch, but it instead was John Naumann's gravesite.

plot had been designated as Lot 18, and it had one recorded burial for John Naumann. He was a German immigrant born on February 7, 1818, in Darmstadt in the Duchy of Hesse. He arrived in Olmsted Falls in the early 1850s with his wife, Elizabeth, and son, John.

On February 28, 1854, Naumann bought a lot along Bradford Road, which later became River Street and then River Road, where he built a house. It was either that year or 1855 (sources differ) when Olmsted Township trustees started Turkeyfoot Cemetery by purchasing three-and-a-half acres from Oscar W. Kendall. Naumann bought Lot 48. The cemetery reportedly was called Turkeyfoot because a flock of turkeys owned by the Bradford family roosted there. In the fall of 1878, township trustees renamed the cemetery Chestnut Grove.



As seen here in August 2008, this is the house John Naumann built in 1854. It stands at 7569 River Road. Its large fireplace was made of stones from Rocky River.

Elizabeth Naumann remained in their Olmsted Falls home until 1902, when she sold it to the Society for Christian Care of the Sick and Needy, which operated the German Hospital in Cleveland, Krecji wrote. She relocated to the hospital after selling the house and died there on February 22, 1907. Her obituary gave Olmsted Falls as the site of her burial, but Krecji did not find her interment listed in Chestnut Grove Cemetery records.

“It should be noted that none of the Naumanns were witches,” he wrote. “This should be evident enough in the fact that Elizabeth’s funeral was held at a Christian facility.”

Thus, the story that a witch was buried there probably was the result of children’s active imaginations, as Dan Hill, former cemetery superintendent, conjectured. As one *Olmsted 200* reader, Frank Kalamajka, put it, “What’s life without a little paranormal excitement, especially when you’re a kid, right? At least we don’t have Bigfoot to worry about.”

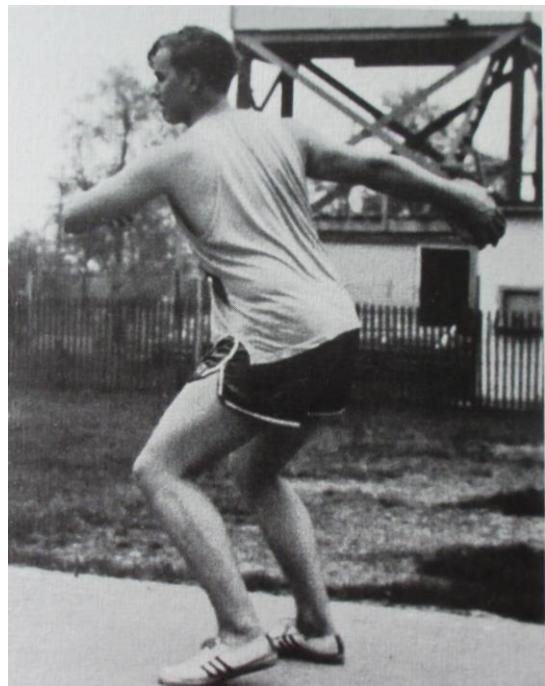
It's not known what happened to the Naumanns' son, who was nine years old in the 1860 Census but did not show up in records after that. “It’s possible that he passed away shortly after and was buried at lot 48 at Chestnut Grove,” Krecji wrote. “Burial records prior to 1936 are sketchy and incomplete.”

The elder John Naumann died on June 11, 1881, at the age of 63. Krecji found his burial in Lot 48 was listed in cemetery records.

Stands Were Seasonal at Former Football Field

A story in last month's issue featuring photos from Mike Gibson of Olmsted Falls High School football players and cheerleaders in the 1940s also included one photo from 1958 showing the old press box that stood at the former football field along Mapleway Drive. It was noted that the press box was by itself with no spectator stands below it.

Reader Jan Smith responded with a photo from the 1958 *Senorio* showing stands filled with spectators in front of the press box. "They covered the track, so [they] had to be taken down and then reconstructed each year," Smith wrote.



Jan Smith has shared the photo on the left from Olmsted Falls High School's 1958 Senorio showing football game spectators sitting in the removable stands in front of the press box at the old football field along Mapleway Drive. On the right is a photo from the 1969 Senorio showing the same press box without the spectator stands in front of it.

Senorio showing football game spectators sitting in the removable stands in front of the press box at the old football field along Mapleway Drive. On the right is a photo from the 1969 Senorio showing the same press box without the spectator stands in front of it.

Imagine what a task it would be if the stands at the current high school stadium had to be removed and then reconstructed each year.

Thanks go to Jan Smith for sharing the 1958 photo. Old photos, whether from high school yearbooks or from family collections, often reveal interesting tidbits of history. If you have a photo or information that illustrates something from the history of Olmsted Falls or Olmsted Township to share with readers, please send it to: wallacestar@hotmail.com.

Still to Come

The next issue of *Olmsted 200* will recognize the 80th anniversary of the United States' entrance into World War II with a story about how Olmsted Falls and Olmsted Township observed the service and sacrifice of local sons and daughters, as well as some photos that show Olmsted Falls at that time. Contributions are welcome from anyone who has more photos and information to share from the war years.

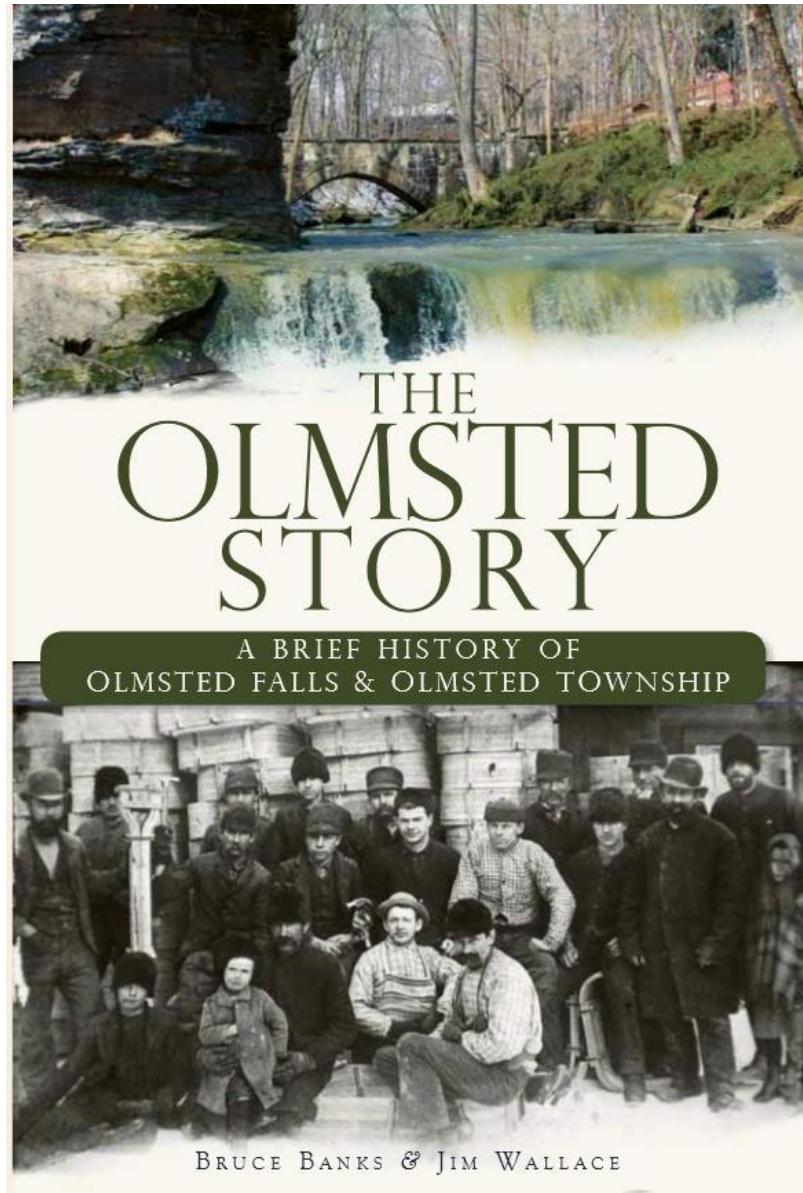
If you know of other people who would like to receive *Olmsted 200* by email, please feel free to forward it to them. They can get on the distribution list by sending a request to: wallacestar@hotmail.com. *Olmsted 200* has readers in several states beyond Ohio, including California, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana, Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas, Louisiana, Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee, West Virginia, Michigan, Wisconsin, New York, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Maine, as well as overseas in the Netherlands, Germany and Japan.

Your questions and comments about *Olmsted 200* are welcome. Perhaps there is something about Olmsted's history that you would like to have pulled out of *Olmsted 200*'s extensive archives. Or perhaps you have information or photos about the community's history that you would like to share.

If you have missed any of the past issues of *Olmsted 200* or want to share them with someone else, all of them can be found on Olmsted Township's website. Go to <http://olmstedtownship.org/newsletters/>. A list of *Olmsted 200* issues is on the right side. Click on the number of the issue you want to read. All of the issues of *Olmsted 200* also are available on the website of the City of Olmsted Falls. Find them at: http://www.olmstedfalls.org/olmsted_falls_history/index.php. A link to *Olmsted 200* can be found on the left side of the page.

Except where otherwise noted, all articles in *Olmsted 200* are written by Jim Wallace. Thanks go to Mary Louise King for help in proofreading and editing many issues. Thanks also go to David Kennedy for frequently contributing research and insight for some stories. Written contributions and photos, as well as comments and questions about items in this newsletter, will be considered for publication. Send any correspondence by email to: wallacestar@hotmail.com.

Olmsted 200 is written, researched and edited by Jim Wallace, who is solely responsible for its content. He is co-author (with Bruce Banks) of ***The Olmsted Story: A Brief History of Olmsted Falls and Olmsted Township***, published in 2010 by The History Press of Charleston, S.C. ***The Olmsted Story*** is available at Angelina's Pizza in Olmsted Falls and the Berea Historical Society's Mahler Museum & History Center and through online booksellers.



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