



Olmsted 200

Bicentennial Notes about Olmsted Falls and Olmsted Township –
First Farmed in 1814 and Settled in 1815

Issue 82

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Big Stone Brought Big Changes to Olmsted's Quarries

For the quarries – and life around them – in Olmsted Falls, West View and other communities in the area, the 1880s was a time of change. At the beginning of the decade, each quarry was a relatively big operation in its own community, but by the end of the decade, it was merely a cog in a much bigger corporate machine.

In the early 1880s, it was common to have a quarry operated and supervised by its owner, as was the case in Olmsted Falls with quarries operated by Luther Barnum and others. This item from the Olmsted Falls column in the *Berea Advertiser*, on August 10, 1882, provides an example of that:



Although these stones in David Fortier River Park undoubtedly were quarried well after Luther Barnum, this is the area where he operated his quarry.

MAYOR BARNUM'S ACCIDENT

Mayor L. Barnum met with an accident Friday morning which nearly cost him his life. He is superintendent of the Olmsted Falls Quarry Co. and was in the quarry at the time a stone was being raised. Suddenly the hook slipped, one of them striking him on the head and left temple, felling him unconscious. Medical aid was immediately procured but it was difficult to make an estimate of what would be the outcome of such a wound. A host of anxious friends are glad to hear that he is in a fair way to recover. Drs. Rose and Knowlton dressed the wound. His brother, Mr. John Barnum of Cleveland, and two sisters, Mrs. Sarah Allen, Brooklyn, Mrs. Lucia Allen, Vermillion, and neices [sic], Misses Lucia Studevant, Vermillion, Agnes Studevant, Carlisle, were called here by the accident. Mr. Barnum has worked about stone the greater part of his life.

Luther Barnum, who happened to be mayor of Olmsted Falls at the time, also was perhaps the village's biggest employer with dozens of men working at his quarry, which was located in what now is David Fortier River Park. According to Walter Holzworth's 1966 Olmsted history book, men named McDonald and House had financial interests in



This grindstone in Plum Creek might not have come from the quarry when Luther Barnum operated it, but it is like those he produced.

the quarry, but Barnum was in charge of the operation. His sons, Tom and Harry, got their start in quarrying by working with their father.

Barnum seems to have been regarded highly in the community. His election to be mayor is one testament to that. Another is a story in the November 8, 1883, edition of the *Berea Advertiser* – just 15 months after his near-fatal accident – on a surprise party about 70 of his friends

held for him on the occasion of his 54th birthday. His friends presented him with a gold Odd Fellows pin and a meerschaum pipe. About him, the columnist wrote: “Mr. Barnum has been connected with the history of this village since its organization, having had an interest in the stone business here for years, is a prominent Odd Fellow, and is a present mayor of the village.”

(However, Barnum lost his bid for re-election in April 1886 to Ed Damp, operator of the gristmill along Rocky River, when Damp led a group of reformers who promised to improve the morality of the community, which meant addressing problems related to the village's saloons.)

Five months after Barnum's surprise birthday party, the April 17, 1884, edition of the *Advertiser* included this item about his quarry:

It should be remembered that L. Barnum's stone quarry has a reputation of manufacturing the finest quantity of grind stones that is to be found in this state. Mr. L.B. has been very busly [sic] engaged this spring stripping at the north end of his quarry and is at present quarrying out excellent rock for which he finds a ready sale. The prospects are very favorable for a busy season.

Business remained good for quarrying that year. In the Olmsted Falls column for the May 29, 1884, edition of the paper was this item: "The Olmsted quarries are running in full blast this season."

In 1885, a new operator, Jeremiah LeDuke, started another quarry in Olmsted Falls using about \$20,000 of equipment he shipped in. Considering that local quarries typically operated from early spring until late fall, when cold and snow made work difficult, LeDuke started his quarry late in the season. An Olmsted Falls column filed on November 27, 1885, for the December 4 edition of the *Advertiser* provided this information:

Tuesday was, we think, first "pay day" in LeDuke's quarry. This new quarry is near the site of "the old mill on the green." Although men have been at work but a short time, it has much the appearance of an old quarry; much channeling has been done and quite a large surface has been cleared of earth. There is no trouble with the water, as the creek flows near and 20 ft. below. Should the owner succeed in getting a railroad to it, it will be one of the first quarries in town. The success of the quarries means good times for Olmsted. Mr. L. Barnum can hardly keep pace with orders for grindstone. The past week many carloads have been shipped – one to Nebraska – Hayden has an ax to grind. Mr. Barnum has done a good business this summer in all kinds of stone. His sons, Tom and Harry, do the turning. Business men dealing with Mr. Barnum will always find good quality and good measure.

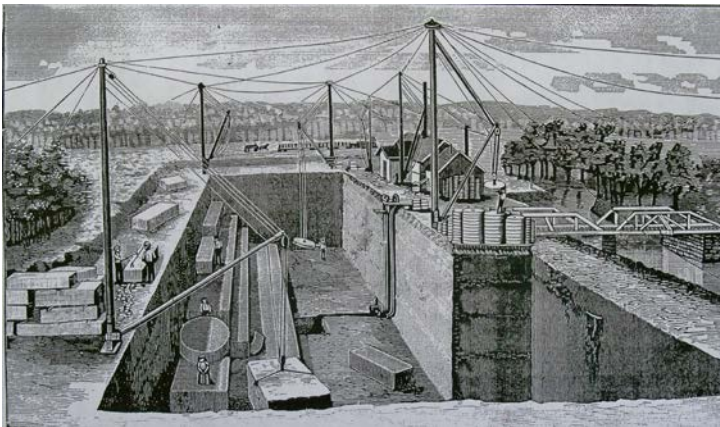
When that item referred to LeDuke's quarry as being "one of the first quarries in town," it apparently meant one of the best because it came along a decade and a half after Barnum and others began quarrying in Olmsted Falls. What the columnist meant by LeDuke's quarry near the site of "the old mill on the green" isn't clear. If that is a reference to the Village Green, it doesn't make sense because there is no record of a mill there. Also, Holzworth indicated that the quarry was on the east side of Rocky River and a railroad spur came to the quarry from the east.

LeDuke's quarry unfortunately was the site of an accident in March 1886 in which 14-year-old Charley Kidney was killed while he and two companions fooled around on a Sunday afternoon with a railroad sidecar that ran off of a trestle with him on it.

However, that came in the waning months of quarries operated by small companies of local owners. In 1886, a group of men led by William McDermott, James Worthington and George Worthington organized the Cleveland Stone Company, which proceeded to buy the quarries in Berea, Olmsted Falls, West View, Columbia Township and Peninsula, as well as others in Lorain, Huron and Erie counties in Ohio and in Grindstone City, Michigan. The company had a private dock in Cleveland and headquarters in the Wilshire Building in downtown Cleveland. As the company expanded, it established offices in several other cities, including Boston, New York, Chicago, St. Louis, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia and Toronto.



George Worthington was Cleveland Stone's first secretary-treasurer and one of its founders, but he later became its president for decades. He also served as president of Union National Bank in Cleveland. He remained a director of Cleveland Stone until his death in 1924, although he had retired from active work several years earlier.



A Cleveland Stone catalogue included this picture of its Columbia quarry, apparently the one a half-mile south of West View purchased in 1886 from Clough and Foster.

The buyouts came as a surprise to people in the communities where the quarries were located. A good example of that is an item filed on July 20, 1886, for the West View column in the July 23 edition of the *Advertiser* about the quarry started by Baxter Clough in 1874 that was half a mile south of West View in Columbia Township:

All one hears now is about the Columbia quarry being sold, Clough & Foster having stepped down and out. The news was a great surprise to some of the men, part of whom commenced work for the Cloughs before father Baxter died, and before Mr. Foster became one of the firm. Well they have sold us to Berea. We were put in a sort of a job lot and all went together: Columbia, that is here, Nickel Plate, at Lagrange and 3 more in North Amherst. Work was suspended last Friday and Saturday but Monday the men went to work for their new firm cheerful and hopeful.

The West View column followed up with this item in the July 30, 1886, *Advertiser*: "Clough and Foster paid off their men in full the 22. The Company gave John

Yarman, the man who was hurt last summer and who goes with crutches and cane yet, \$100.”

The takeovers occurred so suddenly that residents of the quarry communities hoped for the best but did not know what to expect. Initially, the prospects seemed good as Cleveland Stone invested in upgrading the quarries and extended their months of operation. For example, the Olmsted Falls column in the January 6, 1888, edition of the *Advertiser* included this item: “The work of stripping was commenced Monday in the quarries.” In other words, instead of waiting until spring to remove the layer of dirt and rocks over the sandstone deposits that would later be quarried, the company had its men do that at the beginning of the year.

It also was in 1888 that Cleveland Stone replaced the railroad spur that ran from the Olmsted Falls depot and into the quarry by crossing Plum Creek near the falls on the creek. On February 10, 1888, the newspaper’s Olmsted Falls column included this item: “The spur quarry track will be laid as soon as the weather will permit.”

The column followed up on May 4, 1888, with this: “The Stone Co. have a large gang of men laying track on their new spur.” On May 18, 1888, it had this item: “The quarry side track is at last completed and if the Stone Co. will now finish the bridge in satisfactory shape travel may once more be resumed on Main St.”

Then on May 25, 1888, the column included this: “Cleveland Stone Co. have completed their R.R. track and commenced transportation. It is hoped no time will be lost in placing the street in traveling condition which has been obstructed for months, resulting in great financial loss in trade to the tin and hardware business of Mrs. L.B. Adams, and the great inconvenience of the public.”

That complaint about how the company had failed to restore the street it tore up while constructing its new spur was the first of many such complaints against Cleveland Stone.

(To understand what happened, it’s important to note that the Main Street of the late 1880s was not the same roadway known today as Main Street but was part of what now is known as Columbia Road. Back then, Columbia Street included the section currently known as Main Street. It ran from Water Street south to Columbia Township.



This notch in the stone near the falls along Plum Creek might have helped anchor the trestle for the railroad spur into the quarry.

Main Street ran from the current location of the parking lot by Olmsted Community Church, went around the bend over Plum Creek and then headed north.)



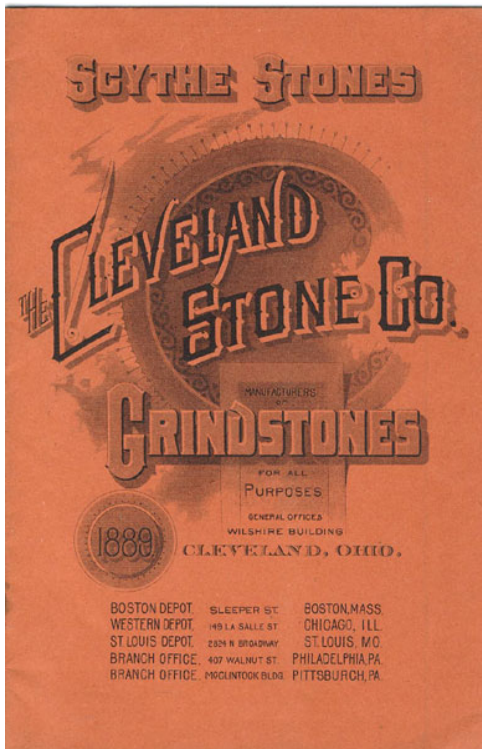
To the left, this portion of an 1892 map of Olmsted Falls produced by George F. Cram and Company shows how Columbia Street at the time extended south from Water Street and headed to Columbia Township, and Main Street went from where the parking lot near Olmsted Community Church is now, around the bend and then north. Today, most of the two combined is Columbia Road, and Main Street is just a short street north of where Columbia Road turns to go around the bend. The map also shows land along Plum Creek that was owned by Cleveland Stone Company. Much of that is now David Fortier River Park. Below left is a piece of rail from the old quarry spur that remains in the park. Below right is the path along the creek and under the bridge that once was the path the spur took to allow stones to be hauled out of the quarry, as can be seen on the map.



By coincidence, about the time Olmsted residents were growing impatient with the Cleveland Stone Company, former quarry owner and community-minded citizen Luther Barnum died. His health had been declining since before he sold his quarry to Cleveland Stone. For example, the *Advertiser* reported on January 8, 1886: “Mr. L. Barnum is still confined to the house with rheumatism.” Although not stated, it is possible Barnum suffered from silicosis after years of working around the dust from sandstone quarrying.

His end came early in the spring of 1888. The *Advertiser* reported on March 30, 1888: “Mr. Luther Barnum, one of our prominent citizens, died at his home after a protracted sickness, last Tuesday morning, aged 58 years. The funeral will take place Monday morning at 10:30 o’clock at the Catholic church, with which he united a few days before his death. A more extended notice will be made of his life hereafter.” His

remains were stored for a while in the vault at Turkeyfoot (Chestnut Grove) Cemetery before being buried in late April at St. Mary’s Catholic cemetery along what now is Bagley Road.



This is the cover of a 20-page catalogue of grindstones from the Cleveland Stone Company issued in 1889.

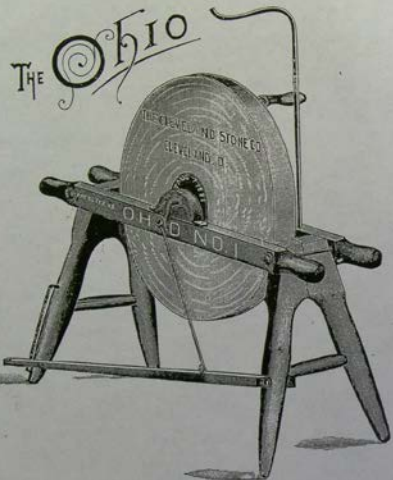
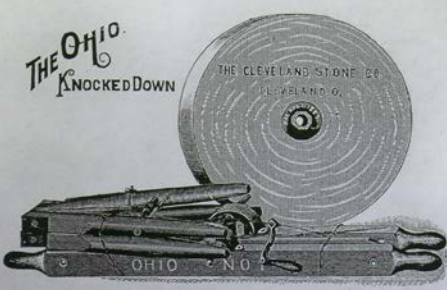
In addition to the contributions Barnum made to the village as mayor, he also made contributions as quarry operator, such as having his men help to repair a bridge over Plum Creek. By contrast, in the months after his death, failure to fix the street and a bridge was among the complaints against Cleveland Stone that appeared in the newspaper, such as this item on June 8, 1888: “The bridge across Plum creek which for several months last past has been undergoing repairs, is at last passable, to the extent of permitting one team to pass over at a time.”

That same Olmsted Falls column also included this item about how well the company seemed to be doing locally: “The quarry engine makes two trips a day to our quarries in a business like manner.” As often has happened in communities with a dominant local industry (such as towns in West Virginia dependent on coal mines or Rust Belt towns dependent on steel mills or automobile factories), Olmsted Falls developed a love-hate relationship with Cleveland Stone. Residents didn’t want to give up the economic benefits of the company’s operations but were frustrated with its callousness.

An Olmsted Falls column in the November 23, 1888, *Advertiser* provided examples of both sides of that relationship:

- “Contracts have been made by the Cleveland Stone Co. with Messrs. Bradford and Edis to strip on the north side of Plum Creek at 21c per sq. yd. Also with Ed. Reynolds to strip on South Side at 20c.”
- “The wages of quarrymen were cut to \$1.00 on Monday morning. Many refuse to work for these wages.”
- “Our Councilmen are good genial fellows, and perhaps good business men, but – we cannot commend them in allowing Main st. to remain in such a condition so long. It has been two years now since the sidewalk was taken up and the road made nearly impassable to accommodate the Cleveland Stone Co., which has and is no doubt doing much for our town. But is it necessary thus to make one of the most used thoroughfares impassable that they may take their time to do the work in. I think we heard a chorus of voices say no. These councilmen have the rights of Olmsted’s welfare to maintain and the condition of her roads and sidewalks should be looked to. At the most it would cause the stone Co. but little more if any trouble to complete the work now and save our people from another winter’s slop and slush.”

THE CLEVELAND STONE COMPANY, CLEVELAND, O.
THE CLEVELAND STONE COMPANY, CLEVELAND, O.

Mounted with Specially Selected Stone.

This Frame is made of the best selected seasoned hardwood. The legs are securely gained into the long side bars and fastened by a bolt passing through both, making the whole strong and rigid. The ends of the side bars are neatly turned to serve as handles.

The “Ohio” we consider one of our neatest frames, and it can be relied upon to give entire satisfaction, both as to appearance and durability.

Every frame is provided with Treadle, Crank and Bucket Holder, and the crank can be used as a wrench to tighten any nut on the frame.

Delivery of Goods to the carriers must be considered as delivery to the purchaser. The transport in all cases and under all conditions will be at the purchaser's expense.

All our Mounted Grindstones are turned perfectly true to their own axis before mounting. By the use of our Patent Fixture we are enabled to detach the shaft and leave the flanges fast to the stone. The shafts are all interchangeable and will fit one fixture as well as another.

The eye of the stone is filled with cement so that the fixture cannot jar out of place either in transportation or by rough usage.

The “Ohio” can be shipped either mounted complete ready for use, with the stone and frame separate or knocked-down, as shown by the above illustration.

PRICE LIST.

No.	Stone Weighs	Per Doz.
1	100 to 110 lbs.	\$72.00
2	70 to 80 "	60.00
3	40 to 50 "	54.00

The usual thickness of stone mounted is from 1 3/4 to 2 1/4 inches. When a different thickness is desired it must be mentioned in the order.

When not otherwise ordered, we ship Mounted Grindstones set up complete, ready for use. If desired to be sent knocked-down it should be so specified.

This page from a Cleveland Stone Company catalogue shows one example of a grindstone and frame the company offered. As the description says, the grindstone could be shipped fully assembled on its frame and ready for use or with the grindstone separate from the frame that was folded, or knocked-down, as the company put it.

Relations between the town and the company worsened over the next several weeks. On January 4, 1889, the *Advertiser* included this comment in its Olmsted Falls column:

The people of the Falls begin now to realize that a corporation is truly a heartless and soulless body. The belief has been unified by the operations of the stone company in stripping preparatory to spring quarrying. In crossing the sidewalk with their loaded wagons at various places they leave great deposits of clay upon the walk making it a thing next to impossible to pass. Columbia street is all tore up and the pedestrians drag off untold quantities of soil.

Olmsted Falls residents were not alone in their displeasure over Cleveland Stone's operations. In his 1970 book about Berea history, *Men of Grit and Greatness*, Holzworth wrote:

The Cleveland Stone Co. was big business, beholden only to directors and stockholders. The welfare of Berea was one of their lesser concerns. They had the money and money talked, so in many cases the Stone Co. proceeded with the assumption that they held the right of eminent domain as they tore up the streets and alleys, altered the water courses and piled in a heap the bones and coffins of Berea's first cemetery.

It would not be surprising to find records showing that other communities with Cleveland Stone quarries had similar complaints. Local residents' mixed feelings about Cleveland Stone continued even as the company cut back the pay for its workers, as these items from the *Advertiser* indicate:

- August 2, 1889, West View: "It is reported that a number of quarrymen are leaving; they are bound for Colorado. Their places will soon be filled."
- December 4, 1891, West View: "The stone quarries in this vicinity have reduced wages to winter prices; as a consequence a number of the hands left for their homes in different parts of the country."
- February 24, 1893, Olmsted Falls: "Cleveland Stone Co. are doing an unusual amount of stripping preparatory to spring work."



This stone with metal rods sticking out along East River Road is left from the quarry at West View.

- March 23, 1894, Olmsted Falls: “Quarry work is well begun – unearthing beautiful blocks of building and grindstone, and filling the deep pit so near the walk near the bridge.”

In the September 17, 1895, *Advertiser*, the Olmsted Falls columnist seemed alarmed by a rumor: “It is reported that Cleveland Stone Co. will soon shut down at this place.” That alarm might have indicated concern for what a quarry shutdown would mean for the local economy. But the shutdown must not have occurred as this item in the column for November 15, 1895, indicated: “Stripping is briskly going on in the quarries and it is a good thing to see the hole near the road diminishing in size.”

However, big trouble was ahead for the Cleveland Stone quarries, and it soon would bring national attention to Berea, West View, Olmsted Falls and other communities. *Olmsted 200* will have more on that in the next issue.

Reader Raises Mystery of Mayor Mahoney’s Movie

Ross Bassett, an *Olmsted 200* reader who contributed a photo and information for the story in Issue 81 about the old Olmsted Township School Number 4, also known as the Gage School, has brought up a mystery about Olmsted history. It is from his memory of an event from many years ago.

“I went to an Olmsted Falls old school and saw a very old turn of the century movie of Olmsted Falls and Berea,” he wrote. “I believe that the mayor of the Falls owned it and was showing it. I think his name was something like Mahoney. The movie was awesome and I would love to see it again.”

Bassett, who is a resident of North Olmsted and also president of the West Park Historical Society, thought maybe that showing of the movie occurred perhaps 25 years ago, but it apparently was earlier than that. If William Mahoney was mayor at the time, it had to occur in the years 1980 through 1983, when he served his two terms as mayor.

“He had dozens of people attend in a school auditorium somewhere in the Falls,” Bassett wrote. “He had several showings while playing some old ragtime music. I was there and I remember some great old video of downtown Berea and Olmsted. I also remember that they took shots in all four directions from the top of the old grade school on Bagley so the movie had to be post-1916 but it was still really old. This movie is just too good to just disappear. I hope it is on a shelf somewhere.”

From that description, it would seem as though it is too good to be left to disappear, but so far, no one knows what happened to it. Bill Eichenberg of the Historical Society of Olmsted Falls has sent emails to some longtime residents, but no one who has replied recalls the film. “It’s such a shame that things disappear,” he wrote.

If anyone knows what happened to that film, please contact *Olmsted 200* at: wallacestar@hotmail.com.

Mapmaker Remembers His Work

Issue 80 of *Olmsted 200* included a story about a map found by Susan Kalamajka-Ramer when she cleaned out her childhood home at 6880 Fitch Road. It was made in February 1968, apparently as a high school project, by Ken Safranski and shows Olmsted Falls, Olmsted Township and West View when those communities had far fewer streets and housing developments than exist today.

In the past month, his sister, Barbara (Safranski) Hart, has told *Olmsted 200* in an email that her brother is alive and well and living in Colorado. “He remembers the map,” she wrote. “He also drew the floor plan for the ‘new’ school.” That “new” school is Olmsted Falls High School, which opened in September 1968. Half a century later, the school received a new floor plan with a 40,000 foot expansion and the renovation of 49,500 square feet of existing space. Stories about the construction and renovation of the school can be found in *Olmsted 200* in Issue 63 from August 2018, Issue 64 from September 2018, Issue 65 from October 2018 and Issue 69 from February 2019.

Still to Come

The next issue of *Olmsted 200* will include a story about how turmoil at the quarries brought national attention to Olmsted Falls and West View.

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: *Olmsted 200* has readers in several states beyond Ohio, including California, Oregon, Washington, 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.

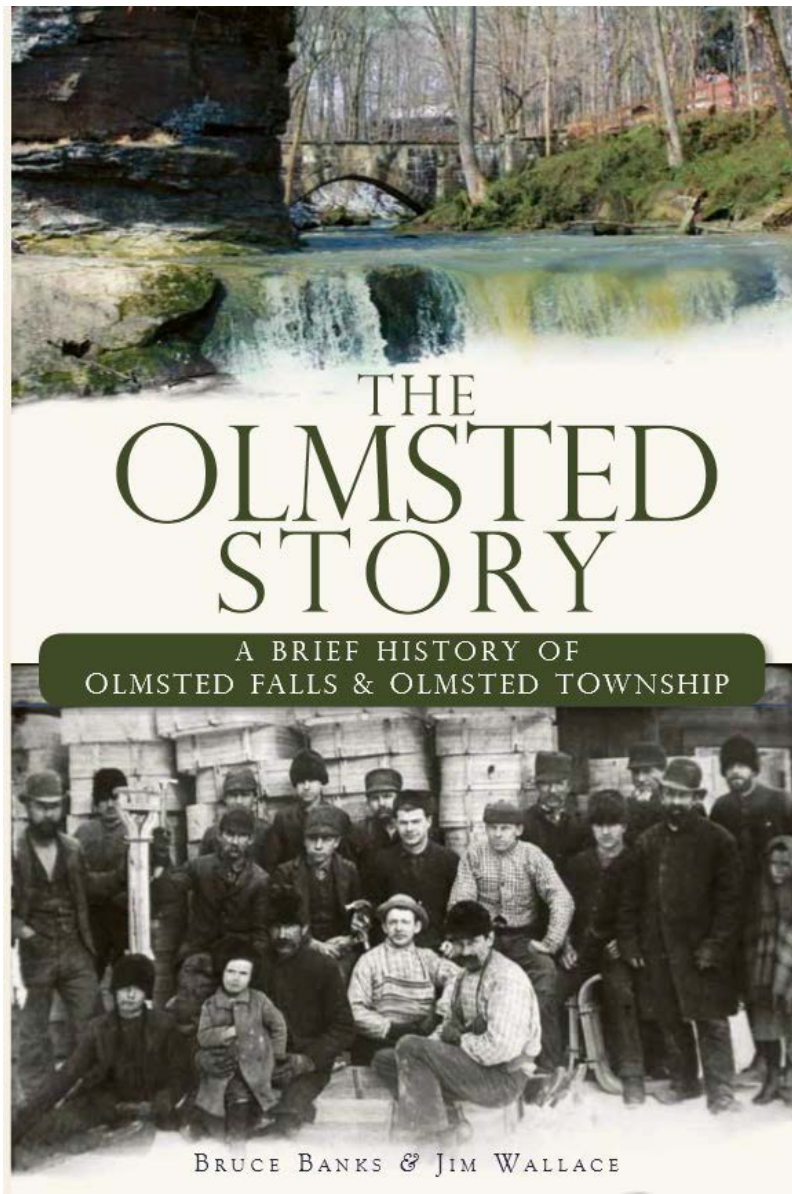
Your questions and comments about *Olmsted 200* are welcome. Perhaps there is something about Olmsted’s history that you would like to have pulled out of *Olmsted 200*’s extensive archives. Or perhaps you have information or photos about the community’s history that you would like to share.

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. 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 the Village Bean in Olmsted Falls and the Berea Historical Society's Mahler Museum & History Center and through online booksellers.



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