

OLMSTEAD

Olmstead Township History from History of Cuyahoga County, Ohio; Part Third: The Townships, compiled by Crisfield Johnson, 1879.

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OLMSTEAD TOWNSHIP HISTORY

Transcribed and Proofed by Denise Wells

The First Improvement - James Geer - Elijah and D. J. Stearns - A Large Purchase - D. J. Stearns Becomes a Pioneer - Celebrating the Fourth - Daniel Bunnell - Olmstead Called Kingston - Three Lonesome Years - High rice for wheat - First Marriage- first Birth - First Death - Amos Briggs - Mrs. Scales and the Wild Animals - Major Hoadley - His Girls Raise a House - Remarkable Death of John Hanley - Settlers After 1819 - First Gristmill - First Religious Organizations - Indian Sugar Bush - Organization of Lenox - Divisions of Lenox - Reorganization - First Officers Afterward - A Big "Black Squirrel" - Lenox Changes to Olmstead - The Seven Fitches - Mr. Barnum's House - Kilpatrick's Mill - First Tavern - The Union Meeting-house - A Lyceum on Butternut Ridge - General Improvement - The Railroads - Olmstead Falls and Lake View - The War - Stone Quarries - The Universalist Church - Wesleyan Methodist Church - Methodist Episcopal Church - Congregational Church on the Ridge - St. Mary's Church - Congregational Church at the Falls - Union School - Lyceum, etc., in District Number One - Olmstead Falls Village - Principal Township Officers.

Township six and range fifteen, now known as Olmstead, saw the first improvement made while war was still raging along the not distant frontier. In the year 1814 James Geer, then a resident of Columbia, which is now in Lorain County, but was at that time in Cuyahoga, cut out the underbrush and girdled the trees on a small piece of land in the southwest corner of the township, on what has since been known as the Browning farm. This he planted to corn the same year, and raised such a crop as he could among the trees.

The next spring, after the declaration of peace, Mr. Geer put up a small log house at the place first mentioned, and moved thither with his family, becoming the first permanent resident of the present township of Olmstead. His son, Calvin Geer, was then a boy of seven, and is now the earliest surviving resident of the township. Wild beasts swarmed all around, and often appeared in the edge of the little clearing. One of young Calvin's oldest recollections is regarding the slaughter by his father of a bear which showed himself one Sunday evening, soon after their arrival, on the bank of Rocky River, not far from their cabin. Mr. Geer's first shot broke the animal's back, but such was his size and vitality that it took three more balls to kill him.

The same year, 1815, Elijah Stearns and his son, David Johnson Stearns, came to Kingston, as Olmstead was then called, to select land for future settlement. The senior Mr. Stearns had a large family of boys, and was desirous to obtain an extensive tract of land for their use. He selected and purchased a

thousand and two acres on Butternut Ridge, in the northwest part of the township, at two dollars per acre. Of this it was arranged that D. J. Stearns was to have a hundred and fifty acres. The latter was then an active, enterprising young man of twenty-one, with a constitution remarkably well fitted to bear the hardships of frontier life, as is shown by the fact that after passing through the whole pioneer period of Olmstead's existence, and after residing sixty-three years in the township, he still survives, at the age of eighty-five, in a condition of remarkable physical vigor, and of undiminished mental power.

It was expected that the proprietors would send a surveyor to lay out the land, and D. J. Stearns waited awhile for his arrival, in the meantime clearing off a small piece of land near the present residence of Buel Stearns. He then returned to Vermont.

In 1816, having perfected the purchase of his land, he came back to Kingston to reside upon it. He was accompanied by his brother Alva, and by Asa Knapp, but they only remained long enough to help him put up a log house and make a beginning in the woods. Mr. Stearns still preserves a note of three hundred and thirty-four dollars, one of four given by the Stearns' for land, to the trustees of the estate of Aaron Olmstead, who had been in his lifetime the proprietor of the township. Young Stearns had a sub-agency under Judge Kirtland, the agent of the proprietors, to sell their land. He, however, had sold only two lots when the owners stopped the sale. The Fourth of July, 1816, was celebrated by Mr. Stearns, assisted by Mr. Geer, in clearing out the "ridge road" from Rocky River, along Butternut ridge, toward the home of the former. They worked from sunrise till sunset, cutting out the saplings so as to make a passable pathway, for a distance of two miles.

That same spring Daniel Bunnell moved from Columbia to the northeast corner of Olmstead, and built a rough plank house, becoming the third resident of the township. As we have said, the township was then called Kingston, but this name had no legal validity; it was merely applied at the fancy of the proprietors to survey-township number six. Many such names were given on the Western Reserve, some of which were retained, while others were changed.

Owing to the stoppage of the sale of land by the proprietors, young Stearns remained almost alone in that part of the township until 1819, keeping bachelor's hall the whole time. In 1817 he was obliged to pay three dollars a bushel for wheat, which he bought near Black River. Having other business to attend to, he gave half of it to another man to take to mill. The latter went with a yoke of oxen, and, finding the nearer mill closed for want of water, he was obliged to go to Chagrin River to get the wheat ground. It took him a week to go and return. Salt at the same time was twenty dollars a barrel.

The first wedding in the township was that of Harvey Hartson and Eunice Parker, which took place at the residence of James Geer, in the spring of 1817, Hartson located himself near Geer. The same spring and at the same house, occurred the first birth, that of Mr. Geer's daughter, Julie. The child died when two years old, this being the first death in the township.

In 1817 Amos Briggs settled on the west part of Butternut Ridge, on what has since been known as the Robb farm. In 1818 Isaac Scales built a house and brought his family to live on the east end of the ridge, near Rocky River. He and his wife lived there without neighbors about a year. As he was obliged to go to Columbia to work most of the time, Mrs. Scales had a most lonesome experience. Often, she had to get up in the night with a broom, to drive the wildcats out of the loft of her house. One day she saw a bear hugging the dog to death in the front yard. She took down the old musket from over the fireplace, but finally concluded that it would be more dangerous than the bear. The latter left the dog apparently dead, and waddled off into the woods. Poor Tray, however, recovered from the effects of his extremely bad

company, but in a very dilapidated condition. Add to such events as those the frequent appearance of wandering Indians and it must be admitted that there was enough to try a woman's nerves most severely.

In February, 1819, Mr. Stearns was married to Polly Barnum; this being, we believe, the second wedding in the township.

A little later in the same spring Major Samuel Hoadley settled near Scales's place, at the east end of Butternut Ridge. He and his family at first occupied a log house, but immediately began the erection of a framed one. After the frame was completed, ready to raise, one day late in the summer Major Hoadley and his wife went away for the day, leaving at home his daughters, Maria and Eunice, the carpenter James Miles and a man named Eliot Smith. During the day Mrs. Scales also came over to visit them. The two girls, both enterprising wide-awake young women determined that they would surprise their parents by raising the new house while they were gone. It was not a very large one, the timbers were light, the carpenter offered to help and to see that the work was done properly, young Smith was very ready to give his best assistance, and Mrs. Scales proffered a pair of arms not at all to be despised.

So at it they went. Under Mr. Miles's direction they all took hold, carried the timbers to their proper position, fitted the sills into place, and matched the bents together. Then with hands and pike-poles the three women and two men started a bent upward, and to the cheery "heave-ho!" of the carpenter steadily raised it to its place. The other work quickly followed, and when Major and Mrs. Hoadley returned at nightfall, their eyes were greeted with the sight of a frame completely erected and ready for the clapboards, while, to their astonished inquiries, two demure young ladies answered quietly, "Oh, we did it;" as if raising houses was the commonest thing in the world for them to do.

The next spring Maria Hoadley, one of the heroines of this adventure, was married to John Adams, a newly arrived young pioneer. They settled nearby, have ever since resided in the township, and now live at West View. Eunice Hoadley afterward became Mrs. John Barnum.

The second death, and first serious accident in the township, occurred in the autumn of 1819, in a very peculiar manner. Mr. D. J. Stearns had a boy of Irish parentage, named John Hanley, about fifteen years old, living with him, whose parents resided in Ridgeville, now Lorain County. One day the boy obtained permission to visit his home, promising to return in time to do the chores at night. The night set in dark, and the boy did not appear. His wife being absent Mr. Stearns was in his house alone. Late in the night he heard an agonized voice shrieking "Oh, dear! Oh! Dear!" at some distance from the house. For a moment it ceased, and then it was heard again nearer than before. Mr. Stearns stepped out of the door, where he was suddenly grasped by a man who flung his arms around him in a state of frantic excitement, crying out at the same time: "Oh! My boy is kilt! My boy is kilt! My boy is kilt!"

As soon as Mr. Stearns could recover from his astonishment, and get the man to the light, he found that his visitor was Mr. Hanley, the father of John. It was with great difficulty that he could quiet the frantic Irishman so as to obtain even the slightest idea of what was the matter. At length, however, he succeeded in learning from the broken ejaculations of the distracted father, mingled with sobs and groans, and cries of anguish, that Hanley and his son had been coon-hunting and that a large tree had fallen upon his boy and probably crushed him to death, a mile or two out in the woods, to the northeast. Knowing that he could do nothing without assistance, Mr. Stearns made Hanley promise to remain at the house until he could obtain aid. His nearest neighbor, Amos Briggs, was absent, and there were no others nearer than a mile and a half. He accordingly went to Mr. Brigg's stable, and took his horse to go

for help. Ere he could mount, however, Hanley came rushing up, and again flung his arms about the young man, crying out that his "boy was kilt" in all the agony of unreasoning despair. Again Mr. Stearns pacified him, and persuaded him to return to the house. The former then rode a mile and a half, and obtained the help of three newcomers, Bennett Powell, Job Cole and another whose name is not recollected.

The four returned with all speed to Stearn's house, where they found the desolate father with whom they set out to find the scene of the disaster. Hanley, however, had been so frightened and demoralized by the catastrophe that he could give no clear idea of the direction to be taken. Nevertheless, he thought it was somewhat east of north, and he knew there was a turning tree where the sad event had occurred. The five men hurried forward through the darkness in the general direction indicated, and at length, saw a light in advance. Shaping their course toward it, they soon arrived at the turning tree. There they soon found that the distracted father's words were but too true; the poor boy was indeed killed. A large ash tree lay where it had fallen, directly across the youth's head, which was crushed out of all semblance of humanity, while his body was raised from the ground by the pressure on his head.

It seems as they gathered from Hanley's broken statements, and his subsequent utterances in a quieter state, that he had persuaded his son to remain and hunt coons with him, instead of returning to the Stearns' that night. They had gone east a mile or two along the line between townships six and seven (Olmstead and Dover), and had then borne southward into the former township. At length, the night being cold and damp, they built a fire at the foot of a hollow ash tree, and determined to wait for the moon. The boy lay down upon a grassy knoll a short distance from the fire, while his father sat with his back to a hickory tree in the opposite direction, and both men went to sleep.

An hour or so later the old man was awakened by a tremendous crash, directly over his head. The hollow ash had burned off and had fallen against the hickory by which Hanley sat. The tough wood of the latter bent before the blow and then recoiled with such force that it threw the ash back in the opposite direction, so as to fall directly across the head of the sleeping boy. His father was so frightened and horrified that he ran screaming into the woods entirely at random, and by mere accident came out at Mr. Stearns' clearing.

When the four Americans saw the situation, they went to work with the axes which they had of course brought with them to chop off the tree on each side of the corpse. Mr. Stearns, however, was obliged to devote himself to holding the half-crazy father to keep him from running under the axes of the choppers in the fruitless attempt to extricate his child. Beneath the sturdy blows of the pioneers the tree was soon severed on either side, and the body taken out. It was carried back to Stearns' where it was kept the remainder of the night and then taken to Hanley's place in Ridgeville.

The accident happened in such a remarkable way that it was long the subject of evening talk among the pioneers of Olmstead.

After 1819 emigrants came in more rapidly than before. Among those who came within the next five years, besides those already named, were Isaac Frost, Elias Frost, Zennas Barnum, Harry Barnum, Crosby Baker, Horace F. Adams, Amos Wolf, Truman Wolf, Christian Wolf, Charles Usher, Hezekiah Usher, Ransom J. Adams, Hosea Bradford, H. G. Seekins, Natrons Usher, Noble Hotchkiss, Thomas Briggs, Otis Briggs, Alvah Stearns, Elijah Stearns Jr., Vespasian Stearns, Eliot Stearns, Lyman Frost, Hosea Bradford, Lucine Adams, and A. G. R. Stearns. Besides the six Stearns brothers who have been named, a seventh, Sidney, began improvements in the township, but died in a short time afterward.

During this period Lemuel Hoadley and Crosby Baker built the first gristmill and sawmill in the township, on the west branch of Rocky River, just above the junction with the east branch. A small society of the Methodist Church was organized and occasional meetings were held. Clearings were made here and there in all parts of the townships except the southwestern section, which was the last to be settled.

Old Indian wigwams were still standing, and Indians frequently came and set their traps for the various fur-bearing animals, which still abounded. D. J. Stearns found an old Indian sugar bush on the place afterward occupied by Mr. A. Tyler, thither the Indians were accustomed to come annually to make sugar, rather, the squaws made the sugar and the Indians ate it. They made sap-troughs out of birch-bark, which they brought with them from Sandusky, there being no birch in Olmstead. Kettles to boil the sap in must have been procured from the whites, but after they had "sugared off" they were accustomed to make a great store-trough of the elm bark, which would hold twelve or fifteen barrels. Here the sugar was kept for common use, while the tribe remained in that section; the remnant being carried with them when they returned to Sandusky.

In the forepart of 1823 number six in range fifteen, was formed into a civil township by the name of Lenox, and on the 14th of April in that year it was organized by the election of its first officers. The principal of these were Amos Briggs, Waltrous Usher, and Hosea Bradford, as trustees, D. J. Stearns, clerk, and Isaac Frost, Treasurer. Lenox continued in existence two years at this time. In 1823 it was cut in twain, and the east half of it again attached to Middleburg, while the western portion was made a part of Ridgeville, Lorain County.

This state of affairs continued two years more, when the west half of the township was set back into Cuyahoga County, the two halves were united, and the breath of municipal life was breathed into the defunct form of Lenox. The first elections in the resuscitated township were held on the 18th of June, 1827, E. C. Frost, Thomas Briggs and Harry Barnum being the judges of the election. As this is the first complete list we have of officers chosen in the territory now constituting Olmstead, we give it entire. Besides, it will show a good portion of those who were residents of the township in 1827, as it must have taken half of them to hold the offices. The list is as follows:

Trustees, Truman Wolf, Alvah Stearns and Elias C. Frost; clerk, D. J. Stearns; Treasurer, Isaac C. Frost; constables, Joel B. Lawrence and Elliott Stearns; overseers of the poor, John Barnum and Elias P. Usher; fence viewers, Olden T. Thompson and Harry Schultz; supervisors of highways, Daniel Bunnell, Hezekiah Usher, H. F. Adams and Elliot Smith. Besides these, Watrous Usher was a justice of the peace. The first tax was half a mill on the dollar. Immediately after the organization the township was divided into three school districts.

About this period Watrous Usher built a sawmill at Olmstead Falls, being the first improvement at that now thriving village.

By this time the rifles began to be a little too thick even for the bears, which had previously flourished in great abundance. In fact, it seems as if Bruin was more prosperous for several years after the advent of the white man than he had been before; for in a short time after his arrival nearly every settler had fifteen or twenty hogs roaming through the woods, and nothing suited better the taste of the bears, who killed and devoured great numbers of them.

But, as has been said, the rifles were getting too thick for them. Our friend Stearns. Whom we have so often referred to, was not a "mighty hunter," having observed that mighty hunters seldom made good farmers. Like nearly everybody else, however, he kept a rifle, and one day he loaned it (to hunt squirrels) to a youngster who was at work for him, who seems not to have been very bright for a pioneer boy, and who must have been a newcomer.

After hunting awhile, he found something in a hollow tree, which he supposed to be a monstrous black squirrel. Sticking his rifle into the hollow, close to the animal's head, he fired. The "black squirrel" came out growling, and sorely wounded-not so badly, however, but that he could conquer and mangle terrible the dog which was with the youngster, and which was bold enough to attack him. Astonished and alarmed at such obstreperous conduct on the part of a "black squirrel" the youth made his way home as fast as possible. As soon as he saw his employer he cried out (calling him by the name by which he was commonly known): "Oh, Johnson! I seen the monstrousness biggest black squirrel, and immediately out in the woods that ever I seen in all my born days."

Mr. Stearns directed him to describe this wonderful squirrel, and immediately recognized it as a bear. The next morning, he and three of his friends started out to slay the animal. Being piloted by the boy to the tree before mentioned, they found it marked with blood six feet from the ground, where the creature had stood up and rubbed his wounded hear against it. The hunters began to think that they, too, were mistaken as well as the boy, for the marks seemed to indicate something rather too large even for a bear.

However, they followed the trail, which was plainly marked with blood, for several miles, and at last came up with the "squirrel." They found it to be a bear, but the largest one, Mr. Stearns says, which he ever saw in all his pioneer experience. One of the parties shot and killed him, and it was then found that the bullet of the blundering boy has passed through his nose and broken one of his jaws.

After 1830 the bears rapidly disappeared. Deer, however, remained; though in constantly decreasing numbers, and occasionally one was to be seen as late as the building of the Cleveland, Columbus and Cincinnati railroad. Wild turkeys, too, abounded, even to a still later period, and the number of their bodies early brought to the tables of the settlers might at one time have been counted by hundreds. For two years after the second organization of Lenox, the township continued to bear that name. During the year 1829, however, Mr. Charles H. Olmstead, who had become the owner of the north part of it as the heir of Aaron Olmstead, deceased, offered to make the people a present of a library if they would change the name of Lenox to Olmstead. The offer was accepted at a township meeting, the name was duly changed by the proper authorities, and the library was duly presented. The first election under the name of Olmstead was held in 1830.

In 1831 four young men, brothers, by the name of Fitch, settled in the central part of the township, and these were followed a year or so later by three more. These seven brothers were Chester, Eli, Horance, Chauncey, Elisha, Daniels and Sandford Fitch. The families planted by them and by the Stearns brothers have grown and flourished mightily, and from that day to this Olmstead has been celebrated for its Fitches and its Stearns; it being almost impossible to find a list of Olmstead men associated in political, religious or social life which did not contain some members of both these families.

It was about this period (1830) that Major Hoadley and his son-in-law, John Barnum, built a sawmill on Plum creek at Olmstead falls. Barnum moved thither to attend to the business, and as there was no house, he proceeded to make one in short order. He cut down a large whitewood tree near the bank of

the creek, and this formed one end of his house. A few smaller logs were laid up, some saplings placed on top to support a temporary roof and the mansion was complete. However, Mr. Barnum speedily constructed a more commodious residence. His son, Luther Barnum, a well-known citizen of Olmstead Falls, was then a year old.

Uriah Kilpatrick soon after built a little "packet" gristmill, also on Plum creek. Both the mill and its owner were of a slow and easy nature, and the patience of his customers was sometimes severely tried. A poor fellow named Powell, sharp enough naturally but with shattered intellect, who used to string verse together for the edification of people, once applied to Mr. Barnum, who was a justice of the peace, for a warrant against Kilpatrick for some imaginary offense. Barnum refused it, but to divert Powell's mind told him he might make some verses against the offender, which would be just as effective as a warrant. The rhymester, desirous to hit the justice as well as the miller, studied a few moments, and delivered himself as follows:

*"Iron beetles are seldom found,
but basswood justices abound
on the banks of Rocky River
Tall Kilpatrick's nose doth quiver;
There he sits in his slow mill
Which most folks think is standing still.*

Kilpatrick's little mill was kept up ten or twelve years and then abandoned. Hoadley & Barker's gristmill, down near the junction, was transferred to Loyal Peck, but this, too, has long since ceased to exist. Shortly after Kilpatrick's, Peter Kidney built a gristmill on the river, below the mouth of Plum creek. N. P. Loomis, who came to Olmstead Falls in 1834, says there was then no road cut through the village; nothing but a path along the river bank. The main road, however, was "slashed out," but was not ready for use. Where the Union school house now stands was a frog pond, and there were only six houses on the ground now occupied by the village.

Some of the pioneers had made a practice of keeping travelers, when necessary, but it was not until about this period that there was a regular hotel in the township. It was kept by William Romp, who erected a large framed building for the purpose, near the river, below Butternut Ridge. He also carried on the first store in the township, at the same point except, perchance, a few goods kept for sale in the house of settlers.

It was about 1835 that the first church edifice was erected in the township. It was a union church, built by Presbyterians, Methodists and Universalists, each denomination raising what they could, and the time which each was allowed to occupy it being in proportion to the amount subscribed. It was subsequently used as a town house, being located at what was called town-house corners, some two miles north of Olmstead Falls. It was used for that purpose until about 1849, when the town business was removed to Olmstead Falls.

The first Sunday-school in the township was established on Butternut Ridge in 1833 or '34. The ridge was settled by a very enterprising, wide-awake set of people, and all intellectual and moral improvements found ready encouragement at their hands. As early as 1837 a lyceum or debating school, was formed in school district number one, toward the east end of the ridge, being the first institution of the kind in the township. Something of that class has been maintained there almost ever since, and we will have something more to say of it a little farther on.

Meanwhile, the township was rapidly assuming the outward garb of civilization. The clearings on each farm, at first small, were extended so as to include the larger part of the area; log houses gave place to frames, pumps appeared instead of the picturesque but inconvenient well-sweeps which were previously seen in every door-yard, and a hundred minor changes indicated by the end of the first half of the century that the pioneer period had changed into the farming period. Yet deer were still sometimes seen in the southwest part of the township, and occasionally one strayed into other sections, and the young men had not lost the skill of their fathers, so but that they were soon out in arms to make venison of the unlucky intruder.

In 1849, the Cleveland, Columbus and Cincinnati railroad was built through the southeast part of the township. This gave a still greater impetus to settlement, and the last of the wild animals soon disappeared before the shriek of the locomotives. In January, 1853, the Toledo, Norwalk and Cleveland railroad (now a part of the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern) was opened for use; running almost exactly east and west in a straight line through the center of the township.

Villages grew up around the two depots; that on the Cleveland, Columbus, Cincinnati and Indianapolis Road being called West View, while that on the Lake Shore Road retained its old name of Olmstead Falls. On the 7th of April 1856, the latter village was incorporated under that name, although at its first election only twenty-six votes were cast. The next year the embryo village of Plum Creek was added to Olmstead Falls; making a town which covered a very large area in proportion to its population, but which has been steadily though slowly filling up ever since. West View is a smaller village, a store, two or three shops and about thirty houses. In 1856 the basement of the Methodist church at Olmstead Falls was purchased by the township for a town house, at a cost of two hundred and fifty dollars.

The part taken by the soldiers of Olmstead in the war for the Union is told in the records of the Cuyahoga County regiments, in the general history of the county. Since the war the history of the township has been uneventful, as is the case with most farming communities, after the close of the pioneer era. The most important event has been the opening of quarries of building stone along the banks of Rocky River, of the same quality as the celebrated Berea stone, which is staked out only a few miles distant. A quarry was opened near West View in 1870, which has been successfully carried on ever since. It employs about twenty-five hands and a railroad has been built to carry the stone from the quarry to West View station. Two quarries were also opened at Olmstead Falls, and for five or six years employed fifty men each, but were closed in 1876. The following is a list of the various business places, shops, etc. at the Falls; General stores, four; drug stores, two; tailor shop, one; blacksmiths' shop, three; shoe shops three; tin shop, one; grist mill, one; broom factory, one; fellowship, one; lumber yard, one. The population of the village is about seven hundred.

We will now give some sketches and statistics which could not well be incorporated in the general story of the township.

THE UNIVERSALIST CHURCH (BUTTERNUT RIDGE)

This church was organized by Rev. Harlow P. Sage as early as 1834, being one of the first Universalist churches in this section. Rev. Stephen Hall was the first minister, and preached from that time some twelve or fifteen years. He was succeeded by Rev. Isaac R. Henry, who officiated about ten years. As before stated, the Universalists, soon after the formation of the society, united with the Methodist and

Presbyterians in building a union house of worship. In 1847 they erected one of their own; a commodious framed edifice on Butternut Ridge, which has ever since been occupied by them. After Mr. Henry the pulpit was occupied in succession by Messrs. Tillotson, French, Shipman, Sykes, Rice, Weeks and Canfield. In 1878 a lady, the Rev. Mrs. Danforth, was called to the pastorate, which she has since acceptably filled. The church now numbers a little over sixty members. It was legally organized in 1868. Its present trustees are Buel Stearns, Jonathan Carpenter and John Foster.

THE WESLEYAN METHODIST CHURCH (WEST VIEW)

This society was formed on the fourth day of April 1843; the first members, whose names are preserved, being Ransom Bronson and Harriet M., his wife; John Adams and Maria, his wife; Lucius Adams and Electa, his wife; Mary Banarce and Sarah Banarce. James Pearson and William Beeham were then the circuit preachers. The organization was called Hoadley's Mills church, or station, until 1861 when it received the name of West View. From such records as can be found we learn that in 1863 the ministers on the circuit were A. W. Sanders, W. B. Moody and G. C. Hicks; in 1864 and '65, E. D. Find; in 1866 and '67 Thomas F. Hicks; in 1868, '69 and '70 J. Nettleton; in 1871, '72 and '73, J. E. Carrol; in 1874, '75 and '76, J. Nettleton; in 1877, William Snell; in 1878 William Moody.

The stewards are H. Walkden, Joseph Reed and J. Case; the clerk and treasurer, O. P. Smith; the trustees, R. Bronson, T. Price, J. Adams, A. J. Pickard and B. Ruple. Since 1865 the church has been a part of Rocky River circuit (previously of Strongsville), which is composed of West View and North Olmstead churches.

NORTH OLMSTEAD CHURCH (WESLEYAN METHODIST)

The church edifice belonging to this society is situated in the extreme northeast corner of the township of Olmstead, but its congregation comes principally from Rockport and Dover. Its ministers since 1865 have been the same as those above given as officiating at West View.

METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH (OLMSTEAD FALLS)

There had been early preaching by the Methodists in Olmstead, but no society was regularly organized until 1843. From that time forward services were punctually held, and in 1851 the present framed church building was erected at Olmstead Falls. The latter preachers, who are all whose names we can obtain have been Uriah Richards, in 1872 '73 and '74; Banias Ushower in 1875 and '76; James Burleson in 1878.

The trustees are Lester Bradford, Charles Monks, Chauncey Fitch, William Butlin, Ashhel Osborn. The stewards are the same, with the addition of David Wright and Freeman Bradford. The church is now a part of Olmstead and Columbia circuit.

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH (ON BUTTERNUT RIDGE)

The church edifice occupied by this society was originally built for the use of the Methodists over thirty years ago. In the course of time, however, most of the members of that denomination in that vicinity died or moved away, and in 1872 the building was transferred to the Congregationalists, who have since held regular services in it. The first pastor was H. C. Johnson, who remained one year; E. P. Clisbee, one year; _____ Westervelt, one and a half years; D. M. Bosworth, one and a half years; Richard Grosvenor, one year; and Rev. John Patchin, who began his services in 1878. The deacons are Richard

Carpenter, James Garrison, Mr. Youngs and Benjamin Salisbury. The church is now in a prosperous condition and numbers about fifty members.

ST. MARY'S CHURCH (CATHOLIC)

In the year 1856 Father Louis Filiere organized St. Mary's Church, and the same year the congregation erected the commodious church edifice at Olmstead Falls. Father Filiere remained in charge as priest until 1874. He was succeeded by Father Edward J. Murphy, who remained until 1876, when he gave place to Father James M. Cullen, the present incumbent. The church building was originally in the north part of the village, but has been moved to a pleasant site in the southern portion. A stone parsonage stands near it, and there is also a school-house in which a school has been kept for the last few years. The councilmen are John Dalton, Patrick McCarty and Joseph Ward. There are now about forty families connected with the church.

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH (OLMSTEAD FALLS)

This was the first church organized in the township, of which any record is preserved, the date of its formation being the 18th day of April, 1835. The first members were Mary Ann Fitch, Jerusha Loomis, Cynthia House, Catherine Nelson, Abner N. Nelson, Sylvester Nelson, Sumner W. Nelson, William Wood, Mary Ann Wood, Rachel Wait, Emeline Spencer, Lydia Cane, Jotham Howe, Anna S. How, Harriet Dryden, Esther E. Kennedy.

The fortunes of the church have been very changeful; some of the time no pastor has been employed, and still more of the time no records have been preserved. It was at first connected with the Cleveland presbytery, but soon after joined the Congregational association. Rev. Israel Mattison was the first regular pastor, beginning his services in 1831. Among those who have followed him have been Rev. James Steels in 1844; Rev. O. W. White in 1854; Rev. E. P. Clisbee in 1857; Rev. Z. P. Disbrow, at various times from 1862 to 1870; Rev. Q. M. Bosworth in 1876; Rev. Richard Grogan in 1877; Rev. John Patchin in 1878. The church building was erected in 1848. The trustees are Hugh Kyle, O. W. Kendall and N. P. Loomis.

OLMSTEAD FALLS UNION SCHOOL

This very creditable institution has about a hundred and fifty scholars, and is graded in three departments, primary, intermediate and high school, though sometimes only two teachers are employed. The school-house, a very fine brick building for a village of that size, two stories high, with ample and convenient rooms, was erected in 1874.

LYCEUM, SCHOOL, ETC., IN DISTRICT NO. ONE

As we have stated in the general sketch of the township, a lyceum, or debating school, was organized in this district in 1837. and the people of "the Ridge" were somewhat noted for their fondness for whatever intellectual exercises could be indulged in a secluded situation. In 1852, on the occasion of building a new school house in district No. 1, eight young men and boys put their loose change together bought the old house, and moved it on to the land of V. and E. Stearns to be used as a meeting-place for the lyceum. It was used for that purpose until 1860. The Good Templars were then given the use of it and occupied it about fifteen years. In 1878 it was transferred to the district board of education, and is now used for the high department of the grade school which has been organized in district No. 1.

OLMSTEAD FALLS VILLAGE

First election April 7, 1856. Officers elected: Thomas Brown, mayor; Wm. S. Carpenter, recorder; H. S. Howe, N. P. Loomis, William W. Smith, Thos. Broadwell and George C. Knight, trustees.

List of Mayors: Wm. S. Carpenter, 1856 and '57; Wm. Gidding, (Chauncey Mead elected in May) 1856; O. W. Kendall, 1859 and '60; N. P. Loomis, 1861; John Lay, 1862; Elisha Fitch, (W. S. Carpenter elected in May) 1863; D. H. Cottrell, 1864; O. W. Kendall, 1865; H. K. Minor, 1866 and '67; L. B. Adams, 1869, '70 and '71; Luther Barnum, 1872, '73, '74 and '75; L. B. Adams, 1876 and '77; re-elected for two years in 1878.

PRINCIPAL TOWNSHIP OFFICERS

(so far as they can be obtained from the records)

1823. (Lenox) Trustees: Amos Briggs, Watrous Usher, Hosea Bradford; clerk, D. J. Stearns; treasurer, Isaac Frost.

1824. Not recorded.

1825 and '26. Township annulled and divided.

1827. (Lenox reorganized) Trustees, Truman Wolf, Alvah Stearns, Elias C. Frost; clerk, D. J. Stearns; treasurer, Isaac Frost; overseers of the poor, John Barnum, Elias P. Usher.

1828. (Lenox) Trustees, David Ross, Alvah Stearns, Lucius Adams; clerk, D. J. Stearns; treasurer, Thomas Briggs; overseers of the poor; E. C. Frost, H. Bradford.

1829. (Lenox) Trustees, D. Ross, A. Stearns, L. Adams; clerk, D. J. Stearns; treasurer, Buel Peck; overseers of the poor, Peter Romp, Ardello Harris.

1830. (Olmstead) Trustees, Noble Hotchkiss, David Ross, Vespasian Stearns; clerk, D. J. Stearns (declined, and Jonas Clisbee appointed); treasurer, A. Stearns; overseers of the poor; E. C. Frost, Jonathan Thompson.

1831. Trustees, Vespasian Stearns, Elliot Smith, Amos Briggs; clerk, Jonathon Clisbee; treasurer, A. Stearns, overseers of the poor, E. C. Frost, Thomas Briggs.

1832. Trustees, A. Briggs, J. Barnum, John Kennedy; clerk, J. Clisbee; treasurer, John Adams.

1833. Trustees, J. Kennedy, N. Hotchkiss, J. Carpenter; clerk, J. Clisbee; treasurer, J. Adams; overseers of the poor, D. Ross, George Keeler.

1834. Trustees, D. J. Stearns, N. Hotchkiss, L. Adams; clerk, Orson Spencer; treasurer, J. Adams; overseers of the poor, Elliot Stearns, J. Adams.

1835. Trustees, D. J. Stearns, William Wood, Nelson Hoadley; clerk, O. Spencer; treasurer, J. Adams; overseers of the poor, N. Hotchkiss, J. Carpenter.

1836. Trustees, William Wood, Jonas Clisbee, Hiram Frisbee; clerk, O. Spencer; treasurer, Nahum Rice; overseers of the poor, Amos Briggs, Cyrus P. Dryden.

1837. Trustees, Hiram Frisbee, Vespasian Stearns, Nelson Hoadley; treasurer, Hiram B. Gleason; clerk, Chester Phillips; overseers of the poor, William Wood, Nahum Rice.

1838. Trustees, Peter Kidney, Vespasian Stearns, John Kennedy; clerk, Jotham Howe; treasurer, H. B. Gleason; overseers of the poor, J. Carpenter, Sanford Fitch.

1839. Trustees, Hiram Frisbee, Sanford Fitch, John Kennedy; clerk, A. W. Ingalls; treasurer; Jotham Howe; overseers of the poor; O W. Hotchkiss, Abner Nelson.

1840. Trustees, Vespasian Stearns, Chauncey Fitch, William Wood; clerk, Jotham Howe; treasurer, Elisha Fitch; overseers of the poor, John Carpenter, Alden Thompson.

1841. Trustees, John Kennedy, Horace F. Adams, Chauncey Fitch; clerk, J. Howe; treasurer, Elisha Fitch;

overseer of the poor, Amos Thompson.

1842. Trustees, H. Frisbee, J. Kennedy, S. Fitch; clerk, Chester Phillips; treasurer, Hiram Gleason; overseers of the poor, E. Fitch, N. B. Sage.

1843. Trustees, Vespasian Stearns, H. Frisbee, S. Fitch; clerk, C. Phillips; treasurer, E. Fitch; overseers of the poor, Amos Briggs, Orson Spencer, assessor, D. J. Stearns.

1844. Trustees, John Kennedy, Elliot Stearns, Joseph S. Allen; clerk, C. Phillips; treasurer, William Romp; overseers of the poor, H. B. Gleason, J. N. Lawrence, assessor, John Barnum.

1845. Trustee, Oliver Weldon, C. Fitch, E. Fitch; clerk, C. Phillips; treasurer, Wm. Romp; assessor, J. Kennedy; overseers of the poor, N. B. Gage, E. Fitch.

1846. Trustees, Caleb Cook, Elisha Fitch, Geo. McKillip; clerk, C. Phillips; treasurer, J. Kennedy; assessor, D. J. Stearns.

1847. Trustees, H. Frisbee, S. Fitch, John Carpenter; clerk, Jotham Howe; treasurer, Newton P. Loomis; assessor, V. Stearns.

1848. Trustees, H. K. Miner, Amos Briggs, D. J. Stearns; clerk, J. H. Henry; treasurer, Thomas F. Husted; assessor, Chester Phillips.

1849. Trustees, Eli Fitch, John Kennedy, Norman Dutcher; clerk, J. R. Henry; treasurer, Jotham Howe; assessor, C. Phillips.

1850. Trustees, Buel Stearns, Chauncey Fitch, Alanson Tilly; clerk, Elliott Stearns; treasurer, Jotham Howe; assessor, C. Phillips.

1851. Trustees, Samuel Daniels, Elias P. Usher, Caleb Cook; clerk, Geo. W. Thompson; treasurer, William Romp; assessor, Chauncey Fitch.

1852. Trustees, Samuel Daniels, E. P. Usher, Caleb Cook; clerk, G. W. Thompson; treasurer, Wm. Romp; assessor, C. Fitch.

1853. Trustees, E. P. Usher, Peter Kidney, John Ames; clerk, G. W. Thompson; treasurer J. Howe; assessor C. Fitch.

1854. Trustees, E. P. Usher, Chauncey Mead, Harvey Barnum; clerk, G. W. Thompson; assessor, Chauncey Fitch.

1855. Trustees, Cyrus P. Dryden, Harvey Barnum, Eli Fitch; clerk, A. G. Hollister; treasurer, Henry S. Howe; assessor, C. C. Fitch.

1856. Trustees, Chauncey Fitch, Thomas Brown, Buel Stearns; clerk, N. P. Loomis; treasurer, Elisha Fitch; assessor, Francis Fitch.

1857. Trustees, C. Fitch, T. Brown, B. Stearns; clerk, N. P. Loomis; treasurer, E. Fitch; assessor, F. Fitch.

1858. Trustees, Eastman Bradford, James P. Rice, C. R. Vaughn; clerk, Jas. H. Strong; treasurer, N. P. Loomis; assessor, C. C. Fitch.

1859. Trustees, C. R. Vaughn, Lewis Short, Charles Carpenter; clerk, J. H. Strong; treasurer, Eastman Bradford; assessor, Buel Stearns.

1860. Trustees, Henry Romp, O.C. Lawrence, Eli Fitch; clerk, Richard Pollard; treasurer, Elisha Fitch; assessor, C. C. Fitch.

1861. Trustees, Calvin Geer, Luther Barnum, J. W. Fitch; clerk, O. W. Kendall; treasurer, C. P. Dryden; assessor, Newell Nelson.

1862. Trustees, J. W. Fitch, H. Romp, Benoni Bartlett; clerk, John C. Fitch; treasurer, Elisha Fitch; assessor, Buel Stearns

1863. Trustees, S. W. Fitch, H. Hofftyzer, Benj. Salisbury; clerk, John G. Fitch; treasurer, William W. Mead; assessor, Newell Nelson

1864. Trustees, J. G. Fitch, G. W. Kennedy, C. R. Vaughn; clerk, N. P. Loomis; treasurer, W. W. Mead; assessor, Newell Nelson.

1865. Trustee, Chauncey Fitch, C. C. Fitch, Wm. Busby; clerk, J. G. Fitch; treasurer, Wm. W. Mead.

1866. Trustees, Eastman Bradford, Calvin Geer, Charles S. Underhill; clerk, J. G. Fitch; treasurer; W. W.

Mead; assessor, G. W. Kennedy.

1867. Trustees, Eastman Bradford, Newman Pickard, Charles C. Fitch; clerk, J. G. Fitch; treasurer, W. W. Mead; assessor, Gardner Stearns.

1868. Trustees, C. C. Fitch, Benoni Bartlott, Lester Bradford; clerk, Asahel Osborn; treasurer, W. W. Mead; assessor, Gardner Stearns.

1869. Trustees, O. P. Smith, J. R. Ruple, Elisha Fitch; clerk, Asahel Osborn; treasurer, W. W. Mead; assessor, James R. Shaw.

1870. Trustees, Calvin Goer, David H. Barnard, Benji Salisbury; clerk, A. Osborn; treasurer, W. W. Mead; assessor, R. T. Elliot.

1871. Trustees, B. Salisbury, Lester Bradford, O. P. Smith; clerk, J. G. Fitch; treasurer, W. W. Mead; assessor, Gardner Stearns.

1872. Trustees, D. H. Barnard, C. C. Fitch, Wm. J. Camp; clerk, Henry Northrop; treasurer, W. W. Mead; assessor, Joel Hall.

1873. Trustees, D. H. Barnard, C. C. Fitch, M. E. Baker; clerk, R. Pollard, treasurer, W. W. Mead; assessor, R. T. Elliot.

1874. Trustees, Wm. J. Camp, Jas Hicky, Wm. Busby; clerk, Richard Pollard; treasurer, Wm. W. Mead; assessor, Lawrence Bramley.

1875. Trustees, Wm. Busby, G. W. Kennedy, L. C. Taney; clerk, Henry Northrop; treasurer, Geo. R. Dryden; assessor, Lawrence Bramley.

1876. Trustees, Clayton Sharp, G. W. Kennedy, L. C. Taney; clerk, Henry Northrop; treasurer, G. B. Dryden; assessor, Henry Romp.

1877. Trustees, Clayton Sharp, Wm. T. Williams, John Hull; clerk, J. G. Fitch; treasurer, G. B. Dryden; assessor, G. W. Kennedy.

1878. Trustees, Clayton Sharp, Wm. T. Williams, William Daniels; clerk, W. D. Bennett; treasurer, G. B. Dryden; assessor, Erastus Libby.

1879. Trustees, Clayton Sharp, W. F. Williams, W. W. Darrald; clerk, W. D. Bennett; treasurer, George B. Dryden; assessor, Erastus Libby.

Olmsted Township History from A History of Cuyahoga County and the City of Cleveland by William R. Coates, 1924.

https://archive.org/details/historyofcuyahog01coat_0/page/154/mode/2up

Number 6 of range 15 was an unbroken forest when the War of 1812 began. The outcome of war is never certain and this one had its effect on the minds of those who were to take part in the creation of a new civilization in New Connecticut. The start was made in this township while the war was raging. It was a timid beginning. It was a tryout of the possibilities of the soil and might or might not be permanent. James Geer, while a resident of Columbia, which is now of Lorain County, made the initiative start in this way. Instead of making a clearing in the usual way, cutting and burning the trees and building his log house, he slipped over from Columbia, girdled a tract of timber, cut out the underbrush on land which was afterwards known as the Browning farm, and planted corn, raising what he could among the trees. This was in the southwest corner of the township. After peace was declared he came in boldly, put up a small log house and moved his family there, they being the first settlers and first permanent residents. Their son, Calvin Geer, was then a boy of seven. Sixty years later Calvin Geer was the oldest surviving resident of Olmsted.

To the younger generation pioneer history may seem to be made up of trivial incidents. The building of the log cabin, the raising, as the log house gave place to the frame, the families of those who came, the meager details of the household equipment, marriage, birth, death, the gristmill, the sawmill, the blacksmith shop, the store, the post office, may not seem to them of historical interest, but they are. The history of nations is so made up. Great successes and failures of great leaders often have hinged upon these so-called trivial things. "For the want of a nail the shoe was lost, for the want of a shoe the horse was lost, for the want of a horse the rider was lost, for the want of the rider the battle was lost, for the want of the battle the kingdom was lost, and all for the want of a horseshoe nail." We will assume that the scout whom Napoleon sent out before the battle of Waterloo, and who reported a level field between the French and English forces, may have been so annoyed by the presence of bunions that he did not investigate as thoroughly as he would have done otherwise and so failed to discover the sharp ravine before the army of Wellington, into which, as Victor Hugo says, line after line of the French went down in that famous charge, until the ravine was filled and the remnant rode over on the living bridge. The greatest generals of the world have been those who have been the greatest masters of details. Our favorite idea of a general is that of a man on horseback waving a sword. General Grant insisted upon daily reports from his entire army. He must know just how many men were sick, what food they had, what stockings and other clothing and every detail of their equipment. These reports he pored over in his tent while others slept. In the founding of a new community nothing is trivial, and in all history the record of achievement is woven with a warp of small detail. A new settlement was a little world in itself and its happenings that might seem to us now unimportant became the theme of the community. These were discussed with a thoroughness of detail that to us now might seem to indicate that the first settlers were of inferior mentality. They were otherwise. The changes came with the denser population. This is shown in the conduct of the newspapers and their news items. As the community grew, space became important. Reporters were instructed to condense. It has been related that one news writer, who had been reprimanded by the editor for extending his items, turned in the following: "John Smith, of Podunk, blew into his gun to see if it was loaded. It was. Funeral at 4 o'clock at his late residence." In contrast to this condensed item, we give one taken from the early annals of Olmsted:

"The Second Death and Serious Accident. In 1819 D. J. Stearns had an Irish boy working for him, whose

parents resided in Ridgeville, now Lorain County. One day the boy obtained permission to visit his home, promising to return in time to do the chores at night. The night set in dark and the boy did not return. His wife being away, Mr. Stearns was at home alone. Late in the night he heard an agonized voice shrieking 'Oh, dear! Oh, dear!' at some distance from the house. For a moment it ceased and then it was heard again nearer than before. Mr. Stearns stepped out of the door when he was suddenly grasped by a man, who flung his arms around him in a state of frantic excitement, crying out at the same time: 'Oh, my boy is kilt! my boy is kilt! my boy is kilt!' As soon as Mr. Stearns could recover from his astonishment and get the man to the light, he found that the visitor was Mr. Hanley, the father of John, the boy who had worked for him. It was with great difficulty that he could quiet the frantic Irishman so as to obtain even the slightest idea of what was the matter. At length, however, he succeeded in learning from the broken ejaculations of the distracted father, mingled with cries and groans and sobs of anguish, that Hanley and his son had been coon hunting and that a large tree had fallen upon his boy and had probably crushed him to death, a mile or two out in the woods to the Northeast: Knowing that he could do nothing without assistance, Mr. Stearns made Hanley promise to remain at the house until he could obtain aid. His nearest neighbor, Amos Briggs, was absent, and there were no others nearer than a mile and a half. He accordingly went to the Briggs stable and took his horse to go for help. Ere he could mount, however, Hanley came rushing up and again flung his arms about the young man, crying out that 'his boy was kilt,' in all the agony of unreasoning despair. Again Mr. Stearns pacified him and persuaded him to return to the house. The former then rode a mile and a half and obtained the help of three newcomers, Bennett Powell, John Cole and another, whose name is not recollected. The four returned with all speed to Stearns' house, where they found the desolate father, with whom they set out to find the scene of the disaster. Hanley, however, had been so frightened and demoralized by the catastrophe that he could give no clear idea of the direction to be taken. Nevertheless, he thought it was somewhere west of north and he knew there was a burning tree where the sad event had occurred. The five men hurried forward in the darkness in the general direction indicated and at length saw a light in advance. Shaping their course toward it they soon arrived at a burning tree; there they soon found that the distracted father's words were but too true: the poor boy was indeed killed. A large tree lay where it had fallen directly across the youth's head, which was crushed out of all semblance of humanity, while his body was raised from the ground by the pressure on his head. It seems as they gathered from Hanley's broken statements and from his subsequent utterances in a quieter state, that he had persuaded his son to remain and hunt coons with him instead of returning to Stearns' that night. They had gone east a mile or two along the line between townships 6 and 7, Olmsted and Dover, and had then borne southward in the former township. At length, the night being cold and damp, they built a fire at the foot of a hollow ash tree and determined to wait for the moon. The boy lay down on a grassy knoll a short distance from the fire, while his father sat with his back against a hickory tree in the opposite direction and both soon went to sleep. An hour or so later the old man was awakened by a tremendous crash directly overhead. The hollow ash had burned off and had fallen against the hickory by which he sat. The tough wood of the latter bent before the blow and then recoiled with such force that it threw the ash back in the opposite direction so as to fall directly across the head of the sleeping boy. His father was so frightened and horrified that he ran screaming into the woods entirely at random and by mere accident came out at Mr. Stearns' clearing." The description of the releasing of the body, the conduct of the father and the return and burial, occupy nearly as much space as that already given.

This account so minute in detail of a tragedy in the woods reflects in some measure the attitude of mind of those isolated from the larger communities. This accidental death was the topic of conversation in the township for a long time. Calvin Geer related to his descendants as his earliest remembrance the killing of a bear on the bank of Rocky River, shortly after their arrival in the new settlement. His father was the marksman and the animal, which he described as a very large bear, appeared near their cabin on Sunday

evening. Three shots were required, as the first two only wounded the animal. This became in the mind of the pioneer boy a lasting memory. Boys of today, who view bears in Brookside Zoo, are not so impressed as were the pioneer boys who saw them, unfettered by iron bars, in the dark woods.

In the year 1815 Elijah Stearns and his son David Johnson Stearns came to the township. It was then called Kingston, and that name adhered for several years before it was changed to Olmsted. David had a large family of boys and wanted land enough to keep them employed, so he bought 1,002 acres of land on Butternut Ridge, in the northwest part of the township. For this he paid \$2 per acre. D. J. Stearns, his son, was then twenty-one, strong and active, and remarkably well fitted for pioneer labor. He was allotted 150 acres of land by his father, but it became necessary to make a trip to Vermont to get a perfected title. This he did after awaiting for some time for the original purchasers to send a surveyor. In the meantime, he had cleared quite a tract on the allotment, which to identify was, in after years, the residence of Buel Stearns. In 1816 he came back, having straightened out the title, and brought with him Alva and Asa Knapp, brothers, who only stayed long enough to assist in the building of a log house and do some clearing. The first purchaser from the Connecticut Land Co. was Aaron Olmsted and Mr. Stearns had to get his title from the trustees of his estate, he having died after his purchase was made. This was not a cash sale, as four notes were given, one of which after its cancellation was retained as a souvenir of the purchase. Young Stearns also took the agency from the trustees for the sale of their land. He only sold two lots when the sale was stopped for some unexplained reason. As an instance of the intensity with which the settlers worked, it is recorded that David Stearns and James Geer celebrated the Fourth of July, 1816, in clearing a roadway from Rocky River and along Butternut Ridge toward the home of Mr. Stearns. They worked from sunrise to sunset cutting out brush and saplings and opened a roadway for a distance of two miles. During this year Daniel Bunnell moved from Columbia to the northeast corner of Kingston, as it was then called, and put up a rough plank house, this being the third settlement made in the township. Owing to the stopping of sales by the proprietors, Bunnell remained alone in that part of the township until 1819, keeping bachelor's hall the whole time. Except in the matter of bread, he got along nicely, but in 1817 he paid \$3 a bushel for wheat and had to haul it from Black River, then, being otherwise employed, he sent another man to mill. This man started with an ox team and drove to the Chagrin River before he found a mill that was open for business. The whole journey occupied just a week. Another drawback was the scarcity of salt, to one who depended to an extent upon wild game. Salt at that time was \$20 a barrel. This year Amos Briggs settled on the west side of Butternut Ridge on a tract that became known as the Robb farm. In 1818 Isaac Scales built a house at the east end of the ridge and moved his family in. They had no neighbors for a year and Mr. Scales worked in Columbia, leaving his wife alone. She had many experiences. Said she often got up in the night to drive wild cats out of the loft with a broom. One day a bear came to the house and got into a controversy with the dog, which wound up by the dog getting hugged by the bear in the front yard. Mrs. Scales made what noise and demonstration she could from the house, and finally the bear ambled off into the woods. The dog survived but led an invalid life from that time on. She was frequently visited by wandering Indians, but they were no more annoying than the tramps that infested the township in later years, but it was trying to the nerves in view of her knowledge of Indian treachery and Indian barbarity. The first wedding in the township was that of Harry Hartson and Eunice Parker Geer. This took place at the home of James Geer in the spring of 1817. Hartson and wife located near the Geer home. In the same spring there was a birth at the Geer cabin, a daughter Julia. She died two years later. Thus, at the home of the first settler occurred the first wedding, the first birth and the first death in the township. In 1819 Stearns married Polly Barnum, this being the second marriage. This year Maj. Samuel Hoadley and family settled near the Scales farm at the east end of Butternut Ridge. The major was quite an interesting and cultivated man, but he took his family into a log house. He immediately began building a better one. The frame of the new house was about ready to raise and one day late in the summer, the major and his wife left home

for the day leaving their two daughters, Marie and Eunice, in charge of the household. The carpenter, James Miles, and his helper, Elliott Smith, were working on the frame for the new house. During the day Mrs. Scales came over for a neighborly call. Now these girls of the major's were wide awake, vivacious and withal athletic and they planned a surprise for the major and his wife and decided to have a raising without the usual large crowd of neighbors to help. All agreed including Mrs. Scales, the caller. Under the direction of the carpenter, they carried the timbers in place for the matching and pinning and then when the bents were ready, all together, with hands and pike poles and to the resonant "he o he," the bents went up to place and the raising was accomplished. When the major and his wife returned and in astonishment asked about the raising, the girls said in a casual way, Oh! we did it, indicating that it was nothing out of the ordinary for them. The next spring, one of the heroines of the raising married John Adams. This was Marie. Soon the other, Eunice, married John Barnum. They needed no matrimonial agency to advertise their qualifications to become the wives of pioneers.

From 1819 the population increased rapidly and in the five years following came Isaac Frost, Zenas Barnum, Harry Benjamin, Crosby Baker, Horace F. Adams, Amos Wolf, Truman Wolf, Christian Wolf, Charles Usher, Hezeldah Usher, Ransom J. Adams, Hosea Bradford, H. G. Seekins, Watrous Usher, Noble Hotchkiss, Thomas Briggs, Otis Briggs, Lyman Frost, Lucius Adams, and Alva, Elijah, Jr., Vespasian, Elliott, and A. G. and R. Stearns. Besides these six Stearns brothers, a seventh, Sidney Stearns, came to the settlement and began clearing but died shortly afterwards. During this period after 1819, Lemuel Hoadley and Crosby Baker built the first gristmill and sawmill on the west branch of Rocky River, just above the east branch or the junction with it. There was a sufficient population to begin to crystallize into an organized community. A small Methodist society was organized and had occasional meetings. Clearings were made in all parts of the township except the southeast, which was the last to be occupied. And yet old Indian wigwams were still standing, and Indians came from time-to-time trapping for fur animals. D. J. Stearns found an old Indian sugar bush on the tract that in later years was known as the Taylor farm. Previous to the advent of the white man into this township the Indians were wont to come annually to this place to make sugar. The squaws made the sugar, as they did all of the labor, other than hunting, fishing, and fighting, which was reserved for the males, the warriors. They made sap troughs of birch bark. These they brought with them from Sandusky, as there is, and was, no birch in this township. Kettles in which to boil the sap they got from the white settlers on their way to the camp. After they had sugared off, the sugar was stored in a great trough made of elm bark, which would hold twelve or fifteen barrels. Here it was kept for common use while the tribe was in this locality. The residue was carried back with them to Sandusky, when the stay was over. In 1823 the township number 6 range 15 was organized under the new name of Lennox. Just why this name was selected is not known for it had previously been called Kingston and was so called when the first Stearns came as a permanent settler. The first election was held on April 14th and the following officers elected: Trustees, Amos Briggs, Hosea Bradford, and Watrous Usher; clerk, D. J. Stearns; treasurer, Isaac Frost. Two years later the township was dismembered and made as naught. The east part, or half, was annexed to Middleburg and the west half to Ridgeville, and two years after this the township was again erected and the broken halves united into one township. The election was held in June, 1827. The name was still Lennox and the officers chosen were: Trustees, Truman Wolf, Alva Stearns, and Elias C. Frost; clerk, D. J. Stearns; treasurer, Isaac C. Frost; justice of the peace, Watrous Usher, and constables, Joel B. Lawrence and Elliott Smith. The first tax levy made was one half of a mill on the dollar of the property of the township. The township was immediately divided into three school districts and schoolhouses built. Watrous Usher built a sawmill at Olmsted Falls about this time. This township, was quite well watered, to use the expression found in the old geographies. The west branch of the Rocky River traverses the township and meets with the east branch some distance from its border and Plum Creek, a considerable stream, adds to the water privileges. About these streams clustered quite early embryo villages, while the territory

away from them was composed of much primeval forest. It has been said that bears at this period of our history were quite numerous and grew to great size fattening on the pigs of the early settlers, who often let these animals run wild in the woods. The rifles of the men thinned the bears to some extent but the busy pioneers had little time for hunting. Stearns said a good hunter did not make a good farmer. He kept a rifle just the same for emergencies.

We trust the boys and girls as well as the grownups will read our history and we must tell a bear story occasionally because these are true bear stories drawn from the experiences of the early settlers and boys and girls like true stories, even if in the telling, they do not point to a moral as do the fables. Mr. Stearns hired a boy to work for him, who was new to the great woods. He had hunted squirrels at home in the grove by his house and he was anxious to do the same in the great woods where he thought these animals must be larger and more interesting game. One day he borrowed Mr. Stearns' rifle and went out hunting. After hunting for some time, he saw what he thought was a big black squirrel in a hollow tree. He put the gun up to a hole and fired. The black squirrel came out wounded and growling and pitched upon his dog. Astonished at such conduct on the part of a squirrel the boy hurried home as fast as he could run. Arriving almost out of breath he said: "Oh Johnson!" calling Mr. Stearns by his first name, "I seen the monstrousest, biggest black squirrel out in the woods that ever I seen in all my born days." He told such a vivid story that the next morning the men went with him to the tree which they found marked high with blood where the bear, for it was a bear, had rubbed his wounded head. Some thought the squirrel was too large even for a bear. They followed the trail by the blood, overtook and shot the bear. It was the largest one any of the pioneers had ever seen. The bullet of the young squirrel hunter had passed through his nose and broken his jaw. After 1830 bears disappeared entirely from the township but deer remained much longer as well as wild turkeys. Hundreds of wild turkeys were shot and they often had turkey dinners in the log cabins.

This township, as we have said, was first organized under the name of Lennox, having been called before that time Kingston. Two years after it was divided and had no name. Two years after that it was organized again with the same territory and the old name Lennox. And two years after the second organization the name was changed to Olmstead. The only change in name since has been the spelling, as it is now written Olmsted. As related, Aaron Olmstead was the first owner. In 1829 Charles H. Olmstead, a descendant, who inherited the unsold land, which was mostly in the north part, offered to make the township a present of a library if they would change the name from Lennox to Olmstead. The offer was accepted and the name was changed and the first election under the name Olmstead was held in 1830. In 1831 seven brothers by the name of Fitch settled in the central part of the township, at least three came that year and the rest shortly after. They were Chester, Eli, Horace, Chauncey, Elisha, Daniel and Sanford Fitch. Their families made a large increase in the population and the town shortly became a town of Fitches and Stearnses, to almost as marked a degree as did Brooklyn in the early days become a town of Fishes and Brainards. One year before the Fitches came, Major Hoadley and his son in law, John Barnum, built a sawmill on Plum Creek at Olmsted Falls. Business started up at once, and, as there was no house near, and Barnum wanted to be near his work, and having as we have related a real pioneer wife, he moved at once and improvised a home until, from the product of the mill, he could get one more convenient. He cut down a whitewood tree near the bank of the creek and this formed one end of the house. Then with a few smaller logs and with saplings for a roof, he moved in. This was only temporary as he began at once the building of a convenient house. Luther Barnum, who in later years was a prominent citizen of the township, was then only one year old.

These little communities that sprang up in the various townships of the county bred up many individual and eccentric characters. Every township had its peculiar character unlike any other. They were

absolutely original and individual. Today in the large centers of population men become types of a class. Each city to some extent is peopled with those who derive their habits of thought and expression from each other. The individual characteristics are ground off by contact with others. This was not true of many of the pioneers and a man of peculiar and unusual personality was found in every settlement and often there were several. They were the court jesters, the entertainers, the necessary relief from the hard toil of the workers in subduing the forest and at the same time procuring subsistence for the home. Olmsted had a man by the name of Powell, who some claimed was not mentally balanced, but he was not a fool. It seems Uriel Kilpatrick had built a little "packet" gristmill on Plum Creek for custom work. He was as slow as "molasses in January" and the mill partook of the characteristics of its owner. The patience of his customers was tried to the utmost in the long wait for their grists and the many promises and postponements. Powell, among his other eccentricities, wrote poetry. He had some grievance against the miller, Kilpatrick, and went to Mr. Barnum, a justice of the peace for a warrant. The justice refused the request and in a joking way suggested that he write a poem about Kilpatrick, which would be just as effective as a warrant. Powell at once got off the following and included a rap at the justice. Basswood mauls or beetles were those most used by the settlers:

"Iron beetles are seldom found
But basswood justices here abound.
On the banks of the Rocky River,
Tall Kilpatrick's nose doth quiver;
There he sits in his slow mill,
Which most folks think is standing still."

The poetry did not destroy the mill, for it continued in operation for ten or twelve years. Hoadley and Barker's gristmill at the river junction was sold to Loyal Peck, who continued the business for some time. It has long since been forgotten. After Kilpatrick's slow motion had ceased altogether, Peter Kidney built a gristmill on the river below the mouth of Plum Creek. N. P. Loomis, who came to Olmsted in 1834, found no road through the village and only a path along the bank of the river. The main road had been slashed out, that is, the underbrush and saplings cut, but it was not ready for use. Where the Union school building was later erected there was a frog pond and only six houses stood on the present site of the village. Up to this time householders had kept travelers, but there was no regular hotel until this year, when William Romp built a large frame hotel and store near the river below Butternut Ridge. This was the first store, as well as hotel, for previously only householders had kept a few goods to accommodate their neighbors. In this year also the first church was built. It was a union church, built by the Presbyterians, Methodists and Universalists, each denomination raising what money they could. It was an equitable arrangement, for each denomination was to have the use of the building in proportion to the amount contributed. This building was afterwards used as a town hall. It was located at Town House Corners, two miles north of Olmsted Falls. This was used as a town hall until 1849, when the town business and official capital was moved to the Falls. The first Sunday school was organized on Butternut Ridge in 1834. This section was settled with an unusually intellectual class of people, who went in for intellectual and moral improvement more than the average of the pioneers. In 1837 a lyceum or debating school was formed in district No. 1, which was located near the east end of the ridge. Here future lawyers, politicians and statesmen clashed in intellectual encounter. From 1834 the township emerged rapidly from the pioneer stage. The clearings were extended, stumps began to disappear, frame houses replaced the log ones, and pumps took the place of the picturesque well sweeps that were, earlier, in almost every door yard. The town was changing by the sturdy strokes of the pioneers to the uneventful life of a farming community, but like Middleburg, other interests came to the front. The younger members of the community proved to be expert with the rifle and venison was still a large

factor in the food supply. This continued until the Cleveland, Columbus & Cincinnati Railroad was built through the township, when soon after, as in Middleburg, the last of the wild animals disappeared. In 1853 the Toledo, Norwalk & Cleveland Railway, which became in after years a part of the Lake Shore Railroad, was opened. This passes through the township running east and west, in about the center of the territory. About these two stations clustered a small village, in embryo. The station of the Cleveland, Columbus & Cincinnati Road was at once named West View and the village the same. This village never was incorporated and never got a place on the map, other than as a railway station. Olmsted Falls, a station on the other railway, had a steady and healthy growth. It was incorporated as a village in 1857, but at the first election there were only twenty-six votes cast. The next year the settlement at Plum Creek was added to Olmsted Falls, and in addition to that, following the pioneer era, it was discovered that the stone that cropped out in Rocky River had the qualities of the Berea sandstone and quarries were opened, but sometime afterwards. In 1870 a quarry was opened at West View, and there were employed twenty-five men in the building stone industry. A short line railroad was built for shipping the stone to the station. At one time there were two quarries in the township employing fifty men each. The growth of the village continued. In the '80s there were at Olmsted Falls four general stores, four drug stores, two tailor shops, three shoe shops, a blacksmith shop, a tin shop, a gristmill, a broom factory, a fellow shop and a lumber yard, and the population of the village was about 700.

The broom factory was operated for many years by John and Joseph Lay. In addition to manufacturing a marketable product that was needed in every home, this industry also provided a new farming product market, for the broom corn must be raised for the brooms. The Lays also operated a bending factory in connection with their broom factory. Frank R. Lay of a younger generation was for some time active in the factory. He is now a resident of Indianapolis, Indiana. This industry has gone the way of many of the earlier ones that made for prosperity in the new communities, which have drifted in natural evolution to the larger manufacturing centers. The gristmill of Edward Damp on Rocky River had a good reputation and customers came from the surrounding towns as well as Olmsted.

The Universalist Church was organized by Rev. Harlow P. Sage in 1834. This was the first church of that denomination in this part of the county. Rev. Stephen Hull, the first minister, remained for fifteen years. This church joined with others, as we have stated, in building the first church. In 1847 the congregation built a church of their own on Butternut Ridge. In 1868 the church was incorporated under the laws of Ohio. The second pastor was Rev. Isaac Henry, who stayed ten years. After Reverend Henry came Reverends Tillotson, French, Shipman, Sykes, Rice and Canfield, in their order. In 1878 came an innovation, when Rev. Mrs. Danforth was called to the pastorate. It may not be historically correct to say that she was the first lady preacher called to a regular pastorate in the county, but she was one of the few. The trustees of this church under her pastorate, or at least at its beginning, were Buel Stearns, Jonathan Carpenter and John Foster. The Wesleyan Methodist Church was organized at West View in 1843. The first members were: Ransom Bronson and Harriet, his wife, John Adams and Maria, his wife, Lucius Adams and Electa, his wife, Mary and Sarah Banarce. As in other townships in the early days, this church was served by circuit preachers. The first were Revs. James Pearson and William Beehan. When first organized, this church was called Hoadley's Mills Church or the Station Church. In 1861 the name settled down to the West View Methodist Church. The circuit riders were called preachers rather than pastors. In 1863 Revs. A. W. Sanderson, W. B. Moody and G. C. Hicks came. In 1864-5 Rev. E. A. Fink, in 1866-7 Rev. Thomas F. Hicks, in 1868-9-10 Rev. J. Nettleton, in 1871-2-3 Rev. J. E. Carroll. Revs. Nettleton and Moody preached again in the '70s and Rev. William Snell. The stewards in this period were H. Walkden, Joseph Reed, J. Case, and the clerk was O. P. Smith. The trustees were R. Bronson, T. Price, J. Adams, A. J. Rickard and B. Ruple. There was a church in North Dover, the building located in the northeast part of the township, drawing its congregation largely from Rockport and Dover townships, of the same

denomination and served by the West View minister. There was a Methodist Episcopal Society at Olmsted Falls as early as 1843. In 1851 a church building was erected there under the official supervision of Lestor Bradford, Charles Monks, Chauncey Fitch, William Butlin and Asahel Osborne, trustees. The stewards at that time being composed of these men and David Wright, and Stephen Bradford in addition. Nearly a hundred years ago a church was built by the Methodists out on Butternut Ridge. This building was in later years transferred to the Congregationalists. The first pastor was Rev. H. C. Johnson, and he was followed by Revs. Clisbee, Westervelt, Bosworth, Grosvenor and Patchin. The deacons in the '80s were Richard Carpenter, James Garrison, Mr. Young and Benjamin Salisbury.

St. Mary's Catholic Church was organized in 1855 by Father Louis Filiere. In the same year the congregation built a church at Olmsted Falls. Father Filiere remained until 1874, when he was succeeded by Father Edward J. Murphy, and his successor was Father James M. Cullen. The church was built in the north part of the village and was then moved to the south part. Here was erected in addition a stone parsonage and a schoolhouse. John Dalton, Patrick McCarty and Joseph Ward were councilmen in the '70s. The first Congregational Church, and the first in the township, was organized at Olmsted Falls in 1835. It started with quite a membership. Like many in the county it was closely allied with the Presbyterian Church, and changed about. At one time it was allied with the Cleveland Presbytery and afterwards changed back to the Congregational system. The first members were Mary Ann Fitch, Jerusha Loomis, Cynthia House, Catherine Nelson, Abner, Sylvester, and Summer W. Nelson, William Wood and Mary Ann Wood, Rachel Wait, Emeline Spencer, Lydia Cune, Gotham and Anna S. Howe, Harriett Dryden, Ester E. Kennedy. The first regular pastor was Rev. Israel Mattison. Other early pastors have been Revs. James Steel, O. W. White, Z. P. Disbro, R. M. Bosworth, Richard Grogan, John Patchin. A church was built at the Falls in 1848. Hugh Kyle, O. W. Kendall and N. P. Loomis were trustees in the '70s. It was always an event of special interest when Dan Bradley, then a student at Oberlin, came to this church to preach on a Sunday. Many remember the stirring addresses he gave. The present pastor of Pilgrim Congregational Church of Cleveland gave promise at that early stage of his pulpit experience of a career of great usefulness.

Quite early in the history of Olmsted a Union school was established at Olmsted Falls. This was an indication of the progressive character of the people. We have referred to the Lyceum organized on the Ridge in 1837. This was the first departure from the one room schools of the pioneers. The consolidation of these district schools under one head was not then thought of. The first agitation for this plan began, so far as this county was concerned, in the '80s in the county teachers' institutes. The condition of the roads at that time did not make the idea so attractive and the gasoline motor was not in existence. At present the schools of Olmsted are consolidated under the township plan. North Olmsted has its separate school district and Olmsted Falls Village and Olmsted Township are united in school management. At present North Olmsted has two school buildings, with an enrollment of 335 pupils, and ten teachers are employed. The superintendent is Ralph Myers. Olmsted Falls and Olmsted Township are accommodated by one large building at the Falls There are enrolled 369 pupils and there are thirteen teachers. The superintendent is G. C. Imhoff. Among the teachers of an earlier period may be mentioned O. W. Kendall and Charles R. Harding. "Charley" Harding taught for some time in the Union School and was active in the County Teachers' Institute. O. W. Kendall was for many years county school examiner and had probably during his active school life the largest acquaintance among teachers of any one in the county. His home was near Turkey Foot Grove on the banks of Rocky River, and he lies in a cemetery near that beautiful grove, remembered by a host of warm friends who knew him in his lifetime. We have not the names of many who taught in the district schools of Olmsted. Miss Emma Pillars, now Mrs. Charles S. Whittern of Cleveland, was a teacher in Olmsted just over the line in Lorain County for about ten years, and her teaching experience is typical of that of many teachers in the "Little Red

Schoolhouse." She taught in several districts, on Butternut Ridge and on the Dutch Road, so called. For several of her first terms she "boarded around." Thus, to the salary which the school authorities were able to pay was added her board furnished by the various families in turn. Often the boarding place was a mile or two from the schoolhouse and there were no sidewalks nor paved roads. It should be remembered that in those days the snows in winter were just as deep and continuous as now and the mud in spring and fall just as deep and tenacious. The snows were welcome, for with them came the sleigh rides and the jolly parties, long to be remembered. In the one room school Miss Pillars taught classes in their A B C lessons and on up to algebra and geography, to which was added in the text books of that time a few pages of astronomy. When asked how she got along boarding around she said: "Oh, when I got to a particularly good place, and was asked to stay longer, which was often the case, I stayed on." In these schools there was no need of a "parent teachers' meeting," which is held to be so beneficial by school superintendents of today.

Unlike Dover, the township of Olmsted is still in existence. The first break in its political entity was in 1856. Then the Village of Olmsted Falls was formed, but it did not incorporate in its boundaries a very large portion of the territory of the original township. The first officers of the village were: Mayor, Thomas Brown; recorder, William S. Carpenter; councilmen, H. S. Howe, N. P. Loomis, William W. Smith, Thomas Broadwell and George C. Knight. Among the mayors who served in the early days are William S. Carpenter, William Giddings, O. W. Kendall, N. P. Loomis, Elisha Fitch, A. H. Cottrell, H. K. Miner, L. B. Adams and Luther Barnum. The present officers of the village are: Mayor, Edgar R. Bayes; clerk, A. L. Hindall; treasurer, G. H. Spaulding; assessor, James McGill; marshal, A. Brause; councilmen, J. E. Anton, E. Braisch, A. T. Burt, G. M. Hecker, Robert McKay and R. E. Stinchcomb; board of public affairs, D. E. Bones, W. G. Locke and P. Simtnerer. North Olmsted, a newer incorporation, embraces the territory of the northern part of the township, and has a much larger area than the Falls. It has, as we have said, a separate school district. The present officers of the village are: Mayor, L. M. Coe; clerk, A. C. Reed; treasurer, C. A. Beebe; assessor, Frank Bliss; councilmen, A. Biddulph, H. K. Bidwell, H. Christenau, A. G. Douglass, A. L. Romp and R. G. Yesberger. Among those that have served as trustees of the original township are Amos Briggs, Watrous Usher, Hosea Bradford, D. Ross, Truman Wolf, A. Stearns, Alva Stearns, Noble Hotchkiss, Lucius Adams, Vespasian Stearns, Elias Frost, Jonas Clisbee, J. Barnum, John Kennedy, J. Carpenter, William Wood, Hiram Frisbee, Hiram B. Gleason, Peter Kidney, Sanford Fitch, Chauncey Fitch, Joseph S. Allen, Oliver Welden, E. Fitch, Caleb Cook, George M. Kellip, H. K. Miner, Norman Dutcher, Alanson Tilly, Samuel Daniels, John Ames, Thomas Brown, Eastman Bradford, James P. Rice, C. R. Vaughn, Lewis Short, Calvin Geer, Luther Barnum, Benoni Bartlett, William J. Camp, D. H. Brainard, James Hickey, William Busby, Clayton Sharp, L. C. Tanney, John Hull and William T. Williams; clerks, D. J. Stearns, Jonas Clisbee, Orson Spencer, Hiram B. Gleason, Gotham Howe, A. W. Ingalls, Chester Phillips, J. B. Henry, Elliott Stearns, Caleb Cook, G. W. Thompson, A. G. Hollister, N. P. Loomis, James H. Strong, Richard Pollard, O. W. Kendall, J. G. Fitch, Asahel Osborn, R. Pollard and Henry Northrup; treasurers, Isaac Frost, Thomas Briggs, Buel Peck, A. Stearns, John Adams, Nahum Rice, Hiram B. Gleason, Jotham Howe, A. W. Ingalls, Elisha Fitch, William Romp, N. P. Loomis, James H. Strong, Eastman Bradford, C. P. Druden, W. W. Mead and George B. Dryden. W. W. Dryden served in the office of treasurer for a long period. D. J. Stearns, the first clerk of Olmsted, was born in Dover, Vermont, and came to Olmsted in 1815. His grandfather, Eliphalet Stearns, of English birth, was a captain in the Revolutionary war, and his father, Elijah, was a lieutenant in that war. F. J. Bartlett, who was justice of the peace in Olmsted, was a captain in the Civil war. His father and mother were born in England. Mr. Bartlett served as justice of the peace in Strongsville Township twelve years before coming to Olmsted, where he was elected to the same office. For years he was proprietor of Cedar Mills at Cedar Point, the junction of the east and west branches of Rocky River. He served as commander of Olmsted Falls Post No. 634 of the Grand Army of the Republic and was a member of fraternal organizations in other towns. T. E. Miller, a

later trustee of the township, was also a member of the school board for sixteen years. Charles F. Stearns, another trustee of later years, lost a son, Louis, in the Civil war. He was the son of Elijah Stearns and one of a family of eleven children. The present officers of the township are: Trustees, R. T. Hall, S. W. Jennings and H. K. Otterson; clerk, L. L. Parch; treasurer, W. G. Locke; assessor, E. R. Lower; justice of the peace, J. H. Scroggie; constable, E. N. Taylor.

Olmsted furnished a large quota of soldiers in the Civil war and has kept alive a Grand Army Post until a few years ago, when from the limited number left it was disbanded. We have not given in these chapters much in regard to the service in the Spanish-American and World wars, as that will be given in a general chapter in, connection with the military history of the City of Cleveland and the county entire.

One of the beauty spots of Olmsted is Turkey Foot Grove on the banks of Rocky River. This has never been made a public park and is owned by the heirs of Davis Lewis. The Metropolitan Park Board, which has been acquiring property under a most comprehensive plan, which embraces a county boulevard system touching the finest natural scenery acquired for public parks, may someday include this in its holdings.

Olmsted Township Excerpt from Memorial to the Pioneer Women of the Western Reserve by Gertrude Van Rensselaer Wickham, Under the Auspices of The Executive Committee of the Woman's Department of the Cleveland Centennial Commission, 1896. Parts 1-4. Transcribed by Betty Ralph.

<https://usgenwebsites.org/OHCuyahoga/Cities/OlmstedTwpPWWR.pdf>

All four parts with many other locations are also viewable at:

<https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/2719949?availability=Las%20Vegas%20Nevada%20FamilySearch%20Library>

Olmstead

Among the many pretty townships of the Western Reserve is found Olmsted, situated fourteen miles to the southwest of the centennial city of '96. A Big Four train stops at West View that you may be within the township, and via the Lake Shore route you may stop at Olmsted Falls, and if you chance to be aboard a Cleveland-Elyria electric car you may visit North Olmsted.

Originally the town was named Kingston, after Lenox.

In 1829 Mr. Charles H. OLMSTEAD, who had become owner of the north part of the town, as heir of Aaron OLMSTED, deceased, offered to make the people the present of a library if they would change the name of Lenox to Olmsted. The offer was accepted, and the library duly presented. The first election under the name of Olmsted was held in 1830.

In 1814 the only marks of civilization were an under brushed road running through the township from north to south and a "blazed" one along the line of Butternut Ridge, which now is a road fourteen miles in length, shaded by magnificent maples.

In the spring of 1815, the Widow PARKER came with her husband, Janes GEER, from the adjoining township of Columbia, a home having been prepared for them in the place now known as Turkey Foot Grove. The home of Mrs. GEER's youth was Connecticut, and two children by a previous marriage came to Ohio with her.

The marriage of one Eunice PARKER to Harvey HARTSON was the first to be solemnized in Olmsted. It occurred at the home of Mrs. GEER in 1817. As there was neither minister nor justice of the peace in the town, they sent to Columbia for a competent person to perform the ceremony.

At the home of Mrs. GEER occurred also the first birth - that of her daughter, Julia. The child died when two years old, the first death in the township.

In 1816 Mrs. BUNNET became a resident here, living in a plank house in the north of the township. She brought the first plantain seed that she might raise it for greens.

In 1818 Mrs. SCALES came to live at the east end of the ridge near Rocky River. As her husband was obliged to work in Columbia, her experience was a most lonely one. Often, she was obliged to rise in the night, and with a broom drive the wildcats from the house. One day she saw a bear hugging a dog to death in the front yard, and taking down the old musket from over the fireplace, thought to put an end to bruin's existence; but after a short inspection of the firearm, concluded it to be more dangerous than the bear, which finally left for the woods. The dog was apparently dead, but eventually revived.

In 1819 Polly BARNUM of Ridgeville married David Johnson STEARNS, who was the earliest settler in the township.

Would my readers like to compare her wedding tour with one of today?

Mr. STEARNS took leave of his wife the evening after the wedding, which occurred one Sunday in February. Necessity compelled him to be at home Monday to attend the "butchering," but he was to return for his wife on Tuesday.

The next morning Polly decided that as she would eventually have to cook that meat and use the lard, she would go thither and superintend the care of it, and so set forth upon her wedding trip alone. A light snow had fallen the previous day, and she was able to follow her husband's tracks through the dense woods a distance of six miles. Though a hollow tree here and there served as hermitage for the bear during those winter days, they left her "monarch of all she surveyed," and she made her way unmolested to her future home where the meat was cared for to her entire satisfaction.

A little later in 1819 Chloe TYLER, wife of Major Lemuel HOADLEY, became a near neighbor of Mrs. SCALES. The family at first occupied a log house, but immediately began the erection of a frame one. After the timber was cut, hewed, and framed, and ready to raise, Maria and Eunice HOADLEY, two robust and resolute girls, who possibly desired to create a favorable impression during a day's absence of their parents, proceeded with the erection of their new house. They put the timber, piece by piece, into place, under the supervision of the carpenter, and with the aid of Mrs. SCALES, raised the building and had

nearly completed the work when their parents arrived and expressed their astonishment, the father pronouncing the work well done. Thus, to women must be given the credit of raising the first house in Olmsted. With the assistance of the daughters, the house was soon completed, and at Christmas they gave a "house warming" - a frolic and dance, to which all the lads and lassies in the neighborhood were invited. This was soon followed by the wedding and happy settlement in the life of the two fair architects, Maria becoming Mrs. John ADAMS, and Eunice the wife of Rev. Julius BRONSON, and sometime after his death was a second time let to the alter by John BARNUM.

In the autumn of 1820 a party of four, Pricilla THOMPSON STEARNS and Polly SHERMAN STEARNS, with their husbands Vespasian and Alvah, left their homes in Vermont with an ox team to seek places of abode in a wilderness six hundred miles distant. They sped over the ground at the rate of one hundred miles per week, and in six weeks' time were enjoying the hospitality of Polly BARNUM STERNS, who, from this time forward was known as "Polly John," and Polly SHERMAN STEARNS received the cognomen of "Polly Alvah."

Logs were soon rolled up for their homes, Pricilla spent that first winter in their hastily constructed log hut. An opening in the roof served as a chimney. A fire was built against logs which served as a fireplace. An opening in one side of the wall formed a window over which was hung a sheet that admitted sufficient light for her to do her work. Another opening covered by a blanket served as door.

When these maidens left their homes in Vermont, they were well supplied with the necessaries of life. A gourd filled with allspice, brought by Pricilla, showed that her mother wished her to have something besides the "spice of life" in the wilderness. Another gourd contained pepper, and they are now preserved by her daughter Hester, in Freeport, Ill. The deer, partridges, and wild turkeys shot by Vespasian was all the fresh meat cooked by Pricilla that winter - and she was also furnished with light by the deer.

Among her guests that first season may be mentioned Mrs. Oliver TERRELL, of Ridgeville fame, who sat upon her horse from darkness till dawn, when break of day showed her the home of Pricilla, which she entered to warm her numbed body ere the family were stirring. She was returning from the Columbia mills and had missed her way. No inducement, however, was great enough to persuade her to partake of food ere leaving, as she knew her children would be waiting anxiously for her return.

Pricilla at one time gained the reputation of feeling herself better than her neighbors, because necessity compelled her to wear a silk dress to church. We know, however, that pride was not listed among her characteristics. That she was generous and always ready to help in time of need may be shown by the following: Her husband's purse contained \$5 on their arrival here and she cheerfully sanctioned the giving of one-half that sum to their neighbor, Mrs. SCALES, to expend for medicine for her sick husband. In 1823 Mrs. THOMPSON, mother of Priscilla, being desirous of seeing her daughter, came alone from her home in Vermont in a one-horse wagon. She was so prepossessed in favor of the country that she came here with her family soon after, and "Grandma THOMPSON" was known, loved, and esteemed for her many deeds of goodness by all the country around.

In 1828, Pricilla, wife of Daniel THOMPSON, and Lucina THOMPSON CARPENTER, with their husbands added to the population of Butternut Ridge. Aurilla THOMPSON and husband Elliot SMITH, were already residents.

Hannah EASTMAN, wife of Hosea BRADFORD, came here with her husband and family in 1820. Previous to this they were pioneers of Brecksville. Mrs. BRADFORD was noted for her hospitality, and many a night has fed and housed the Indians, with never a thought of fear, thus showing her adaptability to the life she had chosen.

In those early days Nellie CISCO, who was of colored descent, became the wife of Joseph PEAK. They lived in the northwestern part of the township on the farm now owned by William HURD. Mrs. PEAK was a devoted Christian, always attending the Methodist church.

Nancy CALKINS (Mrs. Amos BRIGGS) was married in 1819 and lived in Olmsted forty years thereafter. She was taken into the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1828, and in those early days her house was often the home of Christie, Poe, Bigelow, Power, Barkdul, and Disbro. She saw the growth of Methodism in this region from its earliest beginning and was always one of its most zealous and faithful supporters. Pricilla, wife of Davis ROSS, arrived from Canandaigua, N.Y., in 1823. Their daughter Margaret, an extremely amiable and industrious woman came here with her husband, Sheldon WEBSTER, in 1826. In 1823 Phoebe McILRATH (Mrs. Elias FROST) became a resident of what has since been known as the FROST place.

About the year 1825, Lavinia HOVEY (Mrs. Peter ROMP, afterward Mrs. Alvah STEARNS) came with her family to Olmsted. She was married at the early age of fifteen, and, owing to the poor health of her husband, the care of the family devolved mostly upon her. Few women are now living who have labored as long and endured as much as she. She was in great demand as a doctor - forded rivers at dead of night, on horseback, carrying her babe, too young to leave at home, in her arms. She went everywhere, denying no one. In addition to all her other good works, she was a tailoress, and to the very last would always insist on making the buttonholes, because she "loved to do it." How much more precious than the laurels of fame is the memory of this excellent woman, who did not outlive her usefulness!

In 1828 her daughter Amy married Harry BARNUM and became a resident of the farm on which George BARNUM now lives, where she passed a long and useful life, her death occurring only a few months ago. In 1822 Mary USHER (Mrs. William JORDAN) and husband left Brookfield, N.Y., for a home in the West and located here. Mrs. JORDAN lost her father and two brothers the winter following. The woods were very thick and little or no sunlight could penetrate them to dissipate the dampness which caused the malaria that was prevalent at the time.

Betsey USHER, daughter of Charles Lee USHER, became Mrs. Horace ADAMS.

Margaret KEELER came from Vermont to visit a sister here and taught school in Rockport, boarding around. Soon afterward she became Mrs. Elias USHER.

Wealthy MORGAN (Mrs. Watrous USHER) lived in the first brick house in Olmsted after a residence of some years in one part frame and part logs.

Rebecca WEBSTER (Mrs. Thaddeus FLITCH), who afterward became Mrs. John WALKER, started for Olmsted from East Windsor, Conn., in November 1831. She was in company with Anna LOOMIS, wife of her son Chauncey, and family. The vessel on which they took passage from Buffalo was driven by the stress of weather into the harbor of Dunkirk. Here Anna was taken ill with a fever and died at the home of her husband's uncle, in Pomfret, near Fredonia, N.Y. Mrs. Thaddeus FITCH, however accompanied her son and family here, where they arrived December 25 after a prolonged sleighride. In the fall of 1833 Mr.

FITCH returned to Windsor, bringing back with him a second wife, Clarissa LOOMIS, sister of the deceased. Through persevering industry and economy, they acquired a fair property here.

Jerusha LOOMIS (Mrs. Daniel FITCH) came from Cattaraugus, N.Y., in 1839, but her residence here was short. In 1840 she left with her husband to settle in Huron County.

Betsey EDMONDS (Mrs. Chester FITCH) was an adopted daughter of Mrs. Daniel ELMER, North Bolton, Conn. She came here with her husband and family in 1831 and resided in the northern part of the township. She was of French extraction, witty and jolly, fond of company, and had excellent command of language.

In the same year, Sabra CADEY (Mrs. Eli FITCH) came also from East Windsor, and with her husband settled upon the bank of Rocky River. She is still living to tell the story of her pioneer life, which she does not consider worthy of mention. It contains no stories of thrilling adventures with wolves or bears, though they were plentiful at that time. She was always a very busy woman and now, in her ninety-third year, is never idle. Her willing hands did much for neighbors and friends in pioneer times. As a tailoress she caused many a man to rejoice over a perfect fitting "swallow-tailed" coat. Her knowledge of this work was acquired after her marriage, and at spinning and weaving she had few equals.

Can "Aunt Sabra's" friends of today fancy her en route for church behind a yoke of oxen? During her husband's absence, in the year '39, she might have been seen on horseback with her son, Miles, going to Harry SHELDON's mill, in Berea, for flour, which at the time was worth \$10 a barrel. Today we find her enjoying excellent health, and there is no place where one can enjoy a pleasanter visit than with "Aunt Sabra." Her loss would be deeply regretted by the whole community. Everyone loves her.

Clarissa WHILE (Mrs. Sanford FITCH) came to Olmsted with her husband in 1832. Her home was in Chautauqua, N.Y. She was a very enterprising woman in a business way.

Harriet LOOMIS (Mrs. Horace FITCH) became a resident here in 1831. The same year Mary Ann ALCOTT (Mrs. Elisha FITCH) and husband came. She had not family, but has acted as mother to four children and is still living in Olmsted Falls, having the respect of a large circle of relatives and friends.

In November, 1833, Mrs. John LOOMIS and Mrs. Joseph OLMSTED LOOMIS, with their husbands and children, and Joseph LOOMIS, father of John and Joseph, came from East Windsor, Hartford County, Connecticut, from which place we have already brought many families. They traveled overland with teams to Albany, N.Y., thence by Erie Canal to Buffalo, thence by boat to Cleveland, and settled on the bank of Rocky River, on land now owned by Lester BRADFORD. Two small log houses were erected and they made themselves as comfortable as possible.

Jerusha LOOMIS, wife of Joseph LOOMIS, became a resident here in 1834, her husband having returned to East Windsor for her and their three children, Newton P., Gilbert M., and Julia A. The latter, Mrs. PECK, remained here several years, and then went to Springfield, Mass.

The country around Olmsted Falls at this time was still wild and rough, heavily timbered, and sparsely settled, with the exception of the families on Butternut Ridge. In 1836 Amy Eliza MEAD, daughter of Aziel MEAD, of Geneva, O., became the wife of Newton P. LOOMIS, and she is still living, in good health, surrounded by friends and neighbors, whose respect and confidence she has always enjoyed. It was their

pleasure to assemble at her home on May 16, this year, to congratulate herself and husband on a continuous married life of sixty years.

Sarah SMITH COUSINS, of Vergennes, Vt., came here in 1832. She had no need of guests to fill her home, as she made and mended garments for a family of fifteen. Could one woman be asked to do more? The same year Betsey JONES (Mrs. Moses McCALLIPS) became a resident. The families of these women became closely united. Nancy, Lizzie, and Sally Ann, daughters of Betsey and Moses McCALLIPS, became the wives of Moses, William, and Jacob, sons of Sally Ann and Abram COUSINS.

Laura KELLOGG (Mrs. Samuel SPAFFORD) came in '32 with her husband and family from Vergennes, Vt. Her daughter Polly Ann, was one of the teachers on Butternut Ridge who taught six days each week for seventy-five cents, and boarded around. She became Mrs. DIBBLE and now finds the millinery business in Elyria more profitable.

In 1834 Eliza M. PAYSON (Mrs. Caleb COOK) and husband left Manchester, Conn., for a home in Olmsted. They settled at first in the western part of the township, but afterward became residents of the Cook Road.

Sally WEBSTER (Mrs. Hiram KELLOGG) came from Vergennes, Vt., with her husband and one child in 1834.

Naturally of a very nervous temperament, she was not particularly well adapted to pioneer life. If she were to go out of sight of the house and turn around three times, she would have no idea in what direction from her the log house was; of so industrious a disposition that the time, while riding even, would be wasted if she chanced to forget her knitting, which she seldom did. A great deal of her time was devoted to spinning and weaving and today there are overcoats being worn, the cloth of which she made and had fulled at the woolen factory. With the proceeds of her labor in this work she at one time purchased a phaeton for the sum of \$225. As the vehicle is still in existence, though in a very dilapidated condition, we fancy it was "handled with care" while she lived. Her wedding dress, an empire gown of lilac silk, is in the possession of her daughter, Elsie (Mrs. J.S. HENDRICKSON), of Olmsted. It is seventy years old and is in a perfect state of preservation.

Maria GAGE, whose maiden name was REUBIN, came in 1832 from Vermont, and endured many hardships, as did also Charlotte REUBLIN SHELDON, who came about the same time. They both made homes on the bank of Rocky River. The first school house was the regulation log one, with slab desks and seats, built in 1821, near where Snell's store now stands. Rude though it was it furnished a place for the sons and daughters (which were many) of those pioneer women to acquire a common school education. The first church organized was the Universalist, in 1834. In 1835 the First Congregational Church was organized in Olmsted Falls, and the list of its members numbered sixteen, of which eleven were women: Mary Ann FITCH, Jerusha LOOMIS, Cynthia HOUSE, Catherine NELSON, Mary Ann WOOD, Rachel WAIT, Emeline SPENCER, Lydia CUNE, Anna S. HOW, Harriet DRYDEN, and Esther E. KENNEDY.

"Religion is indeed woman's panoply; no one who wishes her happiness would divest her of it." There were many, many others that space forbids mention, whose lot it was to make sacrifices, bear privations, and exercise patience and kindness to a degree that the world may never know, and if it did, would scarcely believe.

“The sweetest lives are those to duty wed,
Whose deeds, both great and small,
Are close knit strands of one unbroken thread,
Where love ennobles all.”

Ella M. HENDRICKSON
Historian

Olmsted committee - Mrs. Amelia AMES, Mrs. Emma PERRY, Miss Delight BRADFORD