

Delaware County Historical Society



Delaware County **Historian**

VOLUME 71
ISSUE 2
SUMMER 2026



Our Vision: A community that values its history as it plans its future.



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DELAWARE COUNTY HISTORIAN

Published by the Delaware County Historical Society, Established 1947

Address: 2690 Stratford Road, Delaware, OH, 43015 **Phone:** 740-369-3831

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We welcome contributions of original historical research concerning Delaware County, Ohio.

Please send articles to the attention of the Newsletter Editor at the above address.

Rutherford B. Hayes: The Civil War Years

By Frank Hickman II

How did Rutherford B. Hayes, a 38-year-old complete novice in leading troops in the Army, become such an effective and daring leader in the 23rd Ohio Volunteer Infantry, rising to the rank of General?

Consider that a great many of the officers in the Civil War - both North and South - had prior military training, and many had participated in the Mexican War of 1846-1848 to hone their martial skills. Consider also that most of the officers who rose to General ranks were either West Point graduates or were politicians who could raise troops for the war, and thus were "handed their stars!"

Hayes began his life in a very inconspicuous manner, having been born in 1822 in Delaware, Ohio. His mother, Sophia Birchard Hayes, was widowed a few months prior to Rutherford's birth, and she already had two small children. Rutherford also experienced the death of his 10-year-old brother Lorenzo in 1825, and later experienced the death of his sister (and best friend) Fanny Hayes Platt, in 1856. She was 36 and died of complications of childbirth.

Hayes' strong mother and his uncle Sardis Birchard helped Rutherford to become a determined and high-achieving person. He was valedictorian at Kenyon College. We also know that as a lawyer in Cincinnati, he defended fugitive slaves in court proceedings. Another note of interest: once word of war at Ft. Sumter broke on April 12th, 1861, Hayes and his

Literary Club friends in Cincinnati formed a Rifle Club, to practice and prepare to protect Cincinnati, or to volunteer themselves for the War effort. Perhaps a harbinger of things to come...the group elected Hayes as their captain.

Hayes was anti-slavery *and* a Lincoln supporter. With the fall of Ft. Sumter on April 13, 1861, we can be certain that he believed in saving the Union. He said, "My belief in this war is as deep as any faith can be." Even though serving in the United States Congress was one of his very strong ambitions, Hayes refused to leave his military unit to campaign for his election and, when he was elected to Congress in 1864, he refused to serve until the war was finished. Hayes professed, in a letter to Lucy Hayes, "An officer fit for duty who at this crisis would abandon his post to electioneer for a seat in Congress ought to be scalped."

Knowing this history, one wonders if James A. Garfield, 42nd Ohio Volunteer Infantry, who did go to Congress in 1863, was aware of Hayes' statement.

"His conduct on the field was marked by conspicuous gallantry as well as the display of qualities of a higher order than that of mere personal daring." - General Ulysses S. Grant



Military Leadership

Hayes was sworn into the Union Army on June 12, 1861, at Camp Chase (near Columbus). He entered the military as Major with the 23rd Regiment of the Ohio Volunteers. Hayes was described as having a “quiet, reserved, conscious quality of when to move forward, step back, and remain.” Hayes’ troops appreciated this demeanor. Early on, a young private named William McKinley recalled the difference between Hayes and other officers. He stated, “Hayes, early on, had a way to reason with his men to win their support.” Later McKinley remarked, “He was so generous, and his relations with his men were so kind, yet always dignified. He won my heart almost from the start...from that moment our confidence in our leader never wavered!” McKinley also said, “Hayes took desperate chances in battle. He seemed like one inspired. His quiet nature at once changed. He permitted nothing to stand in his way, and he often recklessly exposed himself.”

It seems that it was only in this way, through persuasion, that these Civil War volunteers could be led. Fortunately, Hayes was able to win over the loyalty of his men at Camp Chase, deep in the center of Ohio, and far from the cannon fire of actual war. That leadership and loyalty would be called upon repeatedly over the next four years.

Over the course of the war, Hayes - determined, courageous, impetuous – fought in a dozen battles and any number of smaller skirmishes and engagements. He was wounded on five occasions and had four horses shot out from under him!

Battles in Virginia

Hayes and the 23rd’s war began in Western Virginia – today’s West Virginia. They arrived in Clarksburg on July 23, 1861. With little skirmishing at that point, they moved on to Summersville, and on September 10, 1861, under the command of Brigadier General William Rosecrans (born in Kingston Township, Delaware County), Hayes and the 23rd drove enemy pickets out and arrived at the Gauley River at mid-afternoon. Here they met the enemy at Carnifex Ferry. Two of Hayes’ men were wounded, but his presence, as a Major with his troops, was enough to convince the enemy that they were facing an overwhelming force, and they retreated. This was good preparation for what was coming next – Hayes was heading East to the “big war”: South Mountain and Antietam.

Command of the 23rd Regiment

In April, 1862, Hayes assumed command of the 23rd Regiment, as his superior officer, Colonel Scammon, was promoted. The 23rd Ohio prepared to move further South to take over and destroy the Virginia & Nashville Railroad. Hayes was itching to get back into the fight. After several skirmishes and several close calls where he had to retreat, he began to understand that taking too many chances could be imprudent and dangerous. He learned that boldness was not all that was needed to be successful!

Early in the War, with Lee’s forays north, a Confederate victory at the second Battle of Bull Run, and mounting Union losses, Hayes maintained his optimism, stating, “I don’t give it up...something far more damaging than anything that has yet happened must occur, or these

attempts to carry the war into our territory must recoil heavily on the Rebels. Failing to hold their advanced conquests, they must go back vastly weakened and disheartened, while our following wave will be a growing and resistless one!"

Upon daylight on August 7, 1862, Hayes led his troops to relieve a beleaguered federal force at Pack's Ferry near Monroe County in western Virginia. As he set out to relieve the force, he had his military band lead the way, blaring marital tunes. He told his troops to make as much noise as possible, hoping to convince the Rebel forces that an enormous force was headed in their direction. He told his men, "Fighting battles is like courting the girls; those who make the most pretension and are boldest usually win – so go ahead, give good hearty yells as you approach the ferry, but do not expose yourselves to show you are brave – we all know that you are brave." Hayes and his men were successful that day, routing the Confederate force.

The Battle of South Mountain

On September 14, 1862, Union forces under General McClellan attacked along three passes to start the Battle of South Mountain.

Lieutenant Colonel Rutherford B. Hayes and the men of the 23rd Ohio led the Union attack at Fox's Gap. During this battle, Hayes received his second, and most serious, wound of the Civil War. The following is an entry from his journal, describing the action that day. Especially of note is the fact that he still leads and directs his men while lying wounded between the lines, during the heat of battle.

"At 7 AM. we go out to attack. I am sent with [the] Twenty-third up a mountain path to get around the Rebel right with instructions to attack and take a battery of two guns supposed to be posted there. I asked my superior, Colonel

Scammon "If I find six guns and strong support?" Colonel Scammon replies, them anyhow." Hayes understands that this is really the only safe instruction.

Started (i.e. encountered) a Rebel picket about 9 AM. Soon saw from the opposite hill a strong force coming down towards us; (we) formed hastily in the woods; faced by the rear rank (some companies inverted and some out of place) towards the enemy; pushed through bushes and rocks over broken ground towards the enemy; soon received a heavy volley, wounding and killing some. I feared confusion; (I) exhorted, swore, and threatened... Men did well. Found we could not stand it long and ordered an advance. Rushed forward with a yell; enemy gave way. (We) halted to reform the line; heavy firing resumed. I soon began to fear we could not stand it and again ordered a charge.

The enemy broke, and we drove them clear out of the woods. Our men halted at a fence near the edge of the woods and kept up a brisk fire upon the enemy, who were sheltering themselves behind stone walls and fences near the top of the hill, beyond a cornfield in front of our position. Just as I gave the command to charge I felt a stunning blow and found a musket ball had struck my left arm just above the elbow. Fearing that an artery might be cut, I asked a soldier near me to tie my handkerchief above the wound. I soon felt weak, faint, and sick at the stomach. I laid [lay] down and was comfortable. I was perhaps twenty feet behind the line of my men and could form a pretty accurate notion of the way the fight was going."

At this time Hayes recalled having a talk with a wounded Confederate soldier laying nearby. "I gave him messages for my wife and friends in case I should not get up. We were right jolly and

friendly; it was by no means an unpleasant experience.”

Hayes was trying to determine how the battle was progressing, while enemy fire was passing near his face and hitting the ground all around him. Being advised by one of his troops that the enemy might be trying to flank his unit, he ordered part of that unit to wheel back to the left to avoid being flanked. When the firing died down, he yelled, “Hallo 23rd men - are you going to leave your Colonel here for the enemy?”

In an instant, about a dozen of the boys sprang forward to assist him. The firing began in earnest again and Hayes ordered his men back to cover and to return fire. Later he was removed from the area. What Hayes did not know was that the charge that he led helped save the day, as that battle ended in a fierce hand-to-hand clash with bayonets and clubbed muskets, forcing the rebels to flee the battlefield. The wound suffered by Hayes was his most serious and forced him from action, as a musket ball fractured his left arm above the elbow, leaving a gaping hole. Hayes survived, thanks to the skill of his wife Lucy’s brother, Dr. Joseph Webb, and his regimental surgeon.

Promoted to Colonel of the 23rd Ohio while recovering from his wounds, Rutherford B. Hayes returned to the regiment to take command in December, 1862.

Battle of Cloyd’s Mountain

May 9, 1864 - a Union victory in Western Virginia allowed the Union forces to destroy the last line connecting Tennessee to Virginia. After early success on the field of battle, the union soldiers began a wild victory celebration. It seemed that the only Union officer on the field to keep his wits about him that day was Colonel Hayes. He collected 500 men from his brigade along with two artillery pieces, called for his horse, and pursued the rebel soldiers. He and his men ran into 800 rebel troops. At this point, most Civil War Brigade commanders would have held in place and called for reinforcements. Not Rutherford B. Hayes; he resolved to continue the attack. The Ohio boys, under instructions from Hayes to “yell like devils,” pressed forward. General Crook came up from behind to support the 23rd and they scattered the rebels. Lasting only 90 minutes, the Battle of Cloyd’s Mountain was a surprisingly ferocious battle. “The victory at Cloyd’s Mountain was complete,” Hayes wrote his wife Lucy. “This was our best fight and the 23rd was THE regiment!”

The Battle of Opequon Creek

September 17, 1864, was Rutherford B. Hayes’ greatest single moment in the war. More than anyone else, Hayes was responsible for one of General Phillip Sheridan’s (also an Ohioan) great victories. The battle was going badly for the Union forces and Hayes’ unit was called to the front. As they approached the rebel line, they came upon an obstacle - Red Bud Run - which fed into the Opequon river. This obstacle stopped the Union infantry, and a quick decision was needed from the troops’ leaders as to what to do.

Colonel Hayes wrote to Lucy Hayes, “*The order was to walk fast and keep silent, until within about one hundred yards of the enemy guns, then with a yell.....charge at full speed....We passed over a*

ridge and were just ready to begin the rush, when we came upon a deep creek with high banks, boggy, and perhaps 25 yards wide.... The Rebel fire now broke out furiously! Of course, the line stopped; but to stop was death! To go on was probably the same; but we started again. My horse plunged in and mired down hopelessly, just as by frantic struggling he reached the middle of the stream I jumped off, and down on all fours, succeeded in reaching the Rebel side – but alone! Perhaps some distance above or below, others were across. I was about the middle of the brigade and saw nobody else, but hundreds (who) were struggling in the stream. Soon they came flocking, all regiments mixed up – all order gone. There was no chance of reforming, but pell-mell, over the obstructions went the crowd. Two cannons were captured...the rest run off. The whole of General Crook's command was soon over, with the General swinging his sword, the Rebel position was successfully flanked and victory in prospect for the first time that day!"

Rutherford B. Hayes promoted to Brigadier General

General Crook stopped by Hayes' tent on December 9, 1864, and provided him with a pair of his old Brigadier General straps. Rutherford B. Hayes had now been promoted to a one-star General! His commission was dated October 19, and it was given for meritorious service at the battles of Opequon, Fishers Hill, and Cedar Creek.

June 8, 1865: four years and five days following his initial decision to enter the Union Army and the War, Rutherford B. Hayes was leaving it. After all, he had work to do and a duty to fulfill in the United States Congress (having been elected by the citizens of Cincinnati in 1864). As he left the Army, he was honored with the rank of Major General for his conduct in 1864.

Rutherford B. Hayes, the volunteer officer, had mastered the war, fighting alongside his men under the most dangerous of circumstances. Hayes himself shrugged off glowing praise.

Future president William McKinley said about his commanding officer, Rutherford B. Hayes, "He was the most beloved officer in the regiment from the beginning to the end of the War. He was ever looking after the care and well-being of the thousand young men who came from different parts of the State, strangers to him, with no military experience, and no experience in taking care of themselves. He was steady in thought and (in) purpose" ... "his whole nature seemed to change when in battle. From the sunny, agreeable, the kind, the generous, the gentle gentlemen...he was, once the battle was on, intense and ferocious."

As we study Rutherford B. Hayes' background and experiences – his early life here in Delaware, his education, his legal work, his service to his country.....I believe that it is no exaggeration to say that this man was as well prepared, if not better, than most any man who has ever assumed the office of the President of the United States!

Editor's note: This article was presented originally as a lecture to the Ohio Wesleyan University Lifelong Learning Institute on October 4, 2019, by Frank Hickman II. Hickman leads Whetstone Business Consulting and is a combat veteran of Vietnam. In 2019, Hickman was named Citizen of the Year by the Delaware Area Chamber of Commerce for being the prime fundraiser for the Hayes Statue in downtown Delaware. In 2020, Hickman was named Delaware County Outstanding Veteran. He is a graduate of Buckeye Valley Schools.

Harrison Military Road: Delaware, Ohio and the War of 1812

By Steve Shaw

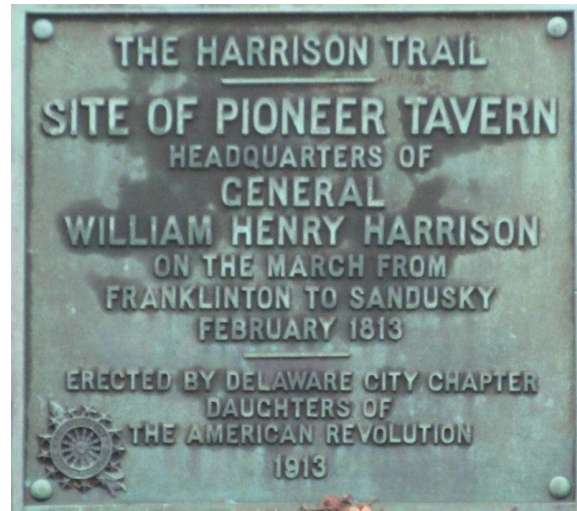
America was at war. On June 18, 1812, the Congress of the United States declared war on Great Britain, for what has come to be called "America's Second Fight for Independence." According to the Sandra Day O'Connor Institute, the decision for war was driven by a "combination of economic hardship, maritime conflict, territorial ambitions, and a fierce desire to defend national sovereignty."

Ohio was the Western Theatre of the War of 1812. As a new state (1803), Ohio supplied 24,703 soldiers and was critical ground for campaigns that secured the Great Lakes. Ultimately Ohio halted incursions by the British and their Native American allies, opening the Northwest Territory to American settlement.

Delaware, Ohio, was home to significant events that were part of this "first large-scale test of the American republic on the world stage" (American Battlefield Trust). Always a crossroads, Delaware was a frequent stopping and supply point for troops heading to battle points north to Lake Erie. A small bronze plaque commemorates the site of Harrison's winter headquarters and the Harrison Trail. The plaque is on a large boulder on Henry Street, across from Selby Field, OWU campus.

In 2013, DCHS commemorated the 200th anniversary of Harrison's encampment and the Harrison Trail with a Flag Day ceremony at the site, including Presentation of Colors, placing a wreath, a Sweet Adelines performance of patriotic songs, and "Taps." Lou Schultz, noted

War of 1812 historian, gave a lecture at The Barn at Stratford, entitled "The War of 1812 in Ohio."



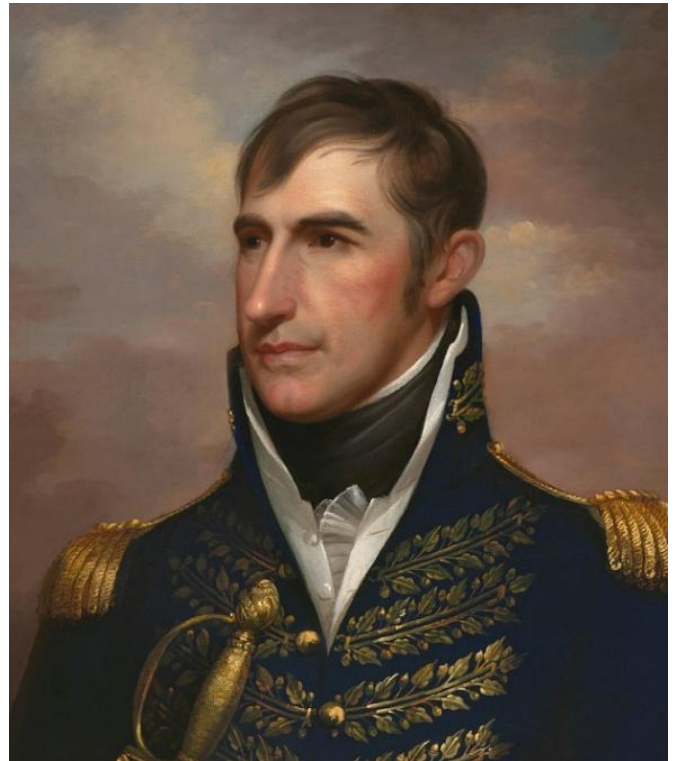
William Henry Harrison came from landed gentry - he was born on Berkeley Plantation in Virginia. His father, Benjamin Harrison, was a signer of the Declaration of Independence and his grandson, Benjamin Harrison, became the 23rd President of the United States. As the 7th of seven children, Harrison sought fresh opportunities in the Northwest Territory, serving as an ensign during the Old Northwest Indian Wars (1791-1794), and secretary of the Northwest Territory (1798-1799), before becoming Governor of the Indiana Territory (1800-1812). He made his definitive mark in the military by defeating a confederacy of Indian tribes at Tippecanoe, Indiana (Nov. 7, 1811). The Tippecanoe Battle helped defeat a Confederacy of tribal groups led by a Shawnee leader, Tecumseh.

Harrison was appointed head of the Western Armies in the fall of 1812 by President James Madison. Harrison inherited an army that needed good support to be successful in the field. Delaware County, Ohio, was credited with a population of 200 in the 1810 Census; (2,000 in Delaware County). It was here that Harrison set up headquarters. Between Delaware

County and Lake Erie, a good road was needed to transport and supply an army, through a heavily forested area that extended from what is now Waldo to Lake Erie and Detroit. The distance was close to 200 miles. Everything to support an army in the field was needed: food, animal forage, arms and ammunition, shelter, blacksmiths, supply depots, spare parts, etc. A series of blockhouses were built, including Fort Morrow, just 10 miles north of Delaware. Conventional wisdom was that work should wait until spring, but the war effort necessitated building the road through the fall and winter. By spring of 1813, a 120-foot-wide road to Lake Erie had been cut through the wilderness. Harrison was able to establish a base of operations around Sandusky and Fort Meigs.

The road also facilitated troop transport and logistical support for the United State Navy operating on Lake Erie. Our own Forrest Meeker served in an army light horse brigade during the war and attained the rank of Colonel. He supplied the Army with flour and other provisions from his Olentangy River grist mill, along with co-founder of Delaware, Moses Byxbe. Profits from the military supply contracts allowed Meeker to build the brick homestead that today is the Delaware County Historical Society's Meeker Homestead Museum.

Two decisive battles occurred in the fall of 1813, supported in part from Harrison Military Road. In September of 1813, Harrison received correspondence from Admiral Oliver Hazard Perry regarding the Battle of Put-In-Bay on Lake Erie. In part, Perry wrote, "We have met the enemy and they are ours." After the Navy established dominance on Lake Erie, Harrison engaged the British and their Indian allies at the Battle of the Thames on October 5, 1813, during which Shawnee leader Tecumseh was



Portrait: William Henry Harrison (1773-1841)
National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution

killed. Tecumseh and his confederacy had fiercely resisted Western American expansion. The War of 1812 crushed the hopes of Native Americans and eventually resulted in removal of tribal entities to the American West.

After the War of 1812, William Henry Harrison was clearly a hero. He was elected to Congress from Ohio, serving as a representative and a senator. He campaigned for U.S. President on a slogan from his war days: "Tippecanoe and Tyler, Too." He became our 9th President in 1841. He served only 32 days before succumbing to complications of pneumonia, purportedly from giving a two-hour inaugural address in very cold weather.

*We are not descended from
fearful countrymen.*

The American victory in the War of 1812 cemented American independence, boosted national pride, and increased domestic manufacturing and infrastructure. Our national anthem, The Star-Spangled Banner, was a result of the fervor of the War of 1812:

*Say, can you see
By the dawn's early light
What so proudly we hailed
At the twilight's last gleaming?
Whose broad stripes and bright stars
Through the perilous fight
O'er the ramparts we watched
Were so gallantly, yeah, streaming?
And the rockets' red glare
The bombs bursting in air
Gave proof through the night
That our flag was still there.
O say, does that star-spangled banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.*



This plaque is in Waldo, Ohio, commemorating the military road. A nearby plaque marks the site of the original War of 1812 stockade fort and Wyatt's Tavern, across the river from the fort's physical location. Nearby is the Wyatt Cemetery, which is the final resting place of thirteen unknown United States soldiers of the War of 1812. There are dozens of veterans of the War of 1812 buried in Delaware county cemeteries.

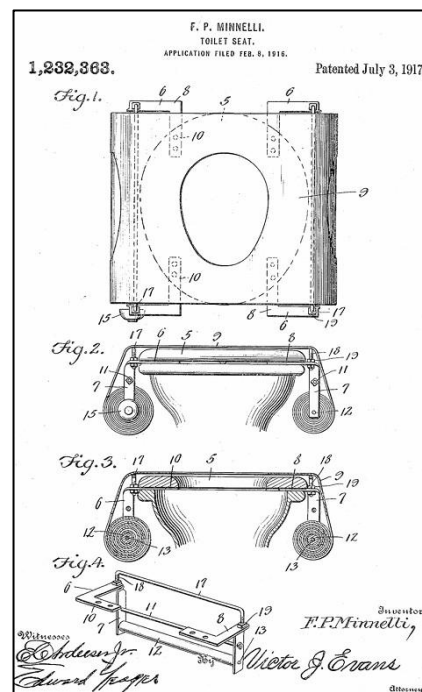
Who Thought of That? Notable Inventors of Delaware County

By Steve Schmitt

Frank P. Minnelli (1870 to 1921)

Frank was granted a patent for a toilet seat cover in 1917. He was the brother of Vincent Charles Minnelli, father of famed Hollywood director Vincente Minnelli (Judy Garland's husband and Liza Minnelli's father).

The brothers co-ran the Minnelli Brothers Mighty Dramatic Company, a traveling tent-theater troupe that performed throughout Ohio and the Midwest in the early 1900's, including Delaware.



Cletus N. Allerding (1875-1958)

Cletus moved to Delaware from Mansfield in the 1930's. While in Mansfield, Cletus had been granted several patents and owned a company making his patented automobile steering wheel. He purchased the old linseed oil mill at the northeast corner of Winter and Lake Streets. The building had most recently been the home of the Automatic Incubator Company. His business manufactured several of his patented furniture designs, including one that was a combination ironing board, step stool, and chair.

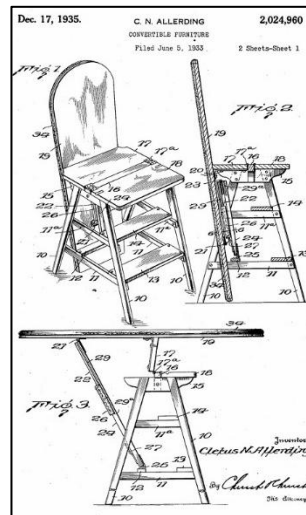
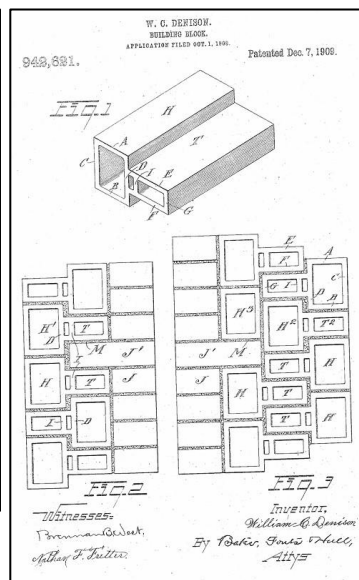
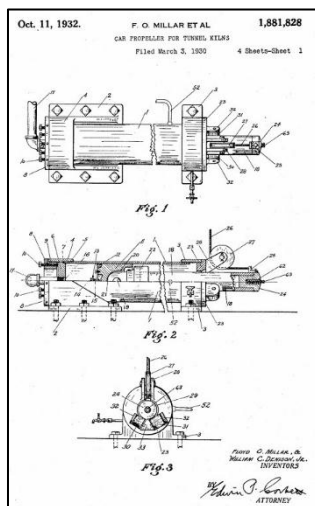


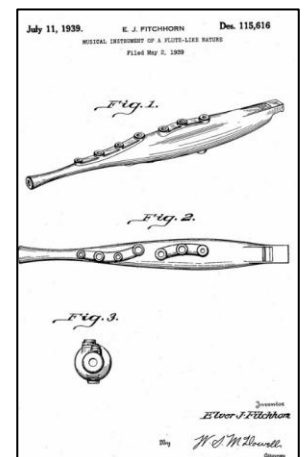
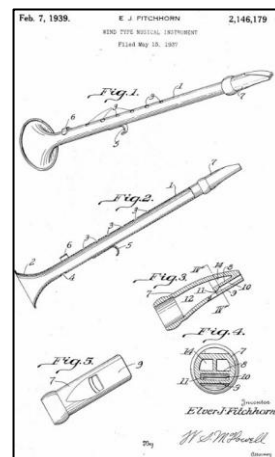
Photo by Brad Cowan, at the Nash House.

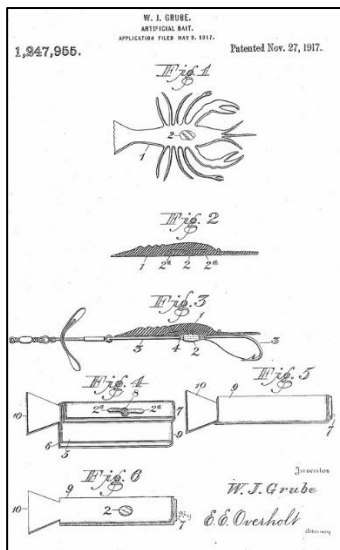
The Denison Family

There were many inventors in Delaware's **Denison** family. Leonard L. (1853 to 1937) and William C. Sr (1858 to 1943), along with sons and nephews, were granted patents for brick designs and manufacturing processes. Their brick company, the Delaware Clay Company, was in business until sold in the 1970's. The Denison brothers also owned Cook Motors in Delaware, and William C. Jr (1892 to 1963) operated the company, later changing the name to Denison Engineering with a focus on hydraulics. The first hydraulic patent was for a way to move carts of bricks through a tunnel kiln. Later patents were for pumps and presses that used hydraulic power. The Denison company produced more than 600 patents during the twentieth century.

Elver J. Fitchhorn (1896-1985)

Elver was a music teacher and band master, who believed all children should learn to sight read music. To facilitate this learning, he patented two musical instruments, the saxette and the song flute, which could be produced at a low cost. Both patents were granted in 1939. Fitchhorn is widely regarded as the "father of pre-band instruments." Early in his career, he played the French horn with the John Philip Sousa band and was a theater violinist. After World War II, Elver also managed Delaware Airport.





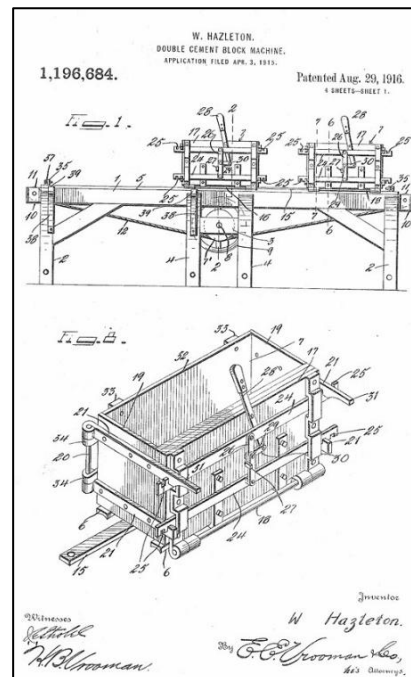
William J. Grube (1873-1954)

William operated a sporting goods and auto parts shop on East Winter St. in Delaware. His obituary indicated he built his own automobile in 1902 using imported components, the fourth auto in Ohio. William was granted several patents for devices such as bicycle wheel hubs and fishing lures. His son Dave continued the shop and was known as cyclist and photographer, and for the curly-hair Labrador Retrievers he bred and trained. Many remember the dogs were usually “parked” on the sidewalk in front of the shop.

An [Early Fishing Tackle Blog](#) details Grube’s contributions.

William Hazelton (1897-1934)

William operated a cement block production company behind his home on Park Ave. across Toledo St. from the Hocking Valley Railroad. He produced a heavy block (65 lb.) with faces of various textures. His blocks can be found throughout Delaware County as foundations for buildings and for complete houses and buildings. Several houses were built across Park Ave. as demonstrator houses. William partnered with Robert Greer’s Delaware Machine & Foundry (located on Toledo St.) to produce his patented block-making machine. The photo below was provided by Chet Hazelton and shows the machine being demonstrated at the 1917 Chicago Cement Show.



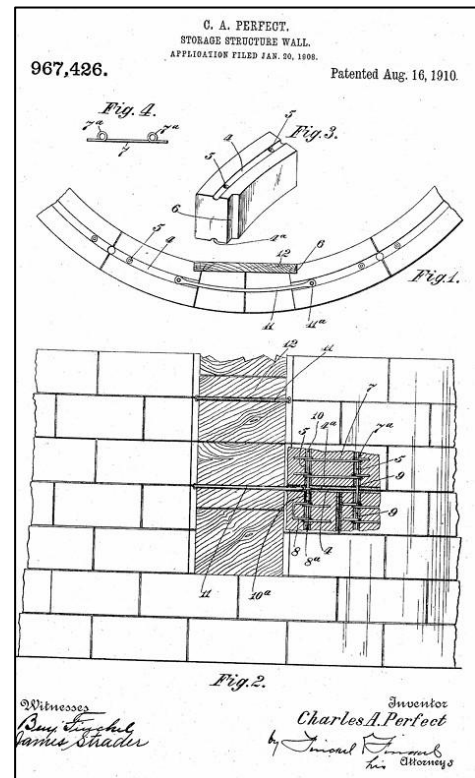
Charles Perfect (1873-1942)

Charles is from the Sunbury area and was granted patents for a novel method of assembling concrete silos and cisterns. He used custom-made curved segments that were internally braced with iron cables. He and his brother Mack initially cast the blocks on their farm, but later partnered with William Hazelton to produce the blocks. There are several "Perfect" silos remaining in Delaware County. Charles also was granted a patent for a loader/unloader that was manufactured by the Sunbury Manufacturing Company. It was designed to move coal and other material from a pit under a railroad hopper car up into a storage container, a wagon, or truck.



Photo: Big Walnut Area Historical Society

When Charles Alton Perfect was born on August 11, 1873, in Trenton Township, Delaware, Ohio, his father, George W. Perfect, was 50 and his mother, Emily Smith, was 39. He married Charlotta May Stone on November 8, 1898, in Delaware, Ohio. They were the parents of at least one daughter. He lived in Berkshire in 1910, and died on April 22, 1942, in Columbus, Ohio, at the age of 68. He was buried in Sunbury Memorial Park, Sunbury, Ohio.



"America will never be destroyed from the outside. If we falter and lose our freedoms, it will be because we destroyed ourselves."

~ Abraham Lincoln

Honoring and Remembering Our Patriots as We Commemorate 250 Years

By Becky S. Cornett

Ohio has the most Revolutionary War veterans resting in our cemeteries of any state in the U.S. According to Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) and Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), about 7,000 Patriots are buried in Ohio. The America 250-Ohio Revolutionary War Veterans Graves Project has documented 4,500 so far, and counting. Documentation progress is found at the [Veteran Graves Project](#) interactive results database.

The *20th Century History of Delaware, County Ohio* (James Lytle, 1908), offers this reason for the large number of Revolutionary War soldiers who came to this area:

When the Revolutionary War closed, it found the government weak and bankrupt. The soldiers who had fought for liberty were forced to accept western lands in payment for long years of military service. This brought many pioneers to the western wilderness and particularly to Ohio, where large areas of land were designated as "United States Military Lands" and "Virginia Military Lands." The land on the east side of the Scioto River was designated as the United States Military Lands and land on the west side of the Scioto River, as the Virginia Military Land. These lands were set apart for the benefit of the Revolutionary soldiers by the United States Government. This caused many of the old Revolutionary soldiers

to settle in Delaware County. Peacetime found them broken down in spirit and fortune, and when lands were offered to them in the West, they were ready to accept and to move toward the setting sun. Such was the noble and warlike stock which made up the early settlers of Delaware County.

One hundred forty-three (143) markers have been documented so far in Delaware County. We honor and remember all of them during this special year – the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. In this issue, we highlight ten of them.



Photo: Marker in Galena Cemetery

Lieutenant Benjamin Carpenter (1750-1823)

Lt. Carpenter served in the 10th Regiment, Pennsylvania, served in Battle of Wyoming, July 3, 1778, and came to Berkshire in 1806 from Pennsylvania. Carpenter's life was documented in the book *From Then till Now: Methodism in Sunbury, OH 1811-1964* by Ruth Truxall. He purchased land north of future Sunbury in July, 1806, signing a Mortgage Deed to Delaware co-founder Moses Byxbe. Carpenter became one of the Associate Judges of the Court of Common Pleas of Delaware County, Ohio.

An account of Judge Carpenter's life by Polly Horn, Big Walnut Area Historical Society, includes a photo of the mosaic that appears on the ceiling of the courthouse in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania.



Carpenter, his wife, and brothers are buried in the Galena Cemetery. His brother, the Rev. Gilbert Carpenter, also served in the Revolutionary War.

Captain Zephaniah Lott (1742-1829)

Capt. Lott served in the 6th Associated Company, Southhampton Township Militia, Bucks County, Pennsylvania and as captain of 5th Company, First Battalion, Bucks County Militia of the Pennsylvania Militia. His father, Capt. Henry Lott, commanded the 4th Company in Northampton Township. Zephaniah received a land grant in 1816 and came to Delaware County and farmed. He is buried in Stark Cemetery, Porter Twp., next to his wife.



Capt. Nathan Carpenter (1757-1814)

Capt. Carpenter joined the Connecticut Militia as a Private and was wounded at Bunker Hill (June 1775). He was commissioned as Captain of a company of militia in Tioga County, New York, in 1793. Having purchased 520 acres in 1800, With his family after a long overland and water journey, Carpenter arrived at his new homestead in Liberty Township on May 1, 1801. The Carpenters were the first colonial family to settle in this area. In 1804 he built the first grist and sawmill in Delaware. Carpenter is buried at Marycrest, the family farm. Note: He was a distant cousin of brothers Benjamin and Gilbert Carpenter.



Simon Condit (1761–1839)

Simon served as a soldier from New Jersey during the Revolutionary War. He relocated to Delaware County in 1833, and is buried in Trenton Cemetery. First of the prominent Condit family to settle in the area, he purchased eighty acres of land next to Van Dorn's tavern, living there until his death. He was the son of Jonathan Condit, who was Captain of Militia in the 2nd New Jersey Regiment.

The community of Condit is named after Lewis S. Condit (born 1854 to Marvin and Sarah), who operated a creamery that fostered commercial development in the area. The Sunbury area was well-known for dairy farming. Condit Station, which was served by the Cleveland, Columbus and Mount Vernon Railroad, became a hub for shipping products such as stone, lumber, and livestock.



Photo: VFW and American Legion representatives honor Simon Condit at Trenton Cemetery as part of the America 250 commemoration.

Benajah Cook (c.1759-1839)

Benajah Cook (with his wife) was the founder of Harlem Township as the first Euro-American settlers. His Revolutionary War service occurred in Connecticut. In a theclio.com entry, Dr. Dave Snyder summarizes the grit of Connecticut patriots, *"The experience of the Connecticut line during the Revolution was grueling. Connecticut soldiers were involved in key engagements in the northern theater and suffered through the privations of encampments like Valley Forge and Morristown."*

"Cook did not merely settle Harlem Township; he effectively capitalized its existence, established its industrial base through early milling, and founded a lineage that would dominate the region's social and political fabric for a century." (theclio.com)

An Ohio History Connection historical marker at Cook Farm states, *"Benajah Cook and the families who settled in Harlem Township, Delaware County [Ohio] are honored for creating a community of productive farms. The Benajah and Cassandra Cook family arrived when the land was forested and settled on 500 acres of the 4,000 acres that Benajah purchased at a sheriff's auction on June 12, 1807."*

[Ohio History Connection historical marker, Cook Farm]

Photo: Cook and his wife are buried in Fancher Cemetery.



Capt. John Oliver Minter (1755-1835)

John served as a Captain in the Westmoreland County Militia (Pennsylvania). After the war, he first moved to Kentucky, and then to Radnor in 1802. He was engaged in the following major battles of the Revolution: Battle of Brandywine (1777); Battle of Germantown (1777); Battle of Monmouth (1778); and the Siege of Yorktown (1781). Minter was married to Elizabeth Crawford, the daughter of Col. Valentine Crawford, who was Gen. George Washington's assistant, and the niece of Col. William Crawford, who led the ill-fated 1782 expedition against the American Indians in Sandusky.



*Photo: John Minter Memorial,
Radnor Cemetery*

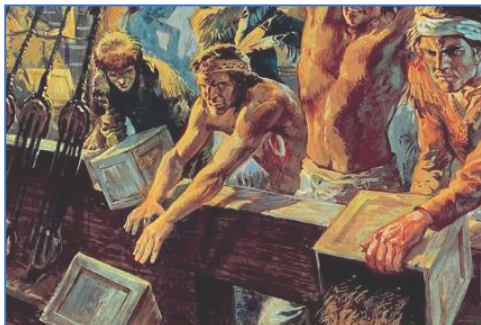
William Perfect (1746-1813)

William was born in Culpepper, VA, and served as a Private in the Virginia militia. He arrived in the area in 1807 from Kentucky, and was recognized with Mordecai Thomas as the very first settlers, as well as the first recorded death in the original Trenton Township. Perfect Creek is named after William.

A 22-stall concrete horse barn, "Perfect Barn," was erected at the Delaware County Fairgrounds in 2015 by Clyde Perfect, in recognition of the family's long history in Delaware County. They were involved in farming, and in breeding and racing horses here and in Indiana. William is buried in Sunbury Memorial Park.



Photo: William Perfect's memorial stone



"I like my coffee with cream and sugar, and my tea in the harbor..."

Field Musician Richard Thompson (1742-1837)

Thompson, born in Ireland, initially served with the British. He changed his allegiance after being captured at the Battle of Bunker Hill, becoming Fife Major of the 5th Virginia Regiment in 1776. He was later appointed Drum Major of the 3rd and 4th Virginia Regiments in 1779 and served until the end of the war.

Thompson moved to Ohio around 1804. He was appointed Master Musician of the Ohio Militia by Governor Return J. Meigs (at age 70) during the War of 1812. He died at age 95 and is buried in Fancher Cemetery.



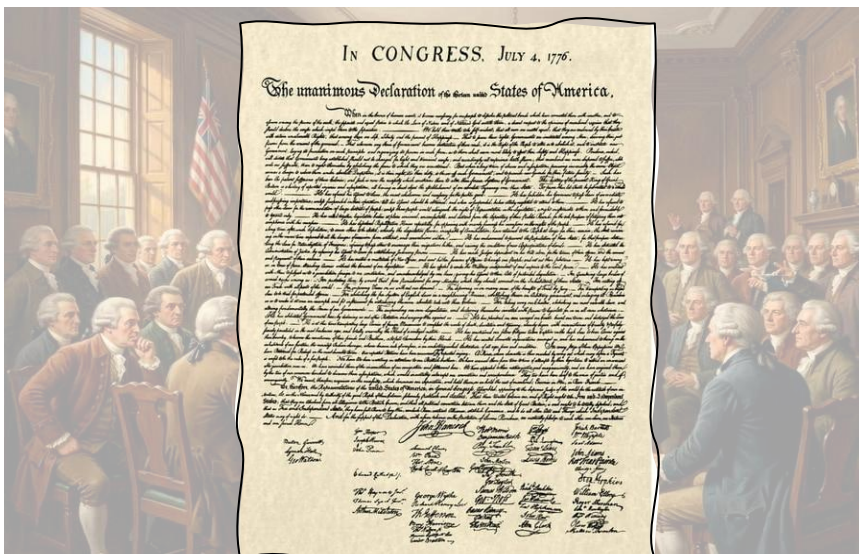
Photo: Richard Thompson's family members with his historic marker, Harlem Township.

Peter Van Sickle (1749-1843)

Private Peter Van Sickle served with the 5th Regiment, Dutchess County Militia, New York Militia, during the American Revolution under George Clinton and in many other assignments. The partial transcription of his [petition for a pension](#), is fascinating. Van Sickle came to Delaware County with family members in 1823. He is buried in Stark Cemetery with other family members.



Peter Van Sickle was the ancestor of the late [Roger Van Sickle](#) (1944-2025).



**Declaration of Independence:
The Ultimate
Break-Up Letter.**

Sgt. William Warrington (1751-1850)

Warrington enlisted in the Continental Army of the Revolutionary War on February 14, 1776, in Captain Thomas Snead's Company of the 9th Virginia Regiment. He was transferred to Gen. George Washington's Guard on March 12, 1777. Sgt. Warrington served with Gen. Washington at Valley Forge and during the Battles of Brandywine, Germantown, Morristown, and Trenton. Warrington was discharged from the army on Feb 10, 1778. He also served in the War of 1812, enlisting in 1813. He moved to Ohio in 1826, and is buried in Mill Creek Cemetery, Scioto Twp.

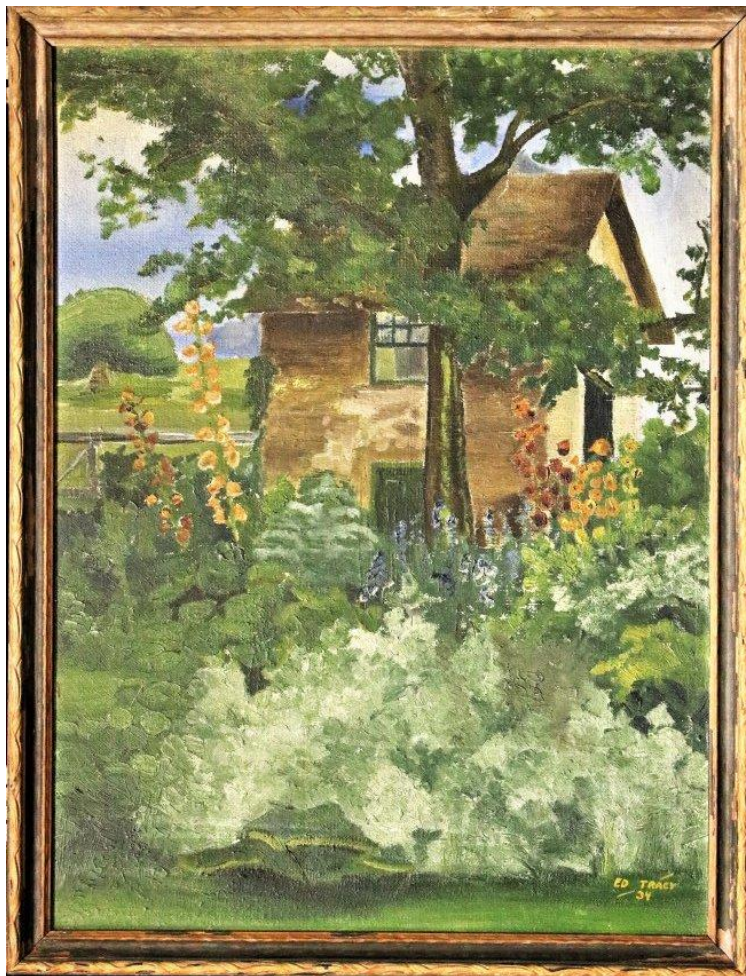


COLLECTIONS SPOTLIGHT

By Becky S. Cornett

DCHS volunteer and artist Cindy Kerr chose a painting and a photograph to spotlight for this issue. These pieces, shown on the next two pages, illustrate key aspects of Delaware County's ongoing history.

Nathan Carpenter, along with his wife, Irina, and their family, was the first colonial settler in Delaware County. He arrived in 1801 after serving in the Revolutionary War. In 1800, Carpenter had purchased 520 acres in Ohio (then part of the Northwest Territory) for \$1,500. Leaving New York in February 1801, the Carpenters traveled to Pittsburgh, floated down the Ohio River, and used keel boats to go up the Scioto River. He set up a homestead near the Whetstone River (now Olentangy) in Liberty Township where he grew grain, and in 1804 built the first mill in Delaware County used for sawing wood and grinding grain. The Carpenters also built a stone springhouse. This was built directly over a freshwater spring and served as a refrigerator, as the water maintains a constant cool temperature inside the spring house throughout the year. Food that would otherwise spoil, such as meat, fruit, or dairy products, could be kept there. It remains on the property, which is now part of White Star Farms/Marycrest owned by Grief Brothers. Nathan Carpenter is buried on the farm.



"Spring House," painted in 1934 by Ed Tracy, is located at White Star Farm, Delaware County, Ohio.

The importance of horses in Delaware County cannot be overstated. Draft horses were supreme in history. Today, standardbreds, American Quarter Horses, draft horses, ponies and small equines, and English and warmblood sport horses all are found in the county, and are showcased at the annual [All Horse Parade](#). The parade takes place as part of the Delaware County Fair, on September 13, 2026, at 3:00 PM, starting at the County Fairgrounds.

Ed Humes, who was born in 1939, grew up in Stratford. His father was Ralph Humes, who raised and showed Percheron, Belgian, and other horses. The Humes were Meeker Homestead tenant farmers from 1946-1952, during the time that property owner Garth Oberlander lived in Bucyrus. They lived across the road from the Meeker House.

Ed is pictured below with two of the horses in front of the Barn at Stratford. It was 1948, and he was on his way to the Ohio State Fair with the horses. At one time, more than fifty Percherons were stabled in the Barn. The Humes draft horses were known across America to be excellent horses, and thus put Delaware on the map.

The Percheron breed originated in France. Once they were brought to America, the breed quickly became popular as a work horse. Known to be gentle but strong, the horses pulled plows, wagons, stagecoaches, and artillery during WWI. Once automobiles and tractors were more affordable, the Percheron population decreased. Today they are used mostly for recreational purposes.

Draft horses were an integral element in the development of Delaware County, which continues to have draft horse stables today.



Ed Humes heading to Ohio Fair

Photographer Unknown – 1948

AMERICANA 250

Scenes and Symbols Around Delaware County

By Becky S. Cornett



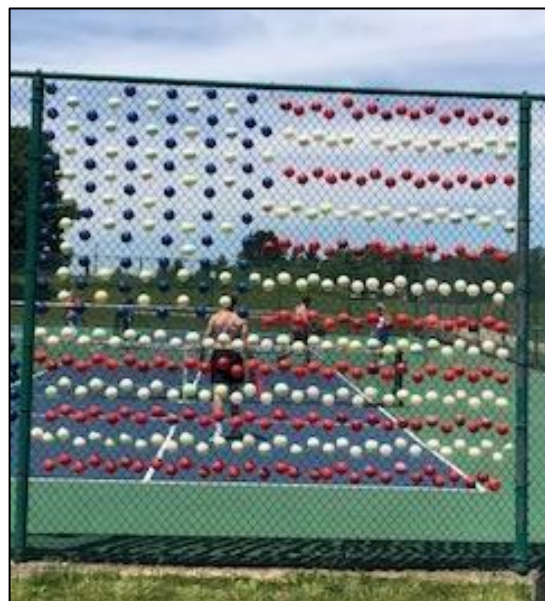
Shawnee Hills Flag Day Display - 2026



*Field of Honor® Westerville Sports Complex,
Memorial Weekend*



Mural honoring Ostrander's history as a railroad town



*Celebrating America 250 at
Smith Park, Delaware*



Ashley Corn Show – July 31-August 1
New for 2026: Tallest Cornstalk Contest



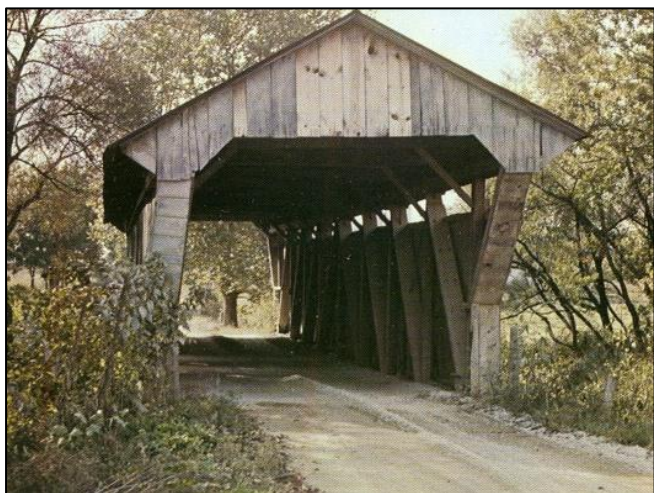
Antique Tractor Show 2026 - Gallant Farm

**Radnor
 Cemetery
 tribute**



Editor's Note: Readers are invited to submit photos and art representing "Americana" in Delaware County for the Fall issue of *The Historian*. We will select and publish 12 more. Submit to: bcornett@delawareohiohistory.org or Communications Committee Chair Marilu Quinn at mquinn@delawareohiohistory.org. Please put "Americana" in the subject line.

"Again? Really???
Please don't make
me repeat myself!"
~ History



*Chambers Road Covered Bridge (1874),
Porter Twp. Photo: Big Walnut Area
Historical Society*



Galena Barnyard. Photo: Dr. Dan Clinchot



*Lucas Flack, Johnny
Bench Award, 2026.
Hayes High School
catcher, NCAA
Division 1.
Photo: Delaware
Gazette*

*Emilia Wadkins, National
Champion, 2026 Youth
Equestrian National
Development Competition
Photo: Delaware Gazette*



A Picture is Worth 1,000 Words

This broadside (below), advertising J.N. Stark's dry goods store in Olive Green, was displayed at the recent "Heartland: The Stories of Ohio Through 250 Objects" exhibit at the Decorative Arts Center of Ohio (DACO) in Lancaster (Jan. 31-April 26, 2026). According to one of the curators, Andrew Richmond, the broadside was chosen "because business and economics was a theme we want to touch on, and such a successful merchant in rural Ohio was a good story, especially since this ad was produced during the Civil War and included the line about 'war times.'" Richmond said that there was nostalgia in the choice: he lived in Sunbury for ten years and drove through Olive Green many times.

**GOOD NEWS FOR ALL
NEW CASH STORE AT OLIVE GREEN**
Fresh Goods at Prices suited to the War Times

A large stock has been received by J. N. STARK. It is so extensive at what low prices he is now enabled to sell goods.

Well the arrival here of all I'll give you a call!

Equines, Groceries, Farming Utensils, &c. &c. just arrived.

I have just purchased STARK & PERFECT'S stock of goods, and have added thereto a large lot of new goods, to be sold for CASH. I have on hand a general assortment of

**DRY GOODS
GROCERIES,**

Hardware, Glassware, Clothing, Notions, Boots, Shoes, Hats, Caps, Stationery, Wooden and Queensware, And all other Articles generally kept in a well furnished Store.

Country Produce of all kinds taken in payment for Merchandise. Come one! Come all! and see for yourselves my goods and prices. Buying and selling for cash alone, I am enabled to give customers as good bargains as they can find anywhere else in the country.

OLIVE GREEN, Delaware County, O. J. N. STARK.

Times Print Cincinnati.

By Becky S. Cornett

Having a cash store during the Civil War was indeed "good news." Cash stores accepting gold, silver, and reliable currency, broke the standard "barter and credit" system. Merchants could avoid debt and pass bulk discounts on to consumers. Note that the ad states "country produce of all kinds taken in payment for merchandise," so - same as cash. James N. Stark (1823-1899) was a prominent merchant and civic leader in Olive Green (Porter Twp), who was the first postmaster, executor of wills, manager of stagecoach agency affairs, and listed in the 1860 census as one of the wealthiest persons in the area.

Olive Green, which was laid out in 1835, grew to over 100 people and supported a school, post office (which was consolidated with Kingston Center after six years), several general stores, a blacksmith, shoemaker, creamery, carpentry shop, millinery, and two churches. Dr. George Foster, a graduate of Starling Medical College (forerunner of Ohio State's College of Medicine), practiced in the village for almost 40 years, beginning in 1874. Dr. Ella Welch, one of the first female physicians in Delaware County, studied with him in 1889. She practiced in Ashley for 41 years.

Fred McKay, longtime columnist for the *Sunbury News*, wrote of Dr. Foster, "For thirty-nine years Dr. G. F. Foster could be seen every day going on his errand of mercy through the heat and the cold, the mud and the rain and snow! I still remember his assuring answer when called, 'I'll be right over.' No nights were too dark, no day was too hot, cold, or stormy. Many older readers can remember his familiar figure in his open buggy or cart or sleigh in the winter's cold. and when the roads were deep and messy, he could be seen rocking along in his saddle on Old Bill or Frank.

The decline of Olive Green as a commercial center occurred primarily because in the 1870's, the railroad never made it to the village; instead, other nearby towns, including Sunbury, secured the lines and built stations and depots, drawing trade and population away. Note that a steam locomotive is featured prominently in the broadside – which was wishful thinking! Also, as many more people owned cars in the early 1920's and enjoyed improved roads, residents could travel to larger communities for jobs and to shop a wider variety of goods and services.

Today, Olive Green, an unincorporated community, is growing as part of Porter Township – with almost 2,500 township residents in 2026. The township median family income is over \$123,000 and the median age is 50.9 years. Porter Township is home to the historic Chambers Road Covered Bridge (1874) – the only remaining covered bridge in Delaware County. It spans Big Walnut Creek and is located just northeast of Olive Green.

People of the Past...

Lucy Page Gaston was born in Delaware, Ohio, to Dr. Alexander Hugh Gaston, a physician, and Henrietta Page, both of whom supported temperance and abolition. The family moved to Illinois when Lucy was a child. She became one of the most prominent anti-tobacco activists of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, as the founder of the Anti-Cigarette League of America (first established in Chicago in 1899), which attracted over 300,000 members by 1901.

Gaston was 16 when she began teaching in rural Illinois schools, and noted the detrimental effect of tobacco on men and boys in those areas. Gaston's mother enlisted Lucy in Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) activities and later engaged in saloon raids and raids on tobacco shops.

She framed tobacco use in speeches and writings as eroding mental capacity and moral fiber. She argued that smokers exhibited "deteriorated character." Gaston popularized the term "coffin nails." She lobbied extensively on the local and state level and



Photo: Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library post

Lucy Page Gaston (1860-1924)

achieved legislative wins in several states. Unfortunately, most of the laws were later invalidated in the courts after challenges by the tobacco industry and rights groups. Lucy Page Gaston died in August, 1924, at the age of 64, ironically from complications of throat cancer and lingering effects of injuries from a prior streetcar accident.

Francis Thomas Evans (1886-1974)

Francis Thomas Evans was born in Delaware, Ohio, in June, 1886, to Francis Thomas "Frank" Evans and Alice Brown Evans, both of whom are buried at Oak Grove Cemetery. After serving in the National Guard and attending Ohio Wesleyan University, he accepted a commission as a Second Lieutenant in the Marine Corps in January, 1909. He became one of the earliest Marine Corps aviators. By early 1917, Evans was the most experienced Curtiss N-9 floatplane pilot in the world, and was one of the first persons ever to loop a seaplane. In 1936, he received the Distinguished Flying Cross for this achievement. During WWI, Evans commanded a seaplane squadron in the Azores. In the 1920's and 1930's, the Marines did not have ambulance aircraft, so Evans developed a way to modify a Douglas P2D-1 patrol floatplane to house a stretcher and medical attendant. This plane was used in the occupations of Haiti and Santo Domingo. Evans achieved the rank of Colonel and retired in December, 1944. He is buried at Arlington National Cemetery. He is listed in the 1925 edition of *Who's Who in American Aeronautics*.



Photo: Wikipedia Commons



Photo: Find-A-Grave

Elmer Washington Bryant Curry (1871-1930)

Education pioneer Elmer Curry was born in Delaware, Ohio, in March, 1871, to Rev. George Washington Curry and Julia Frances "Bertie" Andrews Curry. His father was a minister at Second Baptist Church. In 1896, Curry married Emma Virginia Stewart and they had six children. At the age of 17, he founded a school in a kitchen shed in Delaware that he called The Place of Knowledge for Old and Young. His first student was a 50-year-old man who was a day laborer. Curry attended Michael College and Ohio Wesleyan University. He was the first African American teacher in Delaware City Schools.

In 1889, he founded the Curry Normal and Industrial Institute in Urbana, Ohio. He offered traditional academic education and vocational skills focus. Departments included Bible, normal (learning how to become a teacher), literary, commercial, music, and industrial. Curry modeled his institute on Booker T. Washington's Tuskegee Institute in Alabama.

The Institute building still stands today as a private residence on Water Street in Urbana. *The Story of the Curry Institute*, written by E.W.B. Curry, is available to view at the Urbana Public Library. Over 2,000 students benefited from Curry's efforts.

Curry said of his motivation, “It came to me that the youth must be trained to work. They should know honest toil is an expression of noble manhood and the task cannot disgrace; but the one who slights the common duties of every-day life is a disgrace to themselves and whatever race they represent.”

Curry passed away on June 19, 1930, in Springfield, and is buried at Oakdale Cemetery in Urbana, Ohio. Exhibit panels illustrating Elmer Curry’s life and contributions, developed by Benny Shoults, can be viewed at the Delaware County Records Center.



A lie doesn't become truth, wrong doesn't become right, and evil doesn't become good, just because it's accepted by a majority.”

~ Booker T. Washington

...And People of the Present

Carlos Crawford is director of Delaware County’s Public Defender’s Office. Prior to his appointment, he served as chair of the Public Defender Commission. He is a founding partner of Crawford and Glankler, LLC. Crawford also is a member of Powell’s City Council, beginning his term in January, 2026. He currently serves as President of [Unity Community Center’s](#) Board of Directors, and the Stratford Ecological Center Board of Trustees. He served on the SourcePoint Board from 2019-2023.

Prior to practicing law, Crawford worked as a Safety Engineer for two Fortune 500 companies and was a researcher for the federal government – conducting studies on worker safety and exposure to novel chemicals and compounds, publishing several articles in science journals. He holds degrees in biology, environmental and occupational health, and earned a Juris Doctor from the University of Cincinnati with honors.



Carlos M. Crawford

Delaware County Commissioner Barb Lewis

Barb Lewis will be retiring at the end of 2026, after eleven years of service as a Delaware County Commissioner. Prior to her election, she was a Genoa Township Trustee for seven years. Her fellow Commissioners elected her President of the Board in 2016 and 2019, and Vice-President of the Board in 2015 and 2021. Lewis holds a Ph.D. in Political Science from The Ohio State University, where she taught hundreds of OSU students the fundamentals and ideals of American constitutional government.

Commissioner Lewis emphasizes government efficiency, citizen outreach, and maintaining good working relationships with all of Delaware County's elected officials and state and local leaders. She envisions our county as a unified, dynamic, and growing community. Lewis also is a leader for Delaware County's "Stepping Up Initiative," modeled on a national program that reduces the number of non-violent offenders with mental illness in jails and prisons, while providing them with proper recovery treatment in a cost-effective manner. She serves on the Justice and Public Safety Steering Committee of the National Association of Counties, and chairs the Justice and Public Safety Committee of the County Commissioners' Association of Ohio. She also has been a board member for the United Way of Delaware County.

In remarks Lewis prepared for this feature, she noted that commissioning a mural for the County Law Library's vestibule (Carnegie Library) was a priority, so that the county's rich history would be visible to all who entered. The mural is included in the [America 250-Ohio Murals Across Ohio](#).



Photo: Delaware County

Lewis said, "I'm proud of our award-winning fiscal record and reputation for competence and integrity, and our preservation of history. All this was made possible by my fellow Commissioners and the outstanding administrative team we've assembled. I hope my behind-the-scenes accomplishments will outlast our beautifully renovated Historic Courthouse, where I will miss working after I retire. I will remain active by supporting our many worthy non-profit organizations through Delaware County Foundation, including, of course, the Delaware County Historical Society, which is essential to preserving our history and culture. We very much appreciate how essential all these organizations are to our county's well-being."

Dr. Alice Frazier

Alice Frazier, long-time history enthusiast, DCHS board member, committee chair and member, and sounding board, has received one of the "16 over 60" Awards from the Central Ohio Area Agency on Aging (COAAA) for 2026. Her award bio follows:

"Alice Frazier from Delaware is a retired physician and dedicated community leader whose decades of service have strengthened public health, civic engagement, and local organizations. Known for her humility and thoughtful leadership, she served more than 10 years on the board of SourcePoint, including as president, guiding the organization through growth while keeping a strong focus on the needs of older adults and caregivers."

Alice has also played key leadership roles with the Delaware County Historical Society, the League of Women Voters, and several county-wide health initiatives, helping shape programs that promote wellness, equity, and community involvement. Her work in governance, fundraising, and strategic planning has supported sustainable, mission-driven impact



Photo by COAAA

across organizations. Known for her collaborative approach, and willingness to serve wherever needed, Alice leads by example. Through mentorship, advocacy, and quiet dedication, she has inspired others and left a legacy of service, leadership, and meaningful community change."

Own a piece of History...

Visit us on eBay!

Use the advanced search to find us under Sellers using "collectionsDCHS."

Check back often!

We are selling duplicate items, and interesting things unrelated to Delaware County.

Delaware County Historical Society
~ preserving history since 1947.

HISTORIC BARNs OF DELAWARE COUNTY

COMING SOON!

"HISTORIC BARNs OF DELAWARE COUNTY"

BOOK BY RICHARD LEAVY

Jack Hilborn (1949-2026) followed in his father's footsteps in several ways. He was his father's partner in the insurance business, and in 2018, the business celebrated 80 years in downtown Delaware. He became the second "Mr. Delaware," accepting the Delaware Area Chamber of Commerce Wayne Hilborn Lifetime Achievement Award in February, 2019.

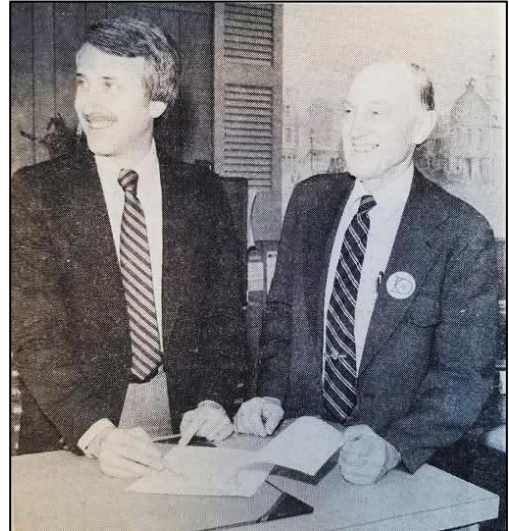
We are so glad that Jack extended his expertise and commitment to the Delaware County Historical Society (DCHS), among the many local, state, and national organizations he served. Jack was elected President of DCHS in 2018, stepping up from VP and previous long board service. Later, he was Executive VP before stepping down due to illness. He was a well-known railfan and served in leadership capacities on the National Railway Historical Society. Jack gave popular presentations about trains annually to DCHS and the wider community.

Brent Carson, President Emeritus, offered this tribute, "Memories of Jack go back to high school and as young adults working together on projects with the Delaware Jaycees. Jack was among the first to welcome me, when, upon retirement I became active in DCHS. He loved local history and the community. Jack, like his father, was a treasure for the community, involved in so many activities. He was a dear friend and I will miss him."

Judge David Hejmanowski, DCHS Trustee, who was the President when Jack served as Exec VP, said, "Jack Hilborn was the very definition of a 'gentleman' - he was a gentle man. I never heard him raise his voice, never heard him speak ill of another person, and never heard him complain. Always positive, always upbeat, always willing to help - he improved any project or organization he was involved with. He loved Delaware, and Delaware loved him back. We were all improved by having Jack in our midst."

Jack Hilborn: a life well-lived, always remembered.

DCHS Remembers Jack Hilborn



Jack Hilborn (L) and his father, Wayne at Hilborn Insurance in 1983.



Winner of Delaware Area Chamber of Commerce Wayne Hilborn Lifetime Achievement Award in 2019. Photo courtesy of the Delaware Gazette.

Blast from the Past

Rural Mail Carrier Wore Out 12 Horses, Eight Automobiles - George N. Davis Retires after Thirty Years Service as Radnor Route Carrier

After wearing out 12 horses and eight automobiles in delivering mail in the Radnor community during the past 36 years, George N. Davis of west of Radnor was experiencing Saturday as his first day of retirement.

Reaching the retirement age of 65 last Sunday, Davis completed his last delivery of the mail Friday afternoon. Of 65 families who were on his route when he started, there were but six people of that group people on that route when he ended his last trip yesterday. From the time he started in 1906 as a rural mail carrier to 1914, Davis used 12 horses for transportation. In 1914, he purchased his first automobile. From that time. until he retired Friday afternoon, he used eight automobiles in his work.

In 1906, Davis's mail route was 24 $\frac{3}{4}$ miles long, but when he made his last trip yesterday it had grown to 41 miles and embraced 170 families. Nine of the 24 $\frac{3}{4}$ miles in his first route were mud roads. but yesterday most of the 41 miles were improved roads.

Before entering the United States Postal Service, Davis taught school for 15 years. Now that he is retired from the postal service, he will spend his time in farm work.

Among the many changes he has seen in nearly a third of a century as a rural mail carrier, one of them was the consolidation of three rural mail routes in the Radnor community to two.

With Davis's retirement, part of his route was transferred to Harry A. Lauer, the other carrier from the Radnor post office, and to routes from the Delaware and Ostrander post offices. With this consolidation, Lauer, the only carrier who will operate from the Radnor post office, will have a route approximately 66 miles long.

Editor's Note: This May 30, 1936, newspaper article and photo are displayed at the Radnor Museum as part of the post office exhibit. The Radnor Museum is open to the public on the first and third Sundays of the month, from April through October, and for several events during the year.



Post Office Window



George N. Davis 1871-1947



Post Office Box 175



Combination for P.O. Box 175

Letter from Our Society President, Karen Cowan

This America250 anniversary is a good time to celebrate the uniqueness of America, and celebrate the heritage and culture of our unique Delaware County. What makes Delaware County unique? This question was asked recently to members of the Historical Society. Since America250 has tuned us into what makes America unique, I thought this would be a good time to talk about what makes Delaware County unique.

Delaware County has a passion for history and preserving the past. You only need to look at Delaware city, where most of the buildings on Sandusky were built during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. We have several historical societies, including Radnor Historical Society, Powell Liberty Historical Society, Galena, Big Walnut, and Harlem, which proudly present the history and heritage of their township, city, or village. Then there is us, the Delaware County Historical Society, which collects and catalogues and researches historical artifacts and events that transcend the boundaries of the cities, villages and townships.

Despite their rapid growth, Delaware County communities have kept their small-town charm. All of the cities, villages, and townships have their signature events that bring their communities together. And, Delaware is one of the few cities of its size that has downtown foot traffic all day, every day, as people walk to work, to coffee shops, to restaurants, to the library, and downtown, to watch other people walking by. That is very unique.

In addition, Delaware County is the birthplace of a President, Rutherford B. Hayes. We have a world renown Triple Crown Harness Race, which is the only one of its kind in the country held at a County Fair. Despite the county's inland location, it features the most shoreline—about 140 miles—of all the counties in Ohio.

DCHS OFFICERS AND TRUSTEES

Karen Cowan, President
Eric Anderson, Executive Vice President
Terri Ross, Vice President of Development
Desiree Hoffman, Vice President of Board Operations
Nancy Reger, Secretary
Jeff Ross, Treasurer
Ceena Baker, Trustee
David Hejmanowski, Trustee
Tito Paul, Trustee
Margaret Snyder, Trustee



WE ARE AN



SUPPORTER

Any audio-visual equipment and internet access for our programs at the Barn at Stratford are provided by a grant from the Delaware County Foundation.

BRINGING HISTORY TO LIFE

Join us for these programs in 2026!



Programs are free unless otherwise noted. Members receive a discount for ticketed events.

All programs are held at The Barn at Stratford, unless otherwise noted. *

How Ohio Won the Civil War

WHEN: Thursday, August 18, at 7:00 PM

WHO: Presented by Michael Wise, President,
Big Walnut Area Historical Society

The History of Fairs in Delaware County

WHEN: Tuesday, September 29, at 7:00 PM

WHO: Presented by Don Howard and Society Volunteers

Life with the Circus: Francis Beverly Kelley

WHEN: Tuesday, October 20, at 7:00 PM

WHO: Presented by Society Volunteer Mike Hoffman

Annual Meeting - Celebrating Delaware County Historical Society and Delaware County First Responders

WHEN: Thursday, November 19, at 7:00 PM

WHO: Panel discussion with representatives from law enforcement, fire, and emergency medical.



Holiday Trolley Tour

WHEN: Saturday, December 12, Noon-6:00 PM

WHO: Hosted by Society Volunteer Benny Shoults

Audio-visual equipment and internet access provided through a grant from the Delaware County Foundation.



Delaware County
Foundation

The Barn at Stratford
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Website:

www.DelawareOhioHistory.org

Phone:

740-369-3831 (Voicemail)

Registration is on Eventbrite for all programs and events.

<https://www.eventbrite.com/d/oh-delaware/delaware-county-historical-society/>

Registrants can sign up to watch the live stream program via a YouTube link, for a small fee charged on Eventbrite, when available.

Additional information will be posted on our website several weeks before each event:

<https://www.DelawareOhioHistory.org/programs-and-events/>