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"To Revive the Memories of the Past": How the Early Settlers' Association of Cuyahoga County Created a Founding Myth for the City of Cleveland

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Hiram Addison was a familiar figure to the reporters and editors of Cleveland newspapers. He showed up in their offices on a regular basis with articles he had written, and usually insisted on proofing the copies of his work himself, oblivious to the good natured grumbling or amused comments by those around him. In the fall of 1879 he had written several articles promoting the idea for a new organization. The 61 year old Addison envisioned this new organization as a place for early residents to meet and promote the "kindly feelings for which the pioneer life is proverbial" and to preserve the "unwritten history of [the] vicinity," [1]

Addison's persistence paid off. On Saturday November 1st, 1879 about twenty citizens of Cleveland met in the Probate Court office to debate the merits of such an organization. According to the *Plain Dealer* there was some "jealousy," which led to a debate as to whether an organization was needed since a group known as the Western Reserve Pioneer Association already existed and met annually. The group eventually decided that a new organization could coexist with out "interfering" with the existing group.[2]

Those present were not in accord regarding the idea, so several prominent, long time residents of Cleveland were appointed to a committee to debate the following questions: Was it desirable to create an organization? What should its geographic limitations be? Should it be a pioneer organization or just a pioneer celebration? And, finally, what constitutes a pioneer?[3]

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[1] Obituary of Hiram Addison, *Cleveland Plain Dealer* 15 January 1898,; James Harrison Kennedy, *A History of the City of Cleveland: Its settlement, rise and progress, 1796-1896* (Cleveland: Imperial Press, 1896)439.

[2] *Cleveland Plain Dealer* 3 November 1879

[3] Ibid.

The resultant organization became known as The Early Settler's Association of Cuyahoga County and the Western Reserve (ESACC). A study of their early years, their activities, speeches, and the demographics of the membership reveals the underlying concerns and purposes of the group. The members had witnessed the changing landscape as the city had grown from frontier to village to industrial city. As the past receded it took on a romantic glow. People grew nostalgic for what they thought was a simpler way of life and the Anglo-European settlement of Cleveland took on mythic proportions. The members of the ESACC considered themselves to be the heirs and guardians of the founding myth they were creating. As heirs to the early Anglo-European settlement, the members of the association prided themselves on their New England heritage. Their status as founders and heirs of the city separated them from the earlier Native inhabitants of the area, and from the current groups of European immigrants flooding the city.

To unpack that gloss between heritage, history and mythology, this paper examines the activities and membership of the ESACC from 1880 to 1896. The oral tradition, and written reminisces of the New England immigrants that came to the Western Reserve formed the base of their founding myth. Speeches, memorials, published histories, and the annals of the association served to embed the myth in popular culture. The ESACC was formed to collect memories of their members, and to preserve the history of the area, as they perceived it. In their efforts to carry out these objectives the association was in the business of collecting, creating and enshrining memories solicited from residents who had lived in the area prior to 1840.

The ESACC left behind a tremendous written record of their proceedings. As agreed upon in the constitution of the association, the annals of the association were

published yearly, and each volume included full transcripts of all speeches and other activities that occurred at the meetings, along with a list of members, both living and deceased. These annals were distributed to each member, and copies were sent to the Western Reserve Historical Society for preservation. They are a treasure trove of information for modern historians, and the descriptions of early Cleveland that occur in these annals have been used in published histories of Cleveland for over a century. A history of the city published in 1887, when the association was only seven years old, extolled the historical research of ESACC as "valuable and interesting," and declared the association to be "one of the most useful and commendable organizations in the city." *Cleveland: Village to Metropolis*, published in 1964, included a great amount of material drawn from the annals of ESACC, although in his footnotes the author warns that these annals must be used, "with due caution," because they are the "reminiscences of elderly people some fifty to seventy years after the events." My interest in these annals was not for their information on pioneer life itself, but to tease out the attitudes and worldview of the members that created them.[4]

Americans have been creating mythic history since the time of the Revolutionary War. Immediately following the battle of Bunker Hill, long before the war was won and preceding the Declaration of Independence by a full year, heroes were being held up as role models, and as inspiration to fight on in the cause of liberty. As the last of the Revolutionary War soldiers began to die, honoring their memory took on even greater

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[4] The Early Settlers Association, *Annals of the Early Settlers Association, Number 1* (Cleveland: Mount and Carroll, Printers and Stationers, 1880), 129-30.; W. Scott Robison, ed., *History of the City of Cleveland, Its Settlement, Rise, and Progress* (Cleveland: Robison & Crockett, The Sunday World, 1887), 202.; Edmund H. Chapman, *Cleveland: Village to Metropolis: A Case Study of Problems of Urban Development in Nineteenth-century America* 2nd ed. (1981, repr.,Cleveland: Press of the Western Reserve Historical Society, 1998), 10,13,22,33,n 157.

urgency. In a similar vein, by 1879 many of the earliest white settlers on the Western Reserve had passed away, and those who were left were entering the last decades of their lives. It was, therefore, imperative to record their memories for posterity, and to recognize their accomplishments. The "unwritten history" that Hiram Addison wanted to capture, was to come from the memories of the members of the association, as opposed to the official written records of the city.[5]

In recent years several historians have looked at memory and the ways in which it is used to create history. In his study of a shoemaker turned Revolutionary hero, Alfred Young noted the importance of asking questions about those who record memories, and their reasons for doing so. He also cautioned historians to ask, "how does memory function in the aged...how do subsequent emotions and values color or overlie the memory of events in the distant past?" For my purposes, the fact that the stories ESACC members told about the past were colored by the "subsequent emotions and values" was significant. The recurring themes that show up in the various stories and the emphasis on certain character traits enabled me to grasp a sense of the worldview of the members in the last decades of the nineteenth century.[6]

The residents of Cleveland who created the ESACC were participating in a nationwide phenomenon, as hundreds of similar organizations sprang up in the United States as the nineteenth century waned. Historian Michael Kammen calls the era from 1870-1915 the "age of memory and ancestor worship by design." Organizations celebrating pioneer life stretched from New York to Oregon. Ohio alone had associations

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[5] Sarah Purcell, *Sealed in Blood: War, Sacrifice and Memory in Revolutionary America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), 12, 195.

[6] Alfred Fabian Young, *The Shoemaker and the Tea Party: Memory and the American Revolution* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1999),7.

in most of its counties, including Montgomery, Franklin, Athens, and Muskingham, and a statewide historical society was formed in 1885. The trend reached its zenith in the 1890s when two of the most famous national heritage societies had their beginnings, the Daughters of the American Revolution and the General Society of Mayflower Descendents. [7]

The formation of these societies accompanied, and in some cases inspired, the creation of dozens of local county and city histories. Local histories produced in the late nineteenth century are celebratory, biased and exclusionary. County and city histories, known as mug books, were financed by subscription. A large percentage of the text was reserved for biographical and genealogical information of prominent members of society, but family members of those who subscribed to the book, regardless of societal standing, also appeared on the pages. The biographies were formulaic, details included, date and place of birth, family background, education, early employment, wife and children, religious and political affiliation. The biographical sketch of Harvey Rice, first president of ESACC, is typical of the genre. He is described as a "lawyer of rare ability," a "keen business man" who led a "busy and productive life." These descriptions showed up in similar phrases in all of the biographical sketches, only the personal details varied. The New England background of Rice, and others like him was emphasized, and whenever possible mention of a family member who had been the "first white" person to do anything in any location was inserted in the biography, no matter how distant the ancestor. As sources for the modern historian these histories are not invaluable. Although biased,

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[7] Michael Kammen, *Mystic Chords of Memory: The Transformation of Tradition in American Culture* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1991), 12.;Early Settlers Association, *Annals of the Early Settlers Association, Number IV* (Cleveland: William O. Williams, 1883), 7.

they provide us with the names and activities of the dominant society, and they tell us a great deal about the values of that society.[8]

The authors of local histories were antiquarians whose methodology and writing would certainly not pass current professional or academic standards. While later professional historians would distance themselves from the local antiquarians that produced celebratory history, Herbert Baxter Adams, the founder of the American Historical Association, urged his graduate students at Johns Hopkins to seek out local history and incorporate it into their work. Adams foresaw a future of cooperation between the nascent historical profession and local antiquarians. Adams had become a proponent of Teutonic theory during his education in Heidelberg. Adams envisioned a chain of unbroken heritage of the Anglo-Saxon way of life from ancient Saxon villages to New England villages. Democracy had its roots in this tradition, and had reached its perfection in New England villages in "communal landholding, town meetings, [and] the appointment of selectmen." [9]

Whether the authors of Cleveland histories produced in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century were consciously subscribing to Teutonist theory is debatable, but there is evidence they were aware of this theory. In a speech presented to the ESACC in 1885, Henry C. White laid out Teutonist beliefs in great detail, drawing a line connecting the Teutonic tribes to the Anglo-Saxon Puritans through to the settlers of "New Connecticut." In his essay about Adams, John Higham argued that Teutonist theory appealed to Gilded Age upper-class Americans by promoting the idea of democracy as an

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[8] Elroy McKendree Avery, *A History of Cleveland and its Environs: The Heart of New Connecticut Volume II Biography*. (Chicago: Lewis Publishing, 1918), 557.

[9] John Higham, "Herbert Baxter Adams and the Study of Local History," *The American Historical Review*, 85,no. 5 (1985): 1229.

"ethnic heritage of a people who learned self-government…defending local liberties against centralized power." Authors of early Cleveland histories, and speakers at ESACC meetings consistently emphasized the New England heritage and leadership qualities of the Anglo-European settlers. They needed no encouragement to follow Adam's dictate to study "individual achievements" and "the origins of local institutions." As one speaker noted, "the kingdom [of England] was sifted that the best seed might be found…that seed was planted in New England…further sifted…and brought out here to plant on the Reserve."[10]

The story of the Western Reserve, sometimes called New Connecticut, is beyond the scope of this paper, but the basic facts are relevant because they explain much of the ESACC's obsession with New England. In a seventeenth century charter, Charles II had granted the colony of Connecticut rights to a wide swath of land from Narragansett to the unnamed sea in the west, a fact that was disputed by both Native Americans and the colonies of New York and Pennsylvania. By 1795 Connecticut had ceded rights to most of that land, keeping a portion of what would become the state of Ohio in reserve. The treaty that followed the Battle of Fallen Timbers opened the way for white settlement by pushing the Native Americans west of the Cuyahoga River. By this time the state of Connecticut had turned over administration of the lands to a group of private speculators, the Connecticut Land Company. In 1796, they hired Moses Cleaveland, himself one of the speculators, to lead a party of surveyors into the Reserve to mark township boundaries and to lay out a principle city. He chose a site at the mouth of the Cuyahoga as the best location for that city, and graciously allowed it to be named after him. The

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[10] ESACC, *Annals of the Early Settlers Association, no. VI*, 23-27.;Higham, "Herbert Baxter Adams," 1228,30.; Remarks of Dr. Bates, typed manuscript, Records of the Early Settlers Association of Cuyahoga County 1890-91, container 1, folder 1, Western Reserve Historical Society.

city was known as Cleaveland, until the letter a was dropped in the 1820's, supposedly to fit better on the masthead of an early newspaper.[11]

This unique beginning to Cleveland and its surrounding area shaped much of its land use, architecture and for many years, the attitudes of its residents. While later developments gave the Western Reserve its own unique qualities, the early and protracted association with New England "establish[ed] a distinctive…style and culture that set it apart from other regions of Ohio." The first white settlers were not all from Connecticut itself, but the New England connection in general is strong. Prior to the formation of ESACC an earlier, more exclusive group of Cleveland residents born in New England had formed the New England Society of Cleveland and the Western Reserve. Formed in 1855, their purpose was to "promote a kindly feeling among the sons of New England [and] for the taking of ourselves back to the standards of our Fathers." The demographics of those who joined the Early Settler's Association in the first years of its existence reveal a continuation of this New England connection.[12]

Over one thousand members are listed in the annals of 1892, which printed a cumulative list of names of members who were or had been members starting in 1879, including those who were deceased. The names of the members, their birthplace (state or country), birthdates, year of arrival in the Western Reserve, and death date, if applicable are included in the list. Out of a total of one thousand four members, the breakdown of nativity was as follows: three hundred sixty one born in Ohio, two hundred eleven in New York, one hundred ninety eight in the combined New England States, twenty two in

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[11] Chapman, *Cleveland: Village to Metropolis*, 1-3.; Carol Poh Miller and Robert A. Wheeler, *Cleveland: A Concise History, 1796-1996,* 2nd ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997), 8-9.

[12] Harlan Hatcher, *The Western Reserve: The Story of New Connecticut in Ohio* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1949)16.; hand written constitution, Records of the New England Society of Cleveland and the Western Reserve, container 1, folder 3, WRHS

Pennsylvania, seventy seven in England, and fifty two in Germany. Of the members born outside of the United States, only Germany and England were represented in significant numbers. The remaining eighty three members came from states and countries represented by less than fifteen members each, among them Ireland, Scotland, and the Isle of Manx. Only two Southern States were represented, Maryland and North Carolina, with only one immigrant each (figure 1).[13]

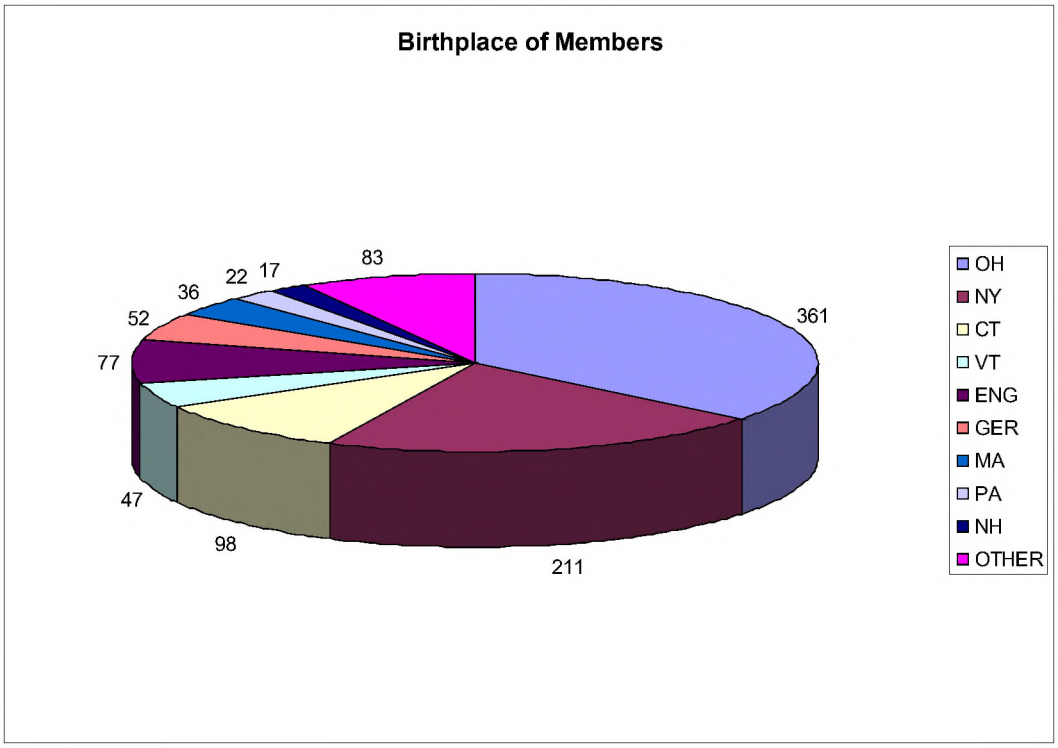

Figure 1

[13] Early Settlers Associaton, *Annals of the Early Settlers Association, Volume III, no 1* (Cleveland: Williams Publishing Company, 1892), 77-107.

The three hundred and sixty one members that had been born in Ohio represented the second generation of immigrants from the eastern part of the country, most often New England, or in a few cases, from Great Britain, or Northern Europe. A closer look at the origins of those New York immigrants, who had migrated as children with their parents, or as adults on their own, usually shows an earlier family migration from New England. Family background information, found in obituaries, and the family sketches included in the Pioneer Families of Cleveland shows that the majority of members born in Ohio and New York had family roots in New England The high percentage of those with New England roots reflects is not unexpected, given the pattern of settlement in the Western Reserve. Pride in this New England background colored the speeches and anecdotes of ESA members. It played a central role in the founding myth they were creating.[14]

New England roots were not required for ESACC membership, as prevalent as they were among the association. Criteria for membership, as set out in the constitution, were straightforward; members must have resided on the Western Reserve for at least forty years, be residents of Cuyahoga County, subscribe to the constitution, and pay a membership fee of one dollar. The one time membership fee of one dollar was the only monetary fee required, but "each member who is able" was asked to contribute another dollar each year at the annual reunion.[15]

The burden of a one dollar a year membership fee was not onerous to the majority of the members. I chose several rank and file members at random from the list, and found few with limited resources. Not all of the members were upper class, but neither did they come from the lowest socio-economic strata. Hiram Addison, whose efforts had

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[14] Gertrude Van Rensselaer Wickham, *The Pioneer Families of Cleveland, 1796-1840* (Cleveland: Evangelical Publishing House, 1914)

[15] ESACC, *Annals of the Early Settlers Association, no 1*, 129.

initiated the organization, was not wealthy, and his active participation may have encouraged other average citizens to participate in ESACC as well. By no means a typical man, he certainly provides an excellent example of the type of Cleveland resident able to engage people of all strata of society.

Hiram Addison was not wealthy, but his eccentric personality and his persistent philanthropic endeavors made him a well known and beloved figure amongst the more well to do of Cleveland, who referred to him as "Father" Addison. For this reason many details of his life and his personality have been preserved. Addison had been born in Euclid in 1818, which qualified him as one of the earliest of the settlers in the organization. Oddly enough, his own story does not appear in the annals, although he was instrumental in obtaining the reminiscences of others. He lived briefly in Pennsylvania, where he met and married his wife, Ann. In the 1850s he unsuccessfully attempted to publish a couple of short lived abolitionist newspapers. The 1870 Federal Census enumerates him in Jeffersonville, Indiana, at age 52, with his wife and four of his six children; he is listed as a peddler, who owned no real estate, and held only 150 dollars in personal assets. Back in Cleveland, by 1880, he is listed in the city directory as an "agent", and by the time of his death in 1898 he had convinced his wealthier colleagues to support his idea of a farm for poor children who were in ill health; the Fresh Air Camp, where he served as superintendent. The tone of his obituary in the, *Cleveland Plain Dealer,* is affectionate, but a bit condescending. He is described as "quaint," and "simple," perhaps because he died leaving "little money behind," having collected money for philanthropic uses, but not for himself. His salesmanship cannot be doubted, however, for he left behind an ESACC that was over a thousand members strong, and was well

respected in the community, and his Fresh Air Camp continues to exist, albeit in a different guise, as the Cleveland Clinic Children's Hospital for Rehabilitation.[16]

The Early Settlers Association owed its existence to Addison, but the elected officials of ESACC were more prominent members of Cleveland society. A vast majority of them were lawyers whose biographical information was included in the publications of the *Cleveland Bench and Bar.* They served on the boards of charity organizations, and many were also elected officials of the city, county or state, serving as councilmen, mayors, judges and legislatures. All were listed in, *Cleveland's Blue Book*, some living in prestigious Euclid Avenue and Franklin Avenue homes.[17]

The city's wealthiest industrialists were not listed among the active members. As savvy citizens of the city, Rockefeller, Mather, and other prominent businessmen provided funds to support the Moses Cleaveland memorial, and were involved in the Centennial Celebrations. Many of those men were named as honorary members, by virtue of their status, but presumably they did not need to pay the annual membership fee of one dollar.

On July 29, 1896 members of the Early Settler's Association of Cuyahoga County posed for a photograph in front of what appears to be an old log cabin. This faux image of a group determined to create their own faux image of the past makes a powerful statement. In reality, the cabin was a replica erected in Public Square in downtown Cleveland as part of the city's centennial celebration. The group of elderly members of

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[16] 1870 Federal Census, Indiana, Clark County, City of Jeffersonville, written page 7, printed page 498, line 11; The American Advertiser, vol 1, no3 Feb 25 1850; *The Cleveland Directory for the year ending June, 1880* (Cleveland:Cleveland Directory Company, 1879)30.; The Cleveland Clinic Children's Hospital for Rehabilitation,History, http://www.childrenshospitals.net//AM/Template.cfm?Section=Overview29 (accessed 24 April, 2009)

[17] James Harrison Kennedy and Wilson M. Day, *The Bench and Bar of Cleveland* (Cleveland: The Cleveland Printing and Publishing Company, 1889), 245-48.; *The Blue Book of Cleveland and Vicinity* (Cleveland: Taylor-Austin Co.,1891)

the association blocks most of the cabin from view; they exhibit the stiff and self conscious appearance common to contemporary photographs of the era. They do not look particularly celebratory (figure 2). Descriptions of the occasion found in newspaper accounts, and the reports of the day recorded in the annals of the association provide a better gauge of the member's mood. Three years of planning and hard work had culminated in a two week celebration of the city, past, present, and future, and the mood was festive. The members of the Early Settler's Association (ESACC) were proud of their efforts, not only in helping to create the Centennial Celebration, but in creating the city itself.[18]

EARLY SETTLERS AT THE LOG CABIN.

Figure 2

[18] Edward A. Roberts, *Official Report of the Centennial Celebration of the founding of the City of Cleveland and the Western Reserve* (Cleveland: Cleveland Publishing Company, 1896), photograph opposite 144.; The Cleveland Leader, July 23, 1896,p 6, column 1.

By 1880, Cleveland was a long past its log cabin and village stages, and was one of the most populous, industrial cities in the Great Lakes Region. The change had begun as early as 1832, when the completion of the Ohio and Erie Canal allowed the small village of Cleveland to become an important inland harbor town. Many of the more prominent members of ESACC had come to Cleveland in the 1830's. In those years the downtown area still resembled a New England village, the few log cabins that still existed were mixed with several prominent brick homes, and many small clapboard dwellings. There was an imposing court house, an academy, hotel, and a church building.[19]

The population of Cleveland in 1830 was only 1,075, but was rapidly climbing, reaching 6,071 by 1840 and 30,000 by 1853. The isolated log cabin frontier life described so often in the speeches and printed anecdotes of the ESACC no longer existed, and the change from village to city had already begun. Opportunities for young lawyers, teachers, and businessmen in the growing city were the pull factor for many of the members of ESACC to move to the area. Those who arrived in the 1830s did not live in log cabins, hunt their own food, or live in isolation. Those were earmarks of a lifestyle that prevailed in the first two decades of the century, and was a transitory phase of life, not a traditional lifestyle. Yet the romance of the log cabin lifestyle permeated many of the anecdotes of pioneer life.[20]

There were some members who had actually lived in the Cleveland area during those early years, and it is their stories that were repeated over and over again, either first hand or in "as told to me by" type narratives. The earliest annals of the association

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[19] Edmund H. Chapman, *Cleveland: Village to Metropolis*, 27-33, 38.

[20] Ibid.

contain many speeches that are homey and informal. They are, perhaps, the type of anecdotal history that Addison had in mind when he promoted the formation of the association. Accounting for the vagaries of human memory, they provide us with descriptions of the early town, and some of its inhabitants. The speakers ramble and often offer unrelated memories, but they are also mostly disingenuous. Tales of encounters with snakes and wild animals are told in amused tones, from the safe distance of a long lived life, are interspersed with tales of school boy pranks, and descriptions of eccentric characters.[21]

As time passed, more speakers began to deliver more flowery, celebratory speeches. They presented the pioneer as archetype; pious, intelligent, and stalwart. An overarching narrative contained elements common to all of these pioneers. The trek from New England on oxcarts, the hand hewn log cabins and the constant threat of wild animals, hostile natives and disease, all bravely undertaken in the hopes of creating a new promised land for themselves and their progeny.

The leaders and guest speakers at meetings of the association were among the most prosperous prominent residents of Cleveland, but the anecdotes of pioneer life that found their way into the annals of the association were collected from a slightly broader demographic. At the first official meeting of the association a resolution was passed to authorize the Executive Committee to "employ Addison or other suitable person," for the purpose of collecting information from people in the wards of the city and townships of the county, and to promote membership in the association. The rank and file members of the association, therefore, were not all prominent citizens, although most shared the New England ancestry, Anglo-American ethnicity and Protestant religion of the leaders. The

[21] ESSAC, *Annals of the Early Settlers Association, No.1,* 1880, 64, 22,48.

anecdotes and generalizations regarding life in early Cleveland contained common themes. The hardship of frontier life among them wild animals, rattlesnakes, isolation, and swamp fever, the hard work, bravery, and pious behavior of the women, the importance of education, the inheritance of the "New England spirit." While some accounts stressed self reliance and the Horatio Alger type story, others lauded the hospitality of the log cabin, and the willingness of neighbors to lend a hand to each other. Simple, home spun celebrations, such as Fourth of July gatherings, dances and weddings were applauded, and compared to elegant "modern" soirees. The common assumption was that life had improved due to progress and modern conveniences, but all the modern improvements of the city had been made possible by the sacrifices and foresight of the original founders of the city.

The hardships of pioneer life were not sugar coated in the accounts of the ESACC; on the contrary there was an emphasis on the struggles of daily life. The harsher the conditions, the more heroic the pioneers could be portrayed. Not that these dangers and hardships had not been very real, in fact the sentimental style of the speakers may have not done justice to the reality of daily life on the frontier. But the gritty reality of that life was not the point of the narrative. The point was to show the character of those pioneers. They were portrayed as somehow morally superior to modern people; they suffered the hardships of life in a remote settlement in silence, content to live the simple life, rejoicing in tallow candles and iron kettles on open hearths. Certainly, it took grit and fortitude to endure primitive living conditions, but the pioneers had no intention of living in that manner for long, no matter how morally superior they may have been.

The men and women who left New England farms and towns to move to the Western Reserve also left behind the amenities of settled town life, something they worked as quickly as possible to recreate in their new homes. As soon as they were able they replaced log cabins with clapboard or brick homes put up schools, shops and churches, and organized literary and musical societies. One speaker acknowledged in his remarks that, while the characteristics of the "class of men" who settled the Western Reserve were to be admired, they were not "victims of intolerance" escaping religious or political persecution. Instead, these men "came…to improve their material condition—to better their worldly fortunes." The goal was not to live a simple life, but to improve property, obtain wealth, and create a "civilized" society.[22]

By the time of the Centennial, the members of ESACC lived in a prosperous city with all of the modern conveniences available at that time. Most would not be willing to exchange their electric lights, running water and telephones for the "simple" life they romanticized. The conservative elites in Cleveland in the late 19th century were not conservative in the sense of immigrant communities that wanted to preserve traditional ways. Pioneers did not represent a traditional way of life, but a transitional way of life in teleological view of history. The pioneers were to be admired, but not imitated as regards to lifestyle. The inclusion of a log cabin replica at the Centennial Celebration was not originally part of the plans for the celebration. It was promoted by the intrepid Addison, who again used what were apparently super natural powers of persuasion to convince the committee to include it. *The Cleveland Leader* noted that he "was at the…height of his

[22] ESACC, *Annals of the Early Settlers*, no 1, 26.

glory" on opening day, claiming that although, "the suggestion of a log cabin…was at first laughed at, but it is the keynote to the whole celebration."[23]

The log cabin stood in the northwest quadrant of Public Square, juxtaposed against the backdrop of the stately Old Stone Church and the Society for Savings Bank (Figure 3). This sanitized, "picturesque," vision of the past was safely ensconced by the "mighty city…the abode of law, order, education, religion…home of culture, refinement, wealth, and all the blessings of modern civilization." Speeches followed the familiar pattern of praise for the vanished life of the pioneer and pride in the great cities that had taken its place. Col. Parsons, president of the ESACC reminded his audience of the connection between the Pilgrims whose "self-sacrificing devoted wives," stood in the doorways of similar cabins, declared the log cabin the "cradle of the statesmen of Ohio," as well as the birthplace of both Andrew Jackson and Abraham Lincoln. Mayor McKinnon claimed that the great manufacturing city had its roots in the first industry to be found in Cleveland's log cabins; the distillery.[24]

The log cabin served as a solid, physical reminder of the life so revered in the annals, attracting crowds of people that would not be present at meetings or read the annals; according to the *Cleveland Leader*, thousands of people attended the opening ceremonies. A forerunner of the living history museums of the twentieth century, the cabin was a reasonable likeness of a pioneer home, complete with dried corn and fruit hanging from the ceiling, tallow candles, earthenware dishes and hunting implement. Shelves made of rough boards held "simple decorations of field flowers…such as one might expect the pioneer women to have in their homes." Costumed women greeted

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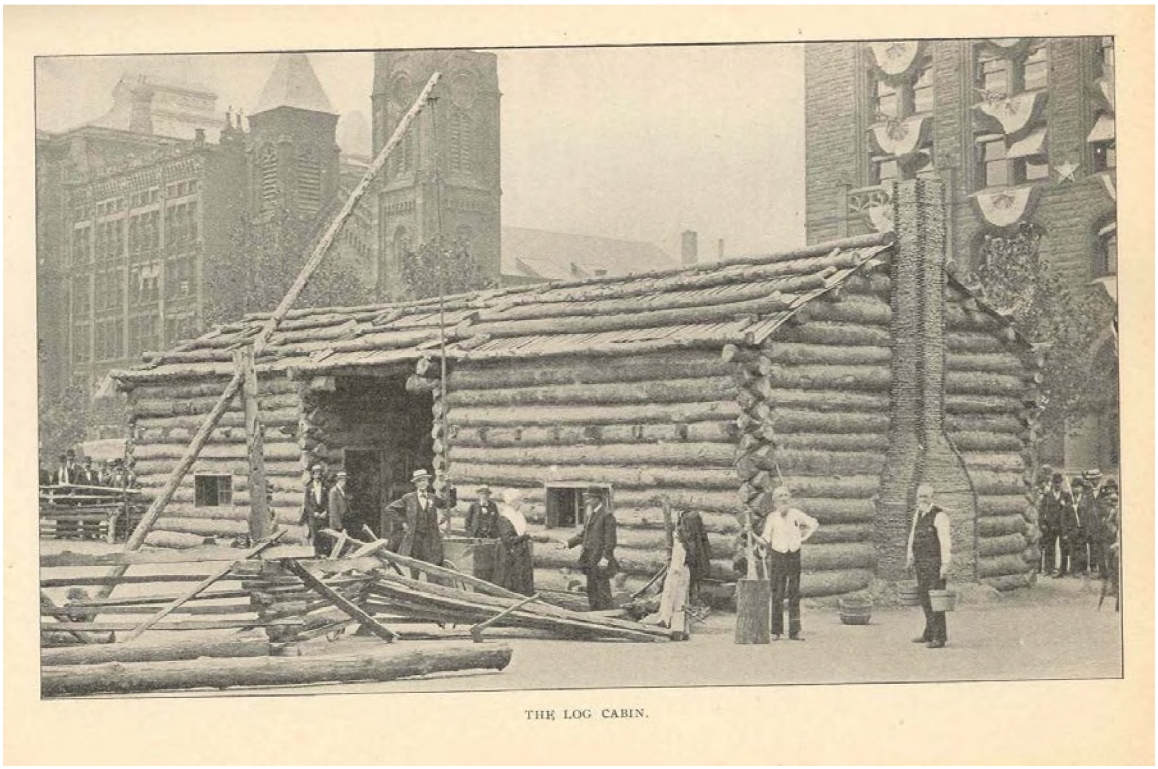
[23] *The Cleveland Leader,* July 22 1896

[24]Roberts, *Official Report of the Centennial Celebration*, 44-45, photograph opposite p 44.; Cleveland Leader, July 22, 1896 p49,columns 4-5.

visitors, wearing hundred year old dresses, which the Leader erroneously termed "colonial costumes." One of the women provided an authentic link to the man hallowed as Cleveland's first permanent settler; Mrs. Louise J. Warner, billed as the granddaughter of Lorenzo Carter.[25]



THE LOG CABIN.

Figure 3

The log cabin was a short lived monument to the past; a more permanent memorial had been erected by the association in 1888, when a bronze statue of Moses Cleaveland was placed in the square, where it remains to this day. Unlike the more homely idea of a log cabin, the impetus for the Cleaveland statue had not come from Addison, but from one of the first guest speakers of the association, Samuel E. Adams, a

[25] Ibid.

prominent criminal attorney in the city. Adams suggested that a statue honoring Cleaveland be placed in Lakeview Park, and that the association change its annual meeting to July 22, the day Cleaveland arrived at the mouth of the Cuyahoga river. Both suggestions were eagerly taken up by the leadership of the association and a resolution was passed that the association "take measures," to commission and finance the statue of Cleaveland.[26]

President Harvey Rice enthusiastically supported the endeavor to honor Cleaveland. Rice had been instrumental in causing a statue of Oliver Hazard Perry to be erected in 1860. As a member of City Council he introduced resolutions in 1857 to commemorate Perry's 1813 victory in Lake Erie. This battle was the closest the city of Cleveland had come to any sort of military engagement and the citizens proudly claimed it as part of their heritage. The inauguration of the Perry Monument attracted several thousand people and included a mock battle on Lake Erie.[27]

The battle monument epitomizes what Sarah Purcell has argued; "military memory is at the heart of American national identity." The Western Reserve and the city of Cleveland have no defining battles or war as the basis for creation of the region. Many, if not most, of the original New England immigrants had been too young for the Revolution, or had not even been born yet, and no major battles had taken place in the area. Even the oldest of the original members of the ESACC had been born after 1800. The Revolution defined their parents' generation, not theirs. The War of 1812 touched the Western Reserve only briefly, and was itself only a brief war that lacked the glorious

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[26]ESACC, *Annals of the Early Settlers Association*, no 1, 23,64.

[27] City Council of Cleveland, *Inauguration of the Perry Statue at Cleveland, on the tenth of September, 1860; including the Addresses and other proceedings, with a sketch of William Walcutt the sculpture* (Cleveland: Fairbanks, Benedict & Co., 1861), 5,

outcome of the Revolution. The only two concrete reminders of the War of 1812 that persisted in popular memory in Cleveland was the inflated importance of the battle of Lake Erie, resulting in local hero Oliver Perry, and the story of the panic in the fledgling village at the time of Hull's defeat.[28]

This last anecdote was told as a somewhat amusing tale, a comedy of errors, and usually glossed over any real concern or anxiety that the incident had created in the residents at that time. Messengers from Huron brought alarming news that British soldiers and Indians were approaching the southern shores of the lake. Major Samuel Jones, head of the local militia, acted as a local Paul Revere, riding through the small settlements of Cleveland and Newburg warning the residents to take shelter at Doan's Corners (modern day Euclid and East 105th St.). The local militia took up posts in Cleveland to defend the settlement. When soldiers in the approaching boats announced themselves as Hull's retreating soldiers, Captain Allen Gaylord of the Newburg militia rode up to the encampment at Doan's Corners proclaiming in a rather melodramatic fashion, "*To your tents oh Israel! General Hull has surrendered to the British General, and our men, instead of Indians, were seen coff Huron.*"[29]

Like the amusing tales of perceived Indian threats that turned out to be misunderstandings, the story of Hull's defeat tried to show that the early residents always stood ready to demonstrate bravery and fortitude, but in reality, had to exert most of their efforts fighting illness and Mother Nature. The man relating the incident, a young boy at the time, declared that everyone went home, thankful for "nothing worse than the

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[28] Purcell, *Sealed in Blood*, 1.
[29] ESACC, *Annals of the Early Settlers*, no.V, 26.

inconvenience of…fleeing their homes on short notice in *unpleasant circumstances*" (italics mine).[30]

The lack of military heroes to honor as founding fathers of Cleveland led to the emphasis on Moses Cleaveland as founder of the city, usually referring to him by his state militia title of General. His story was told and retold at annual meetings, and appears in varying formats in every history of the city, popular and academic. The facts of his leadership of the surveying party were drawn from the official reports of the party as well as journals kept by Cleaveland and other members of the party. As with other accounts of the ESACC members, the facts took on mythic proportions in the speeches and written accounts they created.[31]

Harvey Rice had written a biographical sketch of Moses Cleaveland, lauding him as "manly and dignified…with a military air in his step, indicating he was born to command." According to Rice, Cleaveland's "rigid and pure morality," arose from his Puritan heritage, yet his sense of humor was well known and applauded by his men. His ability to deal with the Indians was highlighted, and Rice claimed Cleaveland's "swarthy," complexion made him more acceptable to the Indians, who were so pleased with his assurances of friendship that they presented him with gifts and shared the peace pipe with him.[32]

The decision to support efforts to create a permanent memorial to Cleaveland was an easy and obvious choice for Rice. He had seen the enthusiastic response to the Perry Monument, and wanted no less for Cleaveland. Letters were circulated soliciting

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[30] Ibid.

[31] Robert A. Wheeler, ed. *Visions of the Western Reserve: Public and Private Documents of Northeastern Ohio, 1750-1860* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2000), 52.

[32] Harvey Rice, *The Founder of the City of Cleveland and Other Sketches* (Boston: Lee and Shepherd, 1892), 17.

subscriptions to raise funds for the project. The letters included practical information on the estimated cost of the project (five thousand dollars), a description of the design for the proposed bronze statue and its granite base, and the chosen site of the monument. The recipients of the letter, it was hoped, would "cheerfully aid the Association," in the project to honor, "the founder of our beautiful city, a noble man, and an honor to the age in which he lived." [33]

The citizens of Cleveland, including some its most prominent members, responded enthusiastically. The largest pledge of five hundred dollars came from a Margaretta Stone, the childless widow of Silas Stone; the German born Margaretta was not a member of the association, but she evidently supported its efforts. Harvey Rice himself pledged three hundred, while Rockefeller provided one hundred dollars. The monument to Cleaveland was one of the public endeavors undertaken by ESACC that the major industrialists, Rockefeller among them, supported, even though they were not official members of the association.[34]

Rice had other motives for establishing the statue of Cleaveland. The statue would function in a pedagogical fashion, serving the same function as statues had served in ancient Rome and Greece. Residents of the city who might never attend meetings of the ESACC, or read its annals, could not help but notice a fifteen foot high monument. Rice noted that "its value as a public educator can hardly be overestimated." Passers by would be reminded who was responsible for the thriving city they lived in, and the authority that was invested in the elite of the city as heirs to the New England heritage. It did not matter that Cleaveland had never lived in the city that bore his name. Like a

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[33] Copy of mass produced circular, Harvey Rice papers, container 1, folder 3, WRHS

[34] hand written 3x5 account book from 1888, marked Moses Cleveland Monument sums paid, Harvey Rice Papers, container 1, folder 3, WRHS.

Roman hero/god he had trod upon its soil and pronounced it suitable for New England colonists, cleared away the objections of the indigenous people by placating them with "wampum, silver trinkets…& whiskey to the tune of about $25 dollars," and returned to the higher civilization of Connecticut, having earned his eternal rest.[35]

There are no statues erected to the man considered to be the first permanent white settler in Cleveland. Lorenzo Carter plays a different role in the founding myth of the city. The stories of his exploits, character and personality take on the tone of tall tales. While Moses Cleaveland fulfilled the function of Cleveland's Romulus, Lorenzo Carter became a folk hero in the tradition of Davy Crockett or Daniel Boone. Tales of Carter blur the lines between the desire to promote the civilized, cultured side of the New England immigrants, and the desire to claim the rugged, rough bravery of the American frontiersman.

The white settlement of Cleveland was not lost in the mists of time, in 1880 when ESACC formed, they were only one two generations removed from the subjects of their history, yet memories are subjective, and as urban legends demonstrate in our own time, fact and fiction are easily and quickly interwoven. The images of the early settlers were "invented by those who had not lived [then]" and by appropriating the memories of those who remembered the early years, but whose "remembering…took place in the context of …politicized construction of public memory."[36]

This process allowed the etiquette conscious Victorian members of the ESACC to romanticize the rough, frontier attitude of Lorenzo Carter. Rice declared Carter to be "the right man in the right place for the times in which he lived." Carter, it may be

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[35] Copy of mass produced circular, Harvey Rice papers, container 1, folder 3, WRHS.; Wheeler, *Visions of Western Reserve,* 55, transcript of Moses Cleaveland diary.

[36] Young, *The Shoemaker and the Tea Party*, 89.

assumed would not be the "right man" to attend dinner parties on Euclid Avenue in 1890, but his uncouth style and rough manners could be admired from a distance of eighty years. His "aggressive and energetic temperament [were] the essential qualities of a leader in pioneer life."[37]

Lorenzo Carter is found among the official records of the city, his rather elaborate log cabin was large enough the serve as the first tavern in 1801, and Carter was considered to have an influence on the other settlers by the Connecticut Land Company who needed to encourage settlement in order to sell off its land. The facts of Carter's life are well documented, the first "ball," was held at his cabin in 1801, as well as the first wedding in the tiny village, and the cabin served as a jail as well as a site for social activities. O'Mick, an Indian accused of murder spent his last days at Carter's cabin before his hanging, Carter supposedly convinced O'Mick to approach his death bravely, and provided him with the whiskey to do so. Carter is also credited with building the first boat in Cleveland, running the first ferry across the river and helping to build Detroit Road. In addition to all this, Carter also earned a living by hunting and selling pelts.[38]

The activities of Carter were of interest to the members of ESACC and the writers of local history, but his fame rested more on the descriptions of his person and character. It is those descriptions that contributed to his legendary status.

The legend started with his appearance. At six feet, Carter was considered a tall man for his time, and was, "a man of splendid physique," "the mighty hunter and terror of the bear," who, "loved adventures and encountered dangers without fear." He was

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[37] W. Scott Robison, ed., *History of the City of Cleveland*, 17.; Harvey Rice, *The Founder of the City of Cleveland,* 219.

[38] Harlan Hatcher, *The Western Reserve*, 67,175.; Chapman, *Cleveland: Village to Metropolis*, 13; Rice, *The Founder of the City of Cleveland*, 212,215,218-19.

considered to be fair and amenable and never started fights, although those who insulted him or dared to take him on in a fight were soon beaten. A poplar account told of Carter's involvement in the rescue of Ben, an escaped slave who almost drowned in the Rocky River and his refusal to hand Ben over to the Kentucky man who owned him. Although Carter informed the slave owner he did not believe in slavery, he also assured him that he did not like "Negroes,"[39] Despite his prejudice, which most of his admirers likely shared, this story served to demonstrate that despite his rough manners and manly bravery, the "sight of weakness and oppression [drew] 'iron' tears down his face."[40]

Carter's supposedly "unbounded influence" with the local Native Americans was legendary as well. He spoke "the Indian language with ease," and evidently impressed them with his strength and marksmanship. As with all of the accounts of relations between the local Native Americans and whites told by members of ESACC, Carter, like all white men, played the part of a stern but fair patriarch. His biographers relate how he treated Indians with kindness and generosity and intervened to settle the "frequent quarrels" they had amongst themselves. Like any good parent Carter used positive and negative consequences to enforce his power, in this case a combination of whiskey and violence. Carter may have been hospitable to the local Indians, trading with them, and serving, or more accurately, bribing them with whiskey, but he did not hesitate to shoot one of them if he felt justified in doing so.[41]

The few Native Americans mentioned in the settler's anecdotes are typically depicted as childlike, prone to drink, quarrelsome, but cowardly when faced with pioneer

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[39] Robison, *History of Cleveland*, 17.; *Annals of the Early Settlers Association*, no.1, 33.

[40] Charles Whittlesey, *Early History of Cleveland, Ohio, including original papers and matters relating to the adjacent country. With Biographical Notices of the Pioneers and Surveyors* (Cleveland: Fairbanks, Benedict and Co., 1867), 339-42.;

[41] Rice, *The Founder of the City of Cleveland*, 210-11.

bravery. Speeches included tales were told of Indian attacks on white settlers in other areas of the Northwest Territory, but the founding of Cleveland was not accompanied by any major battles or conflict with the local tribes. The area around the Cuyahoga seems to have had no permanent Indian settlements when the New England immigrants arrived, but the fear of attack was most certainly present in the settlers' minds, having grown up on stories of Indian savagery. The failure of the whites to find any sign of what they considered civilization enabled them to justify their own settlement of the land. The relief at not having to contend with Indian attacks translated into contempt for the cowardice of the natives. One man scoffed at the supposedly mysterious hold Carter had on the Indians, saying, "the only mystery about it was …he won them by selling them whiskey for their furs and severely whipped or frightened them when they became disorderly." The Indians, he asserted, could tomahawk and scalp people, but, "they were never anything in a fist fight."[42]

Fear of the Native Americans increased when several tribes allied themselves with the British during the War of 1812, although the fears were never realized. Samuel Griswold described the atmosphere of the War of 1812 in his 1884 address. His words come close to acknowledging that the natives had reason to be resentful and angry with the whites who now lived on their lands. He stated that "savage Indians . . . hung upon the border like a dark cloud on the horizon, incensed perhaps justly by the greed of advancing emigrants." The right of the white settlers to the lands they settled, however, was never questioned.[43]

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[42] ESACC, *Annals of the Early Settlers, vol.III,no.V*, 635.
[43] ESACC, *Annals of the Early Settlers* no.VI, 54; ,no.V, 25.

In his first speech to the ESACC, Rice described the lands of the Western Reserve as a wild domain, whose silence was only pierced by, "the dismal howl of the wolf or the still more dismal warwhoop of the savage." These natives, he told his audience, had prophets who foresaw the time when, "a superior race would invade their wild domains and appropriate them." A later president of the association, Richard Parsons, claimed that, "Ohio was waiting for the coming pioneers, [to] cover her broad acres with prosperity and happiness." The natives had had their chance, and lost it. This fact inspired one man to poetry, *The Song of the Cuyahoga*, was proudly presented by John Sargent to the ESACC in 1885:

The white man came, the red man went
His time had come, his day was spent
Before the ringing axe the forest fled
Before the whites the savage sped [44]

Some members who had been children in the early years of the settlement mentioned the Indians with some affection, having played with them as children, or remembering the Indians who shared food with their families. In other speeches the romanticized attitude of the late nineteenth century shows up. Philip Deloria has investigated how, "romantic notions of vanishing Indians," influenced literature and led to the creation of Indian secret societies throughout the nineteenth and twentieth century. No longer a threat to Cleveland residents, the "Indian Other," could now represent "authentic reality in the face of urban disorder."[45]

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[44] ESACC *Annals of the Early Settlers, no 1,* 8-9.; ESACC, *Address of Richard C. Parsons, President of the Early Settlers' Association, Before the Society at Army and Navy Hall, July 22, 1893, at Cleveland, Ohio* (Cleveland: Larwood & Day Co.),10.; ESACC, *Annals of the Early Settlers, no VI,* 15.

[45] *Annals of the Early Settlers no II*, 71,73; Philip J. Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 73,74.

In a strange inversion of history the festivities at the opening of the log cabin during the Centennial ended with the early settlers leaving the site as members of a group called The Improved Order of the Red Man and the Pocahontas Lodges, raised a totem pole in front of the cabin and "joined in the ghost dance." Their "hideous noises" could be "heard for blocks" (Figure 4). Of course, none of the members of the Improved Order of the Red Men were Native Americans. Instead these white men, playing Indian, lamented the fact that "the residue of a proud and gifted race was destined to fade away," and purported to keep the spirit of the noble savage alive by dressing in native costumes and taking on Indian names. They ignored the fact that the white man had caused this fading away. Natural evolution was to blame. The Indian, whose pure, natural souls they admired, had nonetheless lacked the talent and ambition to create "arts or industry," and did not take advantage of their natural resources. It would take a superior race to correct that oversight. Perhaps this explains the name of the organization, The *Improved* Order of the Red Men.[46]

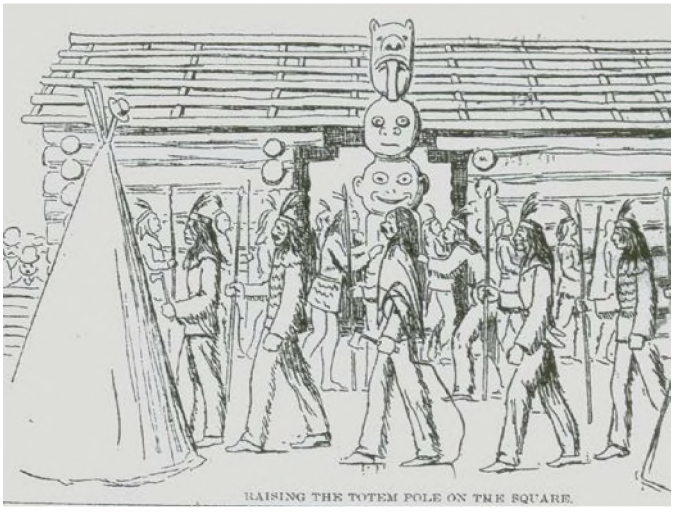

Figure 4

[46] Charles H. Lichtman, ed. *The Official History of the Improved Order of Red Man* (Boston: Fraternity Publishing Co. 1893), 81,26.; newspaper sketch, *The Cleveland Leader,* 22 July, 1886

The speeches found in the annals of the ESACC reflect a firm belief in Social Darwinism. Pioneer life was idolized as simple and idyllic but progress was to be embraced and also celebrated; it created the wealth that defined the social status of the elite. Even the pioneers who had been poor, laboring farmers were lauded as they had provided the "stock" or "root" from which the now prosperous settlers or descendants had evolved. The members of ESACC, like most Americans of their time and class, believed simultaneously that there was a "direct link between ancestry and achievement, [because] heredity mattered," and that man through self-help "could be the master of his own fate." To most of the members these two conditions were necessary for a prosperous life. And the prosperous life most of them led proved that they had plenty of both.[47]

The settlers who remained laborers or small farmers themselves, or whose descendents were among the mill workers, small shop owners, dressmakers and clerks of the city did not often rate biographical sketches and did not appear among the guest speakers at annual meetings. These people shared in pride of ancestry, but their current social status set them apart. Living a very long life, or having been the first person in the Western Reserve to open a store, or run a mill, could earn someone formal recognition, but only those whose descendents were among the upper or upper middle classes rated repeated attention. That said, the invitation to send letters about the early years of the Western Reserve was open to anyone who had lived there. These letters may not have made it into the formal addresses of the officers, but they were included in the annals, and provide some voice to the residents who were not part of the city's elite.

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[47] Michael Kammen, *Mystic Chords of Memory,* 221.

The role of women in the ESACC is typical of the time. Women were listed as members from the very beginning, and in 1882 Esther Harris, was asked to take over as Vice-President upon the death of her husband Josiah. This action was approved by Judge John Hutchins in a speech he presented three years later as an encouraging move. He lamented that the "acts and characters of prominent men," had been noted, but the women had been kept in the background. He proposed to remedy that situation, but claimed a ten minute speech did not provide time for details about particular women, so he would give "a few suggestions applicable to all." The fact that many ten minute speeches provided details about particular men was evidently irrelevant.

Hutchins could summarize women's characters in a ten minute speech because the character traits he extolled described the archetypical pioneer woman. They inspired their husbands to journey to new lands, bravely faced the same dangers as men, while working long hours to feed and clothe their families. The modern mothers of 1885 would do well to learn from their pioneer mothers and teach modern children the lessons of "useful labor," instead allowing their sons to "grow into dudes, nor the daughters into Flora McFlimsies." He concluded his speech by noting that the influence of pioneer women did not detract from the men, she was after all a "helpmeet for him." And he cautioned the female members to hold on to their voting rights in the society by cultivating "inoffensive partisanship."[48]

Women were invited to share their recollections, and several of these anecdotes show up in the annals, but typically as letters, not as speeches given by women. At the Centennial Celebration Belle Hamlin was greeted with much applause as the great-great granddaughter of Lorenzo Carter, but she made no remarks. I could not find any speech

[48] ESACC, *Annals of the Early Settlers, no.VI,* 33-37.

by Esther Harris in her capacity as Vice-President. The women of the ESACC were often involved in various women's committees and organizations in Cleveland. Groups that were exclusively female allowed the women to voice their thoughts and opinions. Organizations that had both male and female members, like the ESACC, followed the conventions of the day, the women deferring to the male leadership. Women were honored, but the pedestal they inhabited was a silent one.[49]

The glorification of log cabin society and the creation of local heroes tell us what the members of ESACC valued and celebrated. The issues that troubled and disturbed them are also present, especially in the official speeches presented at the annual meetings. The speeches presented at the first few annual reunions consisted of jovial anecdotes and reminisces, but as time passed a slightly more negative tone soon crept in. By the end of the decade some speeches focused more on what was wrong than what had been right. The pace of life was faster, young people were spoiled, and morals were loose. And, most disturbing of all, many of the new residents flocking to the growing city were not the "right kind" of people. Members' pride in the progress of their city was marred by fears that it might slip out of their control.

As noted earlier, Kammen has called the era from 1879-1915 the "age of memory and ancestor worship by design." In his essay included in, *The Birth of Modern Cleveland,* Harold C. Livesay, notes that in the United States, "the period between 1870 and 1900, [is summarized] as the era of industrialization, immigration and urbanization." There is a direct correlation between these two ideas. The former arose out of reaction to the latter situation. The wealth that many of the members had accrued, the growth of their city, and the modern conveniences they enjoyed came with a price. In his address

[49] ESACC, *Annals of the Early Settlers, Vol. III, no. V,* 642.

regarding the corporate growth of the city, prominent lawyer S.O. Griswold noted the "dark side," of urban development, where the "vices arising from ignorance, intemperance and lust," grow like "noxious weeds…with more vigor than cultivated grasses." [50]

One of the criteria for membership in the ESACC was to have lived in the Western Reserve for at least forty years; many members had been in the area even longer. The population of Cleveland in 1880, when the organization was formed was 160,146, and had grown to over 261,353 by the time of the Centennial. Members living in the city in 1840 would have lived in a village of only 6,000; some could remember the much smaller populations of the frontier settlement. The large city that they found themselves part of included not only the "wealthy, close-knit aristocracy," which included the families of Rockefeller, Hay, Hanna, Severance, Mather and others, most of whom did not belong to the ESACC, but also, a "flood of foreign immigration." The members of ESACC admired the upper classes, and aspired to join their ranks, if they were not part of them already. They offered no criticism of that group, but they felt constrained to offer opinions and warnings against the poor and the new immigrant.[51]

Two speeches presented to the association in the early 1890 demonstrate the concerns of the ESACC members in regards to the new immigrants to the city. Dr. Bates, the minister at St. Paul's, speaking in 1890, lamented the "extensive intermingling of other seed," that threatened to undermine the work of the "good fruit," that had sprung

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[50] Harold C. Livesay, "From Steeples to Smokestacks: The Birth of the Modern Corporation in Cleveland," in, *The Birth of Modern Cleveland, 1865-1930*, ed. Thomas F. Campbell and Edward M. Miggins (Cleveland: Western Reserve Historical Society, 1988), 54. ; S.O. Griswold, *The Corporate Birth and Growth of the City of Cleveland: An Address to the Early Settlers Association of Cleveland, delivered July 22, 1884* (Cleveland: Publishing House of the Evangelical Association, 1884),31.

[51] Caorl Poh Miller and Robert A. Wheeler, *Cleveland: A Concise History, 1796-1996, 2nd. Edition* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1997), Appendix A, Population, City of Cleveland, 1830-1990, 78;

from New England's Puritan seed. In a less metaphoric manner, he acknowledged the wishes of the "downtrodden," of the world to partake in the better conditions found in The United States, but asks them to be patient. Bates claimed the right of Americans to tell the people of China, Korea and those from all parts of Europe, "or any other people outside of us, we are here and you are not here." The burden to perfect society there fore lay upon the American people. The people of United States will continue to create a better place for, "all the workingmen of the world," but only if conditions at home are not disturbed by "the flood tides of your lowest life." Dr. Bates remarks were interrupted often with spontaneous applause.[52]

President Richard Parsons was even more virulent in his attack, which rather abruptly followed his eulogy of Harvey Rice and John Harris at the 1892 meeting. Parsons provided some "startling," statistics regarding the rate of immigration, and briefly acknowledges those immigrants who have become, "industrious, valuable, citizens, assimilating with our people." He claims there is "room under the stars and stripes, for all…honest, intelligent, ambitious mean and women who love liberty." The significant number of German immigrants who were members of ESACC and prominent in Cleveland's business community may have influenced Parson's remarks.

The problem, Parsons pointed out, was that the newer immigrants were not honest, intelligent, or ambitious. Among the new immigrants were "large numbers of agitators, the communist, the socialist, the anarchist, the criminal [and] an enormous body of infirm paupers, insane, and the refuse of foreign nations." Such a tide of undesirable

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[52] typed manuscript, Remarks of Dr. Bates, Records of the Early Settlers Association, container 1, folder 1, WRHS.

immigrants provides unfair competition to "native" working class people, and creates unemployment leading to vice, crime, anarchism and socialism.[53]

Kammen has stated that, "Public memory…is ideologically important because it shapes a nation's ethos and sense of identity." On a local scale, public memory shapes a region or city's identity. Attempts to create a shared history are difficult in an ethnically diverse area, and the efforts by ESACC to promote and maintain a cherished New England heritage would become increasingly difficult as the city's population became more diverse. Thousands of Cleveland residents were not part of that past, and unlike the Declaration of Independence and the Revolution, images of Moses Cleveland and his band of intrepid surveyors did not transfer well to a general audience. The cultural icons of Cleveland, the museums, orchestra, and theaters would remain under the influence of this New England past for most of the twentieth century, but even as ESACC worked to create a founding myth, there were many in the city who knew nothing of that past. Those who struggled to survive in the city of the late nineteenth-century may have had much in common with those who struggled to create a town out of wilderness, but this connection was not noted by either group.[54]

The current website of the Early Settlers Association of the Western Reserve, as the group is now known, is subdued and low key in design. The home page gives a brief history of the group, calling themselves one of the oldest civic organizations in the area, and inviting anyone, regardless of ancestry or residence to become a member. In place of the large annual gatherings on July 22, they hold a small birthday celebration near the Moses Cleaveland statue complete with cake for attendees and passers-by, most of whom

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[53] ESACC, Annals of the Early Settlers Association vol. III, no 1, 10-11.
[54] Kammen, *Mystic Chords of Memory*, 13.

probably have no idea who Moses Cleaveland was. The association works to preserve the monuments erected in past years, and occasionally adds new ones. Since 1974 they have sponsored a History Day competition for student essays. A list of recent topics covered by the student essays demonstrates a branching out of the traditional focus of the group. Subjects are not restricted to the early days of the Reserve and have included the Hough Riots, the Kent State shootings and Mayor Kucinich's battle with Muny Light, as well as more traditional topics such as the building of the Ohio-Erie Canal, and Euclid Avenue's Millionaire Row. This subtle shift in focus has occurred in the past thirteen years. A screen capture from 1996 shows that the home page at that time was still very traditional, proclaiming that their members were "patriotic citizens dedicated to preserving the ideals and principles of the brave pioneers who blaze the trials of the Western Reserve—the land where your home and your heritage thrive."[55]

It would be easy to dismiss the values and worldview of those founding members of the association as obviously elitist and bigoted. The complex reasons for their thoughts and beliefs are more difficult to tease out. The hyperbolic rhetorical style of the day shaped the phraseology and tone of their speeches, while pseudo-scientific racism informed their attitudes towards minorities, immigrants and Native Americans. They put their faith in the science which presented Anglo-Saxon superiority as fact, and found evidence to enforce this view in stories of savage and/or childlike Indians, easily placated with beads and whiskey, and dirty, ignorant immigrants, prone to criminal violence and anarchy. Ignorance, often willful, of the customs and beliefs of "others" meant that different was always seen as inferior or threatening.

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[55] Early Settlers Association of the Western Reserve, Home page, 2009 http://earlysettlers.org/index.html (accessed 25 April 2009); Early Settlers Association of the Western Reserve, 1996 home page archived at http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~ohesawr/ (accessed 25 April 2009)

This does not excuse their attitudes, but goes a long way in explaining them. The city was changing and the commonly held belief in Anglo-American superiority was being threatened. While we cannot see this change as detrimental, we can understand the reactionary entrenchment it created in those who felt threatened. Lurking beneath their blustering self-confidence was a nagging fear of inadequacy. Cleveland did not have the cultural impact and legacy of Europe. And the knowledge that the great civilizations of the past had faded, meant the civilization created by Anglo-European Americans might one day fade as well. Those in power do not relinquish it easily, and the use of history to retain power is a cross cultural phenomenon.

The members of the ESACC intended to leave a legacy to enshrine and preserve not only their past, but to validate their status in Cleveland society and government. They presented themselves as heirs not only to the "founding fathers" of Cleveland, but as heirs to the Puritan founders of New England, the "founding fathers" of the nation. From a twenty-first century perspective their view of history appears biased and sanitized.

That history was based on collected memories, and memory is problematic, but the value of public memory cannot be dismissed. The methods used by the ESACC to amass personal recollections are akin to those methods used by the WPA historians who collected oral histories of former slaves, the work of Studs Terkel, or the current trend of crowdsourcing. Oral history can create a richer, more diverse picture of the past. While concentrating on a particular ethnic group, the ESACC did give voice to a group of

ordinary people. Unfortunately the narrow focus and the conventions of the times created a homogenous account, with little room for opposing or conflicting views of the past. [56]

Gary Nash argued that in the nineteenth century most history was "great man" history. ESACC erected memorials to men like Cleaveland and Rice, men who are a footnote in a broader history, but considered "great," in local history. They tried to create their own "great man history," but since their ancestors were for the most part, common, ordinary citizens, by default their history is that of the common, ordinary person. The annals of the ESACC tell the story of one small group of residents in the long history of a piece of land now known as Cleveland, Ohio. That story is filtered through the eyes of another small group of residents who had tremendous influence for over a hundred years in Cleveland. The significance of both groups has waned, just as they feared, but the history they wrote provides an interesting and illuminating look at the values and attitudes that shaped the city, and, in many ways, still affect its cultural life and activities.

[56]Stephen Mihm, "Everyone's an Historian Now," *The Boston Globe*, 25 May, 2008, Boston.com, http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe/ideas/articles/2008/05/25/everyones_a_historian_now/?s_campaign=8315, accessed 27 April 2009.