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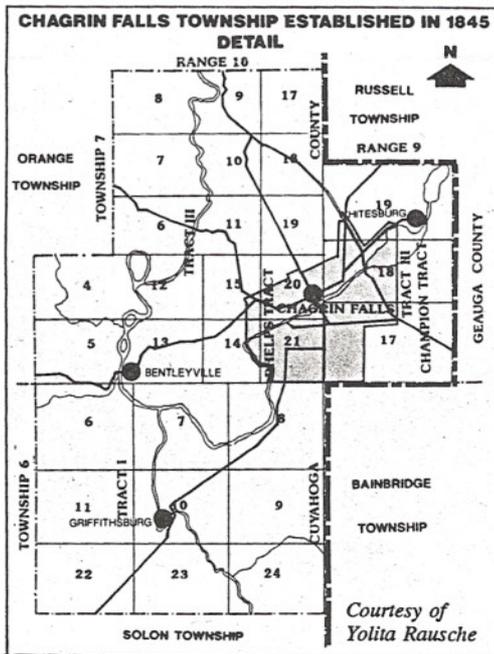
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THE SESQUICENTENNIAL OF CHAGRIN FALLS TOWNSHIP ESTABLISHED MARCH 7, 1845

Kathryn B. Watterson

Chagrin Falls Township encompasses the incorporated Village of Chagrin Falls as well as the unincorporated area of .5 square mile located to the northwest of the Village. It is this small unincorporated area that is usually referred to as "The Township". Chagrin Falls Village is governed by a Mayor and seven council members, the Township by three elected trustees. The Township retains its authority to tax the property of Village residents. The much greater population of the Village means that Township officers are elected by Village voters. The Village can annex Township property only upon the petition of Township landowners or with an affirmative vote of Township residents. Recent rulings indicate that the Village cannot secede from the Township because there is no adjacent Township in the County to which the small remnant could be attached. The ties that bind can also chafe. The sesquicentennial of the establishment of Chagrin Falls Township is an appropriate time to consider how the relationship came about.

One hundred fifty years ago, residents of the newly incorporated Village and the nearby settlements petitioned the Cuyahoga County Commissioners to create a new Township, surrounding and including the Village. The proposed Township, illustrated in the 1845 map, was nearly 5,000 acres in area, more than five times the size of the Village contained within it. To understand the importance of the creation of the Township, we look back to the founding of the Village itself in 1833. Village founders Noah Graves, Dr. Seth Henderson and other pioneers such as James Bosworth, Dr. Justus Vincent and Aaron Bliss envisioned a flourishing mill town using the water



Map of Chagrin Falls Township, 1845.

power of the Chagrin River. They soon learned that the site they had chosen was a cross roads of jurisdictional lines. The Cuyahoga-Geauga County line bisected the proposed Village at what is now Franklin Street. The land to the east was in Russell Township, Geauga County and the land to the west was in Orange Township, Cuyahoga County. With Dr. Justus Vincent as a representative to the Ohio legislature, an act of that body in 1841 and a land swap between Russell and Orange Townships resulted in the moving of the Geauga County line to its present location. This paved the way for the incorporation of the Village of Chagrin Falls in 1844, entirely within Orange Township, Cuyahoga County.

At that time Townships had responsibility for roads and law enforcement, as well as serving as tax

assessors and overseers of the poor. While Orange Township had no other center of population which equaled that of Chagrin Falls Village, it had other areas of development west of the Chagrin River. Kathleen Griffin Fant in her history of Orange Township identified four major settlements scattered throughout Orange Township in the 1840's, exclusive of Chagrin Falls. Two of these settlements were located on S.O.M. Center Road, one at Fairmount Road, and the other at Pinetree Road. The other two were located at what is now Lander Circle and on Miles Road, roughly between Lander and Brainard Roads. There were an additional three smaller settlements. These settlements all had claims on the resources of Orange Township and competed for the available tax money for services and for building the roads and bridges essential for their growth and prosperity.

C. T. Blakeslee in his 1874 "History of Chagrin Falls and Vicinity" humorously describes another point of contention between Chagrin Falls Village and Orange Township: "Without the votes of Chagrin Falls, Orange [T]ownship always went Democratic, but when the villagers turned out, the Whigs carried their ticket. The nation was saved from ruin a number of times in those elections in the estimation of many".

To vote at Orange Center (Pinetree and S.O.M. Center Roads), the men of Chagrin Falls were obliged to cross the Chagrin River near the present Metroparks Polo Field and go through the woods to the Center. Mr. Blakeslee tells of one election when the river was high and the Chagrin Falls Whigs found that the only canoe on the river for the general use of passengers was tied up on the opposite



What's on the National Register Today?

The Joseph Stoneman House and Carriage House located on E. Orange St. were accepted onto the National Register of Historic Places in 1975 as post-Civil War High Style Italianate buildings. The Stoneman House is located on East Orange Street and is today known as Cuff's clothing store.



Joseph Stoneman House on East Orange Street, today.

Joseph Stoneman was a prominent citizen of Chagrin Falls and a leader in the business community. He immigrated from Devonshire England in 1836 with his parents, brothers and sisters and settled in Orange Township. In 1854, he married Grace Whitlock in the Old Stone Church on Cleveland's Public Square. They moved to Chagrin Falls in 1865 joining the English business enclave headed by Whitlocks and Hutchings located on the corner of North Main and East Orange Streets. Stoneman went into the hardware business with his brother-in-law Elias Whitlock and operated Stoneman Hardware (today, the Chagrin Falls Hardware and Supply Co., Inc.). After Whitlock's death, he became a partner with William Hutchings, his cousin. After Hutchings death, he became partners with his son, John W. Stoneman. He served 36 years of active business life at the Stoneman Hardware Store. In addition, he served as a Village Council member and was one of the promoters, stockholders and also treasurer of the Chagrin Falls and Southern Railroad.

The Stoneman House is a two story Italianate boxed shape building with a low hipped roof and elaborate double brackets supporting the projecting eaves. It was constructed in 1873 by Joseph Stoneman, replacing an earlier Greek Revival dwelling located on the site. The building materials are characteristic of the Italianate style with a contrast of ashlar masonry, brick and wood trim. The facade material came from local brick kilns. They are of dark orange color with natural gray color mortar joints placed in an American bond pattern. The wood trim frames the windows and doors. The tooled sandstone foundation is made of plain ashlar course.

The building front has three bays with a

main entrance at the western most bay. Chamfered columns, typical of the Italianate period, support the main entrance porch as well as a west side entrance and east side porch. The main entrance contains a double leaved arched recessed door with vertical light panels and elaborate cast grilled work. An elliptical glass arch is located above this main door. The windows are 2/2 lights with tooled sandstone lintels and sills. Exterior wood black shutters complement the tall windows.

A one story clapboard sided addition built after 1893 partially wraps around the rear southeast corner of the Stoneman House. The addition has an almost flat roof.

The Carriage House was constructed in 1877 and is located 20 feet to the southeast of the Stoneman House. It is a one and a half story front gabled 26'x 36' rectangular former barn constructed of the same brick as the Stoneman House in an American bond pattern. The foundation, as with the Stoneman House, is of sandstone ashlar. The windows are 6/6 lights with the same tooled sandstone lintels and sills as the Stoneman House. On the north and south side of the building, Romanesque arches with corbeled ends frame arched wooden carriage doors. The Chagrin Falls Exponent, the local newspaper, August 9, 1877, said about the building: "It is of brick and from appearances, is to be the finest barn in town." The shingle roof was replaced by a slate roof at the beginning of the 20th century to match the new slate roof of the Stoneman House installed around 1890.

A 10 foot novelty sided addition was added to the west as a one car garage when the Carriage House was converted to an office building.

Sources of Information: *The Chagrin Falls Exponent*, *Land Records*, *Joseph Stoneman House National Register Nomination*.

Now You Know

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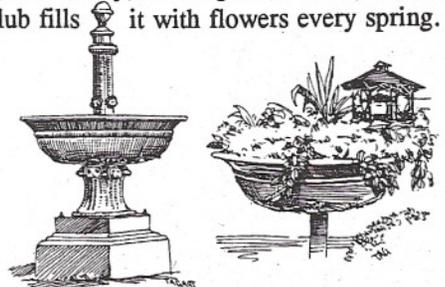
When Chagrin Falls developed its municipal water system in 1897. Human beings were not the only ones to benefit.

In November, 1897, the Village Council Committee on Watering Troughs announced that the Chagrin Falls Township Trustees agreed to contribute "\$50 the first year and a certain amount thereafter" provided the Village Council would advance the money to place the troughs in position. Two large iron troughs were installed the following month, one at the north point of Triangle Park, and the second at the northwest corner of Main and Orange Streets. They were supplied with water from the new waterworks.

In May, 1940, the Chagrin Falls Exponent announced the passing of the last symbol of the horse and buggy days. The Village Street Department had removed the watering trough from the north point of Triangle Park and deposited it at the town dump on Solon Road (now, River Run Park).

Old timers will remember that the town dump served not only as a repository for unwanted material, but also as a salvage and trading center - what today we would call recycling. It was presided over by Mr. George Simmons, who was hired to collect fees and manage the dump. Mr. Simmons spied the old watering trough, and, minus its solid base and elaborate finial, carted it home.

Let us fast - forward to 1972. A new Chagrin Falls Councilperson asked the Village Street Superintendent if he could locate some drain pipe or something in which to plant flowers in Triangle Park. The Superintendent, Frank Simmons, son of George, said he could do better than that. Shortly thereafter the Village Street Department installed the old watering trough at the north point of Triangle Park once again. Today, the Dogwood Valley Garden Club fills it with flowers every spring.



Sources of Information: *Chagrin Falls Exponent*, *Minutes of Chagrin Falls Township*, *Minutes of Chagrin Falls Village*.