

Olmsted 200

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

Issue 47 April 1, 2017

Contents

Olmsted's Edward Scanlon Was Known around the World	1
Osage Oranges Are All over Olmsted	11
John Road Was Narrower	12
Still to Come	13

Olmsted's Edward Scanlon Was Known around the World

During the third quarter of the 20th century, Olmsted was the home of a man whose reputation was as tall as the trees, although it was built on short trees. That is, Edward Scanlon became known throughout the United States and much of the rest of the world for making sure that trees in urban settings did not grow too big for their settings.

He cultivated several varieties of short trees to meet his standards from his farm in Olmsted Township. He also made a name for himself as one of the leading promoters of Arbor Day, which will be observed in Ohio and many other states this year on April 28.

From the early 1950s through the mid-1970s, a 70-acre farm on the border of Olmsted Township and Olmsted Falls was Scanlon's home, called El Rancho Scanlon. But he was not content to stay home. He earned the nickname of the "wandering arborist" because of his trips around to world to plant trees and to bring some back to be studied and propagated.

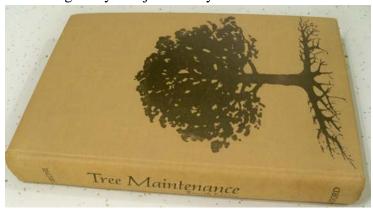


Edward Scanlon developed several types of urban-friendly trees in Olmsted Township.

More than 40 years after his death, Scanlon is still regarded well among arborists, even though many Olmsted residents never knew he existed. Nor do they realize how much he accomplished at a secluded spot along Lewis Road. But Olmsted Falls resident

David Kennedy remembers Scanlon and his work well, even though they met just briefly.





David Kennedy, one of Edward Scanlon's many admirers, holds on to his copy of a textbook from the 1970s that includes many references to Scanlon and trees he developed.

Kennedy has held onto his yellow-highlighted copy of a textbook he used in the 1970s as a student at The Ohio State University, where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in natural resources. The book is *Tree Maintenance* by P.P. Pirone. "It has many references to Scanlon," Kennedy said. Right in the preface, it mentions "Edward Scanlon of Olmsted Falls, Ohio, editor and publisher of *Trees Magazine*," and his work in cultivating trees. It credits him for four photographs of trees used in the book. The index lists references to him on eight pages and references to trees he developed on several other pages.

"It was originally published in 1941," Kennedy said. "This is the fourth edition, 1972. I looked it up on Amazon last night. It's still being published 60 years later. The seventh edition came out in 2000. So I think it's an important book. It was a college-level book."

While Kennedy is surprised at the longevity of that book, he wasn't surprised when he was taking that tree maintenance course in Columbus to read in his textbook about Edward Scanlon of Olmsted Falls. He already knew of him.

"Oh, yes, because I grew up on Rainbow Drive...off Lewis Road down there," Kennedy said. "A neighbor, Tom Flanagan, worked for him at the time. That was when I was a little kid, so I always knew of Scanlon."

In addition to the *Tree Maintenance* textbook, Kennedy also has held onto a full-page ad from an old catalog that promotes the Scanlon Maple, one of the varieties of "tailored" trees for which Edward H. Scanlon & Associates, Inc., was famous.

"Worldwide, he's famous," Kennedy said, adding that he believes many of the trees along Mapleway Drive from Bagley Road to the former DairyPak (now Evergreen Packaging) plant are all Scanlon Red Maples.

Edward H. Scanlon was born in Toledo on September 5, 1903.
According to a story about him in the *Plain Dealer Sunday Magazine* on July 7, 1974, he became interested in trees while he was a Boy Scout attending Toledo Central Catholic High School. He went on to get a degree in forestry from the University of Michigan.

Early in his working life, he took a job with the Davey Tree Expert Co. of Kent, Ohio, which proved to be beneficial but almost fatal. The company put him on a crew sent to Boston, where he was assigned to do minor pruning in a maple tree. About 45 minutes into that task, Scanlon fell out of the tree. He landed on a gravel



This full-page advertisement for one of the trees Edward developed and sold from his Olmsted Township farm is from the collection of David Kennedy of Olmsted Falls.

driveway headfirst. That fall knocked out his teeth, broke one of his wrists, fractured some ribs and left him unconscious. He woke up in a hospital and quit working for Davey.

"You might say that my education began with the fall out of a tree," the *Sunday Magazine* article quoted Scanlon as saying. "But, after all, a tree expert has to begin somewhere."

However, even though his employment with Davey was brief, it helped him get jobs when he soon went to the West Coast to work. Scanlon credited those jobs as teaching him quite a bit about trees. But it was a chance glance down a side street in



One of the 'tailored' trees that Edward Scanlon developed was the Chanticleer Pear, as shown here in a photo from the book Tree Maintenance.

Whittier, California, that set him on the mission that defined his career. He was driving with a friend when the sight along that side street caught his attention, and he returned for a closer look at what turned out to be rows of oleanders planted by a city planner along the tree lawns. They were trained to grow as standards trees, rather than as bushes as they likely would have done on their own. The oleanders were in full bloom at the time and made quite an impression on Scanlon. Other streets in Whittier also were planted with trees designed to beautify their neighborhoods.

Scanlon said, "The next time I saw a sight like that was 30 years later, in Italy."

From 1931 to 1934, he served as the city arborist for Santa Monica, California. In 1933, he helped found the Western Shade Tree Conference. After Santa Monica, Scanlon went to work for the California Division of Highways for several years before serving in the U.S. Navy from 1941 to 1945 during World War II. In 1937, he began

publishing *Trees Magazine: American Journal of Arboriculture*, and continued to publish it until his death.

In 1946, Scanlon went to work for the City of Cleveland as commissioner of shade trees under Mayor Thomas Burke. At a 1973 symposium, he recounted how he started that job by meeting with Burke and his cabinet and responding to the mayor's question about his assessment of Cleveland's trees: "There's only one thing that we know in this field, and that is the trees that shouldn't be planted, and all of them are on the streets of Cleveland. What I'm going to do is experiment."

Over the next decade, Scanlon said, he directed the planting of more than 100 species of trees "and any tree that I thought had even an outside chance of surviving on the street, I planted. Well, we came up with some pretty good ones, so in my talks to garden clubs, I began to refer to trees that I thought should be used on the streets as 'tailored' trees, because in effect that is what they are."

The main problem Scanlon found with trees in Cleveland, which was nicknamed Forest City, was that they were too big and did not fit the tree lawns on which they were planted. Those trees tended to be red maples, Norway maples, sycamores, pin oaks and other such large varieties.

"The plain fact was that Cleveland couldn't afford to go on being a forest city," Scanlon said in the *Sunday Magazine* article. "The big trees had too much trunk and root system

for the tree lawns. They overshadowed the houses, they cracked the sidewalks, they ruined the grass, and they so obscured the street lights that the thoroughfares were dark and dangerous. Finally, such high, wide-spreading trees were dangerous. When they were toppled in windstorms, or got split by lightning, they often would fall on houses, on vehicles, on people; and they frequently pulled down power lines that blacked out whole neighborhoods and constituted a threat of electrocution."



This photo of Edward Scanlon was published in the Cleveland Press on April 25, 1947. That was the year after he became commissioner of shade trees for the City of Cleveland. It was accompanied by this caption:

DESTROYING TREES was the way vandals celebrated Arbor Day on Liberty Ave., near W. 130th St. While this day was being observed throughout the city by planting trees, the vandals broke two newly-planted Norway maples and pulled up three others by the roots. The trees had been planted by the City Properties Department. Here one of them is being inspected by Edward Scanlon, city forester. Scanlon will supervise the planting of 2000 trees on Cleveland streets this spring and 5000 during the year.

Thus, Scanlon worked to get rid of the big trees and replace them with more ornamental trees better suited to the spaces available. When residents of one street complained to the mayor after Scanlon ordered crews to cut down their towering elms, which happened to be diseased, he stood up to the mayor and assured him he knew what he was doing when he replaced the elms with Paul's Scarlet Hawthorn trees.

Scanlon was credited with changing the arboreal look of Cleveland during his years with the city and creating a master plan for planting trees along city streets that was consulted for many years, although not always followed. The book, *Tree Maintenance*, credits Barney Slavin of Rochester, New York, with starting the concept that trees should be fitted into the available space, but it credits Scanlon with continuing that philosophy and "most vigorously" promoting it after he went to work for Cleveland.

In his *Trees Magazine*, Scanlon promoted the creation of a new organization, which he helped establish with a meeting in Cleveland in November 1951. In a 2007 article, Philip Barker of the U.S. Center for Urban Forest Research in Davis, California, wrote, "Through timely intuition, Edward H. Scanlon tossed a pebble in the water,

making ripples that have radiated worldwide, resulting in what is now the esteemed International Plant Propagators' Society."

In 1954 or 1955 (references differ), Scanlon left his city job and worked as a consulting arborist. His clients included the Cleveland Electric Illuminating Company and the Philadelphia Electric Company. He was reported to have prepared master street plans for more than 400 communities in northeastern Ohio and the Philadelphia area.

By that time, however, Scanlon had planted himself in Olmsted. In 1950, he bought a 70-acre farm on top of a ridge at 7621 Lewis Road. Although books, articles and Scanlon's own advertising listed his location as Olmsted Falls, the farm seems to be just north of the municipal border and in Olmsted Township. The Olmsted Township sign is next to the driveway of the property.





On the right is the driveway up to the ridge on which Edward Scanlon lived and grew his trees. On the left is the mailbox for the property at 7621 Lewis Road and the Olmsted Township sign, showing that Scanlon lived just north of Olmsted Falls, although he always was credited with being from Olmsted Falls.

The farm included an old house and a big barn. In his 1966 history of Olmsted, Walter Holzworth wrote, "Through some odd chance the farm he selected to raise his trees was adjacent to the very first nursery in Olmsted Township. Around 1880, [Theodore] Schueren operated a tree farm and small greenhouse just across the little gully to the north of Scanlon's farm. This later became known as the Watt Lewis farm and he recalls grubbing out the growth of remaining trees." (Schueren also operated what might have been Olmsted's first greenhouse. For more on that, see Issue 18 of *Olmsted 200* from November 2014.)

During the 1880s, the Olmsted Falls columnist, L.B. Adams, mentioned Schueren in the Berea newspaper, the *Advertiser*, several times. In the April 15, 1887, edition

Adams provided a long, glowing account of visiting Schueren's greenhouse, which was filled with exotic plants. He also described Schueren's nursery this way:

Mr. Schueren's large nursery extending back nearly one mile, comprises evergreens, cedar, sycamore, poplar and many other varieties which are transplanted every season to beautify our lawns, make our parks, shady walks and evergreen hedges.

Perhaps the qualities of that section of Olmsted Township that attracted Schueren in the 1880s also attracted Scanlon in the 1950s. The location apparently served him well, because it was there that he developed trees that became commercially popular across the country. They included the Scanlon Maple, the Scanlon Cherry, the Rancho Linden and the Chanticleer Pear.

In his 1966 book, Holzworth wrote: "Scanlon grows more than 180 species of rare and unusual trees and he has obtained patents on several varieties. The patented varieties are now grown in Holland for European distribution."

According to the 1974 article in the *Plain Dealer Sunday Magazine*, Scanlon had about 45 acres set aside at that time at El Rancho Scanlon for growing 18 new types of trees.

"It takes many years to test a new type of tree," he said in that article. "It has taken me as long as 24 years to develop just one kind, and that's not time enough, really.

What is needed is to study new trees for 40 years, say, and then to hope for a new selection within the selection. Nature is cooperative, but she simply won't be rushed."

The story also described how Scanlon was impressed during a 1959 overseas trip with an old manor house in Eggam, England, that



Seen through the trees, this is the house where Edward Scanlon lived with his wife, June.

was said to have been owned by King Henry VIII. Over the next decade, he and his wife, June, built a 40-foot-by-24-foot south wing onto their house and decorated in in the style of that English manor house with a large, brick fireplace, a golden parquet floor and wagon-wheel chandeliers. "He completes the picture by wearing tweed suits and a formless type of hat that is reminiscent of the Scottish moors and the misty fields of Ireland," magazine reporter George Condon wrote, adding that Scanlon had a collection of 13 Irish hats and 23 English hats.

That 1959 trip to England was one of many that Scanlon took around the world, which Kennedy said is why he was called "the wandering arborist."

"He would just walk around the entire world essentially looking for trees," Kennedy said. "When he would find one that, for some reason, only grew a certain way – it might have been a grafted pear – but for some reason, he ran across a narrow tree. He would take samples and graft it onto his root stock."

About Scanlon's travels, Holzworth wrote:

In 1957, he planted a Cleveland Norway Maple in the Moscow Friendship Garden as a goodwill gesture by the people of Cleveland. He also planted a tree in Berlin's Tiergarten.



Page 141 of Tree Maintenance shows this photo of Edward Scanlon in front of a 10-year-old Scanlon Red Maple.

In 1959, Scanlon assisted *in planting eight selections* of Norway and Red Maple trees from his Olmsted Falls nursery at the International Horticultural Exhibition in Rotterdam, Holland. During a world trip in 1960, he was the principal speaker at the Royal Horticultural Conference in Melbourne. Australia. He traveled to England and Europe each spring to see firsthand the results of proven street tree practices.

In his 2007 article, Barker wrote that the "world was Scanlon's garden and the trees therein were gold nuggets." If he didn't take samples of certain trees, he at least took photos to use as slides in his illustrated lectures. Among people fond of trees, Barker wrote, Scanlon was well known and a popular speaker.

References to him also appeared in books other than

Tree Maintenance. For example, Katherine S. White (wife of E.B. White, author of such books as *Charlotte's Web*, *Stuart Little* and *The Elements of Style*) wrote about him in her book, *Onward and Upward in the Garden*, which came out in at least 11 editions from 1958 to 1979. Here is one example:

The firm of Edward H. Scanlon & Associates (Olmsted Falls, Ohio) grows conventional trees, but its specialties are rare and unusual trees and what its catalogue describes as "tailored trees." The term is misleading, suggesting as it does trees pruned and tailored into odd outlines, when all it means is trees that are smaller at maturity than most, or that grow, without pruning, in various odd shapes — globe-headed, umbrella, weeping, pyramidal, columnar, and so on. Scanlon recommends the short trees for city streets or moderate-sized house plots, where telephone or power lines may interfere with the branches of trees taller than twenty-five feet, and it recommends those of unusual form for special effects in landscaping. The list of trees is varied and imaginative, it is profusely illustrated with photographs, and it includes many flowering trees not found elsewhere. The catalog I have before me is for the wholesale trade; I trust that the 1961 retail catalogue, due sometime in September, will be just as inclusive and as interesting to read.

Scanlon also was known for his efforts to promote Arbor Day, the day on which people are encouraged to plant and care for trees. Sterling Morton, who served as President Grover Cleveland's secretary of agriculture, is credited with founding Arbor Day in 1872, but several people worked to revive it in the 20th century – none more than Scanlon. In the February 1982 issue of the *Journal of Arboriculture*, Harry J. Banker, who then was the chairman of National Arbor Day, wrote:

Probably the most notable of the leaders in this Renaissance of Arbor Day was Edward H. Scanlon of Ohio. In the late 30s and early 40s, he established the Committee for a National Arbor Day, whose goal it was to secure government recognition of his committee's efforts to establish the last Friday in April as National Arbor Day. This committee was successful in securing the passage of either state legislation or governor proclamation in 22 states between 1940 and 1978, which established the last Friday in April as Arbor Day in those states to coincide with the National Arbor Day date advocated by the National Arbor Day Committee. In 1970 and 1972, Congress passed legislation (for those two years only) which authorized the President to proclaim the last Friday in April as National Arbor Day.

The last Friday in April is still considered as National Arbor Day and is recognized as Arbor Day in most states, including Ohio. But almost two dozen states observe it on other days. The Arbor Day Foundation offers an interactive map on its website (https://www.arborday.org/celebrate/dates.cfm) that shows when each state observes Arbor Day. Perhaps if Scanlon had lived longer and been able to keep working

on recognition for Arbor Day, it might have been established more firmly as a national observance and more uniformly throughout the country.

But Scanlon died suddenly in March 1976, less than two years after he was featured in the *Plain Dealer Sunday Magazine* article. It also wasn't too long after Kennedy, then a student at Ohio State, stopped by Scanlon's house on Lewis Road to meet him. He recalled spending only about five minutes there. "He didn't have time," Kennedy said. Scanlon was a busy man.

In 2007, Barker wrote, "A notable legacy is the many issues of *Trees Magazine*, which Scanlon almost single-handedly produced for about four decades, containing, among other features, praises and sometimes harsh analyses of various tree species for urban uses." He said other parts of Scanlon's legacy include many trees planted along the streets of Cleveland, his development of several varieties of trees and his role in establishing the International Plant Propagators Society. Barker also wrote, "Not to be overlooked is his universal influence against the widespread use of a few fast-growing trees of immense size at maturity, such as silver maples, elms and sycamores but, instead, to plant a wide assortment of medium-sized, lower maintenance trees."

Edward Scanlon's grave can be found in the old Chestnut Grove (or Turkeyfoot) Cemetery in Olmsted Falls, just walking distance from his home. The gravestone is inscribed:

Edward H. Scanlon 1903-1976

Internationally famous wandering arborist

Municipal arborist for Santa Monica, California, and Cleveland, Ohio

Originator of tailored trees

Editor, publisher of Trees Magazine

Founder of Western Shade Tree Conference, Committee for a National Arbor Day, International Plant Propagators Society, Society of Municipal Arborists

The world has lost a beautiful person.



This is Edward Scanlon's gravestone in the old Chestnut Grove Cemetery in Olmsted Falls.

Osage Oranges Are All over Olmsted

Speaking of trees, the story in Issue 46 of *Olmsted 200* about what's left of an Osage orange tree fence along Fitch Road proved to be quite timely. That issue came out just weeks after Kevin Roberts received a professional arborist's report about the Osage orange tree fence behind his house at 7622 Columbia Road in Olmsted Falls. That is the house that Samuel Lay built in 1845. Roberts and his wife bought the house a few years ago, restored it and then made it their home and the home of his law practice.

Roberts had Alan D. Klonowski, a certified arborist from Independence, inspect the row of Osage orange trees near the south side of his property on November 14, 2016. Klonowski prepared his report to Roberts on January 15.

In a list of observations, he found that the trees are all Osage orange (Maclura pomifera). The trees are planted in a row, approximately 70' in length, parallel to the south lot line. Klonowski said they are mostly multi-stemmed, one inch to 23 inches in diameter and 12 feet to 60 feet tall. "The trees are alive and growing vigorously," he wrote. "The trees perform the functions of a living fence, screening, wildlife habitat, and a windbreak."

Klonowski said the property is former farmland that has been reverted partially to woodland with Mahoning silt loam soil. "Original vegetation was deciduous forest consisting primarily of Sour Gum, Pin Oak, Tulip Poplar and Red Maple," he wrote. "This soil is well suited to growing trees."



This photo was included in the report from arborist Alan Klonowski on the Osage orange trees on the property of Kevin Roberts at 7622 Columbia Road – where Samuel Lay built a house in 1845. As the photo shows, the trees form a living fence along the south end of the property.

Roberts had asked Klonowski to figure out how old the trees are. His answer is: "It is reasonable to believe that this row of Osage-orange was planted and has occupied this space since the area was first settled in the early 1800s."

In reaching that conclusion, Klonowski noted that Osage orange trees were widely planted to be natural fences before barbed wire was readily available and inexpensive, but

such "green fencing fell into disuse by the 1920s in the United States because of its thorns and its largesized fruit." He added, "Only thornless, fruitless ornamental varieties of Osage-orange are now being sold at garden centers."

In the email with which he shared Klonowski's report, Roberts wrote about other such natural fences not far from his house. "You can see osage trees along the east side of Columbia heading north from Nobottom Road," he wrote. "And there are all along the borders of the 14 acre former Fitch/Atkinson cow pasture across from the Sunoco where Cook meets Columbia. Once you recognize them you will see them all around here."



This is the former Samuel Lay House that Kevin Roberts bought a few years ago and renovated. It was still being painted when this photo was taken on July 5, 2014. The Osage orange trees are in the backyard opposite from the viewpoint here.

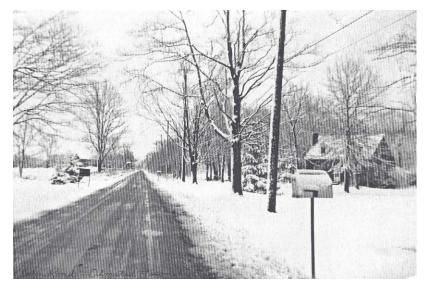
Roberts added, "Osage is the hardest wood, harder than hickory, burns the hottest, and tears up chainsaws. It is the ideal wood for traditional bows, the ones Native Americans used to kill buffalo."

Thanks to Kevin Roberts for sharing information about the Osage orange trees behind his house.

John Road Was Narrower

The John Road of today is not the same road that motorists traveled on through most of the 20th century. Today, the road has two wide lanes and sidewalks on each side. But until late in the 1900s, it was a very narrow, blacktopped, two-lane road with slender berms on each side.

Two black-and-white photos from a scrapbook maintained by Peter and Laura Borns of 26812 John Road show what the road looked like in the past. Their house, which goes back at least to 1860, when James Fitch and Lucretia Stearns Fitch built it, was featured in the lead story of Issue 47 of *Olmsted 200* last month. That story was so full of information and photos that it did not leave room for the old photos of John Road. Both show the road looking east from in front of the Bornses' house, one in winter and the other in summer.



This photo shows what the narrower John Road looked like in the 20th century. The view is to the east from just east of Fitch Road. Notice on the left, the barn that John Hall built in 1880. It stood until it was dismantled during the spring and summer of 2014.

Here is the summer photo, which was taken slightly closer to the front of the house now owned by Peter and Laura Borns at 26812 John Road. In the bottom left is the 1877 carriage stone that also was shown in last month's issue. Again, John Hall's 1880 barn can be seen to the left of the road. Just past where the barn stood, the road curves gently to the left. Thanks to Peter and Laura Borns for sharing both photos.



Still to Come

The next issue of *Olmsted 200* will include a story about how Olmsted Falls doubled in size early in its history. It also will have a story with a few mid-20th century photos of one of the oldest houses in Olmsted Township. That story had been scheduled for this issue, but space doesn't permit its use this month.

If you know of other people who would like to receive *Olmsted 200* by email, please feel free to forward it to them. They can get on the distribution list by sending a request to: wallacestar@hotmail.com. *Olmsted 200* has readers in several states beyond Ohio, including California, Colorado, Arizona, Texas, Louisiana, North Carolina, South Carolina, Kentucky, West Virginia, Florida, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Maine, as well as overseas in the Netherlands, Germany and Japan.

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

If you have missed any of the past issues of *Olmsted 200* or want to share them with someone else, all of them can be found on Olmsted Township's website. Go to http://olmstedtownship.org/newsletters/. A list of *Olmsted 200* issues is on the right side. Click on the number of the issue you want to read.

Except where otherwise noted, all articles in *Olmsted 200* are written by Jim Wallace. Thanks go to Mary Louise King for help in proofreading and editing many issues. Written contributions and photos, as well as comments and questions about items in this newsletter, will be considered for publication. Send any correspondence by email to: wallacestar@hotmail.com.

Olmsted 200 is written, researched and edited by Jim Wallace, who is solely responsible for its content. He is co-author (with Bruce Banks) of **The** Olmsted Story: A Brief History of Olmsted Falls and Olmsted Township, published in 2010 by The History Press of Charleston, S.C. The Olmsted Story is available at the Berea Historical Society's Mahler Museum & History Center and through online booksellers.

Olmsted 200 is copyright © 2017 by Jim Wallace. All rights reserved.

