

The Streets of Dayton and Why So Named

By Charles F. Sullivan

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In the early history of Dayton, the Indians objected to the white people settling here because he needed all the food he could get to feed his own family. Is it any wonder that he should take revenge upon those who were reducing his income without asking permission? When this was done, is it any wonder that the white folks would retaliate? This went on for many years and the Indians were encouraged to make these raids by the English Military from the Canadian Shores.

Finally the Government sent General Mad Anthony Wayne, of the War of the Revolution to go west and raise an army and defeat the Indians. He drilled his men at what is now called *Waynesville* named in his honor and came through here, making the first street in Dayton and it is now known as **Wayne Avenue.**

He met the Indians at what was called Fallen Timbers, near where Toledo now stands. The next year he called the Indians into conference at Greenville Ohio and they signed a treaty of peace August 20, 1795, and this made it almost safe to settle in this country.

Judge Symmes made a contract with the United States Government to buy the land between the two Miamis from the Ohio river to near Springfield, and General Jonathan Dayton of New Jersey, Arthur St. Clair, Governor of the northwest Territory, Gen James Wilkinson, of General Wayne's army, and Israel Ludlow, a surveyor from New Jersey, contracted with him to buy the 7th & 8th ranges between the Great and Little Miami rivers.

They employed Daniel C Cooper to be their agent and sent him to mark the road, cutting the brush as far as possible, from Hamilton to Dayton. Then Israel Ludlow was sent to Dayton, to lay out and survey the new city to be called Dayton.

There were to be seven streets running east and west, the first to be called Water, making it close to the river and as near parallel to it as possible. These were to be 16 degrees south of east and all to be numbered.

There were to be five streets running north and south, at right angles to the others and the first one from the east was to be called **St Clair**, in honor of the Governor.

The next one was to be **Jefferson** in honor of the President. The next was to be the Main street of the city and so was called **Main street**. The next for the surveyor, **Ludlow** and the last for James Wilkinson of Wayne's army.

The next year 1796, the settlers started from Cincinnati in three parties, one going by boat down the Ohio and up the Miami in March.

Usually at this time of the year, the weather is cold, windy and disagreeable, and the water in the river is high, making it very hard to push a boat up stream against the current, with a load of people and supplies. They arrived upon April first, with no houses built nor supplies other than what they had brought with them.

So it was necessary for them to provide shelter for the women and children, which they did by setting the boat on edge and building a fire upon the open end or side.

A couple days later, George Newcom arrived with his party, coming overland by way of Hamilton and still later, William Hamer arrived with his party by way of Lebanon, and he settled near the present site of Focke's Slaughter House.

The streets were all grown up with hazel bushes and other brush and crossing Main street in front of where the present Court House is now located, was quite a large ditch, almost impossible to cross at that time of the year, on account of the mud. This joined what is now Patterson boulevard near its intersection with 5th street.

In 1804, Cooper who became the owner of the city, built a grist mill near the corner of Water and the present boulevard, taking water for power from Madriver and wasting it down the ditch, which emptied into the river below Prairie street near the Fairgrounds.

In 1825, the state started building the Miami & Erie canal, which was complete to Dayton in 1829 and it used this ditch to come into Dayton and made the basin between First & Third streets and passenger boats used this basin for their harbor.

Just think, a boat could leave here one morning and arrive at Cincinnati the next morning, and no danger of getting into trouble on account of speeding.

The canal was very busy until the railroads became a success, when they took all the business, leaving but little for the canal.

The flood of 1913, washed away the Aquaduct over Madriver and filled the canal with mud so the canal quit business promptly.

Railroads had come in and had proven the reliability, delivering people and goods much quicker than any other mode of transportation.

The City bought the canal property from the state and located a street there and named it **Patterson Boulevard** in honor of John H. Patterson. His Father Jefferson Patterson and Col Robert Patterson, his grandfather who moved to Dayton in 1804, have done much to make Dayton the city it now is.

This canal was used to carry off, the water used for power in these factory buildings between Third and Sixth streets. Much flour, linseed oil, lumber, machinery and other things were made here and shipped away by canal.

At the corner of Fourth and St Clair, a large brick building still in good repair, built and used by S. N. Brown & Co., for many years as a wheel factory, but

the coming of the auto, spoiled that business. It was a very successful business in my young manhood, but now the building is used for storage.

Mr Brown's Father, Thomas Brown, came from New Jersey to Lebanon when a young man, walking from Philadelphia, later to Dayton. He was a building contractor and this required lots of brick, and finding a good bed of clay between **Brown Street** and Wayne Ave, he started a brick yard there, hauling the brick to the city by way of brown street, and that gave his name to the street.

In early days, Brown Street was just as it is today to Morton Ave then out to Oak street. The road from Lebanon to Dayton came in as it does now by Far Hills and Brown, but as it was the road from Warren county, the road was called Warren clear through to Main.

After the Civil war, Brown street was cut through to Warren and the names were changed making Brown street through to Oakwood.

Warren stopped at the intersection of Oak & Brown and this place was called Slidertown. The old end of Brown was called Old Brown but finally became Morton Ave.

Near where Morton Ave takes off, Cline street goes west about a hundred feet, then turns south about a square, then west again to Warren. This is caused by the Seely ditch running that way and the houses were built backing up to that open ditch. At first the street was called Zigzag street but now it is **Cline Street**.

When the canal was first built in 1829, it had to be filled with water, so it was extended in a northeasterly direction, where the railroad elevated tracks are now located, from Sixth street to Madriver and a dam was built to throw the water into the canal. Thus the canal was supplied with water at Dayton.

When the canal was extended on to Toledo, it used this route at first, being changed in 1848 to parallel Madriver to the basin at Water street, giving fresh water to the basin.

When the Soldiers Home was located at Dayton, the Eaton Pike came on a straight line from Eaton to Dayton, joining the Germantown pike, near the B & O tracks west of Summit.

To obtain the ground wanted for the Government, Third street was extended straight out until it met the Eaton Pike. The old part of the pike became a part of the Home grounds. From the Home to the City it called Eaton avenue until the McCall company came to Dayton when the name was changed to **McCall Ave.**

When the Madriver & Lake Erie railroad was built, it came straight in, parallel to First street. Their roundhouse was built upon the southeast corner of Water and Webster and their passenger depot, where the N.Y.C. freight depot is now located. Several mergers of the railroads took place and the M & L E became a part of the N. Y. C. system and extended their line through the city and to Cincinnati running around the north side of the Union Depot, later joining the Union Depot organization.

A street was run down along side of the M & L E road to Foundry street and named **Cooper street** in honor of the proprietor of early Dayton. Daniel Cooper also donated the square where the Public Library now stands, to the City and the ground now occupied by the Courthouse and Jail to the County, also nearly all churches of early Dayton were given ground upon which the churches were built.

Now we have the Patterson family honored by **Patterson Boulevard** named for John H. Patterson, descendant of Jefferson Patterson, his father and Col Robert Patterson his grandfather.

Then we have streets named for Indiana Chiefs, Pontiac, Tecumseh, and Logan. For Indian tribes, Iroquois, Wyandot, Bannock, Blackfoot and Cherokee. In honor of state Governors, Meigs, and Foraker.

For Presidents of the United States, Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Madison, Harrison, Taylor, Lincoln, Grant, and McKinley. For the Military, we have Commodore Perry for the victory upon Lake Erie in the war of 1812 when he said, "We have met the enemy and they are ours;" Gen Bruen of the same war 1812; Fremont, explorer and general of the Civil war; Findlay, McPherson, Sheridan, Sherman, for the Civil war. Named for battles, Chickahominy, Chickamauga, Antietum, and Argonne. Named because of our interest in Flying, Aerial, Aero, Air, Air City, Airway road.

Delphos because it ran beside the Toledo DELPHOS & Burlington railroad. Michigan because it ran beside the Dayton & Michigan road.

The following because they ran to the towns for which they are named, Troy, Bellefontaine, Wilmington, Belpre, Germantown, Xenia, Salem, but the name **Salem** has been changed to **Clayton** for the town. Woodburn although there is nothing left of the town but the name.

Now we come to private Citizens for whom streets were named. Lowes Street was named for Dr J. E. Lowes, a physician, prominent politician and promoter for Dayton and his daughter Alberta has a street for her.

Almirwin Terrance is compounded out of the names of three daughters, Alma, Miriam and Winifred.

Arnold Place – for J. O. Arnold, old resident and promoter.

Artz Lane – William Artz, furniture dealer

Ashley – for Ashley Brown, Son-in-law of Col Robert Patterson

Booher Lane – Jesse Booher, saw filer, and had a big reputation as a fancy ice skater and memories of early Dayton.

Broadwell Place – Silas Broadwell, old resident and marshall.

Alullwood – William Aull's woods,

Babbitt – T. S. Babbitt who lived at First and Bridge, later Stratford.

Backus – Joseph Backus, former street commissioner

Been – M. S. Benn, real Estate dealer.

Best – Ed Best, Jeweler

Bidleman – Chas Bidleman, dry goods,

Bierce – G. N. Bierce, Stillwell & Bierce Mfg Co.

Burton – U. S. Senator

(Stainton) Brenner – [Stanton] Stainton Brenner, Real Estate.

Carr – S. H. Carr, Attorney,

Conover – Harvey Conover, attorney,

Clay – Henry Clay, candidate for U S President at one time.

Demphle – Sebastion Demphle, stove dealer

Do sota Bass Courts – De Sota Bass, Colored Preacher.

Eaker – Belle Eaker, Maiden lady who gave her home to the Y.M.C.A. not the Municipal Building.

Forrer – Samuel Forrer, early civil Engineer.

Gummer – Henry Gummer, Gem City Stove Co.

Gunckel – Lewis B. Gunckel, congressman.

Harries – J. W. Harries, brewer,

Hanna Lane – Xenophon Hanna, cigar factory.

Harman – Gabriel Harman, Gebhart Harman Bank,

Howell – Edward Howell, Supt City Railway Co.

Huffman – William P . Huffman, very active in city affairs.

Klee – John Klee, made soft drinks

King – William King, early settler

Macready – Elyer at McCook Field

Mary – Reuben Mumma, was florist at Main & Ridge and named the first street running to the river for his wife, Mary, the next one for himself Reuben, later changed to Burton, the third one Drake, his wife's maiden name and the fourth the family name Mumma.

Master – Master Electric Co.

MCall – MCall Publishing Co.

Odlin – Peter Odlin part of one of his farms.

(Sachs Pruden) – Sachs Prudent brewing Co Ginger ale.

Schantz – Adam Schantz brewer

Shaw – George Shaw, early settler,

Siebenthaler – Siebenthaler, nurseryman.

Spiece – Fred Spiece, city commissioner

Spinning Road, Judge Spinning in early Dayton.

Wroe – Al Wroe, Contractor,

Zeigler – Major David Zeigler, first mayor of Cincinnati. Tomb in Woodland Cemetery.

Sawmill & Stonemill – These two mills were upon the Patterson farm, run by water from Rubican Creek, the sawmill was located where the N C R lumber yard is now while the stonemill was east of Main and was a fulling mill.

Streets named for colleges, Oxford, Yale, Harvard, Otterbein, Wittenberg.

Shakertown Pike, the Shakers were a religious society that did not believe in marriage, had a large farm now owned by the state.

Watervleit – is the same of the location in N Y of headquarters of the Shakers. The Society is not active here now.

Two Bridge streets – One now Stratford Ave; Other one now Third Street west of the river.

Two Xenia Aves – One as at present; the other is Linden Ave.

In the early 1880s, I attended a meeting of the Horticultural Society held at the fruit farm of Nicholas Ohmer, which had been the custom every summer for years. At the business session, Mr. Ohmer announced that this would be the last time for he was going to plat the farm and sell it off in lots. It had lots of fruit upon it especially raspberries and was all in good condition. Now it is almost all built up and has a street bus going up on street and back another, carrying the passengers right to the courthouse corner.

Chas F. Sullivan
112 Wyoming street
Dayton Ohio. June 21, 1946

Transcribed by Terry Anne Nicholson
ldc – did some minor editing – correct obvious spelling errors and break up into smaller blocks - 2023