

and began operations in Amherst in 1911. The Amherst Cut Stone Co. began operations in 1914 and was located on the west side of Amherst off Milan Ave., not far from the current grounds of the Amherst Historical Society & Sandstone Museum Center.

These two concerns contracted for cut stonework throughout North America. They employed stonecutters and stone planer men who were skilled at their trade and produced the various shapes or designs of stone required for building purposes. This cut stone industry—one which had a central shop and sent the work to the building site all ready for placement--was a comparatively new idea in the building trade. The new industry was advantageous in that it permitted the use of machinery that could not easily be moved from place to place, allowing the workers to have permanent homes.

In 1919, the Ohio Quarries Co. purchased the cut stone interests of both Blum and Delbridge and the Amherst Cut Stone Co. and incorporated their operations under the name of the Ohio Cut Stone Co. On April 17, 1929, the Cleveland Stone Co. purchased the assets of the Ohio Quarries Co. and became the present Cleveland Quarries Co. in South Amherst.

The above is not a complete history of the Amherst area sandstone story, but shows that the expression, "**Amherst was built on a rock,**" most certainly is true. To quote from *The History of Lorain County, Ohio*, published in 1879: "**The stone quarried . . . forms such a colossal interest as to have brought together enough people to form a**

**village of 1,500 inhabitants. North Amherst has grown almost entirely from the stimulus given by the development of the stone, and as it is both literally and figuratively built upon a rock, its safety of existence and prosperity is assured. A great change has taken place since the first small opening was made for the purpose of taking out stone.... Hundreds of men, assisted by the giant slave, steam, are toiling in the ledges and pits, taking out the rough stone which under the chisel of the artisan shall be conformed into shapes of grace and beauty and strength, to lend majesty to the buildings in the great marts of trade."**

Sources: *History of Lorain County, Ohio, 1879*; *Amherst's Story*, Armstrong, 1914; Cleveland Quarries publication. /vrb 1991, REV: 2004



Harris-Dute House, late 1840s  
Greek Revival  
Sandstone Museum Center

# The Sandstone Story



Quigley House - 1832  
Greek Revival House

*Amherst*  
*"The Sandstone Center*  
*Of the World"*

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John Baldwin, Sr., founder of Baldwin University, now Baldwin Wallace College, Berea, Ohio, arrived from Connecticut in 1828 and located in Middleburg Township in Cuyahoga county where he purchased a large tract of land (now part of Berea) and established his home. In 1842, near his home, he noticed a thin slab of stone, which had a gritty nature and led him to believe that it would be suitable for grindstones. He took it home and shaped it into a grindstone with an old axe, and after using it, found it had excellent sharpening qualities, much better than any stone he'd seen in Connecticut. He started turning grindstones out on a lathe, which he operated with waterpower. For the next decade, he turned out grindstones made of "Berea Grit." During the years 1850-1870, Berea Sandstone came into use as a building material and was recognized as a standard among the building stones of the country.

**The sandstone business of Amherst, like all great industries, had a small and humble beginning.** Henry Warner first opened the Brownhelm quarry, later owned by the Worthingtons, in 1847, and is believed to have shipped the first stone sent out from this area. The blocks were hauled to Vermilion, and from there, shipped to their destination in Canada. Mr. Warner gave \$600.00 for this quarry land, worked it for six years, and then sold it for \$6,000.00 to John Worthington. A native of Middlesex, Connecticut, Warner had varied experiences before he became one of the pioneer quarrymen of Lorain County. He later became associated with Baxter Clough in the quarry business around 1854 or 1855.

In 1848, Sylvester Silsby took grindstones out of the John Elliott quarry in Amherst. They had

no lathes, and the work of shaping the stones was done entirely with a chisel. William James, who finally bought it from Elliott, worked this quarry for 15 years. After that, it was sold to Parks and E.C. Foster, who sold it to George E. Hall of Cleveland, who then sold it to Worthington and Sons. Block stone was furnished by this quarry for the building of the abutments of the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railroad bridge at Ashtabula. Later, this railroad was known as the New York Central.

The first stone saw mill was built and operated by George E. Hall and Co. in 1868. In the early spring of 1869, R.P. Wilson of Cleveland purchased about 40 acres of land and began quarry operations. This quarry was the beginning of what later became the renowned No. 6 (Gray Canyon) Quarry, **reputed to be the largest single sandstone quarry unit in the world** In 1871, when John Worthington & Sons took over the quarry and mill of George E. Hall, located at the east of North Amherst, they constructed a railroad track from Brownhelm Station to the lake at Vermilion. Docks were built and equipped to transport their output to the various lake ports, and the first boatload of stone was shipped to Toronto, Ontario Canada.

Baxter Clough, originally associated with Henry Warner, bought into a quarry and soon became its sole owner. Clough was one of the first to have a direct outlet of his own by water

by building a dock on the lake and a railroad equipped with steam engines and flats. He conducted experiments to improve the existing machinery and make extracting stone cheaper, and other quarry owners reaped the benefits of his labors. His North and Middle Quarries were

in North Amherst and his South Quarry in South Amherst.

In July, 1886, the Cleveland Stone Company was incorporated, succeeding several of the early pioneers at Berea and Amherst, and as the years passed, they continued to absorb quarry land, not only at Amherst and Berea, but Kipton, Elyria, Euclid and outlying points, until **they became the largest producers of sandstone in the world.**

In 1903, John R. Walsh, Chicago banker and large quarry operator in Bedford, Indiana territory, entered the sandstone field in Amherst, purchasing several large tracts or quarry land located about three miles southwest of North Amherst. He organized the Ohio Quarries Co., which opened and developed large quarries and built modern stone sawing mills. Its chief product was named "Buckeye" Gray Sandstone. This company organized the Lorain and Southern Railroad, and a track was constructed connecting their quarries with the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railroad to the north. The Buckeye Quarry is said to be **one of the deepest quarries in the world**—stone has been taken out to a depth of 240 feet. It is 3,090 feet wide, and 1,056 feet long. It is no longer quarried

The Cleveland Stone Co. and the Ohio Quarries Co. were practically the only two concerns quarrying sandstone in Amherst Township during the years 1903-1922. During this period, two other concerns that worked with the stone were Blum and Delbridge Cut Stone Co. and the Amherst Cut Stone Co. Blum and Delbridge moved from Cleveland

