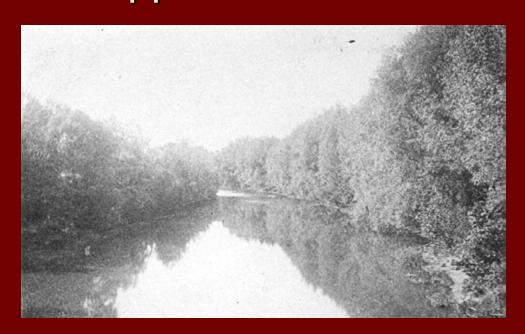# History Highlights

Oxford, Ohio

1810-2010

Native American tribes, including the Miami and Shawnee, traveled through the area until the Treaty of Greenville was signed in 1795.
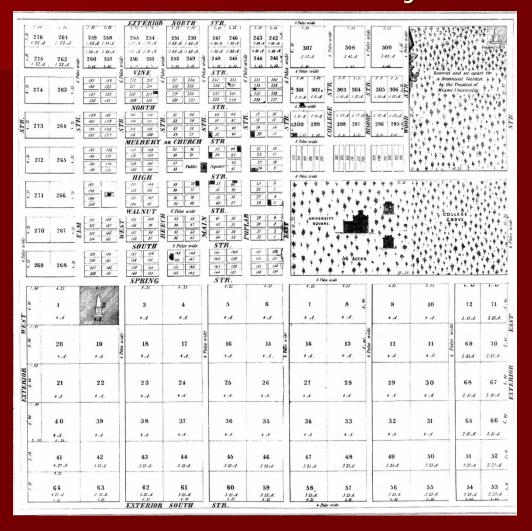

Chief Little Turtle
Miami Tribe

When the Ohio legislature chartered Miami University in 1809, it decided to locate the state's second public university in a wooded township already designated in 1803 to support education.
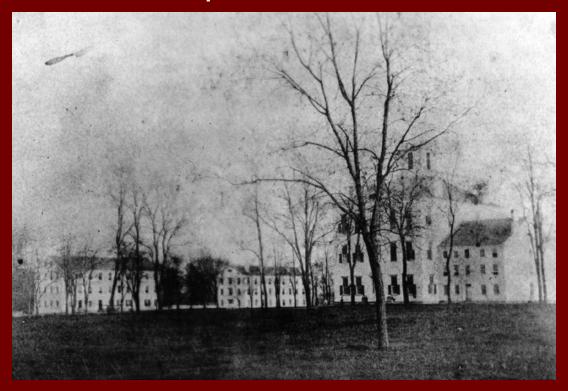

The Creek called "Tallawanda" by Native Americans and named "Four Mile" by General St. Clair's Soldiers

But first there had to be a town in which to place the new university!

So Oxford was laid out in 1810—covering one Mile Square.

Trees were cut, log homes were built, and Miami buildings were constructed in time for college classes to begin in 1824. With a resident population of over 700, the village was incorporated in 1830.

Dormitories and Main Building at Miami

Presumably named for the famous university town in England, Oxford began to attract other institutions of higher learning.

The Oxford Theological Seminary was established in 1838 and remained in town until 1858.
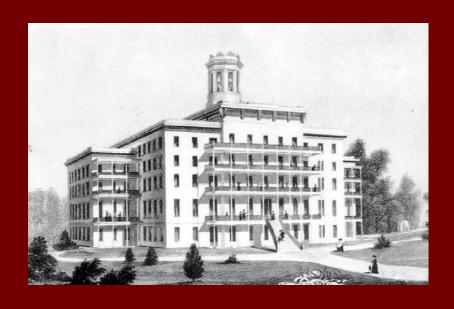

Northeast Corner of Church and Poplar Streets

The Oxford Female Institute was chartered in 1849.

South College Avenue

The Western Female Seminary was chartered in 1853 and opened two years later. Modeled on Mt. Holyoke Seminary in Massachusetts, Western's name was chosen because it was *west* of Mt. Holyoke .

First Building Burned 1860

Second Building Burned 1871

Western's third building, later named Peabody Hall, can still be seen on the east side of town.

Rebuilt After Fire in 1871

The Oxford Female College was chartered in 1854, and the building was named Fisher Hall when it was a Miami dormitory in the 1900s.

Miami's Marcum Conference Center was later built on this site just east of Patterson Avenue.

Oxford's economy continued to be sustained by higher education.

In 1867 Oxford Female Institute and Oxford Female College merged to later become...

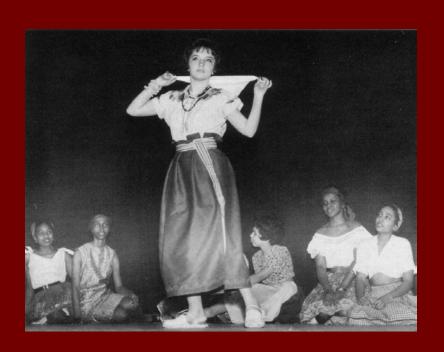# …Oxford College for Women--before closing in 1928.

Today the building is the Oxford Community Arts Center on South College Avenue.

Miami closed for 12 years (1873 – 1885) and leased its campus for use by another school.

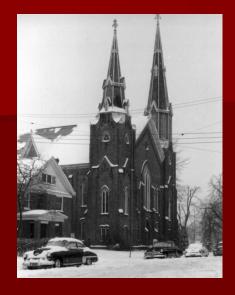Miami Classical and Scientific Training School

The Western Female Seminary became Western College for Women. It brought many international students to Oxford-- before closing in 1974.
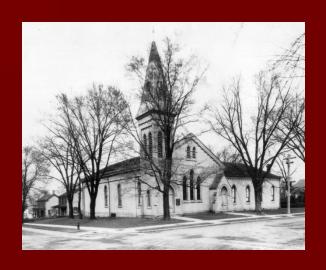
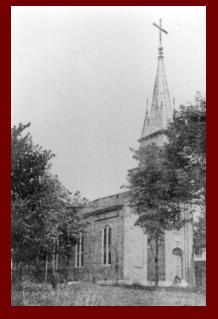# Some of Oxford's Religious Denominations

Houses of worship in the 1800s
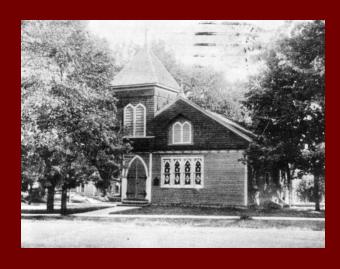
Methodist

Presbyterian

Catholic

Universalist

Baptist
(no picture available)
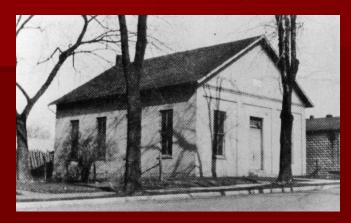
…and in the 1900s
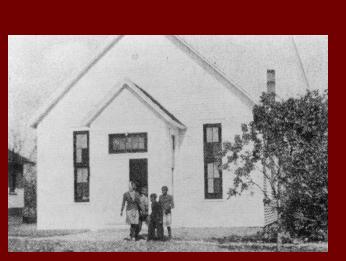
Episcopal

Jewish

Lutheran

Oxford's four historically black churches span both centuries.

A.M.E.

Christian-Disciples of Christ
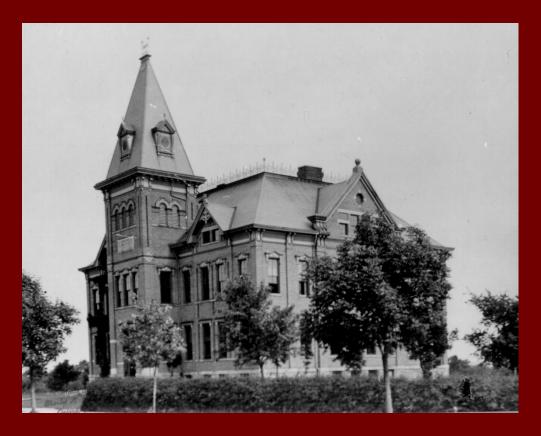

Baptist

Pentecostal

Public education was important to Oxford residents. The first schoolhouse, made of logs, was built in 1811.

By 1853, a new school was built, and high school classes were offered in 1874.
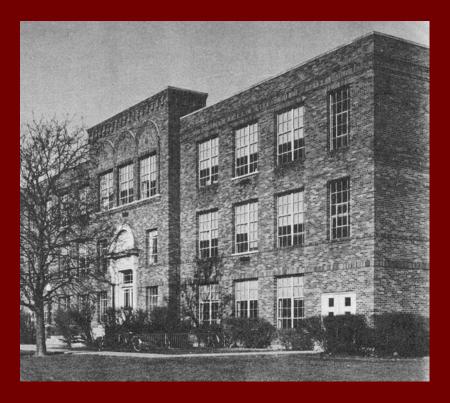

Located at Southeast Corner of West Collins and South Beech Streets

A larger building for Oxford Public School opened in 1886 and was racially integrated soon after.

It stood on West Spring Street until 1952.

Oxford's Stewart High School was built in 1929, and with a later addition, served K-12 until 1956.

Stewart School stood on West Spring Street where Stewart Square Shopping Center is today.

In the mid-1950s Oxford students began attending schools in a consolidated district called Talawanda.
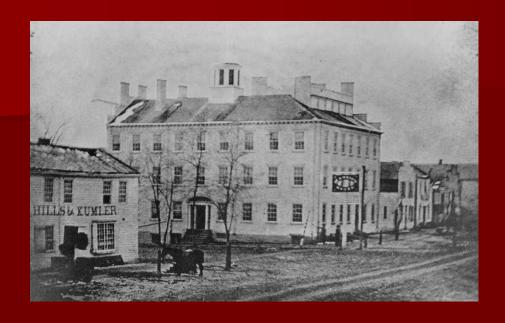

The district now includes four townships and covers a third of Butler County.

Talawanda High School was built in 1956.

West Chestnut Street

Oxford grew and developed around what became known as "Uptown," rather than downtown, because the elevation was higher than the rest of the village.
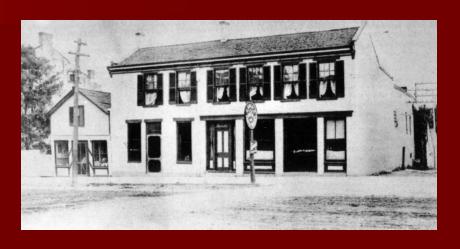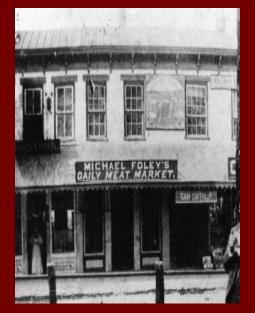
Mansion House Hotel at High and Main

Drug Store at High and East Park Place

Members of different ethnic groups came to Oxford.

An African-American owned barbershop, a German butcher shop and a German bakery were three businesses on East High Street. ⟶
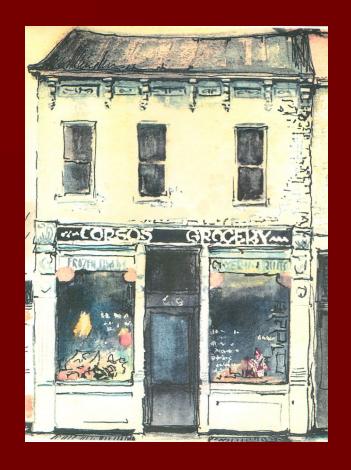

⟵ An Irish immigrant's meat market and an English immigrant's undertaking establishment were on West Park Place.
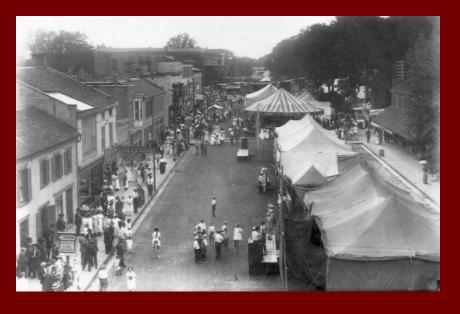
In the early 1900s

Greek immigrants, who later spelled their name Chappars, ran a candy shop, and the Corso family, from Sicily, owned a grocery store on High Street.

Agricultural street fairs were a part of village life in the early 1900s.

Pony Judging Between the Parks

Tents on East High Between Poplar & Main

In the 1930s Oxford had a new post office on West High Street and new municipal building on East High Street.

By the mid-1900s Uptown Oxford had numerous groceries, car dealerships, hardware stores, restaurants, drug stores, banks, and clothing stores.

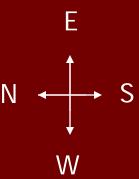
West High Street

East High Street

Later Square D and other businesses developed beyond the Mile Square
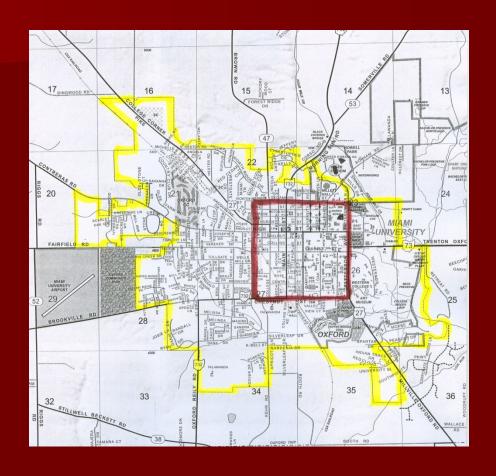

College Corner Pike

New subdivisions were created.

E

N   S

W

"Hill & Hollow," "Wespiser Place," and "Oxford Heights" West of Town

The village became a city in 1971

and continued to grow beyond its original
Mile Square boundaries.

More college students moved off-campus...

...and brought more cars.
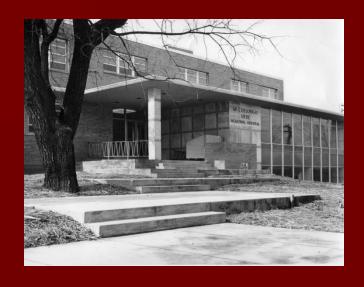
Signs on Student Houses

For a small town, Oxford provided more amenities than most.

Swimming Pool

Hospital

Nearby State Park

Library

University Athletics

National events affected Oxford.

Before and during the Civil War, escaping slaves traveled through the Oxford area on the Underground Railroad.

Some Underground Railroad Sites
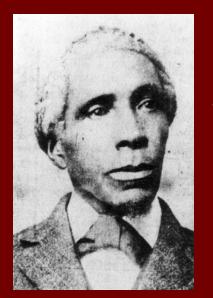
Clough Home, West Walnut Street

Lewis Place, East High Street

Lane Home, *The Pines,* at the end of East High St.
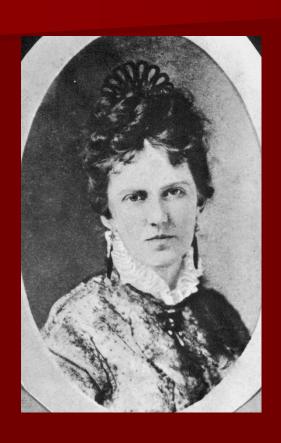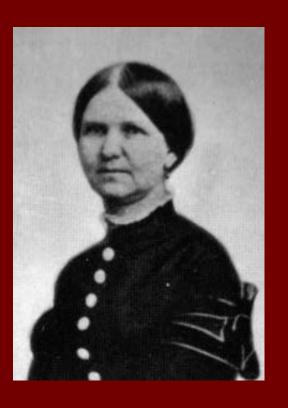
John Jones hid slaves on his Booth Road farm.

Former Oxford residents smuggled and spied for the Confederacy during the Civil War.

Virginia Moon

Moon House
East High St.

Lottie Moon

World War II

Miami University War Training Program:

A Resume of Numbers Trained for Service in World War II

On Campus:

Civilian Pilot Training	570
War Training Service	1,015
Radio - Navy Men	4,314
Coast Guard Men	10
Navy WAVES	1,165
Coast Guard Spars	50
Women Marines	315
Cooks and Bakers	467
V-12, V-5, NROTC	1,847
Cadet Nurses	42
Total	9,795

There was a U.S. Naval Training
School in Oxford.

The Cold War

A Nike Missile Base opened northwest of Oxford, bringing more military families to the area.
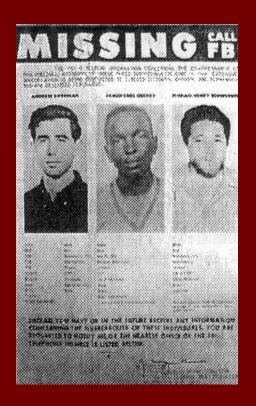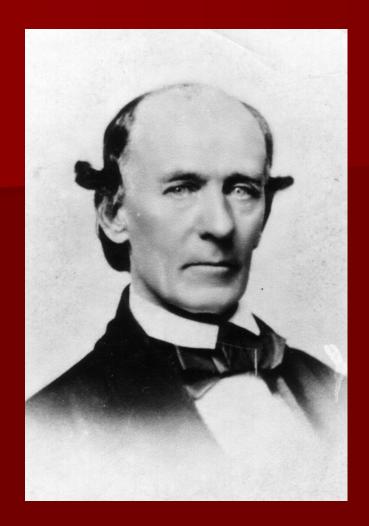
Civil Rights Movement

Civil rights workers trained at Western College for Women during Freedom Summer 1964.
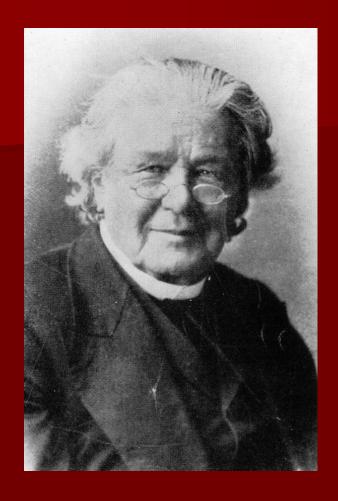
Notable people lived in Oxford.

William H. McGuffey taught at Miami when he began compiling his famous McGuffey Readers, used by generations of American school children.

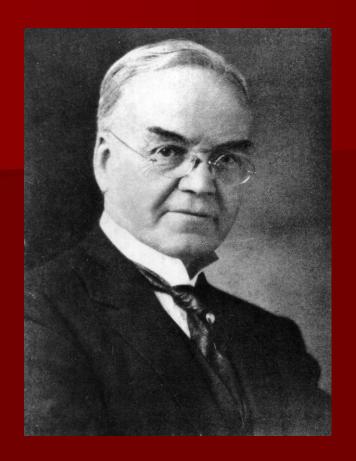His house is still on East Spring Street.

Lorenzo L. Langstroth invented the moveable frame beehive and became known as the "Father of Modern Beekeeping."

His house still stands on Patterson Avenue.

Edgar S. Kelley was the country's first artist-in-residence on a college campus when he composed music at Western College for Women.

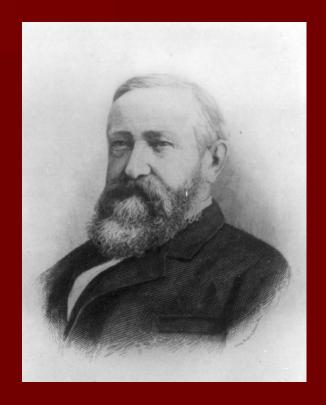His house still stands on the Western campus.

Maurice Rockhold was born in Oxford. As a jazz musician who used the stage name Maurice Rocco, he played with Noble Sissle and appeared in Hollywood movies in the 1930s and '40s.

Oxford's Most Famous Couple

Caroline Scott Harrison was born in Oxford and later became First Lady.

Benjamin Harrison lived in Oxford when he went to Miami. He was later elected 23rd president of the United States.

Photographs by

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