

The village of Cleveland was incorporated on December 23, 1814; one of its notable early citizens was [Lorenzo Carter](#), who made Cleveland a solid source for trade. He also built a large log cabin for newcomers to settle in. The spelling of the city's name was changed in 1831 by *The Cleveland Advertiser*, an early city newspaper. In order for the name to fit on the newspaper's [masthead](#), the first "a" was dropped, reducing the city's name to *Cleveland*.^[6] The new spelling stuck, and long outlasted the *Advertiser* itself.

View in Main St., Cleveland, Ohio (circa 1856-1860) by [John Warner Barber](#). Though not initially apparent — the city was adjacent to swampy lowlands and the harsh winters did not encourage settlement — the location proved providential. The city began to grow rapidly after the completion of the [Ohio and Erie Canal](#) in 1832, turning the city into a key link between the [Ohio River](#) and the [Great Lakes](#), particularly once the city [railroad](#) links were added. In 1822, a young, charismatic lawyer and politician, [John W. Willey](#) came to Cleveland and quickly established himself within the city. He became a popular figure in local politics and wrote the [Cleveland Municipal Charter](#) as well as several of the city's original laws and ordinances. Willey was then elected the first mayor of Cleveland for two terms.

Possibly the oldest photograph of Public Square from 1857
With [James Clark](#) and several others, Willey bought a section of the [Flats](#) with plans to transform it into Cleveland Centre, a business and residential district. Willey then bought a piece of land from the southeast section of [Ohio City](#) across from Columbus Street in Cleveland. Willey named the new territory [Willeyville](#) and subsequently built a bridge connecting the two sections, calling it [Columbus Street Bridge](#). The bridge siphoned off commercial traffic to Cleveland before it could reach Ohio City's mercantile district. This action aggravated citizens of Ohio City, and brought to the surface a fierce rivalry between the small city and Cleveland. Ohio City citizens rallied for "Two Bridges or None!". In October 1836, they violently sought to stop the use of Cleveland's new bridge by bombing the western end of it. However, the explosion caused little damage. A group of 1,000 Ohio City volunteers began digging deep ditches at

both ends of the bridge, making it impossible for horses and wagons to reach the structure. Some citizens were still unsatisfied with this and took to using guns, crowbars, axes, and other weapons to finish off the bridge. They were then met by Willey and a group of armed Cleveland militiamen. A battle ensued on the bridge, with two men seriously wounded before the county sheriff arrived to end the violence and arrest many. A court injunction prevented further confrontations which may have led to an all out war between Cleveland and Ohio City. The two cities eventually made amends and Ohio City was annexed by Cleveland in 1854.

Map of Territorial Changes to the City of Cleveland

The Columbus bridge became an important asset for Cleveland, permitting produce to enter the city from the surrounding hinterlands and build the city's mercantile base. This was greatly increased with the coming of the Ohio & Erie Canal, which realized the city's potential as a major Great Lakes port. Later, as a halfway point for [iron ore](#) coming from [Minnesota](#) across the [Great Lakes](#) and for [coal](#) and other raw materials coming by rail from the south, the site flourished. Cleveland became one of the major [manufacturing](#) and population centers of the [United States](#), and was home to numerous major [steel](#) firms.