

Elyria-Lorain Development

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Elyria and Lorain were dramatically transformed between 1890 and 1910. Both entered the 1890's as small, predominantly, rural villages populated by American born immigrants of English and German ancestry who had immigrated into the area from New England, New York State, and Pennsylvania. Both entered the second decade of the twentieth century as industrial cities with populations swelled by thousands of foreign-born immigrants from eastern and southern Europe and Russia.

Similarly, for both communities the transformation was in large part due to the energy and vision of a single individual. In Elyria he was home-grown; Arthur L. Garford was born, raised and educated in Elyria. In Lorain he was an outsider; Tom L. Johnson had been born in Kentucky, came to Cleveland for its opportunities in street railways, and would have a successful business and political career.