

## **ABSTRACT**

**THESIS:** Institutionalized, but Not Forgotten: An Ethnohistorical and Archaeological Study of the Wood County Infirmary, Ohio

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Infirmaries were a place for those that had nowhere to go and no one to care for them. Today, infirmaries are an often-overlooked part of a county's past infrastructure that housed a marginalized population. This thesis used an infirmary in northwest Ohio as a case study to show a correlation between the life cycle of an infirmary and the quality of care for the residents. Through my research, I found that periods of increased building reflect a developing infirmary, when building stops and modernization begins the infirmary has stabilized, and when building ceases and the land stops being utilized the infirmary is declining. The quality of care and type of care (access to shelter, food, medical care, clothing, technology, leisure, and autonomy) were linked to building and infrastructure trends. When the infirmary was developing, the quality of care was poor at times and ever changing, when the institution stabilized the care stabilized, and the decline of the infirmary led to a change in the type and quality of care.