

An impressionistic painting of a landscape. In the foreground, a river flows through a rocky bank. Two tall, thin trees with sparse green leaves stand on either side of a grassy clearing. In the middle ground, two people are engaged in an activity: one stands next to a horse, while the other is kneeling and looking at a map or document on the ground. A tripod-mounted instrument is also visible. In the background, a river flows through a valley with rolling green hills under a blue sky with soft, white clouds. The overall style is painterly and atmospheric.

# THE OFFICIAL OHIO LANDS BOOK

Written by  
Dr. George W. Knepper

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**OHIO LANDS BOOK**

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**Dr. George W. Knepper**

Cover art by Annette Salrin

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## **OHIO LANDS**

Ohio occupies a unique place in the development of the public lands of the United States. No other state experienced so many different systems of original land survey. As the first state formed out of the public domain, Ohio was the social laboratory in which Congress worked out not only the basic Federal Rectangular Survey System, but also first applied the basic elements for moving a portion of the public domain from wilderness to statehood. Central to the statehood-making process was the rational system of land division worked out in Ohio, and it is the story of that development that we turn to in these pages. In any story about the land, it is important to know the people who inhabited it, and so we turn first to Ohio's earliest inhabitants.

### **THE FIRST ARRIVALS ON OHIO LAND**

#### **Prehistoric Indians**

Ohio's first known inhabitants—Paleo-Indian and Archaic People—arrived more than 12,000 years ago as the great Wisconsinan ice sheet was retreating northward. The Archaic People lived in rock shelters, although recent findings suggest they may have erected primitive structures. They were nomadic hunter-gatherers. They and their successors, for thousands of years, left few cultural remnants beyond stone “points.” The arrival of the Adena people, about 1,000 B.C., marked a higher level of cultural sophistication. The Adena had a modestly diverse agriculture, built substantial dwellings, traded widely, and made decorative and ceremonial objects. They erected thousands of small burial mounds and numerous effigy mounds across much of Ohio.

The Hopewell People lived primarily in the southern part of Ohio starting about 100 B.C. and continuing through several centuries. Their presence overlapped—to some extent—that of the Adena. The Hopewell had more sophisticated agriculture, trade, and artisanship than the Adena. They built impressive, geometrically shaped mounds, some apparently aligned to heavenly phenomena. About 300 A.D., the Hopewell disappeared: no one knows why. They were succeeded by other prehistoric Indians. The last of the prehistoric groups—the Fort Ancients in the south, and the Whittlesey Focus people in the north—fade from view about the end of the seventeenth century.

## Historic Indians of Ohio

The historic Indians of Ohio—those we know about from written records—moved into Ohio in the early and mid-eighteenth century. This is in contrast with neighboring states where historic tribes were established earlier. The late arrival in Ohio lands is usually attributed to the fierce Iroquois, who swept westward from their New York villages to devastate lands from Ohio westward. The Iroquois claimed sovereignty over the conquered lands and other tribes were not strong enough to challenge them. Therefore, for nearly three-quarters of a century, the Ohio lands were largely uninhabited, creating a social vacuum that ultimately would be filled after 1730 by tribes seeking new hunting grounds. Of the many historic Indian tribes that had some presence in Ohio, only six—Miami, Wyandot, Mingo, Delaware, Shawnee, and Ottawa—maintained more or less permanent villages. From their post in Detroit, French traders and soldiers claimed hegemony over these tribes during their earliest years in Ohio.

The Miami, whose home villages centered around modern Ft. Wayne, Indiana, established Pickawillany on the headwaters of the Great Miami to encourage British traders. This challenge to French hegemony resulted in the French destroying Pickawillany in 1752, but the Miami remained important in Ohio Indian affairs for another half century. The Wyandots, a branch of the Huron people, moved first into Ohio in 1739 and, after many wanderings, settled primarily in the Sandusky River Valley and in central Ohio. Ottawas migrated from the overpopulated Detroit region to settle along the fringes of northwestern Ohio's Great Black Swamp.

The Mingo (a name applied to Iroquois, mainly Senecas, who had drifted westward from their home fires in New York), built villages in eastern and central Ohio. Delaware (Lenni Lenape), driven from Pennsylvania by both white and Indian pressure, located on or near the Tuscarawas-Muskingum waterway. A special group of Delaware—Christian converts of Moravian missionaries—had short-lived villages at Schoenbrunn, Gnadenhutten, Salem, Goshen, and Lichtenau in the Tuscarawas-Muskingum valley. Shawnees also left Pennsylvania in the mid-eighteenth century, and reinforced by fellow tribesmen from other regions, built villages in the Scioto Valley and later in the upper reaches of the Great Miami.

Before arriving in Ohio, each tribe had been acculturated in some degree through contacts with the French, British, or colonial Americans. Though France had long claimed the Ohio country, they erected no posts in what is now the state of Ohio. Ohio lacks the French element in its early history that is common to states to its north and west. Great Britain defeated France in the French and Indian War (1754-63 in North America), took over some French posts in the interior, built some of its own, and dominated the Ohio country until the close of the American



*Moravian missionaries founded Schoenbrunn ("beautiful spring") in 1772 as a mission to the Delaware Indians. The settlement grew to include sixty dwellings and more than 300 inhabitants who drew up Ohio's first civil code and built its first Christian church and schoolhouse.*



*"The Power of the Gospel" by Christian Schuessle depicts David Zeisberger, Moravian missionary preaching to the Delaware Indians.*

Revolution, largely by supplying the Ohio Indians who were a vital link in the lucrative fur trade.

After assuming control over trans-Appalachian lands, Great Britain tried to maintain an Indian reserve, especially in the region north and west of the Ohio River. Back country settlers from Pennsylvania to the Carolinas could not be restrained, however. Led by venturesome men like Daniel Boone, they invaded the Kentucky hunting grounds of the Shawnee, while other colonials occupied home sites near the Ohio River in western Virginia. Inevitably aggressive frontiersmen trespassed on Ohio lands, and eastern land companies sent scouts into Indian lands seeking favorable locations in which to plant commercial ventures. In 1774, the Shawnee and their Indian allies, led by the Shawnee chief Cornstalk (Holokeska), fought an American colonial army to a draw in the Battle of Point Pleasant, where the Kanawha joins the Ohio in modern West Virginia. This was the only major engagement of Dunmore's War, a western prelude to the forthcoming American Revolution.

From 1777 to 1782, while colonials battled in the east and south for their independence from Britain, a bitter struggle was waged in Ohio between western settlers and British-led Ohio Indians supplied from Detroit. This vicious contest is but poorly known, yet the conflict helped persuade Britain to cede the trans-Appalachian west to the new United States of America in the Peace of Paris (1783). Now Ohio Indians would have to deal with aggressive American settlers and adventurers unrestrained by British governmental policies. The British lost the war, but they had not lost their desire to retain the profitable fur trade. To that end, they maintained their post at Detroit (illegally since it was in U.S. territory) from which they supplied Ohio Indians and encouraged them to resist American penetration into their hunting grounds.

Administering its new western lands was a priority of the American government. First, Indian claims to that land had to be cleared, so U.S. commissioners met representatives of several Indian tribes at Ft. McIntosh in 1784-85 and concluded a treaty that called for restricting most Ohio Indians in a reserve between the Cuyahoga and Maumee rivers. Most Ohio lands would now be open for settlement. The United States considered this a valid treaty and proceeded on that assumption.



The Ohio Indians, especially the Shawnee, refused to abide by a treaty negotiated under duress by minor tribal chiefs who lacked authority to speak for their people and for other tribes. The Shawnee were even coerced into yet another irregular treaty at Ft. Finney (1786). Further U.S. efforts did nothing to alleviate the Indians' sense of betrayal, nor their determination to resist with force any attempt by settlers to penetrate their Ohio lands.

While unsettled conditions prevailed, settlers began moving into Ohio lands. These folk, and others exposed along the frontier, were harassed by Indian raiding parties. When it appeared the Ohio Indians and their allies were coming together in a loose confederation to oppose settlement, the federal government reacted. In 1790, Maj. Gen. Josiah Harmar was sent to punish the Indian confederacy. His ill-trained army suffered humiliating defeats by Indian warriors, led by the Miami war chief Little Turtle (Meshekinoquah) in the vicinity of modern Ft. Wayne, Indiana. The next year, the governor of the Northwest Territory, Maj. Gen. Arthur St. Clair, trying to succeed where Harmar had failed, led his army into the worst defeat ever inflicted upon the U.S. Army by Indian warriors, at a place later called Ft. Recovery. Then, in



*Josiah Harmar  
(1753-1813)*



*Wayne's men at Fallen Timbers -  
The original painting, "Charge of  
the Dragoons at Fallen Timbers?"  
by R.F. Zogbaum, ca. 1895. It is part of  
the Ohio Historical Society's art collection.*



*Monument commemorating  
the Battle of Fallen Timbers  
in 1794. The monument is  
located southwest of Maumee,  
Lucas County, Ohio.  
The photograph was taken  
ca. 1940-1949.*

1794, Maj. Gen. “Mad” Anthony Wayne led well-trained troops to a convincing victory at Fallen Timbers. The Ohio Indians, recognizing their inability to stop Wayne, met with him to sign the Treaty of Greenville (1795), a treaty they honored. It called for a line to separate Indian country from lands now open to settlement. The Greenville Treaty Line confined the Indians to Ohio’s northwest quadrant and beyond to the north and west. The Line was laid on the ground by surveyors in 1797, and it became a determining feature in the survey and description of Ohio lands.



*General “Mad” Anthony Wayne*



*Fort Recovery, built in 1792, on the site of Major General Arthur St. Clair’s defeat by an Indian confederacy. Fort Recovery is in Mercer County, Ohio. The photograph of the reconstructed fort was taken ca. 1940-1949.*



*Photographic reproduction of a drawing of Fort Greenville, which was the headquarters of General Anthony Wayne in his 1793-1796 campaign against the Confederated Indian Tribes*

## **CONGRESS CREATES THE PUBLIC DOMAIN**

The War for Independence was still in progress on October 10, 1780, when the Continental Congress resolved that western lands it might acquire by treaty with Great Britain or by cession from the states “shall be disposed of for the common benefit of the United States.” Republican states were to be formed in the ceded land, and they would enjoy “the same rights of sovereignty, freedom, and independence, as the other states.” Great Britain surrendered her claim to western lands in the Peace of Paris (1783), but several states had claims based on their colonial charters. Both Virginia and Connecticut had western land claims that would affect the future state of Ohio. In 1781, Virginia offered her western lands to Congress, which accepted the offer three years later. Connecticut’s cession was accepted in 1786. These state land cessions, plus those of Massachusetts, paved the way for Congress to establish, in the region north and west of the Ohio River, the first public domain.

The legal matters of ownership having been settled, Congress was still faced with the reality of Indian occupancy. The Treaty of Ft. McIntosh (1785) was the first of many treaties between the United States and various Ohio Indian tribes, each treaty releasing additional Indian land to the control of the new nation. Even as Congress sought access to Indian-occupied land, American settlers were crossing the Ohio, encroaching on Indian land, carving out small clearings in the wilderness, providing liquor to Indian peoples, and often cheating them in trade. These squatters had no legal right to the land they occupied, but most were tough, independent, self-righteous, and resisted authority, so it proved impossible to remove them. Easterners sometimes referred to them as “banditti,” a favorite put-down of the time.

In 1783, Congress ordered Josiah Harmar, commander of the tiny United States army stationed at Pittsburgh, to roust these people from their new homes and send them back across the Ohio. The army had little success, even though resorting to the burning of cabins and fields. Once the army had left and the ashes cooled, these determined folk rebuilt on Ohio soil. Ft. Harmar, erected in 1785 at the confluence of the Muskingum and the Ohio, was designed to stem the flow of squatters, but it, too, proved ineffective.

It was with a sense of urgency, therefore, that Congress considered how best to develop western lands. It was imperative that the West be governable, preferably by responsible people amenable to legal norms. Congress' first attempt was to enact the Ordinance of 1784. Thomas Jefferson was the moving spirit behind this plan to create ten new states north of the Ohio. He proposed the states be laid out in rectangular form with no consideration of natural boundaries. Before the ordinance was implemented, however, Congress came forward with a superior plan which initiated many features of a federal land policy.

## Main Treaties Ceding Indian Lands in Ohio

<u>No.</u>	<u>Concluded</u>	<u>Place of Treaty</u>	<u>Acres Ceded</u>	<u>Tribes Concerned</u>
1	Aug. 3, 1795	Greenville, Ohio	16,930,417	Eleven northwestern tribes.
2	July 4, 1805	Fort Industry, Ohio	2,726,812	Ottawas, Wyandots, Chippewas, Pottawatamies, Shawnees, Delawares.
3	Nov. 17, 1807	Detroit, Michigan	345,600	Chippewas, Ottawas, Wyandots, Pottawatamies.
4	Nov. 25, 1808	Brownstown, Michigan	Two Roads	Same tribes as at Detroit,
5	Sept. 29, 1817	Fort Meigs, Ohio (Maumee Rapids)	4,554,459	Same as at Fort Industry, and Senecas in addition.
6	Sept. 17, 1818	St. Marys, Ohio		Ottawas, Shawnees, Wyandots, and Senecas.
7	Oct. 2, 1818	St. Marys, Ohio		Was.
8	Oct. 6, 1818	St. Marys, Ohio	297,600	Miamis.

## **THE LAND ORDINANCE OF 1785**

On May 20, 1785, Congress enacted a land ordinance which became one of the most significant pieces of legislation ever passed by the federal legislature. The Land Ordinance of 1785 created rules for the orderly survey, sale, and settlement of the public domain, with settlement to occur only on surveyed land. Land ceded by the states and purchased from the Indians was to be divided into six mile square townships created by lines running north and south intersecting at right angles with east-west lines. Townships were to be arranged in north-south rows called ranges. Most townships were to be subdivided into 36 one mile square sections. Each range, township, and section was to be numbered in a regular, consistent sequence.

The first north-south line was to be the western boundary of Pennsylvania, and the first east-west line (called the Geographer's Line or Base Line) was to begin where the Pennsylvania boundary touched the north bank of the Ohio River. The Geographer's Line was to extend westward through "the whole territory" which at that time was meant to include lands lying between the Ohio River and Lake Erie. The first actual survey extended 42 miles westward, but it did not proceed north of the Geographer's Line.

The Geographer of the United States was to make a return of the survey after each seven ranges had been completed, at which time the Secretary of War was to choose by lot one seventh of the land to compensate veterans of the Continental army. The rest of the lots were to be sold at auction in New York, then the nation's capital. A section (one square mile or 640 acres) was the smallest unit for sale, and some townships were to be sold in their entirety. The minimum price was one dollar per acre to be paid in cash or in land warrants of equivalent value. No land would be sold on credit.

The Ordinance's other provisions had long term consequences. In each township, section number 16 was to be reserved for the support of public schools. (This was the first federal aid to education, predating the Constitution itself.) Sections number 8, 11, 26, and 29 in every township were reserved for future sale by the federal government when, it was hoped, they would bring higher prices because of developed land around them. Congress also reserved one third part of all gold, silver, lead, and copper mines to its own use, a bit of wishful thinking as regards Ohio lands.

## THE SEVEN RANGES

On the last day of September, 1785, Thomas Hutchins, Geographer of the United States, and his crew began the first survey of federal land—the Seven Ranges in eastern Ohio. As directed in the Ordinance, they pushed the Geographer’s Line 42 miles westward from Pennsylvania. Every six miles they ran lines south to the Ohio River, and within these ranges ran township lines. Using the 1785 numbering system, ranges were numbered westward from the Pennsylvania border, townships were numbered south to north within each range, and sections were numbered in sequence starting with section 1 located in the township’s southeast corner, then running south to north in each tier until section 36 was reached in the northwest corner. As directed in the Ordinance, section 16 was reserved for the support of public schools, and sections 8, 11, 26, and 29 set aside for future sale.

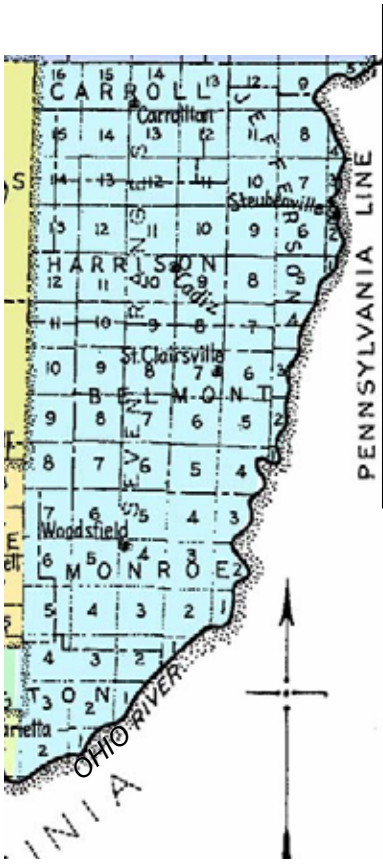
In the Land Act of 1796, Congress changed the section numbering system. Sections were now to be numbered so that section 1 was located in the township’s northeast corner. Numbers would then progress west and east alternately through the township “with progressive numbers” until number 36 was reached in the township’s southeast corner. This system of section numbering

6	5	4	3	2	1
7	8	9	10	11	12
18	17	16	15	14	13
19	20	21	22	23	24
30	29	28	27	26	25
31	32	33	34	35	36

Sections numbered  
After law of 1796

36	30	24	18	12	6
35	29	23	17	11	5
34	28	22	16	10	4
33	27	21	15	9	3
32	26	20	14	8	2
31	25	19	13	7	1

Sections numbered  
Before law of 1796



*The Seven Ranges*



The problem of keeping townships six miles square when the earth is curved was solved in 1804 by Jared Mansfield, Surveyor General of the Northwest Territory. Mansfield established an arbitrary meridian and an intersecting east-west base line to survey the 2nd Principal Meridian in southern Indiana. Ranges of townships were progressively numbered eastward and westward from the meridian, while townships within each range were numbered northward and southward from the base line. This use of the principal meridian and base line can be found in Northwest Ohio where the Ohio-Indiana line constitutes the first Principal Meridian and the 41st degree of latitude is the base line. There are 34 meridians in the United States—some designated by number, but most by names.

became standard thereafter in all original federal surveys.<sup>1</sup> Range, Township, Section, Part of Section, and the original land survey name have become the basic legal property description for most of the land originally surveyed by the United States government in the 29 public land states. The original field notes and plats of the United States government land surveys in Ohio have been deposited by the Auditor of State into the State of Ohio Archives at the Ohio Historical Center in Columbus.

## Map of the Northwest Territory



The Ordinance of July 13, 1787 provided  
*"...there shall be formed in said territory, not less than three nor more than five states..."*

The original boundaries were defined as:  
 Eastern State (numbers 1,2,3,4); Middle State (numbers 5,6,7,8,9) and  
 Western State (numbers 10,11,12,13,14,15). These divisions are marked by broken lines on the map.

Congress later decided to divide the Northwest Territory into the states of:  
 Ohio (1803), Indiana (1816), Illinois (1818), Michigan (1837), Wisconsin (1848), and  
 Minnesota (1858). These states are shown by the heavy solid lines on the map.

*Map Source: Biographical Directory - General Assembly of Ohio 1929-1930: Columbus, 1931.*

- 1) Numbering townships from the Ohio River, and sections according to the 1796 standard, was used in these surveys: East of the Scioto River and West of the Ohio Company Purchase; North of the Seven Ranges between the United States Military District and Connecticut Western Reserve; East of the 1st Meridian–West of the Great Miami River and East of the 1st Principal Meridian.



## THE NORTHWEST ORDINANCE

As land sales progressed in the Seven Ranges, and as Congress permitted Virginia and Connecticut to develop their reserves in Ohio, Congress realized it was time to establish an orderly system of government north and west of the Ohio River in what was now designated the Northwest Territory.<sup>2</sup> To this end, Congress enacted the Northwest Ordinance, a remarkable document outlining how a wilderness area would progress through a three-step process to ultimate statehood. Both northern and southern influences were present in the document. Some of Thomas Jefferson's ideas from the Ordinance of 1784 were melded with sections composed in large part by Nathan Dane of Massachusetts.

In the first stage of development, the Northwest Territory was to be governed by a governor, a secretary and three judges, each appointed by Congress. The governor and any two of the judges, acting together, could select laws from the codes of the original states. The second stage began when 5,000 free adult males resided in the Territory. Then eligible voters would elect a legislature, but the governor retained an absolute veto over its acts. The third stage began when 60,000 inhabitants were resident in any of the three proposed divisions of the Territory—the eastern, central, or western “states.” At that point the territorial legislature could petition Congress for statehood. At least three states, but no more than five, were to be erected in the Territory. Each new state was to be equal to the existing states “in all respects whatsoever.” A “bill of rights” guaranteed that basic civil rights would be protected. Trial by jury was guaranteed, as was freedom of religion. Public schooling was to be encouraged. Involuntary servitude—slavery—was prohibited except in punishment for crimes for which a person had been duly convicted.

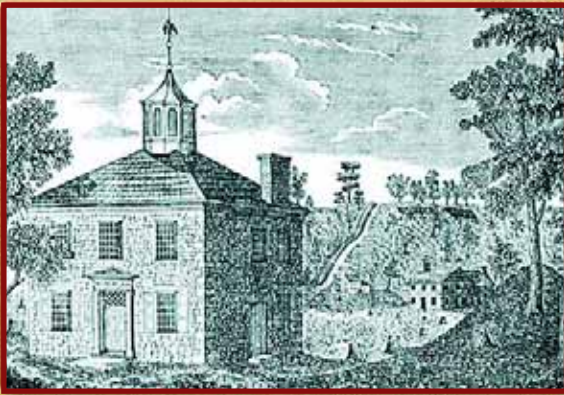
The Northwest Ordinance contained practical steps for achieving statehood, assuring that there would be no second-class states created in the Territory. It enumerated civil rights essential to a free people. There had never been anything like it in the history of the world. It is little wonder that scholars rank the Northwest Ordinance with the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution as a document fundamental to the emergence of the American republic.

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2) The Northwest Territory ultimately embraced Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin and the northeast corner of Minnesota.

## STATEHOOD FOR OHIO

Ohio comprised most of the eastern division, or “state,” in the Northwest Territory, and was the first part of the public domain to emerge into statehood. In October, 1787, the Confederation Congress selected its own president, Arthur St. Clair, to be governor of the Northwest Territory. Winthrop Sargent was appointed secretary, and three judges were appointed. In the summer of 1788, Governor St. Clair arrived at Marietta, the first authorized settlement in the Northwest Territory, but he soon moved on westward to Losantiville, a struggling settlement that St. Clair renamed Cincinnati. Here he



*Photographic reproduction of an engraving of the Chillicothe Courthouse, 1801. The engraving was published in a periodical, "American Pioneer," volume 1, number 6 in June 1842.*



*View of Front Street in Marietta, Ohio. Shows Thomas Wells and Co. and the News Depot, ca. 1850-1859.*

was more centrally located to administer his sprawling charge. From the beginning, St. Clair faced opposition from individualistic settlers who chafed under appointed rule, and who set out to expedite the state-making process. They rushed the count that found the 5,000 free adult males necessary to elect a legislature. The newly elected legislature chafed under the governor's veto power, and again hastened the count to establish the 60,000 inhabitants required before the territorial legislature could petition

Congress for statehood. In their effort to hasten the state-making process, these leaders in the Northwest Territory found allies in President Thomas Jefferson and the U.S. Congress.

On April 30, 1802, Congress enacted the Enabling Act whose preamble read, "That the inhabitants of the eastern division of the territory northwest of the river Ohio, be, and they are hereby, authorized to form for themselves a constitution and State government, and to assume such name as they shall deem proper, and the said State, when formed, shall be admitted into the Union upon the same footing with the original States in all respects whatsoever."

Delegates chosen in the eastern division met in a constitutional convention in November, 1802 held in Chillicothe, where they drafted a constitution for the State of Ohio. Both houses of Congress quickly accepted this constitution and forwarded their approval to President Jefferson, who signed the bill creating Ohio on February 19, 1803. The language of the bill seems plain enough; Ohio was a State as of that date. But a host of legalisms muddled the

water to the extent that Ohio's official birth date was ultimately set by the Ohio General Assembly as March 1, 1803, the day the new legislature met for the first time.



*Arthur St. Clair  
Governor of the  
Northwest Territory.*



*Territorial government is inaugurated, 1788.*



*The settlement at "the point," Marietta, ca. 1790*

Critics charge that Ohio was not properly admitted to the Union because Congress passed no final joint resolution specifically admitting Ohio. However, both houses of Congress did promptly seat Ohio's two senators and lone representative without any caveat about their legality. One hundred and fifty years later, during celebration of the State's sesquicentennial, Congress passed such a resolution (one would hope tongue in cheek) and submitted it to President Dwight D. Eisenhower who signed it, thus making Ohio legitimate, retroactive to 1803.

Ohio was the first state carved out of the public domain, and therefore the first to be fashioned by Congress. As we shall see, it was in Ohio that



*Above: An artist's drawing of the Capitol Building in Chillicothe when it was Ohio's first capital city 1803-1810.*



*Reproduction of a photograph depicting the building that served as Ohio's capital building in Zanesville. Zanesville was the second capital of Ohio from 1810-1812.*

Congress worked out its ultimate system of survey—the Federal Rectangular Survey System. Federal aid to public schooling was pioneered in Ohio, and slavery was banned in Ohio as it had been in the Northwest Territory. Certainly no other state has so good a claim as Ohio to be the model for western development. It is a proud heritage.

## GETTING STARTED AS A STATE

In 1803, the new State of Ohio was largely a wilderness, and some areas would remain so until after the Civil War. Only Cincinnati and a half dozen small communities had much of a presence among its 60,000 plus residents. On January 11, 1803, Edward Tiffin of Chillicothe was elected governor, but did not assume office until March. Tiffin had been a leading proponent of statehood as had many of his influential townsmen, so it was reasonable that Chillicothe became Ohio's first capital city. It retained that honor until 1810 when Zanesville wooed away state government by offering a splendid new building for its use. Two years later, Chillicothe provided improved facilities and state government moved back to that town. It was clear, however, that a more central location would better serve a growing state. In 1816, therefore, the legislature moved the seat of government to the raw new town of Columbus, where it has since remained.<sup>3</sup>



*Photographic reproduction of an engraving of the first state buildings in Columbus, Ohio, including the United States Courthouse, Public Offices and the Old State House, ca. 1814 - 1816.*

3) The State of Ohio Archives at the Ohio Historical Center has the original deed to the ten acre State House grounds.

## Boundaries of the New State

The Constitution of 1802 defined Ohio's boundaries, each portion of which would be challenged by a neighboring state throughout the nineteenth, and well into the twentieth century. The boundary with Pennsylvania, originally completed in 1785-86 by Thomas Hutchins, was twice resurveyed in the nineteenth century before both Ohio and Pennsylvania were satisfied. All the water of the Ohio River along Ohio's border belonged to the earlier established states of Virginia (after 1863, West Virginia) and Kentucky. Ohio sought to have the state line run through the middle of the Ohio River, but it lost every legal effort to secure half of that stream. Meanwhile, damming of the river changed its configuration in the twentieth century, and ultimately federal courts ruled that waters lying beyond the original river shoreline on the Ohio side belonged to Ohio. Ohio's border with Indiana was surveyed erratically and proved to be inaccurate. Though some corrections were made in the line, both states agreed to leave the boundary essentially as it was. Ohio's northern border with Michigan has a dramatic history outlined on page 46. Once the line was finally agreed upon and marked on the land, there remained controversy over the question of why Ohio's boundary, from its eastern land terminus, should go off northeasterly to the Canadian border instead of proceeding as a simple extension of the line marked out on land. Late in the twentieth century, federal courts agreed that Ohio should retain the disputed portion of Lake Erie.

In the Enabling Act of 1802, federal lands lying within the boundaries of the new state would remain under federal control. When such land was sold, three-fifths of the money received by the federal government was to go to Ohio to be used in constructing roads within the state. The other two fifths was to be used by the federal government to build roads to the Ohio boundary. In return, Ohio pledged not to tax federal lands within the state for a five year period. Once federal land was purchased, of course, the new owner had to pay state taxes on his land.



*Edward Tiffin was chosen speaker of the territorial house of representatives. He would go on to become a Democratic-Republican governor of Ohio from 1803 until 1807.*

## PRIVATELY CONDUCTED ORIGINAL SURVEYS

Two major sections of Ohio—the Virginia Military District and the Connecticut Western Reserve—were surveyed privately, the Virginia Military District under Virginia custom (i.e., indiscriminate claim and metes and bounds survey), and the Western Reserve in a rectangular pattern chosen by the Connecticut Land Company. These private surveys were underway while Congress was experimenting with the federal survey system, seeking to create a uniform system for the public domain. We will first examine the two private original surveys, and then follow the evolution of the federal original survey system.

### Virginia Military District

Virginia ceded most of her western lands to Congress in 1781, and Congress accepted her offer in 1784, including the reserving of approximately 4,204,800 acres between the Scioto River to the east and the Little Miami River to the west. On the map the area appears as a misshapen triangle with its base on the Ohio River from which it extends northward some 141 miles. Virginia intended to use this land to satisfy state military bounty warrants issued as compensation to her veterans of the American Revolution.



Virginia Military District, comprising all or part of 23 counties, is the only Ohio land not originally surveyed on the rectangular pattern. Virginia custom was used.

Indiscriminate claims were defined by metes and bounds surveys. More than 16,125 such surveys were made in the District. The result

was a patchwork of land holdings that relied upon natural markers—trees, piles of rocks, etc.—for corner monuments.



As markers changed, disappeared, or were disputed, endless confusion resulted, and the Virginia Military District is said to have experienced more litigation over land claims than all the rest of Ohio put together.

Virginia military bounties varied in size from the 100 acres due to a private, to the 15,000 acres that could be claimed by a Major General. The amount increased if the veteran had served more than six years. The heirs of a man killed in service were eligible for his bounty. All told, about 6,146,950 acres in Ohio and Kentucky<sup>4</sup> were issued under Virginia land warrants to veterans and their heirs. There was a brisk trade in land warrants since veterans or their heirs could sell them, usually to speculators at a substantially discounted

Virginia compensated its veterans of both the French and Indian War (1754-63) and the War for Independence (1775-1783) with western land grants. Virginia's most famous veteran, George Washington, served in both wars and was entitled to 23,333 acres. He never claimed them: instead, he purchased two warrants, totaling 3,100 acres, all but 49 of which were within surveys run in 1787 in Clermont County (two surveys) and Hamilton County (one survey). An act of Congress (July 17, 1788) nullified these surveys, and Washington never filed for a U.S. patent under the congressional acts of 1790 and 1794. He mistakenly believed he owned the surveyed land. These lands were allegedly resurveyed in 1806 and properly certified to the U.S. Secretary of War. Claim jumpers occupied the land and secured U.S. patents to it, thus depriving Washington's estate of valuable resources. His heirs were never compensated.

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4) Kentucky was part of Virginia until attaining statehood in 1792.



price. Ultimately some 25 individuals controlled about 1,035,408 acres within the Virginia Military District.

From its earliest days, land speculation has been big business in America. Huge estates could also be acquired by surveyors, who took a healthy share of the land they had laid out as compensation. This form of compensation was especially common in the Virginia Military District. Among the most successful at this practice were Nathaniel Massie, who surveyed many of the earliest land claims in the region and accumulated some 70,000 acres in the process, and Duncan McArthur, later a governor of Ohio, whose holdings

Claiming land by a Virginia Military Warrant involved sending the warrant to the principal surveyor of the Virginia Military District in Ohio. He then gave the warrant to a deputy surveyor, who would make a general description of the claim (entry) and then run a survey. Virginia permitted a 5% error factor for these surveys, but this was often exceeded. Following acceptance of the survey, the warrant was sent to the federal government and a U.S. Patent issued. For their services, the deputy surveyors often received 20% to 50% of the acres called for in the warrant, or they could be paid in cash, which was scarce on the Ohio frontier. In Ohio, the entry number and survey number are the same.

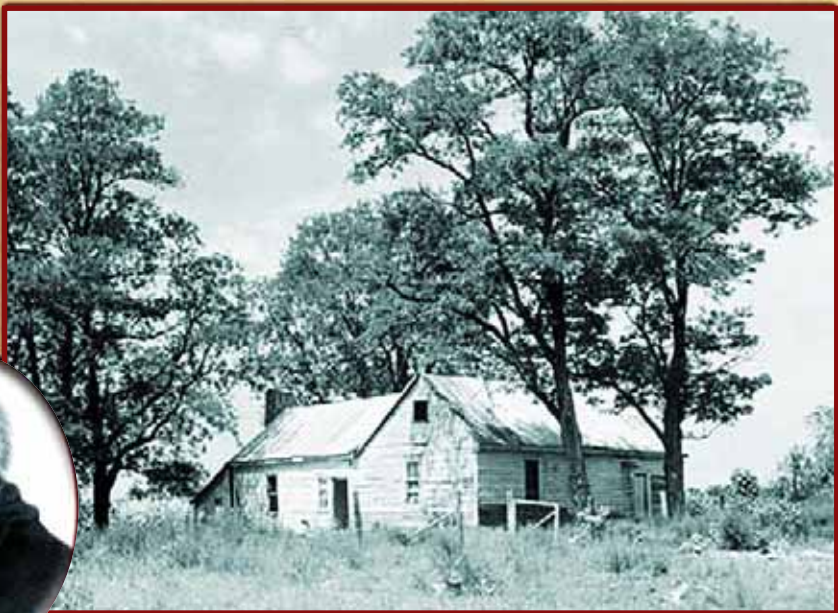
The first Virginia Military District survey was run by John O'Bannon, November 13, 1787, in what is now Clermont County. The first U.S. Patent for District land was issued on February 20, 1796. The State of Ohio Archives has original Virginia Military District Entry and Survey records, a card index of entrymen, W.P.A. plats of 16 of the 23 counties involved, and a list of the entries which were withdrawn. Inquiries can be researched by surname, warrant number, or survey number. Additional district records can be found at the University of Illinois Library at Urbana, Ill, and the Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland. Soldier's applications are filed at the Virginia State Library, Richmond.

exceeded 90,000 acres. Early surveyors often became developers, laying out communities and encouraging settlers by offering free lots to first comers. In this fashion, Massie developed Manchester (1792), the District's first real town, and Chillicothe (1796), which soon became the Northwest Territory's political center.

By 1830, most of the Virginia Military District's best land had been claimed, but there were still veterans' warrants in private hands. On May 30, 1830, and again on August 31, 1852, Congress passed laws permitting Virginia Military Warrants to be exchanged for land scrip. Land scrip operated as a form of currency and could be used to acquire any U.S. public lands open for entry at private sale. The federal government ultimately issued land scrip for 1,041,976 acres in exchange for Virginia Military Warrants. On December 9, 1852 Virginia relinquished, and ceded to the federal government its claim to any unlocated land in the Military District, and in 1871 Congress ceded this land to the State of Ohio. In 1872, Ohio set aside this land as an endowment for the Ohio



*Nathaniel  
Massie*



*Buckeye Station, second oldest building in Ohio, built by General Nathaniel Massie in 1797. It is in Manchester, Adams County, Ohio. This photograph was taken ca. 1940-1949.*

Agricultural and Mechanical College (founded 1870). Ohio had previously received 630,000 acres from Congress to be used for an A&M college under the terms of the Morrill Land Grant College Act of 1862. With this support the college grew, and in 1878 was renamed Ohio State University.

## **Connecticut Western Reserve**

The Connecticut Western Reserve includes all or parts of 14 counties in northeastern Ohio. The Reserve extends 120 miles westward from the Ohio-Pennsylvania line, and is bordered on the south by the 41st parallel of latitude and on the north by Lake Erie. All of Erie and Huron counties are in the Reserve as is the easternmost extension of Ottawa County and the Erie Islands.

Connecticut's western land claims were based on several royal charters, the most determining of which was the royal charter of 1662 issued by King Charles II of England. On surrendering its western land claims to the United States on September 13, 1786, Connecticut retained this reserve, which the state anticipated would be a New Connecticut in size and influence. It was not to be, however. The Western Reserve contains approximately 3,366,921 acres, or just over 5,260 square miles, including the Firelands, a portion of the Reserve that was treated differently from the rest. Connecticut retained jurisdictional control of the Reserve until surrendering it to the United States by Deed of Cession, May 30, 1800.

Prior to this cession, the State of Connecticut had sold all of the Reserve, except the Firelands, to the Connecticut Land Company by a quitclaim deed to 35 investors (many more investors later joined in the enterprise). This sale was completed on September 2, 1795. The Connecticut Land Company paid \$1,200,000 to the State of Connecticut which invested the money in a fund to benefit public schools in that state. The company investors, whether individuals or groups, pledged money to acquire land from the state. Each individual or group was the grantee (buyer) of as many 1,200 thousandths, in common and undivided, of that part of the Western Reserve as each had subscribed dollars to the purchase price.<sup>5</sup>

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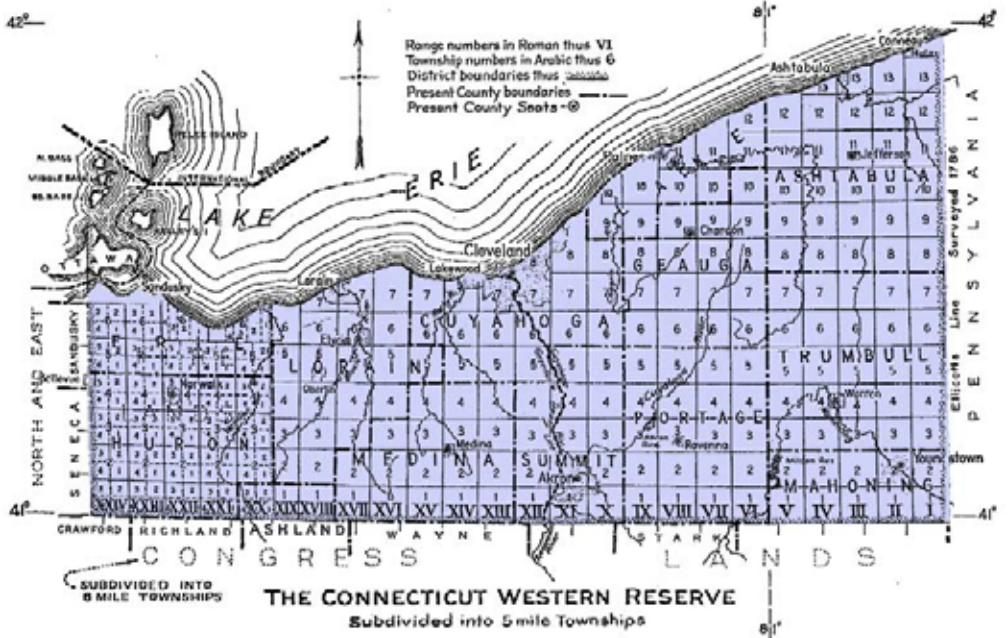
5) The quit claim deed to Moses Cleaveland, who led the first party to survey and settle in the Reserve, was for 32,600 twelve hundred thousandths.

In 1796, the Connecticut Land Company, anxious to start land sales, outfitted a survey party, led by General Moses Cleaveland, to run the original survey lines and scout out the region's resources. The region east of the Cuyahoga River was clear of Indian claim as per the Treaty of Ft. McIntosh (1785) as confirmed by the Treaty of Greenville (1795), but to insure that local Indians would pose no problems, Cleaveland met Seneca subchiefs near Buffalo and placated them with trade goods before continuing with his party to the mouth of the Cuyahoga. The surveyors could operate only east of the Cuyahoga (which was part of the Greenville Treaty Line) since Indian claims to lands west of the river were still valid, and would remain so, until vacated by the Treaty of Ft. Industry (1805).

The Connecticut Land Company determined upon a rectangular survey. Townships were five miles square except, of course, for partial townships bordering Lake Erie. Many townships were subdivided into four lots of 4,000 acres each. In most cases, however, purchasers subdivided the surveying townships into lots of various sizes and patterns. Ranges were numbered westward from the Pennsylvania line, and townships were numbered south to north from the 41st parallel.

Much of the Reserve contained poorly drained or inferior soils, so "equalizing" townships were set aside to compensate share owners unlucky enough to draw shares for inferior land. This practice, as well as the method of drawing lots, meant that a single purchaser could end up with widely dispersed properties.

Lots sold slowly in the Reserve. In its early days it was isolated from access to markets. The opening of New York's Erie Canal in 1825, followed by completion of the Ohio and Erie Canal (1825-32) and the Penn-Ohio Canal (1840), greatly relieved that isolation, but in the meantime, sales moved slowly and eastern land owners were stuck with extensive, unsaleable holdings. Indeed, there was more absentee land ownership in the Reserve than elsewhere in Ohio during the first quarter of the nineteenth century.

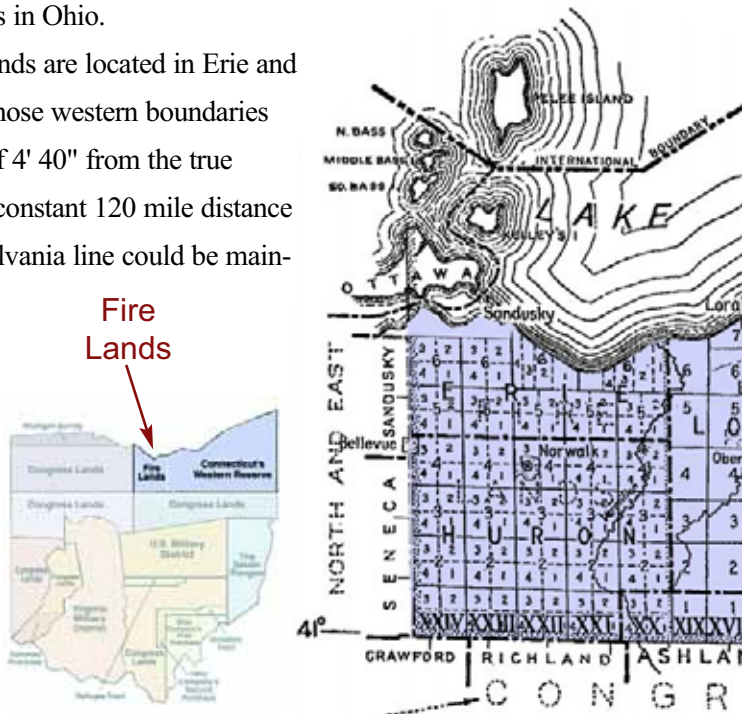


## Firelands (Sufferers' Lands)

On May 10, 1792, the Connecticut state legislature set aside the westernmost 500,000 acres of the Western Reserve to compensate, in proportion to their loss, the 1,866 Connecticut residents whose property had been damaged by British coastal raiders during the American Revolution. Much property was destroyed by fire (hence the term Firelands), especially in New London where the turncoat, Benedict Arnold, led a devastating raid against his home region.

The Sufferers, their heirs or legal representatives, formed an Ohio corporation on April 15, 1803 to manage their Ohio lands. With Indian claims having been reduced in 1805, the corporation's Board of Directors authorized a survey. All 500,000 acres were surveyed into five mile square townships which were further subdivided into four quarter townships each containing 4,000 acres. The sufferers' proprietary rights were divided into 120 classes, each of which represented 120th of the total property loss. Then, by a complicated process, lots were drawn assigning the 120 classes to surveyed property. Sufferers with claims in more than one of the 120 classes found their lands dispersed and difficult to manage. By the time details of this complex plan were worked out, many original sufferers had died, or were too old to take up lands in Ohio.

The Firelands are located in Erie and Huron counties, whose western boundaries have a westering of 4' 40" from the true meridian so that a constant 120 mile distance west of the Pennsylvania line could be maintained. Ruggles Township in Ashland County, and Danbury Township in Ottawa County are also within the Firelands.



## LAND SALES TO PRIVATE GROUPS

Even as the Confederation Congress was negotiating with Virginia and Connecticut as to their reserved lands in Ohio, it was involved with speculative ventures led by men from Massachusetts and New Jersey. In two instances, Congress sold Ohio land to private groups, whose settlements were to add another distinct element to the complex pattern of original surveys.

### Ohio Company of Associates

In 1783, General Rufus Putnam led fellow officers, veterans of the American Revolution, in petitioning Congress to pay for their services to the nation with western land grants. When Congress failed to act, Putnam and fellow Massachusetts officers met at Boston's Bunch of Grapes tavern on March 1, 1786, and formed the Ohio Company of Associates to pursue this program. The company was capitalized at \$1,000,000 in Continental Certificates, the money to be raised by selling 1,000 shares at \$1,000 per share. Congress was then approached for a western land grant, but it showed little interest. Skillful lobbying led by Manasseh Cutler helped congressmen to see the advantages of having a corps of solid citizens setting up communities in the western wilderness. The military experience of the associates would help to keep the Indians in check, and to protect the new settlements. Congress, therefore, agreed to sell 1,500,000 acres of Ohio lands lying west of the Seven Ranges, north of the Ohio River, east of the 16th range (not yet surveyed), and extending as far north as required to secure that acreage.

This land was to be privately surveyed on the pattern established by the Land Ordinance of 1785. In each six mile square township, section 16 was to be reserved for support of public schools, section 29 to support religion, sections, 8, 11, and 26 for later disposition by Congress, and two entire surveying townships (72 square miles) in perpetuity for support of a university.

Since the land was paid for in severely depreciated Continental securities, its price was actually about twelve and a half cents per acre. In allowing payment in depreciated secu-



rities, Congress undercut its own recent rule, embraced in the Land Ordinance of 1785, that land must be paid for in cash or its equivalent. When the Ohio Company could not meet its second payment, it settled for the 750,000 acres it had paid for.

This is called the Ohio Company First Purchase, and a U.S. Patent for this land was issued May 10, 1792 by President George



*Reproduction of a portrait of General Rufus Putnam (profile), ca. 1780-1789. He was a Revolutionary War veteran and member of the Ohio Company who helped to found Marietta, Ohio and open the Northwest Territory for settlement.*



*Exterior view of the Rufus Putnam Residence in Marietta, Ohio, ca. 1895. It was one of the dwellings in Campus Martius, the fortification erected by the Ohio Company, ca. 1790-1799.*

Dividing Ohio Company land into shares was extremely complex as indicated in this chart. The allotment deeds show seven separate tracts, grouped in six divisions, were conveyed for each share as follows:

<u>Division</u>	<u>Tract</u>	<u>Acres</u>
First	One eight acre lot	8.00
Second	One three acre lot	3.00
Third	One house lot of (about)	.37
Fourth	One one hundred and sixty acre lot	160.00
Fifth	One one hundred acre lot One six hundred and forty acre lot or section	100.00 640.00
Sixth	One two hundred and sixty two acre lot or fraction	262.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,173.37</b>



Washington.<sup>6</sup> The First Purchase ultimately contained 913,883 acres including the reserved sections and townships.

A congressional resolution of July 23, 1787, permitted military bounty warrants to be used in acquiring Ohio Company land. Such warrants, totaling 142,900 acres, were used in acquiring the Ohio Company Second Purchase



*Exterior view of the Ohio Company Land Office in Marietta, Ohio, ca. 1895. It was built after the Ohio Company landed at Marietta in 1788. This photograph depicts the building in its second location. In 1791 the Land Office was moved 450 feet east of its original location so that it could be protected by the guns at Campus Martius from attacks by Native Americans hostile to Anglo-American settlement of the Ohio Valley. It is the oldest building in Ohio and presently part of the Campus Martius State Memorial.*



*Photograph of the Marietta Land Office building.*

totaling 214,285 acres. The U.S. Patent for the second purchase was also issued on May 10, 1792.

The Ohio Company divided 964,285 acres it had acquired into 822 shares of 1,173.37 acres each. On February 1, 1796, a deed of partition or allotment was made to 817 shareholders. The remainder was held in trust for the company. All lands not previously conveyed or disposed of were sold in 1849.

The initial survey of Ohio Company lands began with the advance party of settlers, who arrived at Marietta in April, 1788. On the east bank of the Muskingum across from Ft. Harmar, a town featuring in-lots and out-lots was laid out. Rufus Putnam directed the initial

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6) Under the new Constitution, which took effect in 1789, the nation's administrative business, formerly conducted by congressional boards, was conducted by the executive branch through various agencies, boards, and offices.

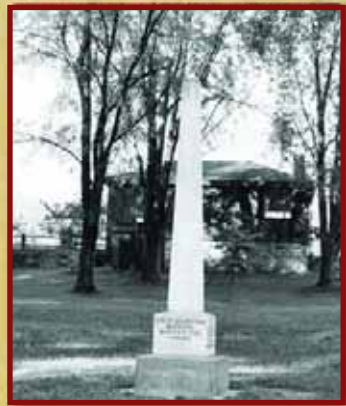
survey under terms of the Land Ordinance of 1785, using its range, township, and section numbering system. Some sections were divided differently to accommodate the allotment plan.

Ohio Company records are in the Marietta College Library, Marietta, Ohio. Copies of plats showing the allotments and original proprietors are in the State of Ohio Archives in the Ohio Historical Center.

## **Donation Tract**

The Donation Tract of 100,000 acres, located along the northern border of the Ohio Company lands, was authorized by Congress on April 21, 1792, to create a buffer zone sheltering Ohio Company lands from Indian incursions. To this end, a 100-acre lot would be given to any male, eighteen or older, who would actually settle on the land at the time the deed was conveyed. The 100,000 acres, located in present Adams, Fearing, Salem, Muskingum, Palmer, Waterford, and Watertown townships in Washington County, and in Windsor Township, Morgan County, were originally surveyed into 100-acre lots allotted by agents of the Ohio Company. On May 10, 1792 the U.S. Patent for the land was issued to the Ohio Company which then issued deeds to the actual settlers. In 1818, lands not conveyed reverted to the federal government and were sold at the Marietta Land Office.

This marked the first time that federal land was given without charge to specified settlers, predating the more famous Homestead Act of 1862 by seventy years. Whether or not the tract actually served as a buffer can not be determined, but it is true that the Ohio Company lands never experienced another Indian raid to compare with the Big Bottom Massacre of 1791.



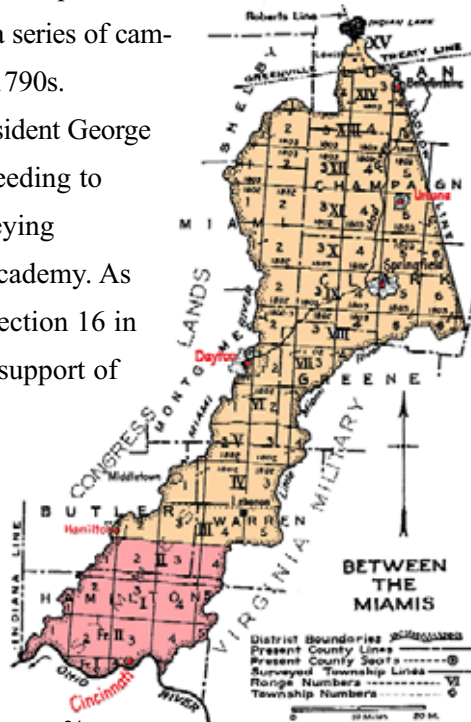
*Memorial to the Big Bottom Massacre, the January 2, 1791 battle between Ohio Company settlers and the Wyandot Indians. The memorial is located in Morgan County, Ohio. The photograph was taken ca. 1940-1949.*

## Symmes Purchase (Miami Purchase)

The Ohio Company of Associates was not the only group petitioning the Confederation Congress for western lands. New Jersey interests, led by Judge John Cleves Symmes, a member of Congress, persuaded that body in 1787 to sell 1,000,000 acres lying north of the Ohio River between the two Miami rivers. Symmes had been attracted to this land by the recommendation of Benjamin Stites, a soldier and trader to whom Symmes granted land near the Little Miami. Stites and company erected some huts and called their settlement Columbia. It later became an eastern extension of Cincinnati.

Symmes never paid for nor developed the full 1,000,000 acres he sought. He mishandled survey and sales to such an extent that Congress restricted his purchase to 311,682 acres, including lands reserved for special purposes. On occasion, Symmes had sold land lying outside the bounds of his purchase. Sometimes his associates back in New Jersey sold lots, inadvertently, that Symmes had already sold to others, and the reverse was true as well. Symmes ignored repeated federal requests to set aside the full surveying township he was obligated to supply for support of an academy. This confusion was amplified by Indian wars that developed as the U.S. Army attempted to quell threats from an Indian confederacy through a series of campaigns against the tribes in the early 1790s.

On September 30, 1794, President George Washington signed the U.S. Patent deeding to Symmes 248,250 acres, plus a surveying township to be held in trust for an academy. As with the Ohio Company purchase, section 16 in each township was reserved for the support of

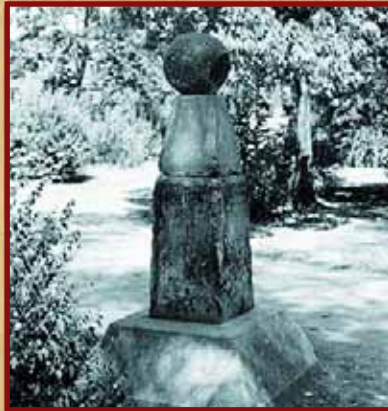


public schools, section 29 for ministerial lands in support of churches, and sections 8, 11, and 26 for the future use of the federal government. In addition, the patent reserved 15 acres for Ft. Washington, erected in 1789 and used thereafter as a staging post for the U.S. Army in its attacks against the Ohio Indian confederacy (1790-94). One square mile near the mouth of the Great Miami was also reserved for military purposes.

Symmes paid \$70,455 in public securities to acquire 105,683 acres, and used military land warrants totaling 92,250 acres for an additional 142,857 acres. Depreciation of securities, plus a federal allowance of one-third dollar off for bad land and incidental charges, meant that Symmes actually paid about two-thirds of a dollar per acre. As with the Ohio Company, private purchasers benefited from a better price than Congress offered through regular sales at federal land offices.

Symmes conveyed the entire third range in trust to his close associate, Jonathan Dayton of New Jersey, because Dayton had purchased military bounty warrants from veterans who needed cash to buy land located outside the Symmes Purchase. This third range is often called the Military Range in the records of Warren and Butler counties.

The Symmes Purchase was privately surveyed. It is the only original land survey in the United States that has ranges running south to north, and fractional townships running west to east. Sections are numbered according to the Land Ordinance of 1785. North of the Symmes Purchase, the federal "Between the Miamis Survey" continued the unorthodox numbering system in order to maintain consistency with the Symmes numbering.



*Captain John Cleves Symmes Memorial, Hamilton, Butler County, Ohio. Symmes, son of the original proprietor, was a captain in the War of 1812, an educator, surveyor, and a philosopher responsible for the Theory of Concentric Spheres and Polar Voids. This monument was erected in the 1840s and the photograph was taken ca. 1940-1949.*

Persons who unwittingly purchased land which Symmes sold beyond the limits of his patent, and who settled on that land, were technically squatters on federal land. Congress corrected this problem through relief acts, passed March 2, 1799 and March 3, 1801, giving these settlers pre-emption rights, the first right to buy their land from the federal government, in most cases at a favorable rate.

Pre-emption rights were of exceptional interest to western settlers. These congressional acts set a precedent that was extended in future land legislation, pre-dating by four decades the Pre-emption Act of 1841 which was more general in



*A view designed to give easterners a look at a "western clearing" from Ladies Repository, vol. XV (1855); Ohio Historical Society*

character. Unfortunately, pre-emption, like home-steading, was subject to fraud and to illegal settlement on public lands not yet surveyed.



*Cabin raisings were often community efforts. Ohio Historical Society*

*Surveyor Christopher Gist is depicted in one of the 18 original art renderings by Annette Salrin for the official Ohio Bicentennial of the American Revolution celebration calendar. Ohio Historical Society*



## FEDERAL LAND OFFICES AND SALES IN OHIO

Determining the price of federal land and the conditions under which it could be sold was a feature of the land ordinances of 1785 and 1796. In each case, the minimum amount one could purchase directly from the federal government was set at one full section (640 acres), and the minimum price (lands were sold at auction) was set at one dollar per acre in 1785, and two dollars per acre in 1796. Payment was to be in cash or in debt certificates the equivalent of cash. In 1785, there was no credit provision: in 1796, one half the purchase price was due at the time of sale, and the other half within a year.<sup>7</sup>

Obviously Congress expected initial purchasers to be from the monied class, for \$640 plus fees, in cash, was well beyond what the typical settler could pay. The sale of large amounts of land, with payment in cash, promised to bring money into the federal treasury more expeditiously than the sale of many small amounts to a large number of individual purchasers. Although these laws favored speculators, once the speculator possessed land, he normally expected to sell it to settlers in smaller, affordable parcels. If he could not, he faced a loss on his investment. Purchasers at federal land offices sometimes banded together, spreading their resources beyond the purchase of a single section, and sharing responsibility for potential losses.

The history of federal land policy is replete with efforts to balance the interests of the federal government with the interests of land-seeking settlers on the one hand and speculators on the other. The federal government wanted to maximize income from sales, the settler wanted cheap land under favorable terms. To this end, settlers pressured their congressmen to keep federal land

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7) The Confederation Congress (1781-89) and Congress under the new constitution (1789-) relied on income from land sales for a substantial part of the revenue needed to operate the government and maintain the military. The new nation had but recently fought against what its people considered excessive and unfair taxation: it was prudent for legislators to seek non-tax sources of revenue, hence their eagerness to optimize income from the sale of public lands.

prices low and terms of payment easy. Speculators, having purchased land they expected to resell, lobbied to keep prices high enough that they could sell under the federal price and still turn a profit. The sale terms that evolved under these countervailing forces represented compromise. Each party hoped to find new terms of sale that redounded to its benefit. An example of this can be found in the Land Act passed by Congress in 1800, and known as the Harrison Land Act for its sponsor.

The State of Ohio Archives has a card index of about 175,000 cards, some of them duplicates, arranged by surname, and then the given name of the purchaser (entryman) who acquired federal public lands in Ohio. It also has the Federal Tract and Entry books which are arranged by surveying range, township, section, and part of section. These give the name of the purchaser (entryman), quantity of acres entered, and date of entry. Sometimes additional information is given, such as the purchase price, state or country of residence at the time of entry, the final certificate number, and the federal land office where the land was sold. The current county and civil township are not given in the tract and entry books, but can be determined by using the range, township, section, part of section, and original survey name, with a map showing Ohio's original land subdivisions.

In the year 2000, original land deed records were electronically imaged and are available in the State Auditor's Office Legal Division. The State Auditor's Office has more than 300 cubic feet of original land records in the State of Ohio Archives. Inquiries should be sent to either the State of Ohio Archives: Ohio Historical Center, 1982 Velma Avenue, Columbus, OH 43211 or State Auditor's Office, Legal Division, 88 East Broad Street - 5th floor, Columbus, OH 43215.

## **Harrison Land Act, May 10, 1800**

William Henry Harrison was the sole representative to Congress from the Northwest Territory. He was associated politically with the group pressing for early statehood for Ohio. He was born into privilege, but as a frontier resident, he was familiar with the liberal land policies desired by actual settlers on western lands. The land act that he sponsored represented a compromise of sorts. It liberalized sale terms while retaining a substantial price per acre.

The Land Act of 1800 established federal land offices in Steubenville, Marietta, Chillicothe, and Cincinnati. Land office business was now more readily accessible to potential purchasers. The new law provided for sale at auction, and the minimum price was set at two dollars per acre. Private entry was permitted if the auctioned land did not sell. The minimum amount to be sold was cut in half, to 320 acres (half section). For the first time, the law extended credit to purchasers. The entryman (purchaser) had to deposit 5% of the purchase price, including surveying fees, on the day of sale. Another 20% was due within 40 days. Additional payments of 25% of the purchase price were



*Bird's eye view of Steubenville, Jefferson County, Ohio, ca. 1940-1949.*



to be made within two, three, and four years after date of sale. The last three payments carried an interest charge of 6%. Any tract not completely paid for within one year after the date of the last payment would be advertised for sale by the registrar of the land office, who would then sell it at public sale for no less than the whole arrears due. If the land was not sold, or the arrears paid, it would then revert to the United States. A discount of 8% per year was allowed for prepayment of any of the last three payments. A purchaser who paid in full for his tract on the day of sale could thus buy \$2 an acre land for \$1.64 an acre.

The act also created two positions—Receiver of Public Monies, and Registrar of Public Lands. These officials in each land office could permit the Surveyor General of the United States to lease the reserved sections of townships for up to seven years on condition that the lessee make improvements. The act provided pre-emption rights for anyone erecting a grist mill.

The first federal land office opened in Steubenville in July, 1800. This office and its sister offices in Ohio enjoyed brisk sales that disposed of 398,647 acres at a price of \$834,888 in the 1800-01 season alone. By June 30, 1820, the four Ohio land offices had sold 8,848,152 acres (13,825 square miles) for \$17,226,186 at an average price per acre of \$1.95.

These figures appear to show that federal land was moving at a healthy pace, but there were problems. More than 29% of those acres were resold due to default on payment. The first large scale default was related to the Panic of 1819, which was caused in large part by over-extension of credit in public land sales. Land purchasers were often wildly optimistic about their ability to meet payments. Too many actual settlers, who should have used their funds to improve land they already owned, took a flyer and purchased additional land beyond their ability to pay.

Ohio was still a wilderness in 1820. Only a few towns of respectable size, nearly all of them along rivers in the state's southern reaches, challenged the great forests and soggy plains. Even the most favorably located farmers risked a year's work as they sent their goods by flatboat down the Ohio-Mississippi riverway to market at New Orleans. Those living in Ohio's interior had scarcely any way to market their crops and livestock. Cash money (specie)

was extremely scarce: much business was carried on by barter. But one could not barter with the federal land office. It is little wonder there were frequent defaults on land payments.

Every interest suffered during the Panic of 1819, not just farmers. Land speculators, banks and other lenders, and business interests generally, even those in the eastern states, felt its effects. So there was support for the new Land Act, passed by Congress April 24, 1820, that abolished the credit system. To offset this loss of maneuvering room, the price of public land was reduced to \$1.25 per acre and the minimum purchase reduced to 80 acres. Sales continued, as the economy recovered, and the Chillicothe land office alone, from 1820 until its closing in 1876, managed 94,182 entries.

The purchase of federal land was a bureaucratic process in the early nineteenth century. Once a purchaser (entryman) paid for his land, the registrar of the land office issued a final certificate (or certificate of location if land scrip was used in the purchase). The final certificate was then sent to federal authorities in Washington D.C. and a U.S. Patent was

issued. Accounts and records had to be verified, thus extending the process. Until March 1833,

each U.S. Patent was signed by the

President of the United States. The patent

was then returned to the originating land

office to be delivered to the owner (pat-

entee). Some patentees failed to record their

U.S. Patents, and others never even picked

them up from the land office. At the time of

its closure in 1876, the Chillicothe land

office held thousands of unclaimed patents.

These were returned to the General Land

Office in Washington D.C.



*In 1800, William Henry Harrison, served as secretary to the Northwest Territory. He would go on to become the 9th President of the United States (March 4, 1841 to April 4, 1841).*

# AN ORIGINAL FEDERAL SURVEY ON THE FIVE MILE SQUARE PATTERN

From the story of original surveys in Ohio to this point, it is evident that Congress was willing to allow a variety of practices. Congress was not beyond experimenting with their own six mile square township pattern, and in 1796 they did so. Only the Connecticut Western Reserve, privately surveyed, used the five mile square, and that survey was going on even as Congress established its own five mile square survey to accommodate soldiers' bounty land warrants.

## United States Military District (USMD)

As early as 1776, and again in 1780, the Continental Congress had resolved to grant bounty lands to officers and men of the Continental Line. Each state was responsible for seeing to the needs of soldiers in its own regiments. The new Congress under the Articles of Confederation (1781-89) had initially provided bounty lands for Continental soldiers in the Seven Ranges, but this provision did not succeed in meeting the need.

On June 1, 1796, Congress addressed the issue again, passing legislation that created the United States Military District, sometimes referred to as the USMD Lands or the USMD Survey.

Survey of the USMD began in March 1797 according to the provisions of the act of June 1, 1796. The land was to be divided into surveying townships five miles square (16,000 acres) with the township then divided into quarter townships of 4,000 acres each. Ranges were numbered east to west, starting at the line of range seven in the Seven Ranges. Townships were numbered northward from the base line, which is the south line of the USMD tract. Quarter townships were numbered in a counterclockwise direction starting with the number one in the

### **Bounty Land Warrants for Veterans of the American Revolution**

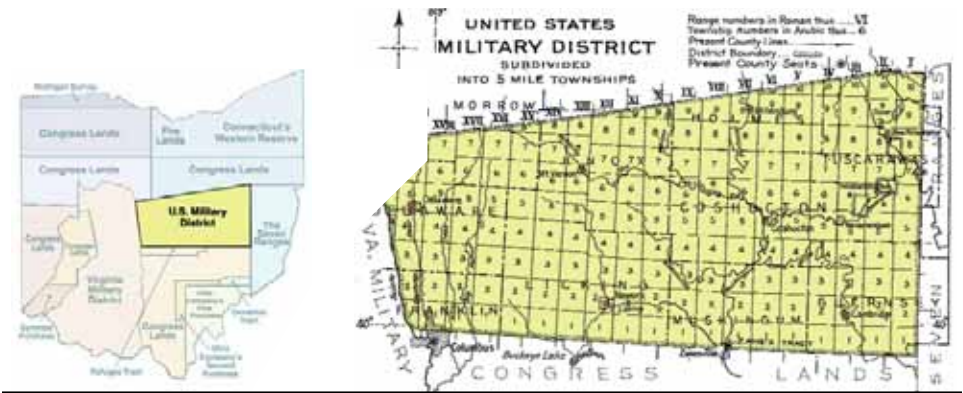
Acreage by Rank\*

Major General . . .	1100 acres
Brigadier . . . . .	850 acres
Colonel . . . . .	500 acres
Lieutenant Colonel	.450 acres
Major . . . . .	400 acres
Captain . . . . .	300 acres
Lieutenant . . . . .	200 acres
Ensign . . . . .	150 acres
Non-Commissioned	100 acres
Soldier . . . . .	100 acres
Surgeon . . . . .	400 acres
Surgeon's Mate . . .	300 acres

\*Source: William Donohue Ellis, The Ordinance of 1787: The Nation Begins, Dayton, Ohio: Landfall Press, 1987, p. 28

township's northeast corner. The quarter townships were subdivided by their original proprietors in whatever manner they wanted.

One wonders why the original survey conformed so poorly to the actual size of veterans' warrants. One explanation, it would seem, must center around Congress' desire for speed in reconciling the veteran pay issue, and the practical problems of subdividing the land on a finer grid. Veterans had to pool their war-



Refugee Tract

rants if they were to buy from the government. Apparently Congress recognized the awkwardness of these conditions and, in 1800, allowed 50 quarter townships and fractional quarter townships, not already taken, to be divided into 100 acre lots. Two years later, Congress permitted some fractional townships to be divided into 50 acre lots. On March 3, 1803, all remaining land not covered by warrants, or previously subdivided, were to be surveyed into one mile square sections and sold on the same terms as other public lands.

In the USMD, as elsewhere in the surveyed lands, many veterans sold their warrants to speculators or jobbers at a fraction of their true value. Of the 1,043,460 acres claimed by land warrant, 569,542 acres were patented to just 22 persons. The actual location of the 262 quarter townships claimed by military warrants was determined by a drawing. Few absentee owners ever visited their land, and fewer still spent any time on it. They sold it, sight unseen, as a speculative venture, often paying no regard to any attachment of sale made by Ohio officials for delinquent taxes.

By 1823, the United States government had issued 10,958 warrants for service in the Revolutionary War totaling 1,549,350 acres, and more were issued under various laws thereafter. These warrants could only be used in the USMD except for those used in the Ohio Company lands or in the Symmes Purchase. Veterans who held on to their warrants finally received relief by the act of May 30, 1830, which allowed them to exchange their warrants for land scrip issued in 80 acre amounts, good for \$1.25 an acre on land anywhere in the public domain available for private entry. This act, plus seven other warrant exchange acts, caused more than 12,138,840 acres of land scrip to be issued. Researchers will find that land scrip could be bought cheaply, depending on market conditions. Its use in land transactions does not infer the holder was entitled to it by military service. Veterans often sold their land scrip to land jobbers, thus producing a dead-end situation for family researchers.

## TERMS OF SALE UNDER VARIOUS U.S. LAND ACTS 1785-1862\*

<u>Year</u>	<u>Minimum Price</u>	<u>Terms</u>	<u>Minimum Purchase</u>
1785	\$1.00 per acre	Specie, loan-office or debt certificates.	640 Acres
1796	\$2.00 per acre	One-half down, one half due in one year	640 Acres
1800	\$2.00 per acre	One-quarter cash, remainder to be paid in three annual installments.	320 Acres
1804	\$2.00 per acre	One-quarter cash, remainder to be paid in three annual installments.	160 Acres
1820	1.25 per acre	Cash.	80 Acres
1830		Land Scrip acceptable in lieu of cash	
1832	\$1.25 per acre	Cash, Land Scrip.	40 Acres
1841	\$1.25 per acre	Squatters who built homes and improved land could purchase one-quarter section before it was offered for public sale.	160 Acres
1855	\$1.00 per acre	Land not sold for 10 years to be offered at \$1.00 per acre; if not sold for 30 years, land could be disposed of at 12½¢ per acre.	40-320 Acres
1862	\$10 (filing fee)	Title could be obtained after 5 years residence under Homestead Act.	160 Acres
*1800-1862		Initial Sale by Public Auction	

The USMD is bounded on the north by the Greenville Treaty Line, on the east by the Seven Ranges, on the south by the Refugee Tract and Congress Lands, and on the west by the Scioto River. Its 2,560,000 acres (4,000 square miles) are located in Franklin, Delaware, Knox, Licking, Morrow, Noble, Marion, Holmes, Coshocton, Muskingum, Tuscarawas, and Guernsey counties.

## **CONGRESS LANDS**

Initially all of the public domain could be described as Congress Lands, but that name was replaced in those regions developed in special surveys such as the Seven Ranges or the United States Military District. What remained in the public domain outside these particular regions was still referred to as Congress Lands, and they were surveyed under the federal rectangular system, with six mile square townships, and with the numbering system of 1796.

### **Lands East of the Scioto River**

This tract contains more than 3,500,000 acres lying east of the Scioto River, south of the Refugee Tract and the United States Military District, west of the Seven Ranges, the Donation Tract and the Ohio Company Purchase, and north of the Ohio River.

The major portion of this tract was coveted by the Scioto Company, a speculative venture led by the influential William Duer, which attempted to ride the coat tails of the Ohio Company to success. The Ohio company did succeed, of course, but mismanagement and fraud doomed the Scioto Company. It was unable to pay Congress for its purchase and the land remained in the control of the federal government.

This survey was integrated into the Ohio Company and Seven Ranges surveys with the six mile square townships numbered south to north and ranges numbered east to west. A different survey was used in a 25,200 acre tract that Congress reserved for the French Grants (see page 50). Many irregularities in applying the national system occur in the East of Scioto Tract due to surveying errors, multiple surveys, and erratic numbering.

### **Lands West of Miami River**

This tract lies west of the Great Miami River, east of the Ohio-Indiana state line, and south of the Greenville Treaty Line. The original survey in 1798 contained a triangular shaped slice of land, now located in Indiana, that extended to the Greenville line as it ran from Fort Recovery to opposite the mouth of the Kentucky River. The Ohio Enabling Act of 1802 established Ohio's western boundary as a surveyor's meridian, north from the mouth of the

Great Miami. Ranges are numbered east and west of that meridian, those in Ohio being “East of the First Meridian.” Townships are numbered south to north with irregularities caused in part by the surveyors basing the numbering on the Great Miami.

## North of the Seven Ranges

Congress originally expected to include in the original survey of 1785 lands between the Ohio River and Lake Erie. Connecticut’s reservation, accepted by Congress in 1786, preempted lands north of the 41st parallel. Between that parallel and the Base Line of the Seven Ranges Survey, extending westward from the Pennsylvania line to the Tuscarawas River, lands were surveyed circa 1801 under the law of 1796. The ranges and townships followed those of the original Seven Ranges, but the sections were numbered according to the 1796 pattern.

Land west of the Cuyahoga-Tuscarawas line and north of the U.S. military District remained Indian territory until that land was ceded in the Treaty of Ft. Industry (1805). The ceded lands lying within the Western Reserve were surveyed as an extension of the original Western Reserve survey of 1796-97. Congress Lands south of the Reserve were surveyed in 1806-07. This survey had six mile square townships and continued the range, township, and section numbering system of the Ohio River Survey, section numbering being based on the 1796 land act.



*The Signing of the Treaty of Greenville, 1795, as depicted by Howard Chandler Christy (painted in 1945). Anthony Wayne dictates terms to the Indians. This painting is currently hanging in the rotunda of the Ohio Statehouse.*



## CONGRESS LANDS IN NORTHWEST OHIO

Lands west of the Ft. Industry line and north of the Greenville line constitute northwest Ohio, the last major region of the state to be developed. Here lands “guaranteed” to Indian tribes by the Treaty of Greenville (1795) were relinquished by the tribes in one treaty after another. By 1818, most of northwest Ohio was in possession of the United States although many small reservations remained until they, too, were abandoned through forced agreements. After the Wyandots of Upper Sandusky were forced out in 1842-43, no organized Indian tribe remained in Ohio, and, to this day, it is one of a small handful of states containing no Indian reservation.

### South & East of the First Principal Meridian and Base Line

In 1817 the Ohio-Indiana border was surveyed and became known as the First Principal Meridian for all land surveyed in the rest of the United States. The 41st parallel of north latitude became the base line. Congress Lands lying east of the meridian and south of the base line were first surveyed in 1819 under the direction of Edward Tiffin, Surveyor General of the United States. The tract included Indian reservations surveyed after the tribes left. This survey used the standard six mile square township, but townships were numbered north to south. Ranges were numbered west to east.

### North & East of the First Principal Meridian and Base Line

This tract extended eastward from the First Principal Meridian to the western boundary of the Western Reserve, and northward from the Base Line (41st parallel) to the line then separating Ohio from Michigan Territory. The survey in 1820-21 created six mile square townships, numbered south to north, and ranges numbered west to east. A

Twelve Mile Reserve and a Two Mile Reserve, legacies of the Treaty of Greenville, plus certain lands still held by Indian tribes, were surveyed some years later.



## The Michigan Survey

This original land survey is located in Williams, Fulton, and Lucas counties. It is a continuation of the federal rectangular surveys starting from the Michigan Meridian, located west of Detroit, and the Base Line located northwest of Detroit. Due to misconceptions about the geography of the region at the time Ohio was going through the state making process, controversy erupted over proper location of the border between Ohio and Michigan Territory.

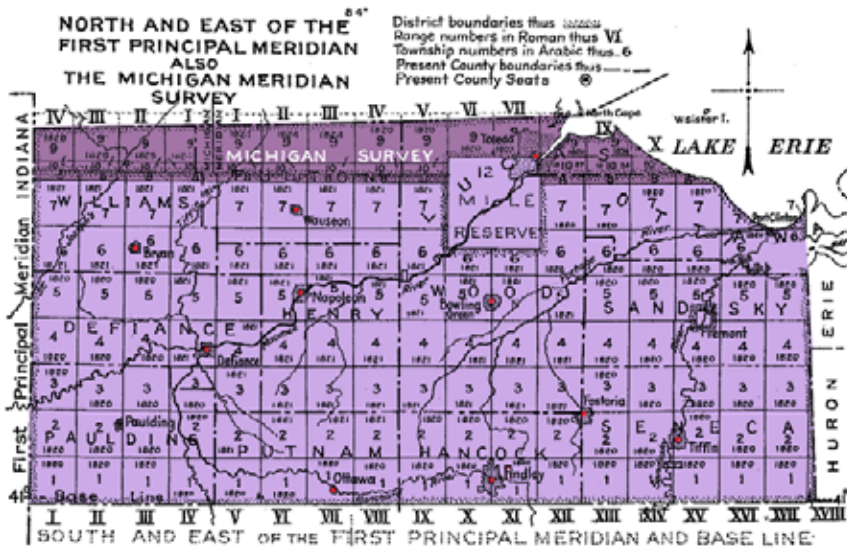
The controversy traces to the assumption that an east-west line drawn through the southern extremity of Lake Michigan, as provided in the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, would give the “eastern division” (i.e. Ohio) the mouth of the Maumee River, clearly the most desirable feature of the region. This line was confirmed in the Ohio enabling act of 1802, but shortly thereafter it was discovered that Lake Michigan extended further to the south than had been assumed, and an east-west line from its southern extremity would intersect Lake Erie south of the mouth of the Maumee. Armed with this information, delegates to Ohio’s constitutional convention wrote into the new state constitution that, with the approval of Congress, Ohio’s northern border would be a line drawn directly from Lake Michigan’s southern extremity to the “most northerly cape of the Miami (Maumee) Bay.” Congress approved the constitution without either confirming or rejecting Ohio’s self-negotiated line.

In 1817, the Surveyor General of Ohio oversaw a survey by William Harris, who ran a boundary line according to the language of the Ohio Constitution. Michigan objected and ordered its own survey, known as the Fulton Line, according to boundary descriptions in the Northwest Ordinance and the Ohio enabling act of 1802. Land between the Harris Line and the Fulton Line, sometimes called the “Toledo Strip,” was hotly contested. Both Ohio and Michigan Territory threatened to occupy this land with militia, and each made other gestures by which they hoped to demonstrate control. The issue came to a head in the mid-1830s as Michigan was preparing for statehood. Both Congress and Andrew Jackson’s presidential administration became involved in the dispute. Ultimately Ohio’s superior political clout prevailed, and on June 15, 1836, Jackson signed a congressional act awarding the disputed region to Ohio.

Michigan achieved its main goal, statehood, in 1837 and, as consolation for loss of the “Toledo strip,” was awarded 9,000 square miles which became its Upper Peninsula.

In 1915, Ohio and Michigan joined in a resurvey of the Harris Line that “satisfied” both states. However, where the Harris Line touched Lake Erie’s shore, it was extended northeasterly to the Canadian boundary in Lake Erie, giving Ohio many square miles of Lake Erie coveted by Michigan, which claimed the Harris Line should have been extended in a straight line to the boundary. This conflict was resolved in 1973 when federal courts ruled that the disputed area in Lake Erie belonged to Ohio.

The Michigan Survey is based on the Michigan Meridian and Base Line. Ranges are numbered from the Meridian in both an east and a west direction. Township numbering is uniquely irregular, but it is based on the line of the 41st parallel.



*The survey of Northwest Ohio used the Ohio-Indiana state line as a “First Principal Meridian.” The 41st parallel of north latitude became an intersecting, east-west base line used in surveying.*

## FEDERAL LAND GRANTS FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES

Congress made federal land grants to groups or individuals for specific reasons: some in sympathy for a mistreated group, some for services rendered the United States, and at least one—Zane’s Tract—in fulfillment of a business arrangement.

### Moravian Indian Grants

Moravian missionaries came to America in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, in part to introduce Christianity to the Indians. In 1772 and shortly thereafter, they brought their Delaware and Mohican converts to the Tuscarawas Valley. There they established several villages, but the location was unfortunate. The villages were situated between hostile, British-supported tribes to their west, and aggressive American frontier fighters to their east during a period of bloody struggle in the Ohio country. On March 8, 1782, a band of about 100 Pennsylvania militiamen who had suffered atrocities from hostile



*Aerial view of the Moravian Village, Schoenbrunn, in New Philadelphia, Tuscarawas County, Ohio, 1930-1939.*

Indians descended upon Gnadenhutzen, rounded up the Christian Indians nearby, and systematically murdered 96 men, women, and children.

The slaying of these innocents horrified many easterners, safely removed from the crude realities of the frontier. Congress thus made recompense in the Land Ordinance of 1785 by granting to the Moravian Indian survivors three tracts of 4,000 acres each, located near Schoenbrunn, Gnadenhutzen, and Salem—Moravian towns situated in the Tuscarawas Valley. In an ordinance of September 3, 1788, these tracts were donated in trust to the “Society of the United Brethren (Moravian) for propagating the Gospel among the Heathen.” This act was intended to help Moravian missionaries in the task of “civilizing” the tribes, and was to encourage scattered remnants of the Christian Indian peoples to return to their former homes along the Tuscarawas.

On February 24, 1798, a U.S. Patent was issued to the United Brethren as trustees for the Indians, but few of the now scattered Christian Indians returned to their shadowed valley. Thus, by agreements signed by a U.S. Commissioner, the United Brethren and the Christian Indians, the trust was revoked in 1823 and the three tracts transferred to the federal government. The

United Brethren Deed of Retrocession was executed April 24, 1824, and accepted by Congress May 26, 1824.

In 1825, the three tracts were divided into farm lots and later sold by government agents at the courthouse in New Philadelphia. Lots



*Interior of reconstructed schoolhouse in the Moravian village, Schoenbrunn, in New Philadelphia, Tuscarawas County, Ohio, 1939.*

remaining unsold were later sold at the Zanesville Land Office. The Christian Indians received a \$400 annuity from the sale proceeds, and the United Brethren Society received enough money to pay the debt remaining from improvements it had made to the tracts.

## French Grants

The French Grants, located along the Ohio River in Scioto County, were awarded to 101 Frenchmen who had been swindled by the Scioto Company (see page 43). Unscrupulous agents sold lands the company did not own to credulous French emigrés. In the process, they grossly misrepresented what lay in store for



*Arrival of the French settlers at Gallipolis.*

the emigrating Frenchmen. The lands to which the French held worthless titles were actually located within the Ohio Company purchase. The Ohio Company provided them initial shelter and then sold

lots to them for \$1.25 an acre. Many of the French decided to try their luck elsewhere, but those who remained founded Gallipolis (city of the Gauls).

Congress was prevailed upon to aid these unfortunates who had paid twice for land. It passed a bill on May 31, 1795 giving 24,000 acres to “the French inhabitants of Gallipolis.” John Gervais received 4,000 of these acres for services in obtaining the grant. The remainder was surveyed into 92 lots of 217.4 acres each. This is commonly called the First Grant. Eight inhabitants of Gallipolis did not receive a portion of the First Grant, so Congress granted an additional 1,200 acres on June 25, 1798. This land was surveyed into 150-acre lots and is known as the Second Grant.

## Refugee Tract

The Refugee Tract of 103,527 acres is located in parts of Franklin, Fairfield, Licking and Perry counties. It extends eastward from the Scioto River for 42 miles along the south line of the United States Military District. In the first 30 miles, the Refugee Tract is four and one half miles wide, but it narrows to three miles wide in its easternmost twelve miles.

The refugees were persons from British Canada who had fled south to aid the colonial cause during the War for Independence. Terms of the grant were restrictive. On April 7, 1798, Congress granted land to refugees who had fled south before July 4, 1776, continued to aid the United States, and who did not return to reside in territory ruled by the British monarch prior to November 25, 1783. In other words, the refugee had to have been away from home, aiding the revolutionary cause during the entire revolutionary struggle. Not many could qualify, even though Congress provided that bounty land could be claimed by widows and heirs of such persons if they died within the United States or in colonial service during the Revolutionary War.

An act of February 18, 1801 established the boundaries of the Refugee Tract and named the claimants and the amount of land to which each was entitled. Other claimants were named in an act of April 23, 1812. In all, 67 claimants received 58,080 acres, most of it in 320, 640, 960, 1280, and 2,240 acre amounts.

The Refugee Lands were not set aside until after the regular federal surveys had progressed to the United States Military District, so range, township, section lines and numbers were already established. Townships were fractional (partial) and were subdivided into 320-acre lots by halving each full section with a north-south line. The claimant's grant was located by drawing lots. An act of April 29, 1816 authorized the Chillicothe Land Office to sell 45,447 unclaimed acres.

In Columbus, the Refugee Grant lies approximately between Fifth Avenue on the north and Refugee Road on the south. The Ohio Statehouse and most downtown office buildings are located within the tract.

## Zane's Tract

Ebenezer Zane, an early settler of Wheeling in Western Virginia, contracted with the federal government to build a road through the southern Ohio wilderness. Zane's Trace, as the road was called, was hacked out of the dense forest in 1796-97. It was little more than an improved bridle path connecting Wheeling with Limestone (Maysville), Kentucky, a principal stopover for down river travelers.

As payment for his work, Congress authorized Zane to locate three



*Reconstruction of the home of Ebenezer Zane, Jr. in Logan County, Ohio. The home was built in 1805 and used as an army headquarters in the War of 1812. The photograph was taken ca. 1940-1949.*



*Memorial to Isaac Zane & Simon Kenton, Zanesfield, Logan County, Ohio. The memorial was unveiled September 8, 1914. The photograph is ca. 1940-1949.*

tracts of 640 acres each so long as he paid for the surveys and did not interfere with existing government surveys. Zane located his tracts where his trace crossed the Muskingum, Hocking, and Scioto rivers. He received the right to operate ferries at these strategic sites. The wisdom of his choices became apparent as the Muskingum crossing grew into Zanesville (named for Ebenezer), the Hocking crossing became Lancaster, and Chillicothe developed across the Scioto from his other grant.

By an act of April 3, 1802, Ebenezer's brother, Isaac Zane, was granted three sections of 640 acres each, for services to the federal gov-



ernment as intermediary with the Ohio Indians. Two of the sections were reserved for the use and benefit of Isaac's children, living at the time of his death, or their heirs. Zane was issued a U.S. Patent for these tracts on August 28, 1806. They are located in the civil townships of Salem and Concord in Champaign County.

## **Dohrman Grant**

Arnold Henry Dohrman—agent for the United States to the Portuguese crown during the Revolutionary War—fed, clothed, and nursed American sailors captured by British cruisers and then released into Dohrman's hands. His request for reimbursement for the funds he personally subscribed in this work were in large part disallowed by the Treasury for lack of proper documentation. Congress sympathized with his plight, however, and on October 1, 1787, granted him an entire township (23,040 acres) as compensation for his expenses and in recognition of his humanitarian efforts.

By an act of February 27, 1801, President John Adams issued a U.S. Patent to Dohrman for Township 13, Range 7 in the Seven Ranges Survey. Today, half of that land lies in Harrison, and half in Tuscarawas counties. On March 3, 1817, Congress granted his widow, Rachel, a lifetime annuity of \$300, and to each of Dohrman's minor children, \$100 annually until they reached age 21.

## **Other Grants to Individuals**

The Dohrman grant was unusually generous, overshadowing in scope grants made to many others in Ohio. The United States made small grants to some Indian leaders as part of treaty negotiations, to white men freed from Indian captivity, and to early settlers who traded with the Indians on behalf of the United States. The lands granted were located in northwestern Ohio, some of them along the St. Mary's River.

Other individuals were rewarded with the grant of pre-emption rights, which was the right to have first opportunity at purchasing federal land without having to bid on it. This advantage was eagerly sought by settlers, and their lobbying with congress finally paid off in the Land Act of 1841, granting pre-emption to people settled on federal land that they did not own.

## **FEDERAL MILITARY RESERVATIONS (FORTS)**

Pioneer Ohio had two kinds of fortifications: those that were locally created, like Marietta's Campus Martius, and those that were federally mandated. Federal fort locations (the structure plus surrounding land), often preceded original surveys, and their lands were integrated into the original surveys at a later time. A few federal forts, however, were original surveys.

### **Fort Washington**

Fort Washington was built in Cincinnati in 1789 to protect settlers. It became the staging post for U.S. Army campaigns against the Indian confederacy in the 1790s. The military reservation covered 15 acres, and was set aside for use by the federal government in John Cleves Symmes' U.S. Patent. Its military value much diminished, Congress ordered the property subdivided in 1806 into town lots and streets which were to conform to the original town plat of Cincinnati. The survey, certified July 8, 1807, shows the fort's boundaries to be Fourth Street to the north, Ludlow Street to the east, the Ohio River to the south, and Broadway to the west. Modern Cincinnati's waterfront attractions are built partly on the old Fort Washington grounds.

### **Twelve Mile Square Reservation**

The Treaty of Greenville (1795) reserved to the United States a twelve mile square military reservation located at the rapids of the Maumee. This strategic location had been recognized by the British, who erected Ft. Miami on the north bank in 1794 to assist Ohio Indians to stop further encroachments upon their lands. As a condition of Jay's Treaty (1794), the British abandoned the fort in the summer of 1796. During the War of 1812, General William Henry Harrison's army erected Ft. Meigs on the south side of the Maumee just below the rapids, but long before that, surveys had been made within the Twelve Mile Square.

By an act of Congress March 3, 1805, the Reserve was surveyed into four, six mile square townships, numbered clockwise with number one located in the southwest corner. Each township was partially subdivided into sections although many sections impinged upon private land claims. In 1816, sections fronting the river were subdivided into long lots of about 160 acres apiece. They are numbered 1 to 93

and called “River Tracts” in the State Auditor’s records. Also in 1816, town lots and out lots were to be laid out in a quantity not to exceed two entire sections. Included was the town of Perrysburg.

## Two Mile Square Reservation

The Two Mile Square, now embraced within the city limits of Fremont, was another strategic location reserved to the United States in the Treaty of Greenville (1795). It was located on both sides of the Sandusky River at the rapids. During the War of 1812, Americans built Ft. Stephenson on an acre of land on the river’s west side. In 1813, young Major George Croghan and his badly outnumbered troops successfully defended the fort against a British and Indian force of about 1,300 men.

In 1807, the Two Mile Square was surveyed into four 640-acre sections. By an act of April 26, 1816, section one, east of the river, was divided into 310 in-lots and 63 out-lots to create the town of Croghanville, named to honor the defender of Ft. Stephenson. In 1829, the town, now on both sides of the river, was incorporated as Lower Sandusky. In 1848, however, its name was changed to Fremont to honor Maj. Gen. John C. Fremont, the “Pathfinder of the West.” The federal land office in Wooster handled early land sales.



*Fort Washington, erected 1789-90 in Cincinnati.*



*Marker commemorating Fort Washington, built in 1789 and 1790 on the Ohio River, opposite the mouth of the Licking River. It was demolished in 1808. The marker is located in Cincinnati, Hamilton County, Ohio. The photograph was taken ca. 1940-1949.*

## FEDERAL LAND GRANTS TO THE STATE OF OHIO

In addition to its grants to groups and individuals, the federal government made substantial land grants to the State of Ohio in support of specific purposes. These grants involve many interests. The principal ones are described briefly herein.

### School Lands

Among the Founding Fathers' generation were leaders who believed an educated public was necessary to sustain a self-governing republic. Even before adoption of the Constitution of 1787, the Confederation Congress had provided real support for public schooling by providing, in the Land Act of 1785, that section 16 (one square mile) in every survey township, be set aside for the "maintenance of public schools within said township."<sup>8</sup>

The ordinance regards the township as a surveying unit, a six mile square containing 36 one mile square sections numbered in a prescribed sequence. Section 16 is located close to the center of the township. Civil townships, on the other hand, are political units of local government within counties. In states surveyed under the federal rectangular system, survey townships and civil townships usually have the same boundaries, but there are many exceptions.

The Northwest Ordinance of 1787 identified characteristics to be found in a well-ordered, democratic society, but it made no provision, beyond encouragement, for support of public schooling. In the enabling act of 1802, however, Congress offered three positions which, if accepted by delegates to the 1802 constitutional convention, "shall be obligatory upon the United States." The first proposition was that section 16 in every township, "and where such section has been sold, granted, or disposed of," equivalent land closest to section 16, "shall be granted to the inhabitant of such township for the use of schools."

Convention delegates responded with a counterproposal. The United States should donate one thirty-sixth (2.77%) of the land area of Ohio for the

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8) By 1920, 73,155,075 acres of public land had been given by the federal government to the public land states in support of public schooling.

The United States government ultimately granted 704,204 acres to Ohio for the support of public schooling. Each township received **section 16** whenever possible, or another section in lieu of it. Early land grants sometimes interfered with the availability of section 16, so it was not uncommon for a substitute section to be assigned. Downtown Columbus, for example, is situated in Range 22, Township 5, Section 16 (according to Matthew's Survey) which should have been reserved for support of public schools. However, the Refugee Grant overlapped this section 16, and it was therefore unavailable for schools, but was available to claimants of the Refugee Grant. Thus township 5's schools were assigned Section 15 in Township 11, Range 21 (Matthew's Survey), which is located next to Township 11's school section, now located in Madison Township, Franklin County, near Groveport.

### *A Township*

6	5	4	3	2	1
7	8	9	10	11	12
18	17	16	15	14	13
19	20	21	22	23	24
30	29	28	27	26	25
31	32	33	34	35	36

*Congress reserved **section 16** near the middle of each township for the use of public schools.*

The Virginia Military District, the Connecticut Western Reserve, and the United States Military District all received school lands, but these lands were not located within either the Virginia Military District or in the Western Reserve because neither tract was developed under federal jurisdiction. Virginia Military District school lands (105,600 acres) are located in Morrow, Wayne, Holmes, Ashland, Richland and Crawford counties. Western Reserve lands are located in Holmes and Tuscarawas counties (56,000 acres) and in Williams, DeJaree, Paulding, Putnam, Henry, and Van Wert counties (57,724.16 acres). In all, the Connecticut Western Reserve was granted 93,724.16 acres.

United States Military District school lands totaled 72,000 acres and are located in Guernsey, Coshocton, Muskingum, Licking, Morrow, and Delaware counties. The Donation Tract, the Two Mile Square reserve, the Moravian Tracts, and the French Grants were granted school lands either within the tracts, or adjoining them.

support of public schools. Also, the United States should give the state not less than three percent of the net proceeds derived from public land sales in Ohio for constructing roads within the state, and should donate one survey township (23,040 acres) for an institution of higher learning. Finally, the Ohio legislature should be given control of the donated lands, in trust, for the purposes Congress intended when making the Grant.<sup>9</sup> Congress accepted these bold counterproposals on March 3, 1803, thereby appropriating public land to honor its commitment to Ohio.

On April 15, 1803, Ohio's first state legislature provided for leasing and administering school lands. Initially lands were to be leased for seven to fifteen years. The lessee was obligated to clear and fence the property, plant 100 apple trees, and perform other duties. In 1817, in what proved to be an unfortunate move, the legislature allowed school lands to be leased for 99 years, renewable forever. Some legislators wanted to sell school lands, and on February 1, 1826, Congress permitted sales with the provision that the township's inhabitants must vote their consent. The legislature complied with this mandate and, on January 20, 1827, enacted the voting, appraisal, and conveyance procedures to be followed. Proceeds from the sale of school lands were to be deposited in the Common School Fund, and interest on the principal paid to the schools within the original surveyed townships.

The Ohio Constitution of 1851 (still the basic law of Ohio, although much amended) provided in Article VI, Section I for protection of the principal of all funds received from the sale or other disposition of the lands granted or entrusted to the state for educational or religious purposes. This article was amended in 1968, and the trust monies were then dispersed for educational purposes.

Until 1914, school lands were administered by trustees of the original surveyed townships. Often their stewardship was sloppy, a problem that went back to the earliest days of statehood. In 1838, for example, Samuel Lewis, the state's first Superintendent of Common Schools, issued the "First Annual Report

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9) Miami University became the beneficiary of the grant of a township to support higher learning.

from this department for the State of Ohio.” Lewis rode on horseback over much of the state gathering information. His report chronicled abuses by township trustees including misdirecting tax monies ostensibly collected for school purposes, and leasing school lands to favorites under excessively generous terms. Later generations would call the latter abuses “sweetheart deals.”

In 1914, the Auditor of State became responsible for leasing mineral rights on school lands, and in addition to his other duties, the Garver Act of 1917 made him Supervisor of School and Ministerial Lands. The Auditor retained supervisory control until August 1, 1985, when the legislature transferred most of these duties to the Director of Administrative Services.<sup>10</sup>

On June 29, 1988, legislation went into effect that transferred the general charge, supervision, management, and all remaining monies of school lands from the Director of Administrative Services to the Board of Education in each school district that had been allotted these lands. Title to them is now held in trust by the State of Ohio, through the General Assembly, as per a March 3, 1803 Act of Congress.

The Auditor of State maintains the record copy of School and Ministerial Land deeds issued by the State of Ohio. Final certificates for such lands, as well as lease records, are located in the State of Ohio Archives, Ohio Historical Center.

## **Ministerial Lands**

In the early years of the American Union, some states still taxed their citizens for the benefit of religion. This was a holdover from English and other European traditions where one denomination constituted a state church and received its support and other perquisites from the state. In America, however, religious diversity undercut that practice as it became apparent that there would be no agreement on whose religious practices would prevail, let alone earn

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10) At the time of transfer, four school land farms totaling 1,232 acres were under two year leases, while several small lots in Columbiana County were under lease for 99 years, renewable forever. The four school land farms were located in Hardin County, Marion Township (R9E, T4S, S16-640 acres); Ross County, Green Townships (R21, T9, S15-312 acres); Marion County, Big Island Township (R14E, T5S, S15-160 acres); and Franklin County, Madison Township (R21, T11, S16-120 acres).

Some 99-year leases renewable forever are still in effect in Marietta and in Hamilton County's Delhi and Green townships. Persons occupying these lands do not own them, which presents a title problem. To clear this problem, persons pay the back rent and receive a deed from the State of Ohio. The back rent on some parcels has been as low as five cents a year because the original 1805 rent formula is still in effect.

In 1833, Congress authorized Ohio to sell ministerial lands. Money from the sale was invested, and churches within the original surveying township received the interest and rent money until 1968, when the constitutionality of such church-state relationships was challenged. Congress then authorized the remaining ministerial funds to be dispersed for schools. In May, 1968, Ohio voters approved a constitutional amendment that directed any future ministerial income be used solely for educational purposes.

public tax support. Congress' grant of ministerial lands in Ohio (such grants limited to the Ohio Company Purchase and the Symmes Purchase) was therefore somewhat of an anomaly.

Both the Ohio Company's First Purchase and the Symmes Purchase provided that section 29 of each township be set aside for the support of religion. Monies realized from the leasing or sale of section 29 were to be distributed to the township's churches on a pro rata basis according to each denomination's membership. As with school lands, township trustees were in charge of administering these lands. After Ohio emerged as a state, the Ohio General Assembly became the trustee of ministerial lands. The legislature enacted laws permitting 99-year leases, renewable forever. Income from ministerial lands, therefore, was severely limited.

Ohio's ministerial lands totaled 43,525 acres. In the Ohio Company First Purchase, ministerial lands were located in Washington, Meigs, Gallia, Lawrence, and Athens counties. When the original survey was made, it was dis-



covered that Marietta was within a ministerial section, and the federal government would not permit the sale of section 29 in Marietta. Congress did not set aside section 29 in the Ohio Company's Second Purchase (parts of Vinton, Morgan, Hocking, and Athens counties), but on January 7, 1796, the Ohio Company set aside section 29 in each of the ten surveying townships located in this tract. Congress treated section 29 lands in the Symmes Purchase as it did those in the Ohio Company lands through a contract with the Board of Treasury. Ministerial lands in the Symmes Purchase are located in parts of Hamilton, Butler, and Warren counties.

Ministerial lands are yet another evidence that Ohio's experience with federal lands is unique.

Congress made no other provision for the support of religion elsewhere in the public domain. Some small, specific mission grants were made in a few western states based on the historic presence there of continuous religious activity.

## **Canal Lands**

Canals opened the interior of Ohio to national and world markets. In 1825 the state commenced construction on the Ohio and Erie Canal and the Miami Canal, later extended into the Miami and Erie Canal. It was an enormous

undertaking for a relatively poor state to handle. Ohio followed the lead of New York State, which had just completed its Erie Canal, and sold state-backed bonds in eastern money markets to finance construction of these two through



*The old Miami and Erie Canal, built between 1825-1845, St. Marys, Auglaize County, Ohio, ca. 1940-1949.*

routes connecting Lake Erie with the Ohio River. Several short feeder lines were also constructed.

In Ohio's settled areas, land for canal right-of-way was secured through eminent domain. In some cases, land owners donated right-of-way to the state knowing that a canal would enhance the value of their remaining holdings. The northward extension of the Miami and Erie, however, ran largely through unsold federal lands. In 1828, Congress granted Ohio 500,000 acres in the state's northwestern region to help finance the northward extension of the Miami Canal. This was the first of several grants that ultimately totaled 1,100,361 acres. Ohio realized \$2,257,487 from the sale of these lands.<sup>11</sup>

Ohio's canal era was rather brief. Construction started July 4, 1825. By July 4, 1827, the first usable section of the Ohio and Erie (36 miles from Akron to Cleveland) was in operation. Ultimately the Ohio Canal System included more than 795 miles of through canals and feeders, five reservoirs comprising



11) Ohio's major canals and their length were: Ohio and Erie, 308 miles; Miami and Erie, 248 miles; Wabash and Erie, 18 miles in Ohio (most of it was in Indiana); Hocking, 56 miles; Walhonding, 25 miles; Sandy and Beaver, 6 miles (the state was only responsible for a small part of this canal); Muskingum improvement, 91 miles; and eight feeders, 42 miles.

32,903 acres, 29 stream dams, 294 lift locks, and 44 aqueducts. These cost the state \$15,967,652. The cost of operating and maintaining the system, up to November 15, 1901 was \$12,464,130. Gross receipts for that period were \$17,556,722.

The mature canal system had scarcely begun to function when, in the 1850s, large scale railroad development undercut the canals' importance. By encouraging railroad development, the state actually contributed to the demise of its considerable canal investment. In the Civil War era, the state surrendered control of the system to private interests that took what profit they could and allowed the system to deteriorate. Late in the nineteenth century, the state reclaimed control, but found itself stuck with unprofitable, deteriorating properties. Neither Ohio's governors nor other influential people could persuade the legislature to invest in a major overhaul. In 1913, a great flood washed out or destroyed nearly all the still viable sections.

Much canal right-of-way was converted to other uses. Railroad tracks were laid on some, roads and trunk sewer lines preempted other sections, and private citizens whose land abutted canal lands often treated canal property as their own. The state recovered some of its canal lands, but much remained outside its grasp. Today, canal towpath and reservoirs are prized for their recreational value.

## **Wagon Road or Turnpike Lands**

As provided in the congressional enabling act of June 30, 1802, Ohio received three percent of the net proceeds from federal land sales in the state to be used exclusively for building roads within the state. (Another two percent of federal sales was marked for construction of roads leading to Ohio's boundaries.) The state used this seed money effectively to help construct its earliest roads. By June 30, 1880, Ohio had received \$596,634 from this source.

As it had with canals, Congress recognized the importance of roads by granting federal land to the state to help in the construction of two important roads. On February 23, 1823, Ohio was granted 60,000 acres along the 46-mile route of the Maumee Road. Income from these lands made it possible for Ohio

to construct a road running from Perrysburg on the Maumee to the western boundary of the Western Reserve (at modern Bellevue). The help was essential because much of the roadway ran through the Black Swamp's supersaturated terrain which made road building an expensive proposition. In 1827, the state received an additional 31,596 acre congressional grant, this one in support of the Columbus and Sandusky Turnpike.

Federal land grants to Ohio for canals and roads came at a time in the nation's history when there was much disagreement about what role the federal government should play, if any, in financing internal improvements. Many argued that financing roads and canals should be borne entirely by the states in which the improvements rested: they were the beneficiaries, not taxpayers across the nation at large. Others countered by claiming that roads and canals, wherever located, were, or soon would become, part of a national transportation system that would expedite the mails, allow quick movement of troops and supplies to threatened areas, and generally help bind the nation together. Even

eastern business officials and consumers would benefit from having goods flow freely within western states and across state boundaries. Ohio was fortunate. It received its federal land grants for roads and canals before resistance to federal funding of internal improvements tightened during the administrations of Andrew Jackson (1829-37).



*Rutted road with Zanesville, Muskingum County, Ohio in the distance, ca. 1886-1888. This photograph is part of a collection compiled by Henry Howe while researching the 1889 edition of "Historical Collections of Ohio."*

## Salt Reservations

Salt was a precious and scarce commodity on the frontier. It was valued for seasoning, but it was also essential for the preservation of certain foods, mainly pork. Many a frontier family or military garrison subsisted on little more than salt pork during winter months. Indians had “boiled salt” at Ohio’s salt springs. The springs were located in surveyors’ notes, and they brought prime prices on the market.

Congress recognized the special value of salt springs. In the Land Act of 1796, it reserved salt springs on federal land from sale. In Ohio, these reservations were found in present day Jackson County (23,040 acres or one township), Delaware County (4,000 acres), and Muskingum County (1,280 acres). The Scioto springs were Ohio’s largest and most valuable. A thriving settlement grew up around them, causing the state legislature to create a new county of Jackson with the county seat located at the salt works.

In 1816, Congress authorized the sale of 640 acres of this reservation and the proceeds of \$7,196 were used to construct county buildings. In 1824, Congress authorized Ohio to sell all of its remaining salt lands and use the proceeds for “literary purposes.”



*Scioto Salt Springs  
Photo courtesy of:  
Ohio Department of Natural Resources*

## Swamp Lands

On September 28, 1850, by act of Congress, Ohio received 25,640 acres of land mostly in the undrained Black Swamp of Northwestern Ohio. The land was considered worthless at the time, but draining it in later years produced prime farmland.

## FEDERAL LANDS DONATED BY CONGRESS FOR UNIVERSITIES

### Ohio University

In the First Ohio Company Purchase, two surveying townships were reserved by Congress perpetually “for the purposes of a university.” These lands comprising 46,080 acres are located in the civil townships of Athens and Alexander in Athens County. The recipient of this land grant was Ohio University, chartered by the state on February 18, 1804. The next year the state legislature permitted the University Trustees to lease these lands to settlers for 99 years, renewable forever. The leases fixed an annual rent of six percent of the appraised value of the lands. This decision was short-sighted. The trustees were interested in immediate income, and doubtless, had only a limited number of options for obtaining it in what was still untamed wilderness.



*Photographic reproduction of a drawing by Henry Howe depicting Ohio University at Athens, Ohio in 1846. Ohio University, founded in 1804, was the first institution of higher education established in the old northwest. This photographic reproduction of Howe's drawing dates ca. 1970-1979.*

In 1826, Congress permitted the state to sell land in the two surveying townships, but for lands already leased, persons holding the lease paid only the rent established by the 1805 law, and that condition prevails today.

The primitive institution was a university in name only when the first students appeared in 1809. For some years it remained more a secondary school than a true college, but by 1820 it was offering some collegiate courses.

Among the university's early graduates were men

of distinction in the early history of Ohio. Ohio University was the first collegiate institution in the old Northwest Territory, and the first publically assisted institution of its kind in America.



*Ohio University's Cutler Hall, built in 1816.*



*Aerial view of Ohio University, founded 1804 in Athens, Athens County, Ohio, ca. 1940-1949.*

## Miami University

John Cleves Symmes, as we have noted, was involved in several difficulties while trying to develop the land he and his associates had purchased between the Miami rivers. Among them was his failure to honor the sale provision requiring him to set-aside a full surveying township in support of higher education. Congress expected Symmes either to give the federal government land in that amount from his grant or to pay \$15,360, plus interest from the date of his 1794 patent. Although Symmes had conflicts with Congress, he still had political clout, having been chosen by Congress as one of the three judges for the Northwest Territory.

Congress declared in September, 1803 that 23,321 acres (36.4 square miles) located in the Congress Lands west of the Great Miami were to be set aside for “an academy, other public schools and seminaries of learning.” The set aside land is located in modern Butler County. It benefited Miami University, chartered in 1809 by the state legislature in a town the legislature named Oxford. Secondary level classes began in 1818, collegiate courses followed in 1824, and the first collegiate class graduated in 1826. Unfortunately, as in other instances involving the leasing of public lands for school purposes, Miami realized little income, for the land was leased for 99 years, renewable forever, at what is today a negligible rate.



*The earliest known photo of the Miami campus, ca. 1858. The large building was known as either “The Main Building” or simply “Old Main.” The two smaller buildings were the North and South Dormitories.  
Photo courtesy of the Miami University Archives.*



## The Ohio State University

While the Civil War was raging, Congress passed the Morrill Act of 1862. It offered land grants to any state or territory that would establish a college focused on agriculture and the mechanic arts. The Morrill Act thus became the basis for the nation's impressive "land grant" universities, most of which are A&M (Agricultural and Mechanical) universities.

On February 9, 1864, the Ohio legislature accepted this act's terms and received 30,000 acres of public land for each federal senator and representative. Since Ohio had two senators and 19 representatives, the state was entitled to 630,000 acres. Federal lands were no longer available in Ohio, however, so the state accepted land scrip in its place. Land scrip, issued by the federal government, could be used to acquire land anywhere in the public domain open for private entry. Instead of buying land, Ohio sold its land scrip for \$342,450.80, about 54 cents per acre. This became the university's initial stake. The Ohio Agricultural and Mechanical College was chartered in 1870, opened its doors to students in 1873, and graduated its first class in 1878. In addition to the Morrill Grant, the state legislature assigned the school at least 76,735 acres of unlocated



*Ohio State University's University Hall, 1874 in Columbus, Ohio,  
Photo courtesy of: The Ohio State University.*

lands remaining in the Virginia Military District. These lands were sold or quit claimed to individuals until the 1940s.

Though initially designed to be an A&M college, the school's trustees soon decided its curriculum should reach beyond agriculture and the mechanical arts, and, consistent with this belief, they renamed the school Ohio State University. To emphasize its place in the state system, the name later became The Ohio State University.

### **Original Surveys Influence Ohio's Development**

The original surveys of federal lands in Ohio often defined regions set aside for the benefit of specific groups. Survey lines defining congressional land grants became, in effect, boundaries setting off one cultural group from another. Ohio, therefore, was a mosaic of diverse peoples from its beginning. These groups of dissimilar background, with different economic, political, and social traditions, were present in large enough numbers, and they maintained their regional hold long enough to leave enduring marks upon Ohio. To this day, a discerning viewer can find cultural traces that the state's earliest settlers left in their various regions.



*Ohio State University's First Graduating Class 1878 in Columbus, Ohio,  
Photo courtesy of: The Ohio State University.*

New Englanders established the state's first authorized, enduring settlement at Marietta in April, 1788, in lands purchased by the Ohio Company of Associates. Shortly thereafter, a larger group of New Englanders moved into the Connecticut Western Reserve, a region Connecticut had sold to private land developers. These two centers of New England influence supported northern values - federalism, internal improvements, business enterprise, banks, and public schools supported by tax money.

In south central Ohio, western Virginians and Kentuckians dominated the Virginia Military District, infusing the region with the values of the Upland South—localism and states' rights, decentralization, livestock raising as an agricultural specialty, schooling to be paid for by those attending, and a more laid-back lifestyle than was found among New Englanders.

The Seven Ranges was not designed to favor a particular cultural group, but its proximity to the Ohio River attracted frontier Pennsylvanians, western Virginians and others who simply moved across the river to their new homes. They were a somewhat diverse group, but the strong Scots-Irish presence among them was noted for its independence, antipathy toward Indians, and love of political and religious disputation.

John Cleves Symmes and associates sold much of the Miami Purchase to fellow New Jerseyites and other Middle States people, some of whom came to settle between the Miamis and some who sold their holdings to others. The Miami Purchase was culturally mixed from the start because of its easy access to Kentuckians seeking more secure land titles, and because it bordered the Ohio River, the main avenue to the West for migrants. Cincinnati, the region's focus, quickly became Ohio's largest and most cosmopolitan city, attracting a diversity of people including Ohio's largest concentration of free blacks and unknown numbers of fugitive slaves.

Other cultural groups in early Ohio included Pennsylvania Germans. Although Congress bestowed no land grant upon them, they tended initially to cluster within the Congress Lands of the Ohio River Survey located immediately south of the Western Reserve. They brought their language, agricultural practices, and various Protestant religious preferences to this region. Congress

designed the French Grants and the Moravian Grants to benefit people with distinctive social and cultural outlooks, but their numbers were too small for them to have statewide impact.

A salad bowl of peoples, each distinct but living close by people different from themselves, organized the State of Ohio. No one group was dominant enough to impose its will upon the others, although it might assume for a time the leadership role in a particular political, economic, or social cause. Early political leadership, for example, fell to Democratic Republicans from the regions largely inhabited by persons of southern origin. They substantially outnumbered Federalist New Englanders. On the other hand, decades later New England influence tended to define Ohio's move toward tax-supported schools, internal improvements, and support for the great antebellum social reform movements, especially anti-slavery.

Migration into the state from other parts of the Union was accompanied by a strong flow of immigrants directly from Europe. They came principally from Great Britain, Ireland, and the various German states. The British (English, Scots, Welsh) settled widely across the state, having nothing to do with survey boundaries. Nor did the Irish confine themselves to a particular region. In time, Irish immigrants tended to cluster in villages and cities.

The German immigrants were also located in many parts of the state, but those who were primarily farmers tended to cluster in new lands recently opened. About 1830, Germans by the thousands started moving into north central, west central, and northwestern Ohio, and this movement lasted for decades. It was common for Germans to come to Cincinnati, where brokers assisted them in acquiring government land or land sold by speculators. Most of this land was located in those surveys located south and east, and north and east of the Principal Meridian and Base Line. It was originally surveyed between 1819 and 1821. Some later located in the Michigan Survey.

This immigration was large enough and enduring enough to give a flavor to these large regions of Ohio. There were cultural splits among the Germans, most notably between Roman Catholic and Protestant believers, leading to the establishment of villages which were exclusively one or the other.

In large part, however, values were shared—respect for the German language (despite various dialects), architecture, agricultural practices, food specialties, a sense of neatness and concern for property, and an enduring social and political conservatism. As Germans and others moved into northwestern Ohio, they were aided by the Miami and Erie Canal and by the Maumee Road connecting the Maumee River with the Western Reserve. Both were built with funds derived from the sale of federal land granted to Ohio for these purposes.

Ohio's growth and development proceeded at an impressive pace, so that by 1840 it had become the nation's third most populous state, a distinction it would hold until 1890. In the process, the original survey lines were often lost to the public eye. In a few cases, such as the 41st parallel of latitude defining the Western Reserve's southern boundary, a portion of a survey line serves as part of the boundary of a county, but most counties were erected independent of survey lines. Many contain lands from more than one original survey. Franklin County, for instance, has some townships laid out on the six mile square grid of the East of Scioto Survey, some on the five mile square grid of the United States Military District, some subject to the special considerations of the Refugee Grant, and some formed in the helter skelter of the Virginia Military District.

A special case is the Greenville Treaty Line. Between the Tuscarawas River and the Ohio-Indiana border, it cuts west by southwest through a number of counties, dividing one original survey pattern from another. It is interesting that an agreement, forged in 1795 with Indian peoples, continues to impact upon contemporary Ohioans.

Ohio may no longer be a salad bowl of diverse people. Groups have lost their distinctiveness through mobility, intermarriage, new immigration, and the cultural blending wrought by a media-invoked cultural salad dressing poured over us all.

The most meaningful original survey lines that endure today are those marking state boundaries. They do not set us apart. They embrace us all.

## Appendix

# The Origin of Ohio's County Names

(Date in parentheses is year county was established, it may differ from year it was actually organized.)

**Adams (1797)**, named for our second president, John Adams, during whose administration the county was organized.

**Allen (1820)**, probably named for either Ethan Allen, a hero of the Revolutionary War or John L. Allen, a hero of the War of 1812. Both men were colonels.

**Ashland (1846)**, named after “Ashland,” home of the Whig candidate for President, Henry Clay, outside Lexington, Kentucky.

**Ashtabula (1808)**, named after the Ashtabula River which meant “Fish River” in the local Indian dialect.

**Athens (1805)**, the county is named after Athens, Greece.

**Auglaize (1848)**, named for the Auglaize River. “Auglaize” is a Shawnee Indian word meaning “fallen timbers.”

**Belmont (1801)**, comes from the French words “belle monte,” meaning “beautiful mountain,” describing the hills of the county.

**Brown (1818)**, named for Gen. Jacob Brown, a hero of the War of 1812. Georgetown, the county seat, was the boyhood home of Ulysses Simpson Grant, Civil War General and 18th President of the United States.

**Butler (1803)**, named for Major General Richard Butler, killed during the disastrous defeat of General Arthur St. Clair by the Indians on Nov. 4, 1791.

**Carroll (1833)**, took the name Carroll from Charles Carroll of Carrollton, Maryland, the last surviving signer of the Declaration of Independence, who died in Baltimore on November 14, 1832, at the age of 96.

**Champaign (1805)**, is French and means “a plain,” descriptive of the level land in the area.

**Clark (1818)**, named for Brigadier General George Rogers Clark who defeated the Shawnee Indians in a battle near Springfield, on August 8, 1780.

**Clermont (1800)**, comes from the French word meaning “clear mountain.”

**Clinton (1810)**, named in honor of George Clinton, who was vice-president of the United States when the county was formed.

**Columbiana (1803)**, derived from Christopher Columbus and Anna.

**Coshocton (1810)**, is an anglicized version of the Indian village “Goschachgunk” or “Goschaching” meaning “Black Bear Town” or “where there is a river crossing.”

**Crawford (1820)**, named in honor of Col. William Crawford who was burned at the stake in 1782 by Indians.

**Cuyahoga (1808)**, named for the Cuyahoga River. Cuyahoga is an Indian word meaning “crooked,” or “winding stream.”

**Darke (1809)**, named for Gen. William Darke, Revolutionary War hero.

**Defiance (1845)**, named for Fort Defiance built in 1794 by General Anthony Wayne.

**Delaware (1808)**, named for the Delaware Indians who came from the Delaware River area near Philadelphia.

**Erie (1838)**, named for the Erie Indian tribe. In their Indian dialect the word “erie” meant “cat” or “wildcat.”

**Fairfield (1800)**, Arthur St. Clair, Governor of the Northwest Territory, named this county for the beauty of its “fair fields.”

**Fayette (1810)**, named for Marie Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert du Motier, the Marquis de Lafayette. He served as an American Major General in the Revolutionary War and was named an honorary U.S. citizen in 1803.

**Franklin (1803)**, named for Benjamin Franklin, printer and diplomat.

**Fulton (1850)**, named for Robert Fulton, inventor of the steamboat.

**Gallia (1803)**, is derived from Gaul, the ancient name of France.

**Geauga (1806)**, the name Geauga or Sheauga was one given by the Indians to the Grand River which flows through the county. It means “raccoon.”

**Greene (1803)**, named for Gen. Nathaniel Greene, Revolutionary War hero.

**Guernsey (1810)**, due to the fact that many of the original settlers came from the Isle of Guernsey in the English Channel.

**Hamilton (1790)**, named for Alexander Hamilton, the first Secretary of the Treasury, 1789-1795.

**Hancock (1820)**, named for John Hancock, President of the Continental Congress (1775-1777) and first signer of the Declaration of Independence.

**Hardin (1820)**, named for Colonel John Hardin who was executed by the Indians while on a peace mission in 1792.

**Harrison (1813)**, named for General William Henry Harrison, a hero of the War of 1812. First U.S. President to have lived in Ohio.

**Henry (1820)**, named for Patrick Henry, Governor of Virginia 1776-1779 and 1784-1786; a celebrated orator of the Revolutionary War period.

**Highland (1805)**, describes the county’s terrain.

**Hocking (1818)**, derived its name from the Indian word “Hoch-Hoch-ing” which meant “a bottle.” The Hocking River flows through this county which was once claimed by the Wyandot Indians.

**Holmes (1824)**, named for Major Andrew H. Holmes, who was killed during Major George Croghan’s unsuccessful attack on Fort Mackinac (Michigan) on August 4, 1814.

**Huron (1809)**, the name Huron was given by the French to the Wyandot Indian tribe who lived in this area.

**Jackson (1816)**, named for Major General Andrew Jackson, who defeated the British at the Battle of New Orleans, January 8, 1815.

**Jefferson (1797)**, named for Thomas Jefferson, statesman and Vice President of the United States, March 4, 1797 to March 3, 1801, and the 3rd President of the U.S. (1801-09).

**Knox (1808)**, named for General Henry Knox, the first U.S. Secretary of War.

**Lake (1840)**, named because it borders on Lake Erie; Ohio’s smallest county in land area.

**Lawrence (1815)**, named for Captain James Lawrence, commander of the U.S. Frigate *Chesapeake* during the War of 1812.

**Licking (1808)**, derived its name from the principal stream flowing through the county. Pioneers called it the “Licking River”, but it was called “Pataskala” by the Indians. The river received its name from salt licks in the area.

**Logan (1818)**, named for Gen. Benjamin Logan, who destroyed the Shawnee Indians Mac-o-chee Villages in the area in 1786.

**Lorain (1822)**, named after the Province of Lorraine, France.

**Lucas (1835)**, named for Robert Lucas, Ohio Governor 1832-1836, who personally commanded Ohio troops in the 1835 boundary dispute with Michigan. First territorial Governor of Iowa 1838-1841.

**Madison (1810)**, named for James Madison, U.S. President from March 4, 1809 to March 3, 1817.

**Mahoning (1846)**, derives its name from the Mahoning River. Mahoning is from the Indian word "Mahoni," meaning a "lick" or "Mahonink," meaning "at the lick."

**Marion (1820)**, named in honor of Gen. Francis Marion of South Carolina, the "Swamp Fox" of Revolutionary War fame.

**Medina (1812)**, named for Medina in Arabia, the town to which Mohammed fled from Mecca.

**Meigs (1819)**, named for Return Jonathan Meigs, Jr., Ohio Governor 1810-1814 and Postmaster General 1814-1823 who lived in Marietta.

**Mercer (1820)**, named in honor of Gen. Hugh Mercer, who was killed at the Battle of Princeton, New Jersey, on January 3, 1777.

**Miami (1807)**, named for the Miami Indians who claimed Western Ohio and whose principal village, Pickawillany, was located near Piqua.

**Monroe (1813)**, named for James Monroe, U.S. Secretary of State, 1811-1817, and later the fifth President of the United States, 1817-1825.

**Montgomery (1803)**, named for General Richard Montgomery who lost his life in the assault on Quebec during the Revolutionary War.

**Morgan (1817)**, named in honor of Gen. Daniel Morgan, who won a brilliant victory against the British at Cowpens, South Carolina, January 17, 1781.

**Morrow (1848)**, named for Jeremiah Morrow, Congressman 1803-1813; 1840-1843, U.S. Senator 1813-1819, and Ohio Governor 1822-1826.

**Muskingum (1804)**, is an old Delaware Indian word meaning "a town by the river."

**Noble (1851)**, named out of respect for James Noble, a pioneer settler who first bought land in the county in 1814.

**Ottawa (1840)**, named for the Ottawa Indian tribe. The name in their language meant "trader."

**Paulding (1820)**, named for John Paulding, one of three soldiers who captured Major John Andre, British spy in the Revolutionary War.

**Perry (1818)**, named in honor of Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry, who defeated the British in the naval Battle of Lake Erie, September 13, 1813.

**Pickaway (1810)**, named from a misspelling of the tribe of Indians, known as Piqua, a branch of the Shawnee Tribe.

**Pike (1815)**, bears the name of Brig. Gen. Zebulon Montgomery Pike, who discovered Pike's Peak in Colorado in 1806.

**Portage (1808)**, name comes from the old Indian portage path, eight miles in length, between the Cuyahoga and Tuscarawas rivers.

**Preble (1808)**, named for Capt. Edward Preble, naval commander in the Revolutionary War and the War with Tripoli.

**Putnam (1820)**, named for Israel Putnam, Revolutionary War Major General, who gained fame at the Battle of Breed's Hill, often misnamed the Battle of Bunker Hill, on June 17, 1775.

**Richland (1808)**, named for the richness of its soil.

**Ross (1798)**, named by Territorial Governor Arthur St. Clair for his friend, James Ross of Pennsylvania, U.S. Senator 1794-1803.

**Sandusky (1820)**, is a derivative of an Indian word meaning "cold water." In Wyandot and Huron languages it is "Sa-un-dos-tee" meaning "water within water pools."

**Scioto (1803)**, takes its name from the Scioto River which flows through the county. Scioto comes from a Indian word "Scionto," meaning "deer."



**Seneca (1820)**, named for the Seneca Indians, who had a 40,000 acre reservation north of Tiffin from 1817-1831.

**Shelby (1819)**, named for Isaac Shelby, Revolutionary War hero and first Governor of Kentucky. Counties in nine states are named for him.

**Stark (1808)**, named for Gen. John Stark of Revolutionary War fame.

**Summit (1840)**, derived its name for having the highest land on the line of the Ohio and Erie Canal, known as "Portage Summit."

**Trumbull (1800)**, in the Connecticut Western Reserve, was named for Jonathan Trumbull, Jr., Governor of Connecticut 1797-1809.

**Tuscarawas (1808)**, named for the Tuscarawas River, an Indian term perhaps meaning "open mouth".

**Union (1820)**, named because it was formed from parts of Delaware, Franklin, Madison, and Logan counties.

**Van Wert (1820)**, named for Isaac Van Wert, one of the three captors of British spy, Major John Andre. Actual spelling of Van Wert's name was "Van Wart." The spelling was changed due to an illegible entry in Congressional records.

**Vinton (1850)**, named for Samuel Finley Vinton, an Ohio Statesman and U.S. Congressman, known as the "Father of the Department of Interior."

**Warren (1803)**, named for Gen. Joseph Warren, who was killed at the Battle of Breed's (Bunker) Hill, on June 17, 1775.

**Washington (1788)**, Ohio's first county and named in honor of George Washington, who was president of the Constitutional Convention at the time the county was formed.

**Wayne (1808)**, named for Major General Anthony Wayne, Revolutionary War hero, later General-in-Chief of the U.S. Army 1791-1796. Defeated the Indians at the "Battle of Fallen Timbers," August 20, 1794.

**Williams (1820)**, honors David Williams, one of three captors of Major John Andre on September 23, 1780.

**Wood (1820)**, named after Major Eleazer D. Wood, U.S. Army-Engineers, who built Fort Meigs in 1813 while serving on the staff of General William Henry Harrison.

**Wyandot (1845)**, named for the Wyandot Indians, the last Indian tribe in Ohio to cede their reservations March 17, 1842. They moved to lands west of the Mississippi River in July, 1843.

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