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A Quarterly Journal Exploring The Heritage Of Southern Ohio

Volume 6, Number 2

## *In This Issue:*



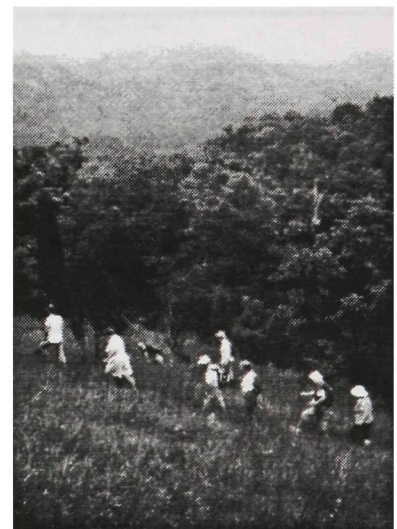
**Life On The Farm  
Of Long Ago**



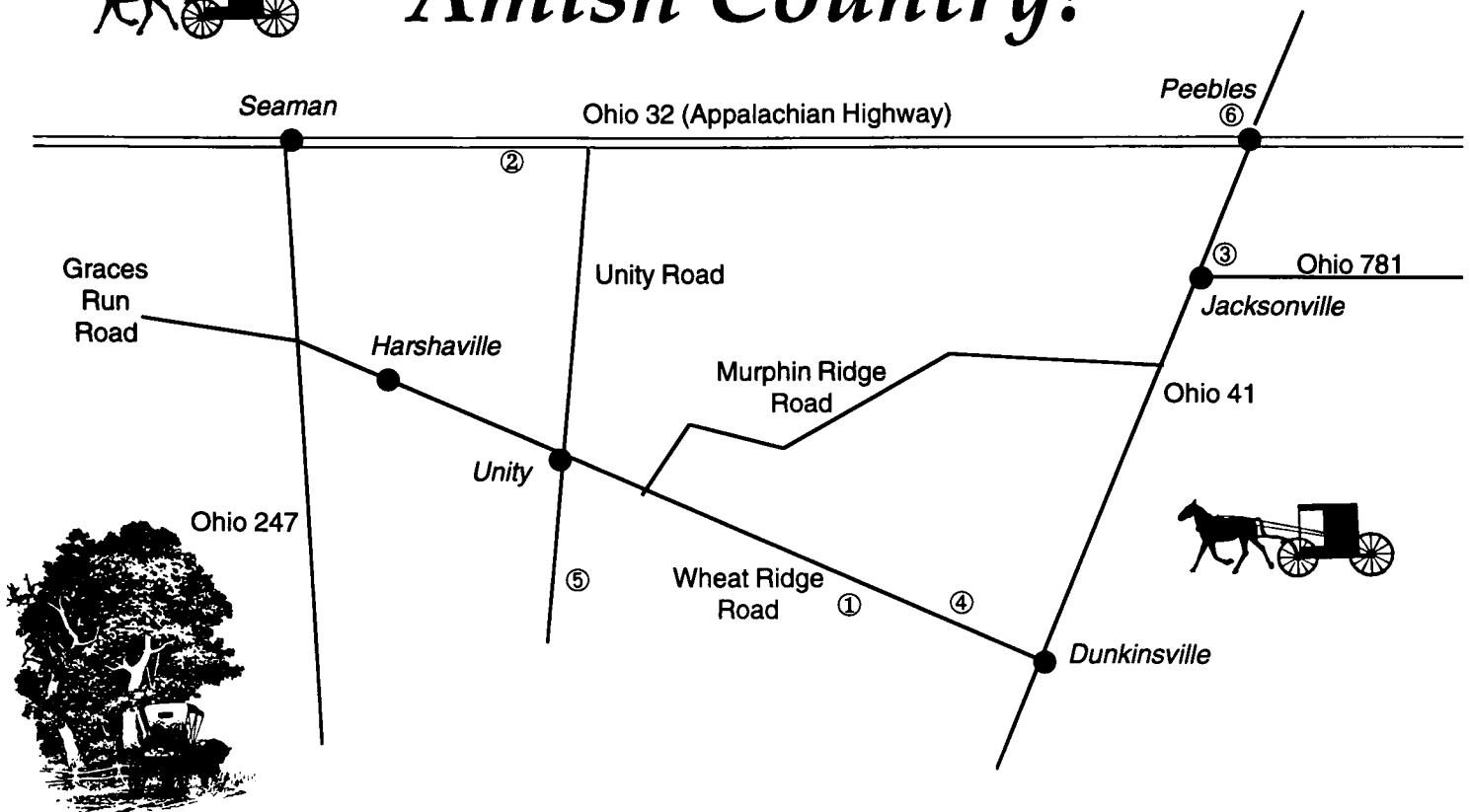
**Mineral Springs  
Adams County, Ohio**

**Hunting For Hanging Prairies**

**Also: Frontier Wedding Customs  
Shawnee-Repeopling The Southland  
Underground Railroad Signals  
The Mighty Teays**



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*The last covered bridge on the  
state highway system  
Page 32*



*Volume 6 Number 2*

## *Table Of Contents*

### **History**

- 7 The Way We Were
- 8 Mineral Springs, Adams County, Ohio
- 22 Shawnee - Repeopling The Southland
- 31 A Scene From The Past
- 32 Bridges To Our Past
- 37 Frontier Wedding Customs
- 47 Let's Keep Their Memory Green
- Outside Back Cover - The Good Old Days**

### **Geology**

- 33 The Mighty Teays

### **Natural History**

- 42 Hunting For Hanging Prairies



*The Shawnee in the Ohio Southland  
Page 22*

### **Features**

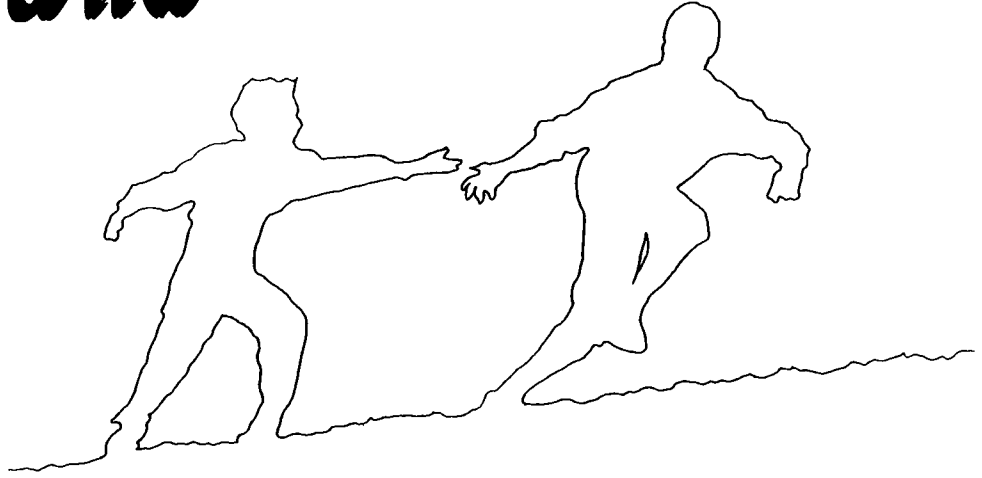
- 2 Underground Railroad Signals
- 20 Life On The Farm Of Long Ago

**Dear Readers,**

**We apologize for the *extreme tardiness*  
of this issue and sincerely hope you did  
not suffer too much inconvenience.**

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# Underground Railroad Signals



*A Contemporary Ring of Relevance*

**Marcia Baker Pogue**

The quest for freedom continues. Reams have been written, but the story is far from complete. In essence it is a never-ending story,



until mankind demonstrates mental and spiritual, as well as physical freedom—perfect peace.

The secret cooperative network, known as the Underground Railroad, aided fugitive slaves in reaching sanctuary prior to the abolition of slavery in the United States. It stands as a magnificent reminder of what can be accomplished when unselfishness, courage, colorblindness, and humanitarian motives unite in a labor of love.

The Underground Railroad has been well-documented, in fact (as known), in rumor, myth and fiction. Examples close to home include excellent accounts by Paul Young in *Ohio Southland*, Winter, 1990 issue and Issue #1, 1991. Mr. Young states in 1991, "...a century and a half after the Underground Railroad had been thoroughly tested...and not found wanting...it is...time for a summing up..."

Anyone with even a shade of interest in the fascinating activity of the uniquely American Underground Railroad, would be encouraged to delve even more deeply into some of the thrilling historical episodes of imaginative details. *Jurassic Park* or *Star Trek* does not encompass any more breathtaking derring-do than real-life actions and risks of those fleeing servitude and those who helped them escape to safety.

Does the Underground Railroad have relevance these days, and are there recent efforts to preserve and make widely available its lore in meaningful ways for current and future generations? The answer is a resounding YES!

The United States Congress thought so in 1990, when it recognized the significance of the Underground Railroad, by passing Public Law 101-628, directing the Secretary of the Interior through the National Park Service (NPS) to conduct a study of alternatives for commemorating and interpreting the Underground Railroad. One of the considerations under the legislation is the establishment of a new unit of the national park system.

Wouldn't the Ohio Southland be the perfect site for such a commemorative facility! An exciting and com-

prehensive proposal for a National Underground Railroad Freedom Center for downtown Cincinnati has been recently submitted to the National Park Service. Background is provided by Mr. Daniel Hurley of Cincinnati, President of Applied History Associates, Project Coordinator for the proposed museum:

*The Greater Cincinnati Chapter of The National Conference of Christians and Jews (NCCJ), approaching its 50th anniversary in 1994, gathered together some people to brainstorm for ideas. To create something of lasting value, not just a one-time thing. Chip Harrod*

(Mr. Robert C. Harrod, Executive Director of NCCJ) proposed an idea submitted to the National Park Service.

(Explanatory note: The NCCJ is a human relations organization dedicated to fighting bias, bigotry and racism in America. The National Conference promotes understanding and respect among all races, religions and cultures through advocacy, conflict resolution and education...Its interest in promotion of the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center springs from its historic mission and from a desire to give this proposal

to the community as a legacy in gratitude for its half-century of support.)

Excerpts from this proposal include: "The NCCJ, Greater Cincinnati Region, in cooperation with one or more existing historical and educational organizations, proposes to establish in Cincinnati a museum focused on the quest for freedom symbolized by the Underground Railroad. The primary exhibition and educational programs of the proposed Freedom Center will highlight the courageous efforts of both African Americans and sympathetic white Americans to secure freedom for those fleeing slavery before and during the Civil War.

"At its best, America proclaimed the belief that all men are created equal, promising freedom and opportunity to each person. At its worst, it enslaved millions of men and women because of their race. This tension between promise and reality inspired many forms of resistance, including escape and flight. Over 130 years

## 20 Dollars Reward.

**R**AN AWAY from the subscriber, living in Woodford county Kentucky, a **YELLOW NEGRO MAN**, named **JEFFREY**, between the age of twenty-five and twenty six years, tho' he dont appear so old, about five feet eight or nine inches high, rather slim than otherwise, a little knock-kneed, wears his hair in plats on his head. Any person who will apprehend said negro, and bring him to me, or secure him in the most convenient jail to the place where he is taken, and give information to me, shall receive the above reward.

**WILLIAM BUFORD.**

**AUGUST 22, 1810.**

31\*

Centinel of the North-Western Territory

after the end of slavery, the image of African American men and women risking everything to seek freedom, remains one of the most powerful, popular and enduring symbols in the nation's history.

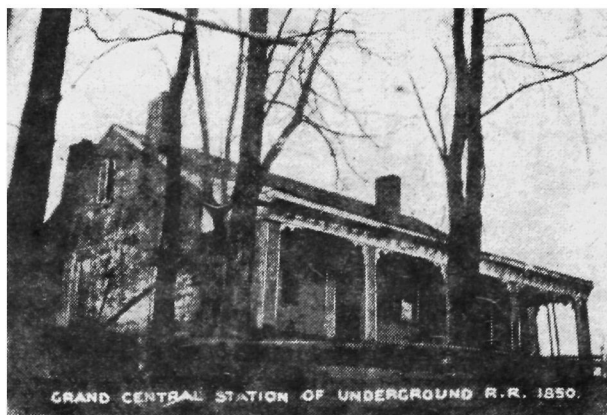
"On the eve of the twenty-first century, contemporary Americans would benefit greatly by re-exploring the history and social themes of the Underground Railroad. And for Cincinnatians (and the Ohio Southland region) the Freedom Center could provide a positive framework within which to renew the discussion of how we will respond to today's human relations challenges. In addition, the Freedom Center will bolster Cincinnati's image as a racially tolerant community."

Mr. Hurley continues, *The feeling is that the Underground Railroad was a time in history when there was meaningful cooperation between blacks and whites. It's not just interest in a historical topic—it's an interest in a historical topic that has CONTEMPORARY RELEVANCE!*

*We believe that our city, and American society in general, very much needs to find a forum where African Americans and Whites in particular can really talk with each other, to bring us together, so to speak. To have an honest discussion today about human relations, we must have an honest discussion about what they were in the past.*

The desire is for a museum of national interest in Cincinnati, the metropolitan center of a rich area, very close

to a number of sites of authentic Underground Railroad operations, such as the Rankin House and Parker House in Ripley. It is hoped that the NPS will be a partner in this process. The NPS began with a list of 400 prospective sites, and has narrowed that number to sixteen peak sites, at this writing.



*A 1905 picture post card showing the now famous Rankin House on the hilltop overlooking Ripley, Ohio. This landmark was a major stop on the Underground Railroad and is now maintained as a museum.*

Dan Hurley points out his concerns as an historian: *One problem is that there's a lot of mythology about the Underground Railroad. I am concerned that we do not perpetuate that mythology, that we try to deal with what the Underground Railroad really was.*

He provides interesting data: *First of all, the Underground Railroad was not nearly as organized as most textbooks seem to indicate; it was a much looser operation. Secondly, and most importantly, it was run primarily by blacks. The*

*other thing that needs to be stressed is that the focus can be shifted to free blacks, but the first steps towards freedom had to be taken by people who were themselves enslaved. The vast majority of African Americans who escaped slavery did it on their own.*

*In many cases, those fleeing toward freedom did not know where they were going, but they knew they were leaving. We think of them as heading north to free U.S. states and to Canada, but actually they went in lots of directions. They headed into Mexico, into Florida, and into the "back country," where they found protection with Native Americans, another part of the story which has been largely ignored. They also headed into the*

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Caribbean, so there is an "island" story.

The traditional image of the Underground Railroad, according to Dan Hurley, is captured in a painting by Cincinnati artist Charles Webber, shown at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893. It depicts white Quaker abolitionists assisting runaway blacks, ...as active ones, with blacks as sort of a helpless cargo. Not true at all! Often, free blacks took care of the runaways themselves.

Mr. Hurley speaks of a quote from *The Philanthropist*, a reform and anti-slavery newspaper published by James Birney: *He was persecuted, had his press thrown in the river, was put out of business. While Birney was in Cincinnati and runaways were passing through, he was rarely, if ever, told about the incidents until after the fact. Even he was not trusted by the black community.*

Among traditional myths is the belief that there were tunnels under the Ohio River. How did escapees cross the river? Dan enlightens us. *The river in the 19th century was not like the river today. Before the dams were built, the river was much shallower. In winter, it often froze solid, and in summer there were many more places where the river could be forded. A famous photograph of the river in the summer of 1883, in the middle chan-*

*nel, records the depth at one foot, eleven inches. You didn't need tunnels because you could walk across the river. The reality is much more interesting than the mythology!*

It can be said that much progress has been made toward freedom, but the end is not yet in sight. It is interesting to note that our first president, George Washing-

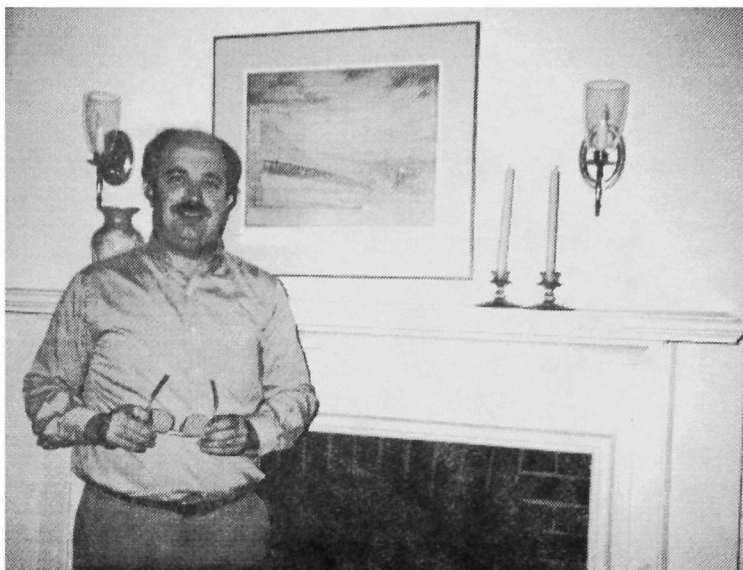
Marcia Baker Pogue

ton, owned 316 slaves at the time of his death in 1799, some of whom were granted their freedom in his will. (He had begun to question slavery before his death.)

Another historical figure, Mary Baker Eddy, author of *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, was left a widow in North Carolina in 1844 when her first husband, George Washington Glover, succumbed to yellow fever. One of her first acts after his passing was to free the one or two

slaves owned by her late husband, before returning to her family home in New England three weeks after his death.

Mrs. Eddy writes in *Science and Health*, "A few immortal sentences, breathing the omnipotence of divine justice, have been potent to...abolish the whipping post and slave market; but oppression neither went down in blood, nor did the breath of freedom come from the cannon's mouth. Love is the liberator. Legally to abol-



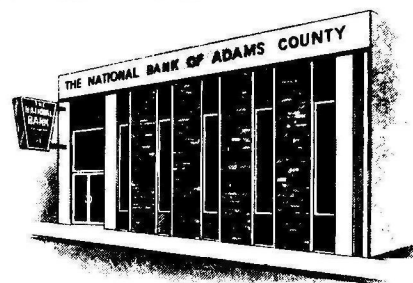
Daniel Hurley, President, Applied History Associates  
and Coordinator for the National Underground  
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between North and South, free and slave, right here at the Ohio Southland's doorstep. Wouldn't it be wonderful to have a museum overlooking this great symbol of freedom?

*"Let all that now divides us, remove and pass away,  
Let all that now unites us, more sweet and lasting prove."  
--old hymn*

\* \* \*

*A winter time view of the Ohio River at Ripley. The Ohio River was the dividing line between the free states of the North and the slave-holding states of the South*

ish unpaid servitude in the United States was hard; but the abolition of mental slavery is a more difficult task."

The Ohio River is the great symbol, the dividing line

*Marcia Baker Pogue is a regular contributor to Ohio Southland. She is a freelance writer whose work has been published in numerous newspapers, magazines and journals.*



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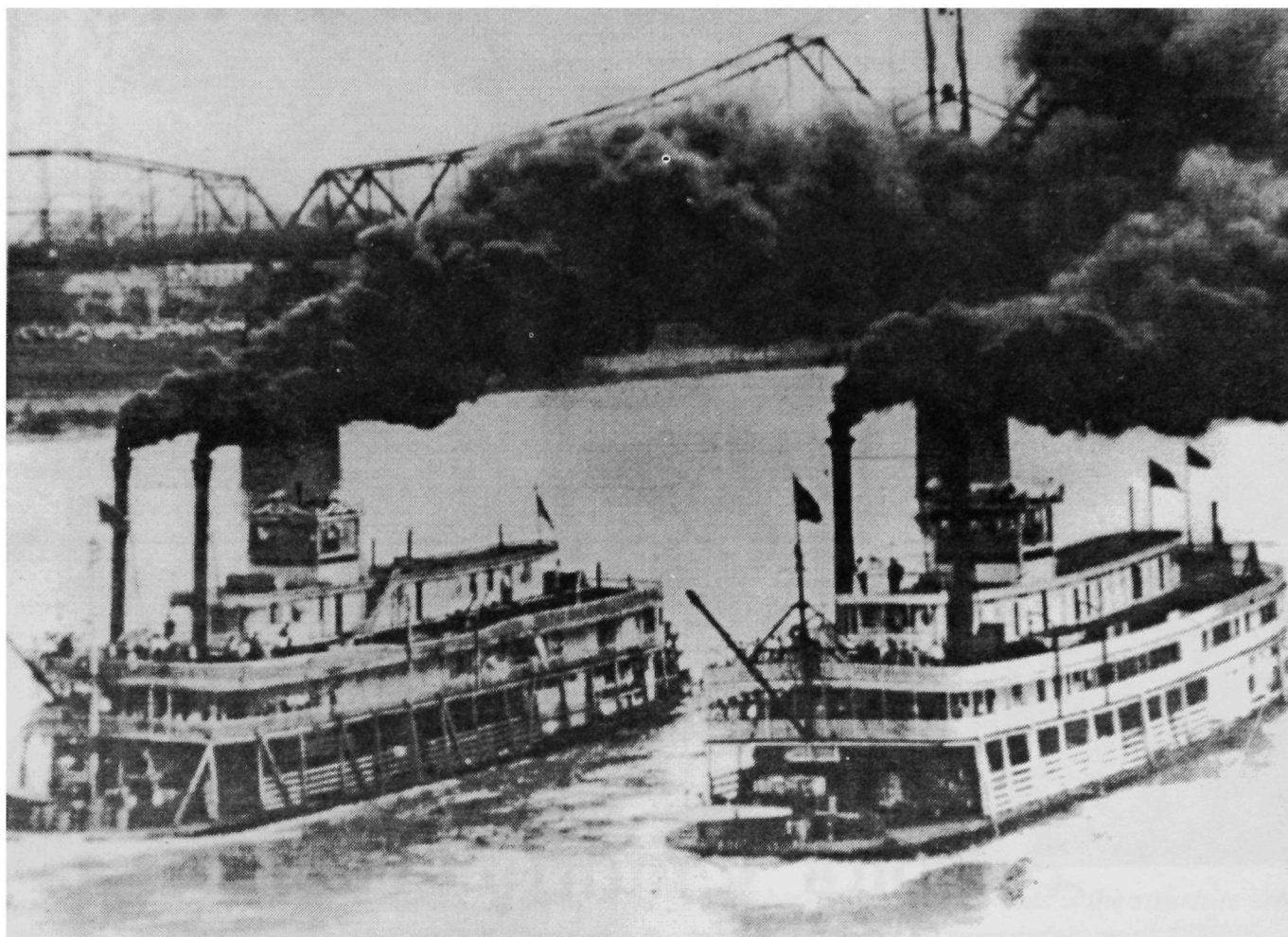
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# The Way We Were...



Clermont County Public Library - Bethel Branch

Steamboat races on the Ohio River used to be a common occurrence. Here is seen the Betsy Ann challenging the Chris Green as they raced from New Richmond in Clermont County to Cincinnati. Over a thousand people lined the shores to watch this match during the summer of 1928.



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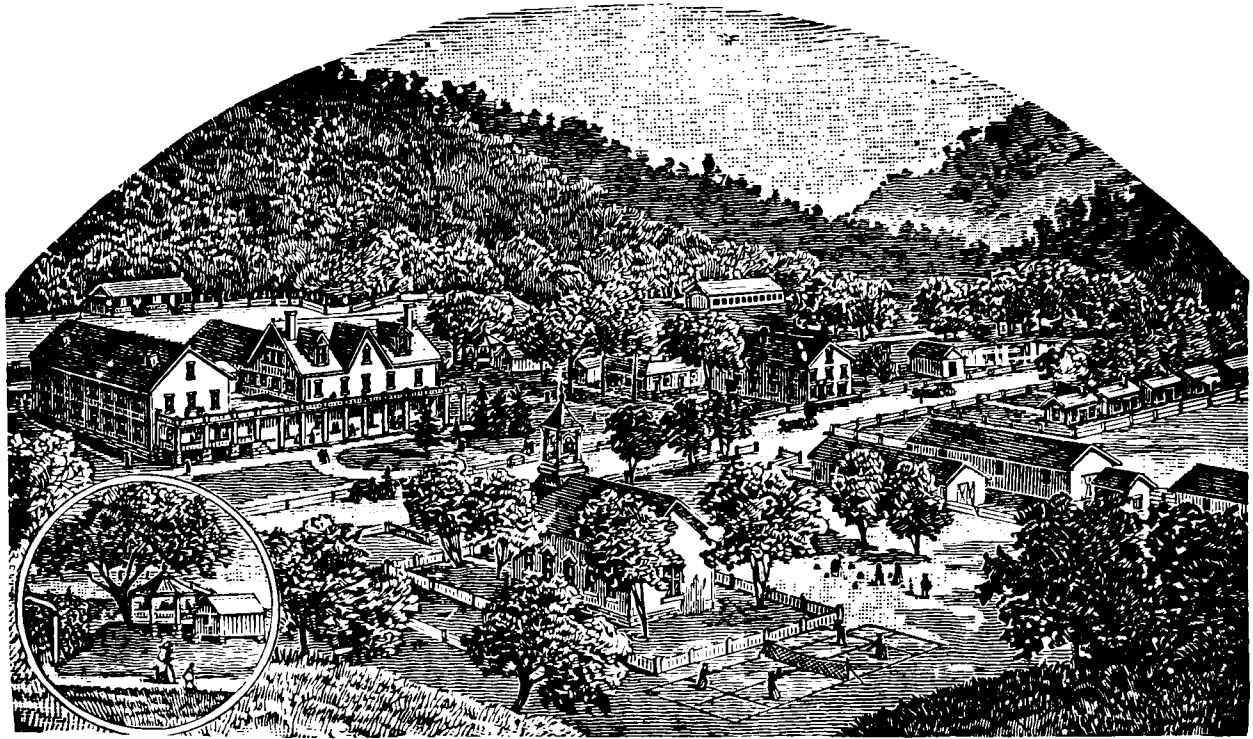
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# Mineral Springs



## Adams County, Ohio

**Stephen Kelley**

For thousands of years mankind has looked to nature for curing various ailments and ills. One natural source considered by many as having healing properties is mineral waters. Ever since the first White explorers discovered and began mapping the New World, springs, streams and lakes possessing mineral-laden waters received special attention for their potential healing qualities.

It was only a matter of decades after the first White settlements were founded on the east coast of the north American continent that health "resorts" or spas were





*Photographer Finley Black took this shot of the Mineral Springs hotel around 1870. This is the structure erected in 1867 by Salisbury, McFerson & Company. The hotel maintained this appearance until 1889.*

built near mineral springs. Many believed that drinking, bathing in or breathing the vapors of these mineral waters alleviated aches and pains and cured their diseases.

For almost a century, Adams County possessed such a health resort. Located about six miles southeast of present-day Peebles, it was commonly known as Mineral Springs, Adams County, Ohio. It was situated on the Dry Fork of Turkey Creek at the foot of Peach Mountain. This once famous resort dates back to 1840 when a local resident, Charles Matheny, found the waters from one of the mineral springs in the area acted strongly on his kidneys and gave him relief from a persistent renal disorder. Word of his "cure" became widespread and soon a number of ailing hopefuls flocked to the area seeking help from the red sulphur spring from which Charles had drunk.

The problem of these uninvited visitors so vexed the

owner of the property he sold the land in 1857 in order to get rid of the problem. The new owner waged no better and resold the acreage in 1863 to Hillis Rees. And it was Rees who finally realized there was potential here to capitalize on the spring. Therefore, in 1864 he erected a rather primitive, two story log hotel and dubbed his new resort, "Sodaville."

Records are lacking but the Sodaville resort was apparently a financial success. It was at least successful enough to catch the business eye of three Brown County men. So it was in the fall of 1866 Byington Salisbury, Adam and James McFerson bought the property from Rees for six thousand dollars. These new owners immediately set to work and erected a modern, three story Gothic Style hotel and demolished the former Sodaville hotel. Incorporated as Salisbury, McFerson & Co., they also built stone improvements around two nearby mineral springs for the convenience of their customers. The

Brown Countians eventually managed to acquire over four hundred acres around their hotel and laid out several miles of hiking and bridle trails.

As the new resort's patronage increased, several local people were hired to help in the hotel and on the grounds. In time, a number of these employees built homes in the immediate vicinity and within a few years a small village developed around the resort complex.

In 1872 a post office was established at the resort and was given the name of Mineral Springs. Within a few years the resort as well as the surrounding community took the name and the former name of Sodaville was all but forgotten.

During those early years of Mineral Springs most of the guests travelled to the resort by way of steamboat to the village of Rome on the Ohio River. From there horse-drawn hacks, owned and operated by the hotel, brought visitors over Sunshine Ridge on the Rome Pike and through the tiny communities of Blue Creek and Wamsley. Three large barns had been erected near the hotel to accomodate the horses and vehicles. The old Rome Pike originally terminated in front of the former Sodaville Hotel but by 1880 had been extended northward over Peach Mountain to the Beaver Pond community.

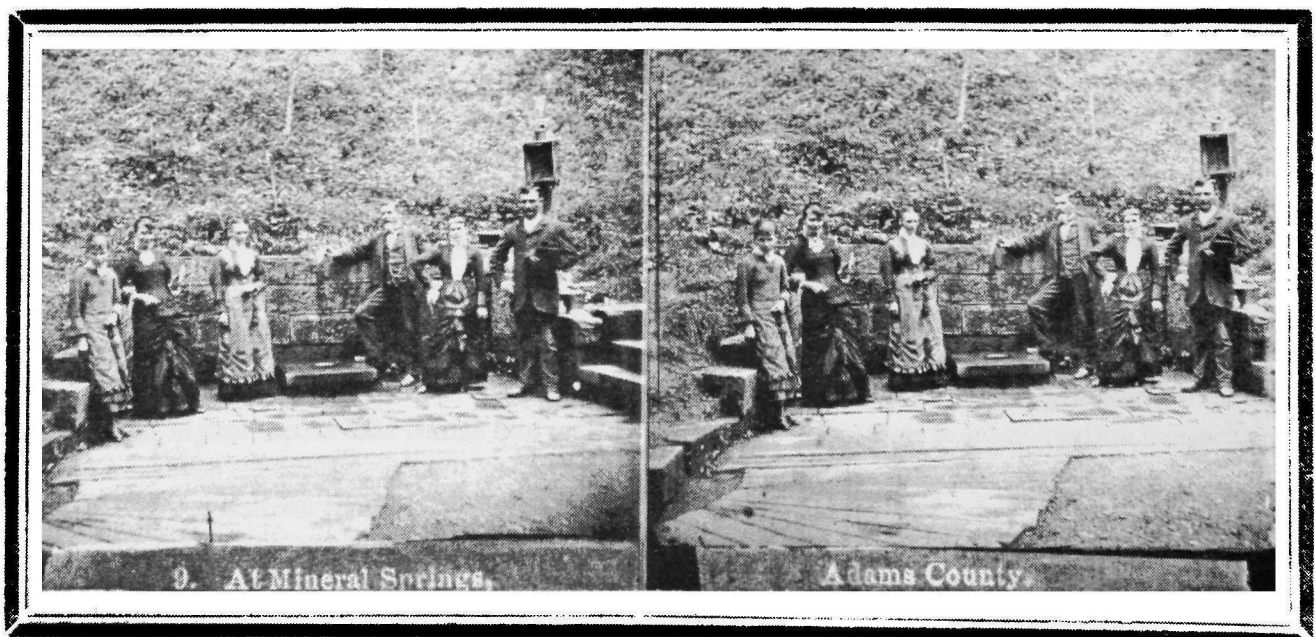
It was in the spring of 1888 the Mineral Springs resort was purchased by Civil War General Benjamin Coates of Portsmouth, Ohio. The resort then consisted of the big hotel, a handful of rustic guest cabins and a set of outbuildings situated on four hundred and twenty

seven acres on the south side of Peach Mountain.

Coates was a former resident of West Union, having practiced medicine there from 1853 to 1861. He was elected to serve in the Ohio Senate from 1862 to 1864. During that term he enlisted in the volunteer army as lieutenant colonel of the 91st Ohio Volunteer Infantry. He was promoted to colonel of his regiment in 1864 and was breveted a brigadier general in March, 1865. Following the Civil War he moved from West Union to Portsmouth where he continued to practice medicine.

General Coates had invested his money wisely through the years and was well to do. Although he owned the Mineral Springs resort only three years, he lavishly spent his money improving the grounds and facilities. He immediately built an addition of twenty rooms on the south end of the hotel. He also constructed a large two story building just north of the hotel which was used as a general store. The general also erected a two story home on the grounds for his own personal residence. It was originally painted red and known for several years thereafter as "the red house."

During the general's ownership of the resort, guests could not only enjoy the benefits of the mineral water and hiking and horseback trails, but also had the options of playing tennis on the new lawn courts laid out beside the little chapel on the grounds or playing croquet on the spacious lawns around the various buildings. A small spring-fed pond for fishing was excavated close to one of the springs and visitors could now lounge in the shade of the new Victorian gazebos built by the



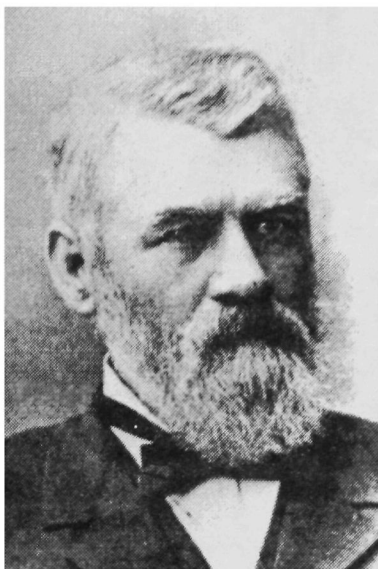
*This stereo card view of the Big Spring was taken in 1880 by Edward A. Kiefer of Portsmouth, Ohio*

general beside two of the largest springs.

It was under the general's management steps were taken to make the resort self-supporting. Large vegetable gardens were planted in the spring which produced an abundance of much needed fresh produce. Enough was raised so large amounts could be canned for winter use. Pigs, beef, dairy cattle and chickens were raised on the grounds to provide a constant source of fresh meat, milk, butter and eggs. City guests were fascinated with this aspect of the resort and it usually was not too difficult to find plenty of volunteers to work in the gardens, help gather eggs, feed the livestock, milk the cows, etc.

An ice house with walls almost three feet thick was built to store ice that was cut from the Ohio River in the winter at Rome and hauled on horse-drawn sleds to the resort. Packed in sawdust in the ice house, there was no danger of the blocks of ice melting even during the hottest part of summer. Much of this ice was used in the summertime

to make that delicious delicacy known as homemade ice cream—a rare treat before the days of automated refrigeration!



*Benjamin F. Coates*  
1827-1899  
*Brigadier General*  
91st OVI

In the summer of 1891 General Coates sold the resort to Smith and Sarah Grimes. Smith Grimes was, for all intents and purposes, a conniving, shrewd businessman with a not-always-so-honest knack for making money. He and his father, Greer B. Grimes, had founded a bank in West Union in 1865. It failed in 1889 paying only sixty percent in settlement to its customers. Smith Grimes had definitely anticipated and probably planned the bank's demise as he had been careful to transfer most of his real estate holdings into his wife's name in 1888. He barely managed to escape a prison term over the fiasco and felt compelled to move out of West Union due to public opinion. When he bought Mineral Springs, it also was put in Mrs. Grimes' name for fear creditors would lay claim to it.

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Regardless of Smith Grimes' unpopularity in West Union, he proved himself to be a very popular resort operator. Under his ownership and management, the resort continued to increase in size and public appeal. As did General Coates, Grimes lavished his money on the resort. He hired Frank Hemmings, a local stonemason and carpenter, to have the stonework around the springs improved, making certain the name, **SMITH GRIMES**, was prominently

carved on the basin of the ground's largest spring. He also erected a substantial amusement hall around the year 1900 which stood separate from the hotel and was used for dancing, bowling and billiards. In 1906 he built a two story frame structure on the side of the hill behind the hotel complex. The ground floor contained a "first class up-to-date bowling alley that will meet the requirements of professional bowlers." The second story was one large room that Grimes generously furnished free of charge to the young people to use as a theater when they gave plays.



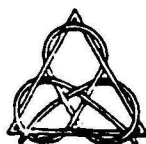
*A photo of the hotel taken circa 1900. The south end addition constructed in 1889 by General Benjamin Coates is clearly seen on the left.*

Other improvements instituted by Smith Grimes included new tennis courts and croquet grounds. About 1892 he donated a thousand dollars to help build a new road up and over Peach Mountain to the Cincinnati, Portsmouth & Virginia Railroad at the community of Jaybird. Upon completion of this road, the railroad moved its station from Beaver Pond to Jaybird. The station was then known as the Mineral Springs Station until its closing in the 1920s. It was also during Smith Grimes' proprietorship that the resort obtained telegraph and telephone connections with the outside world.



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In his own words, during his proprietorship of Mineral Springs, Grimes, "...was active in politics and my hotel was the center for the politicians, who came around through the country then and made speeches. During that time I entertained two men who became president, (James A.) Garfield and (Rutherford B.) Hayes, and hundreds of others, who were, or became prominent."

In January of 1908, Smith Grimes decided to retire and sold Mineral Springs to Frank Durnell and J.W. Rogers of

Hillsboro, Ohio. The new owners paid seventeen thousand dollars for the four hundred and thirty acre resort complex. Rogers, nicknamed "Happy Jack," was the senior partner of the two and took over management of the business.

And what was the resort actually like during this time? Well, perhaps a few quotes from a descriptive booklet published for Mineral Springs about 1906 help answer this question. It states that, ...the Springs are located in

a delightful valley in the eastern part of Adams County, Ohio issuing from the base of hills that are almost mountainous in proportions. The buildings are pleasantly situated adjacent to the Springs, surrounded, shaded and

protected by the extensive forest of large native trees. The hills in the vicinity are covered with the original vegetation and long before the close of each summer day the shadows cover the valley and hotel buildings, rendering the evenings charming and nights cool and pleasant. The accommodations are ample and



Two young guests sit on the Big Spring's stonework. Note the niches in the back wall for the tin cups and Smith Grimes' name on the basin.

comfortable. No pains or expense has been spared in refitting, refurnishing and improving the place. Hot and cold baths are provided. Acetyline gas in every room. Guest(s) will find comfortable rooms, good board and a pleasant place to live, whether for a few weeks, several months or for the whole year.

Continuing, it states, *The Springs* afford a sequestered retreat keenly appreciated by those who seek respite from the cares of business. No sound of locomotive or clang

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Further describing the natural beauty of the area the booklet states, *Nature has been lavish in adorning this region. The rugged hillsides are covered with majestic trees and cumbered with tangled vines. In the Spring, the most charming wild flowers bud and bloom in every nook and corner, presenting a fairy world of beauty, nestled in the rich green of abounding moss and fern. No cultivated flowers vie with nature's floral riches as presented here in June and the late summer months. In the Autumn when the Sumacs and Dogwood are aflame, the foliage of Maples and Gums all purple and gold, the Oaks bearing deep crimson and bronze, the rich berries of Spicewood, native Briars, and other gorgeous trophies of the plant world glowing in the days the sweetest of the year—there is presented a charm indescribable which makes the visitor (loathe) to leave such glorious scenes that deeply impress and improve human*

*nature.*

This brochure also goes into detail describing the healing properties of the mineral waters which bubbled from the springs present on the grounds. Needless to say, this literature greatly exaggerates the curative powers of the water, hoping to entice prospective visitors to the resort. One part of the text reports, *these waters have been analyzed by chemists in Cincinnati and Columbus and it is shown that they are highly charged with gas and possess the various Chlorides, Sulphates, etc., that render mineral waters highly medicinal. These waters are strongly therapeutic and have been known to cure many diseases, the following among others: Dyspepsia, Indigestion, Disordered Liver, Chronic Irritation of the Bowels, Costiveness, Hemorrhoids, Chronic Diarrhea, Catarrh, Diseases of the Urinary Organs, Gravel and Kidney Diseases, Female Diseases, Erysipelas, Scrofulas, Dropsy, Ulcers and all Nervous and Skin Diseases.*

In addition to all these miraculous healing powers, the booklet informs the readers the mineral waters are, *...cool and pleasant to the taste, and may be taken freely with safety and profit.* In further describing the grounds, the literature states that Mineral Springs was unlike most "fashionable" summer resorts of that day. Rather, it was

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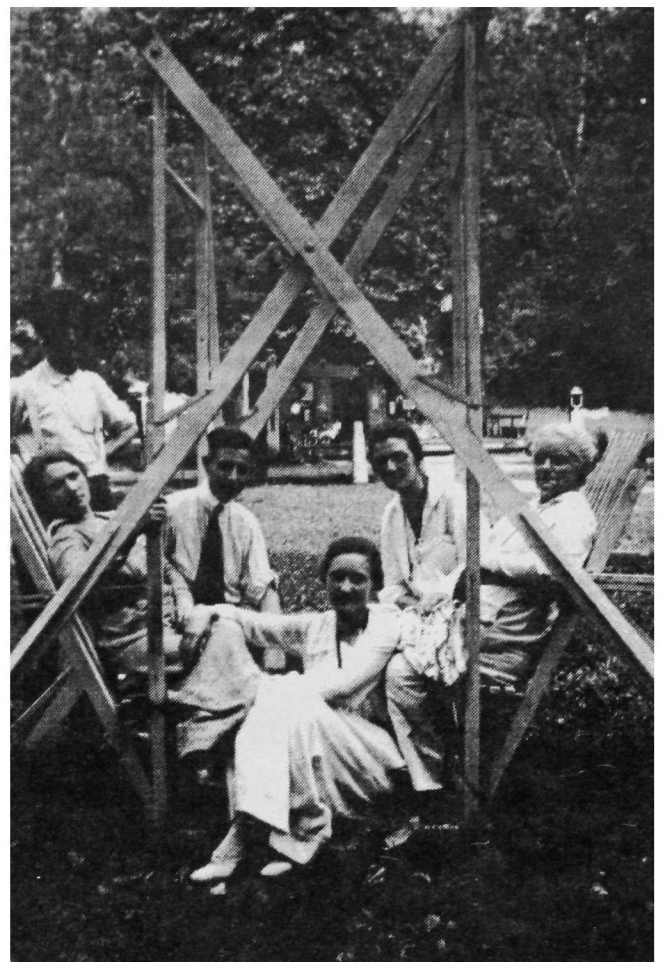
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*Also described in the literature were ...charming walks (which) have been cut through woods and up hill sides. Excursions of any length may be taken. Scenery the most attractive, rugged and lichen-covered rocks, cliffs, caves, tangled brake and fen, the solitude of dense forests—all invite to sweet communion with nature. Large stables are located on the premises and attentive hostlers are in charge. A fine gravel road leading to the Ohio River directly in front of the grounds and other attractive drive-ways affords delightful pleasure trips. Good roads for automobiles.*

J.W. Rogers of Hillsboro began managing the big resort in 1908. Business was booming at that time and the new manager realized it. He immediately had the roof torn off the hotel and by May had added another story and a half to the structure. The newly remodeled three and a half story hotel now had three large gables on the front and contained one hundred and ten rooms which were filled to capacity during the summer months. Even so, there was still a need for more hotel space. Rogers was determined to meet this need and about 1912 he built an annex on the southeast corner of the hotel containing an additional twelve rooms. About three years later, Rogers enlarged this annex to a total capacity of twenty-five rooms. By the time American forces were being readied for combat in Europe, the hotel with cot-



*Guests lounging on the swing in the yard*

tages could accommodate three hundred people.

The pre-World War I years of 1905 to 1917 appear to be the apex of Mineral Springs' popularity. The area was then well known throughout the United States and it was common to have guests from New York State, the deep South, and even as far away as California.

These were the good times, the happy times of the resort. And it was during this time period the automobile made its appearance at Mineral Springs. Although they had become almost a common sight in the metropolitan areas, their appearance at the resort was a rare occurrence until the early Nineteen Teens. When one of these early vehicles would be seen approaching, the young children of the Mineral Springs community would go running after it shouting, "Auto! Auto!" It was not too many years later, however, the hotel obtained its own motorized vehicle to transport guests to and from the train depot.

The World War I years of 1917-18 dealt a staggering blow to the prosperity and success of the Mineral Springs resort. As the nation focused its efforts upon the war, few people had time or money to spend vacationing.

J.W. Rogers must have seen the handwriting on the wall, realizing the golden age of the spa was over and sold the property in March of 1920. He knew the Ameri-

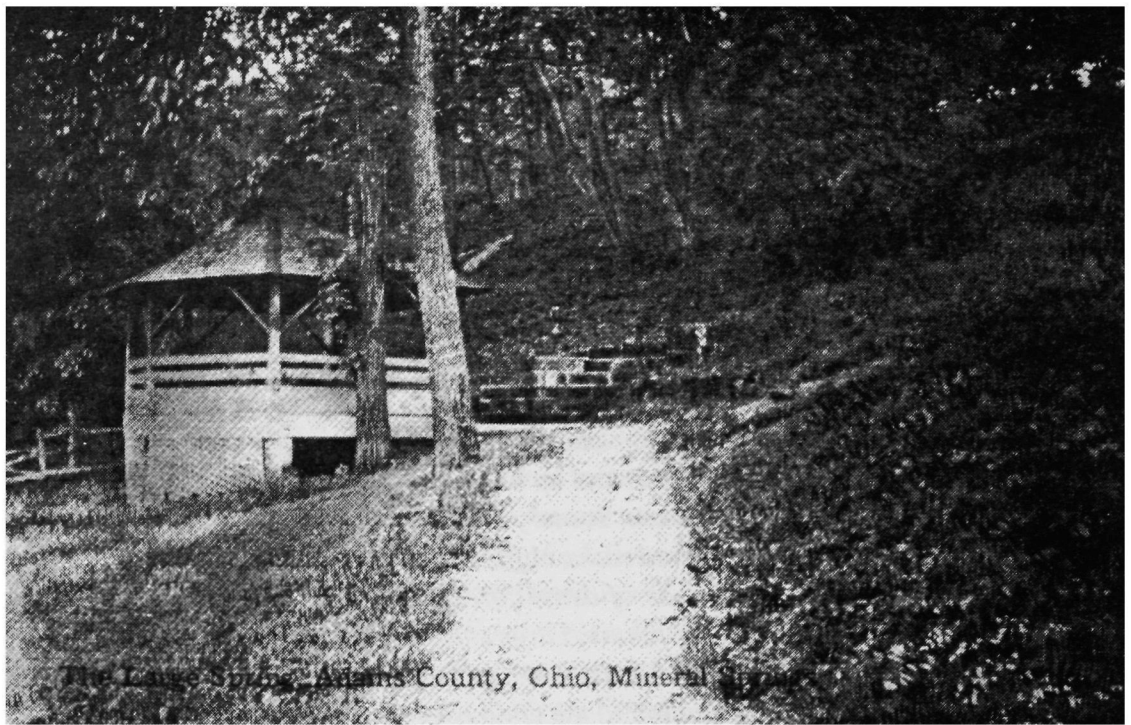


*The hotel grounds featured lawn tennis courts*

can public had fallen in love with the automobile and the new trend following the war was to travel and sight see rather than spend a vacation at a health resort. As public highways improved, tourists now started traveling enmasse to the large national parks, to the seashore and to the gambling meccas.

The new owners of the Mineral Springs hotel were Louis Moore and Beu Jamison of Fayette County, Ohio. The selling price of the hotel with four hundred and thirty acres was twenty-five thousand dollars. Moore and Jamison kept the resort only one season before they realized they had purchased a white elephant. They quickly sold it in November, 1920 to Vynul Harbage of Madison County, Ohio who kept it less than three months. The spa's business was failing more quickly than ever and during the next forty months the property changed hands four more times.

In February, 1924, Ernest Ramey of Columbus, Ohio bought the ailing resort. It was now operated only during the summer months with most of the one hundred thirty rooms standing empty and deteriorating during the tourist season. The buildings were showing signs of decay from improper maintenance, the gardens were tangled with weeds and the stock barns were mostly vacant and unused.



*The Big Spring or "Lower Spring" and its gazebo as photographed circa 1900*

Ramey immediately made a pretense about repairing and restoring the resort to its original beauty and condition. He quickly started painting and papering on the inside of the large hotel, the cold, damp weather preventing much work from being done on the exterior of the buildings. On April 30, 1924, Ramey and one of his employees, Vernon Austin, had finished their work for the day and were about to leave. They had been working in the kitchen and Vernon noticed that the meat block was sitting somewhat too closely to the fireplace grating. He mentioned this to Ramey and asked him if the block should not be moved for fear of possible fire. Ramey assured Austin there was no danger and to have no concern about it.

Ramey had been eating his meals with Austin and his family and that day was no different. As they were sitting around the table finishing their supper, they were

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interrupted by Vernon's daughter, Ruth, who excitedly reported there was a fire in the community—the big hotel was burning! The fire started, not surprisingly, in the kitchen area. When local residents offered their help in hauling out furniture or fighting the blaze, Ramey quickly thanked them but advised them to stay back as he did not want anyone to get hurt. Since there was no such thing as a fire department closer than Peebles, neighborhood citizens were compelled to helplessly stand by and watch the fifty-seven year old behemoth burn to the ground.

The updraft from the fiery spectacle was so powerful that it carried burning pieces of wood several hundred feet in the air, sprinkling them throughout the area. Local residents later located and recovered charred pieces of the hotel as far as two miles away from Mineral Springs. The reflection of the fire on the sides of the Dry Fork valley could be seen late that evening in Peebles, over five miles away. By daybreak all that was left was a smoldering heap of glowing embers. The Mineral Springs health resort was now just a pleasant memory burned indelibly in the minds of the thousands of persons whose lives it had so deeply touched for over half a century.

Local legend has it that Ramey submitted the claim

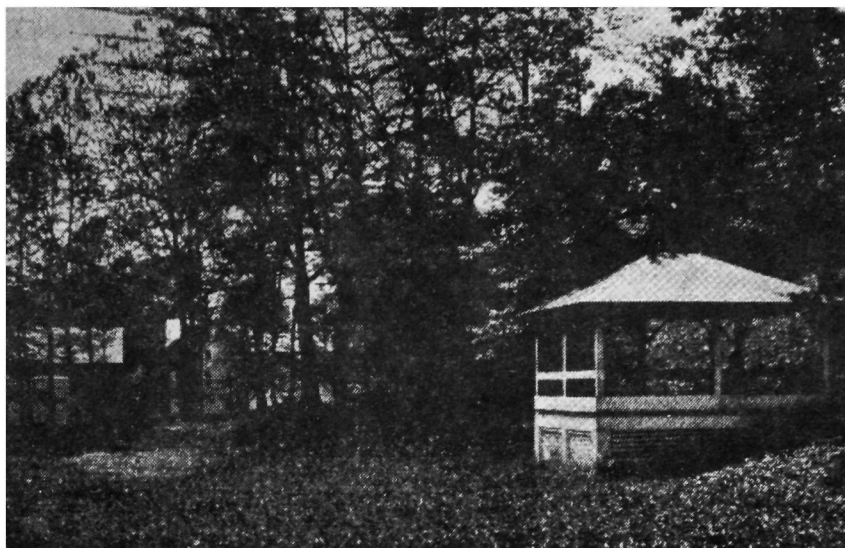
on his inflated insurance policy on the hotel before the smoke had cleared. The property was heavily mortgaged and over insured and Ramey had already sold all of the standing timber on the grounds over a month before the fire. Floyd McCoy of Peebles had paid Ramey five thousand dollars for the timber that he cut and sold for railroad ties during the next two years. Although McCoy was not allowed to cut within five hundred feet of the

springs or buildings, all in all, this action on Ramey's part appeared rather suspicious following the fire. To further bolster the evidence that the fire was not unplanned was the fact Ramey made no effort to rebuild the resort and sold the acreage in less than a year.

Although there was never any investigation, area residents were convinced

Ramey had planned the fiery fiasco, collected the insurance, milked the remainder of the property for what he could get out of it, then dumped the once elegant resort grounds for a mere four thousand dollars.

Subsequent owners either dismantled the remaining structures on the property or permitted them to deteriorate and decay into ruins through the years. No new structures were ever built on the hotel site and today the area is a wilderness of trees and underbrush. Only a few foundation stones and the fine stone improvement



*A 1908 view of the gazebo at the "Upper Spring"*

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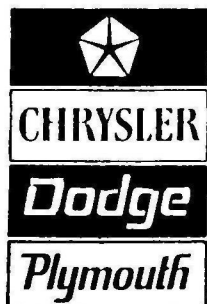
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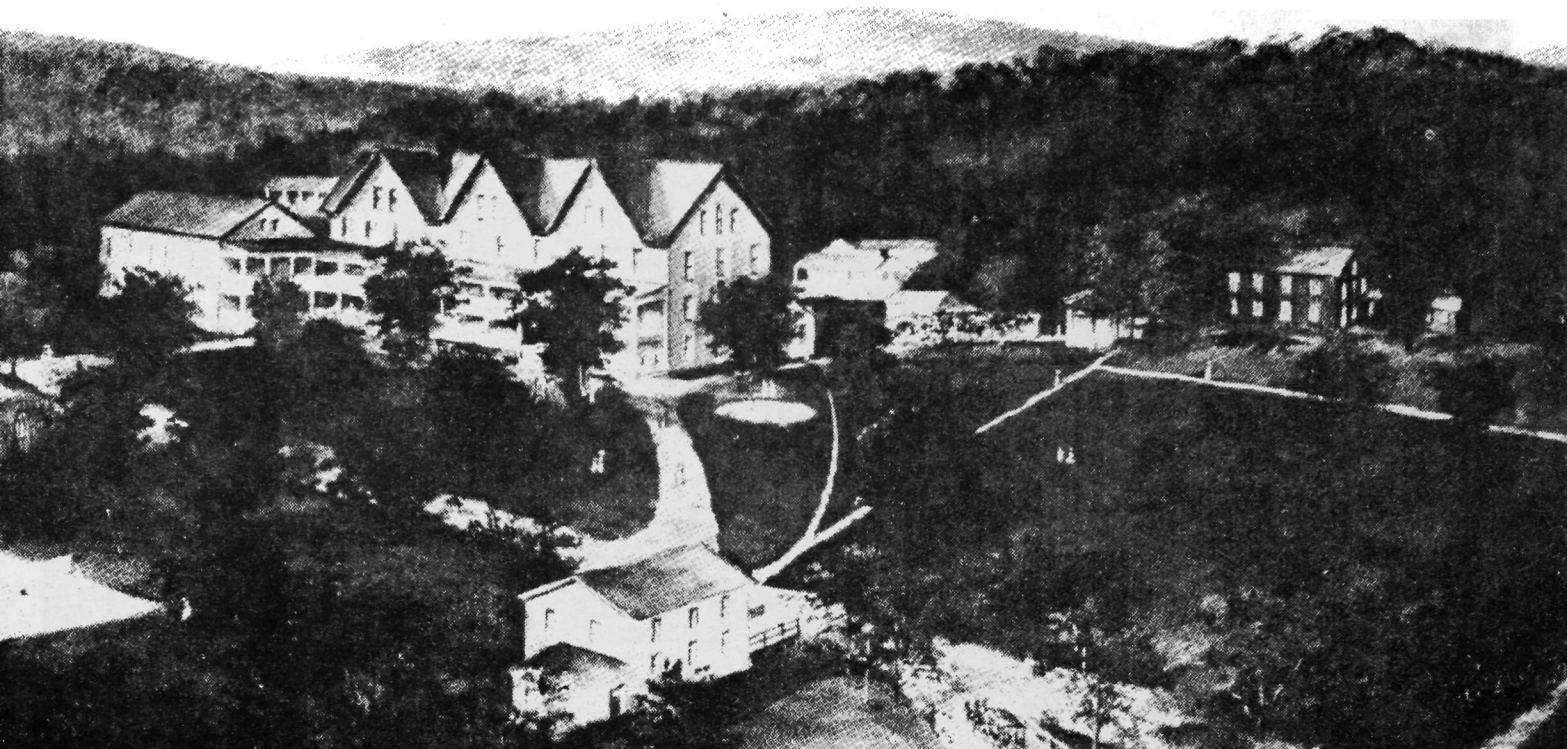
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*This picture post card was made circa 1916 and shows an artist's conception of the Mineral Springs hotel and its surroundings while owned by J.W. Rogers.*

around the main spring are the only evidence of the once famous Mineral Springs health resort. In recent years the Adams County Historical Society erected an historical marker on the Mineral Springs Pike opposite of where the big hotel once stood.

But the destruction of the Mineral Springs hotel does

not close the story of the old resort. Early in the Twentieth Century a second hotel was erected only a quarter of a mile further north. Although much smaller and far less elegant, the "upper hotel" as it was commonly known, will be the subject of another article in the next issue of *Ohio Southland*. 

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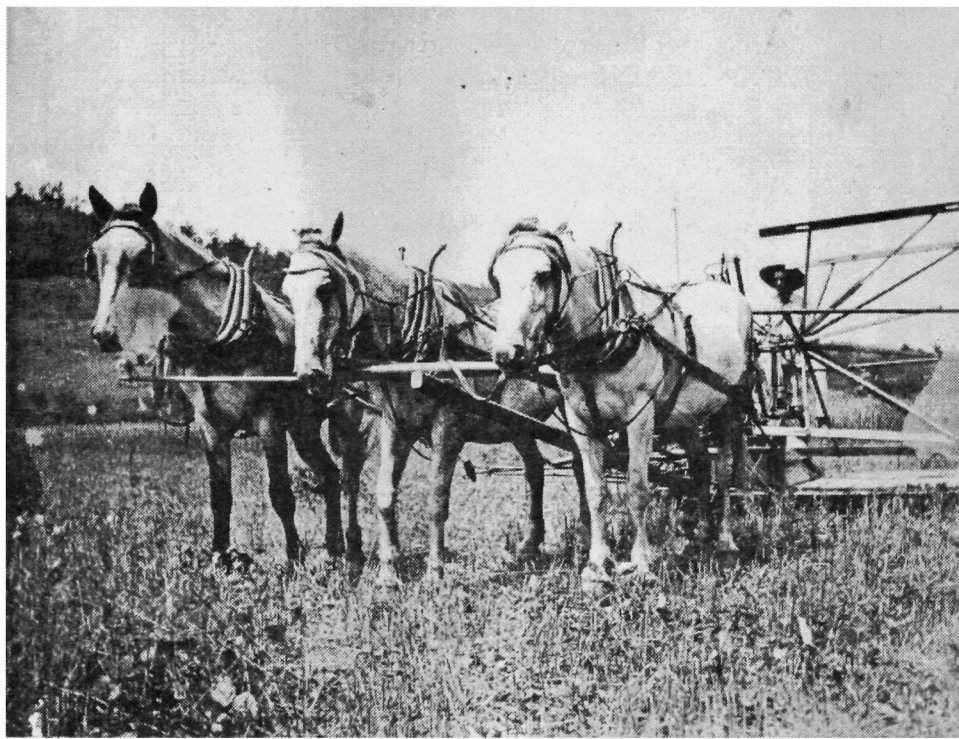


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# life on the farm of long ago



As can be readily seen from these vintage photographs, the different methods of farming having certainly changed during the past century. These pictures were taken in the 1890s and early 1900s in Scioto, Clermont and Adams counties.

*"Ted," "Nell," and "Babe" pull a reaper*

*Grandma helping cut tobacco*







*"Nick" and his  
team of oxen*



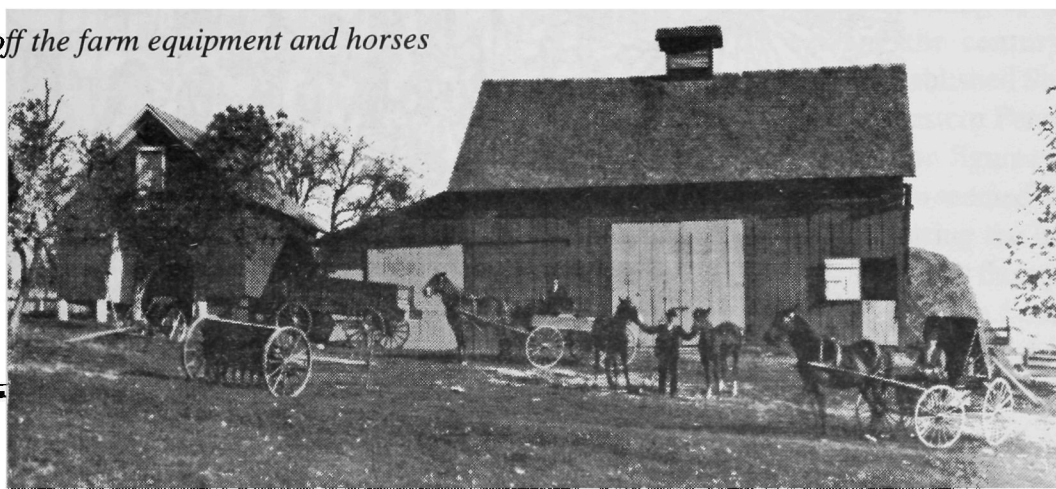
*An early hay rake*

*Milking the cow the "age-old" way*



Clermont County Historical Society

*Showing off the farm equipment and horses*



*Ohio Southland In The 18th Century--Number 10*

# Shawnee:

## Repeopling The Southland

by an Allegheny Trader  
"Betwixt the Forks and the Oubache"



*An early woodcut of a Shawnee village*

*Route U.S. 23 cuts through the traditional site of "Cornstalk's Town" just south of present-day Circleville on the famous Pickaway Plains. This Shawnee village was occupied during the mid to late 1770s. The tree-covered elevation on the left was known by the Shawnee as the "Black Mountain."*

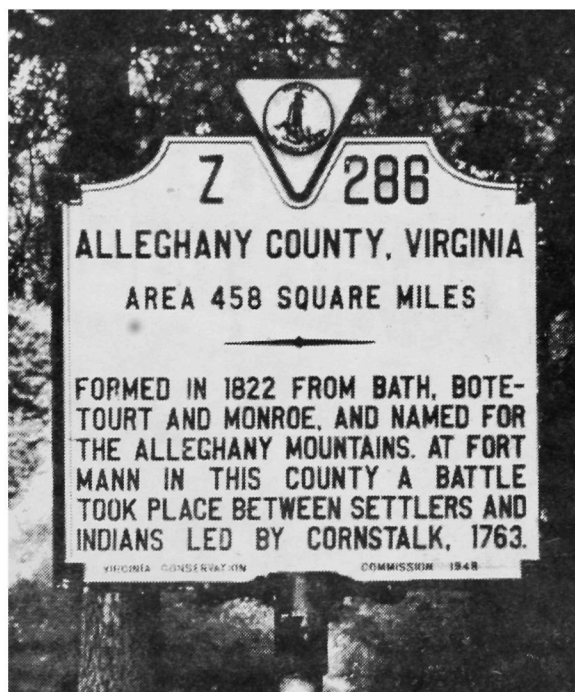
When the first Euro-Americans permanently settled the Southland area, they had numerous encounters with the natives. For example, *A History of Adams County, Ohio*, states that the Shawnee were found encamped on Ohio Brush Creek just outside modern day Seaman, Ohio. Similarly, Ohio's most famous native group was also reported to have camped near the present village of Wamsleyville in the eastern part of the county. Such encounters were not limited to Adams County but seemed to have occurred throughout southern Ohio. These reported encounters are somewhat surprising, since history tells us that native peoples relinquished their claims to southern Ohio with the signing of the 1795 Treaty of Greene Ville. The question immediately comes to mind: "Why were they still there?"

Such contradictions are the result of a rather ethnocentric view of the period and social conditions which were more dynamic than they are at times portrayed. This author's series has been just as ethnocentric, since it has focused on European expansion into the region and not necessarily the native peoples who actually dominated the landscape in the 18th century. Obviously, American claims were made, but the United States' first backcountry did not fill up until many years later. This allowed native groups to use less settled areas for a time after the signing of the "treaty."

The following native history will be the first in a number of articles which will explore this most important aspect of the region. Later installments of this series

will in fact discuss the natives' livelihood. However, the following background is important since it provides a perspective on Euro-American contact and the prolonged impact Europeans have had on native cultures.

To fully understand the Shawnee people, modern historians are required to trace these mobile people across nearly the entire eastern half of the continent or from places as far away as Georgia, New York, Pennsylvania, and Illinois.



*Historical markers denoting the presence of the Shawnee can be found throughout a wide area of the eastern U.S. This one, in the Blue Ridge Mountains of western Virginia, refers to the great chief, Cornstalk.*

The term Shawnee does not refer to a politically unified nation, but is a collective term for a group of people speaking nearly the same Algonkian language. The origins of these linguistically related people may have been the Upper Ohio Valley. However, at the time of contact, they were found to be scattered across what is now the eastern United States. Shawnee speakers were said to have been living in Georgia and Alabama in the 1670s. During the 1680s, remnant bands were living with local Illinoian peoples along the Mississippi. To the east, Shawnee captives were found living with the Seneca. Later accounts dating to the last decade of the century mention newly established Shawnee villages in eastern Pennsylvania.

Although no accurate population figures are known, the bulk of the Shawnee population seemed to have been living in eastern Pennsylvania during the latter 1690s. There is evidence which suggests that their populations swelled as clan members living in the South or along the Mississippi River relocated to Pennsylvania.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 26...**





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General B.F. Coates commissioned this lithograph





**NGS, ADAMS Co.. O.**

h of Mineral Springs in 1889. See story on page 8.



*This large oil painting entitled, **Signing the Treaty of Greene Ville**, hangs in the Ohio State Capitol building in Columbus. In this treaty, several Indian nations relinquished their claims to the Ohio "Southland."*

Soon after the first quarter of the 18th century, historic evidence suggests the repopulation of the Upper Ohio Valley and the southern shore of Lake Erie by a variety of historic Indian groups. From the west, groups collectively called the Miami filtered into the region. From the north, the Ottawa and descendants of the Huron, more commonly known as the Wyandot, began to use the southern shore of Lake Erie as a hunting territory. Eastern groups who moved into the Ohio region, included individuals of Iroquoian and Delaware descent.

The origins and the possible re-establishment of the Shawnee in the Ohio Valley has been discussed by many ethnohistorians. Most would agree that the Shawnee refugees which appeared across eastern North America late in the 17th century seem to have had their origins in some portion of the Ohio Valley. The most compelling evidence for the origins of the Shawnee comes from council minutes (ca. 1732) relating to the economic and population pressures in eastern Pennsylvania. In council the Shawnee were told to "...look toward the Ohio,

the place from whence you came..." Memories of the Ohio Valley may have persisted in the minds of the elders during the short cultural hiatus beginning in the late 1680s and ending in the 1720s. Returning Shawnee may have recalled former village sites on which new towns sprung. In fact, archaeological excavations have recovered data demonstrating that certain "protohistoric" village sites were later used historically.

The Shawnees' return to at least the extreme upper Ohio drainage along western Pennsylvania's Allegheny River was in concert with other tribes like the Delaware, who were themselves being forced westward to more vacant lands on which to hunt, fish and plant gardens. Apparently, the Shawnee westward migration from eastern Pennsylvania began in the mid 1720s. David Zeisberger, a Moravian missionary who lived with the Delaware through the period, suggests that this migration to the Ohio country was essentially complete by 1768.

Logstown on the Ohio River just below the "Forks of



the Ohio" and Lower Shawneetown at the mouth of the Scioto River were the most notable village sites of these early immigrants. These towns continued to be used during the 1740s and through the mid 1750s. These sites were the dominant Shawnee domiciles until the French and Indian War. Lower Shawneetown was probably the most important Shawnee settlement in the Southland area. However, this is a story in itself.

With increasing hostilities during the French and Indian War and the "alienation" of the Shawnee from British interest during the late 1750s and early 1760s, the natives sought new village sites which were isolated from the Ohio River Valley. By this time, both Logstown and Lower Shawneetown had been abandoned. During the late 1760s and early 1770s or prior to the American Revolution, major areas of Shawnee settlement were known to be focused along the mid-Scioto Valley and along its major western tributary, Paint Creek.

Simultaneously, other Shawnee-speaking people were also living in a less well known settlement at the mouth of Wakatomika Creek on the Muskingum River (Dresden, Ohio.) These Shawnee living in eastern Ohio may have been part of a band moving northward from

the Savanna River area, but whose first Ohio Valley "historic" village may have been located near the confluence of the Kanawha and Ohio rivers. Again, the potential for cultural conflict between this band and the Virginia settlements probably caused the abandonment

of the "Upper" Shawnee town from its exposed position near the Kanawha River.

However, each of these new towns were vulnerable from southern military attacks as English expansion continued in the 1760s. This was clearly pointed out in 1774 by Lord Dunmore, who successfully lead a campaign to the Pickaway Plains or the heart of Shawnee country and sued for at least a temporary peace. However, reciprocal skirmishes between border settlers and natives continued. The Shawnee towns remained the principal objectives at which military operations were directed through the decade bracketing the American Revolution.

Information, derived primarily from military reconnaissance at the end of the American Revolution, indicates that Shawnee towns were prevalent along the upper Great Miami River, and the Mad River—its tributary. This population shift may have begun as early as 1774 with an attack on Wakatomika on the Muskingum River. Wapatomica on the Mad River was established



*Simon Kenton  
Explorér, Indian fighter, frontiersman*



*Juanita Jones*

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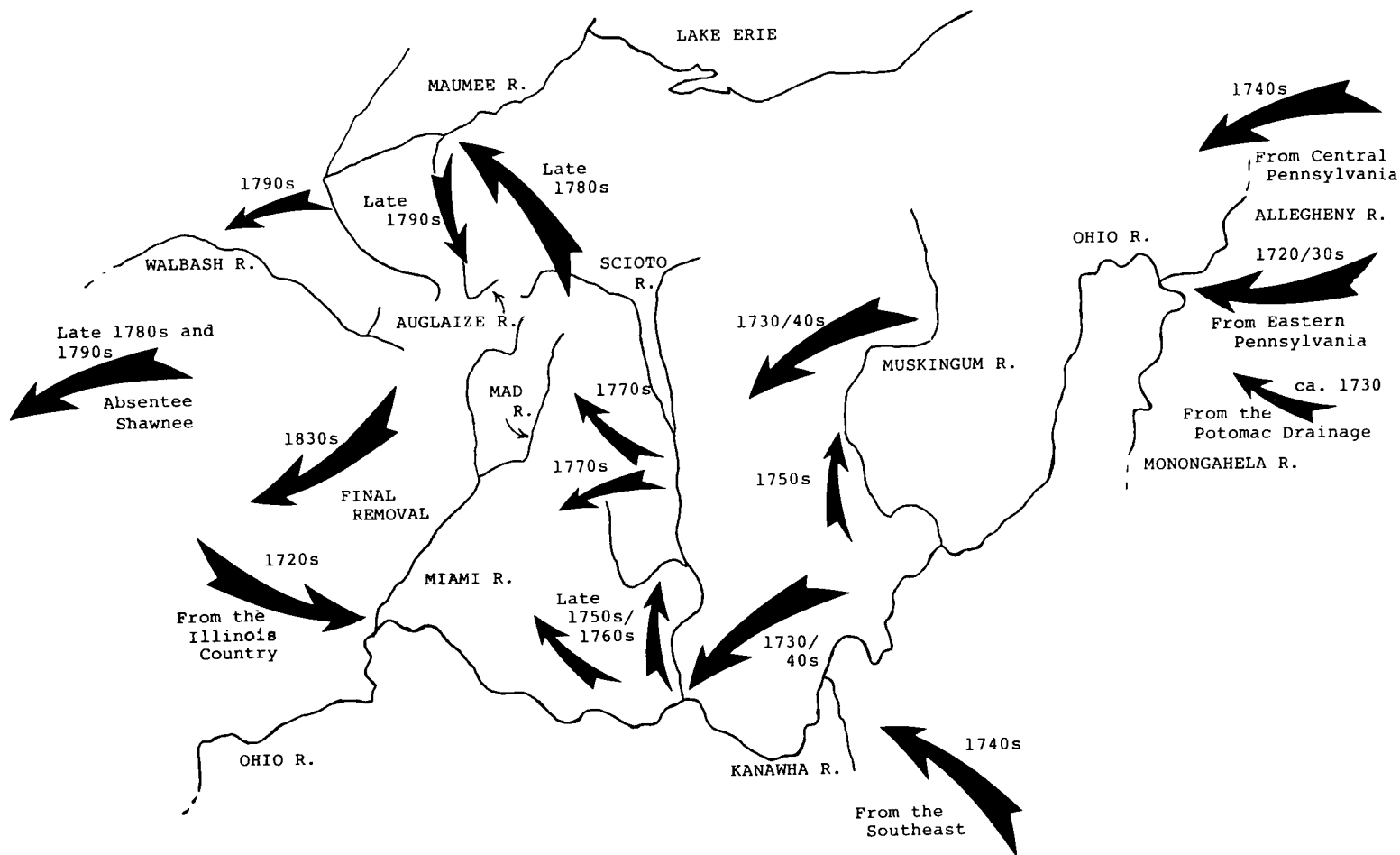
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Map of the Ohio Country showing the strategic movements of the Shawnee as a result of military conflict and growing Euro-American settlement. These movements are complimented by villages along the Ohio River in the 1740s and '50s; towns along the Middle Muskingum and Scioto drainages occupied during the 1760s and early 1770s; and settlements along the Miami/Mad river drainage and upper Little Miami River valley utilized during the late 1770s and early 1780s. During the late 1780s, Shawnee towns were relocated to the Maumee River valley. A portion of these people, sometimes called the Absentee Shawnee, moved out of the entire Ohio Country region. Following the Treaty of Greene Ville, the remaining Ohio Shawnee moved southward to areas along the upper Auglaize River, branches of the upper Ottawa River, and the upper reaches of the Miami River. Formal "reserves" or reservations were formed around these settlements at the end of the War of 1812. These reserves were occupied until final removal in 1833 when the natives were relocated to "Indian Lands" beyond the Mississippi River.

The position of Shawnee towns in what is now west-central Ohio was unknown to the colonial armies at the beginning of the American Revolution. However, the strategic value of villages being relocated to areas along the Little Miami, Great Miami, and Mad River was compromised by the Shawnee predilection for the taking of Euro-American captives for adoption. Runaway captives, like Simon Kenton, brought back valuable military information resulting in the attack and destruction of these towns during the mid 1780s.

Military operations forced Shawnee settlements along the Ohio River mainstem to be abandoned during the French and Indian War. By the mid 1760s, Shawnee settlements were focused on more remotely located regions including portions of the middle Scioto River basin, along the lower course of the North Fork of Paint Creek, and at the mouth of Wakatomika Creek on the Muskingum River. Military encounters, like the Battle of Point Pleasant (October 10, 1774), and the advancement of Dunmore's army to the Pickaway Plains, demonstrated the vulnerability of even these settlements.

by about 1777 if not earlier. Militia groups from the western settlements of Virginia including modern day Kentucky and West Virginia, repeatedly attacked and destroyed many settlements along the lower Mad and Great Miami rivers during the latter years of the American Revolution. Natives, who earlier abandoned settlements on the Pickaway Plains, built new villages like New Pickaway Town (near modern Springfield) and Chelicothe or Old Town (near modern Xenia, Ohio), only to have them burnt or destroyed—sometimes repeatedly. For examples, these aforementioned towns were destroyed by George Rogers Clark in 1780. Villagers from Old Town apparently moved to a later Chelicothe, or Standing Stone Town as it was known by the English, near modern Piqua, Ohio. Clark returned to the Miami Valley two years later only to destroy this new Chelicothe Town. The Calakaatha Shawnee never reoccupied this later village but probably moved some 25 miles to the northeast or across country to the upper Mad River Valley.

Shawnee movements during the decade following the American Revolution are quite complex. These move-

ments are less than clear because of sometimes conflicting accounts and a dearth of first-hand documentation. The misinterpretation of Shawnee movements and settlement is complicated by the reoccurrence of Shawnee village names, like Chillicothe/Chelicothe, Piqua/Picaway, Wakatomica/Wapatomica/Wakatonika, and Wapaughkonetta/Wapuckinati. Careful research indicates that each of these placenames appear, again and again, along the western migration route of the Shawnee. Obviously, errors including linguistic misunderstanding of place names, like Wapaughkonetta for instance, or in the way placenames were transcribed, directly affects our historical interpretations.

Many Shawnee towns were simply named for the principal group or clan represented—for instance: Calakaatha, Pekowi, Mekoce, or Kispoko. Many towns were called by two or more names—possibly a formal clan name but more commonly by a local feature or landmark, for instance, “Standing Stone Town,” previously cited.

For another example, following the Wakatomika settlement near modern Dresden, Ohio and before the

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*An early engraving of the Battle of Point Pleasant. Here, on the north bank of the Kanawha River where it flows into the Ohio, the Virginia militia, led by Lord Dunmore, royal governor of Virginia, defeated the Shawnee, forcing them to retreat towards their villages on the Pickaway Plains.*

establishment of the well known Wapaugkonetta settlement on the Auglaize River were the towns of Wakatomica and Wapuckinati, both located on the Mad River drainage in present-day Logan County, Ohio. The Mad River Wapatomica Town in particular seems to have been established at about the

time Wakatomica was abandoned (1774). Simon Kenton, the famous Indian fighter, was taken captive and was brought to the Mad River Valley in 1777. Kenton states that Wakatomica was "...so called from the many tribes living together." This would suggest that it was so named because it was an amalgamated settlement composed of various Shawnee clans.

For strategic purposes, the bulk of the Shawnee seem to have been living along the upper Mad River from about 1778 to 1786. A number of captive accounts and references from English sources suggest that this Wakatomica was in close association with other Shawnee towns including Bluejacket's Town, Macachac Town, McKee's Town, and Wapuckinati from the end of the American Revolution until at least 1786. The influx of Euro-Americans along the Ohio and its southern tributaries following the Revolution perpetuated ever-growing hostilities. Although the attacks may not have caused the Shawnee to immediately abandon southwestern Ohio, it did demonstrate its vulnerable position.

Military information can be somewhat misleading

since it suggests that this core of Shawnee settlement was attacked and physically destroyed by General Benjamin Logan in 1786. However, the attack may have

only caused the temporary abandonment of the Mad River Towns. Militia accounts regarding the expedition stand in contrast to captivity accounts like Jonathan

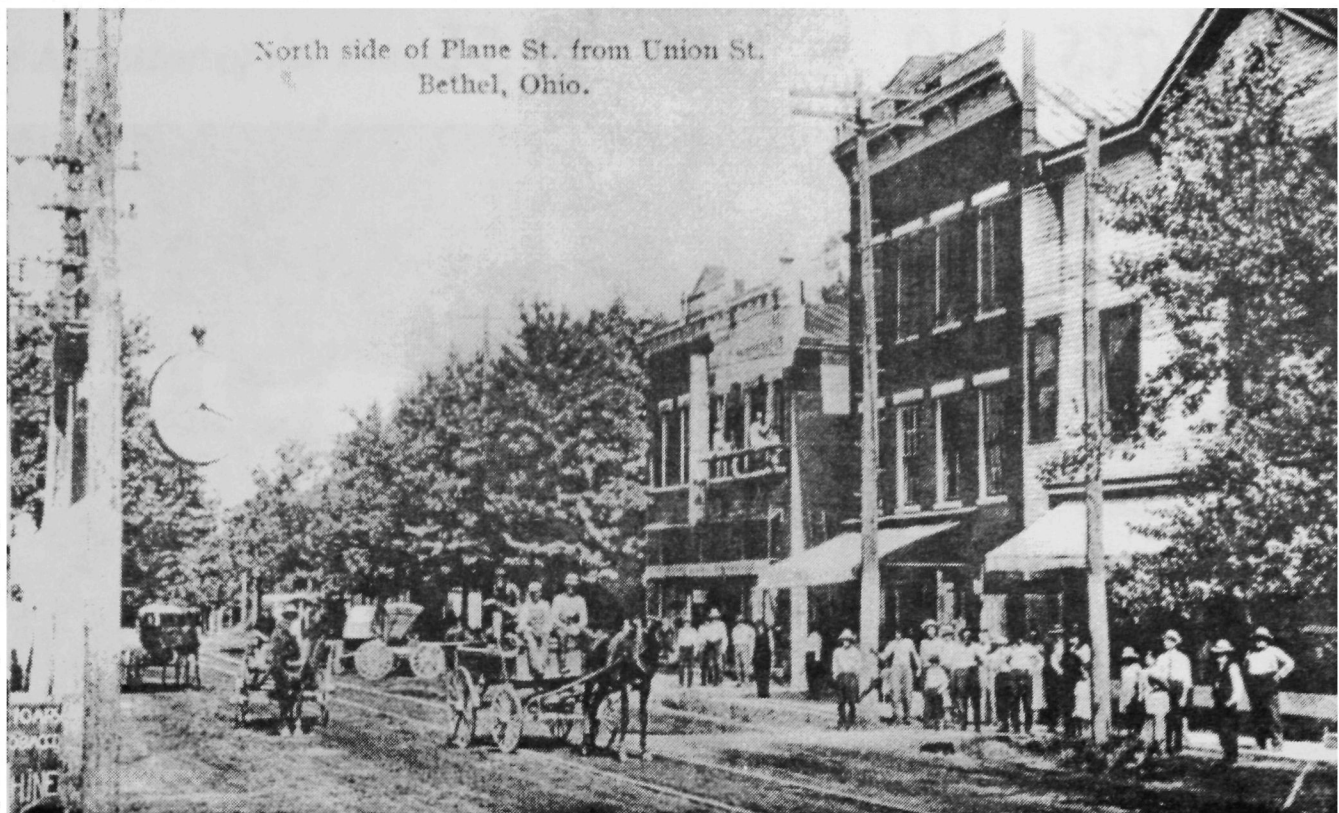
Alder's who was living with the Shawnee in 1786. Alder's writings suggest the abandonment of the region for winter hunting camps further north. However, the Mekoce clan, at least in part, returned to the Mad River and rebuilt portions of their village the following year. Clinging to the former town sites at least temporarily was a rational response since the previously cleared and cultivated fields would have continued to be an attractive setting. However, the period from 1787 to 1788 was a time of political reorganization for the Shawnee bands. These new interests lead to the reappraisal of the Mad River area and ultimately to the discussion of new areas of settlement. Later, Shawnee groups would be found along the Maumee River in northern Ohio and along streams in Indiana like the White River and the Wabash. This period also witnessed the second out-migration of Shawnee from their ancestral homeland in less than a century. The continued movements of the Shawnee during the very late 18th century and the early 19th century will be the continued topic of discussion in the next *Ohio Southland* magazine.



# A Scene From The Past...

Ohio Southland-31

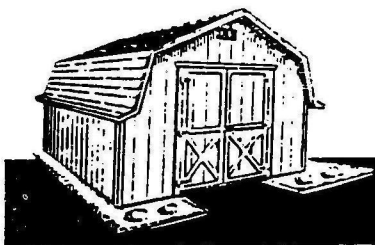
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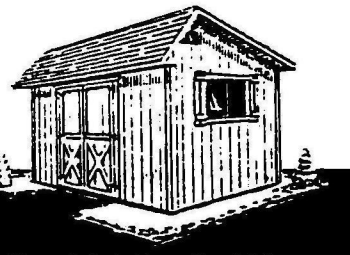
*A picture post card view, circa 1910, of Bethel. looking west on Plane Street. Beck's Dry Goods and Snider's Realty can be seen on the right. The Black Line Railroad tracks are in the middle of the street.*

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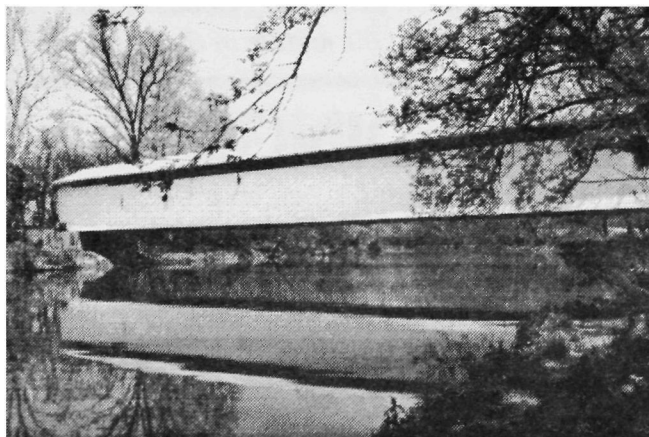
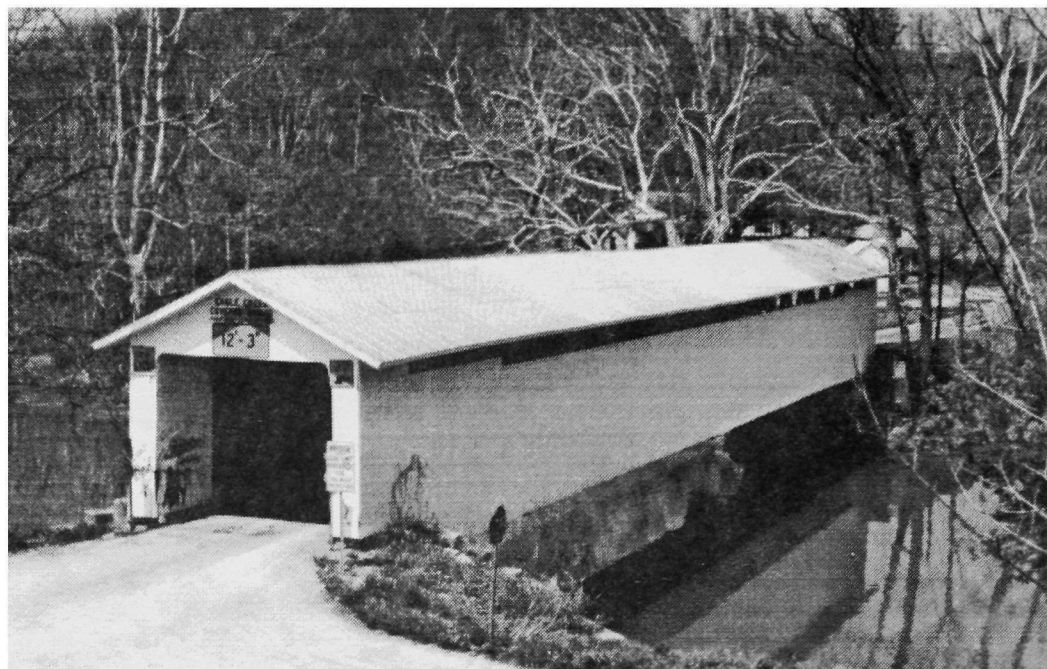


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# Bridges To Our Past



Brown County's Eagle Creek Covered Bridge is unique being the last remaining covered bridge in use on the state highway system. It is found on Ohio 763 about three and a half miles south of the hamlet of Decatur.

As its name implies, this structure crosses Eagle Creek with a span which stretches 187 feet. This National Register of Historic Places landmark was constructed by the Smith Bridge Company in 1875. Its architecture is known as Smith Type-4 Improved.

The Eagle Creek Covered Bridge is located in one of the most picturesque settings in the Ohio Southland.



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## SUNDRY STORES

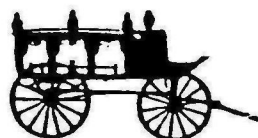
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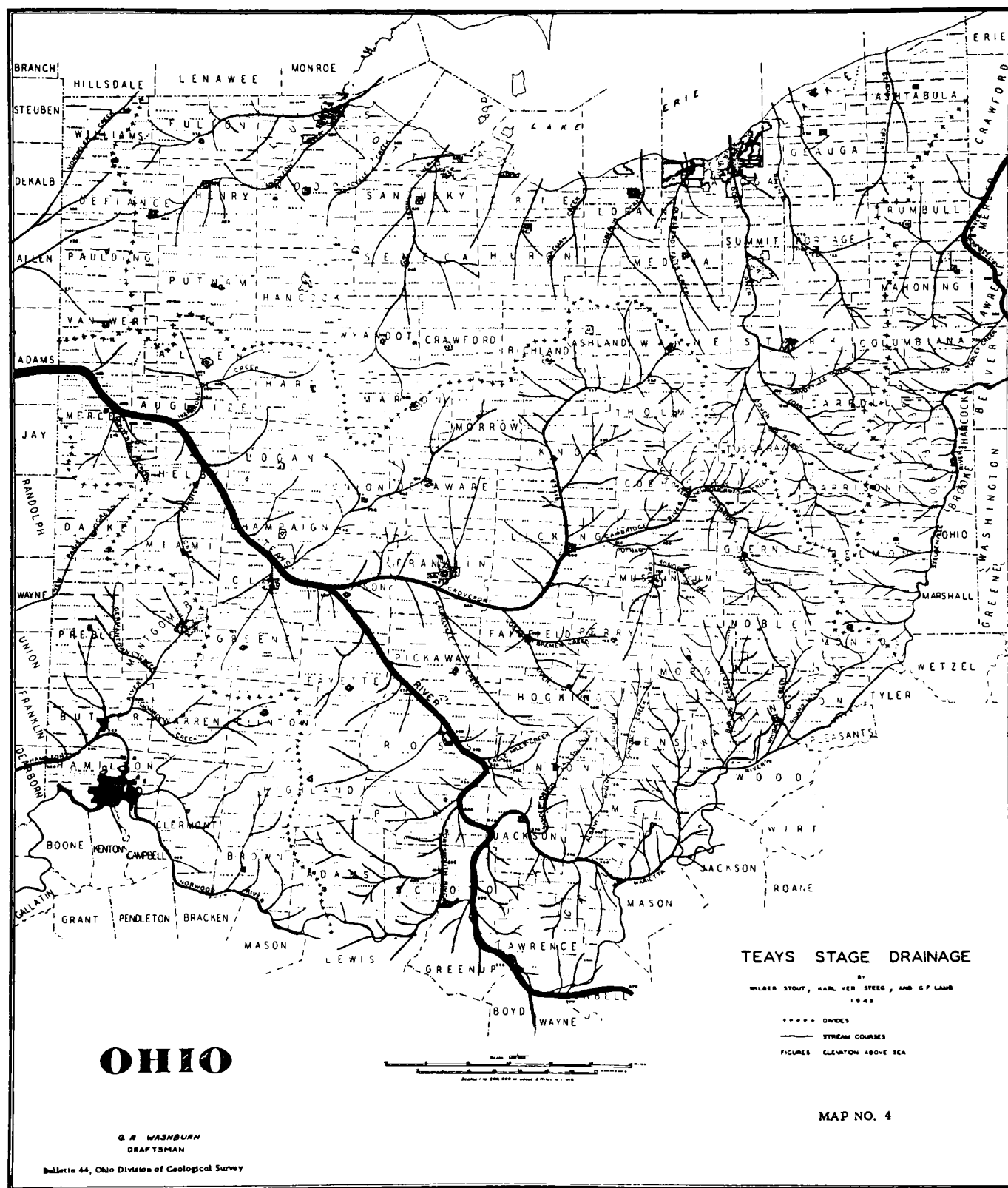


*The Ancestor of the Beautiful Ohio River...*

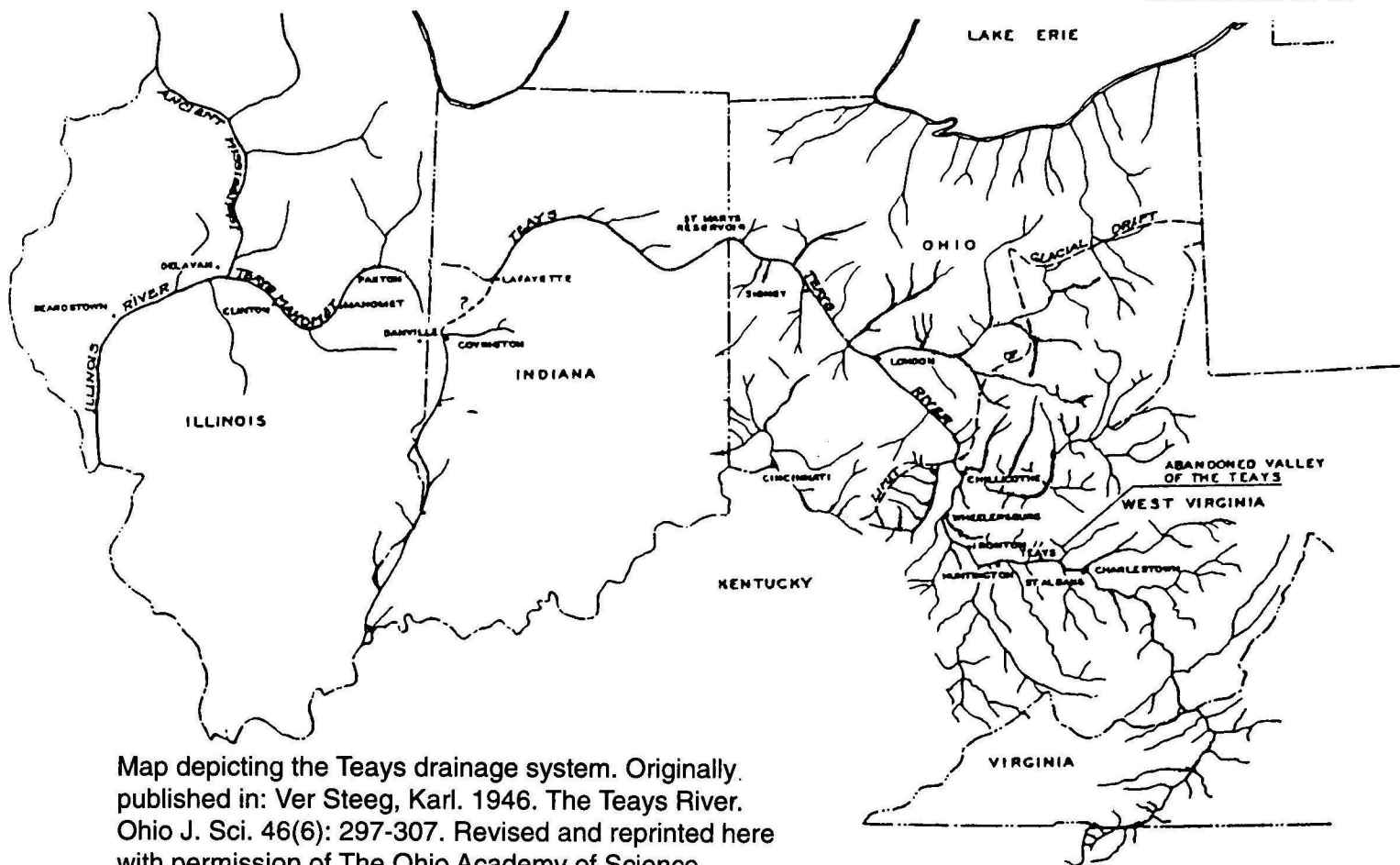
# The Mighty Teays

**Paul E. Knoop, Jr.**

For many thousands of years it was Ohio's greatest river. It originated from headwaters in North Carolina and Virginia and, flowing northwest, the giant stream entered Ohio near Wheelersburg in Scioto County, flowed north past Chillicothe and then northwest to Mercer County. Exiting Ohio, the stream continued across Indiana and Illinois to its junction with the ancestral Mississippi River.



The ancient Teays River superimposed on a modern map of Ohio. This map was originally published as an insert in: Stout, Wilber E., Karl Ver Steeg, and G.F. Lamb. 1943. Geology of water in Ohio. Ohio Geol. Bull. 44. 694 p. Reprinted here with permission of the Division of Geological Survey, Ohio Department of Natural Resources.

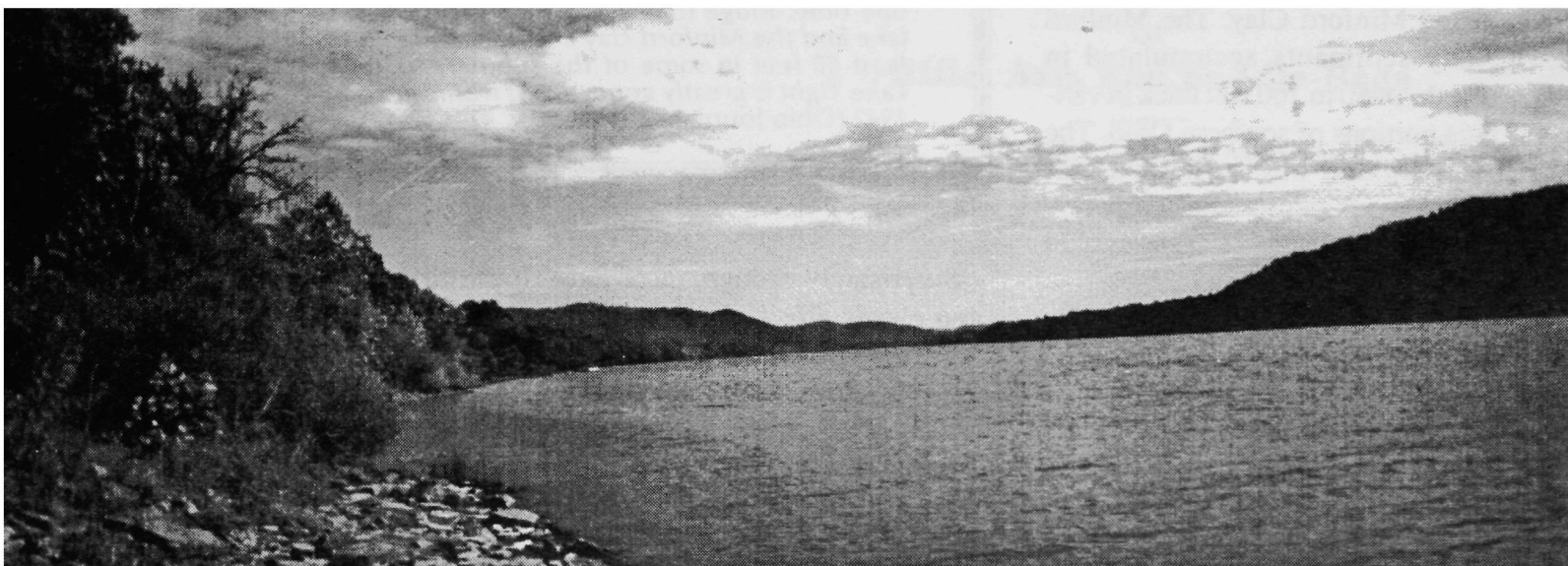


Map depicting the Teays drainage system. Originally published in: Ver Steeg, Karl. 1946. The Teays River. Ohio J. Sci. 46(6): 297-307. Revised and reprinted here with permission of The Ohio Academy of Science.

The above described river was the mighty Teays (pronounced Tays), perhaps the best known nonexistent river in the midwestern United States. During its life the Teays

River cut deep valleys in the bedrock, valleys that in some areas are 400 feet deep. Today, most of these valleys are filled with glacial drift (mostly coarse gravel) but their lo-

cation can be determined by well drillings. The many thousands of oil, gas, and water wells tell precisely the distance through glacial gravel to bedrock. In this way geologists



*The Ohio River as seen at Rome in Adams County. This section of the river was originally a small tributary of the ancient Teays and flowed east at this point--the opposite direction it runs today!*

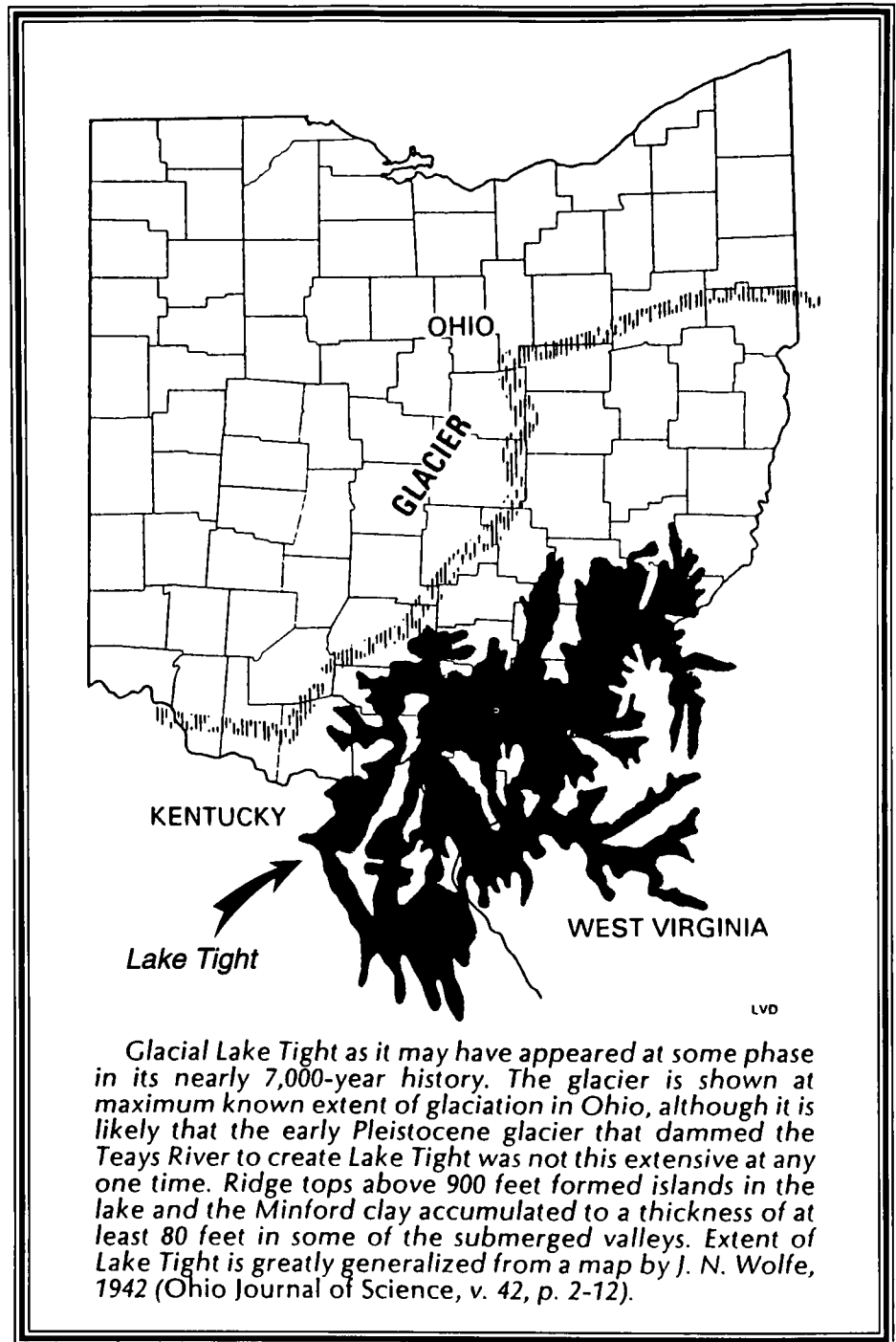
can trace the route of the buried river valley.

South of the glacial boundary, between Wheelersburg and Chillicothe, the broad valley of the Teays is clearly visible to the perceptive auto traveler. High altitude photos of southern Ohio show precisely the route taken by this preglacial stream.

The demise of the Teays occurred when a continental glacier advanced southward and blocked the northward flowing Teays River. The resulting impounded waters created a lake of mammoth proportions. Lake Tight, as it is called, covered 7,000 square miles of land in southern Ohio and parts of West Virginia and Kentucky. This lake must have been an impressive sight, as the waters rose to elevations of nearly 900 feet, creating an intricate pattern of long finger lakes with numerous ridgetops poking above the waters as islands.

Direct evidence of Lake Tight consists of thick deposits of laminated Minford Clay. The Minford Clay sediments accumulated in depths of 80 to 260 feet thick in various portions of southern Ohio. The Minford Clay was laid down in seasonal layers and counting these layers suggest that Lake Tight existed for at least 6,500 years.

Eventually the waters of Lake Tight rose to an elevation sufficiently high to breach the divide and create new drainage channels. As Lake Tight was drained by this breach in the divide, a new river drainage system was created. We call it the Ohio River.



Surprisingly enough, these long-ago events affect our lives today. Many of the buried river valleys under glaciated Ohio were possibly tributary streams of the mighty Teays. These valleys, now filled with many feet of glacial till, are the reservoirs for our drinking water—a gift far superior to any that can be

purchased at local department stores.

\* \* \*

*Paul E. Knoop, Jr. is a retired Education Coordinator of Aullwood Audubon Center & Farm, Dayton, Ohio. He is presently an Environmental Educator, Natural Areas Consultant and Naturalist.*





*Romance In The Wilderness...*

# Frontier Wedding Customs

*Excerpted From:*

**The  
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or  
Rifle, Axe, and Saddle-Bags**

~~~~~  
**by William Henry Milburn**

~~~~~  
**1858**  
~~~~~

Will you have a description of a western wedding in the quaint old days of pioneer life?

Early on a fine morning, there rides up to the door of a log cabin, one of our young American friends, about eighteen years of age, on his father's best horse and best saddle—if that worthy gentleman owns a saddle—the likelihood is that it is nothing but a blanket. In the door stands a blithe and buxom lassie of fifteen summers, but fully grown and finely moulded. Saluting her frankly,

he presents his horse fair to her. Without recourse to block or stile, she lays one hand confidingly on his knee, the other on the horse's rump, and throws herself gracefully into the pillion behind him. Thus riding double, they start for the parson's, three or four of his male friends bearing them company. There are no roads except bridle paths, and they therefore ride in Indian file. The old fighting times have taught them one good lesson, to hold their tongues unless they have something to say; hence the party is a silent one. Half a dozen or a dozen miles are passed, when a clearing in the woods is gained, in the center of which stands a lowly cabin. In its door you shall see one, two, three, four—as it were, a series of short steps—of tow-headed urchins, who announce to the inmates the approach of the company. The foremost rider gives the customary hail, "Hillo, the house there." In obedience to this summons there appears upon the threshold a large, raw-boned gentleman, not in cassock, bands and surplice, not even in clerical black, but in a linsey-woolsey or buckskin hunting shirt. Seeing the strangers, he courteously invites them to alight and come in. Before this invitation is complied

with, however, the candidate for matrimonial honors inquires, is the parson at home? His interlocutor responds that he is that person. Whereupon the young man announces, "You see, this young woman and me have come here to git married; kin you do it?"

"Well, I reckon."

"Well, we're in a great hurry, kin you do it quick?"

"Certainly."

The ceremony is proceeded with as regularly as if it were in a cathedral. The young people's hands are joined, and the good man's benediction is given as he pronounces them man and wife. The new husband asks, "Is that all, parson?"

"That's all I can do for you."

Straightening to his full height with great dignity, the young man inquires, "Well, parson, what's the damage?"

Parsons are modest men. With a blush and a stammer, our clerical friend intimates that the less said upon that subject the better.

"Oh, no, parson," responds the young backwoodsman. "I wish you to understand that I don't choose to begin life on tick."

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Simple folk that they were, they held that a wife who was not worth paying the parson for, was not worth having. Thus urged, the clergyman signifies, "Anything that is pleasant to you is agreeable to me."

Whereupon the young husband requests one of his friends "to fetch *it* in off the horse's neck."

Doubtless, the wisest of you, if you have never lived upon the frontier, would be puzzled to tell what that is on the horse's neck. It turns out to be a *corn-shuck horse-collar*. This is the parson's fee, and right glad he is to get it.

The bridal train return as they have come, until within a half mile of the bride's father's cabin, when all the young men of the party, save the one with the lady behind, start at a helter-skelter gallop through the woods, dodging the limbs, jumping the fallen trees, yelling and screaming as if they were crazy. This is what they call the bottle race. In the door of the cabin stands a gentleman, his arm uplifted, grasping in his fist a great black bottle, which he is shaking desperately, as if to incite the racers to greater speed. Up rushes the foremost of the horsemen, clutches "black Betty," gives her one tri-

umphant wave around his head in token of his victory, applies her mouth to his mouth, imbibing the consequences, and then returns to our young couple, that they may drink their own health and happiness, in the best bald-face whiskey the settlement furnishes.

And now here are assembled all the neighbors from miles around—men, women, children and dogs. The men have been amusing themselves with the usual athletic sports of the border, flinging the rail, hurling the tomahawk, pitching quoits, wrestling, running foot and horse races, and shooting at a mark. The women are mostly busied about the barbeque. A trench has been dug, in one end of which you will see the flames blazing, in another the coals smouldering. Here the meats are being prepared for mastication.

But it is now high noon, dinner-time the world over, so think our simple-minded farmers. The grand repast is served beneath a rustic arbor, formed by leafy branches. Here, upon the puncheon slabs, are served bear meat, buffalo meat, venison, wild turkey, and, as the daintiest of all the delicacies, baked 'possum. For side dishes, you have "big hominy," pyramids of corn

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dodgers, with plenty of milk and butter, if the country be far enough advanced for cows. If not, bear's oil must take the place. It is used as a sop for bread, as gravy for meat, and is pronounced wonderful by those who like it. The men draw their hunting-knives from their belts, commence the business of carving, using their fingers for forks. Every mother's skirt is clutched by her brood of little ones, begging for dodger and gravy, while around every hunter, fawn and leap his hounds, begging for their share of the repast.

Shall I attempt a description of their personal appearance? They are all large, very large, men, women, and babies. The men averaging over six feet in height, and broad in proportion, are clad in deer-skin hunting-shirts, leggings, and moccasins of the same material. When a gentleman wishes a pair of stockings, he fills his moccasins with dried leaves. Around the waist is a belt with a sheath for the hunting-knife, and another for the tomahawk. Descending from the shoulders are straps supporting the bullet-pouch and powder-horn. The head is surmounted by a coon-skin cap, the tail of the animal gracefully pendent between the shoulders—the only ornament upon the person masculine.

But what am I to do with the gear of the ladies? While the fighting is going on, when the small stock of store goods brought from the older settlements has been exhausted and there are no stores, before the home-made looms can be put in operation, the women are obliged to fall back upon the material employed by their husbands and sons, and thus manufacture their garments from deer-skin. You can readily conceive that when a lady has been thoroughly drenched in a hard shower, and is drying herself before a blazing fire, her garments shall be a very tight fit, but now the spinning-jenny and the loom are in daily use, and they are dressed in cloth of their own making. Copperas, madder, and the other dyes, have not yet been introduced, wherefore, they say, by poetic license, white cloth; in (truth), it is only a dirty

brown. Mantua-making has not been imported from Paris, and, in consequence, the cut and make are of the most primitive description. The sleeves resemble miniature corn-sacks, through which the hands are thrust;

the dresses are gathered at the neck, but gathered nowhere else, and fall gracefully—or gracelessly—around the person. But one young lady at this frolic, as at all frolics, is the cynosure of every beholder. She has prevailed upon her father to go a journey of fifty miles...to buy her a new dress. It is bought and she has it on, but, what catastrophes will not ensue when young ladies entrust the purchase of their wardrobe to their fathers. The dress is of calico—for calico is the velvet and *moire antique* of the time, but it is a furniture calico, of a very large figure, and very red. But the old hunters are staring at her as if their eyes had never greeted such a vision of ravishing beauty. The old ladies are winking and nodding, and

whispering to each other that “that gal’s extravagance will spile the whole family.” Need I say what the young ladies are doing? Or the young gentlemen? Who does not know the power of fine dress to breed envy and win attention?

Here, then, they stand around the hospitable board, a healthy, hearty, happy set of people, without a twinge of neuralgia, or a symptom of dyspepsia in the company. This you would believe, could you see them eat. Dinner ended, the second part of the programme begins; and what can this be but a dance. Wherefore the old black fiddler is introduced, who, after making the inevitable preliminary flourishes with his bow, bids them choose partners and start. Remember that they are dancing as our English forefathers danced, on the green sward, in the checkered shade. And here I am reminded that they are a rough and unsophisticated people, for the only styles they are acquainted with are the Virginia reels, jigs, and shake-downs. If you had mentioned mazourka, polka, schottische, redown, in connection with dancing, they would have stared as if they thought



William Henry Milburn  
*Author of The Pioneer Preacher*  
 A native of Philadelphia, he served as a  
 Methodist Circuit Rider on the American  
 frontier during 1843-45 where he learned  
 of the unique wedding customs described here.



you crazy. In (truth), had they known these figures, I much question their adopting them; for they held it as a primary axiom in domestic morality, that it was the business of every man to hug his own wife, and let other women alone, and the province of the lady to submit to that delicate process only at the arms of her lord, or her lover, at farthest. But we, with our superior refinement and morality, can afford to practise the styles sometimes called fancy—more properly affectionate—imported from the sinks of European prostitution, while we scout as rude and vulgar the borderers and their scruples. On they caper, “till the live-long daylight fails,” when, if not to “the spicy nut-brown ale,” they betake themselves for recuperation to a cold cut and “black Betty.” Through the thickening darkness, blazing pine-knots from fire-stands shed a lurid glare, affording light enough to dance by. Thus they proceed till daylight, halting in the middle watch for another “bite and swig.” As the ruddy glow steals along the eastern sky, worn-out and bare-footed—for moccasins will not bear everything—they hie them home to rest.

A day or two thereafter, you shall see every man who has been at the party, coming to the “infair.” With his rifle on his shoulder, that, if occasion serve, he may “drop a deer in his tracks,” attended by his pack of hounds, who follow him everywhere, to church and funerals, as well as to weddings, our trusty hunter bears along his axe. Reaching the site selected, he finds a group of hardy woodmen stripped for their work, wielding their axes with gigantic strength and dexterous aim. The great trees of the forest shiver, groan, and fall with a thunderous crash. Logs of the proper length are cut and notched; brawney arms lift them to their places; clap-boards for the roof are split, and the puncheons are hewed for the floor, and in a trice the new house is raised. In the center of the floor, four augur-holes are bored, in which are inserted stakes. On these, two puncheons are placed, which constitute the table. Four other augur-holes are

bored in one corner of the cabin, in which are inserted four stakes with forked tops. In these are laid saplings, on which rest strips of bark, or, in their place, buffalo skins are tightly drawn. Dried leaves are then collected as a mattress; the upper side of the tick being constituted of skin; and thus you have bed and bedstead. A

rude dresser is hewn in another corner of the cabin, which shall contain the little stock of pottery, tin and iron ware. Three or four three-legged stools—to be followed in after years by a dozen or twenty more, as necessity may require—and, in course of time, a sugar-trough for a cradle, complete the furniture of the dwelling. At his leisure, the young man shall arrange a set of

buckhorns over the door, as pegs whereon to rest his rifle; and construct a loom, that his wife may prosecute her weaving, for she has brought with her a spinning-jenny as her dower. The “house is warmed” by means of another party, and our newly-married pair start upon the sober jogg of wedded life.

Humble indeed were these households of the first settlers. But around these cabin-homes of the wilderness, God’s angels came to bestow their benedictions. Here are health and labor, frugality and content, chastity and love. From these darkened fountains in the forest have gushed the waters which, flowing into sunshine, have combined to form the majestic river of our national life.



*An early engraving depicting a cabin raising.*

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# Hunting For Hanging Prairies

Jeffrey Knoop



Jeffrey Knoop

*A mid-summer visit to a hanging prairie.*

Adams County is nationally known for its tremendous number of plants and animals, collectively referred to as *biological diversity*. As has been pointed out in earlier articles, the “prairies” or cedar barrens of southeastern Adams County exemplify the county’s local wealth of biota. Some of the richest prairie barrens contain upwards of 250 species of plants alone in an area no larger than a football field.

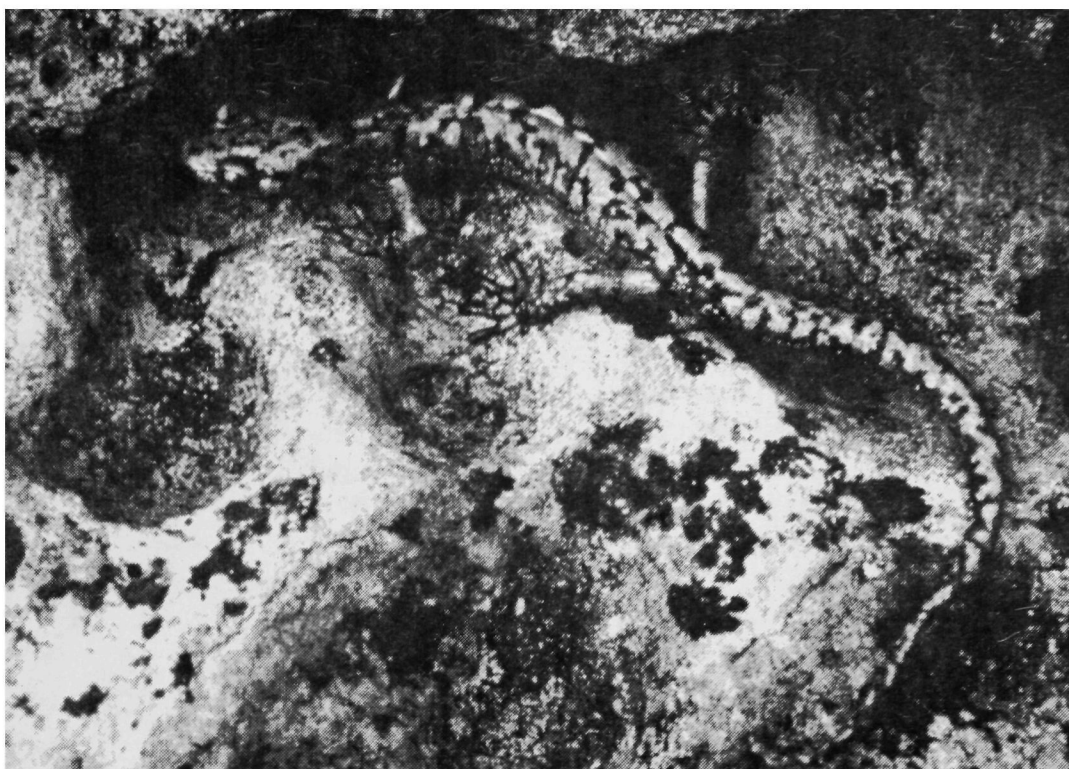
Such prairie barrens are most prominent just east of Ohio Brush Creek where the “hills” of the Allegheny Plateau abruptly rise in knob-like stature. At first glance the

barrens appear randomly scattered, occurring in a variety of shapes, sizes, and topographic positions. Random as they may seem, some order can be put to the chaos by a good surface bedrock geology map, for the barrens are exclusively restricted to localized outcroppings of dolomite (a type of limestone) and calcareous shales. So with a surface geology map in hand, one can, with some regularity, “predict” just where prairie barrens might occur in southeastern Adams County.

However, bedrock occurrence alone won’t always lead one to a prairie barren. Couple the surface bedrock geology map with a topographic map (a topographic or “topo” map depicts surface elevations) and your chances of locating one particular type of barren called a “hanging prairie” is greatly increased for steep, well drained slopes, easily observable on topo maps, are another important locational clue in hunting for the elusive hanging prairie.

Hanging prairies, also known as goat prairies or contour prairies, are particularly noteworthy. In Adams County, they occur where dolomites and limestones outcrop in narrow bands on extremely steep slopes. Such prairie barrens seemingly “hang” above the adjacent deep, moist ravines, the gorge-like ravines a result of stream erosion over geologic time.

Without a doubt, some of the finest hanging prairies are located in extreme northern Green Township. Here, several north-south oriented tributary streams have cut deep gorges (several hundred feet deep) into the underlying bedrock along their courses towards Ohio Brush Creek. Stream orientation is important for north-south oriented tributary streams create slopes and uplands that expose high amounts of west and southwesterly facing slopes. West and southwesterly facing slopes receive a maximum of solar radiation thereby creating extremely



Jeffrey Knopp

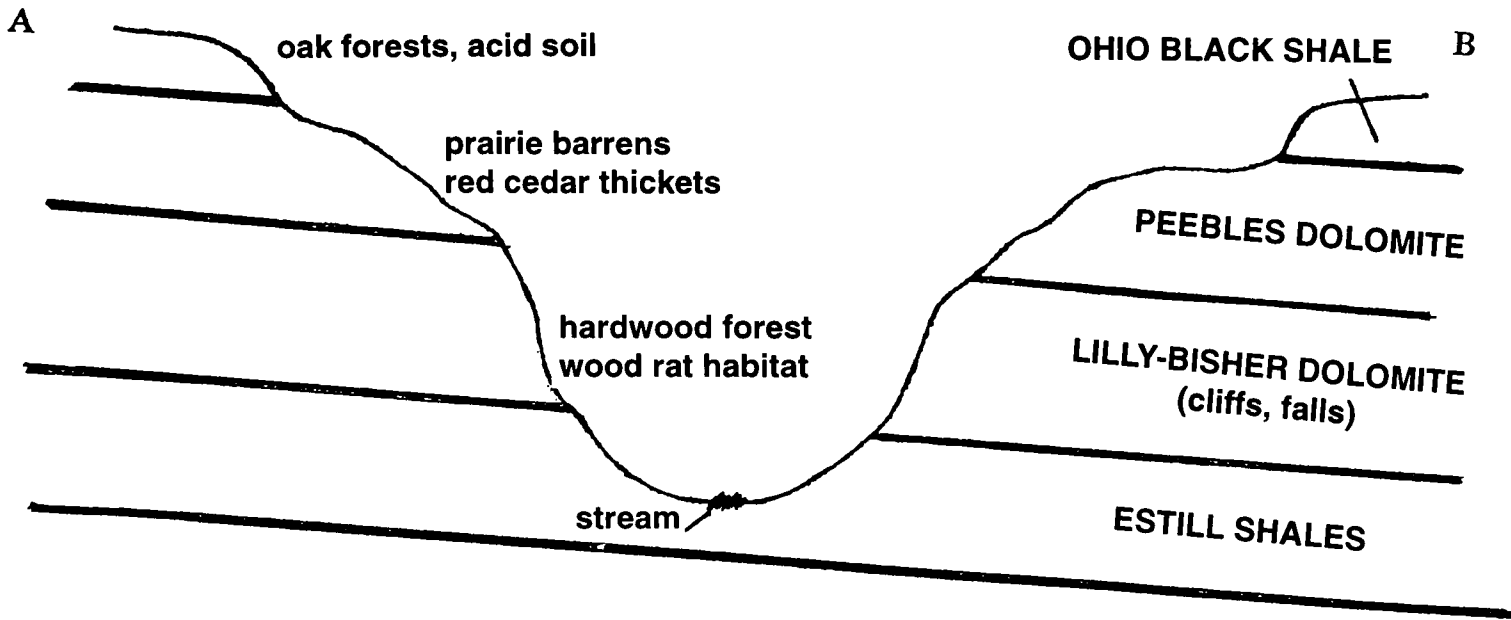
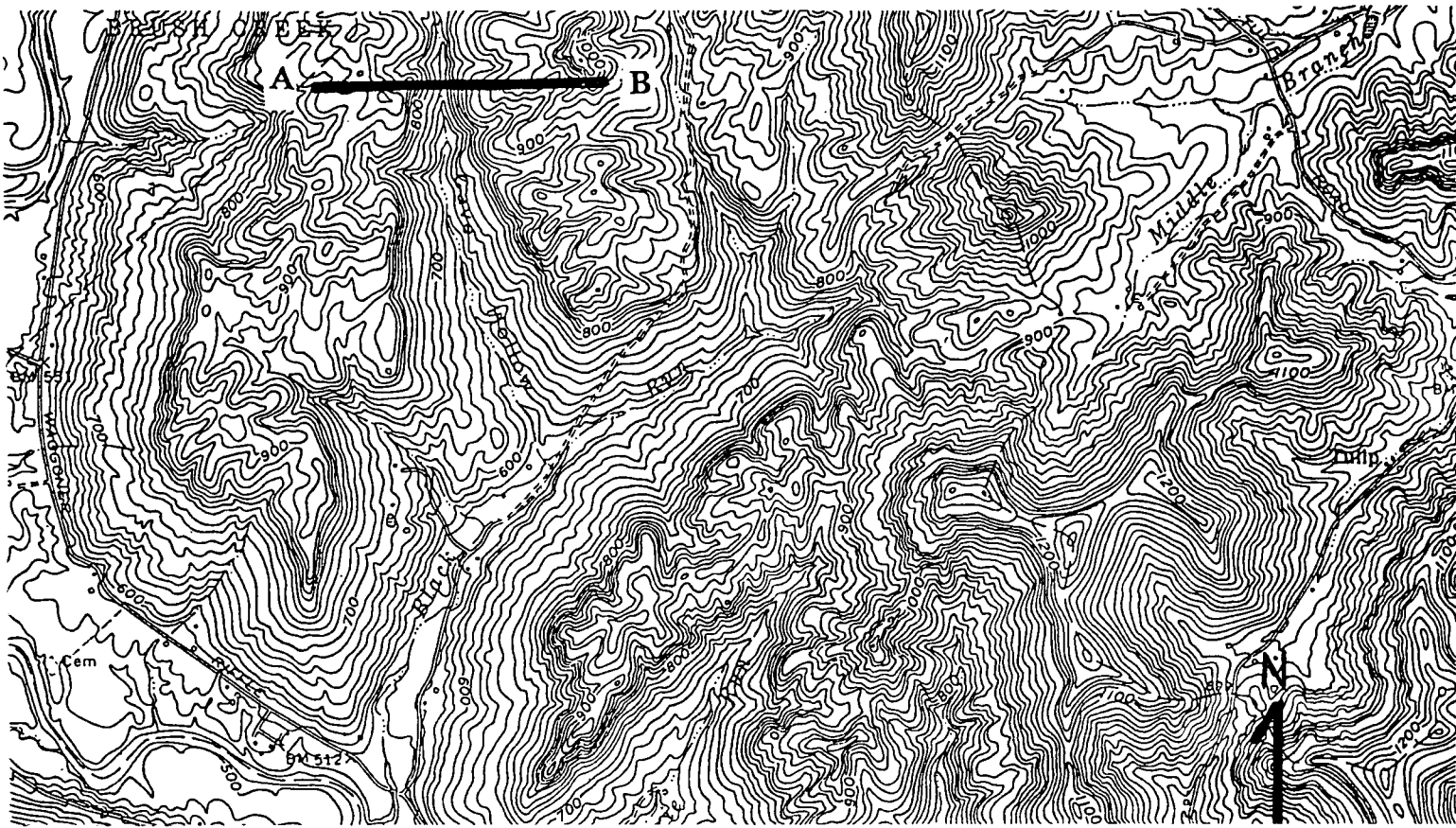
*A Green Salamander in a crevasse on dolomite rock. This salamander is the only North American species of salamander that has green coloration.*

droughthy, sun-parched conditions. Thus, stony, shallow dolomitic soils coupled with steep slopes oriented west and southwesterly set the stage for the persistence of these hanging prairies.

The eminent ecologist, E. Lucy Braun, spent a large part of her professional career studying the barrens and other plant communities in Adams County’s Mineral Springs region. She concluded that the barrens of Adams County are a product of soil derived from dolomite and generally occur on steep southwesterly facing slopes as described above. Such settings create localized habitat conditions not dissimilar from the prairie regions of the central United States that receive one half the rainfall of Adams County. Dr. Braun also brought attention to the relict nature of the prairie barrens; the plants of these communities entered the region in a time unlike the present (probably many thousand years ago). Local factors, i.e. steep slopes, thin soils, dolomitic bedrock, may account for their persistence, or possibly the failure of the present climatic vegetation, i.e. deciduous forest, to invade and occupy the areas now under prairie vegetation. In general, it is the extreme habitats which are held by the unusual vegetation; the average areas are readily invaded by the usual type (Braun, 1928).

Up-slope and down-slope of hanging prairies are forested communities where environmental conditions are less severe due to differences in bedrock, deeper soils,





Typical hanging prairie valley in cross section--The upper map is a topographic map of an area in northern Green Township, Adams County. Line A - B across the steep, rocky ravine has a relief in excess of 200 feet. The lower diagram is a cross sectional view looking north up Cave Hollow Valley. Note that the prairie barrens are restricted to outcroppings of the Peebles Dolomite. Down slope from the barrens, cliffs and waterfalls are formed within the Lilly-Bisher dolomites. Up slope from the barrens is the highly acidic Ohio Black Shales which cap many of the ridges in this portion of Adams County., (not to scale)

and generally more moist environs. Migration of trees and shrubs into the barrens can occur, but only slowly and ensuing drought years may bring about their ultimate demise. Migration of the sun-dependent prairie plants are limited up-slope by forest and acidic Ohio Black Shales; down-slope by vertical cliffs and lack of adequate sunlight.

The barrens of Adams County are some of the region's finest natural flower gardens. Grasses dominate, but forbs—sunflowers, coneflowers, Indian Paint Brush and Blazing Stars—dominate the color spectrum. In spring, with the grasses still brown and little signs of life even in the adjacent woods, blooming prairie forbs abound including prairie violet, golden alexanders, yellow puccoon, and the delicate whitlow grass. As spring fades to summer, the best is yet to come. The variety of plant species increase with brilliant late summer arrays of butterfly weed, obedient plant, purple coneflowers, gentians and sunflowers, which dominate the landscape of the barren. On into the fall, the tall prairie grasses—Turkey Foot and Indian Grass—add rich green and silver to the landscape. The American aloe or agave is

almost always present giving the barrens a desert-like aspect. A high percentage of the plant species occurring in these barrens are very rare in Ohio, some on the state endangered species list.

In many hanging prairies, the down-slope margin of the prairie vegetation ends with steep, vertical cliffs. Within the deep ravines, which are dominated by mature deciduous forest, one can find deep moss mats covered with tangled masses of ferns and numerous woodland flowers. In addition, this is the habitat for two extremely rare animal species: the Green Salamander and the Allegheny Wood Rat better known as the Pack Rat. The nocturnal Green Salamander inhabits crevasses and caves formed within the vertical walls of the ravine. The Pack Rat, as its name implies, is evidenced by small caches of twigs, nuts, leaves and occasional bottle caps, or other objects it may decide to pack away along cliffs and within rock shelters. Both the Wood Rat and the Green Salamander are endangered in Ohio, known only from the state in Green and Brush Creek townships, Adams County.

Several of the region's finest hanging prairies occur

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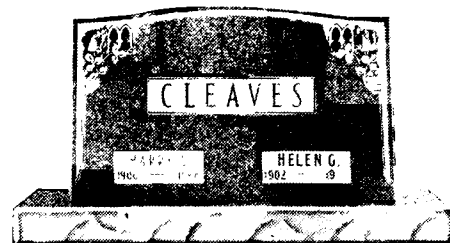
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*Typical hanging prairie in northern Green Township, Adams County. The person nearest to the middle of the picture is standing at the edge of a 50 foot cliff. The barren is seen in the foreground and a mixed hardwood forest in the ravine.*

within the Edge of Appalachia Preserve. Access to these sites is possible with permission from The Nature Conservancy or the Cincinnati Museum of Natural History. Both the Conservancy and the Museum lead public walks into these sites, so contact one of these agencies for schedules of walks. One of the best ways to learn about the barrens of the county is to join us on a volunteer work day as we strive to maintain these unique prairie barrens by removing selected woody shrubs and cedar trees or prepare the sites for a prescribed burn to enhance the prairie vegetation and sustain the vigor of the irreplaceable hanging prairies of Adams County.

\* \* \*

NOTE: An excellent historical reference which discusses the prairies and barrens of Adams County in detail is: Braun, E.L., The Vegetation of the Mineral Springs Region of Adams County, Ohio. Biological Survey Bulletin No. 15. The Ohio State University Press, Columbus, Ohio. 1928.

\* \* \*

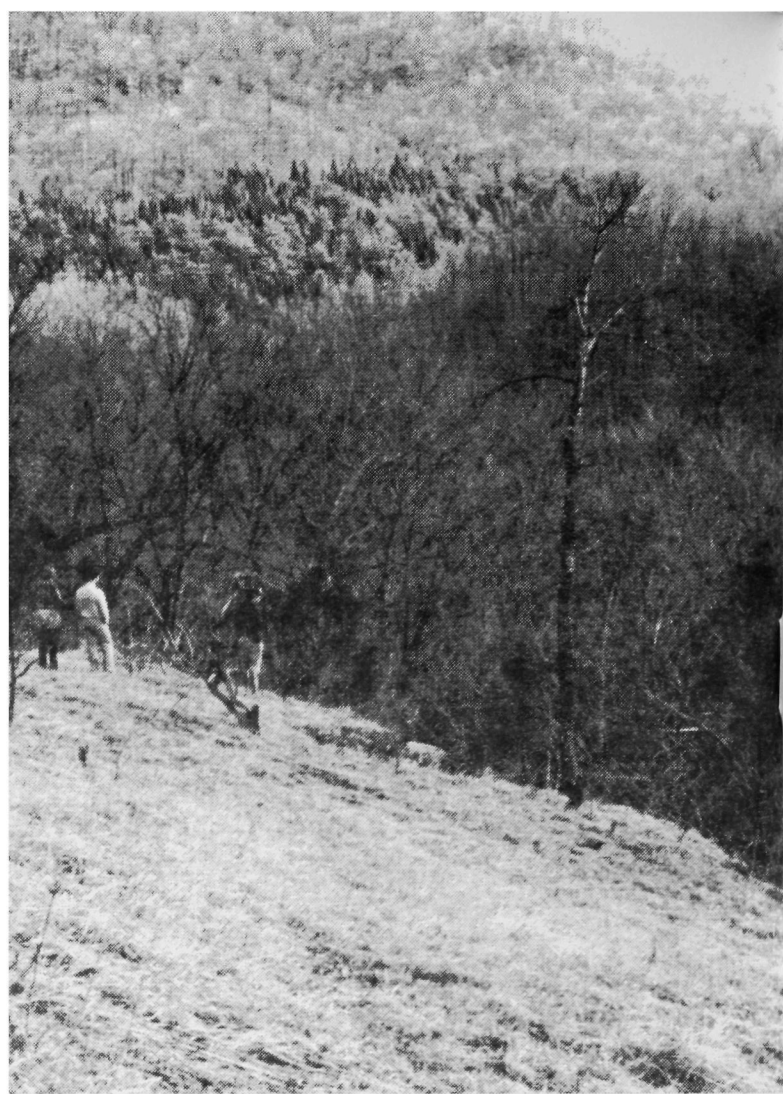
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For more information about becoming a member, contact: The Nature Conservancy, 1504 West First Avenue, Columbus, Ohio 43212, (614) 486-4194.

\* \* \*

*Jeffrey Knoop is Director of Science and Stewardship for the Ohio Chapter of The Nature Conservancy.*



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Lena McCoy Mathews

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*Let's Keep Their Memory Green* is being published in series form through the generosity of the children of Mrs. Mathews: Dr. Fred L. Mathews of Dowagiac, Michigan; Dr. John A. Mathews and Dr. Thomas E. Mathews of Three Rivers, Michigan; Richard C. Mathews of Marathon, Florida; and Ruth Mathews Cornell of Lafayette, Indiana.

## Chapter XXII

\* \* \*

### Hast Thou Faith

\* \* \*

In First Corinthians, twelfth chapter, verses five and six we read: *And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operation, but it is the same God that worketh all in all.*

In this day we hear quoted a great deal among evangelistic groups from the Psalms: *Let the redeemed of the Lord say so.*

Also from St. John's gospel: *We speak that we do know and testify that we have seen.*

These scriptures are quoted many times as encouragement for the testimony of new converts, or for those who have received outstanding answers to prayer to testify publicly of their experiences. Such testimonies are faith-inspiring agencies no one should belittle.

There are also scriptures that may seem to be contradictory, such as in Romans: *Hast thou faith, have it to thyself before God.* There are others of the, *go and tell no man*, types.

This is somewhat clarified when we read in Ecclesiastes that there is *a time to keep silence and a time to speak.*

With these scriptures in mind it may be better understood why some who have had miraculous experiences give no public testimony other than that shown by a deeper and richer spiritual life.

*Foxes Book of Martyrs*, *Scots' Worthies* and other books record much of the miraculous among the Covenanters of persecution times.

Though these quiet Scots shrank

from much public demonstration, true stories of their own experiences were told to the children along with Bible stories and stories of persecution days.

After all, it is the same God that works in the private and living testimony as effectively as in the public testimony, they held.

In the days when the Gaileyte church flourished, there had been miraculous recoveries from illnesses and even when life was not spared, grueling pain had been eased by the prayer of faith. Reverend Gailey had seemed at times to possess a spiritual power glimpsed fleetingly now and then down the ages that kept the church from losing sight of the miraculous in healing.

\* \* \*

Less than a year after her enrollment in the Hillsboro Academy, Victoria Wickerham's education became again, something for her to dream about. Sickness at home had interfered with her plans before this at times; now Candace, the mainstay at home, was ill.

Lois Ann, as always, was just a living shadow and their father, still a semi-invalid. Cargill had married Elizabeth Sharp, so there seemed no other way but for Victoria to come home.

Candace's illness soon become serious—an abscess on one kidney. To drain the abscess was as far as local physicians' knowledge had advanced.

The Elders of the church had prayed often for her recovery, if it be the Lord's will.

"God heals through man so far as he has revealed cures to man. The clay with which Jesus anointed the blind man's eyes was well known to have curative elements to the extent of drawing out inflammation, but it could never have opened blind eyes; yet he used the

clay," Reverend Gailey had pointed out.

It was not, however, the Lord's will that Candace recover.

John and Eleanor Ann, through all their trials, had managed to keep the little forty acre farm home mortgage-free, but the land was mined out to the place where raising enough to feed the proverbial "cow, sow and hen" and a pair of horses was difficult. However, with his work making and repairing shoes and harnesses and occasionally making a piece of furniture for sale, doctor bills, funeral expenses and taxes were met.

Candace had done much of the farm work while Cargill worked on the railroad, at making ties or at splitting rails and shingles, slowly accumulating the \$1,000 those thrifty Scots figured a young man should have before taking a wife. She had also woven baskets and cloth on a hand-loom as a little independent business of her own.

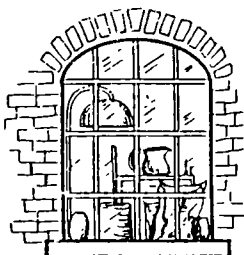
Now the family would have to adjust and carry on. Cargill moved nearer and farmed the place on shares while John worked at his trade as much as he was able.

Lois Ann had her own small business at home of blocking over and trimming a hat now and then and making hair switches and wigs from ladies' combings.

Victoria was free again to make another try for a college education.

She was busily packing her valise and trunk. An uneasy foreboding seemed to envelope her. She tried to ignore the feeling for these trips were anything but pleasant by jostling train, bouncing livery rig and pitching river boat. Still, the other-than-natural feeling of dread for an unpleasant journey continued to trouble her.

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Dropping to her knees beside her bed she was lost for a moment in seeking Divine guidance.

All at once it seemd the old precentor of her childhood was standing before her lining out from the ninety-first Psalm, *Thou shalt not need to be afraid.*

She arose and began to sing a portion of the Psalm, a version she knew so well:

*Thou shalt not need to be afraid  
For terror of the night;  
Nor for the arrow that doth fly  
By day while it is light:*

*Nor for the pestilence that walks  
In darkness secretly;  
Nor for destruction that doth waste  
At noonday openly:*

*A thousand at thy side shall fall  
On thy right hand shall lie;  
Ten thousand dead, yet unto thee  
It shall not once come nigh.*

As she sang, her spirits rose and she chided herself for her moment of fearfulness.

River fog was dense, almost obscuring the ticket office as Victoria, valise in hand, alighted from the cab she had taken from train to boat landing. The cab driver was setting down her trunk when a colored porter approached.

"Let me help with your baggage ma'am. Which boat, ma'am?" he asked, shouldering her trunk.

"The 'Phaeton.' It leaves first I believe," she replied.

"Better take the 'Handy,' ma'am, she's perfectly safe," he counseled as they approached the ticket office.

"She's perfectly safe." "Thou shalt not need to be afraid,"—the two statements seemed to flow together.

"Very well," she replied, and bought a ticket for the 'Handy' although it did not leave until a little later.

There may yet be living some very old folks who will remember that the boiler of the 'Phaeton' blew up on the trip. There were few, if any, survivors.

\* \* \*

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*A 1912 Main Street view of the Clermont County community of Tobasco. A car on the Black Line Railroad is seen rounding the curve.*



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