

Western Reserve Historical Society.

CLEVELAND, O., JULY, 1871.

HISTORICAL AND ARCHÆOLOGICAL TRACTS,
NUMBER SIX.

PAPERS RELATING TO THE
FIRST WHITE SETTLERS IN OHIO.

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An article appeared in the *Cleveland Herald* in the spring of 1871 announcing the receipt by the Historical Society from the Department of State at Washington of valuable transcripts of letters and documents. They have now been examined and are highly interesting, relating as most of them do, to settlements and attempted settlements northwest of the Ohio River prior to that of Marietta in the spring of 1788.

The announcement of this discovery has attracted the attention of students in history, particularly of those who reside in the States formed out of that vast region, the old Northwestern Territory as defined by the ordinance of 1787. These disclosures have nowhere excited more attention than at Marietta, so long regarded as the first formed, first named, and first peopled settlement by the English race in Ohio.

It has hitherto been supposed that with the exception of traders and missionaries and the occupation by the military under Colonel Harmer during the existence of the Confederation no attempts had been made prior to 1788 at permanent occupation for the purpose of cultivating the

soil. I do not here propose to enter into a discussion of this point, preferring first to present the material in our possession.

A brief reference to some of the early occupants both French and English will not however be out of place. As early as the year 1745 English traders penetrated as far as Sandusky or "St. Dusky" and established a post on the North side of the Bay near the carrying place or portage from the Portage River across the Peninsula. They were driven away by the French probably in 1748 or 1749. During this period a celebrated Indian trader from Pennsylvania by the well known name of George Croghan had a station at or near the mouth of the Cuyahoga then known as the Cayahaga, and sometimes as Hioga. In 1750 or 1751 the English Post at Pickawillany was established at a town of the Miamies or Tawixtawes near the mouth of Loramie's Creek, in Shelby county Ohio. The French and Indians destroyed this post in June 1752. In 1761 Frederick Post, a Moravian missionary established a mission on the Tuscarawas near Bolivar on the line between Stark and Tuscarawas counties, Ohio. Until the cession made to the United States by Virginia of her claims on the northern bank of the Ohio river, her citizens regarded Ohio as a part of the old Dominion and undertook to locate their land certificates here. Before the

war of the revolution Great Britain had great difficulty in confining her adventurous colonists to the southern side of the Ohio. At a Congress of the Colonies held at Albany in 1754, Benjamin Franklin presented the draft of an English Confederation very much like the one now adopted for Canada. The plan was adopted by the Congress but declined by England. A part of this scheme was the establishment of a colony at the mouth of the Cuyahoga protected by a fort and another on the Ohio river. Colonel Brodhead, was the military commander at Pittsburg during the early part of the war of the Revolution whose letters we now proceed to give so far as they relate to the settlers north of the Ohio. The salt spring in Weathersfield, Trumbull county, was well known to the English in 1754, and also the existence of bituminous coal and petroleum springs in Ohio. The correspondence which is quite fragmentary is presented in the order of dates as near as practicable.

COL. BRODHEAD TO JOHN JAY, 1779.

PITTSBURGH, OCT. 26, 1779.

SIR—Since I did myself the honor to address you by a former letter, some of the inhabitants from Youghaginia and Ohio counties have been hardy enough to cross the Ohio River and make small improvements on the Indian lands from the river Muskingum to Fort McIntosh and thirty miles up some of the branches of the Ohio River. As soon as I received information of the trespass, I detached a party of sixty men under command of Capt. Clarke, to apprehend the trespassers and destroy their huts, which they have in a great measure effected, and likewise dispatched a runner to the Chiefs of the Delawares at Cooshoeking to prevent their attacking the innocent inhabitants, but as yet have received no answer from them. Capt. Clarke informs me that the trespassers had returned and that the trespass appeared to have been committed upwards of a month ago. It is hard to determine what effect this impudent conduct may have on the minds of the Delaware chiefs and warriors, but I hope a favorable answer to the speech I sent them. I presume a line from your Excellency to the Governor and Council of Virginia will tend to prevent a future trespass and the murder of many innocent families on this frontier.

I have the honor to be with perfect respect
Your Excellency's most obt. and most
H'ble Serv't

D. BRODHEAD,

Col. Command'g W. D.

His Excellency JNO. JAY, Esq.

BRODHEAD TO WASHINGTON.

PITTSBURGH, OCT. 26, 1779.

DEAR GEN'L—Immediately after I had closed my last (of the 9th of this instant) I rec'd a letter from Col. Shepherd, Lieut. of Ohio County, informing me that a certain Decker, Cox & Comp'y with others had

crossed the Ohio River, and committed trespasses on Indian lands wherefore I ordered sixty rank and file to be equipped, and Capt. Clarke of the 8th Penn. reg't proceeded with this party to Wheeling with orders to cross the river at that p s. and to apprehend some of the principal trespassers and destroy their huts. He returned without finding any of the trespassers, but destroyed some huts. He writes me the inhabitants have made small improvements all the way from the Muskingum River to Fort McIntosh and thirty miles up some of the Branches. I sent a runner to the Delaware Council at Cooshoeking to inform them of the trespass, and assure them it was committed by some foolish people, and requested them to rely on my doing them justice and punishing the offenders, but as yet have not received an answer.

* * * * *

I have the honor to be with perfect regard
and esteem, your Excellency's most
Ob't H'ble Serv't

D. BRODHEAD.

His Excellency GEN. WASHINGTON.

BRODHEAD TO MAJOR TAYLOR.

HEADQUARTERS, PITTSBURGH, {
Nov. 21, 1779. }

DEAR SIR— * * * I am glad to hear of Capt. Vance's return, but I sincerely wish he had taken under guard some of those fellows who, by their unlicensed encroachments on the Indian's Hunting grounds, seem determined to provoke new calamities to the already much distressed inhabitants of the frontier; and as I consider it a duty not to be dispensed with, I desire you will send a party equal to that under the command of Captain Vance, to go in search of those disturbers of the general tranquility, and give them orders to apprehend any white man who may be found hunting or encamped on the Indians' lands, and use all possible means for that purpose.

The party cannot render more essential services to the country, than by apprehending silly people in order that proper examples may be made, and the effusion of blood (consequent) be prevented.

* * * * *

I am with great regard

Your Most Humble Servant

DAN'L BRODHEAD,

Col. Commanding W. D.

Major RICHARD TAYLOR.

SETTLEMENT AT THE SALT SPRINGS,
TRUMBULL COUNTY.

During the revolutionary war a party of settlers from Fort Pitt built a number of cabins at the Salt Springs, in what is now the township of Weathersfield, Trumbull county. Here they lived in peace and security, tilled the land, and made salt which they sold to the Moravian Indians. How many congregated there is not known, but from the reports of Colonel Harmar it is judged there were ten or more families. These had been located at the springs by Pennsylvania traders, who claimed the land by reason of purchases from the In-

dians. Harmar sent Ensign Armstrong in May 1785, and after dispossessing the inhabitants, burnt their cabins and destroyed all improvements about the Springs. The land was afterwards purchased by General Samuel H. Parsons and Jonathan Heart of Connecticut.

On the 30th of November, 1782, a preliminary treaty of peace between the United States and Great Britain was signed at Paris, and a definitive treaty was signed at the same place by American and English Commissioners, on the 3d of September 1783. By that treaty the United States became a free and independent nation. Under its provisions the English evacuated New York on the 25th of November 1783, when the acknowledgement of our sovereignty as a nation became a reality, for no foreign soldier was from that day in power on the territory of the thirteen colonies. The government of the United States claimed that by the terms of the treaty of Paris, all the territory Northwest of the Ohio to the Mississippi, was surrendered to the United States, but Great Britain refused to acknowledge this claim until 1796, when all their posts within the tract referred to were delivered to the United States.

On the 21st of January, 1785, a treaty was concluded at Fort McIntosh, between George Rogers Clarke, Richard Butler and Arthur Lee as Commissioners for the United States, and the representatives of the Wyandot, Delaware, Chippewa and Ottawa Nations, with this clause:

"If any citizen of the United States, or other person, not being an Indian, shall attempt to settle on any of the lands allotted to the Wyandot and Delaware Nations in this Treaty, excepting the lands reserved to the United States in the preceding article, such person shall forfeit the protection of the United States, and the Indians may punish him as they please."

The treaty made at Fort Finney, at the mouth of the Great Miami, January 31, 1786, between George Rogers Clarke, Richard Butler, and Samuel H. Parsons, Commissioners on the part of the United States, and the chiefs and warriors of the Shawanees, provided in article VII:

"If any citizen or citizens of the United States shall presume to settle upon the lands allotted to the Shawanees by this Treaty, he or they shall be put out of the protection of the United States."

THE INDIAN COMMISSIONERS TO COL. HARMAR,
1785

"Surveying or settling the lands not within the limits of any particular State being forbid by the United States in Congress assembled, the commandant will employ such force as he may deem necessary in driving off persons attempting to settle on the lands of the United States."

Given at Fort McIntosh, this 24th day of January, 1785.

{ G. R. CLARK,
RICHARD BUTLER,
ARTHUR LEE.

Owing to the small force under his command, it was impossible at that time for Colonel Harmar to carry into effect the orders of the Commissioners. Even had the number of troops been sufficient, Colonel Harmar, in his discretion as commander, would have long hesitated before driving from their houses in midwinter in a wilderness, those who had settled on the public lands. As it was, he waited until he obtained further instructions from the government, then vested in Congress. In a note to Harmar the Hon. Richard Henry Lee, President of Congress, approved of the orders of the Commissioners, and directed them to be carried into execution. This was in March. Toward the latter end of the month, the following instructions were given to Ensign John Armstrong.

FORT MCINTOSH, March 29, 1785.

To Ensign John Armstrong,

SIR:—Having received intelligence that several persons in defiance of the orders of Congress, have presumed, to settle on the lands of the United States, on the western side of the Ohio, about forty or fifty miles from hence, you are hereby ordered to proceed with your party as far down as opposite Wheeling, and dispossess the said settlers. At Wheeling you will leave copies of the above instructions which I received from the honorable the Commissioners for Indian Affairs, and of these your orders, in order that all persons may be fully acquainted therewith.

I am Sir, y^r humble servt,

JOS. HARMAR,

Lt. Col. Comd.

Ensign Armstrong left on his mission on the 31st of March. His operations are fully detailed in the following official reports.

FORT MCINTOSH, 12th April, 1785.

SIR:

Agreeable to your orders, I proceeded with my party early on the 31st of March down the river Ohio. On the 1st instant, we crossed little Beaver and dispossessed one family. Four miles from where we found three families living in sheds, but they having no raft to transport their effects, I thought proper to give till the 12th inst., at which time they promised to demolish their sheds and move to the east side of the river.

At Yellow Creek I dispossessed two families and destroyed their buildings. The 2d being stormy, no business could be done. The 3d we dispossessed eight families. The 4th we arrived at Mingo Bottom, or Old Town. I read my instructions to the prisoner Ross, who declared they never came from Congress, for he had late accounts from that Honorable body, who he was well convinced gave no such instructions to the Commissioners. Neither did he care from whom they came, for he was determined to hold his possession, and if I should

destroy his house he would build six more in the course of a week. He also cast many reflections on the Honorable, the Congress, the Commissioners, and the commanding officer. I conceived him to be a dangerous man, and sent him under guard to Wheeling. Finding most of the settlers in this place were tenants under the prisoner; I gave them a few days at which time they promised to move to the eastern side of the Ohio, and that they would demolish their buildings. On the evening of the 4th, Charles Norris, with a party of armed men, came to my quarters in a hostile manner and demanded my instructions. After conversing with them for some time and showing my instructions, the warmth with which they first expressed themselves appeared to abate, and from some motive lodged their arms with me till morning.

I learnt from the conversation of the party that at Norris Town (by them so called) eleven miles further down the river a party of seventy or eighty men were assembled with a determination to oppose me.

Finding Norris to be a man of influence in that country I conceived it to my interest to make use of him as an instrument which I effected by informing him it was my intention to treat any armed party I saw as enemies to my country, and would fire on them if they did not disperse.

On the 5th when I arrived within two miles of the town or place where I expected to meet with opposition, I ordered my men to load their arms in presence of Norris and then desired him to go to the party and inform them of my instructions.

I then proceeded on with caution but had not got far before the paper No. 1 was handed me by one of the party, to which I replied I should treat with no party, but intended to execute my orders.

When I arrived at the town there were about forty men assembled who had deposited their arms. After I had read to them my instructions they agreed to move off by the 19th inst. This indulgence I thought proper to grant, the weather being too severe to turn them out of doors. The 6th I proceeded to Haglins' or Mercer's Town, where I was presented with paper No. 2, and from the humble and peaceable disposition of the people, and the impossibility of their moving off immediately, I gave them to the 10th, and believe they will generally leave the settlement at that time.

At that place I was informed that Charles Norris and John Carpenter had been by the people elected Justices of the Peace, that they had, I found, precepts, and decided thereon.

I then proceeded on till opposite Wheeling, where I dispossessed one family, and destroyed their buildings.

I hope, Sir, the indulgence granted to some of the inhabitants will meet your approbation. The paper No. 3 is an advertisement, a copy of which is posted up in almost every settlement on the western side of the Ohio.

Three of my party being lamed, I left them about forty miles from this place, under the care of a Corporal. The remainder I have or-

dered to gain their respective companies, and the prisoner I have delivered to the care of the garrison guard.

I am sir with every respect,
Your obedient servt,
JOHN ARMSTRONG,
Ensign.

To Colonel Harmar, or the chiefest in command at Fort McIntosh.

SIR:—Agreeably to the order we have Received for Removing off the Lands to the West of the Ohio, we are preparing to execute the utmost diligence but find it will be impracticable to entirely clear off the place. According to our engagements with Ensign Armstrong when we received the orders, which, if you will condescend to take under your consideration, we make no doubt you will Readily Grant, for we have neither houses nor lands to move too; have every Necessary to Procure by our Labour, for the Support of our families and stocks, for we have no money. Therefore if you Can Consistant with your Honor allow us a few Weeks more to move off and prepare Dwellings to move to, we shall Greatly Acknowledge the favour.

We have sent a full Representation of our distressed circumstances by way of Petition to Congress, and whatever Orders and Regulations they in their wisdom may think proper to prescribe we shall as in duty bound obey.

Therefore the furtherest time we request is till we know the resolutions of Congress in regard to our petition, which if you grant, we request the favour of you to send us your pleasure and directions by the Bearer, Mr. James Cochran, which will be gratefully acknowledged by your humble Serv'ts, the Subscribers :

Thomas Tilton,	James Clark,
John Nixon,	his
Henry Cassill,	Adam [A H] house,
John Nowles,	mark
John Tilton,	Thomas Johnson,
John Fitzpatrick,	Hanamet Davis,
Daniel Menser,	William Wallace,
Zephania Dunn,	Jos. Reburn,
John McDonald,	Jon. Maples,
Henry Froggs,	William Mann,
Wiland noagland,	William Kerr,
Michael Rawlings,	Daniel Duff,
Thomas Dawsson,	Joseph Ross,
William Shift,	James Watson,
Solomon Delong,	Abertions Bailey,
Charles Ward,	Charles Chambers,
Fred'k Lamb,	Robert Hill,
John Rigdon,	James Pauf,
George Atchinson,	William McNees
Hanes Piley,	Archibald harbson,
Walter Cain,	William Bailey,
Jacob Light,	Jonas Amspoker,
James Weleams,	Nicholas Decker,
Jesse Edgerton,	John Platt.
Nathanial Parremore,	Benjamin Reed,
Jesse Parremore,	Joseph Godard,
Jacob Clark,	Henry Conrod,
John Custer,	William Carpenter,
Thomas McDonald,	John Godard,
James Noyes,	George Reno,
John Casstleman	John Buchanan,
	Daniel Mathews.

FORT MCINTOSH, 13th April 1785.

Sir:

As the following information through you, to the honorable the Congress, may be of some service, I trust you'd not be displeased therewith. It is the opinion of many honorable men (with whom I conversed on my return from Wheeling) that if the Honorable the Congress don't fall on some speedy method to prevent people from settling on the Lands of the United States, west of the Ohio, that country will soon be inhabited by bandits whose actions are a disgrace to human nature.

You will in a few days receive an address from the Magistracy of Ohio County through which most of those people pass; many of whom are flying from justice.

I have Sir taken some pains to distribute copies of your instructions, with those from the Honorable, the Commissioners for Indian Affairs, into almost every settlement west of the Ohio, and had them posted up at most public places on the east side of the river, in the neighborhood through which those people pass. Notwithstanding they have saw and read those Instructions they are moving to the unsettled country by forties and fifties.

From the best information I could receive there are at the falls of Hawk Hawkins [Hock-hocking], upwards of three hundred families. At Muskingum a number equal.

At the [word illegible] Towns there are several families and more than fifteen hundred on the rivers Miami & Siota. From Wheeling to that place there is scarcely one Bottom on the river but has one or more families living thereon.

In consequence of the Advertisement by John Amberson I am apprised meetings will be held at the times therein mentioned.

That at Mengons and Haglins Town mentioned in my report of yesterday, the inhabitants had come to a resolution to comply with the requisition of the Advertisement.

The supposed distance from this place to Wheeling pursuing the river, is seventy miles.

I am Sir with due respect.

Your most Obedient Servant.

John Armstrong

Ensign.

To Col. Harmar.

FORT MCINTOSH, April 2. 1785.

To all those persons who have settled on the Lands of the United States, westward of the Ohio River contrary to the Orders of Congress.

I have received your Representation by James Cochran, and must inform you that my instructions are positive in driving off by force all persons who presume to settle upon or survey the Lands of the United States.

As you inform me that you have sent on a petition to Congress upon the subject, and upon a consideration of your present distressed circumstances, according to your own account, I am induced to forbear sending any troops for one month from this date to dispossess you, or until further orders from authority.

At the same time you must be as expeditious as possible in preparing to remove yourselves, as I am very confident that the Honorable body the Congress, will not grant

the prayer of your petition, in which case I shall be under the necessity of executing my orders.

JOS. HARMAR.

Lt. Col. Comd.

The Indian commissioners were men of character and distinction, in whom the public had full confidence. Arthur Lee was a native of Virginia and a man of fine talents. During the revolution he represented this country at the Court of Versailles, and in 1784 was selected by Congress to treat with Western Indians. Mr. Lee died December 14, 1792, aged 52 years.

George Rogers Clark has been called "*the Washington of the West*." A Virginian by birth he rendered invaluable services to America during the War for Independence. His appointment as Indian Commissioner was a happy selection, for he was a man of great nerve, indomitable will and energy, whose voice was potential among the Savage nations.

FORT MCINTOSH.

May 1st, 1785.

Sir:—

In obedience to the instructions received from the honorable, the Commissioners for Indian Affairs, upon their departure from this post, I have to inform your Excellency, that I detached Ensign Armstrong "with a party of twenty men" furnished with fifteen days provisions, on the 31st of March last, to dispossess sundry persons who had presumed to settle on the lands of the United States on the Western side of the Ohio River.

The enclosed copy of the instructions together with his orders were posted up at Wheeling and distributed throughout the different parts of the country, in order that all persons might be fully acquainted therewith.

Ensign Armstrong having marched with his party as far down as opposite Wheeling, which is about seventy from hence, pursuing the course of the river, and executing his orders (except in a few indulgencies granted on account of the weather), returned on the 12th ulto.

I have the honor of enclosing to your Excellency, his report with sundry petitions, handed him by the settlers, likewise the opinion of some reputable inhabitants on the Eastern side of the river, with respect to them.

On the 20th ult. I received the inclosed representation signed by 66 of them praying for a further indulgence of time, and informing me that they had sent on a petition to Congress upon the subject.

In answer to which I thought it most expedient to grant them one month from the 21st ulto. to remove themselves, at the expiration of which time, parties will be detached to drive off all settlers within the distance of one hundred and fifty miles from the garrison, which in my present situation is all that is practicable. The number of settlers lower down the river is very considerable, and from all accounts daily increasing.

I would therefore (before I proceed farther in the business) beg to know the pleasure of

your Excellency, and your particular order upon the subject.

I have the honor to be with the highest esteem and respect,

Your Excellency's

Most humble and obt. servant,

JOS. HARMAR,

Lt. Col. Comd. 1st Amer. Regt.

His Excellency

Richard Henry Lee,

President of Congress.

It is possible that papers exist which will determine the exact location of the various settlements mentioned in Ensign Armstrong's report. From the distances given by him, we are enabled to fix the localities as follows:—

1st. The settlers on or near the Little Beaver were in what is now Columbiana county, Ohio.

2d. Those four miles from the Little Beaver were also in Columbiana county.

3d. That at Yellow Creek was near Wellsville, Columbiana county.

4th. The eight families between Yellow Creek and Mingo Bottom were in Jefferson county.

5th. The settlement at Mingo Bottom was in Jefferson county, three miles below Steubenville on farms formerly belonging to J. H. Hallock and Daniel Potter.

6th. The place called Norris' Town, was in Jefferson county, fourteen miles below Steubenville.

7th. Haglin's or Mercer's Town, between Norris' Town and opposite Wheeling, was in Belmont county.

8th. The settlement opposite Wheeling was in what is now Pease Township, Belmont county.

In many parts of the State after the permanent settlers became located, tracts were found which had been partially cleared and a new growth of timber formed. Especially was this the case along the Ohio, on the same ground passed over by Ensign Armstrong.

The Congressional Committee, consisting of Mr. Howell, Mr. Grayson, Mr. McHenry, Mr. Pettit and Mr. King, to whom was referred a letter of the first of May, 1785, from Col. J. Harmar,—Report

That Congress approve of the conduct of Colonel Harmar in carrying into execution the order given him by the Commissioners for removing intruders from the lands of the United States.

That he be authorized to remove the troops under his command, and to take post at any place on or near the River Ohio, between Muskingum and the great Miami, which he shall conceive most advisable for farther carrying into effect the before mentioned order.

That the Board of Treasury advance Colonel Harmar six hundred dollars on account and for the purpose of transporting the said troops and their baggage to such place as he shall

deem proper for the advance of the public service.

June 24, 1785.

Ordered. That the first and second paragraphs be referred to the Secretaries at War to take order. That the third paragraph be referred to the Board of Treasury to take order.

FORT MCINTOSH, June 15, 1785.

SIR:

I have already sent you a copy of Ensign Armstrong's report, from which you will have learned the extent and character of the settlements west of the river. Most of those engaged in this business are shiftless fellows from Pennsylvania and Virginia, though I have seen and conversed with a few who appear to be intelligent and honest in their purposes. A few days after Ensign Armstrong returned, I dispatched him with a small force to Salt Springs towards the Lakes, to dispossess a number of adventurers who had located there. This he accomplished without serious difficulty.

The force under my command, would not warrant the sending a detachment to the Scioto or Miami, but I have sent written notices by trustworthy Indians to all who have settled there. Be assured Sir, I shall make every effort within my means, for carrying out your orders, and those of the honorable, the Congress.

I am, your very obedient servant.

JOS HARMAR.

Hon'able

Major General Knox.

FORT MCINTOSH, June 21, 1785.

DEAR JOHNSTON:

The nations down the river have killed and scalped several adventurers who have settled on their lands.

JOSIAH HARMAR.

COL. FRANCIS JOHNSTON.

FORT MCINTOSH, June 1, 1785.

SIR:

The Shawanese make great professions of peace. The Cherokees are hostile, and have killed and scalped seven people near the mouth of the Scioto, about three hundred and seventy miles from hence.

Your most obt servt,

JOSIAH HARMAR.

MAJ. GENL. KNOX, Sec. at War.

FORT MCINTOSH, June 25, 1785.

Dear General:

The Indians down the river, viz.: the Shawanese, Miamis, Cherokees and Kickapoos have killed and scalped several adventurers—settlers on their lands.

JOSIAH HARMAR.

Gen. THOS. MIFFLIN.

The following extracts from letters written by Jonathan Heart, a captain in Harmar's corps, relate to the subject under consideration. Heart afterward be-

came Major and was killed at St. Clair's defeat, November 4, 1791.

FORT HARMAR, 8th January, 1786.

MAJOR WILLIAM JUDD,
Farmington, Conn.

DEAR SIR :

* * * * *

Agreeable to established customs in this country, cutting down a few trees, planting three hills of corn and fencing them, gives a right of soil to 400 acres and a pre-emption to 400 more; conformable to this custom every valuable situation on the grant is located. Congress in their wisdom to prevent this improper mode of possession have forbid such locations and we have actually burnt, destroyed and turned off great numbers of inhabitants holding under this tenure, and unless Congress put a full and final stop to this mode of settlement the whole Federal territory will not raise one thousand pounds. * * *

Your most obedient humble servt,

JONATHAN HEART.

FORT HARMAR, 7th February, 1786.

MAJOR WILLIAM JUDD.

Farmington, Conn.

Sir:

* * * * *

The extent of the territory proposed will furnish lands for all people wishing to remove into new countries for five years, and some of the conditions as to mode and manner of settlement are very exceptionable, particularly that allowing a pre-emption to all persons claiming lands by possession or improvements, for custom in the country has established the rule, that cutting a few trees and fencing in as much land as your length of rails will encompass and planting the hills of corn, gives possession to 400 acres and a right to purchase 400 more. In conformity to this idea possession has been taken of every extensive bottom, beautiful situation, or advantageous place over the whole extent, and little more than broken ground, narrow strips of such lands as from situation or some circumstance are of little value, will be left for the petitioners. Congress acquainted with this circumstance as to mode of settlement have positively forbid all such settlements and ordered off such settlers holding lands on that tenure; this was absolutely necessary, for while this mode was admitted, no man would give 400 dollars for a farm which one day's work would secure,

* * * * *

Your most obt. And humble serv't,

JONA. HEART.

SETTLEMENT AT THE MOUTH OF THE SCIOTO RIVER, 1785.

In the first volume of William's *American Pioneer*, page 56. the late George Corwin of Portsmouth (1842) gave his recollections of the first attempt to settle there. It was probably not on the present site of the town but on the west side of the old

mouth of the River Scioto near where the village of Alexandria is located.

Until the Ohio canal was constructed and an artificial cut made at Portsmouth no water discharged there from the Scioto at its ordinary stage. The site of Alexandria was very attractive, but the ground between it and Portsmouth is most of it subject to inundation. The late Robert B. McAfee of Kentucky stated to F. C. Cleveland of Alexandria, who was an engineer on the Ohio canal forty years since that there were whites on the Kentucky side of the Ohio opposite Scioto in 1773. Mr. Cleveland said there was a space of about forty acres at Alexandria which had been chopped, and when the early settlers came this space was covered with a second growth of trees, standing among the stumps.

This was probably the work of the parties referred to by Mr. Corwin. The four families who attempted to settle at the mouth of the Sciota in 1785, came from Redstone, Pa. "They commenced clearing the ground to plant seeds for a crop to support their families, hoping that the red men of the forest would suffer them to remain and improve the soil."

The four heads of the families,—only one of whose names has been preserved went up the Sciota on a tour of exploration as far as Pee Pee Creek and encamped. Peter Patrick, one of the party, cut his initials upon a beech tree. Here they were surprised by Indians and two of them killed. Two of them escaped across the country to the mouth of the Little Sciota, just in time to meet a boat descending the Ohio for Post Vincent. This boat took the survivors from their intended home to Maysville, where the settlement was large enough to protect itself against their red enemies.

From a letter dated Fort McIntosh, June 1st, 1785, written by General Josiah Harmar to General Knox, Secretary at War, we take it there must have been another settlement on the Scioto, other than that referred to by Mr. Corwin. General Harmar says: "The Shawanese make great professions of peace. The Cherokees are hostile, and have killed and scalped seven people near the mouth of the Scioto, about three hundred and seventy miles from hence."

In a letter to Col. Francis Johnston of Philadelphia, dated Fort McIntosh, June 21, 1785, General Harmar refers to the same event in these words: "The nations down the river have killed and scalped several adventurers who have settled on their lands."

SETTLEMENTS ON THE MIAMI.

While the number of inhabitants on the Miami is no doubt extravagantly estimated, there were operations going on along that river by white adventurers at the time mentioned. Four years prior to the landing of John Cleves Symmes at the Miami, almost the whole bottom of that river as far north as the site of Hamilton, in Butler county, had been explored, and openings made with a view to pre-empting the best localities under the laws of Congress. This was by a party from Washington county, Pennsylvania, one of whom named Hindman was living as late as 1846, a few miles from Hillsborough Highland county. In the Cincinnati *Miscellany*, edited by Charles Cist, we find a short narrative of Mr. Hindman relating to the subject. He says :

"My father, John Hindman was a native and resident of Lancaster county, Pennsylvania, where I was born in 1760, and at the age of twenty left that neighborhood for Washington county, where I remained four years. In the month of March, 1785, I left the state of Pennsylvania, taking water at the mouth of Buffalo creek with a party consisting of Wm. West, John Simons, John Sept, and old Mr. Carlin and their families.

We reached Limestone point, now Maysville, in safety, where we laid by two weeks. The next landing we made was at the mouth of the Big Miami. We were the first company that had landed at that place. The Indians had left two or three days before we landed. We found two Indians buried as they were laid on the ground, a pen of poles built around them, and a new blanket spread over each one. The first we found was near

the bank of the Ohio, and the second near the mouth of White Water.

Soon after we landed, the Ohio raised so as to overflow all the bottoms at the mouth of the Big Miami. We went over therefore to the Kentucky side, and cleared thirty or forty acres on a claim of a man by the name of Tanner, whose son was killed by the Indians some time afterward on a creek which now bears his name. Some time in May or June we started to go up the Big Miami, to make what we called improvements, so as to secure a portion of the lands which we selected out of the best and broadest bottoms between the mouth of the river and where Hamilton now stands.

We started a north course to White Water, supposing it to be the Miami; we proceed up the creek, but Joseph Robinson who started from the mouth of the Miami with our party, and who knew something of the country from having been taken prisoner with Col. Langhery and carried through it, giving it as his opinion, that we were not at the main river, we made a raft and crossed the stream, having the misfortune to lose all our guns in the passage. We proceeded up where Hamilton now is, and made improvements wherever we found bottoms firmer than the rest, all the way down to the mouth of the Miami. I then went up the Ohio again to Buffalo, but returned the same fall, and found Gens. Clarke, Butler and Parsons at the mouth of the Big Miami, as Commissioners to treat with the Indians. Major Finney was there also. I was in company with Symmes when he was engaged in taking the meanders of the Miami river at the time John Filson was killed by the Indians."

There is one mistake in Mr. Hindman's statement; that referring to the murder of young Tanner by the Indians. He was not killed, but taken prisoner, and afterwards published an interesting narrative of his captivity.