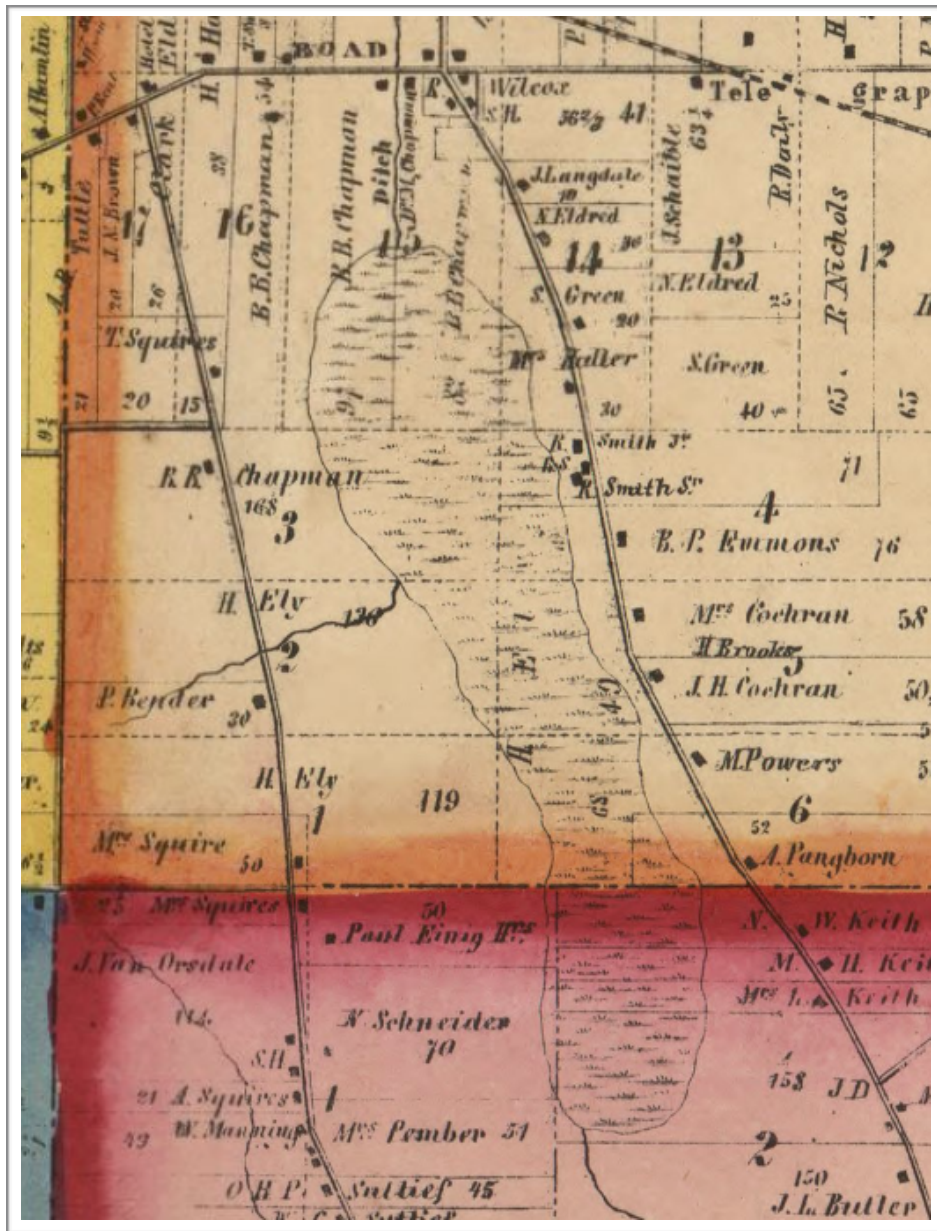

East Marsh Report

A Geographic, Prehistoric, & Early Historic Review

Col. Matthew W. Nahorn - 2016



A detail view of an 1857 Lorain County township wall map, showing the East Marsh located between the West and Murray Ridges.

Introduction

Numerous wet and marshy lands were encountered by the early settlers of Northern Ohio upon their arrival to this area. The early settlers from the East, who lived off of the land in an agricultural manner, looked upon these marshes as a resource that was “unusable” and something that needed to be conquered, cleared, and drained in order to live upon and use the landscape efficiently. Before this, Native American Indians who lived a bit more directly with the land, being largely hunters and gatherers and generally nomadic in their lifestyle, were forced to conform to the land itself and not drastically alter land features for their own uses. They were required to use the land, essentially, the way it was naturally formed without being able to alter it in any major way, compared to the early settlers’ actions. After the absence of these Native peoples, the resources within and around, and the ecological importance of the East Marsh itself were overlooked for many years until relatively recently. Col. Raymond C. Vietzen, Elyria archaeologist and proprietor of the Indian Ridge Museum, who grew up and lived within the study area, on the West Ridge, stated in his “Prehistoric Americans,” that, “I became forty years old before I was aware of the importance of the area to both Indian and white man, and by then man had changed it for the worse.” The three aspects of geography, prehistory, and early historic history must be explored in order to understand and appreciate the natural formations of this area and the stories locked away in the now-nearly completely drained East Marsh complex.

The particular area of interest for this study is located in Elyria, Lorain County, Ohio and is bounded on the North by State Route 113 or the South Ridge; on the East, generally, by Murray Ridge Road; on the South by the very tip or southern edge of the boundary of the East Marsh complex itself; and on the West by West Ridge Road. The location is within the Black River Watershed. Geography / geology, prehistory, and early historic history are all facets that must be reviewed in order to properly understand the complete background story of the area located in and around the East Marsh of the Black River Watershed.

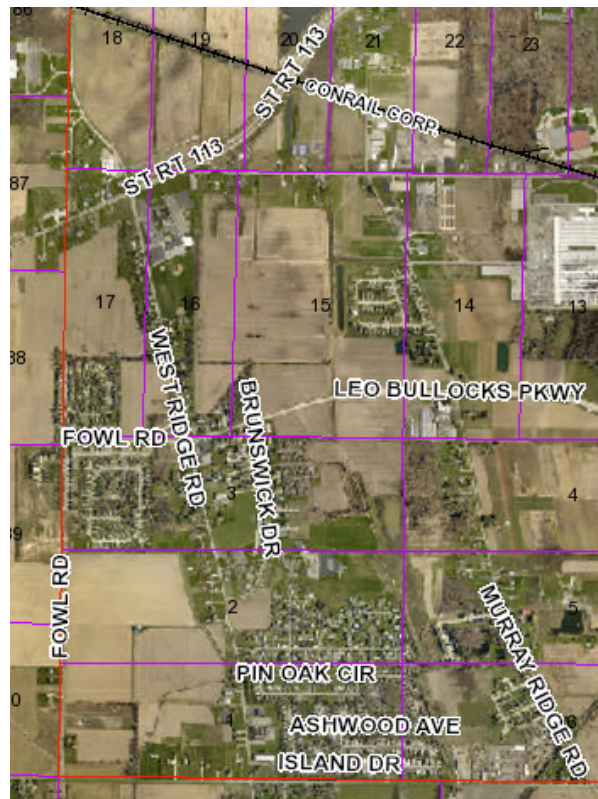
Geography

It is understandable that upon encountering these marshy areas, early settlers from the East looked upon that landscape as not useful in its present state. As described in “The Marshes of Southwestern Lake Erie” (Campbell with Gavin), “A freshwater marsh is an open expanse of cattails, grasses, and cane, cut by streams and punctuated with pools of open water.” Campbell goes on to properly describe the complexities, intricacies, and rich

biodiversity of marshes and the fact that the marshlands we encounter today are just remnants of larger natural complexes that once existed for thousands of years, on the southern shores of Lake Erie. These marshes, swamp forests, wet woods, and related environments act as a watershed's "kidneys" by cleansing, retaining, and slowly releasing water moving through and across the landscape. These features aid in maintaining more regular flow and further provide unique breeding grounds and opportunity for the preservation and furtherance of genetic diversity. Campbell mentions "sand ridges" as being the "natural outer barriers" often encountered when studying these marsh features. This explanation fits perfectly in this study area of the East Marsh, as the ancient beach ridges of the West and Murray Ridges naturally confine the boundary of the East Marsh.

As briefly stated above, the area studied in this document is essentially surrounded by the present-day State Route 113, Murray Ridge Road, and West Ridge Road. The location is immediately west of the original City of Elyria, and now within the City limits (originally within Elyria Township).

The geography in remnants of the stages and related specific ridges are to be the West Ridge, and Each is an ancient an ancient, glacial lake here, thousands of 20,000 years ago, giant in height, moved into land beneath, initiating and retreat of these Isostasy and isostatic this enormous ice helped determine, continue to facilitate drainage patterns that



this area still shows ancient glacial lake beach ridges. Three noted: the South Ridge, the Murray Ridge. beach ridge, or part of stage once located years ago. Some glaciers of over a mile this area, scouring the a process of growth glacial features. rebound as a result of weight upon the land, direct, dictate, and current watershed we see today. The

general flow of the watershed and its watercourses are a consequence of the glacial activity, subsequent lake levels, and ultimately the resulting topography. The streams in the watersheds of Northern Ohio generally are thus known as consequent streams.

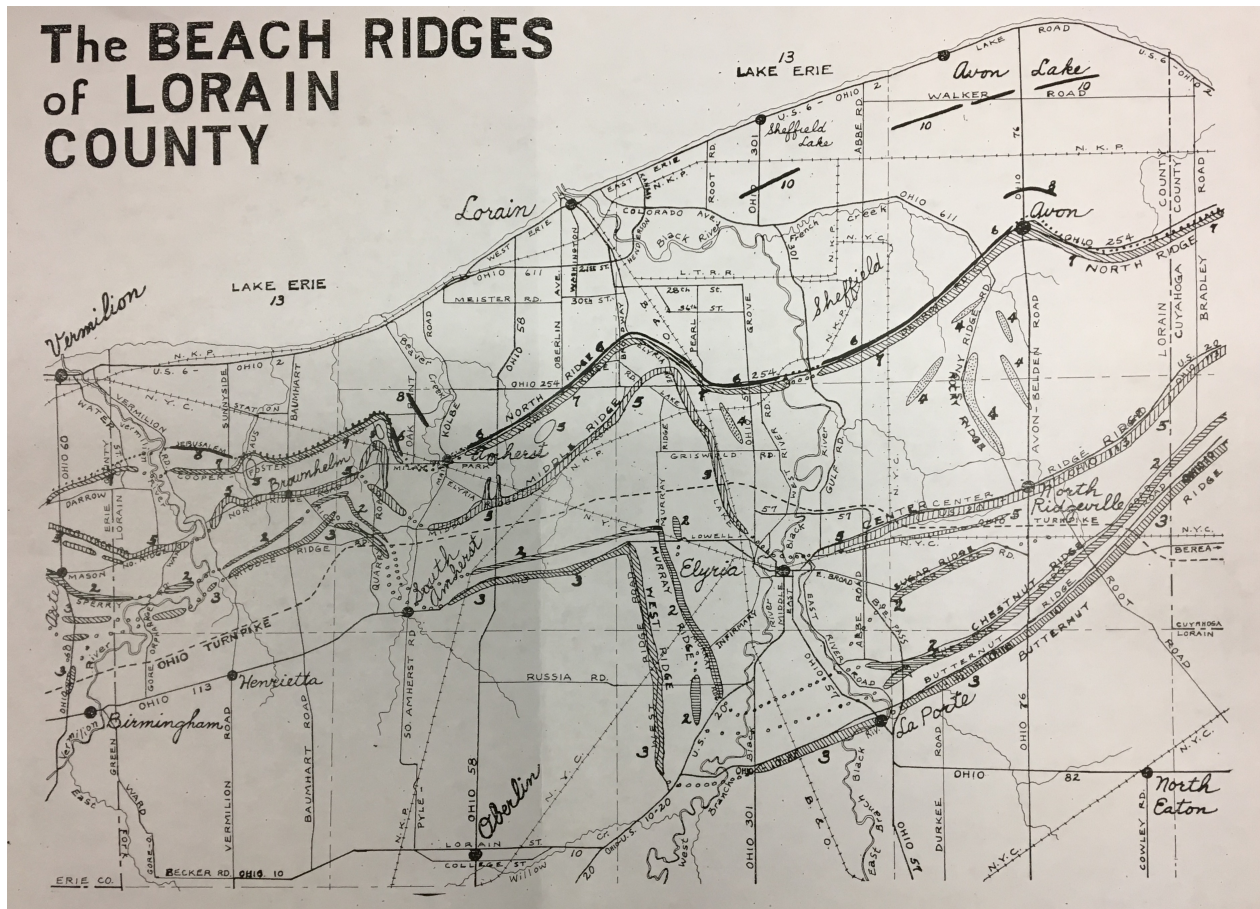
Geologist Frank Carney describes well, in his “The Abandoned Shorelines of the Oberlin Quadrangle, Ohio,” reasons for the existence of the East Marsh. Carney begins his paper by stating a common interest of students from this study area: “Many students have given attention to the shifting series of lakes that followed up the retreating Wisconsin ice sheet.” He spent a considerable amount of time researching the ancient beaches, prehistoric lakes, their stages, channels, and levels, as well as mapping these features. The weathering of shale versus sandstone was a major contributing factor in the development of future beaches and shoreline structures. Shale of course did not produce ample amounts of sediment as compared to sandstone, in the shore-building process. Natural weathering processes over time have made it challenging to precisely locate the previous levels. Furthermore, Carney notes that, “Stream erosion has removed part of the southern end of West Ridge.”

In order to understand the entire area under study, we must move on to the Murray Ridge. This particular Ridge, Carney argues, being parallel to the West Ridge, “appears to have originated as an off-shore barrier of the higher Maumee shoreline, which later grew above water and finally became the shoreline proper.” The Maumee level (shoreline) was largely defined by a “broad embayment,” which developed about four miles south from Elyria. As one goes south on the Ridge, it becomes taller and more complicated in form, where it has a “strong development,” Carney notes. He particularly describes that “about one mile of the northern part was steepened by wavework.” Furthermore, the material deposited becomes finer, southward. Carney clearly describes the early conditions of the area under study and the reasons for them. A direct block quote is most sufficient here:

“The muck soil between West and Murray ridges indicates a lagoon history; an arm of the lake was shut off completely at the northern end, as shown by the bar joining the ridges; there is evidence that the southern end was once more nearly enclosed than now; some short spits are appended to the inland slope of the beach, one of which may formerly have been connected with the isolated ridge of sand and gravel, outlined by the 750-foot contour, about one mile long, and parallel to West Ridge. Murray Ridge was a shoreline in the closing period of the upper Maumee stage as well as during the lower stage.”

As the giant glaciers retreated by melting back, temporary glacial lakes (and lagoons) formed in front of these glaciers, and these lakes both aided in creating sand and pushing it up into beach ridges, those being the geologically significant ridges that we see today. These ridges are often very well-drained because of their sandy soil composition (sand being created by the lake water weathering process of sandstone outcroppings). This soil composition and particular stratigraphy also allows for the creation of natural springs,

several of which are located along the South and North Ridges, near here. Around these ridges, low-lying land with soils often composed of clay, which retain water allowing for the creation of swamps, wetlands, and otherwise marshy areas, may be found. The East Marsh, located on the lowlands between the two beach ridges (West and Murray), is a remnant of a former temporary glacial lake fragment or lagoon. About 4,300 years ago, Lake Erie finally retreated to its present level, as the Niagara River opened up, finally free of glacial ice, allowing current flow patterns to become established in the Great Lakes Watershed. Water in this area continues to attempt to reach its local and ultimate base levels today.

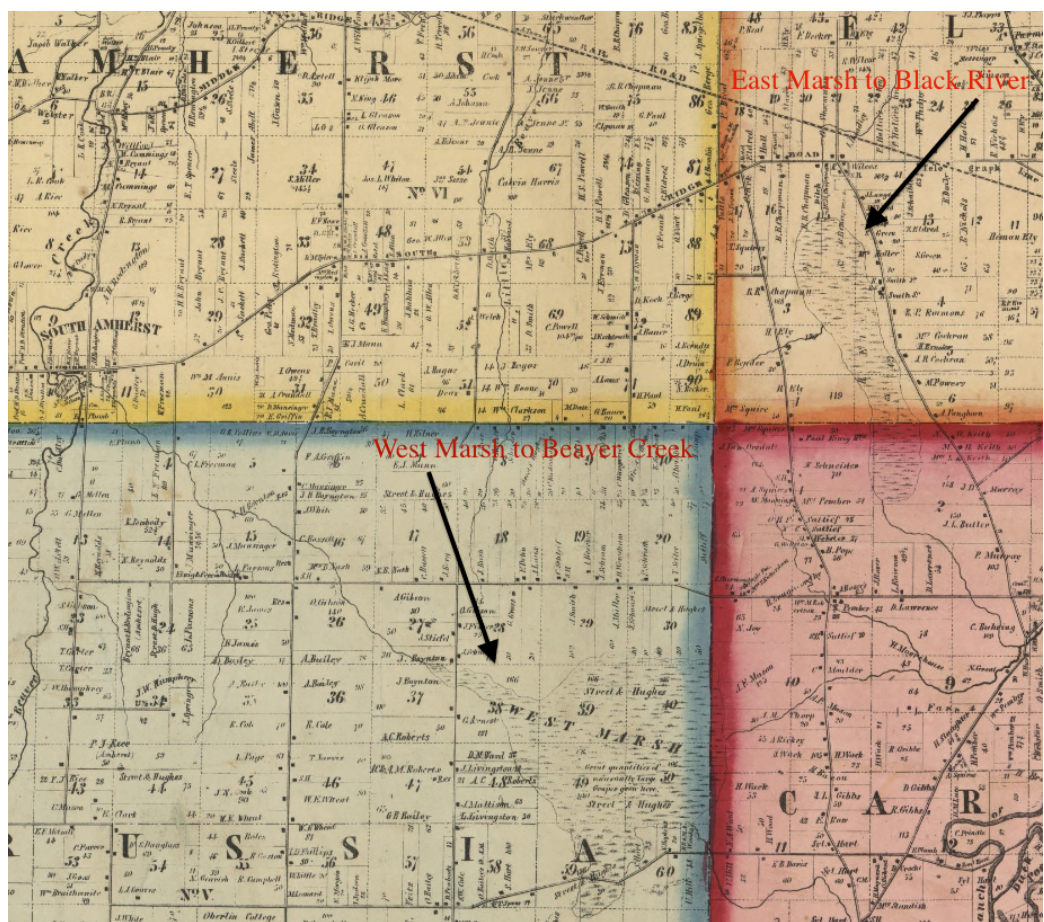


Studying this particular area, it is important to closely review the 1903 United States Geological Survey Topographic maps and the 1857, 1874, 1896, and 1912 Township historical maps. The 1857 Lorain County Township wall map is one of these invaluable resources that clearly delineates both the East and West Marshes. (The East, draining into the Black River; the West, draining into the Beaver Creek.) Furthermore, the 1874 map clearly marks natural freshwater springs in this area (one is being largely commercially used today and is known as White House Springs. The author can confirm the high quality of water that is extracted from

this particular spring.) Col. Raymond C. Vietzen (1907-1995), a noted archaeologist who grew up in the area of the East Marsh, describes briefly the area on a tag from his Museum: “The East Marsh, now drained and farmed...rattlesnakes, huckleberries, and cranberries, as well as many fur-bearing animals existed here.” The Marsh environment succeeded here as a result of the area’s soil type and grade or topography of the surrounding land. Reviewing the aerial maps of today, small remnants of the original southern portions of the East Marsh still persist.

Water flowed into the East Marsh from, at the very least, two major stream inlets that drained from the north, flowing south into the northernmost section of the Marsh, and secondly, coming from the west, flowing east, into the western side of the Marsh. Further, water percolated into the Marsh from numerous local seep springs. The water slowly made its way through the marsh, flowing south out of the southernmost part of the Marsh and into the West Branch of the Black River, just south of Elyria. It is believed that at an early time and when the East Marsh was geologically “young,” a previous stage of Lake Erie was present here, known as Lake Whittlesey, having its southernmost shore roughly along the present

State Route 113 or Telegraph Road (also known as the “South Ridge”). A stream drained some of that glacial lake water south out of the Lake into the East Marsh, and the water worked its way, slowly, southward. That channel was moved slightly, dredged, and widened, becoming known



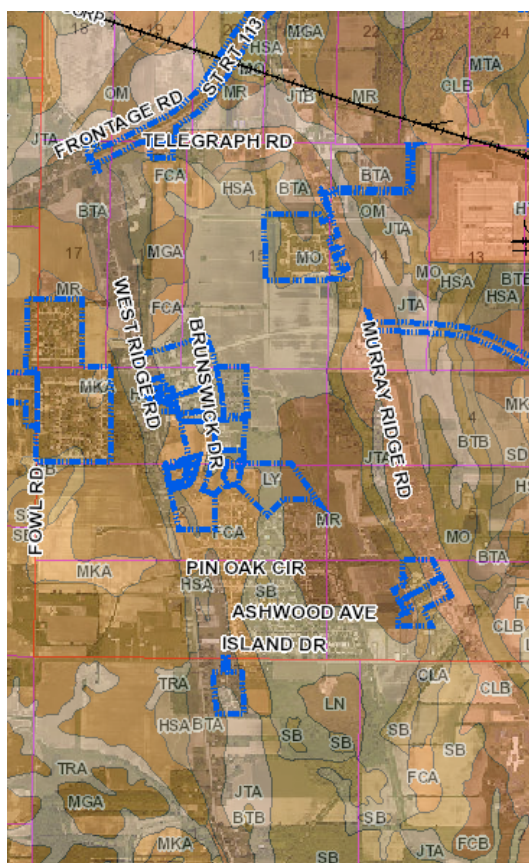
as Haag Ditch (a property owner's name in that area), which still partially aids in present-day drainage patterns. Drainage patterns in this general area have since been largely altered.

Water is unique in that it is both an agent of destruction and creation, often doing so simultaneously but in different locations along a channel (cut bank versus point bar features, for example). Water, in numerous forms, is a key factor in the creation of the natural features that we see within the study area. Water aided in the creation of sand (much from sandstone formations and outcroppings), its transport, and its eventual formation into ridges. The ridge features have been integral formations used by both native peoples and early settlers — and the features were later paved and are now used as our “ridge roads” within and around the study area. From the glaciers to the melt water they left behind and the lakes formed as a result, water has shaped and been an integral factor in the resulting geography of this area under study. From glaciers (ice), to melt water forming lakes (liquid), to natural springs and the marshy areas (ground and surface water), all of these states once occupied and helped shape the landscape of this study area.

Presently (and in recent history) much of the land that contained the water of the East Marsh has been cleared, drained, tiled, and is farmed or otherwise developed, generally residentially. Once drained, the rich soils of these former marshy areas provide for ideal

farms. As an interesting side note, an intriguing notation is contained on the drawing of the West Marsh (1857 Township Map), which states, “Great quantities of unusually large grapes grow here.” Secondary landuse in this area is characterized by residential ventures, some being high-density. Finally, tertiary landuses include some commercial and industrial ventures. Development has largely been restricted to the area on either side of the ridges; whereas, the landuse in the area of the former deepest marshland is still drained and largely characterized as agricultural in use.

Personal visits to sites are imperative in order to be able to appreciate, understand, and expound on such an area in an educated and adequate fashion. Therefore, such a visit, having those ultimate intentions, was undertaken in order to prepare this



report. A personal field visit to this area, by the author, yielded interesting observations on December 7, 2015. We traveled the study area, entering from Route 113 and turning south on West Ridge Road, traveling south to Albrecht Road, taking that Road eastward to Murray Ridge Road. We headed north on Murray Ridge to Route 113. We retraced our route, and this time instead took Russia Road in order to reach the Murray Ridge. This trip yielded the following information and observations: the ridges and their elevations were noted. As is confirmed from the 1903 USGS map, we noticed that the West Ridge is not as noticeable or steep as compared to the Murray Ridge. We noted the overgrown site of the Vietzen property (and former Museum site) where cattails (both native broad-leaf *Typha latifolia* and non-native narrow-leaf *Typha angustifolia*), phragmites (*Phragmites australis*) and other such water-loving species have overtaken the property. We reached the Twin Lakes Park (modular homes) and decided to venture into this established development in order to investigate more of the center portion of the study area. Here we noticed numerous trees nicely spaced out among the home units. These trees comprised nearly a pure stand of soft maples: a dominant collection of red maples (*acer rubrum*) and a few silver maples (*acer saccharinum*). They were generally of similar age and size, likely saved from a former forested space that once occupied the area. The presence of soft maples and a few pin oaks (*quercus palustris*) sprinkled throughout, confirm this area as having been or being prone to being a marshy or otherwise generally wet landscape. These are all indicator species of such an environment. Off of Murray Ridge, we briefly took a detour into the Marsh's Landing housing development, where we found construction was ongoing. This is a rather high-density compacted development endeavor. The development surrounds what seems to be the extreme southeastern tip of what is likely one of the few fragments of the original East Marsh complex or rather an abandoned farm property that has, in secondary succession, reverted back to a marshy area as a result of the favorable soil composition and possible extant seed bank. A portion of this area seems to have been converted into a retention area to collect rainwater runoff from the nearby development. The soil at the edge of this development (and within it) looked to be quite sandy in composition. Near the northern portion of the study area, close to the intersection of the relatively new Leo Bullocks Parkway (on both the north and south sides) and Murray Ridge Road, the rich soil is quite dark and even near black in areas — upon initial observation what would seem to be most likely a loamy soil from the marsh environment.

Upon further research through the Natural Resources Conservation Services, after generating a map, it was determined that much of the former Marsh area is composed of

Luray Silty Clay Loam and Miner Silty Clay Loam. These soils are described as being “very poorly drained” and are known as “prime farmland if drained.” This can then be compared against the soils that compose a majority of the ancient beach ridges, bookending the Marsh, which include Bogart Loam (moderately well-drained; all areas are prime farmland) and Chili Loam (well-drained; all areas are prime farmland).



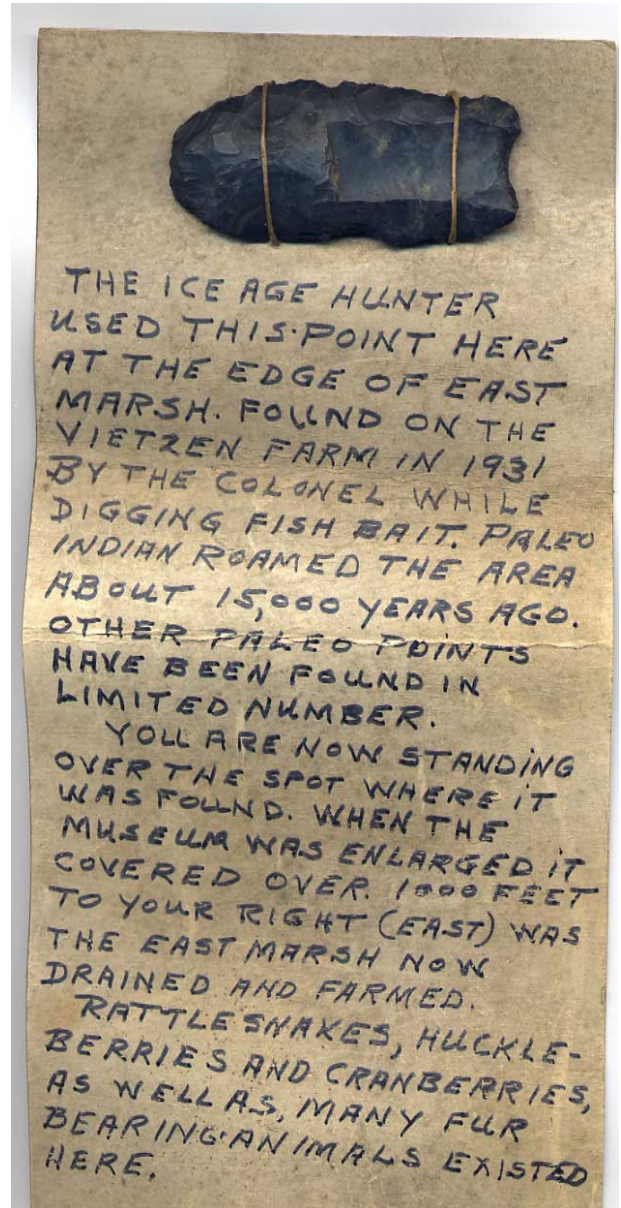
Lorain County, Ohio (OH093)			
Map Unit Symbol	Map Unit Name	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI
BtA	Bogart loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes	118.2	6.3%
BtB	Bogart loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	23.0	1.2%
CIA	Chili loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes	11.8	0.6%
CIB	Chili loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	149.1	8.0%
Cz	Udorthents	11.5	0.6%
FcA	Fitchville silt loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes	105.4	5.6%
HsA	Haskins loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes	96.1	5.1%
HtA	Haskins-Urban land complex, nearly level	44.6	2.4%
JtA	Jimtown loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes	122.5	6.5%
JtB	Jimtown loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	4.9	0.3%
Ln	Lorain silty clay loam	2.8	0.2%
Ly	Luray silty clay loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes	313.6	16.8%
MgA	Mahoning silt loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes	421.7	22.5%
MgB	Mahoning silt loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	11.9	0.6%

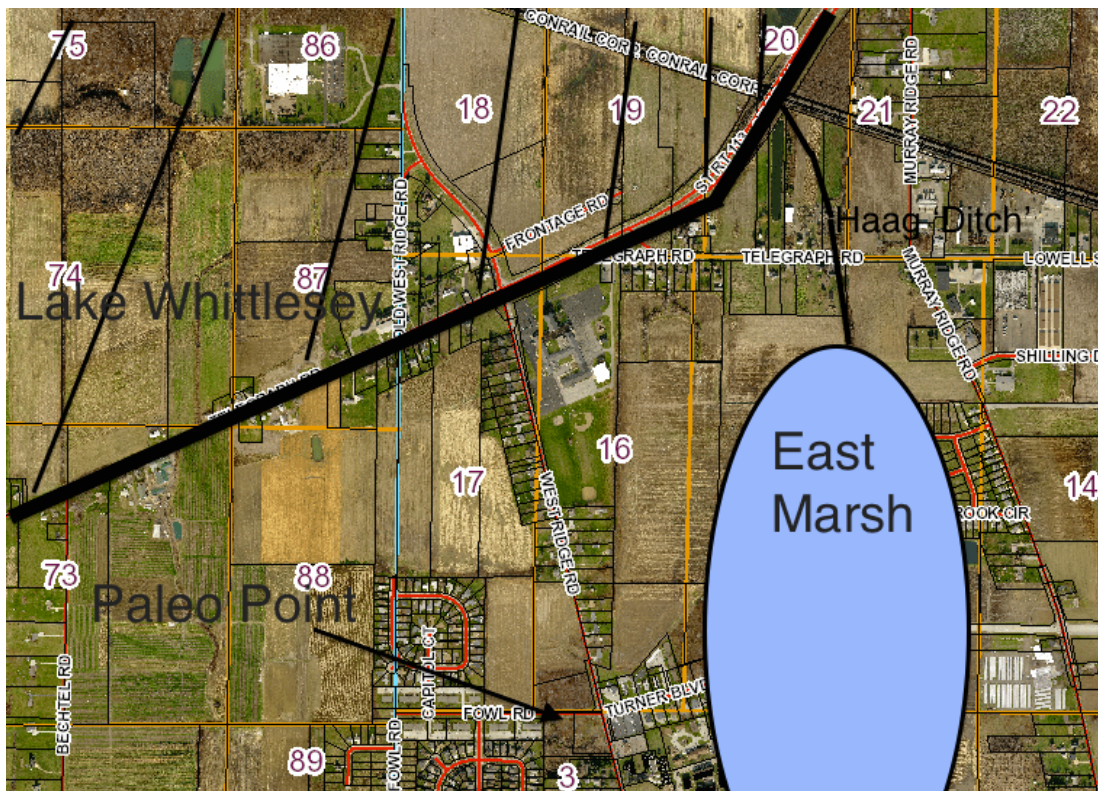
Prehistory

Evidence of human life in the East Marsh region has been traced back some 15,000 years. Prehistoric people of the Paleo, Archaic, Woodland, and Late Prehistoric cultures inhabited this area, periodically, for thousands of years. The early Paleo cultures who lived here were nomadic, Ice Age hunters and gatherers who “followed” their food, such as the Mammoth and Mastodon. Col. Vietzen, the local archaeologist who grew up and lived on a West Ridge farm, stated in his “Prehistoric Americans,” that, “as a child I saw at least a bushel of flint spears, arrowheads, flat slates, and axes picked up in tilling the Vietzen acres.”

Col. Raymond C. Vietzen (1907-1995), the archaeologist and historian who operated the Indian Ridge Museum (1930-1995) at the southwest corner of West Ridge and Fowl Roads in

Elyria, documented some very important information on the prehistory of this particular area. He notes in his "Yesterday's Ohioans" (1973) publication that, "for thousands of years man has lived on this land enjoying all that nature offered but no one knows what the future holds." Of particular interest, in 1931 he located one of the oldest artifacts found in this study's region of focus. The story of finding the artifact, as recounted by Col. Vietzen in his "Prehistoric Indians from Darkness into Light" (1995) is as follows: "When Ruth and I were first married, her father and I often went fishing. As I dug some worms at the north end of the museum, my shovel turned up a Paleo point about three inches long. It was of dark flint and nicely fluted. I was elated and it was better than fishing but my companions did not agree as one could eat fish but not flint and the Depression years were fresh in our minds. I would go hungry for such an interesting specimen. I see it every day in the museum case as it rests beside a mammoth jaw....The fluted projectile point was found about 30 feet from the large spring on the Indian site." This is good, solid evidence of the Paleo Ice Age hunters hunting along the high, well-drained ridges of the edge of the East Marsh, when it was a relatively new land feature. He notes that, "other Paleo points have been found in limited number." The Paleo projectile point noted above is now preserved, along with its unique story, at the New Indian Ridge Museum in Amherst. It was likely longer and worked down over the years until it was lost or discarded (location found on map below). It is composed of a dark Coshocton Flint material, of the Flint Ridge family. This material naturally occurs in southeastern Ohio and was either directly collected by the native peoples or traded for and later made its way here. Flint Ridge material is Ohio's state gemstone.

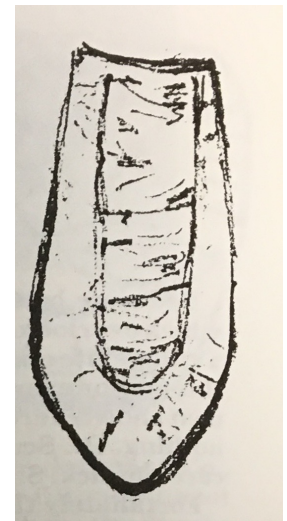




Another artifact of the Paleo era, being a fully fluted style projectile point was found near the Vietzen Homestead on the West Ridge. Interestingly, this artifact's maker struck the flute's flake nearly the complete length of the artifact. Upper Mercer Flint was chosen for the material of this rarer piece and is reportedly black, originating in the northeast corner of the Flint Ridge in Coshocton County, Ohio. Col. Vietzen made a drawing of this particular piece, which appeared in his "Archaeology Around the Great Lakes" (1987).

An unusually large Hopewell style blade (knife or ceremonial specimen) was also unearthed on the Vietzen family farm in the 1930s. It measures nearly 5 1/4" long and is of Flint Ridge Chalcedony material. It is also preserved at the New Indian Ridge Museum.

In his "Prehistoric Americans," Col. Vietzen notes, "After years of research, I have found the site embraced several farms on both sides of the Marsh. These farms are joined and also included the Marsh area which was eventually drained and farmed. Aside from the Vietzen and Schaible farms on West Ridge, there were Eldreds and Powells on Murray Ridge all in a block of about 400 acres of land, all located on high, well-drained land overlooking the Marsh land, much of which was forested and filled with fur-bearing animals, which also provided meat for food. There



were at least six springs as late as 1930. These provided fresh water for the Indians. An ideal site for any man.” He notes that the flint artifacts included Adena stemmed and dovetail projectile points. Additionally, Archaic artifacts, and “a few Paleo points” were found. Evidence of Adena and Hopewell drilling styles were exhibited in the gorgets and pendants. Interestingly, no triangular points of the later Erie culture were found on the site, and the area likely was abandoned circa A.D. 900.

Other artifacts from this study area were found on the farmsteads of the individuals who tilled the land from the 19th to the early or mid 20th century. Col. Vietzen notes that a majority of the flint artifacts were recovered on the Eldred and Vietzen farms, “but grooved axes were more numerous on the Schaible Farm.” The Schaibles owned land on both the east and west sides of the Marsh. Particularly, on the west side of the Marsh, and almost directly opposite Col. Vietzen’s house and Musuem, Vietzen notes, “...my neighbor found a grooved axe of the Archaic culture. This was on the east side of West Ridge in his apple orchard about 100 feet from my house. This he gave me. Now, a tavern occupies the site and I wipe away the tears.” The old Schaible barn and homestead stood here, about where the Convenient store stands today.

The Eldred Site, located on the Eldred Farm, was a multi-cultural “Indian village” site, as termed by Col. Vietzen, inhabited by the Archaic people, circa 7,000 B.C. - 5,000 B.C., as indicated by the presence of side-notched projectile points having been found at the site, as we learn in Col. Vietzen’s 1973 “Yesterday’s Ohioans.” Evidence of the Early and Middle Woodland (c. 1,000 B.C. — A.D. 1) people was also discovered, as spearheads indicative of their culture were found, along with a “fine birdstone of Laurentian Slate.” In another publication, he mentions this same artifact as being flat and “an unusual birdstone.” Additionally, evidence of the Adena (c. 1,000 B.C.) and Hopewell (c. A. D. 1) was unearthed. The stone axe forms found here were generally of igneous rock (some slate) un-grooved celt types of the Woodland (c. 1,000 B.C. — A.D. 600) and Mississippian (c. A.D. 1,000) periods. Specifically, the majority exhibited a pointed pole, indicating the Adena cultural style. It was noted that slate ornaments were not common. Flint Ridge flint was found at this site, coming



from the Newark, Ohio area, and was found to have been crafted by the Hopewell people into the form of “two beautiful elliptical knives.” A dovetail made of the same deep red Flint Ridge material was also found. Lastly, very little evidence of Late Prehistoric inhabitation was noted — five triangular points were found and a unique stone elbow pipe of red pipestone, having a carving on the bowl of a snake including three feathers on its head, was unearthed. All are likely attributed to the Erie culture. Their presence was not considered to be dominant in the study area, as they generally chose high, scenic spots overlooking rivers.

Artifacts from the William Powell Farm are described by Col. Vietzen in his “Prehistoric Americans” (1989), where he recalls, “My father, who worked part time on the William Powell Farm, told me there were at least five plain slate birdstones found on the Powell Farm when he was a boy (circa 1888).” He further states that these birdstones did not have the protrusions often referred to as “eyes.” One was specifically reported to be “very thin,” having drilled holes, perforated from both sides. Col. Vietzen never examined any of these artifacts except for the birdstone found “on the Eldred farm adjoining Powell’s on the north.” Over the years he mentions that he did obtain the aforementioned pipe, gorgets, dovetails, axes, and “common” style flint projectile points from the area. He mentions, “I do have a Paleo I personally found near my home on the Vietzen Farm. Paleo man followed these Ridges from the old glacial lake (Whittlesey) south.” Col. Vietzen believed that hunting was



sufficient to support these native peoples, but very few remains of Mammoths or Mastodons have been recovered in Lorain County. At the New Indian Ridge Museum, we preserve several bones and a large fragment of a jawbone including teeth, from a Mammoth collected by J. Alex Justice in southwestern Lorain County.

On the subject of birdstones, we are still unsure of their intended use in prehistoric cultures. Very likely they were a ceremonial artifact, possibly one created in an attempt to emulate a bird and used in an effort to send one's prayers up and out of sight, to the Great Spirit. The more "heavy duty" made stones that resemble the bird form may have been more utilitarian and acted as a counterweight on the atlatl tool, which pre-dated the bow and arrow. Col. Vietzen notes that "one of the finest birdstones ever found" was located less than five miles south of the Powell Farm, on the west bank of the Black River. This was a "pop-eye," bust-type birdstone made of Gneiss, found while tilling the land on the Clough Farm (on LaGrange Road near Slife Road, about 5 miles south of the Vietzen's). While birdstones are in fact a rare artifact and not readily encountered, a good number were made during prehistoric times, and it seems that the highest concentration of these has been collected in the Great Lakes Watershed.

History

Springs, the rich marsh soils, and the sandy beach ridges were all contributing factors as to why this area was chosen to be settled by those coming from the East. Just as the



prehistoric people who used this land, the early settlers recognized the potential that existed here but in a slightly different way. The historic history of this area dates to the early 1800s. Some of the names of the early settlers here, include the Eldreds, Powells, Schaibles, and Vietzens. We will delve into some of these family names and review their farmsteads. This particular area is interesting because the region under study includes an old schoolhouse, a cemetery, and numerous natural springs. As noted, in historic times, the East Marsh area was cleared of its forested marshy environment, tiled and drained, and the land was prepared for large-scale farming operations. Remnants of the Marsh, or secondary successional stages of it, look to be extant in the extreme southern portion.



Col. Raymond C. Vietzen's "Yesterday Ohioans" (1973) publication provides some important information on the Eldred family and history of this area. Moses Eldred (1770-1857), married to Martha DeWitt [Eldred] (1776-1832), was an early settler in the North Ridgeville, Ohio area. He was a War of 1812 veteran who, around 1813, started an inn at his log house, near the northeast corner of Center Ridge Road and Case Road in that town. In 1815 he became the first postmaster of Ridgeville, from this log house, and in circa 1820s-1830 he built the large two-story frame house that still stands. This larger structure also allowed Mr. Eldred to operate a stage coach inn here. It was later moved slightly down the hill and still stands today, having large pillars added to its front and a porch added as well. For years it was part of a motel. Noah Eldred, Moses' son, came with his father to this area. Noah is listed on Original Lot #14 east of the East Marsh, on Murray Ridge.

Another Eldred son, Clark (1796-1882), came to this area (1817) with Elyria founder Heman Ely (1775-1852), and he made the first clearing in the area 2 1/2 miles west of Black River on the Murray Ridge. The farm was also located east of the East Marsh, taking advantage of the "rich gravelly loam of the Ridge." The farm was in the Eldred family for many years. It passed through their family generations after Noah's death in 1882 (his wife, Harmony Redington Eldred died in 1854).

Col. Vietzen describes the early Eldred homestead as consisting of a log house, which was common for the early settlers. This log structure was located in what was later the site of their garden, north of the frame house that was later built on the Ridge. Vietzen makes special mention of American Chestnut trees that were once on the homestead site, and he would collect these as a child (these trees, now functionally extinct, were affected by a blight brought here in the early 1900s, quickly spreading through the region, devastating these

populations). A son of Noah, Francis N. Eldred, lived on the old place, being born in 1850. There he farmed the 82 acres of land, and “kept a very well organized homestead,” Vietzen stated. His family consisted of six children. A daughter, Nina, married Bert Squire. They lived on the West Ridge. Other sons, Lewis and Frank, maintained the Homestead. Vietzen recalls that Nina Eldred Squire lived across from them, and Col. Vietzen and her children schooled together. The old Eldred frame house on Murray Ridge Road, west of Elyria, burned to the ground around 1973 (pictured above).

The Powell Farm was located on roughly the northern half of Original Lot #4.

The Schaible family occupied a small, wood frame house and he moved it across the grounds where it was on period house, for many Schaible farm have been



owned quite a substantial vicinity. Originally an Italianate style homestead, it was acquired by Col. Vietzen, Road to his Museum display and furnished as a years. Today, portions of the developed into housing and

commercial uses, and some continue to be farmed. The commercial ventures have taken root in a section of the old farmstead fronting West Ridge Road, where the house was located (in



the area of Leo Bullocks Parkway). Col. Vietzen also photographed the “Schaible barn in ruins” (as he labeled the slide) in 1972.



The Vietzen Farm was located on Original Lot 3, along the western edge of West Ridge, bordering Fowl Road (originally a small farm lane) on the north, originally settled by Col. Vietzen’s paternal grandparents as an active farm. In Col. Vietzen’s “Prehistoric Americans,” he notes, “Our farm was less than one half mile from the south shore of Lake Whittlesey, the glacial lake which later became Lake Erie. It was on the west bank of

the East Marsh, which was between West and Murray Ridges.” The Vietzen family came here in the mid-1800s from Germany. Col. Raymond C. and Ruth (Bliss) Vietzen purchased their property (8714 West Ridge Rd.) from his parents, Frederick A. and Elise (Von Zimmerman) Vietzen. This is where the Indian Ridge Museum was started in 1930, a multi-building operation, which essentially ceased operations in 1995 with Col. Vietzen’s death. This Vietzen Homestead was demolished in late 2000. Col. Nahorn was able to visit the Museum building (empty) and house site before and after demolition. The original Vietzen family Homestead (8772 West Ridge Rd.), where Raymond Vietzen and his seven siblings grew up, remains today and is still standing,



along with an original barn. On August 16, 2016, Col. Nahorn was

able to visit the original Vietzen family homestead, as it was put up for sale. The house is in poor shape, and its future is uncertain.



Our December 7, 2015 driving tour of the study area described above, took us to the District 3 Schoolhouse and also the North Murray Ridge Cemetery. For eight grades Col. Vietzen attended the District Number 3 Elyria Township School, a small brick schoolhouse



still standing here, opposite the Cemetery. (Many of the early area settlers are buried here.) The building was heated by a coal stove which was tended to by the older students. The schoolhouse evidently was remodeled in 1931 as indicated by a stone above the doorway, but the original portion is much older. Mrs. Pearl Eppley was the teacher at the time Vietzen attended. The building is (and has been for several years) empty at the

time of this writing. A bank had once operated here, and Col. Nahorn vaguely remembers entering the building. He maintains an original class photo in the Museum files, with Col. Vietzen pictured along with Mrs. Pearl Eppley, teacher, standing in front of the old school building (before the structure was enlarged).



Many farms in this area not only had the traditionally tilled land but also included orchards of fruit trees. There was a peach orchard north of the Cemetery, American Chestnut trees were located on these farms (including on the Eldred farm on the east side of the Marsh), and an apple orchard was located on the west side of the Marsh. The Schwert Farm, just south of the Vietzen Farm, boasted having “the most wonderful plum and cherry orchard I have ever seen,” Col. Vietzen stated in his “The Old Warrior Speaks” book.



Conclusion

We have traced the history of the region in and around the East Marsh of Lorain County, becoming acquainted with this particular area by reviewing its geography and how and why it came to be, from ancient times to the modern era. General facts about marshes (and such related environments) and their contributions to watersheds have been explored. Besides being extremely diverse habitats, providing unique niches for a wide range of many types of wildlife, marshes are integral in cleansing and purifying water before it enters a receiving watercourse and acting as a regulator, aiding in the maintenance of flow and flow

regulation of these watercourses. An overview of the prehistoric inhabitants during the early pre-history of this area has been provided, and artifacts left behind by these peoples, found in the confines of the study area, have been documented. A small but crucial portion of Lorain County has been selected, magnified, and dissected in this study. By looking closely at the area's particular geography, reasons for its formation, and collection of prehistoric sites in this section of Northern Ohio, the information shared sheds light on other sites and may be compared to areas in the vicinity and afar. When choosing to research such an area, one might look to this report, using it as a template to holistically review the area under study and to appreciate its background stories.



Col. Nahorn in his New Indian Ridge Museum (2015) beside the original door that he salvaged from the Indian Ridge Museum, Elyria, in late 2000. The wooden arrow below the window, which had been separated from the door, was later re-united with the door, thanks to the Nahorn family, ten years later. Photography courtesy Daryl Smith.

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