PREHISTORIC ARCHAEOLOGY

NATIVE AMERICAN OCCUPATION

The historic record for northern Ohio covers nearly 350 years, from the early journals of French and English explorers and missionaries to the present day. The period of human occupation before written records for the area we now call Sheffield and Avon is perhaps 30 times longer—the Prehistoric Period. During this period, several Indian cultural groups inhabited the Black River valley and North Ridge (see Chronology Table). The following is a summary of what we know of the earliest inhabitants of the ***Byway*** corridor.

Paleo-Indians. Analysis of pollen in sediment cores from the Lake Erie basin show that the time between 13,000 and 9,000 years before the present [YBP] was characterized by major changes in the flora and, by inference, a major climatic shift (Shane 1994). As the glacial ice retreated from the region, gradual warming led to the replacement of conifer forests with deciduous trees on the lake plain. During this time the Paleo-Indians are thought to have entered the Lake Erie region, although there is some evidence of earlier occupation in limestone caves and rock shelters in western Pennsylvania and on abandoned beach ridges of Lake Huron in southern Ontario (Adovasio et al. 1978; Ellis and Deller 2000). The environment was that of a boreal forest dominated by spruce and pine and human populations were most likely small and scattered (Shane 1987). Large mammalian species, such as woodland muskox (*Bootherium bombifrons*), American mastodon (*Mammut americanum*), woolly mammoth (*Mammuthus prinigenius*), giant ground sloth (*Megalonyx jeffersonii*), elk-moose (*Cervalces scotti*), and giant beaver (*Castoroides ohioensis*) were present in the region at this time and

Depiction of mastodons in an Ohio glacial bog; skeletal remains of these beasts have been found in bog deposits at three locations in Lorain County (from Feldmann and Hackathorn 1996).

utilized the boreal forest habitat (McDonald 1994). Paleo-Indians overlapped in time with these now-extinct Pleistocene [glacial age] mammals and there is some evidence they hunted them (Fisher et al. 1994). There is little to indicate the degree of impact such exploitation may have had on these animals, but overhunting and climate changes may have hastened their decline.

By 11,000 YBP winters were less extreme and summers were warmer in the Lake Erie region. Increasing diversity of vegetation and fauna would have provided multiple new environments and enhanced sources of food and shelter for human populations to exploit. The Clovis people entered eastern North America during the late glacial period, just prior to 11,000 YBP and may have been the first wave of colonizing people in the Lake Erie region (Tankersley 1994). The single most diagnostic lithic [stone] artifact of the Clovis culture is a fluted projectile point, referred to as the Clovis point (Agenbrood 1988). The Paleo-Indians were nomadic, probably living in small groups [40 to 60 people] that obtained most of their food from hunting with wooden spears tipped with distinctive lanceolate points made of flint.

One of the earliest, well-documented Paleo-Indian occupations in the Lake Erie region is the ***Paleo Crossing Site*** (Ohio Archaeological Inventory No. 33-ME-274) in northeastern Ohio, which is dated at about 11,000 years ago (Brose 1994). This Early Paleo-Indian site is located in the Cuyahoga River valley, about 40 miles south of Cleveland, Ohio and is thought to have been occupied between 11,500 and 10,000 years ago based on chert artifacts, post molds, and granules of charcoal with radiocarbon dates of 10,980+75. The site is characterized by lithic artifacts, particularly projectile points of the "Gainey" style [Clovis occupation], and waste flakes from the manufacture and/or use of these tools. The 2.4-acre site sits on a glacial kame ridge located near a series of glacial kettle lakes.

Paleo-Indians attack a wooly mammoth in northern Ohio about 10,000 years ago. Although there are some clues that Paleo-Indians hunted large mammals, they likely utilized a wide range of plants and animals (courtesy of National Park Service).

Paleo-Indian lanceolate projectile point (left), dated at 10,000-9,000 years ago and Archaic corner-notched point (right), dated at 7,000-6,000 years ago, discovered on North Ridge in Sheffield Village by Dennis Bryden. These discoveries were from the vicinity of the I-90 Interchange, known as the Gornall Sites (33-LN-58 & 59). Flint for these points is believed to have been quarried by Indians from deposits in the Upper Mercer Limestone (Pennsylvanian Period, 300 million YBP) in Coshocton County, Ohio.

CHRONOLOGY OF PREHISTORIC INDIANS

12,000 BC	Asian migrants cross Bering land bridge and enter New World.	PALEO-INDIAN
9500 BC	Fluted point came into use. Few Paleo finds exceed this date.	
9000 BC	Fluted point users spread over most of North America.	
8500 BC	Transition to Archaic Period. Descendants of Paleo-Indians lived a less nomadic life.	
8000 BC	Early Archaic. Marked by first use of side notched, bifurcated, and corner notched points.	ARCHAIC
6000 BC	Middle Archaic. Many new styles of hafting designs invented. First ground stone tools such as axes and pestles developed.	
2500 BC	Late Archaic. Increased sedentary life-style, development of elaborate mortuary complexes such as Red Ocher and Glacial Kame.	
1000 BC	Early Woodland. Widespread use of pottery. First mounds built by the Adena people in southern Ohio.	WOODLAND
1 AD	Middle Woodland. Hopewell culture appears marked by geometric earthworks, trade routes, exotic material. After a few hundred years, Hopewell system breaks down.	
400 AD	Late Woodland. Appearance of first village sites in central and southern Ohio. Use of bow and arrow begins.	
1000 AD	Fort Ancient culture in southern Ohio. Sandusky and Whittlesey traditions in northern Ohio, and Monogahela in eastern Ohio. All live in large agricultural villages and subsistence was based on maize cultivation.	LATE PREHISTORIC
1650 AD	Most prehistoric people had left northern Ohio, leaving the area with few inhabitants.	EARLY HISTORIC
1750 AD	Many Indian groups such as Shawnee, Miami, Ottawa, Delaware, and Wyandot move into Ohio from other areas.	

Chronology of Ohio's Prehistoric Indians (modified from Converse 2003).

The dates and style, variety, and lithology of the tools unearthed suggest that the site may represent the initial colonization of the Lake Erie drainage basin.

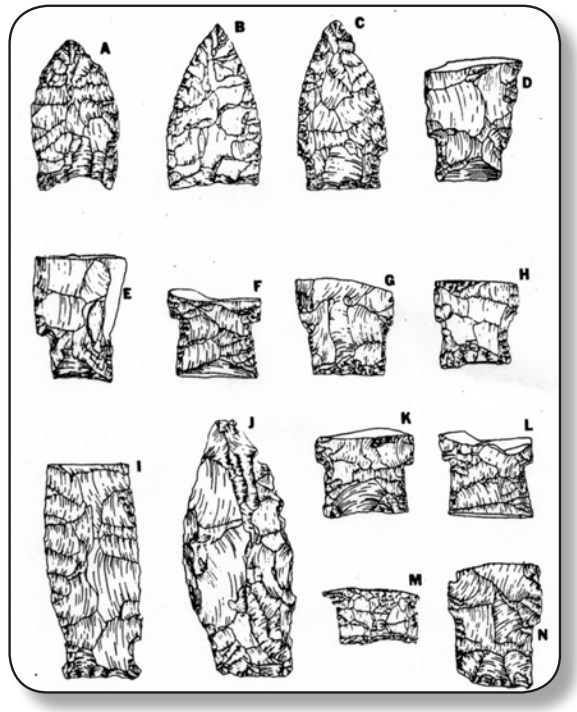
Other evidence of early human occupation in northern Ohio comes from excavations at the ***Anderson Site*** (33-ER-75), situated on a bluff overlooking Old Woman Creek in Erie County (Shane 1981). This site, which has been occupied off-and-on for the past 10,000 years, may have been attractive to prehistoric people because of its well-drained sandy soil

and its strategic location above the creek valley. Because Lake Erie was at least 65 feet lower than present when the Paleo-Indians occupied the site, there was no estuary in the valley as there is today (Herdendorf and Bailey 1989), but the valley was probably a conduit for the movement of game and the upland terrain was rich in forest and grassland resources. During this time period, the Black River valley in northern Lorain County most likely was occupied by Paleo-Indians.

Little remains of the camps of the Late Paleo-Indian hunters, other than their distinctive lanceolate-shaped spear points and perhaps the fire-stained stone cobbles scattered throughout their sites. No fireplaces, refuse pits or other facilities of the Paleo-Indians were found at the ***Anderson Site*** that would permit a direct way of determining the age of the occupation. However, the spear points that were found are like the lanceolate points found at the ***Squaw Rockshelter Site*** (33-CU-34) south of Cleveland (Brose 1989) and the ***Paleo Crossing Site*** in Medina County. Archaeologists have obtained radiocarbon dates ranging from 11,000 to 9,200 YBP for wood charcoal associated with these points.

From 11,000 to 10,000 YBP the climatic conditions in the region became more complex, with short-term temperature and moisture reversals in contrast to the gradual warming trends of earlier millennia. Increased mobility in human populations seems likely during this period because the landscape was no longer predictable from generation to generation. Prolonged drought conditions would have placed significant stresses on human and animal populations. Later in the Paleo-Indian period [~9,500 YBP], another group of hunters called the Plano people moved into northern Ohio from the west (Otto 1980). Artifacts from this culture, particularly lanceolate projectile points, have been found in Sheffield along the abandoned beach ridge that once formed the shore of glacial Lake Warren, known as North Ridge.

Additional evidence of early human occupation in northern Ohio comes from excavations at the ***Burrell Orchard Site*** (33-LN-15) in Sheffield just 2.5 miles north of the ***Byway***. This site, which appears to have been occupied off and on for the past 10,000 years, may have been attractive to prehistoric people because of its well-drained soil and its strategic location above French Creek and the Black River. These valleys were probably conduits for the movement of game, especially deer. Also, the upland terrain and abandoned beach ridges to the south were rich in forest and grassland resources. During this time period, the Black River valley and North Ridge were most likely occupied by Paleo-Indians. Little remains of the camps of these Late Paleo-Indian hunters, other than their distinctive lanceolate-shaped spear points and perhaps the fire-stained cobbles scattered throughout their sites. Excavations at this site in 2008 also indicated extensive occupation by Archaic Indians ~4,000 YBP (Redmond and Scanlan 2009).



Paleo-Indian projectile points from the Anderson Site in Erie County, Ohio (from Shane 1981).

Archaic Indians. The warming trend was re-established during the period from 10,000 to 9,000 YBP as climatic conditions approached modern values and gradients. Spruce, hemlock, pine, and larch either disappeared or were restricted to sheltered ravines, while oak, hickory, walnut, and maple became the dominant trees. Later, ~6,500 YBP, beech became important. Human populations would have been affected by the loss of conifer forests, but the more diverse and plentiful fauna of the deciduous forests that replaced them and milder winters would have also increased forage potentials.

These new opportunities coincided with occupation of the region by people of the Archaic culture whose economy was based on hunting, fishing, and gathering. With the expansion of the deciduous forest into northern Ohio, Archaic Indians adapted to the changing environment by developing new food sources and modifying technologies to utilize the resources of the newly established woodlands. In addition to hunting game, such as deer, they gathered plant foods, especially from nut-bearing trees (oak, hickory, and walnut). Most Archaic sites found in northern Ohio appear to have been small hunting camps. Archaic habitation and hearth structures in other northern Ohio watersheds suggest cold-weather occupation of camps (probably autumn), when deer are most mobile and best hunted. Typically these camps were located on a vantage point above a stream valley to maximize hunting efforts by utilizing bluff tops as observation areas to locate and pursue deer moving through the valley. Archaic Indians established hunting and fishing camps in various parts of their territories to take advantage of seasonal food resources.

In addition to chipping spear points and knives from flint, Archaic Indians developed a technique for making axes and various types of food-processing tools. They tended to use hard rocks for these purposes, such as granite erratics, which are abundant in the glacial deposits of the watershed and in the hollows between the ancient beach ridges (Herdendorf 1963). Brewerton side-notched projectile points from the ***Gornall Sites*** (33-LN-58 & 59) on North Ridge in Sheffield indicate Late Archaic people (5,000 to 3,500 YBP) occupied the area.

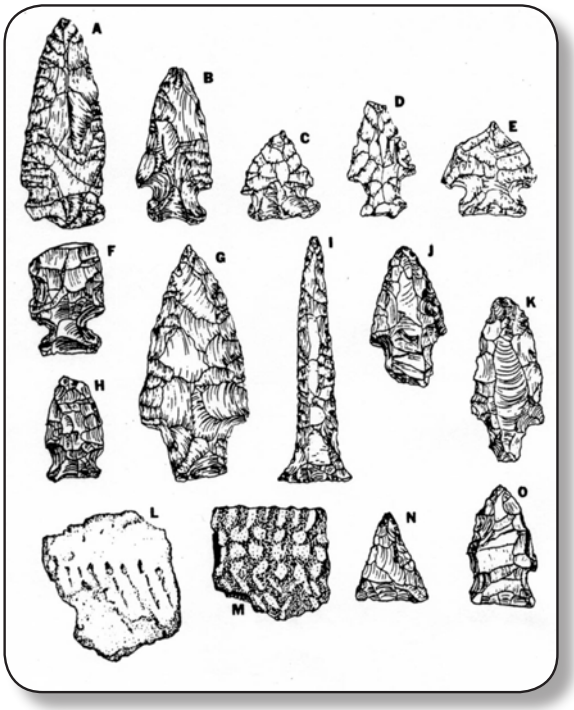
Seasonal hunting camp typical of the type built by Archaic Indians in northern Ohio (courtesy of James Maxwell).

Engraving of Indians making a dugout canoe, similar to the 3,600-year-old Ringer canoe excavated in Ashland County, Ohio (from Harriot 1590). Although this method of canoe construction was observed in the late 16th century, Archaic and Woodland Indians most likely used similar techniques in making their dugout canoes.

Model of Ringer canoe at the Cleveland Museum of Natural History.

The Ringer dugout canoe [radiocarbon dates range from 1,500 to 3,600 YBP], found in the remnant of a glacial lake in Ashland County, Ohio at the head of the Vermilion River, a tributary of Lake Erie immediately to the east of the Black River, suggests that Archaic or Woodland peoples were engaged in water-borne trade in the region (Brose and Greber 1982). This canoe is believed to have had a cargo capacity of about 1,170 pounds and a crew of 2 to 4 members. Rather than the long-distance canoes of the later Woodland people (used to transport such commodities as copper, mica, flint, pottery, fresh conch shells, and salt), the Archaic canoe seemed best suited for local travel, carrying passengers and subsistence cargoes.

The ***Weilnau Site*** (33-ER-280), located on a high bluff overlooking the Huron River valley in Milan Township, Erie County, Ohio contained a habitation structure and projectile points associated with the Early Archaic period (Abel and Haas 1991). The habitation structure consisted of a shallow, circular depression 10 feet in diameter, surrounded by post molds. A cluster of fire-cracked rocks near its center indicates the presence of a hearth. This sites is interpreted as a hunting camp (Abel 1994). The site offers a clear view of the broad floodplain and meanders of the Huron River, some 65 feet below. The Huron River valley constricts immediately downstream of the site forming a bottleneck for game moving in that direction, leading to the postulation that Early Archaic hunters used the bluff tops near the site as observation points to locate and pursue deer and other game moving through the valley. The habitation structure and the hearth suggests cold-weather occupation of the camp, probably autumn when deer are most mobile and best hunted. The Huron River valley was probably utilized heavily by deer during these seasons, especially since the river rarely freezes below the site under current climatic conditions and most certainly was ice-free during the mild temperatures of the warm Climatic Optimum, 8,000 to 6,000 YBP.



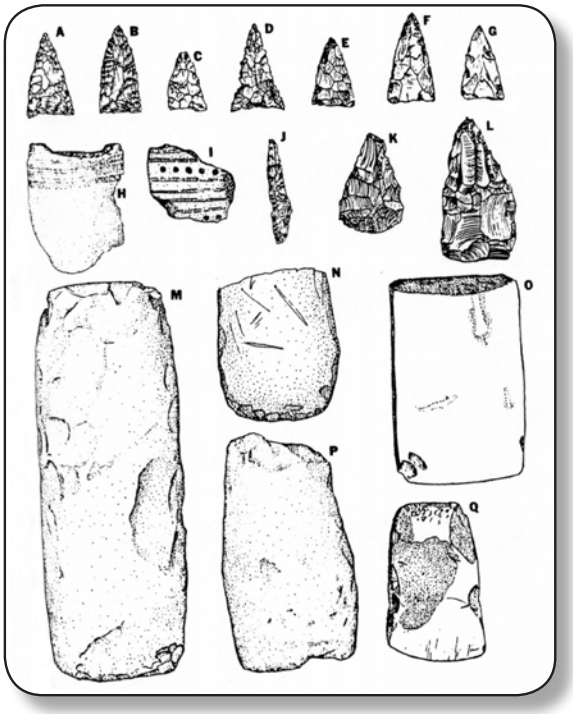
Archaic (A-I) and Woodland (J-O) artifacts from the Anderson Site (from Shane 1981).

Woodland Indians. About 3,000 YBP the way of life of Indian people in much of eastern North America began to undergo a fundamental change, largely in response to the domestication and cultivation of plants. With crops to supplement food traditionally obtained by hunting and gathering, cultures were able to establish more-or-less permanent villages. Fired clay pottery also appeared at this time, permitting resources to be stored, which also favored more permanent settlements. Thus, these people began to follow a yearly round of activities, in part controlled by the need to come together in summer to plant, cultivate, and harvest crops. This last 3,000 years of eastern North American prehistory is known as the Woodland Period.

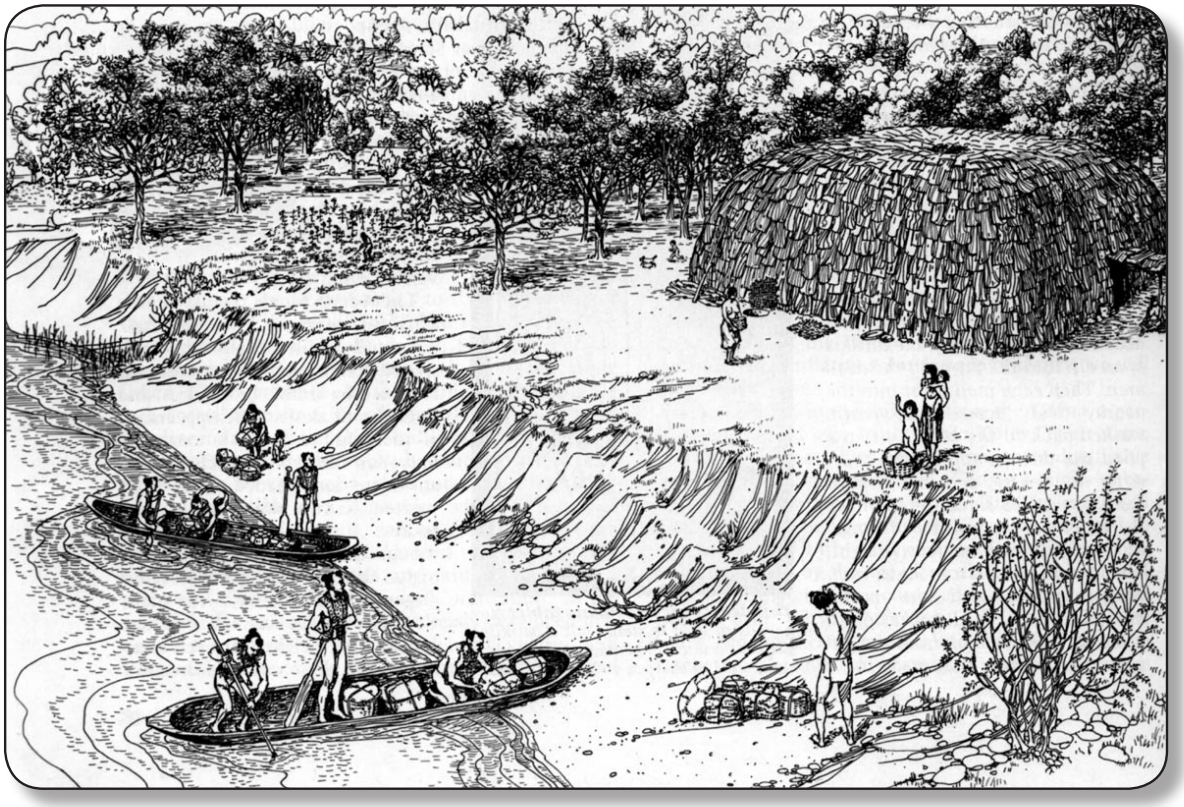
One of the most extensively documented and perhaps the single most important aboriginal wild plant food source associated with lagoons at Lake Erie stream mouths was wild rice (*Zizania aquatic* and *Zizania palustris*). Early French explorers and missionaries reported that wild rice constituted a food staple for many of Algonquian- and Siouan-speaking tribal groups then living in the Great Lakes region. The occurrence of stands of wild rice, which were once abundant in Lake Erie embayments, such as the Black River mouth, may have been one of the primary attractions for late prehistory aboriginal peoples.

At first, Woodland farmers cultivated only indigenous Midwestern plants for their seeds, such as the marsh elder (*Iva annua*), lamb's quarter (*Chenopodium album*), gourd (*Cucurbita lagenaria*), and perhaps sunflower (*Helianthus* spp.); these crops were later replaced by cultivated corn, beans, and squash introduced from Mexico. Perhaps for the next 2,000 years, cultivated plant foods supplemented a subsistence economy based on hunting, gathering, and fishing. By about 1,100 YBP, Indian farmers became reliant on corn, beans, squash, and sunflower for a significant portion of their food (Prufer and Shane 1976). At about the same time, bows and arrows first came into common use for hunting.

Based on radiocarbon dates, a major Woodland village, the ***Burrell Fort Site*** (33-LN-3), was occupied from 2,500 to 1,200



Late Woodland artifacts from the Anderson Site (from Shane 1981).



Depiction of Woodland Indian village along a tributary to Lake Erie (courtesy of James Maxwell).

YBP at the confluence of French Creek and Sugar Creek in Sheffield's James Day Park. The fort was constructed on high ground where the creeks meet to form a triangular projection. The village was thus protected from invaders on two sides by steep shale bluffs and on the third side by a wooden stockade and earthworks. Stains in the soil where the wooden posts were located and the trenches dug to form the earthworks are still clearly visible at the site. The ***Burrell Fort Site*** was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1978.

Although the Woodland villagers grew corn, as evidenced by the carbonized kernels recovered from village refuse pits, large amounts of animal remains and nut shells indicate that farming may have been less important to the village economy than hunting, fishing, or gathering. Evidence for angling with hook and line includes polished bone fishhooks at several northern Ohio sites. Fish from Lake Erie and Black River were likely taken with nets, traps, or spears. Refuge pits [middens] at Late Woodland sites on Sandusky Bay, ~900 YBP, have yielded an assemblage of fish that represent both shallow nearshore waters and the deeper waters of Lake Erie (Cavender and Bowen 1994). Many small and medium sized fish were present along with some very large individuals. The wide size variation and high diversity indicates capture by trap or seine, a hypothesis that is supported by the recovery of netsinkers at the site. Fishing grounds with relatively firm, unobstructed bottoms were probably selected close to the village. The dominance of adult pumpkinseed sunfish (*Lepomis gibbosus*) suggests these were taken during the early summer spawning season when adults are easily captured in shallow water by seining. Some open water species were present, but most share an affinity with shallow, vegetated edges of a protected bay or river mouth. Other vertebrates identified from the middens (muskrats, ducks, turtles, and frogs) correspond to the shallow-water habitat indicated by the majority of fish species.

Studies of animal bones from prehistoric Indian habitations in northern Ohio show that white-tailed deer was the single most important game animal for the Woodland people. In addition to meat, deer provided hide for clothing, bone and antler for tools and utensils, sinew for thread and binding material, and brain for tanning. Elk, raccoon, rabbits, bear, and wild turkey were also hunted in the upland forest surrounding the Black River valley. Beavers, muskrats, and waterfowl were taken from the wetlands. Wild plants from valley wetlands and upland forests appear to have provided at least half of the foods eaten by Woodland people. Nuts, numerous kinds of seeds of herbaceous plants, and greens were collected from the forest, as were many medicinal plants. Hickory nuts, in particular, were crushed and boiled in water to release their oil, which was collected and used as margarine. Wetland plants, such as cattails and bulrushes, provided raw material for making mats, baskets, house coverings, and a great many other utensils.

Fired clay pottery vessels and smoking pipe bowls were fashioned from clay probably dug from bluffs along Lake Erie tributaries. Pots were unpainted and were decorated along the rim with bands of simple rectangular tool impressions. Oval post-mold patterns, floor depressions, and hearth structures at Woodland houses were similar to the dome-shaped lodges or "wigwams" built by Ottawa Indians of the western Great Lakes region in the 17th to 19th centuries. These houses probably consisted of oval pole frames, covered with various available kinds of tree bark and bulrush or cattail mats.

Woodland Indian flint knapping tool kit (courtesy of Firelands Archaeological Research Center).

Woodland Indian projectile points and flint tools from the Burrell Fort Site on French Creek in Sheffield Village, Ohio (courtesy of Ron Sauer).

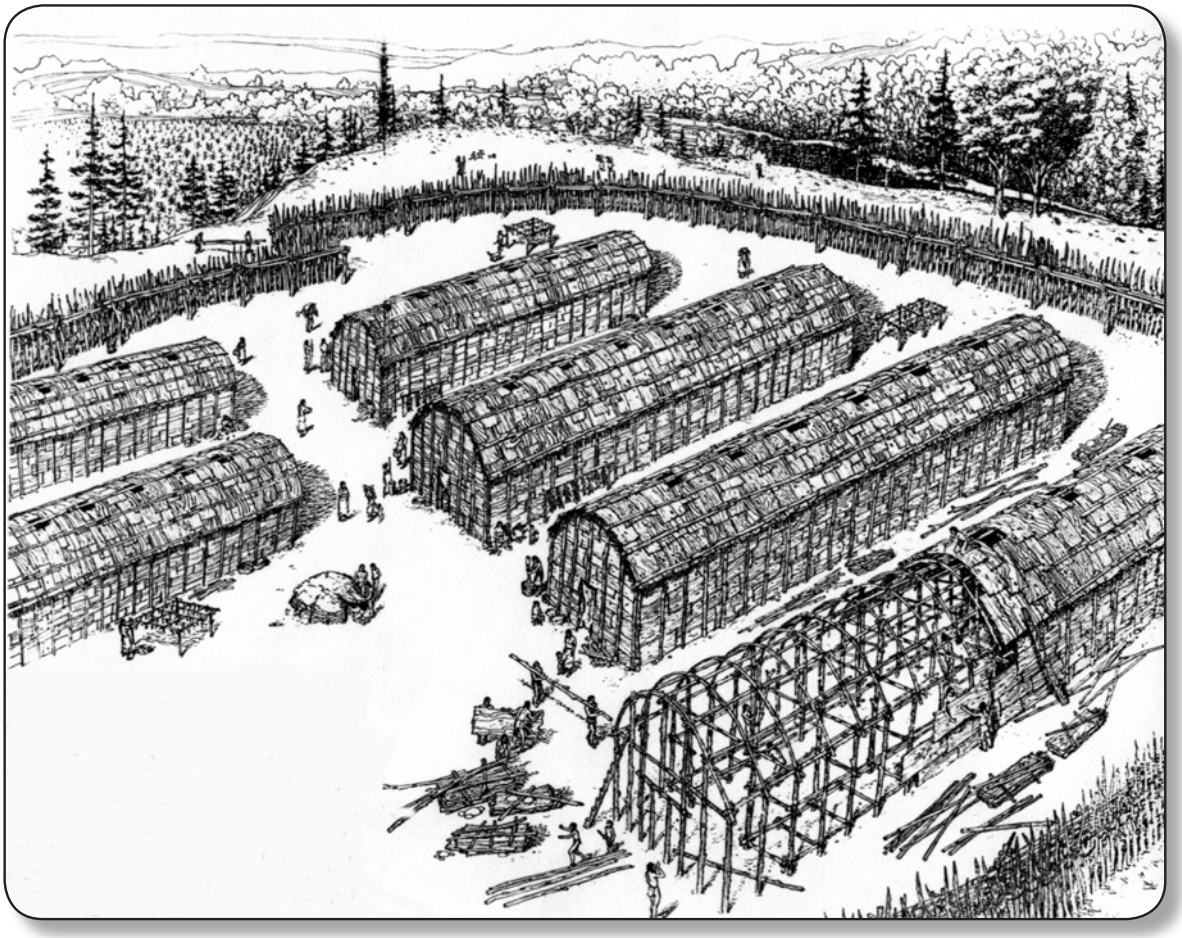
Demonstration of the use of a knapping kit to make projectile points from flint. These artifacts were excavated at the Seaman Fort Site on the Huron River in Erie County, Ohio.

Late Prehistoric and Contact Indians. The last prehistoric culture to inhabit Lorain County and areas to the west is known as the Sandusky Tradition, which presumably arose from about 1,000 YBP. A contemporary group of Indians living more to the northeast is known as the Whittlesey Tradition, while another group in southern Ohio has been named the Fort Ancient Culture.

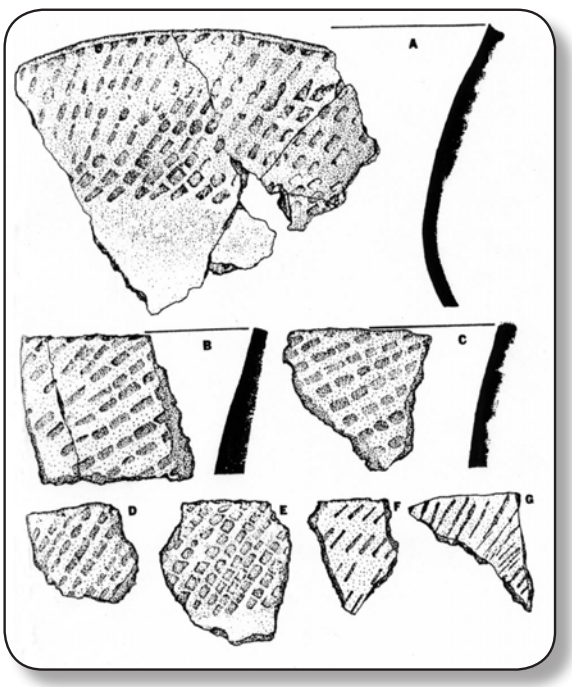
The Black River valley lies at the eastern edge of the region occupied by the Sandusky Tradition. Defined as an archaeological sequence spanning the Late Woodland to Late Prehistoric Periods, the Sandusky Tradition is believed to have originated in the central Lake Erie drainage basin of northern Ohio and expanded over time into northwestern Ohio, southeastern Michigan, and southwestern Ontario. These people inhabited small villages built on promontories or high banks overlooking streams that emptied into Lake Erie. The villages were fortified with palasides and exterior ditches. The ***White Fort Site*** (33-LN-2)—about 3,000 feet south of Garfield Bridge—is an example of such a village. The recovery of Mixter Dentate and Parker Festooned ceramics indicates that this settlement was affiliated with the Sandusky Tradition (Redmond 1999).

Late Prehistoric Indians used bows and arrows for hunting. The proximity of villages to the lake and rivers enabled these people to fish extensively, both with hooks and with nets. Their nets were weighted with rounded pieces of stone, particularly hard shale, which were roughly notched on opposite edges for attachment to the nets. These people also cultivated corn and collected wild plant food and freshwater mussels. The discovery of a bundle burial at the ***White Fort Site*** indicates careful processing of the deceased, perhaps at a remote location some distance from the village, prior to final interment in the fort.

Excavations at the ***Eiden Site*** (33-LN-14), located on the north bank of French Creek at its confluence with the Black River, about 3 miles north of the ***Byway***, indicate that a Late Prehistoric agricultural village was still active here ~550 YBP. However, ceramic artifacts, circular house patterns, pit features, and numerous human burials indicate that the major occupation of the village belonged to the middle phase of Sandusky Tradition, ~750 YBP. The ***Eiden Prehistoric District***, which demonstrates several periods of prehistoric



Fortified Late Prehistoric Indian village of the Great Lakes region (courtesy of James Maxwell).



Late Prehistoric ceramic artifacts from the Anderson Site (from Shane 1981).

occupation beginning as early as 10,000 YBP, was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1978.

The Sandusky Tradition may have culminated in groups ancestral to the *Assistaeronon* or "Fire Nation" that are documented in early historical accounts, and in turn may have been the ancestors of the Erie Indians of eastern Lake Erie who were reportedly destroyed as a people by marauding Iroquois from western New York in 1654 (Otto 1980). Archaeological investigations indicate that the Iroquois occupied a relatively small area between Lakes Erie and Ontario and used the hinterlands of the north shore as hunting grounds. These groups represent the region's Contact Indians, those who first encountered Europeans. However, there were very few Indians living along the south shore of Lake Erie when the first Europeans began to move through the area in the late 17th century.

Late Prehistoric Indian (Sandusky Tradition) ceramic artifacts from the Eiden Site on the Black River in Sheffield Village, Ohio (courtesy of Ron Sauer). An Indian village existed at this site about 700-600 years before the present (YBP).

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

Several important archaeological sites are located in close proximity to the ***North Ridge Scenic Byway*** corridor. The major features of these sites are summarized here.

White Fort Site (Ohio Archaeological Inventory 33-LN-2). Located on the west bank of the Black River about 2,000 feet southwest of Garfield Bridge, this site [also known as Fort Lot] was excavated by the Cleveland Museum of Natural History in 1995 and 1996 (Redmond 1999). A major prehistoric occupation was revealed at the site consisting of one or more nucleated village (clustered) settlements that covered a combined area of 5.4 acres. The remains of a multi-walled defensive stockade, represented by shallow ditches and individual post molds, enclose a 4-acre portion of the overall habitation area. This enclosure contained concentrations of food storage pits and midden (refuse) debris, as well as circular trenches and rectangular post-walled dwellings. Subsistence remains reflect a mixed dependence on cultivars such as maize, beans, and squash, as well as small and large game, fish, and mollusks. A total of 5 human interments were discovered at the site. No obvious evidence of skeletal traumas or pathologies were identified in the field and all individuals were reburied in place. The majority of lithic projectile points were triangular flint of the Madison type, most likely true arrow tips. The recovery of Mixter series and Parker Festooned ceramics indicate the settlement was affiliated with the Sandusky Tradition (Late Woodland) of northwestern Ohio. Radiocarbon determinations on charcoal wood samples from fire pits indicate that the site was occupied from 670 to 370 YBP, with the major occupation in the 14th century.

Betzel Site (33-LN-10). This site is located immediately south of Ohio Route 254 at the west end of Garfield Bridge. Archaeologists from Case Institute of Technology, conducting investigation in 1964 and 1965, interpreted the site as a Late Woodland village.

Garfield Bridge Site. This site is located on the eastern bluff of the Black River at the approach to the former Garfield Bridge, near the intersection of Ohio Route 254 and East River Road in Sheffield. This bridge was dismantled in 2002-2003 to make way

Artist's interpretation of White Fort, a Late Prehistoric village with longhouses, on the Black River from archaeological evidence (courtesy of Lorain County Metro Parks).

Reconstructed Mixter Dentate ceramic vessel excavated from the White Fort Site (courtesy of Cleveland Museum of Natural History).

for the new Garfield Bridge opened in 2003. In 1936 when the former bridge was being constructed, Col. Raymond Vietzen (1945) documented several Indian skeletons. During grading of the approach, a bulldozer exposed a burial site with at least 5 skeletons. Several triangular, notched, and bone projectile points were associated with the burials. The bone projectiles were found embedded in the skeletons, one of which penetrated a vertebra and spinal cord, most likely causing death. For many years Col. Vietzen displayed these artifacts in his Indian Ridge Museum in Elyria, Ohio.

Gornall Sites No. 1 & No. 2 (33-LN-58 & 33-LN-59). These sites are located in the vicinity of 5220 Detroit Road in Sheffield Village, the former location of the George W. Moon House (Italianate 1855) which was demolished in 1990 to build two fast-food restaurants and a supermarket. The archaeological site was also graded and paved over at the same time. However, important artifacts were recovered before the site was

The historic Jacob Shupe Homestead on Beaver Creek in Amherst, Ohio. The farmhouse—46900 Cooper Foster Park Road, built in 1816, is the oldest dwelling in Amherst. This building has been restored by the Nahorn family as their home. Matthew Nahorn has re-established a portion of Col. Raymond Vietzen's Indian Ridge Museum in the building, calling it the New Indian Ridge Museum in Col. Vietzen's honor. The museum contains a number of artifacts excavated from archaeological sites on North Ridge.

destroyed, which indicate Late Archaic occupation. The artifacts included Brewerton side-notched projectile points, a grooved axe, flint scrapers, a triangular stone knife, a gorget (neck or breast ornament), and several broken points and flint flakes. Dr. David R. Bush, Regional Archaeologist for the Cleveland Museum of Natural History, interpreted the sites as probable hunting camps.

Avenbury Lake Site (33-LN-188). This site is located at 35290 Detroit Road in Avon. During construction of a recent housing development on the north side of the ancient beach ridge, excavations revealed evidence of prehistoric occupation at this site.

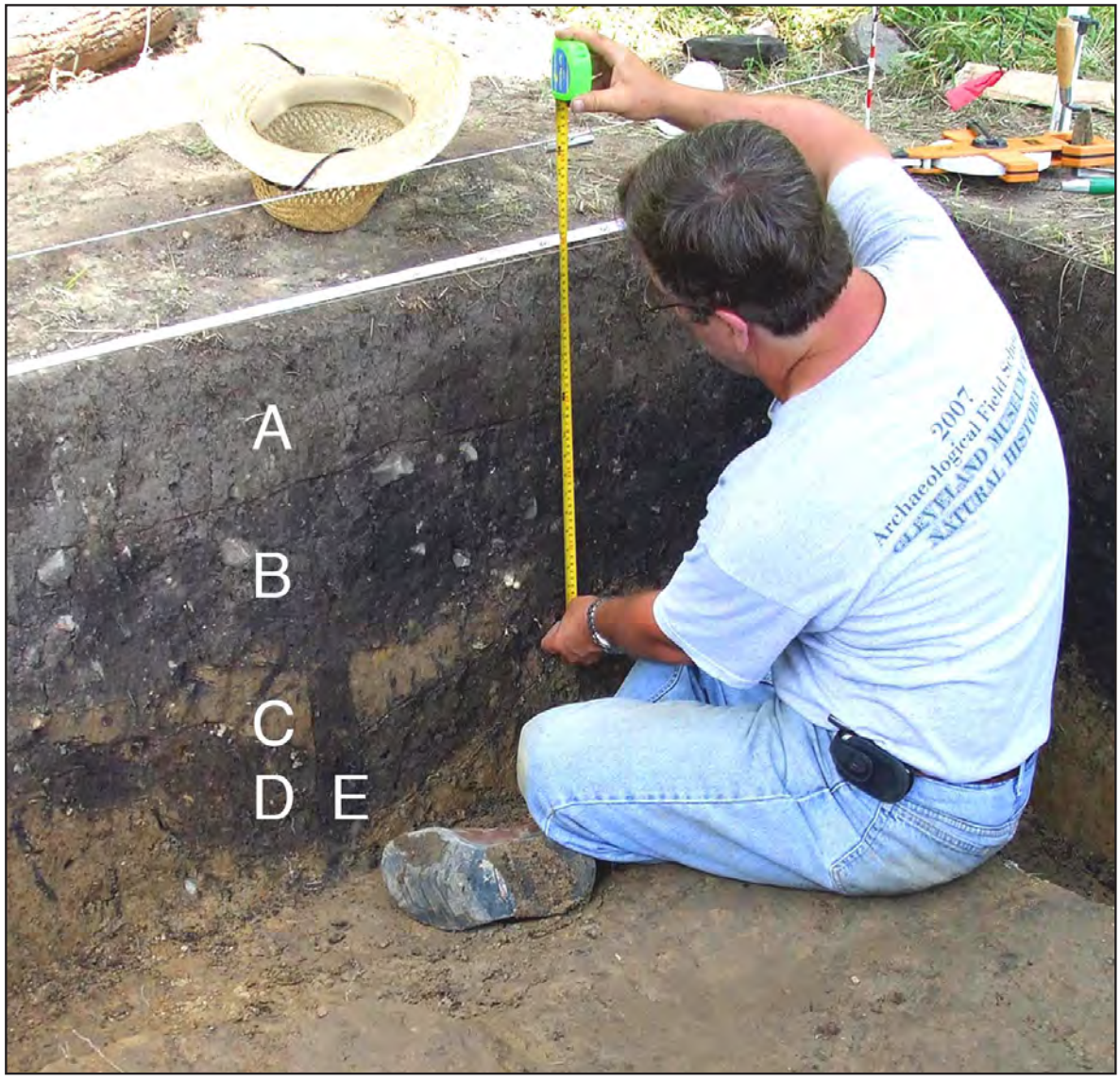
French Creek Sites. Several prehistoric sites are found in French Creek Reservation, another Lorain County Metro Parks property located near the mouth of French Creek, 2.7 miles north of the ***North Ridge Scenic Byway*** corridor. One of the park's nature trails leads to the ***Burrell Fort Site*** (33-LN-3), a Late Woodland Indian fortification on a promontory bluff overlooking the confluence of French and Sugar Creeks. The ***Eiden Site*** (33-LN-14), located in the same reservation on the north bank of French Creek at its confluence with the Black River, is thought to be the largest Woodland Indian settlement in the Black River valley. This major agricultural village and cemetery dates to the 14th and 15th centuries (Mckenzie and Blank 1976) and is believed to be contemporary with the Late Woodland settlement at White Fort.

Burrell Orchard Site (33-LN-15). For five weeks during the summer of 2008 Dr. Brian Redmond, Curator of Archaeology at the Cleveland Museum of Natural History, directed a field school to investigate a prehistoric Indian village site at the Burrell Homestead on East River Road, 2.5 miles north of the ***Byway***. Six excavations [units] that measured up to two meters square, extending down to the subsoil (0.5 meter).

The site is located on top of a triangular promontory of land created by the confluence of the Black River and French Creek. The steep cliffs of the promontory afforded natural protection for the Indians from attack on two sides. The excavations have revealed cultural deposits that most likely date to the Late Archaic Period. A sizeable village appears to have been located at this site, based on the extensive midden [refuse] deposits uncovered. The most common artifact recovered was fire-cracked rock, which indicates that food preparation, hide tanning, or perhaps heating of dwellings was taking place at the site. Animal bones, particularly deer and catfish, were also found in most units. Stone tools found in the units include lanceolate projectile points, knives, scrappers, and drills. Carbonized post molds in one unit may represent a defensive stockade on the third side of the triangle. Alternatively, they may be the remains of a housing or cooking/deer hide tanning structure. Radiocarbon dates confirm the age of the artifacts at 4,570 YBP (Redmond and Scanlan 2009).

Shale bluff along French Creek west of East River Road. At the top of this steep cliff Archaic Indians occupied a naturally protected promontory some 4-5,000 years ago. The same type of siltstone cropping out at stream level was found in several excavations indicting use by early inhabitants.

Mapping location of fire-cracked rock and siltstone platforms at Burrell Orchard Site in June 2008.



Brian Redmond takes measurements of buried cultural deposits (strata of midden or trash layers) at the Burrell Orchard Site in July 2008. Strata: A–plow zone, B–midden layer with fire-cracked rock, C–subsurface clay layer placed on top of a fire-pit feature, D–fire-pit feature with charcoal deposits, and E–possible post-mold feature [decayed wood trace of a post placed by Archaic Indians].

Dr. Redmond photographs a smudge-pot feature probably used to cure (preserve) deer hides.

Flint drill tool recovered from a unit at the Burrell Orchard Site in June.