

MARTINS FERRY

SIGNATURE EVENT

THE BEGINNING

THE PATH TO STATEHOOD: BICENTENNIAL WAGON TRAIN

21 JUNE, 2003

Salutations:

MAYOR SHRODES

CONGRESSMAN STRICKLAND

REPRESENTATIVES DOMENICK AND WILSON

MR. GEORGE

FELLOW WORTHINGTONIANS

FELLOW OHIOANS

AND VISITORS FROM OTHER STATES AND OTHER COUNTRIES

WHAT A GREAT MORNING IT IS TO HAVE CROSSED THE OHIO RIVER AND
TO BEGIN THE JOURNEY ACROSS OHIO.

AND WHAT A COINCIDENCE TO BE HERE AT WALNUT GROVE CEMETARY AND
TO LEARN ABOUT ITS RENOVATION PROJECT. IN WORTHINGTON, WE ALSO
HAVE A WALNUT GROVE CEMETARY, AND WE HAVE A RENOVATION PROJECT.

BICENTENNIAL WAGON TRAIN

MARTINS FERRY OHIO

21 JUNE, 2003

FIVE AND ONE-HALF YEARS AGO, WHEN WE BEGAN TO PLAN FOR WORTHINGTON'S BICENTENNIAL, A RE-ENACTMENT OF OUR FOUNDERS' JOURNEY FROM CONNECTICUT TO CENTRAL OHIO WAS ENTHUSIASTICALLY PROPOSED AND ACCEPTED... THUS WAS BORN THE BICENTENNIAL WAGON TRAIN. OF COURSE, OHIO, ALSO CELEBRATING ITS BICENTENNIAL WOULD BE A WELCOME PARTNER. WE WERE DELIGHTED WHEN STEPHEN GEORGE, CHAIRMAN OF THE OHIO BICENTENNIAL COMMISSION, EMBRACED THIS IDEA AS A SIGNATURE EVENT FOR OHIO'S BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION. WE ARE INDEBTED TO HIM, THE CAPABLE MEMBERS OF HIS OFFICE, AND TO THE MEMBERS OF THE OHIO BICENTENNIAL COMMISSION FOR HELPING MAKE THIS A REALITY.

WE ARE ALSO INDEBTED TO THE MANY PARTICIPATING COMMUNITIES ALONG THE ROUTE THIS WAGON TRAIN WILL TAKE DURING ITS THREE AND ONE-HALF WEEKS TRAIL ACROSS OHIO. PARTICULARLY ARE WE GRATEFUL TO MARTINS FERRY FOR SERVING AS THE EASTERN ANCHOR COMMUNITY THAT STARTS THIS ARDUOUS ENDEAVOR ON ITS WAY. [INTRODUCE PEOPLE FROM WORTHINGTON -- LOU BRIGGS, DAVID ELDER, JOHN BUTTERFIELD, LORI TREGO, CANDY BROOKS, AND JUNE WHITE (WHO WILL MAKE THE ENTIRE TRIP FROM MARTINS FERRY TO WORTHINGTON, AND WHO WAS THE FIRST PERSON TO SIGN UP TO RIDE ON THE WAGON TRAIN).]

THE MEMBERS OF THE SCIOTO COMPANY, WHO FOUNDED WORTHINGTON, STARTED THEIR TRIP DURING THE SUMMER OF 1803. I'M NOT SURE EXACTLY WHERE THEY CROSSED THE OHIO RIVER. BUT THEY PROBABLY

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ARRIVED HERE IN EARLY TO MID SEPTEMBER. WE DO KNOW THAT THEY STOPPED FOR PROVISIONS IN WHEELING SO ITS POSSIBLE THAT THEY CROSSED NEAR WHERE WE ARE TODAY.

TRYING TO DETERMINE THE CROSSING POINT UNEARTHED A CONTROVERSY -- WHICH COMMUNITY IS OLDER, MARIETTA OR MARTINS FERRY? MOST OHIO HISTORY SOURCES TELL US THAT MARIETTA IS THE OLDEST PERMANENT (WHITE MAN) CITY IN OHIO, FOUNDED IN 1778. MARTINS FERRY'S WEB SITE LISTS ITS SETTLEMENT AS 1785. (LAST EVENING, "EBENEZER MARTIN" SUGGESTED 1787.) I CHECKED WITH OUR FRIEND, DR. JOHN KRAMER WHO TOLD ME THAT GENERALLY PEOPLE AROUND HERE AGREE THAT MARTINS FERRY WAS SETTLED FIRST BUT THAT MARIETTA RECEIVED ITS CHARTER FIRST. SINCE WE ARE IN MARTINS FERRY, THAT SETTLES IT... MARTINS FERRY IS THE OLDEST. EXCEPT THAT THE HISTORY BOOKS AGAIN SAY THAT THE NAME MARTINS FERRY WAS DECIDED UPON IN 1835. THE EARLIER SETTLEMENT WAS CALLED NORRISTOWN, THEN IN 1795, JEFFERSON. MARTINS FERRY WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN REFERRED TO BY THAT NAME IN ANY OF THE JOURNALS KEPT BY WORTHINGTON'S FOUNDERS.

IN ADDITION TO PLANNING A YEAR LONG CELEBRATION WE WANTED TO DO MORE THAN JUST HONOR OUR PAST. WE WANTED TO EMPHASIZE THE QUALITIES OUR FOUNDING FATHERS HELD DEAR, AND BROUGHT WITH THEM. THESE ARE RELIGION, EDUCATION AND LITERATURE.

EARLY TRADERS AND SETTLERS WERE ATTRACTED TO THE OHIO TERRITORY BECAUSE OF ITS WEALTH OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND WATER WAYS, ITS

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PLENTIFUL GAME AND THE FERTILE LAND... IN OTHER WORDS ITS LOCATION. OHIO'S CONTINUING SUCCESS HAS BEEN CREDITED IN NO SMALL PART TO THESE RESOURCES, AGRICULTURE AND OUR PROXIMITY TO THE POPULATION CENTERS OF THE EASTERN AND CENTRAL UNITED STATES AS WELL AS CANADA... AGAIN, LOCATION. WITH ACCESS TO THESE MARKETS, LOCATION MAKES OHIO ATTRACTIVE TO INDUSTRY AND BUSINESS. THE THREE FACTORS THAT MAKE A LAND GREAT -- LOCATION, LOCATION AND LOCATION.

BUT THE PEOPLE WHO ESTABLISHED THE NORTHWEST TERRITORY, THE OHIO TERRITORY, AND WORTHINGTON WANTED TO BE SURE THE PEOPLE AS WELL AS THE LAND WERE GREAT. THE PUBLIC LAND ACT OF 1785 PROVIDED THAT THE LAND OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORY SHOULD BE SURVEYED, SHOULD BE DIVIDED INTO TRACTS OF SIX SQUARE MILES CALLED TOWNSHIPS AND THAT ONE OF THE THIRTY-SIX SECTIONS OF EACH TOWNSHIOP SHOULD BE SAVED, NOT SOLD, TO PROVIDE MONEY TO SUPPORT NEW SCHOOLS.

IN THE HISTORICAL COLLECTIONS OF OHIO BY HENRY HOWE PUBLISHED IN 1904, HOWE REFERS TO TWO OF THE PRINCIPLES ESPOUSED BY JAMES KILBOURNE AND THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE SCIOTO COMPANY. "OBEYING TO THE LETTER OF THE ARTICLES OF THE ASSOCIATION (THE SCIOTO COMPANY) THE FIRST CABIN ERECTED WAS USED FOR A SCHOOL HOUSE AND A CHURCH OF THE PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL DENOMINATION; THE FIRST SABBATH AFTER THE ARRIVAL OF THE THIRD FAMILY DIVINE WORSHIP WAS HELD THEREIN, AND ON THE ARRIVAL OF THE ELEVENTH FAMILY A SCHOOL WAS COMMENCED. THIS EARLY ATTENTION TO RELIGION AND

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EDUCATION HAS LEFT ITS FAVORABLE IMPRESS UPON THE CHARACTER OF THE PEOPLE TO THE PRESENT DAY." RELIGION AND EDUCATION.

THE THIRD QUALITY, LITERATURE, OR LIFE-LONG LEARNING IS EXEMPLEFIED BY THE FACT THAT WORTHINGTON'S FOUNDERS EARLY ON STARTED A LIBRARY... HAVING BROUGHT WITH THEM ON THEIR WAGONS BOOKS FOR THIS PURPOSE. OUR CHIEF LIBRARIAN, MERIBAH MANSFIELD, HAS GIVEN ME A BAG OF BOOKS TO BE CARRIED ON THIS WAGON TRAIN OF 2003 SYMBOLIC OF THE VALUE AND WORTH OUR FOUNDERS PLACED IN THE LITERARY ARTS. WE WANT OUR BICENTENNIAL TO RE-INVIGORATE THOSE IDEALS WHICH HAVE BEEN OUR STRENGTH SINCE OUR BEGINNING. AND WE WANT THIS TO BE A LEGACY FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS.

I WOULD SUGGEST THAT THIS MIGHT ALSO BE A LEGACY FOR THE OHIO LEGISLATURE TO LEAVE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS OF OHIOANS -- TO CONTINUE TO STRENGTHEN THE EDUCATION OF OHIO'S YOUTH AND ADULTS. BASIC EDUCATION TO LEARN SKILLS TO SURVIVE. HIGHER EDUCATION TO LEARN SKILLS TO FLOURISH. AND CONTINUING EDUCATION TO LEARN SKILLS TO ENDURE.

SUPPORT ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION.

HIGHER EDUCATION -- SUPPORT OF OUR COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES.

CONTINUING EDUCATION -- SUPPORT OF OUR LIBRARIES.

WE HEARD LAST NIGHT FROM REPRESENTATIVE CHARLIE WILSON THAT THE OHIO LEGISLATURE HAD WORKED HARD AND LONG INTO THE NIGHT PASSING THE NEW BIENNIAL STATE BUDGET. IF ANY OF YOU HERE KNOW ANY STATE LEGISALTORS, PLEASE KEEP REMINDING THEM THAT THE

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THREE MOST IMPORTANT FACTORS IN MAKING AND KEEPING PEOPLE GREAT
ARE:

EDUCATION...

EDUCATION...

AND EDUCATION..

LOUIS J. ROSEBERRY GOOREY, M.D.
PRESIDENT, WORTHINGTON CITY COUNCIL