

BUTLER COUNTY  
HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY

# BUTLER COUNTY HISTORICAL MARKER DRIVING TOUR

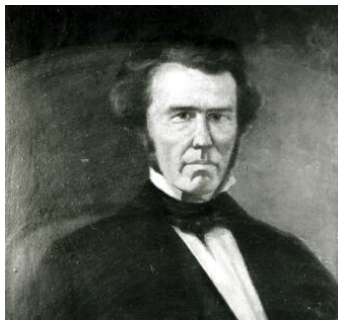
*Western Butler County: Hanover, Morgan and Reily Townships*



## BIRTHPLACE OF WILLIAM BEBB

Governor of Ohio (1846-1849)  
1979 Bebb Park Lane, Okeana, Morgan Township

*Edward Bebb, father of William Bebb and first Welshman to settle in Paddy's Run, Morgan Township, purchased this cabin in 1801. Originally the cabin stood four miles southeast of this site on the Dry Fork of the Whitewater River, where William Bebb was born on December 8, 1802. At 20, William became a teacher and in 1826 became the first teacher at Paddy's Run School. Two years later, Bebb and his wife opened a boarding*



*school on his father's farm. Bebb began the study of law and in 1831 passed the state bar examination and began to practice law in Hamilton, where he soon became an active politician. In 1840 he stumped the state for Harrison and Tyler and in 1846 he was nominated for Governor by the Whig party. His election slogan was "Wm. Bebb and a Home Currency against David Tod and Pot Metal." After his term as governor, Bebb served in several government positions until his retirement to his farm near Rockford, Illinois. He died on October 23, 1873.*

**Directions to Next Marker:** Return to Ohio Rt 126 (Cincinnati Brookville Road). Turn right on Church Street in Okeana and left on Okeana Drewersburg Road.

## MORGAN TOWNSHIP HOUSE

Across from 6481 Okeana Drewersburg Rd, Okeana

*On April 20, 1857, the trustees of Morgan Township met in Okeana to obtain a lot for the township house. From a quarter mill tax levy, \$850 was budgeted for a house and lot. Money expended on the project included \$50 for the lot, \$650 for the construction of the building, \$41 for fencing, \$12.60 for twelve chairs, and \$10.25 for a table. Since its*



*completion in 1858, this meeting house has been used for trustee meetings, a voting precinct, village singing schools and concerts, public school, bank, and township garage. The trustees moved to a new building across the street in 1972 and into their Chapel Road complex in 2000.*

By the early summer of 1863, many Ohioans had become dissatisfied with what seemed a protracted Civil War. They opposed the administration of President Abraham Lincoln and the policy of a national military draft and were alarmed by what they saw as an invasion of their civil liberties. This was in part fueled by the arrest of Clement Vallandigham, future



Democratic candidate for Governor, for publicly criticizing the war. He was convicted of sedition by a military commission and exiled by the President. On July 17, 1863, those unfriendly to the Civil War (Copperheads) from Morgan, Ross, Reily, and Hanover townships met at the Morgan Township House to organize the Butler County Mutual Protection Company. Copperheads from Franklin County, Indiana, joined the company to protest the draft and the president's handling of the war. The company was short-lived, however, as similar antiwar organizations flourished in the region.

**Directions to Next Marker:** Go east on Okeana Drewersburg Road to Ohio Rt 126 (Cincinnati Brookville Road), turn right. Continue on Ohio Rt 126 east into Shandon.

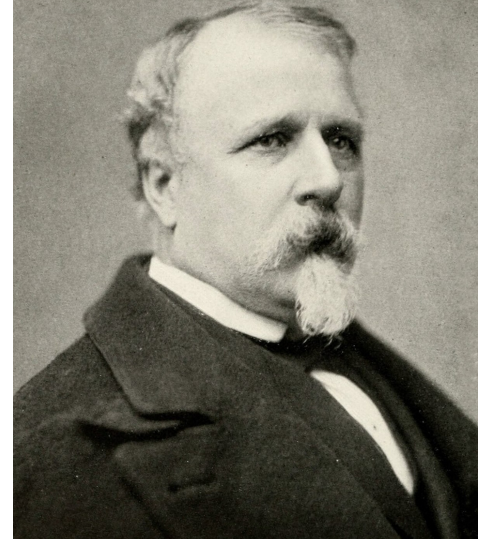


## PADDY'S RUN & SHANDON

Across from 4750 Cincinnati Brookville Rd / OH 126

The foundation for the first Welsh settlement in Ohio was laid on June 29, 1801, when William and Morgan Gwilym purchased land in what is now Morgan Township at the Cincinnati Land Office. The Welsh, who settled in Pennsylvania beginning in the late eighteenth century, moved westward and settled here in 1802. This area was also the major terminus for the 1818 migration from Montgomeryshire/ Cardiganshire in Wales. In 1803 a Congregational Church was organized, and services were held in members' homes or outdoors. A brick Meetinghouse, complete with a Welsh death door leading to the cemetery, was constructed in 1824. The building now serves as the Community House.

The present brick church was built in 1854. For many years, the library, formed in 1852, was housed in the New London Special School District building that stood on this site. A post office, established in 1831, was named for a nearby stream called Paddy's Run, the local name of New London having been rejected by the Postmaster General. Objecting to being called "Paddies" outside the community, younger residents lobbied for a name change. The community became Glendower in 1886 and again Paddy's Run in 1888 after citizens staged a boycott of the Post Office in 1887. As a compromise, the name was changed to Shandon in 1893. From this first Welsh settlement came Gomer and Venedocia in northwest Ohio and communities in northeastern Indiana. Welsh communities located in east Tennessee, Illinois, Iowa, and Wisconsin can trace their roots back to Paddy's Run.



Paddy's Run was the birthplace of influential Ohioans including Murat Halstead (pictured), journalist and editor well-known as a war correspondent; Albert Shaw, editor of the Review of Reviews; Dr. Mark Francis, pioneer in the field of veterinary medicine; and Dr. Edward Francis, researcher with the U.S. Public Health Service.

**Directions to Next Marker:** Ohio Rt 126 east to Ohio Rt 748 north (Millville Shandon Road) this is approximately one block to the turn. Turn left (north). Stay on Ohio Rt 748 until you come to Ohio Rt 129 (Hamilton Scipio Road). Turn right (east). Stay on Ohio Rt 129 until you reach US Rt 27 (stoplight). Turn North (left) into Millville. At the traffic light, turn left and stay on US 27 north. In approximately one mile, turn left on Reily Millville Road (Township Road 29).

## BETHEL CHAPEL & CEMETERY

4025 Reily Millville Road, Hamilton  
Historic Presbyterian Cemetery

*William Holmes McGuffey, author of the Eclectic Series of Readers, was ordained a Presbyterian minister in a log meeting house on this site in 1829. The ordination was performed by Robert Bishop, President of Miami University, and other ministers from the Oxford Presbytery. McGuffey's Christian character is an example and model for all teachers and students in America.*



**Directions to Next Marker**  
Continue west on Reily Millville Road. Keep your eyes peeled for the pair of Bald Eagles nesting between the Bethel Chapel Cemetery and the Lewis-Sample Farm!



## LEWIS-SAMPLE FARM & MIAMI VALLEY NATIVE AMERICANS

4262 Reily Millville Road, Hamilton



The farmstead shares the name of the Lewis & Sample families, two owners since European-descended settlers began moving into the Ohio County in the late 1700s. Andrew (1762-1847) and Martha Lewis (1774-1852) acquired this land in 1804. Like others, Andrew saw for himself the rich land north of the Ohio River while in the army during the Ohio Indian Wars of the 1790s. By 1834, the Lewis farmstead had expanded to more than 350 acres with a brick house, still house, and sawmill on Indian Creek. The Sample family purchased the farm in 1871 and owned it until 2007.

American Indians have lived here since around 13,000 BCE. Over time, these Paleoindian cultures (13,000 BCE - 8,000 BCE) gradually changed their ways of life and developed into what archaeologists have named the Archaic cultures (8,000 BCE - 800 BCE) and, thousands of years later, they transformed into the Adena and Hopewell cultures, (800 BCE - 400 CE). Archaeological surveys have recorded more than 250 Adena and Hopewell mounds in Butler County, although many have been destroyed by farming activity. Several earthworks are located in Reily and Hanover Townships, including a six-foot-tall mound on the Lewis-Sample Farm.

### Directions to Next Marker:

Continue west on Reily Millville Rd

## BUNKER HILL

Across from 5116 Reily Millville Road, Hamilton

Thomas Burk Sr. purchased a quarter section of federal land here in 1804. A schoolhouse was erected on this purchase in 1809. That same year, a road from Williams' Mill (Millville) was blazed and a sawmill was built on Indian Creek west of this marker. Obadiah Welliver opened a tavern on his purchase in 1812. Burk sold his grist mill in 1818 and it is thought that the hamlet around this mill was



called Dogtown because of a vicious dogfight there. In 1825, Reily Post Office was established at Welliver's Tavern. That year a woolen mill with textile production machinery was built by Elias Sayres, near the sawmill. Multi-millionaire Elias Jackson ("Lucky") Baldwin (1828-1909), the founder of Santa Anita Racetrack near Los Angeles, was born here.

The Millville, Reily, and Milton Turnpike brought prosperity to the village now renamed Bunker Hill. School House No. 10 stood nearby from 1849-1857. By 1850, clothing manufacturing was the major business here. A Post Office was established in 1852. A Universalist church was dedicated in 1855. During the Civil War, the Peace Democrats, called Copperheads, were active in this area. Ohio Congressman Clement Vallandigham, future Peace Democratic leader, campaigned here in 1860 and a traditional Democratic Party pole raising was held here in 1863. Coopers, cobblers, blacksmiths, wagon shops, saddlers, a sorghum mill, a huckster (traveling salesman), a photographer, a clothes pin factory, a band, a music teacher, and a baseball team were here during the 19th century. The Post Office closed in 1906. By 1912, the church had closed.



**Directions to Next Marker:**

Continue northwest on Reily Millville Road



**BUNKER HILL  
UNIVERSALIST CHURCH**  
5359 Reily Millville Road, Oxford  
East Side of Cemetery inside Peter Wildlife Area

The Bunker Hill Society was organized about 1845 and fellowshipped in 1854. A frame meeting house, capable of seating 300, was dedicated in 1855. Thirty people united with the church during the 1859 Annual Meeting. The membership suffered greatly during the Civil War, many enlisting in the Union Army. Some members, Like John G. Agnew, were Peace Democrats (Copperheads). Agnew withdrew from the church on July 5, 1863 saying, "I feel the course I am and have been pursuing does not comport with the Christian character. Nor do I think that I can be better

while this war lasts. I do not wish to be a reproach upon the church." The church was re-fellowshipped in 1900. The last sermon was delivered October 23, 1910. Fire destroyed the building May 8, 1924.



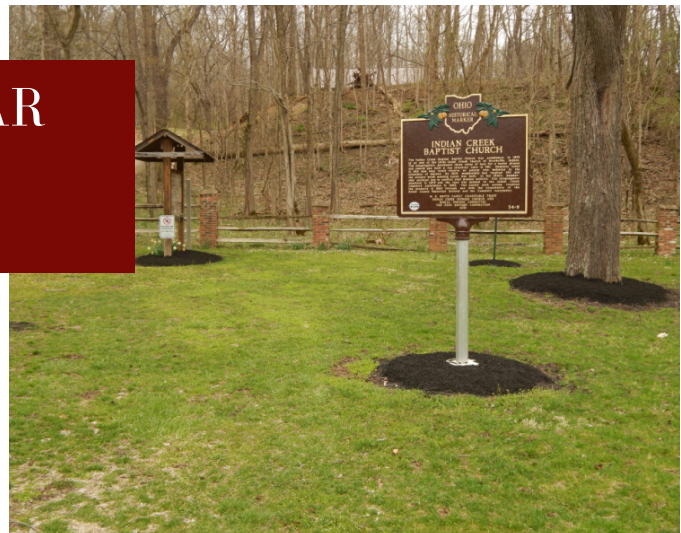
*This site was part of purchases made at the Cincinnati Land Office by James Deneen in 1804 and Obadiah Welliver in 1811. Welliver found a Native American burial ground near this marker. In 1855, the Universalist Church obtained a building lot and cemetery grounds with the Welliver burial ground. The vacant land around the Deneen Cemetery was purchased for additional burial plots. The last burial was in 1918. There are numerous unmarked graves. Veterans of the Revolutionary War, War of 1812, Mexican War and Civil War rest here. Four sons from the Bressler family fought in the Civil War. John M., who died for the Union cause, and Jonathan, a Confederate (Alabama) artillery officer are buried here. The site became a county historical park in 1964.*

**Directions to Next Marker:** Northwest on Reily Millville into Millville. Turn left (west) on Mail Street then right onto Springfield Road (Township Road 36). Turn north (right) onto Indian Creek Road (Township Road 37)

## INDIAN CREEK REGULAR BAPTIST CHURCH

3000 Indian Creek Road, Oxford

*The Indian Creek Regular Baptist Church was established in 1810 as an arm of the Little Cedar Creek Church of Brookville, Indiana. The congregation purchased three acres of land for a burial ground and church and built a log structure here in 1811. Members voted in 1812 that they would*



*receive no person who believed in the principles of slavery. By 1829, membership had reached 150 and the present brick meeting house was built. In the 1840s, membership declined due to conflict over mission activity. The congregation dissolved in 1879 and the land was deeded to the Indian Creek Cemetery Association in 1880. The county park system received the property in 1960 with the cooperation of the Butler County Historical Society and the Cemetery Association.*

*The Indian Creek Burial Ground was the first land purchased in Butler County to be used for a cemetery. The ground was never plotted, and burial was free. Sontes marked the graves of those who never completed their westward journeys, among them children and parents as well as some of the founders of the church. Other notable burials include Thomas Boone, cousin of Daniel Boone, and soldiers from the Revolutionary and Civil Wars and the War of 1812. In 1880, after the church dissolved, the Indian Creek Cemetery Association was formed to continue maintenance and grounds upkeep. MetroParks of Butler County and the Indian Creek Restoration Committee continue to preserve this sacred place as a way to connect with Ohio's frontier past.*

**Directions to Next Marker:** Continue north on Indian Creek Road. This will become Riggs Road. Continue north on Riggs Road to Stillwell Beckett Road (Township Road 38) Turn southeast (right) on Stillwell Beckett Road to US Routh 27 Millville Oxford Road). Turn north (left). Indian Ridge Golf Club is almost immediately on your right.



## STILLWELL'S CORNER

IndianRidge Golf Club  
2600 Oxford Millville Road, Oxford

*A cemetery was established on this site in 1811 and became the final resting place for many of the area's early pioneer families. The Hanover Township Trustees obtained title to the land in 1823 from John and Anna Farnsworth, and it was expanded for additional plots in 1879. Unfortunately, many burials remain unmarked or can be located only by primitive limestone markers above them. The oldest legible headstone is dated 1816. The small hamlet of Stillwell's Corners was located south of the cemetery at the junction of two roads, one leading to Oxford and the other the state line.. As with most pioneer communities, it had mills, still houses, taverns, and stores. Stillwell Post Office operated in the area from 1831 to 1859. The office was moved to McGonigle's Station with the arrival of the Junction Railroad. That office closed in 1905.*

THANK YOU FOR JOINING OUR TOUR OF  
WESTERN BUTLER COUNTY. STAY TUNED  
FOR MORE TOURS OF HISTORICAL  
BUTLER COUNTY!

PHOTO CREDITS: Many of the photos and text are courtesy of Ohio History Connection / RemarkableOhio.org and MetroParks of Butler Count. Please note: all MetroParks of Butler County are open from 8:00 am until dark daily.