

# When Indians Lived 14 Miles from Mansfield

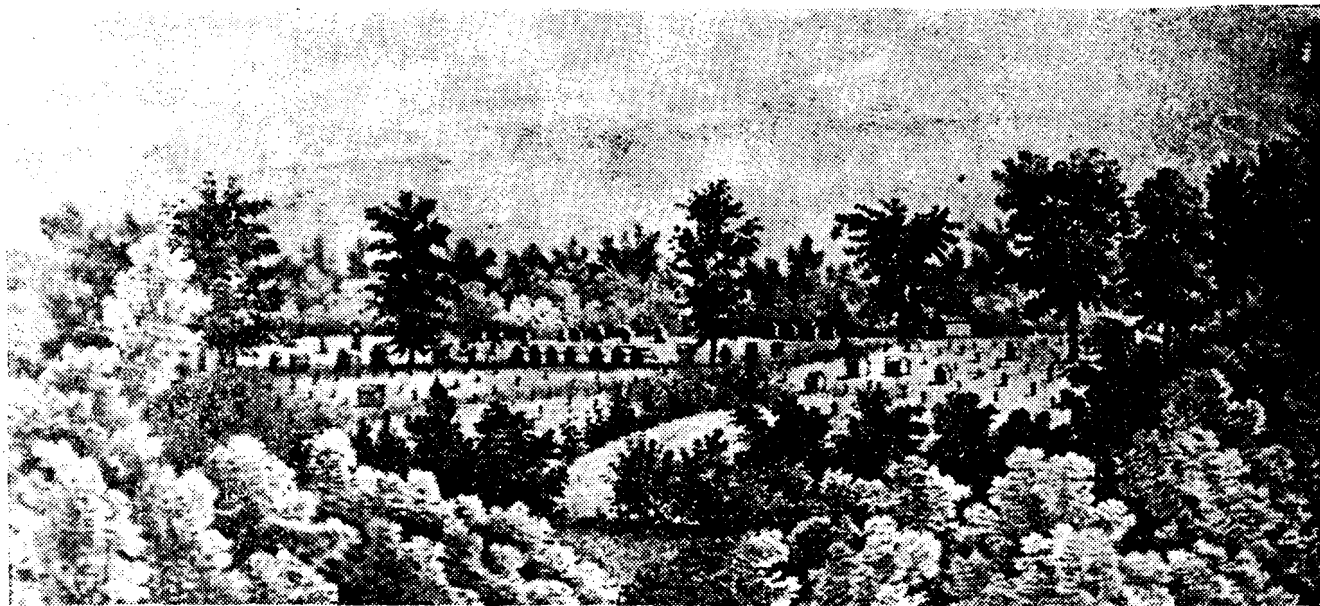
Interested in owning the site of one of Ohio's best-known Indian villages?

It's some 14 miles southwest of Mansfield, just off a paved highway in some of the prettiest country in the Buckeye state.

The village was Greentown which was in existence from 1783 to 1812. That 29-year period saw the arrival of white settlers in the area now included in Richland and Ashland Counties and the birth of Mansfield. It so marked the end of Indian domination in this section of Ohio.

The Greentown site, to the north of the Black Fork and a short distance northwest of Perrysville, is on farms owned by Mr. and Mrs. Ken Cripp and Mrs. Dave Zody.

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The Krupps want to sell 100 acres of their farm, including a nine-hole, three-hole golf course near the In-



The Greentown Indians, part of the Delaware tribe, lived for 29 years in the village of Greentown on the banks of the Black Fork northwest of Perrysville. This artist's sketch of the village with its cabins and council house is from the A. J. Baughman History of Richland County.

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## *The Mansfield That Was*

By VIRGIL A. STANFIELD

of the Greentown family of Indians eagerly took to the ways of the whites. He practiced law in Mansfield and married Lucy Bigelow,

The Indians packed what they could transport handily and started westward. They spent a few days camped along Ritter's Run between South Mulberry St. and Glessner Ave.

While they were here a couple of whites from the army unit went to Greentown and burned it. About 60 cabins were destroyed.

News of the fire angered the Indians remaining in the area and they accused the Rev. Copus of double-crossing them although the kindly pastor had no hand in the burning of the village.

A small group of soldiers were sent to the Copus cabin to protect the family, but they failed in their mission. One morning 45 Indians came down a steep hill beside the cabin and attacked, killing Copus and six of the soldiers.

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The Krupps want to sell 75 acres of their farm, including a nine-hole, three-par golf course near the Indian village site and the site itself. The Greentown area formerly was owned by Fred Myers who farmed it. The village site now is largely grassland.

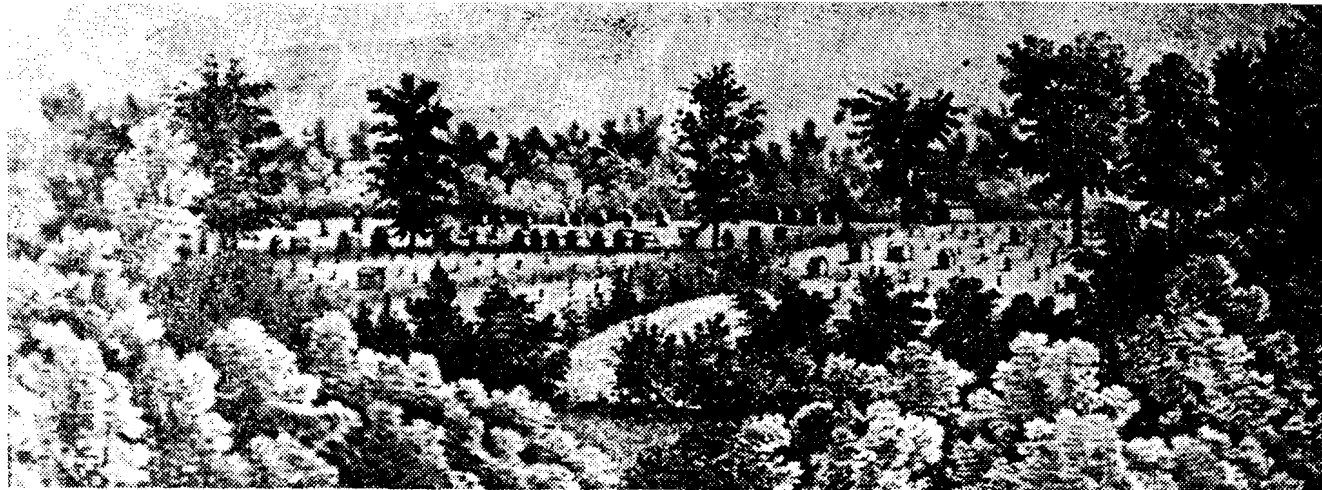
J. M. Weirick, a farmer who lives nearby and is well-versed in Indian history, pointed out that Greentown offered protection from enemies of the Delawares. The Black Fork, a lake and swampland almost surrounded the village.

Weirick said at one time a fence enclosed the Indian burial ground. It was removed later to permit farming of the land.

"They raised some of the best potatoes you ever saw where that burial ground was," he said.

He said many arrowheads and Indian tools have been found in the immediate area.

Greentown, home of the



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Delawares and a few Mohawks, was founded by Thomas Armstrong, a tough Indian chief, and Thomas Green, a renegade white who could be as vicious toward his own race as any Indian. The village was once in Richland County, but it later became a part of Ashland County.

The Delawares, who originally had come from the West, worked their way as far east as the Delaware River, or about the present site of the city of Philadelphia, Pa. As that section of the country was settled the Delawares were driven back to Ohio. Green came here with them from Pennsylvania.

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The village he founded was named for him.

It is easy to see why Greentown grew on high ground along the Black Fork. A stream meant much to the Indians. It was a way of travel. It provided food and water. Pollution was unknown when Greentown was built and the indi-

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ans drank from the stream in safety.

The land around the village was fertile, as it is today. The Indians grew corn, potatoes and melons in the black earth.

The farming was done by the women who cleared the land, cultivated it and made meal and hominy from the corn in the fall. The Indian braves devoted their time to hunting and fighting. No one ever explained what they did when there was no fighting and there was plenty to eat.

In the late 1700s Greentown was home to well over 100 Indians. Some sources place the population higher than that. There was a large council house and around it were the cabins, or cotta-ges, made from poles, much as log cabins were built by the first white settlers.

Until the War of 1812 the Indians of Greentown got along pretty well with the settlers in the area. Sometimes the whites were guests of the Delawares at feasts which included singing and dancing and dining on bear meat and venison.

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The whites were something less than enthusiastic about the food. Lack of refrigeration permitted the meat to spoil before it was served. As the Indians cooked the meat in a big pot, they threw an occasional bit into the flames as an offering to the Great Spirit.

Robert W. Soulen, Mansfield architect and historian, says he found that the Delawares used stone fireplaces in the cabins. The graves in the nearby burying ground were marked by large round stones with figures on them.

A young John Armstrong

of the Greentown family of Indians eagerly took to the ways of the whites. He practiced law in Mansfield and married Lucy Bigelow, daughter of a pastor here. He got his law experience in an office at the southeast corner of Central Park, at about the site of the old courthouse and jail.

When the War of 1812 broke out and the British began to use the Indians in attacks on the whites, Greentown was doomed.

The U. S. Army moved in with orders to take the Indians to western Ohio where they could be watched. The Delawares liked their country along the Black Fork and didn't want to leave.

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James Copus, a frontier minister whose cabin was near the present Charles Mill dam, was trusted by the Indians and he finally persuaded them to move from Greentown, promising that their village and possessions would be protected so they could return at some future date.

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Greentown was never rebuilt. Following a treaty signed in 1817, the Indians were taken to a reservation in Marion and Wyandot Counties where they remained a few years. Later they went to the western states.

Capt. Pipe, leader of the Delawares in the Upper Sandusky area, hated the whites following the burning of Greentown, but as he grew older he forgot his hatred and got along well with the settlers.

Capt. Pipe lived the final years of his life near the present village of Jeromesville which had been founded around 1803 by a French Canadian.

It may be that the historic ground where Greentown stood can someday be taken over by the state and preserved. The site is worth saving because of its significance to the history of northcentral Ohio and its natural beauty.