Religion and Ethnicity in the Western Reserve

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During the first half of the nineteenth century, the Western Reserve in northeastern Ohio attracted diverse religious and ethnic groups. "From the first New England settlers to the most recent . . . newcomers, each group has brought along its cultural baggage; foremost among that baggage are religious beliefs and practices as represented by the churches each group has founded and sustained."[1]

The Western Reserve, a tract of land stretching along the southern shore of Lake Erie, was originally claimed by the Connecticut Colony under its 1662 royal charter. Connecticut ceded its interests in western lands to Congress in 1786 but retained the Western Reserve.[2] The first county, Trumbull, was created from the Western Reserve in 1800—the year Connecticut relinquished administrative control to the United States government. Congress incorporated the area into the Territory of Ohio, the first region carved from the greater Northwest Territory, three years before Ohio became a state in 1803. The Western Reserve extends 120 miles (193 km) from the Pennsylvania border westward to present-day Erie, Huron, and part of Ottawa counties, and continues about fifty miles south of Lake Erie to Akron and Youngstown.[3]

Historical Background

Connecticut claimed the land in what is now northeastern Ohio, then known as the Western Reserve, in 1662 under its royal charter, granted by Charles II of England. Beginning in 1792, Connecticut citizens whose homes and farms had been destroyed by the British during the Revolutionary War became eligible to

receive land in the western part of the Western Reserve known as the "Firelands." This region, located in Erie and Huron counties, consisted of some five hundred thousand acres.[4]

In 1795 the General Assembly of Connecticut sold most of the Reserve in northeastern Ohio to the Connecticut Land Company, which sent a survey party in 1796 under the direction of General Moses Cleaveland.[5] The settlement established at Cleveland, located at the junction of Lake Erie and the Cuyahoga River, was formally incorporated as a village in 1814, and later as a city in 1836. It soon grew to be the largest city in the Western Reserve, and served as an important transportation center due to its location on Lake Erie, its location at the mouth of the Cuyahoga River, and the completion of the Ohio and Erie Canal in 1832, connecting Cleveland and Lake Erie with Portsmouth on the Ohio River in southern Ohio. After the arrival of the railroad in 1851, Cleveland provided convenient transportation for migrants to other midwestern states.[6]

Cleveland became a major commercial center and port of arrival for new immigrants, although people also arrived in other eastern counties, particularly Ashtabula and Geauga. Fairport Harbor (formerly in Geauga County, now Lake County) also served as an important migration port for people entering the region.[7]

Most of the earliest settlers in the Western Reserve arrived from the New England states, New York, and other states during the late eighteenth century, and the influx continued throughout the nineteenth century. Settlers immigrated to this region for a variety of economic reasons, including opportunities in farming, industry, and factories; work on the railroads and canals; and desire for better land. In addition, a combination of personal considerations influenced the migration: religious, military, and political concerns; the desire to settle in an area with other immigrants from the old country or family members; to improve social conditions; and to search for a new life. The Reserve's favorable weather also attracted a number of immigrants, especially those from the New England states. During the years 1816 and 1817, New Englanders endured particularly cold winters, and many farmers lost their crops.[8] It is not surprising that a mass migration to northeastern Ohio occurred as New Englanders sought rich farmland elsewhere. After arriving in

northeastern Ohio, settlers concentrated on farming their land, working at an occupation, and getting used to their new environment.

An influx of New England emigrants arrived in the Western Reserve after the War of 1812.[9] Some followed ministers or other religious leaders. The townships were mostly patterned after New England towns, while some carried the same or similar names. A number of townships included a central green containing a congregational meetinghouse (or other church), a town hall, and the local schoolhouse. Later, large industrial centers in Cleveland, such as iron and steel factories, provided jobs for thousands of migrants.[10] Akron also had manufacturing and rubber plants that attracted workers with diverse ethnic backgrounds.[11] Meredith Colket summarizes New England migration to northeast Ohio: "The Western Reserve area served as a great magnet attracting tens of thousands of New Englanders, largely those with Connecticut origins. Historians say that the new inhabitants created an atmosphere more typical of New England than any other area outside New England."[12]

Northeastern Ohio also drew thousands of European immigrants from the mid- to late nineteenth century and into the twentieth century. Immigrants from European countries traveled to Cleveland and northeastern Ohio for a number of reasons—economic and religious considerations, epidemics in the old country, political persecution, and to avoid being drafted into the military, among other concerns. "Between 1860 and 1930 a majority of the people who came to Cleveland and other large Great Lakes cities in the United States—Buffalo, Detroit, Chicago, Milwaukee—came from Central, Southern and Eastern Europe. Throughout those years, Cleveland was one of the most 'European' of all American cities."[13]

Biographies, census records after 1850, church records, early land records, and local histories (such as county histories) are useful in identifying the origins of immigrants to Ohio counties.

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, most people traveled to northeastern Ohio in groups, seeking employment. Most traveled to the Western Reserve on New York's improved roads (such as the Mohawk Turnpike); on New York's Erie Canal, after it was completed in 1825; on Lake Erie by boat from Buffalo, New York; along the southern shores of Lake Erie (Seneca Road);

or across west-central Pennsylvania. They came from other areas of Ohio; from the New England states; and from Michigan, New York, Pennsylvania, Indiana, and other western states.[14] Many of the trails to the Reserve were rough and difficult to travel.

Foreign settlers arriving in New York City from Europe often traveled directly to the Reserve, although some settled first in New York, or elsewhere in the East, for a period of time before moving to Ohio, many by way of New York's Erie Canal.

Today the Western Reserve consists of about three million acres in ten northeastern Ohio counties—Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Erie, Geauga, Huron, Lake, Lorain, Medina, Portage, and Trumbull counties—and parts of four others—most of Summit County, the northern half of Mahoning County, the northern part of Ashland County, and a small part of eastern Ottawa County.

The Role of Religion in the Development of the Western Reserve

Pioneers who settled in northeastern Ohio engaged in a variety of religious practices. Rural settlers were not often active in formal religion, likely because of the distance between farms and communities with churches, but for the most part they were good Christians. The majority of white settlers to the Western Reserve in the early nineteenth century were New England Yankees—primarily arriving from Connecticut and Massachusetts. These Protestants brought with them their Congregational and Presbyterian beliefs.[15]

Initially, settlers who wished to hold religious services met in cabins, homes, or barns, and sometimes in the town meetinghouse or courthouse. Later, resident pastors were found, and log meetinghouses and permanent church buildings were erected. While some settlers were not interested in theology and chose not to be associated with any religious organization, believer and nonbeliever alike were served by traveling missionaries, itinerant pastors, circuit preachers, and circuit riders. Most of these clergymen were Baptist, Congregationalist, Methodist, or Presbyterian.[16]

Foreign immigrants to the Western Reserve tended to gather in homogeneous communities with others who shared their language, customs, and traditions. To assist immigrants, churches established

charities, social groups, fraternal organizations, hospitals, missionary societies, religious orders, schools, and similar institutions for its members. The Congregationalist influence brought in by New Englanders, especially immigrants from Connecticut in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, later expanded to include Protestant, Roman Catholic, Jewish, and other religious organizations. Religious diversity and pluralism in the Western Reserve was evident after the Civil War and into the early twentieth century as churches and synagogues cooperated with one another.[17]

Amish

The Amish are a Protestant group that migrated to Pennsylvania from Germany, Switzerland, and other southern European countries during the eighteenth century because of religious persecution.[18] Known for their plain clothing, the Amish lived in various localities in north-central Ohio during the nineteenth century, particularly in Holmes County and Geauga County. The first Amish settler in Geauga County, Sam Weaver, arrived in 1883 from Holmes County.[19] A few months later, ten others arrived from Holmes County and from Pennsylvania. More soon followed and established the first Amish Church in 1887.[20] The major Amish settlement in the Western Reserve is located in Geauga County, where their horse-drawn buggies are common even today.[21] Religious services are frequently held in members' homes, as there is not any central church leadership or church buildings.[22] Amish vary from being conservative, or traditional (Old Order Amish), to progressive, although most continue to maintain a conservative, simple, and uniform nineteenth-century lifestyle in their dress and manners.[23]

Baptists

Baptists arrived in the Western Reserve during the early nineteenth century and currently form one of the largest religious groups in Ohio. Today's Baptists can trace their origins from Ohio to New England to England.[24] Others came from the South, where the Baptist Church was particularly important within the African-American community. An early Baptist Church was established in

the Reserve in 1803. The First Baptist Church of greater Cleveland was organized in 1833.[25] Baptists fragmented into different groups—Free Will Baptists, Six Principle Baptists, Seventh Day Baptists, United Baptists, and others. Northern Baptists and Southern Baptists formed separate conventions during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, often over racial issues. African-American Baptists arrived in Cleveland from the South during the latter half of the nineteenth century.[26] The Western Reserve Historical Society in Cleveland has an outstanding collection of printed and original Baptist Church records and registers, biographies, church histories, memoirs, sermons, and other resources—not just for Ohio but for other United States localities as well.

Congregationalists

Congregationalists have enjoyed prominence on the colonial New England scene since the seventeenth century. In Congregationalism, each individual congregation is autonomous and self-governing and elects its own minister and church leaders.[27] Emphasizing education, they founded Harvard College near Boston in 1636. Congregationalists arrived in the Western Reserve in the early nineteenth century. Many early settlers from New England to the Reserve were members of the Congregational Church. The Connecticut Mission Society formed Presbyterian and Congregational churches in the Western Reserve in 1800.[28] Congregational churches merged into the United Church of Christ in 1957.[29]

Born in Massachusetts in 1757, Reverend Joseph Badger was one of the first and most prominent Congregational itinerant missionaries in the Western Reserve. With others, he founded the first Congregational Church in the Reserve in 1801. Badger died in 1846 and left a journal of his missionary activities, which has since been published.[30]

In 1801 Congregationalists and Presbyterians cooperated to form a "Plan of Union."[31] These two religious organizations agreed to work together in their missionary activities to avoid competition on the western frontier.[32] In 1826 they organized Western Reserve

College in Hudson, Ohio (which later became Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland), under the direction of David Hudson.

Disciples of Christ

The Disciples of Christ were part of a Protestant movement established in the Western Reserve in the 1820s, also known as the Christian Church.[33] Early members were often known as Campbellites, named after the founders of this restorationist movement, Thomas and Alexander Campbell. In 1850 the Disciples of Christ established Hiram College, a private, coeducational liberal arts college, in Hiram, Ohio (southeast of Cleveland).[34]

Episcopalians

Episcopalians figure among the early, well-established, and often more affluent settlers in the Western Reserve. The first Episcopal parish was formed in Warren in 1813 and another in Ashtabula in 1816. Trinity Episcopal Church was organized in Cleveland in 1816. St. John Episcopal Church, founded in 1836, played a major role in the Cleveland Underground Railroad, assisting African-Americans who escaped slavery in the South, crossed Lake Erie, and then sought refuge in Canada. The Protestant Episcopal Church is part of the Anglican Communion (the Church of England in America).[35] Episcopal churches may still be found throughout the Western Reserve and Ohio, preserving the New England influence and style of worship.

Jews

The first Jewish settler to Cleveland arrived in 1836. Most Jews settled in Cleveland and Akron rather than in rural farming communities.[36] German-Jewish emigrants arrived in Cleveland during the 1850s. A second wave of Jewish emigrants arrived during the 1870s. Jews settled in the Cleveland area in large numbers beginning in the early twentieth century. Many Jews emigrated from the "Pale of Settlement" at the edge of the Russian Empire.[37] The Cleveland Jewish Archives are housed at the Western Reserve

Historical Society in Cleveland, and published guides are available.[38] The Immigration History Research Center in Minneapolis, Minnesota, houses a number of Cleveland Synagogue records, membership lists, Jewish Center books, and minute books.[39]

Lutherans

Many nineteenth-century Germans and emigrants from northern European countries to the Western Reserve were Lutherans. Two examples of Lutheran churches in greater Cleveland are the Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church and Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church. Some settlers conducted Lutheran services in German, others in English. Lutherans established a school in Cleveland in 1849 and a hospital in 1896. Several Lutheran denominations merged during the twentieth century. Today most northeastern Ohio Lutheran churches belong to either the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod or the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.[40]

Mennonites

Another Protestant religious group that arrived from central Europe, the Mennonites, like the Amish, also maintain a conservative agricultural lifestyle, although not quite as conservative as the Amish.[41] Mennonites are found living in Geauga County, throughout Ohio, and elsewhere in the United States (particularly the midwestern states) and Canada. Mennonites usually meet in traditional church buildings, whereas Amish meet in members' homes for church services.[42]

Methodists

Methodists arrived in the Western Reserve early in the nineteenth century.[43] Itinerant pastors or circuit riders were common throughout the Western Reserve and Ohio, as well as the mid-Atlantic states. Some Methodist ministers traveled to rural areas on horseback or in a horse-drawn buggy to take the word of God to people who did not have a church or place of worship nearby.[44] Ministers preached, held camp meetings, baptized, married, and

buried people along the way. Soon, assemblies of clerics and lay members from particular districts formed governing bodies called "conferences," and permanent church buildings were erected in the Reserve.[45] Methodist Episcopal churches in northeastern Ohio were originally part of the Baltimore Conference from 1798 until 1824. Then they became part of the Pittsburgh Conference, followed by the Michigan Conference, Erie Conference, North Ohio Conference, East Ohio Conference, and then the Northeast Ohio Conference in 1912.[46]

Several early movements may be found in America, including the Methodist Episcopal Church organized in 1784 in Baltimore, Maryland. The first organized Methodist Episcopal congregation in the Reserve was at Deerfield, Ohio, in 1801. The first Methodist Church in Cleveland was organized in 1827.[47] In 1845 Methodists founded Baldwin-Wallace College, a private, coeducational liberal arts college, in Berea, Ohio (southwest of Cleveland).[48] By the 1850s and 1860s, the Methodist Church, also known as the United Methodist Church, was one of Ohio's largest denominations.[49] German Methodist Episcopal conferences merged geographically with English conferences in 1933 when the Central German Conference dissolved,[50] and various Methodist denominations and groups continued to merge during the twentieth century, resulting in one of the largest Protestant denominations not only in Ohio but in the United States.[51]

Latter-day Saints

Latter-day Saints were among the earliest nineteenth-century settlers in the Western Reserve. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized in Fayette, Seneca County, New York, on April 6, 1830.[52] In October 1830, four missionaries from upstate New York arrived in Mentor, Ohio, to preach about this new religion—Oliver Cowdery, Peter Whitmer Jr., Ziba Peterson, and Parley P. Pratt (a former Campbellite preacher). Sidney Rigdon, an influential and popular Campbellite minister in the Western Reserve, and many of his followers soon joined with the Latter-day Saints.[53] Shortly thereafter, in February 1831, the Prophet Joseph Smith and

his wife Emma (Hale) Smith arrived in Kirtland (Geauga County, now Lake County) from the Finger Lakes region of north-central New York. In Kirtland they met and were befriended by Newel K. and Elizabeth Whitney.[54]

Converts from upstate New York and other localities began migrating to the Kirtland area in 1831, traveling by ship on Lake Erie to Fairport Harbor, Ohio.[55] In 1833 the Saints, with great sacrifice, began constructing their first temple in Kirtland, which still stands today.[56] Although Kirtland was headquarters of the Church until 1838, many early Saints also settled in Hiram, Thompson, and other northeastern Ohio townships. The Latter-day Saints have kept records since the Church was established in New York and Ohio.[57] Because of religious persecution and economic problems, Joseph and Emma Smith and most Latter-day Saints left Kirtland in 1838 to settle in northwestern Missouri. The Saints later migrated to Nauvoo, Hancock County, Illinois, and eventually the majority migrated to the Salt Lake Valley, beginning in 1846.

Some members remained in Ohio, Illinois, and other midwestern states. In 1860 some of those who did not migrate west founded the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (RLDS) under the leadership of Joseph Smith III, son of Joseph and Emma Smith. The RLDS Church has, since the late nineteenth century, remained influential in the Kirtland area.[58]

Presbyterians

Presbyterians were among the earliest settlers in the Western Reserve beginning in 1807. The Presbyterian Church was established in New England and the mid-Atlantic colonies during the seventeenth century. Presbyterianism, one of the earliest Protestant denominations in Ohio, was embraced by the Scotch-Irish, English, and Welsh.[59] Several different ethnic Presbyterian groups settled in greater Cleveland. The First Presbyterian Church, or Old Stone Church, was organized in Cleveland in 1820. Presbyterian congregations with different scriptural interpretations merged with various organizations during the twentieth century, such as the Presbyterian Church (USA).

Roman Catholics

Roman Catholic settlements could be found in the Western Reserve beginning in the early nineteenth century. The Catholic Church was particularly strong in larger industrial cities, including Akron, Cleveland, and Youngstown. The Diocese of Cleveland (also known as the Cleveland Catholic Diocese) was organized in 1847. Many nineteenth-century European immigrants to the Reserve were members of the Roman Catholic Church—Germans, Irish, Italians, and central Europeans. Irish Catholics were one of the largest religious groups in the greater Cleveland area. Roman Catholics migrated to northeastern Ohio to work on the Ohio and Erie Canal or to work in Cleveland's industries. Roman Catholics established parishes, parochial schools, hospitals, and other institutions. The Roman Catholic Church today forms one of the largest religious bodies in Ohio. Roman Catholic Church records may be found in individual churches and in diocesan offices and archives. Roman Catholic baptismal records, marriage record books, newspapers, and other records are also housed at the Immigration History Research Center in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and the Western Reserve Historical Society in Cleveland.[60]

Shakers

The Shaker sect was introduced into the United States in 1774 by Ann Lee from Manchester, England, who established a church near Albany, in 1776.[61] Shakers (the Millenium Church of United Believers, sometimes known as "Shaking Quakers") settled in the North Union Shaker community southeast of Cleveland in 1822. The North Union Shaker community (now a suburb of Cleveland, known as Shaker Heights) supported one of the largest Shaker communities in America from about 1822 to 1889.[62] Many Shaker records are housed at the Western Reserve Historical Society in Cleveland, and they have been microfilmed.[63] The utopian society Shaker movement in the Western Reserve declined after the Civil War.[64] Because Shakers practice celibacy, today only a few Shakers may be found residing at Sabbathday Lake Shaker Village, United Society of Shakers, New Gloucester, Maine.[65]

United Church of Christ

The United Church of Christ was formed as a merger between the Congregational Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ) and the Evangelical and Reformed Church in 1957. Their national headquarters is located in Cleveland.

Unitarians and Universalists

Unitarians and Universalists could be found in the Western Reserve beginning in the 1820s, although Universalism never attracted large numbers of communicants.[66] American Unitarianism originated in New England as a derivative of Congregationalism. The Universalist movement was imported from England and was also found in Pennsylvania. The First Unitarian Society of Cleveland was organized in 1836. Unitarian congregations tend to be liberal and allow members to have free will in their beliefs, conscience, and thoughts. The two movements merged nationally as the Unitarian Universalist Association, headquartered in Boston.

Other Organizations

Other religious organizations that have been in the Western Reserve since the nineteenth and twentieth centuries include Adventists,[67] African-American denominations, Apostolic churches, Assemblies of God, Baha'i, Buddhists, Byzantine Catholics, Christian Scientists, the Church of God, Eastern Orthodox Christians,[68] Evangelical United Brethren,[69] Holiness churches, Jehovah's Witnesses, Muslims, Pentecostals, the Reformed Church,[70] Salvation Army, Society of Friends (Quakers), Unity churches, and some nondenominational churches. Hinduism and Sikhism are also currently growing in the Cleveland area.[71]

Ethnic Settlements in the Western Reserve

A chapter on religion and migration to the Western Reserve would be incomplete without considering some of the major ethnic settlements in northeastern Ohio. Over sixty different ethnic groups and nationalities settled in the Cleveland area.[72] "Greater

Cleveland is unique in having nine ethnic groups with more than 30,000 persons and nineteen other ethnic groups each having more than . . . 10,000 members."[73] The comprehensive ethnic reference guide the *Greater Cleveland Nationalities Directory*[74] identifies many nationalities. These historical sources are valuable guides for the development of ethnic groups in the Cleveland area. Periodicals also include biographies and historical material.[75]

Cleveland and its suburbs constitute one of the largest ethnic concentrations and ethnically diverse communities in North America. Ethnic and cultural groups usually settled together in neighborhoods where many people shared the same background and culture. They formed social clubs and welfare societies, benevolent associations and lodges, fraternal and other social organizations; founded literary associations; and established ethnic churches.[76]

Ethnic immigrants settled in northeastern Ohio throughout the nineteenth century but particularly during the latter half of the nineteenth century and into the early twentieth century. Many arrived for economic reasons during Cleveland's industrial era, 1870 to 1930. In addition to those who began farming, unskilled laborers worked on Ohio's canals, roads, and railroads; others took jobs on the Erie lakefront in the shipping industry.[77] Laborers also worked in Cleveland's industrial plants and steel mills or found employment in related industries.[78]

Ethnic minorities tended to reside in their own communities, which became ethnic urban centers, and worshipped at their own churches. Religious services were often conducted in foreign languages and were held in private homes until a church building was available. Many records of ethnic organizations have been kept over the years; the majority of these are housed at the Western Reserve Historical Society in Cleveland.[79] Newspapers printed in the native language of the immigrant often included news of the homeland. Emigrants from foreign countries settled in urban communities because of the availability of work there, and because neighborhoods comprised of others from the same country spoke their native language and shared similar religious beliefs, customs, traditions, and lifestyles. They often supported each other with their business interests.

Since the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century, some of the major ethnic groups in greater Cleveland and the Western Reserve in northeastern Ohio include the following (in alphabetical order): African-Americans,[80] Albanians, Arabs, Armenians, Asian-Indians, Canadians, Croatians, Cubans, Czechs/Bohemians, Dutch, English, French, Germans, Greeks, Hungarians, Irish, Italians, Jews, Latvians, Lebanese/Syrians, Lithuanians, Macedonians, Manx,[81] Mexicans, Native Americans, Norwegians, Poles, Puerto Ricans, Romanians, Russians, Scots, Serbians, Sicilians, Slovaks, Slovenians, and Ukrainians. The largest ethnic communities in greater Cleveland since the nineteenth century are the Germans, Hungarians, Irish, Italians, and Poles. Smaller ethnic groups also settled in the Western Reserve, including Austrians, Bulgarians, Chinese, Danes, Estonians, Filipinos, Finns, Iranians, Japanese, Swedes, Swiss, Turks, Vietnamese, and Welsh.[82] Many central European emigrants were Roman Catholic, but small numbers of Protestants also migrated to the Western Reserve, as did a sizable Jewish population.

Family History Resources

Genealogical and family history information about early settlers in the Western Reserve may be found in biographies, census population schedules, church records, city and rural directories, court records, family Bibles, gravestone inscriptions and cemetery records, land and property records, local histories, military records, naturalization records, newspapers, patriotic and lineage societies, probate records, school records, tax lists (sometimes known as tax duplicates), and vital records (births, marriages, and deaths), among other sources.[83] Many Ohio records are available on microfilm and may be loaned to Latter-day Saint family history centers (local branch genealogical libraries). These resources are useful in tracing migration to northeastern Ohio. See the online Family History Library Catalog for microfilm numbers (www.familysearch.org) and for addresses of family history centers. Many Western Reserve records, either digitized copies or transcriptions, are available on the Internet.[84]

The largest repository of religious and ethnic resources in northeastern Ohio is the Western Reserve Historical Society Library (WRHS), 10825 East Boulevard, Cleveland, OH 44106 (www.wrhs.org/library). The WRHS library houses thousands of books, microfiche, and microfilms, business records, census schedules, church records, city directories, diaries, ethnic collections, genealogies and family histories, immigration records, local histories, over 4,500 manuscript collections, maps and atlases, military records, newspapers, oral history tapes and transcripts, periodicals, photographs, vital records, and many reference sources.[85] Notable ethnic collections at the Society include the African American Archives, Cleveland Jewish Archives, and Irish American Archives.[86] Biographies, church records, local histories, and newspapers housed at the WRHS, and other repositories, are among the major sources used for religious and ethnic studies.[87]

In addition to the Western Reserve Historical Society, significant ethnic, religious, and genealogical collections and reference sources for northeastern Ohio are housed at libraries and archives in Ohio and elsewhere, including the following:

- Case Western Reserve University, Kelvin Smith Library, 11055 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44106-7151 (www.cwru.edu/UL/homepage.html)
- Cleveland Public Library, 325 Superior Avenue N.E., Cleveland, OH 44114-1271 (www.cpl.org)
- Cleveland State University Library, 2121 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44115 (www.csuohio.edu)[88]
- Cuyahoga County Public Library, Fairview Park Regional Library, 21255 Lorain Road, Fairview Park, OH 44126-2120 (www.cuyahogalibrary.org/branchespages/FPR.htm)
- Family History Library, 35 North West Temple Street, Salt Lake City, UT 84150 (www.familysearch.org)

Other repositories housing northeastern Ohio genealogical and historical records include public and university libraries, county archives (for example, Cuyahoga and Geauga counties), courthouses, historical societies, Brigham Young University's Harold B. Lee Library (Provo, Utah), Ohio Genealogical Society (Mansfield, Ohio), Ohio

Historical Society (Columbus), State Library of Ohio (Columbus), Youngstown Historical Center of Industry and Labor (Youngstown, Ohio), and others.[89]

Conclusion

The Western Reserve in northeastern Ohio remains one of the most ethnically and religiously diverse regions in North America. People migrated to this area from New England and other states, Canada, and from European countries for a variety of reasons. Beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, Cleveland became one of America's prime industrial centers, providing employment to many people of different ethnic and religious backgrounds. Numerous genealogical and historical resources are available for locating residents in northeast Ohio.

NOTES

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[1]George W. Knepper, *A Brief History of Religion in Northeast Ohio,* Sacred Landmarks Monograph Series (Cleveland: Cleveland State University, 2002), 2.

[2]The Western Reserve in northeastern Ohio is also known as the Connecticut Western Reserve or New Connecticut.

[3]A major history of northeast Ohio is Harriet Taylor Upton, *History of the Western Reserve* (Chicago: Lewis Publishing, 1910). Two additional Western Reserve

historical and biographical reference sources are David D. Van Tassel and John J. Grabowski, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Cleveland History,* 2nd ed. (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1996), and David D. Van Tassel and John J. Grabowski, eds., *The Dictionary of Cleveland Biography* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1996), http://ech.cwru.edu.

[4]The Firelands in the Western Reserve are sometimes known as "Sufferers' Lands." For a brief history of this region, see Thomas A. Smith, "The Firelands and the Settlement of Vermilion," in *Ohio's Western Reserve: A Regional Reader,* ed. Harry F. Lupold and Gladys Haddad (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1988), 39–44.

[5]The community of Cleveland was named in honor of the general whose original surname was spelled Cleaveland.

[6]The standard history of the Western Reserve is Harlan Hatcher, *The Western Reserve: The Story of New Connecticut in Ohio,* rev. ed. (Cleveland and New York: World Publishing Company, 1966). Hatcher discusses the history of this region and settlement and migration patterns.

[7]Harry F. Lupold, "Fairport: The Transformation of a Lake Erie Port, 1812–1870," in *Ohio's Western Reserve,* 85–92; see also Fairport Harbor Bicentennial Committee, *A History of Fairport Harbor, Ohio* (Fairport Harbor, OH: Bicentennial Committee, 1976). Many Latter-day Saints also immigrated through Fairport Harbor.

[8]Hatcher, *Western Reserve,* 57–60.

[9]Ralph J. Crandall, "New England's Migration Fever: The Expansion of America," www.ancestry.com/learn/library/article.aspx?article=2834. See also Barbara Lacey, "Migration from Connecticut," www.ctheritage.org/encyclopedia/topicalsurveys/migration.htm.

[10]Iron and steel production was especially needed during the Civil War, 1861–65.

[11]Knepper, *Brief History,* 13.

[12]Meredith B. Colket Jr., *The Widely Known "Western Reserve" of Ohio,* in proceedings of the "World Conference on Records and Genealogical Seminar," Salt Lake City, Utah, August 5–8, 1969 (Salt Lake City: The Genealogical Society of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1969), 1.

[13]David C. Hammack, Diane L. Grabowski, and John J. Grabowski, eds., *Identity, Conflict, and Cooperation: Central Europeans in Cleveland, 1850–1930* (Cleveland: Western Reserve Historical Society, 2002), 12. This major reference source studies six groups of immigrants to Cleveland, Ohio—from Croatia, the Czech lands, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia.

[14]Ohio Genealogical Society, "How We Came to Ohio," *The Report* 19 (Summer 1979): 61; see also Pioneer Migration Routes Through Ohio http://homepages.rootsweb.com/~maggieoh/pioneer.html; and Connecticut Western Reserve Migration, http://new.oplin.org/evolution/mig/ctwr/migctwr1810.html. Reverse migration to Ohio from Indiana, Illinois, and other Midwestern states

may be determined from the federal census after 1850, biographical sketches, church records, land records, newspapers, and other genealogical sources.

[15]See Upton, *History of the Western Reserve,* 1:121–34.

[16]Traveling clergy were also known as itinerant circuit riders, or in the case of some clergy, proselytizing evangelicals. Roman Catholics, such as Irish Catholics, residing in the early days of northeastern Ohio were served by itinerant priests, some from as far away as Cincinnati.

[17]The National Conference of Christians and Jews was organized in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1927–28 to foster cooperation and friendship among Catholics, Jews, and Protestants. This nationwide ecumenical organization has its headquarters in New York City.

[18]The Amish religious group originated in seventeenth-century Europe with Jakob (Jacob) Ammann (Amman/Amen), born 1644 in Switzerland, who was a Swiss Mennonite farmer and religious leader. The Amish began emigrating from Germany to the United States during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, with major settlements in southeastern Pennsylvania. Some New Order Amish joined with the Mennonites. The Amish are sometimes known as Amish Mennonites.

[19]*Pioneer and General History of Geauga County* (Evansville, IN: Unigraphic, 1979), 87–91.

[20]*Pioneer and General History of Geauga County,* 87. For a discussion of Amish in Geauga County, see also Moses Borkholder and Mattie E. Borkholder, *History of Geauga County and History of the Amish* (n.p., 1961) and John M. Byler, *Early Amish Settlers of Geauga County, Ohio* (Gordonville, PA: John M. Byler, 1997).

[21]Major Amish settlements are found in Burton, Mesopotamia, and Middlefield, Geauga County. Other Amish settlements may be found in Ashtabula, Portage, and Trumbull counties.

[22]Amish are baptized as adults, usually between eighteen and twenty-two years of age, not as children.

[23]Characteristic of the traditional Old Order Amish lifestyle is the plain clothing worn by church members. Adult males wear broad-brimmed black hats, a full beard (but no mustache), suspenders, and homemade plain clothes fastened with hooks and eyes (without buttons). Unbaptized young men do not have beards. Women wear bonnets, long full dresses with capes over their shoulders, shawls, plain aprons, and black shoes. Amish do not wear jewelry. Most Old Order Amish ride in horse-drawn buggies, do not have electricity in their homes, do not use modern farm equipment, and do not drive cars. Many Amish have large families. Children attend elementary school to the eighth grade, and then most work on farms rather than attend high school. Most Old Order Amish are farmers, but some are carpenters and craftsmen as well. Women usually stay at home after they marry and do not follow a career. Some Ohio Amish have small businesses, craft shops, and bookstores.

[24]After being banished from the Massachusetts Bay Colony, Roger Williams, an English Puritan clergyman, founded the first Baptist Church in America at

Providence, Rhode Island, in 1639. Other Baptist congregations were organized in New England, the mid-Atlantic states, and later in the South.

[25]*History of the First Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, 1833–1883* (Cleveland: J. B. Savage, 1883).

[26]The African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church has been prominent in the Cleveland area since the nineteenth century. St. John AME Church was founded in 1830 and is the oldest African-American church in Cleveland. It played an important role in the Underground Railroad in Cleveland.

[27]The Congregational Church was the established church in Connecticut until 1818. Many early immigrants to the Western Reserve were Congregationalists from Connecticut.

[28]Presbytery of the Western Reserve, http://preswesres.org/aboutus/history.html.

[29]In 1957 most Congregational churches joined with several other Protestant denominations to form the United Church of Christ (UCC).

[30]Joseph Badger, *A Memoir of Rev. Joseph Badger,* ed. Henry Noble Day (Hudson, OH: Sawyer, Ingersoll, 1851). This work includes his autobiography and selected correspondence. See also "Joseph Badger: The Diary of the First Missionary, 1801–1803," *Visions of the Western Reserve: Public and Private Documents of Northeastern Ohio, 1750–1860,* ed. Robert A. Wheeler (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2000), 71–83; and Harold E. Davis, "Religion in the Western Reserve, 1800–1825," *Ohio Archaeological and Historical Quarterly* [*Ohio History*] 38 (July 1929): 483–86.

[31]Davis, "Religion in the Western Reserve," 479–83; and Milton V. Backman Jr., *The Heavens Resound: A History of the Latter-day Saints in Ohio, 1830–1838* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1983), 38–39.

[32]Knepper, *Brief History,* 4.

[33]The standard history of the Disciples in the Reserve is Amos Sutton Hayden, *Early History of the Disciples in the Western Reserve, Ohio* (1875, reprint. Evansville, IN: Unigraphic, 1979). An index to this work was compiled by Georgene Morris Sones, *Index of the Disciples in the Western Reserve, Ohio* (n.p., n.d.).

[34]Hiram College was formerly known as the Western Reserve Eclectic Institute (see Knepper, *Brief History,* 7).

[35]Colonists split from the Church of England in 1787 to form the Protestant Episcopal Church of America.

[36]Knepper, *Brief History,* 10, 12.

[37]The Pale of Settlement was established in 1791 as a territory for Russian Jews; see Alden Oreck, "The Pale of Settlement" in the Jewish Virtual Library, www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/History/pale.html; and The Pale of Settlement, www.friends-partners.org/partners/beyond-the-pale/eng_captions/29-9.html; historical maps are included on these two Web sites.

[38]John J. Grabowski and Lucinda K. Arnold, comps., *A Guide to Jewish History Sources in the History Library of the Western Reserve Historical Society,*

Kermit J. Pike, ed. (Cleveland: Western Reserve Historical Society, 1983). A supplement to this work was published in 2000. See also the Western Reserve Historical Society online catalog for a more comprehensive listing of Jewish sources at the WRHS, www.wrhs.org/library.

[39]Immigration History Research Center, University of Minnesota, 311 Andersen Library, 222–21st Avenue S., Minneapolis, MN 55455–0439, www.ihrc.umn.edu.

[40]American Lutheran Church and Lutheran Church of America.

[41]The name Mennonite comes from one of the group's founders, Menno Simon (Simons). Mennonites were derived from the Anabaptist movement and were persecuted in Europe for their religious beliefs. They eventually emigrated to the United States and Canada.

[42]http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~mennobit; see also Mennonite Church USA Historical Committee, www.mcusa-archives.org. An index to thousands of Mennonite and Amish obituaries since 1864, as printed in several publications, is available on the Internet at Mennobits—a Web site for researchers interested in Amish and Mennonite families.

[43]John Wesley, born in 1703, an Anglican priest, is the founder of Methodism in England. Wesley and his followers did not attempt to form a new denomination, but to reform the Church of England from within. He did not see the Church of England meeting the needs of everyday people. Methodists (the Methodist Episcopal Church) have resided in the Reserve since the early nineteenth century.

[44]Methodist ministers also taught the word of God to Native Americans living in Ohio and elsewhere.

[45]See Gracelouise Sims Moore, ed., *The Tapestry of Faith: The History of Methodism in the Cleveland District of the East Ohio Conference* (Cleveland: Methodist Union of the Cleveland District of the United Methodist Church, 2003), for a history of Methodist churches in the Western Reserve.

[46]Moore, *Tapestry of Faith,* 4.

[47]Moore, *Tapestry of Faith,* 5.

[48]Knepper, *Brief History,* 6.

[49]Through mergers, the United Methodist Church was organized in 1968.

[50]This Conference was held in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1933 (see Moore, *Tapestry of Faith,* 13).

[51]The term "Methodist Church" was used between the years 1939 and 1968. In 1939 the word "Episcopal" was dropped. In 1968 the Methodist denomination merged with the Evangelical-United Brethren denomination, forming what is now known as the United Methodist Church.

[52]Originally the Church of Christ, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is headquartered in Salt Lake City, Utah (see www.lds.org).

[53]Backman, *Heavens Resound,* 1–19, 44–45; see also Knepper, *Brief History,* 8.

[54]For a detailed history of the Latter-day Saints in Kirtland, Ohio, see Karl Ricks Anderson, *Joseph Smith's Kirtland: Eyewitness Accounts* (Salt Lake City:

Deseret Book, 1989); and Backman, *Heavens Resound.* For general Kirtland history, see Anne B. Prusha, *A History of Kirtland, Ohio* (Mentor, OH: Lakeland Community College Press, 1982), 38–54.

[55]Fred E. Woods, "Mormon Migration on Lake Erie and through Fairport Harbor," in *Inland Seas* (quarterly journal of the Great Lakes Historical Society) 60 (Winter 2004): 291–305.

[56]The Kirtland Temple was dedicated March 27, 1836. The title to the Kirtland Temple was obtained in 1880 by the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, now known as the Community of Christ (see www.cofchrist.org).

[57]See Kip Sperry, *Kirtland, Ohio: A Guide to Family History and Historical Sources* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 2005), for a study of family history and historical sources for the Kirtland area.

[58]The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints was organized April 6, 1860, at Amboy, Lee County, Illinois. Since April 2001 it has been known as the Community of Christ, with headquarters in Independence, Missouri.

[59]The Church of Scotland, the national church in Scotland, is Presbyterian.

[60]For a guide to the Center's records, see University of Minnesota, Immigration History Research Center, *The Immigration History Research Center: A Guide to Collections,* comp. and ed. Suzanna Moody and Joel Wurl (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991).

[61]Ann Lee, whom Shakers called "Mother Ann," was born February 29, 1736, in Manchester, England. She immigrated to America in 1774 and died September 8, 1784. Shakers are officially known as the United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearing and are sometimes known as "Believers." The Society was founded in 1747 in Manchester, England (see www.shaker.lib.me.us/about.html).

[62]John Patterson MacLean, *Shakers of Ohio* (1907, reprint. Philadelphia: Porcupine Press, 1975), 114; see also Knepper, *Brief History,* 9.

[63]For a published guide to the Shaker Collection, see Kermit J. Pike, *A Guide to Shaker Manuscripts in the Library of the Western Reserve Historical Society* (Cleveland: Western Reserve Historical Society, 1974). The Western Reserve Historical Society houses one of the largest Shaker collections in America.

[64]The relationship between Shakers and Mormons is explored by Robert F. W. Meader, "The Shakers and the Mormons," *Shaker Quarterly* 2 (Fall 1962): 83–96.

[65]See United Society of Shakers, www.shaker.lib.me.us.

[66]Knepper, *Brief History,* 5.

[67]In the Western Reserve the Adventists were formerly known as Millerites, named after William Miller, a New England farmer (see Knepper, *Brief History,* 9).

[68]The Eastern and Western branches of Christianity began a division in 1054 that would never be reconciled. Eastern Orthodox churches are a substantial presence in Cleveland; it is the primary religious agency for Greeks, Romanians, and Serbs. Cleveland has a Syrian Orthodox Church.

[69]The Evangelical United Brethren denomination was at one time two separate bodies—the Church of the United Brethren in Christ and the Evangelical Church. They merged in 1946 to form what is now known as the Evangelical United Brethren Church. This denomination was of German origin (see Moore, *Tapestry of Faith,* 6–7).

[70]Many German immigrants to Ohio were members of the Evangelical and Reformed faiths.

[71]Hinduism and Sikhism are religious traditions from India.

[72]Cleveland's religious and ethnic communities are described in Van Tassel and Grabowski, *Encyclopedia of Cleveland History,* http://ech.cwru.edu, and in other publications.

[73]Donald Levy, *A Report on the Location of Ethnic Groups in Greater Cleveland* (Cleveland: Institute of Urban Studies, 1972), 2. These statistics refer to the mid-twentieth century.

[74]*Ethnic Directory: A Complete Roster of over 2,000 Organizations belonging to the Many Ethnic Groups in Greater Cleveland* [title varies, *Greater Cleveland Nationalities Directory* and *Cleveland Ethnic Directory*] (Cleveland: Sun Newspapers, 1974– [varies]).

[75]An example of an ethnic periodical is *Our Polish Ancestors,* quarterly of the Polish Genealogical Society of Greater Cleveland, Parma, Ohio (see www.freewebs.com/pgsgc).

[76]An example ethnic organization is the German Society of Cleveland.

[77]Many early farmers in the Cleveland area were of German origin.

[78]Early farmers in the Western Reserve included migrants from New England, New York, Germany, and several other localities.

[79]Records are also available in other repositories, including the Cleveland Public Library, Immigration History Research Center at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota, and others.

[80]African Americans resided mostly in larger cities in northeast Ohio, rather than rural communities (see Knepper, *Brief History,* 11).

[81]Manx arrived in the Western Reserve from the Isle of Man, an island located in the Irish Sea equidistant from England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. Northeast Ohio was home to America's largest Manx settlements.

[82]Levy, *Report on the Location of Ethnic Groups,* 1–46. This work gives a brief summary of the history of ethnic groups in greater Cleveland—Germans, Hungarians, Irish, Italians, Jews, Poles, Romanians, Russians, Slovaks, and others. It includes Cuyahoga County maps that identify residence of ethnic communities.

[83]A summary of Ohio family history sources, with extensive bibliographies, is found in Kip Sperry, *Genealogical Research in Ohio,* 2nd ed. (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing, 2003). Also useful for this region is Vicki Blum Vigil, *Finding Your Family History in Northeast Ohio* (Cleveland: Gray & Company, 2003). Although dated, a summary of Western Reserve genealogical sources is listed in Colket, *Widely Known "Western Reserve."* Many pre-1900 Ohio births and marriages are indexed in the International Genealogical Index (IGI) available online

at www.familysearch.org. U.S. census records for Ohio extend from 1820 through 1930; indexes and digitized census images are available online at www.ancestry.com and www.heritagequestonline.com.

[84]See the Ohio GenWeb project for each Western Reserve county, www.rootsweb.com/~ohgenweb.

[85]The Western Reserve Historical Society Library's online catalog, www.wrhs.org/library, is the most comprehensive and up-to-date guide to manuscript and other genealogical and historical collections. Although partially dated, the major published guides to WRHS manuscript collections are Kermit J. Pike, *A Guide to the Manuscripts and Archives of the Western Reserve Historical Society* (Cleveland: Western Reserve Historical Society, 1972), and Kermit J. Pike, comp., *A Guide to the Major Manuscript Collections Accessioned and Processed by the Library of the Western Reserve Historical Society Since 1970* (Cleveland: Western Reserve Historical Society, 1987).

[86]Finding aids, guides, and handouts describing ethnic collections at the Western Reserve Historical Society are available at the Society's library.

[87]Religious and ethnic records for Northeast Ohio, and other Midwestern states, are also available at the Immigration History Research Center, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota (see www.ihrc.umn.edu), and at other repositories.

[88]Cleveland State University has an interest in investigating ethnicity and its impact on Cleveland, Ohio. They have published several monographs on this topic.

[89]Addresses of these and many other libraries, archives, and historical societies are included in Sperry, *Genealogical Research in Ohio,* 160–209.