

A historic sandstone marker from the Northwest Ordinances of the 1785-1787 era uncovered.

The common school system of Ohio is rooted in the education policies inherent in the Northwest Ordinances. One such policy root was the formation of townships of 6 miles square and the set aside of the 16th section (each section was 1-mile square or 640 acres) for the support of education.

Of course, the township lines were established by a survey marking the boundaries. The markers were typically sandstones.

A Highland County survey crew recently uncovered a stone marker marking the corners of Lots 18, 19, and 20 of a particular township. Section 16 was set aside for the support of schools.

Modern day legislators would do well to understand the Northwest Ordinance roots of the public common school system. That would give them pause when they choose between adequate funding of authentic public education and vouchers for private schools.

[McCarty Associates surveyors discover historic markers](#)

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On Jan. 12, a survey crew from McCarty Associates in Hillsboro trekked nearly three miles of boundary lines with over 350 feet of elevation change east of U.S. 52, and the effort paid off in a big way.

McCarty Associates surveyors "were thrilled to uncover original set stones from the French Land Grant surveys of the late 1790s, marking the corners of Lots 18, 19, and 20."

Despite years of logging and land changes, these historic sandstone markers remain undisturbed – and a rare and exciting find in today's surveying world.

"Recovering these stones and documenting their locations with modern GPS State Plane coordinates is a true highlight, connecting centuries-old craftsmanship with today's technology."

According to The Official Ohio Lands Book, the French Grants, located along the Ohio River in Scioto County, were awarded to 101 Frenchmen who had been swindled by the Scioto Company. Unscrupulous agents sold lands the company did not own to credulous French emigrés. In the process, they grossly misrepresented what lay in store for the emigrating Frenchmen.

The lands to which the French held worthless titles were actually located within the Ohio Company purchase. The Ohio Company provided them initial shelter and then sold lots to them for \$1.25 an acre. Many of the French decided to try their luck elsewhere, but those who remained founded Gallipolis (city of the Gauls).

Congress was prevailed upon to aid these unfortunates who had paid twice for land. It passed a bill on May 31, 1795 giving 24,000 acres to "the French inhabitants of Gallipolis." John Gervais received 4,000 of these acres for services in obtaining the grant. The remainder was surveyed into 92 lots of 217.4 acres each. This is commonly called the First Grant. Eight inhabitants of Gallipolis did not receive a portion of the First Grant, so Congress granted an additional 1,200 acres on June 25, 1798. This land was surveyed into 150-acre lots and is known as the Second Grant.

McCarty Associates in Hillsboro is a local team of professional architects, civil engineers, and land surveyors with over 60 years of experience.

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