

Cultural Resource Study, Bruce Hannon Levee Trail Sangamon River Corridor Reserve

Monticello, Piatt County, Illinois

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Appendix A: Property Ownership Table

List of Abbreviations

BHLT	Bruce Hannon Levee Trail
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
COAP	Committee on Allerton Park
CWA	Civil Works Administration
LCF	Land Conservation Foundation
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
PCHGS	Piatt County Historical and Genealogical Society
Prosperity Wind	Prosperity Wind LLC
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office
SRCR	Sangamon River Corridor Reserve
Study	Cultural Resource Study

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Any cultural resource project draws upon the expertise and aid of several individuals and organizations. First and foremost, we want to extend our appreciation to Dr. Deanna Glosser, Executive Director of the Land Conservation Foundation (LCF), for providing the subject of this study and trusting Tetra Tech with the work. We applaud the LCF for the work that they do to preserve the natural and cultural resources of eastern Illinois for its citizens to enjoy for years to come.

Tetra Tech would like to extend special thanks to the Piatt County Historical and Genealogical Society (PCHGS). We deeply appreciate their cooperation, collaboration, and willingness to help at all stages of the research process. Dee Lund, President of the PCHGS, spent considerable time consulting with us to ensure that we had access to the organization's available resources during the tight schedule of our research trip, and she was also helpful in identifying additional sources. Emily Stone and Mike Nolan, Volunteer Librarians with PCHGS, assisted us in the archive. We are grateful for their assistance gathering materials and for their extensive knowledge of the archive's holdings.

Many thanks to Jack Stiverson, lifelong Monticello resident, who provided invaluable information about landowner Walter H. Troike during our visit to the PCHGS. We would also like to thank Jennifer Harper, Piatt County Circuit Clerk and Recorder, for her assistance with deed research. Additionally, we are grateful for the information provided by Seth E. Floyd, Piatt County Circuit Clerk, pertaining to drainage district records.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Authority and Purpose of the Cultural Resource Study

Prosperity Wind LLC (Prosperity Wind) is developing the Prosperity Wind Project (Project) in Piatt County, Illinois. In the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between Prosperity Wind and the Illinois State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), dated January 5, 2024, Prosperity Wind has agreed to conduct activities to mitigate adverse effects to historic properties resulting from the Project.

1.2 Project Scope

Prosperity Wind contracted Tetra Tech, Inc. (Tetra Tech) to complete this Cultural Resource Study (Study) on its behalf, as agreed upon with the SHPO as an appropriate form of mitigation for the Project. The Study was conducted in partnership with the Land Conservation Foundation (LCF), to document and research a series of levees on the Sangamon River that are a focal point of the existing Bruce Hannon Levee Trail (BHLT). The Study will produce several deliverables that will offset any adverse impacts resulting from the proposed Project. These deliverables include a Study Report, a video presentation of findings (not included in this document), a National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) nomination (if appropriate), and recommendations for expanded interpretation of the site.

The Research Area consists of tax parcels 05-14-18-005-007-00 and 05-13018-005-015-00, which encompass the levees, the surrounding land, and the land contained by them.

1.3 Methodology

1.3.1 Research Questions

With this Study, Tetra Tech sought to answer three research questions:

1. Who is responsible for the construction of the levees that now constitute the BHLT?
2. When were the levees constructed?
3. For what specific purpose were the levees constructed?

1.3.2 Documentary Research

Tetra Tech conducted digital research prior to the survey and research trip to 1) become familiar with the history of the area to identify additional relevant sources in the archive, 2) reduce time spent in the field and make the time spent researching as efficient as possible, and 3) identify gaps in sources and source repositories to be resolved during the trip.

Property research conducted by Tetra Tech included tracing land ownership as early as documentation allowed and researching each landowner to reveal how they used the land during their tenure of ownership. This research also includes biographical and some genealogical information about each landowner.

Sources used for digital and archival research include:

- Plat atlases from the Piatt County Historical and Genealogical Society (PCHGS) and www.HistoricMapWorks.com
- Newspaper articles from www.Newspapers.com and the Allerton Library Digital Newspaper Archives. Newspaper articles can reveal information about a person’s birth, death, occupation, place of residence, and sometimes landownership.
- Census data; birth, death, and marriage records; and public family trees from www.Ancestry.com.
- Digital and physical city directories from PCHGS and www.Ancestry.com.
- Scholarly monographs and journal articles for the environmental, cultural, and historic contexts.
- Land patents from the Bureau of Land Management’s General Land Office Records.
- Local history monographs, including Emma Piatt’s History of Piatt County (1883) and The Past and Present of Piatt County, Illinois (1903).
- Deeds of land sale from the Piatt County Clerk & Recorder’s office.

1.3.3 Field Survey

Tetra Tech surveyed the BHLT in February 2024. Two architectural historians walked the length of the trail and took photographs of the levees, the floodplain forest, and the floodplain restoration area at various points along the trail in order to document the trail’s current conditions. In addition, Tetra Tech used ArcGIS Field Maps to map the trail’s path and to document the location of Tour Stop signs.

1.4 Summary of Research Findings

Based on digital research, archival research, and field survey, Tetra Tech has determined the following answers to the Research Questions established at the beginning of this study. For more information supporting these conclusions, please see 3.13 Walter H. Troike and Cleo Troike, 24 April 1956 – 1963 within Chapter Three: Site History.

- 1. Who is responsible for the construction of the levees that now constitute the Bruce Hannon Levee Trail?** Walter H. Troike (1898-1962), Research Area landowner, constructed the levees.
- 2. When were the levees constructed?** The levees were constructed between 1956 and 1962.
- 3. For what specific purpose were the levees constructed?** Walter Troike most likely constructed the levees to improve the land’s value for future sale to a farmer or other agricultural entity. There is little evidence to suggest that Troike himself intended to use the land for farming.

2. SITE OVERVIEW WITH ENVIRONMENTAL, CULTURAL, AND HISTORICAL CONTEXTS

2.1 Site Overview and Land Conservation Foundation History

The BHLT is part of the Sangamon River Corridor Reserve (SRCR), which is managed by the LCF. The LCF was founded in 2003 by Bruce Hannon and other local citizens and conservationists who sought “to preserve and restore local woods and wetlands along rivers and creeks” that were frequently threatened by development projects. Dr. Deanna Glosser is the organization’s current Executive Director. The LCF’s mission is to “preserve and restore natural communities in East Central Illinois, to create interconnected corridors, to provide wildlife habitat, and connect people and nature for future generations.”¹

The LCF manages a total of five properties in the East-Central Illinois area, specifically in Champaign, DeWitt, Piatt, and Vermillion counties. In addition to the SRCR, the LCF protects the Brady Woods Nature Preserve, Feller Woods, the Mouth of Jordan Reserve, and the Mettler Woods Nature Preserve.² The SRCR was created in November 2012 when the LCF purchased the 108 acres that constitute the reserve. At present, the LCF is restoring 59 acres from farmland back to a floodplain forest.³

The vision for this unique trail was forwarded by Bruce Hannon.⁴ The trail was ultimately named in recognition of Hannon’s lifelong commitment to conservation and environmental activism in Central-East Illinois. Hannon formed the Committee on Allerton Park (COAP) in the late 1960s to halt an Army Corps of Engineers project that proposed damming the Sangamon River to form the Oakley Reservoir, which would subsequently flood Allerton Park. Following almost a decade of activism, the project was scrapped in 1975.⁵

The BHLT is 2.3 miles long and consists of a 0.3-mile approach to the trailhead and a 1.7-mile loop that traverses the top of earthen levees. In recent years, the LCF has added culverts under the levees to preserve their integrity, prevent erosion, and allow for water flow into the floodplain.

2.2 Environmental Context

The Research Area is situated within a floodplain forest east of the Sangamon River. This area consists of a glacially formed landscape characterized by a variety of glacial, glaciofluvial, and alluvial topography formed within a variety of depositional environments during the latter portion of the Wisconsin glacialiation of the western Great Lakes region.⁶

¹ Land Conservation Foundation, “About LCF.”

² Land Conservation Foundation.

³ Land Conservation Foundation, “Sangamon River Corridor Reserve.”

⁴ “News - Land Conservation Foundation.”

⁵ “News - Land Conservation Foundation”; Hassinger, “The Dam That Wasn’t.”

⁶ Willman et al., *Handbook of Illinois Stratigraphy*, 227.

2.2.1 Physiography and Geology

The Research Area is located within a physiographic region known as the Bloomington Ridged Plain, which is part of the Till Plains Section of the Central Lowland Province.⁷ It has prominent glacial topography that includes moraines and morainic systems of the late advances of the Woodfordian substage of the Wisconsinan glaciation (dating 22,000-12,500 before present [BP]).⁸ It is characterized by low, broad, concentric morainic ridges alternating with wide stretches of relatively flat or gently undulating ground moraines (nearly featureless inter-morainal areas). Early explorers often compared the monotonous, rolling, open prairie with its tall waving grasses to the sea.⁹ Leighton et al. state, “It was in this district more than in any other that the grass-covered stretches of rolling prairie and extensive swamps, described by early settlers, were most typically and extensively developed.”¹⁰

The series of widely spaced, radiating morainal ridges were formed by the many recessions and re-advances of the Wisconsin glacier. The outer edge of the Bloomington Ridged Plain follows the outer border of the Shelbyville moraine from the Indiana/Illinois line westward and northward to the Green River Lowland. From there it follows the outer edge of the Bloomington moraine to its juncture with Hampshire Ridge of the Great Lakes Section. The series of named moraines from south to north include Shelbyville, Cerro Gordo, Champaign, Leroy, Bloomington, Normal, Outer Cropsey, Middle Cropsey, Inner Cropsey, Farm Ridge, Chatsworth, Marseilles, and Iroquois.¹¹

The underlying bedrock, which was deeply buried by the glacial drift, consists of sedimentary rock formations of sandstone, shale, and limestone. The two primary geologic periods during which the sedimentary strata were formed include the Cambrian and Ordovician. Ordovician-age dolomite and limestone dominate bedrock formations while some shale and sandstone beds are present. Rock strata formed during this period include Prairie du Chien dolomite, St. Peter sandstone, Glenwood shale, Platteville and Galena dolomite, and Maquoketa shale. The crushed limestone and dolomite used for construction purposes (concrete aggregate, road material, and agricultural limestone) were extracted from the Platteville and Galena Groups (about 350 feet thick). Ordovician sedimentary rocks naturally outcrop where streams are deeply entrenched and can only be found along the major rivers like the Upper Illinois Valley and Rock River Valley.

2.2.2 Hydrology

Several intermittent and permanent drainages are in proximity to the Research Area, the most significant of which is the Sangamon River that flows southwest along the western side of the Research Area. The Sangamon River travels over 200 miles from its headwaters in McLean County into Champaign and Piatt Counties, then west through Macon and Sangamon Counties until its confluence

⁷ Willman et al., 16; Neely and Heister, *The Natural Resources of Illinois: Introduction and Guide*, 18.

⁸ Willman et al., *Handbook of Illinois Stratigraphy*, 227.

⁹ Nelson, *Illinois: A Geographical Survey*, 60.

¹⁰ Leighton, Ekblaw, and Horberg, *Physiographic Divisions of Illinois*, 24.

¹¹ Ekblaw and Lamar, *Sand and Gravel Resources of Northeastern Illinois*, 42; Frye and Willman, “Quaternary System,” 234–35.

with the Illinois River near Beardstown, Illinois in Cass County.¹² One of the major tributaries to the Sangamon River is Goose Creek, situated north of the Research Area, primarily within the Goose Creek Township. For more information about the Sangamon River, see [2.5 Drainage Districts](#) of this report.

Multiple unnamed ephemeral tributaries drain the Research Area into the surrounding creeks and rivers. These most likely provided a necessary resource for prehistoric populations, as the headwaters of the drainages and confluences would have been the most productive. Additionally, buried archaeological resources might be present at the river confluences, shorelines of creeks, and areas within closer proximity to the Sangamon River, given that these areas would have been susceptible to flooding and increased alluvial deposition.

2.2.3 Soils

Piatt County was once covered by the Illinoian and Wisconsin glaciers during the Pleistocene. These glaciers greatly contributed to the shape of landforms and development of soil within the county. The dominant parent materials in Piatt County are primarily related to these glaciers and consist of loess, glacial till, and glacial outwash. Alluvium and colluvium are also present, though on a smaller scale, and are the result of water and gravitational forces. Glacial till is a mixture of materials that were picked up by the ice as it moved over the land. The size of particles ranges from clay to occasional boulders. Glacial outwash is deposited by the running water that derives from glaciers as they melt. Both depositional types can occur in the front, or at the margins, of glaciers as well as concentrated in channels of major stream valleys. These sediments are typically poorly sorted and vary greatly in particle size. By contrast, loess is a very uniform deposit, typically derived from aeolian deposition though in Illinois is also derived primarily from glaciers, in particular, sediments derived from river valleys that drained from the continental glaciers to the north.

2.2.4 Flora

The Research Area is located in the Prairie Peninsula section of the northern division of the Oak-Hickory Forest Region of eastern North America.¹³ This area was historically tall-grass prairie. Several hundred species of grasses and forbs comprised the tall-grass prairie. Mesic and wet grassland communities were widespread and extant in the Research Area. The mesic prairie was dominated by Indian grass (*Sorghastrum nutans*), northern dropseed (*Sporobolus heterolepis*), big bluestem (*Andropogon gerardii*), little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*), and switch grass (*Panicum virgatum*) along with associated species like leadplant (*Amorpha canescens*), prairie dock (*Silphium terebinthinaceum*), and rattlesnake master (*Eryngium yuccifolium*). Typical forbs (wildflowers) may have included black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*), bird's foot violet (*Viola pedata*), compass plant (*Silphium laciniatum*), cylindrical blazing star (*Liatris cylindracea*), drooping coneflower (*Ratibida pinnata*), flowering spurge (*Euphorbia corollata*), grass-leaved golden rod (*Euthamia graminifolia*),

¹² "The Sangamon River."

¹³ Braun, *Deciduous Forests of Eastern North America*; Transeau, "The Prairie Peninsula."

cowbane (*Cicuta virosa*), heath aster (*Symphyotrichum ericoides*), New England aster (*Symphyotrichum novae-angliae*), rigid goldenrod (*Solidago* spp.), rough blazing star (*Liatris aspera*), shooting star (*Dodecatheon meadia*), and western sunflower (*Helianthus occidentalis*). The wet prairie was dominated by sedges (*Cyperaceae* spp.), rushes (*Juncaceae* spp.), cattails (*Typha* spp.), cordgrass (*Spartina pectinata*), and blue joint grass (*Calamagrostis canadensis*) with other distinctive plants being swamp milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*), water hemlock (*Cicuta* spp.), ironweed (*Vernonia* spp.), and boneset (*Eupatorium* spp.).¹⁴

The prairie grasses developed in the regions during the Hypsithermal Interval between 7600–4500 BP.¹⁵ The Hypsithermal Interval consisted of a time of warmer climate during the early Holocene.¹⁶ Wright suggests that grasses began to dominate the landscape about 8000 BP.¹⁷ The Prairie Peninsula probably became established as western grasslands expanded eastward during the postglacial period of warm and dry climatic conditions.¹⁸ Following the maximum expansion of prairie grass vegetation within the Prairie Peninsula, a climatic reversal to cooler and moister climate conditions led to a reintroduction of forest vegetation.

Bottomland forest that bordered portions of streams may have consisted of a variety of oak trees (*Quercus* spp.), black walnut (*Juglans nigra*), white walnut (*Juglans cinerea*), shell bark hickory (*Carya laciniosa*), bitternut hickory (*Carya cordiformis*), cottonwood (*Populus* spp.), maples (*Acer* spp.), and other shrubs and plants.¹⁹ Scattered across the prairie, upland groves of the oak-hickory type may have consisted of white oak (*Quercus alba*), bur oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*), red oak (*Quercus rubra*), black oak (*Quercus velutina*), and black cherry (*Prunus serotina*).²⁰ Native forests provided valuable resources to sustain the early settlers. Timber yielded wood for constructing buildings, fencing, wagons, tools, and furniture as well as fuel for heating and cooking. Vital food plant resources of the forest community included nuts (e.g., black walnut, hickory, acorns, and butternut) and various fruits and berries (e.g., crab apple, paw paw, plum, mulberry, elderberry, blackberry, gooseberry, and grapes).

2.2.5 Fauna

The extensive modification of the natural landscape since the middle of the nineteenth century has altered the distribution of faunal species.²¹ Many species were decimated in the mid to late 1800s

¹⁴ Mohlenbrock, *Guide to the Vascular Flora of Illinois*, 17; Robertson, “Natural Vegetation Communities,” 42–43; Schwegman, “Comprehensive Plan for the Illinois Nature Preserves System. Part 2: The Natural Divisions of Illinois,” 15; Sullivan, “An Atlas of Biodiversity: Chicago Wilderness, A Regional Nature Reserve,” 14–19.

¹⁵ Deevey and Flint, “Postglacial Hypsithermal Interval.”

¹⁶ Geis and Boggess, “The Prairie Peninsula: Its Origin and Significance in the Vegetational History of Central Illinois,” 90–91.

¹⁷ Wright, “History of the Prairie Peninsula.”

¹⁸ King, “Late Quaternary Vegetational History of Illinois.”

¹⁹ Mohlenbrock, *Guide to the Vascular Flora of Illinois*, 17; Schwegman, “Comprehensive Plan for the Illinois Nature Preserves System. Part 2: The Natural Divisions of Illinois,” 15.

²⁰ Kershaw, *Trees of Illinois*, 24.

²¹ Schwegman, “Comprehensive Plan for the Illinois Nature Preserves System. Part 2: The Natural Divisions of Illinois.”

through over-hunting and landscape modification such as forest clearing and the draining and cultivation of the prairies. However, written records and archaeological evidence suggests a number of species would have been available to the prehistoric inhabitants and later Euro-American settlers of Piatt County. Mammal species such as opossum (*Didelphis virginiana*), eastern cottontail (*Sylvilagus floridanus*), woodchuck (*Marmota monax*), gray squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*), fox squirrel (*Sciurus niger*), red squirrel (*Tamiasciurus hudsonicus*), beaver (*Castor canadensis*), muskrat (*Ondatra zibethicus*), coyote (*Canis latrans*), red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*), gray fox (*Urocyon inereoaragenteus*), black bear (*Ursus americanus*), raccoon (*Procyon lotor*), long-tailed weasel (*Mustela frenata*), mink (*Mustela vison*), badger (*Taxidea taxus*), river otter (*Lontra canadensis*), bobcat (*Lynx rufus*), cougar (*Puma concolor*), elk (*Cervus elaphus*), white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) and bison (*Bison bison*) were hunted for meat, fur, or killed off as predators of livestock.²²

Avian species such as ducks (*Aix* spp. and *Anas* spp.) and geese (*Anser* spp., *Branta* spp., and *Chen* spp.) may have been seasonally abundant during their annual migrations within the Illinois River Valley.²³ A variety of freshwater fish species such as catfish (Family *Ictaluridae*), drum (Family *Sciaenidae*), bowfin (*Amia* spp.), pike (*Esox* spp.), and black bass (*Micropterus nigromaculatus*) would have been available within the numerous creeks and rivers within and surrounding the Research Area.²⁴

2.3 Cultural Context

Native American tribes have a history of settlement in Illinois that extends far beyond initial settlement by Euro-Americans. The Cultural Context serves as an overview of the history of these populations that spans from the Paleoindian prehistoric era into the nineteenth century when tribes were forcibly relocated from their ancestral lands.

2.3.1 Prehistoric Cultural Context

Researchers divide the chronology of prehistoric Illinois into five broad periods. Each period represents culturally and environmentally distinct approaches taken by different indigenous groups in regard to subsistence, technology, and social organization. The periods are as follows: Paleoindian (11,500–10,000 BP [years Before Present]), Archaic (ca. 10,000–3000 BP), Woodland (3000-1250 BP), Mississippian (1100–550 BP), and Late Prehistoric (ca. 700–300 BP).

Paleoindians may have been present in Illinois as early as 11,500 BP. In general, the Paleoindian Period is typically associated with the hunting of megafauna that became extinct during the terminal phase of the late Pleistocene or early Holocene. Paleoindian bands were highly mobile hunter-gatherers, and their food economy was based on the availability of big game that ranged across the

²² Hoffmeister, *Mammals of Illinois*; Purdue and Styles, *Dynamics of Mammalian Distribution in the Holocene of Illinois*.

²³ Schorger, *The Passenger Pigeon: Its Natural History and Extinction*.

²⁴ Smith, *The Fishes of Illinois*.

landscape.²⁵ Paleoindian subsistence on the Illinois Plains and the surrounding region included the seasonal gathering of plant foods such as seed plants, root or bulb plants, berry and fruits, nuts, and various plants containing stems, leaves, and shoots.

The Archaic period (10,000–3000 BP) marks a shift in adaptation to a more diverse exploitation of food resources than was previously practiced in the Paleoindian period, as well as a more diverse toolkit with the addition of grinding stones to process seeds and nuts, and large rock ovens to cook root and succulent crops. Human groups remained nomadic but appear to have exploited smaller territories than their Paleoindian predecessors, making more repetitive visits to fewer strategic locations. The Late Archaic (5000–3000 BP) period is characterized by increased population sizes as evidenced by larger and more numerous sites, the onset of long-distance trade networks, and an increased focus on riverine settings for site locations.

The Woodland period (3000–1250 BP) represents a cultural expansion of ongoing Late Archaic adaptations, with the use of ceramic vessels marking a major technological innovation within the period. In southern Illinois, the local Early Woodland (3000–2200 BP) expression was the Adena culture, noted for its construction of conical burial mounds and circular ceremonial earthworks. Adena culture is marked by more territorially restrictive, seasonal movement than what occurred in the Archaic period, with evidence of semi-permanent camp sites in the larger drainage basins, especially along the lower Illinois River.

The Mississippian Period (1100–550 BP) experienced significant population growth as evidenced by larger towns and villages, an increase in the number of towns and villages, and the expansion of agricultural production.²⁶ Mississippian society was characterized by hereditary chiefdoms; long-distance trade in valuables such as copper and marine shell; monumental mound architecture; fortified towns with stockades; specialized production of ceramics and other items; and complex religious and iconographic traditions.²⁷ The Cahokia site near present day St. Louis, Missouri, which was at its peak during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries Anno Domini (AD), is perhaps the best-known Mississippian site.

The final pre-contact period in Illinois is termed the Late Prehistoric and extends from circa 700 BP to 300 BP. With the abandonment of the Mississippian settlements, an in-migration of Oneota cultural groups from the west and north came to Illinois. These people continued to cultivate maize as a major subsistence crop, but evidence of the highly centralized polity of the previous period has not been identified archaeologically. Instead, populations tended to be more dispersed, with settlement patterns reflecting smaller, short-term encampments. Oneota/Late Prehistoric sites are found in

²⁵ Drago, "Some Aspects of Eastern North American Prehistory: A Review 1975," 9; Fitting, *The Archaeology of Michigan: A Guide to the Prehistory of the Great Lakes Region*, 38; Markman, *Chicago Before Prehistory: The Prehistoric Archaeology of a Modern Metropolitan Area*, 47; Mason, *Great Lakes Archaeology*, 82; Wright, *A History of the Native People of Canada: Volume I (10,000 – 1000 B.C.)*, 50.

²⁶ Sabo III, "The Mississippi Period: Southeastern Chiefdoms A.D. 900 – 1541."

²⁷ Payne, "Mississippian Period"; Sabo III, "The Mississippi Period: Southeastern Chiefdoms A.D. 900 – 1541."

northwestern Indiana, northeastern Illinois, southern Wisconsin, and Iowa. Cultural and linguistic traits of these Oneota groups appear to be ancestral to the Potawatomie and Miami tribes who were encountered by the first Europeans to visit eastern Illinois.²⁸

2.4 Historic Context

2.4.1 Early European Settlement

In 1671, the French were the first Europeans to lay claim to the area that now makes up the state of Illinois. By 1673, the first exploration of the newly claimed land was underway. Jacques Marquette, a French Jesuit missionary, and Louis Jolliet, a French-Canadian fur trader and explorer, embarked on a four-month voyage along the Mississippi River from St. Ignace, in modern day Michigan to near Rosedale, in modern day Mississippi.²⁹ The trip led to a series of events that would alter both human and ecological history in the North American Interior including the establishment of permanent French-named towns, the introduction of Christianity, the loss of indigenous lands and resources, and near extermination of the fur-bearing animals, like beavers, in the Upper Midwest.³⁰

Although Marquette and Jolliet reported positive interactions with the indigenous people they encountered on their 1673 trip, tensions often ran high during the period of European settlement and early statehood. In 1730, French troops killed about 500 Fox people near present-day Bloomington after conflicts over the fur trade. In 1803, the Kaskaskia Indians gave up nearly all of their land in Illinois. In 1819, the Prairie band of the Kickapoo, a tribe with ancestral ties to the land that is now Piatt County, signed a treaty relinquishing their land in Illinois and relocating to Missouri and beyond following continual conflicts over hunting grounds, land rights, and trade issues. In 1832, the Sacs and Foxes, along with some Prairie Kickapoo allies and under the leadership of Black Hawk, tried to reestablish a village along the Rock River. The Illinois militia chased the group north into Wisconsin where they were massacred at the Battle of Bad Axe. Increased fears and hostilities pushed the Vermillion band of Kickapoo west into Kansas shortly after.³¹

In 1680, French traders, including René-Robert Cavelier, sieur de La Salle constructed Fort Crevecoeur near present-day Peoria, Illinois. La Salle then led the construction of a 4,000-mile network of trading posts. The first permanent European settlement in Illinois was founded in Cahokia in 1699 and was settled by French missionaries.³² Following the end of the French and Indian War in 1763, Illinois

²⁸ Schurr, "The Late Prehistory of Northwestern Indiana: New Perspectives on an Old Model."

²⁹ Illinois Historic Preservation Division, "Illinois Historic Preservation Agency"; Wisconsin Historical Society, "Expedition of Marquette and Joliet, 1673."

³⁰ Wisconsin Historical Society, "Expedition of Marquette and Joliet, 1673."

³¹ Rauscher, "The Kickapoo Indians- IHT Vol 6:1 1999"; Illinois Historic Preservation Division, "Illinois Historic Preservation Agency."

³² Wisconsin Historical Society, "Expedition of Marquette and Joliet, 1673"; Illinois Historic Preservation Division, "Illinois Historic Preservation Agency."

Country east of the Mississippi was ceded to the British and the land west of the river was ceded to the Spanish. In 1764, British soldiers peacefully took over Fort de Chartres, cementing the transition.³³

On July 4, 1778, during the American Revolutionary War, George Rogers Clark seized Kaskaskia, the British seat of government in the region, from the British. No shots were fired, but it still became one of the westernmost battles of the war. Upon the conclusion of the war, Illinois passed to ownership of the United States, becoming part of the state of Virginia. It then became part of the Northwest Territory, the nation's first post-colonial organized incorporated territory, in 1787. In 1800, Illinois became part of Indiana Territory and then became the Illinois Territory in 1809. In 1818, Illinois became the twenty first state of the United States of America, with 34,620 residents and Kaskaskia as its capital.³⁴

In the 1720s, while Illinois was part of the French colony of Louisiana, the French brought enslaved Africans to the area. When the French surrendered control to the British in 1763, the enslaved population was nearly 600 people.³⁵ After Illinois became part of the Northwest Territory, Congress passed an ordinance in 1787 that stated, "There shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in said territory, otherwise than in punishment of crimes, whereof the party shall have been convicted."³⁶ Territorial governor Arthur St. Clair interpreted the ordinance to mean that people currently enslaved in Illinois would remain enslaved, but no new enslaved people could be brought into the state. Once Illinois became part of Indiana Territory, a "Black Code" was passed that prohibited slavery, but allowed indentured servitude, allowing slave owners to bind enslaved people to them for terms of up to 99 years. Illinois was admitted into the Union as a free state in 1818. However, the state constitution allowed for current slave owners to retain their "indentured" people and allowed for limited slavery in the salt mines. The state's general assembly also announced its approval of slavery in other states and condemned creation of abolition societies within the state.³⁷ It was not until the Constitution of 1848 that Illinois became a free state that did not permit slavery. However, in 1853, it became illegal for African Americans to settle in Illinois; they could not even remain in the state for more than 10 days at a time. Counties with a previously existing Black population had detailed records on each person to prove that they were in fact free and allowed to live in Illinois.³⁸ Following the end of Civil War in 1865, the "Black Codes" were repealed. In addition to the rights afforded by the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments, state laws in 1874 and 1875 forbid segregation and discrimination in public places. Despite legislation, racial tensions remained high, resulting in lynchings and race riots through the twentieth century.³⁹

³³ Illinois Historic Preservation Division, "Illinois Historic Preservation Agency."

³⁴ Illinois Historic Preservation Division.

³⁵ Everingham, "African Americans in Illinois - Education."

³⁶ Snively, "Slavery in Illinois."

³⁷ Everingham, "African Americans in Illinois - Education."

³⁸ Jaffe, "Slavery Existed in Illinois, but Schools Don't Always Teach That History."

³⁹ Everingham, "African Americans in Illinois - Education."

At the time of statehood, two-thirds of the population lived in southern Illinois, along the eastern and western edges, and were primarily involved in the fur trade. Most of the population into the mid-nineteenth century remained in the central and southern portions of the state. The Illinois and Michigan Canal was completed in 1848, linking the Illinois River with Lake Michigan, a crucial juncture in the journey for settlers from the east. This along with developments such as the Cumberland Road and rail expansion throughout the state, encouraged settlement towards the interior of the state.⁴⁰

2.4.2 Early Settlement near Present-Day Monticello

The first recorded European-American settler near modern-day Monticello was George Hayworth, who moved to Illinois from Tennessee along with a colony of Quakers in the spring of 1822, four years after Illinois became a state. He, his wife, and children built a cabin in the northwest corner of what is now the Monticello Township and lived there for three years before moving to Danville.⁴¹ Soon after, James Martin and his wife travelled to Illinois from Kentucky via Ohio and Indiana and built a cabin near North State Street in Monticello in the fall of 1822. After his wife died, James went back to Indiana and then returned with his niece, Mrs. Furnish, and nephew, John Martin. They settled near present day White Heath. Apparently, Martin influenced others to join them, like Abraham Haneline and his four sons who settled north of Monticello in 1824.⁴²

James A. Piatt, a Pennsylvanian “schoolteacher, merchant, innkeeper, miller, and tinner” arrived in the area in 1829 to purchase the Hayworth cabin where he then lived with his wife Jemima Ford Piatt and six children.⁴³ Their son Jacob is reported as being the first white male child born in the area.⁴⁴ However, Henry Sadorus’s daughter was born a year prior in 1830.⁴⁵ Jemima Ford Piatt died in 1836, and James remarried Mahala Oxley, who already had a daughter. James acquired 600 acres of land and farmed most of the present-day site of Monticello. He was known for “his hospitality as well as his relentless pursuit of horse thieves.”⁴⁶ He died in 1838 of typhoid pneumonia.⁴⁷ His granddaughter, Emma Piatt, wrote a comprehensive account of the history of Piatt County in 1883.⁴⁸ Other early settlers in the late 1820s included the Holidays, Yorks, Carvers, Frys, Furnaces, and Cordells.⁴⁹ Settlers who arrived in the early 1830s included William Barnes, Major James McReynolds, and Abraham Marquiss with his 21-person party.⁵⁰

⁴⁰ Lockhart, Cartwright, and Simon, “History of Illinois.”

⁴¹ “Early Settlement at Monticello.”

⁴² “Early Settlement at Monticello.”

⁴³ “Early Settlement at Monticello.”

⁴⁴ “Early Settlement at Monticello.”

⁴⁵ Piatt, *History of Piatt County*, 138.

⁴⁶ “Early Settlement at Monticello.”

⁴⁷ “Early Settlement at Monticello.”

⁴⁸ Piatt, *History of Piatt County*.

⁴⁹ “Early Settlement at Monticello.”

⁵⁰ “Early Settlement at Monticello.”

Many early settlers were acquainted with the Potawatomi and Kickapoo people who were inhabiting the area at the time of settlement and early settlers recounted stories of trade and support among the groups. Some who were children at the time recalled playing with the children of the nearby tribes.⁵¹ These accounts often present a romanticized view of relations between the separate groups and the true nature of these interactions is not known. The Potawatomi Trail of Death passed through the town in 1838. This event was the forced removal by militia of about 859 members of the Potawatomi nation from Indiana to reservations in eastern Kansas. Over 61 days, more than 40 people died.⁵² Three died in Monticello and a historical marker notes their burial in the Monticello Cemetery.⁵³ Jacob Piatt Dunn Jr., a historian, ethnologist, and journalist from Indiana, is credited with coining the phrase “Potawatomi Trail of Death”. He was also the first cousin twice removed of James A. Piatt Sr., for whom the county is named.

Early homesteading in the county was arduous, not only for the isolation, but for the weather. Settlement in central Illinois is marked by the “deep snow” of 1830-31 and the “sudden freeze” of 1836. The “Deep Snow” resulted in alternating sheets of snow and ice three to four feet deep, leaving settlers snowbound.⁵⁴ Many contemporary accounts agree that it snowed for as many as 60 days. Freezing rain left a crust on top of the snow, strong enough for people to walk on. The snow beneath was so deep that people and animals alike became stuck and easy prey for predators. Thousands of game animals like deer and bison, along with domesticated animals like cattle were lost to the snow, affecting food sources for settlers.⁵⁵ Spring brought heavy flooding and the discovery of bodies once the snow finally melted.⁵⁶ In contrast, the “Sudden Freeze” happened over the course of only a few hours. In mid-December of 1836, Illinois experienced a period of mild weather causing the snow to melt. In a few hours, it began raining and then a large, dark storm front appeared that brought high winds and freezing weather. The speed of the storm caused temperatures to go from 40 degrees Fahrenheit in the morning, to 0 degrees by 2pm in Augusta, Illinois, where temperature records were kept.⁵⁷ According to local accounts, it froze several inches of slush, as well as people and animals alike.⁵⁸ Other accounts in the Midwest describe men freezing to their saddles and frogs freezing with their mouths open due to the speed of the storm and subsequent temperature drop.⁵⁹ Such extreme and sudden weather events seem to be characteristic of Illinois, even in the current day.

⁵¹ Piatt, *History of Piatt County*, 131.

⁵² Hoffman, “Unsettled Proves Powerful.”

⁵³ “Potawatomi Trail of Death Historical Marker.”

⁵⁴ Piatt, *History of Piatt County*, 139.

⁵⁵ Emery, “‘Year of Deep Snow’ Set Standard for Winter in Illinois.”

⁵⁶ Piatt, *History of Piatt County*, 139.

⁵⁷ Gabor, “Weathering the ‘Sudden Freeze.’”

⁵⁸ Piatt, *History of Piatt County*, 139.

⁵⁹ Gabor, “Weathering the ‘Sudden Freeze.’”

2.4.3 Creation of Piatt County

The growing population of Monticello and surrounding areas became discontented with the distance from the Macon County seat in Decatur, 30 miles away. By 1837, an effort to create a new county from Macon and De Witt was underway.⁶⁰ Abraham and William Marquiss and William Barnes canvassed DeWitt County and George A. Patterson, and James and John Piatt canvassed Macon County.⁶¹ Patterson was appointed to lobby in legislature for the new county. There was a meeting held at the house of Abraham Marquiss to decide the name of the county. Isaac Demorest suggested “Webster” while William Barnes proposed “Piatt”, which won the majority vote by one.⁶² Piatt County was formed January 27, 1841. Monticello, having been previously laid out in 1837, was selected as the county seat.⁶³ By 1843, the first courthouse was constructed. The second courthouse was built in 1856 and the present building was completed in 1904.⁶⁴ The first county election took place in April 1841. The first county commissioners’ court was made up of John Hughes, W. Bailey, and Enoch Peck. The first court was presided over by Judge Samuel H. Treat. The first circuit clerk was Joseph King, James Reber the probate judge, and John Piatt the sheriff.⁶⁵

Emma Piatt writes, “Even a history of this little bit of the state’s territory cannot be written without an allusion to this great and good man—to Abraham Lincoln.”⁶⁶ And so it is prudent to mention the small connections Monticello claims to one of the most well-known Illinoisans. Early after the formation of the county, Lincoln is reported to have come to Monticello to practice law. He also gave a speech at the courthouse during the 1856 presidential campaign and his 1858 senatorial campaign. His 1858 visit drew a crowd of 5,000 to the park where he gave a speech and “t’was the greatest day Piatt County had ever seen” according to Emma Piatt.⁶⁷ During the Civil War, Piatt County sent more soldiers to war in proportion to its population than much of the state, 1,055 out of 6,124 people, 240 men in excess of the county’s share. They were all volunteers, “no drafted men or bounty-hunters among them.”⁶⁸

2.4.4 Founding of Monticello

In 1837, James A. Piatt, Abraham Marquiss, Major James McReynolds, William Barnes, William Piatt, and Mr. Sardorus formed a joint stock company and laid out Monticello on the land owned by Piatt.⁶⁹ They also owned the first water powered mill.⁷⁰ The name Monticello is credited to Major McReynolds,

⁶⁰ Piatt, *History of Piatt County*, 131.

⁶¹ Piatt, 132.

⁶² Piatt, 132.

⁶³ Piatt, 132.

⁶⁴ Piatt County Historical and Genealogical Society, “County History.”

⁶⁵ Piatt, *History of Piatt County*.

⁶⁶ Piatt, 145.

⁶⁷ Piatt, 145.

⁶⁸ Piatt, 178.

⁶⁹ “Early Settlement at Monticello.”

⁷⁰ Piatt, *History of Piatt County*, 141–42.

who named it after Thomas Jefferson’s plantation of the same name.⁷¹ On July 4, 1837, 11 years to the day after Jefferson’s death, a barbeque celebrating the new town was held. Judge Charles Emerson of Decatur gave a speech entitled “May This Monticello Bring Another Jefferson.”⁷² By 1839, there were four houses and a small blacksmith shop. The first gristmill, built the same year, lay northwest of Monticello.⁷³ The first newspaper, *The Monticello Times*, was printed in November 1856. This initiated a period of the press being bought out and its name changed every few years. It appears that the earliest railroad in the area, the Wabash, was constructed in the 1850s.⁷⁴ Monticello became a city in 1872 with Daniel Stickel, the first store owner in Monticello, as mayor.⁷⁵

Agriculture drove development and prosperity in Piatt County from the time of settlement in the 1820s and 1830s onwards into the twentieth century. In the nineteenth century, however, much of the land in central Illinois was wetland that flooded and was thus ill suited to farming. The formation of drainage districts mandated by statewide legislation sought to improve this land in Illinois for agricultural use. See [2.5 Drainage Districts](#) for more information about drainage legislation in Illinois and the legacy of this legislation in Piatt County.

Monticello, while rural, often participated in larger state trends. Illinois was home to a strong temperance movement that appeared as early as 1833 (the Eighteenth Amendment would not pass until 1919).⁷⁶ Around 1855, Monticello had a Good Templars’ Lodge, an organization dedicated to temperance, and the movement began growing significantly in the area. Credited to the efforts of the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union (headquartered in Evanston in 1879), the county entered “practical prohibition” when the last saloon was closed around 1878.⁷⁷

One important character in Monticello history was Dr. W. B. Caldwell. In 1875 he began practicing medicine in Cisco, Illinois. Ten years later, he moved his practice to Monticello where he developed Caldwell’s Syrup of Pepsin.⁷⁸ The Pepsin Syrup Company was sold in 1925 to the Household Products Company, which produced Bayer Aspirin, but was made under the original name until 1934. It was produced in Monticello until the plant closed on October 4, 1985.⁷⁹

The Marquiss Business and Residence Directory of Monticello provides the following description of business and manufacturing in the city in 1909 that illustrates the significant progress and development achieved by the city since its establishment in 1837:

⁷¹ “Early Settlement at Monticello.”

⁷² “Early Settlement at Monticello.”

⁷³ “Early Settlement at Monticello.”

⁷⁴ Piatt, *History of Piatt County*, 152.

⁷⁵ “Early Settlement at Monticello.”

⁷⁶ “Prohibition in Illinois.”

⁷⁷ Piatt, *History of Piatt County*, 170.

⁷⁸ Piatt, *History of Piatt County*.

⁷⁹ Kentucky Historical Society, “Object Record: Bottle, Medicine.”

Monticello is situated on two steam railroads, the Illinois Central and the Wabash. Both roads have direct connection with Chicago and St. Louis and afford good means for commerce.

Monticello is the home of Dr. Caldwell's Syrup Pepsin, which is manufactured by the Pepsin Syrup Co. This company has the largest medicine dispensary in the state... At present they employ about seventy-five persons. Two other medicines are made in Monticello but on a smaller scale. There are also concrete blocks, wagons, stationary and cigars made in the city. ...

The Illinois Traction System affords a fine way for the farmers and the residents of the suburban towns to come to Monticello to trade. ...

There are two thriving newspapers, "The Republican" issues nearly 2000 copies a week, and the "Bulletin" about 1200 copies. ...

The department store belonging to H. P. Martin & Co. ... contains everything in the dry goods, clothing, and shoe lines that anyone would want. W. E. Smith's dry goods store is of the sort seldom found in a town the size of Monticello.

Monticello is a very pleasant trading place, with clean streets, good sidewalks, and pleasant people. There are about ninety business houses all composed of progressive and thriving people.⁸⁰

Another significant figure in the history of Monticello is Robert Allerton (1873-1964). Originally from Chicago, Robert was the only son of Samuel Allerton, a self-made millionaire through the industries of farming and banking. Robert dreamed of becoming an artist abroad but returned to Chicago at age 24. He agreed to manage his family's Illinois land holdings if his father agreed to pay for the construction of a house in Piatt County. By 1900, construction on the 12,000-acre estate, designed by John Borie, was mostly complete.⁸¹ Over the 50 years of its construction and occupancy, the Allerton house became an eclectic mix of architectural styles and landscaping traditions. Much of the design and accumulated art is due to the influence of John Gregg, an architect, who Robert met in 1923 and who came to live at Allerton in 1929.⁸² Robert gifted the house and grounds and another 3,600 acres of farmland to the University of Illinois in 1946. The deed of gift stated that the property "be used by the University as an education and research center, as a forest and wild-life and plant-life reserve, as an example of landscape gardening, and as a public park."⁸³ He and his partner John Gregg also endowed "the Allerton Gardens in Hawaii (now part of the National Tropical Botanical Garden), the Honolulu Academy of Art, and notably for Chicago, the main building of the Art Institute where Allerton served as the honorary president and trustee. The building was renamed in his honor in 1968.

⁸⁰ *Marquiss' Business and Residence Directory*, 13.

⁸¹ Straus, "Robert Allerton: The Man Behind the Gardens."

⁸² Straus.

⁸³ "History."

In addition, Allerton gifted over 6,600 pieces to the Art Institute, including six Rodin sculptures and its first Picasso, and making him one of the most dedicated patron-benefactors in the Institute's history."⁸⁴ Allerton was inducted into the Chicago LGBT Hall of Fame in 2016 for his battle to get his relationship with John legally recognized. To prevent legal battles over his estate after his death, Robert pressured the state to permit adult adoptions and then legally adopted John (in his 50s) so his partner's inheritance could not be challenged. This process was successful, and when Robert died in 1964, John inherited his estate, providing a loophole to the first legally recognized same-sex relationships in Illinois.⁸⁵ The estate, only three miles from the BHLT, now functions as a park, nature center, and conference center. It was listed on the NRHP in 2007.

2.4.5 Monticello Today

Emma Piatt notes that most people living in the county at the time of her book were "Americans," but in the twenty years prior, there had been "a number of English, Irish and German settlements" made there.⁸⁶ The population of Monticello during Emma Piatt's time was 1,337; by 2020 it was 5,941. 96% of the population identifies as white and all are U.S. citizens reporting English as their primary language. Although the community is still rural, education and administration has become the top employers over farming and later factory work.⁸⁷

2.5 Drainage Districts

Drainage legislation has existed in Illinois since the mid-nineteenth century to aid the development of drainage infrastructure over large swaths of private and public lands in the state. In Piatt County and elsewhere throughout Illinois, drainage law has shaped patterns of settlement, agriculture, and industry. The legislation sanctions the creation of drainage districts that allow landowners to collectively agree on appropriate drainage infrastructure for the lands within the district. Districts can be formal with elected commissioners and coercive power, or informal with simple agreements amongst few landowners.⁸⁸ The infrastructure development that has followed drainage law, however, has also fundamentally altered the state's landscape.

At the time of large Euro-American settlement in Illinois at the beginning of the nineteenth century, Illinois consisted of "vast, glaciated flat to rolling plains" that were "once largely covered by [tall-grass] prairies."⁸⁹ The prairies, however, were poorly drained, resulting in unfavorable conditions for settlers. Morainal barriers, flat land, and the poorly developed, naturally existing drainage networks resulted in flooding, subsequently forming marshes, wet prairies, and swamps in these flooded areas. To make land suitable for settlement and for agriculture, extensive swaths of land all over the Central

⁸⁴ "ROBERT HENRY ALLERTON – Chicago LGBT Hall of Fame."

⁸⁵ "ROBERT HENRY ALLERTON – Chicago LGBT Hall of Fame."

⁸⁶ Piatt, *History of Piatt County*, 136.

⁸⁷ "Monticello, IL | Data USA."

⁸⁸ Illinois State Archives, "IRAD System - Drainage Districts."

⁸⁹ Woods et al., "Level III and IV Ecoregions of Illinois," 8.

Corn Belt Plains Ecoregion of Illinois “have been tilled, ditched, and tied into existing drainage systems” since the mid-nineteenth century.⁹⁰

The Sangamon River is the most significant water source near the Research Area. The river flows southwest along the western side of the land. It travels approximately 246 miles from its headwaters in McLean County through Champaign County and Piatt County, then west through Macon County and Sangamon County until its confluence with the Illinois River near Beardstown, Illinois in Cass County.⁹¹ Early Euro-American settlers to Illinois hoped that the Sangamon could serve as a trade route to the Illinois and Mississippi Rivers, but its waters were too shallow and slow-moving for such use. Even so, the river “proved to be a boon to area development” by providing transportation power for grain mills and water supplies for nearby towns and businesses.⁹²

From her *History of Piatt County* published in 1883, Emma Piatt offers the following description of the Sangamon and its tributaries as they pertain to Piatt County:

*A little north of [the ridge that forms the water shed between the Illinois and Kaskaskia rivers in the Cerro Gordo township], and coursing southwesterly across the county, flows the Sangamon river [sic], through quite a belt of timber. The principal tributaries of the Sangamon on the north are Madden’s Run, Goose Creek, Wild Cat Creek and Friend’s Creek, which runs through a very small portion of the western part of the county. Camp Creek and Willow Branch are the principal tributaries on the south. The extreme northern part of the county is drained by Salt Creek, another tributary of the Sangamon. The southern and southeastern part of the county drains into the Kaskaskia through the West Okaw and Lake Fork of the Okaw.*⁹³

Piatt continues with discussion of drainage issues that plagued the area. According to Piatt, “it is in the southeastern part of the county that the drainage is most inefficient. The fall of the country along the Lake Fork is very slight, and during the rainy season of the year acres of rich and valuable land are submerged.”⁹⁴ Comprehensive drainage legislation in Illinois was passed just four years prior in 1879. In 1882, the Special Drainage District of the Counties of Piatt, Champaign, and Douglas (later called the Lake Fork Special Drainage District) was created to construct ditches to aid the drainage of Lake Fork.⁹⁵

The formation of drainage districts was the culmination of decades of legislation and technological innovation. Although drainage projects existed prior to the Levee Act of 1879 and the Farm Drainage Act of 1879, it wasn’t until these two acts were law that drainage projects in Illinois substantially increased. The laws facilitated cooperative endeavors amongst landowners, allowing ditches, levees,

⁹⁰ Woods et al., 8.

⁹¹ “The Sangamon River.”

⁹² “The Sangamon River.”

⁹³ Piatt, *History of Piatt County*, 94.

⁹⁴ Piatt, 94.

⁹⁵ McIntosh, *Past and Present of Piatt County, Illinois*, 21.

and other drainage projects to function effectively and cover large swaths of land owned by several individuals.⁹⁶ In Illinois, the groundwork for the Levee Act and the Farm Drainage Act was established in 1845 legislation regarding “inclosures [*sic*] and fences” that gave landowners of adjoining farms authority to establish committees that would oversee the construction of cooperative fences, dikes, and ditches.⁹⁷

The first law pertaining specifically to drainage in Illinois was passed in 1865. The legislation established a board of drainage commissioners, provided a means of appeal for dissenting landowners, established maximum lengths of time for construction, and approved taxation against nonresident landholders.⁹⁸ A civil case from 1869 ruled that private drainage construction companies were prohibited from assessing and collecting taxes for drainage projects and reserved that right for counties, townships, cities, and towns. However, this ruling and the 1865 legislation were rendered moot by the ratification of the 1870 Illinois Constitution, which stated the following: “The General Assembly may pass laws permitting the owners or occupants of lands to construct drains and ditches, for agricultural and sanitary purposes, across the lands of others.”⁹⁹ A new drainage law was passed in 1871 that incorporated this change and allowed a landowner to petition the county court for the creation of a drainage district. This law was declared unconstitutional in 1876 for lacking sufficient provisions for landowner consent.¹⁰⁰

Finally, in 1879, the Levee Act and the Farm Drainage Act were passed. These acts remained the enabling drainage legislation in Illinois until 1955 when drainage law was recodified. The laws required that drainage districts be independent municipal entities. The Levee Act remained much the same as the 1871 legislation, but now included additional procedures for appeal by landowners who opposed assessments.¹⁰¹ The Farm Drainage Act combined several statutes related to drainage law. It first established township highway commissioners as drainage district commissioners. It also allowed for the establishment of a drainage district if all landowners involved in a proposed district consented, allowing the landowners to bypass any county or township officials.¹⁰² This type of district is referred to as a mutual district.

It is within this context that the Lake Fork Special Drainage District was established in Piatt County in the early 1880s. Although the district covers land outside of the Research Area, it is nonetheless significant as the first drainage district in the county and demonstrates the importance of drainage law to this region of Illinois. By facilitating easier drainage projects, the value of farmland in the county increased.

⁹⁶ McCorvie and Lant, “Drainage District Formation and the Loss of Midwestern Wetlands, 1850-1930,” 29.

⁹⁷ Herget, “Taming the Environment: The Drainage District in Illinois,” 110.

⁹⁸ Herget, 114.

⁹⁹ Herget, 114-15.

¹⁰⁰ Herget, 115.

¹⁰¹ Herget, 116; Illinois State Archives, “IRAD System - Drainage Districts.”

¹⁰² Herget, “Taming the Environment: The Drainage District in Illinois,” 116-18.

The district's first commissioners were Alfred Jay, Samuel L. Busich, and Anthony Clark. They were elected on October 7, 1882. Prior to work, the proposed path for the ditch was surveyed and "the amount of the benefits to the various landowners determined, and the assessments [taxation] made."¹⁰³ Three years elapsed before work began, however, because there were "a great many objections to the decision of the commissioners with regard to the assessment, and they were restrained by the court for awhile [*sic*]."¹⁰⁴ Work commenced in the summer of 1885 and was complete by November of 1886. The ditch extended from the southeastern portion of the Monticello township (Section 36, Township 18N, Range 6E) to the southeastern portion of the Unity township (Section 26, Township 16N, Range 6E), a distance of approximately seven miles.¹⁰⁵

Drainage districts proliferated in Illinois over the next several decades. Benefits to forming drainage districts were apparent by 1900, evidenced through the increasing value of drained land across the state.¹⁰⁶ By 1937, Illinois had 1,541 drainage districts that comprised over 5.5 million acres of land.¹⁰⁷ Over half of crop-producing land in Illinois was drained by 1940.¹⁰⁸ In Piatt County, Monticello had drainage districts by 1890 at the latest. By 1895, the Lake Fork Special Drainage District had 32 subdistricts.¹⁰⁹

During the Great Depression in the 1930s, drainage infrastructure construction made up a significant amount of relief work in Piatt County. The New Deal agency that administered work relief during the winter of 1933-1934 was the Civil Works Administration (CWA). Jobs from the CWA arrived in Piatt County in November of 1933.¹¹⁰ By the end of December of 1933, the allotted quota of jobs for men in Piatt County had been met, and proposed projects were underway. Drainage-related projects usually consisted of cleaning out existing ditches.¹¹¹ The CWA was terminated in March of 1934. Because of the agency's short lifespan, many projects remained unfinished. A county work relief program took the CWA's place in May of 1934, and the program's first project was a drainage ditch cleanup in Monticello.¹¹² It was around this time that Research Area landowner Walter H. Troike founded his construction company that focused on drainage ditch contracting. See [3.13 Walter H. Troike and Cleo Troike, 24 April 1956 – 1963](#) for more information about Troike, his career, and his construction of the levees within the Research Area.

While drainage projects in the Corn Belt improved the value of land and increased its production capabilities, they have also fundamentally altered the region's landscape and ecology. Wetland

¹⁰³ McIntosh, *Past and Present of Piatt County, Illinois*, 21.

¹⁰⁴ McIntosh, 21.

¹⁰⁵ McIntosh, 21.

¹⁰⁶ McCorvie and Lant, "Drainage District Formation and the Loss of Midwestern Wetlands, 1850-1930," 32.

¹⁰⁷ Herget, "Taming the Environment: The Drainage District in Illinois," 118.

¹⁰⁸ McCorvie and Lant, "Drainage District Formation and the Loss of Midwestern Wetlands, 1850-1930," 33.

¹⁰⁹ "Local Jottings"; "Commissioners' Report," 2.

¹¹⁰ "Piatt CWA Gives Jobs to 160 Men," 1.

¹¹¹ "Full CWA Quota at Work Now," 1.

¹¹² "Piatt Work Relief Opens," 1.

drainage has “[removed] productive aquatic habitats, [increased] water pollution, and [destabilized] flow regimes.”¹¹³ Draining wetlands in the region was encouraged by public policy as late as the 1950s. For example, the USDA Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service subsidized wetland tiling until 1956. Significant loss of wildlife habitat by the early 1960s, however, resulted in Congressional restrictions placed upon this practice.¹¹⁴ It wasn’t until the 1970s that the ecological value of wetlands was widely acknowledged and documented.¹¹⁵

¹¹³ McCorvie and Lant, “Drainage District Formation and the Loss of Midwestern Wetlands, 1850-1930,” 22.

¹¹⁴ McCorvie and Lant, 23.

¹¹⁵ McCorvie and Lant, 22.

3. SITE HISTORY

Site History traces the history of the Research Area land back to the earliest available landownership documentation beginning in 1839. Organized chronologically, the chapter tells the story of the land's development over time by describing land use, where possible, and by discussing the lives, careers, and lineage of the landowners themselves. Many of the landowners have genealogical ties to significant figures in Piatt County's early development, such as the Piatt and Lodge families, and these figures are often discussed alongside landowners in the sections that follow.

For many rural areas, there is a dearth in available historical source material, particularly pre-1860. Place-based research for rural areas relies on historic census data, plats, and newspaper articles, all of which are more readily available for the decades following 1860 and in more urban locations.

See the table in [Appendix A: Property Ownership Table](#) that shows each landowner's date of acquisition and date of sale, if known, of the Research Area land.

3.1 Samuel B. Abbott, 1 November 1839 – Unknown

Samuel B. Abbott owned the portion of the Research Area located in Section 13, Township 18N, Range 5E beginning in 1839.¹¹⁶ Samuel and his family are listed in the 1840 census for Macon County, which included the area that would become Piatt County as the county was not formed at this time. This census lists Samuel, his wife, and their four children as living in the area by 1840.¹¹⁷ However, it is unclear if the Abbotts were living on the Research Area land or elsewhere in the area during this time. Records search for Samuel Abbott produce several individuals with the same name alive at the same time, and with little additional information to narrow down the search, further details regarding Samuel's life or ownership of the land are unavailable. Additionally, it is unknown when Samuel sold this portion of the land.

3.2 William Stage, 1 November 1839 – 19 March 1841

William Stage, also spelled "Staige" (1764-1863), owned an extensive amount of land in Piatt County. He owned the portion of the Research Area land located in Section 14, Township 18N, Range 5E from November of 1839 through March of 1841.¹¹⁸

Stage was born in Virginia to Scottish parents, and lived in Pickaway County and Fairfield County, Ohio; it does not appear that he ever lived in Illinois.¹¹⁹ He married three times: Catherine Hile (1789-1819), Margaret Griffin (1785-1835), and Magdalena Reber, a widow, who he married in 1836 but eventually separated from.¹²⁰ He was listed as a farmer in the 1850 census.¹²¹ Several of his children

¹¹⁶ BLM, "Samuel B. Albott - Patent Details."

¹¹⁷ U.S. Census Bureau, "Samuel B. Abbott."

¹¹⁸ BLM, "William Stage - Patent Details"; Piatt County Clerk & Recorder's Office, "Deed from William Stage to Samuel Sharp."

¹¹⁹ Ayres, "William Staige (1784-1863)."

¹²⁰ Ayres.

¹²¹ U.S. Census Bureau, "William Stage."

moved to Piatt County, Illinois. Land use during Stage's ownership is unknown due to a lack of available documentation.

3.3 Samuel Sharp, 19 March 1841 – 1847

Samuel Sharp (also spelled as Sharpe) married Harriet Melissa Stage (b. 1822, d. 1842), daughter of William and Margaret Stage.¹²² Melissa, as she is listed on her tombstone, attended the Granville Female Academy in Granville, Ohio in 1838 and 1839.¹²³ The pair were married in Fairfield County, Ohio in December 1840 and moved to Illinois soon after.¹²⁴ They had one infant daughter who died shortly after birth in 1842. Melissa died in December of that year.¹²⁵ They are both buried in the Old Monticello Cemetery. Due to the lack of accessible records and the common nature of Samuel's name, his background is mostly unknown, as is his life following the death of Melissa. Sharp's use of the Research Area land is unknown based on the lack of available documentation.

3.4 Chester Denning, 1847 – 7 May 1853

The name "Chester Denning" came up with no relevant documents or references. However, there was a Charles R. Deming (b. 1804 [Massachusetts] d. 1903 [Illinois]) who patented land in the nearby Bement Township (Township 17N Range 4E) through military warrant in 1858.¹²⁶ By 1875, the land in the Bement Township was under different ownership.¹²⁷ Charles R. Deming also purchased several parcels of land in Henry County, Illinois during the 1840s and 1850s.¹²⁸ It is unlikely that that Denning or Deming ever lived on or used the land in Piatt County during his brief ownership.

3.5 Daniel Stickle, 7 May 1853 – 14 August 1855

Daniel Stickle (also spelled Stickel) purchased the land on May 7, 1853, and sold it on August 14, 1855.¹²⁹ Stickle was born in 1816 in York County, Pennsylvania. He began visiting Monticello often, beginning in 1837, and officially moved to the area in April 1841.¹³⁰ He first purchased land in Monticello at the July 4, 1837 celebration of the newly surveyed town. In 1841, he established the first general merchandise store in Monticello. In the late 1830s or early 1840s, Stickle was appointed commissioner for construction of a new state road from Charleston, IL to Bloomington.¹³¹ Stickle married Annabell Piatt, daughter of James Piatt, on May 31, 1842. Stickle was superintendent of the

¹²² Hays, "Fannie Stage - Hays/Heath/Harris/Hart Family Tree."

¹²³ "Catalogue of the Officers and Members of Granville Female Academy for the Year Ending February 22, 1838; Granville, Ohio."; "Catalogue of the Officers and Members of Granville Female Academy for the Year Ending February 20, 1839; Granville, Ohio."

¹²⁴ Fairfield County, Ohio, "Harriet M. Stage in the Ohio, U.S., County Marriage Records, 1774-1993."

¹²⁵ Find A Grave, "Melissa Stage Sharp (1813-1842)."

¹²⁶ Roberts, "Charles Rolland Deming (1804-1903)"; BLM, "Charles R. Deming - Patent Details."

¹²⁷ Warner & Beers, *Atlas of Piatt County and the State of Illinois*.

¹²⁸ "Charles Deming in the Illinois, U.S., Public Land Purchase Records, 1813-1909."

¹²⁹ Piatt County Clerk & Recorder's Office, "Deed from Chester Denning to Daniel Stickle"; Piatt County Clerk & Recorder's Office, "Deed from Daniel Stickel to Enoch Judy."

¹³⁰ Piatt, *History of Piatt County*, 313.

¹³¹ Piatt, 120-21; 242.

Methodist Episcopal Church's Sunday school. After closing or selling his business in 1854, Stickle bought a farm outside of town in 1856. He and Annabell moved back to Monticello in 1865 and constructed a brick home that they lived in until 1880.¹³² The residence, though no longer extant, sat on a 3.5-acre parcel at the intersection of what is now North Park Street and West Livingston Street, next to the Old Monticello Cemetery.¹³³

Stickle was active in local and state politics throughout his lifetime. He was a supervisor of the Monticello township, was elected state representative in 1858, and was elected the first mayor of the City of Monticello in 1872 and served two terms.¹³⁴ In the 1875 atlas directory, he is listed as "Mayor of City. Coal Dealer. Office with M.C. Kazebee, Grain Dealer."¹³⁵ In 1883, he was the police magistrate.¹³⁶

Stickel also purchased several other parcels of land around Monticello in 1853.¹³⁷ It is likely that the purchase of the Research Area land was simply part of Stickel's larger acquisition and quick turn over of land in the area. The location of Stickel's farm is unknown, although it is referenced in Emma Piatt's 1883 work as "south of Monticello."¹³⁸

While Daniel Stickel was a significant person in Monticello and Piatt County history, his usage of the land does not appear to have related to his contributions to the community due to his brief ownership time and larger pattern of purchasing large quantities of land and selling them quickly.

3.6 Enoch Judy, 14 August 1855 – 1864

Enoch Judy owned the Research Area land from August 14, 1855 through 1864.¹³⁹ Judy was born on February 4, 1810, in Hardy County, West Virginia. In 1827, he moved to Ohio with an uncle. He married Sarah McMurry on October 13, 1844.¹⁴⁰ In 1850 he moved from Ohio to Piatt County, "settling on a farm owned by [James] Piatt, after whom the county was named. He then bought 160 acres of land in its raw state, two miles from Monticello and improved it, and resided there."¹⁴¹ Enoch and Sarah had at least four children, Margaret Anne, John, Elizabeth Jane (1851-1865), and an unnamed infant son. Sarah died during the birth of this son on August 24, 1854. Sarah, her infant son, and Elizabeth are buried in the Haneline Cemetery, situated approximately one-quarter mile south of the Research Area.¹⁴²

¹³² Piatt, 322.

¹³³ Warner & Beers, *Atlas of Piatt County and the State of Illinois*.

¹³⁴ Piatt, *History of Piatt County*, 244, 313, 321–22.

¹³⁵ Warner & Beers, *Atlas of Piatt County and the State of Illinois*, Directories 001.

¹³⁶ Piatt, *History of Piatt County*, 322.

¹³⁷ BLM, "Daniel Stickel - Patent Details."

¹³⁸ Piatt, *History of Piatt County*, 282.

¹³⁹ Piatt County Clerk & Recorder's Office, "Deed from Daniel Stickel to Enoch Judy"; Piatt County Clerk & Recorder's Office, "Deed from Enoch Judy to William Foster."

¹⁴⁰ "A Piatt County Pioneer."

¹⁴¹ "A Piatt County Pioneer."

¹⁴² Behrend, "Sarah Judy (Unknown-1854)"; Behrend, "Infant Son Judy (Unknown-1854)"; Behrend, "Eliza J Judy (Unknown-1865)."

Following Sarah's death, Enoch married Jemima Luvena "Zenia" Hodgkins in 1861.¹⁴³ Born Jemima Culver, she married Samuel Hodgkins in 1847 in Franklin County, Ohio.¹⁴⁴ They had two children, Elmira (1853-1871, buried in Haneline Cemetery) and Rachel A. (b. 1859).¹⁴⁵ Rachel likely died between 1860-1870 as she is not recorded on the 1870 Census. They moved to Monticello in 1860 along with Samuel's brother and parents. Samuel died in 1860 and is buried in Old Monticello Cemetery.¹⁴⁶

Maragaret Judy, Enoch Judy's daughter, married Jeremiah Sanford Hodgkins (1831-1916) in 1862. He was the brother of Samuel Hodgkins, Luvena's first husband. They had 12 children, and 10 lived to adulthood. They moved to Missouri in 1880.¹⁴⁷

Enoch and Luvena moved to Jackson County, Missouri in 1884 with Enoch's son John and his wife Emma Rosebrough, their daughter Lidia, and Lidia's husband Walter Reeves.¹⁴⁸ Luvena died in 1896. Both are buried in Belton Cemetery in Belton, MO with Ruda Terril (1822-1898) of whom not much is known. Enoch died in 1900.¹⁴⁹

During his life, Enoch and his son were farmers and owned much of the land surrounding the Research Area until they left Illinois.¹⁵⁰ Judy's use of the land during his era of ownership is unknown based on available documentation. Because Judy was a farmer and owned a large amount of surrounding land, it's possible that Judy attempted farming on the Research Area land. Alternatively, it's possible that Judy sold the parcels after learning that they were not as suited to farming as the other nearby land outside of the immediate floodplain. Additionally, Judy may have given the land that Haneline Cemetery now occupies to the city of Monticello following the death of his first wife and son, evidenced by Judy's ownership of the land surrounding the small cemetery in 1875.¹⁵¹

3.7 William Foster, 1864 – c. 1875

William Foster owned the Research Area land beginning in 1864. Sometime between that time and 1875, he sold the land to Joseph Green Foster.¹⁵² There are two William Fosters that could have owned the land: William T. Foster, brother to Joseph Green Foster, or William A. Foster, their father. Based on documentation available at this time, Tetra Tech cannot determine which William Foster the 1864 land deed refers to. Therefore, both William T. and William A. Foster will be discussed.

¹⁴³ "Enoch Judy - Marriage Record."

¹⁴⁴ "Lavina Culver in the Ohio, U.S., County Marriage Records, 1774-1993."

¹⁴⁵ Miller, "Elmira Judy (1853-1871)."

¹⁴⁶ Find A Grave, "Samuel S. Hodgkins (1823-1860)."

¹⁴⁷ Hill, "Obituary."

¹⁴⁸ "A Piatt County Pioneer"; U.S. Census Bureau, "Enoch Judy"; Belton, "John W Judy (1849-1931)."

¹⁴⁹ Belton, "Enoch Judy (1810-1900)."

¹⁵⁰ U.S. Census Bureau, "William Stage"; U.S. Census Bureau, "U.S., Selected Federal Census Non-Population Schedules, 1850-1880"; Warner & Beers, *Atlas of Piatt County and the State of Illinois*.

¹⁵¹ Warner & Beers, *Atlas of Piatt County and the State of Illinois*.

¹⁵² Piatt County Clerk & Recorder's Office, "Deed from Enoch Judy to William Foster"; Warner & Beers, *Atlas of Piatt County and the State of Illinois*.

William A. Foster (1799-1879) was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and moved to Piatt County sometime between 1850 and 1860.¹⁵³ He and his wife Anna L. Boggs (1805-1844) had five children together: Ester Joy, Mary A., John B., Joseph Green, and William T.¹⁵⁴ William A. was a farmer by the time he was living in Monticello in 1860.¹⁵⁵

William T. Foster (1828-1866), son of William A. Foster, was born in New York and moved to Monticello in 1854.¹⁵⁶ He and Mary Elizabeth Thomas married in 1852.¹⁵⁷ His occupation is not listed in the 1860 census. In the 1870 census, he was listed as a retired merchant and Clerk of Circuit Court.¹⁵⁸ In 1872, he was elected as a city council member.¹⁵⁹

By 1880, William T. Foster was a farmer. Available records indicate that he took up farming only between 1870 and 1880, but this cannot be definitively confirmed at this time.¹⁶⁰ His agricultural holdings are listed in the 1880 Agricultural Census, with his farm location listed as Monticello township. However, the specific location of his farm cannot be determined based on available sources. According to the census, in 1880 he farmed on 50 acres of tilled land. He owned four horses, two cows, 20 pigs, and 50 chickens. The chickens produced 600 dozen eggs in 1879. Additionally, he harvested 600 bushels of corn, 100 bushels of wheat, and 50 bushels of potatoes.¹⁶¹

3.8 Joseph Green Foster, c. 1875 – c. 1896

Joseph Green Foster owned the land in the Research Area by 1875.¹⁶² There is a gap in land ownership documentation between 1864 and 1875, meaning that Joseph Foster could have acquired the land anytime within those eleven years.

Joseph was born on September 26, 1826, to William A. Foster, Jr. (1799-1879), and Anna L. Foster (née Boggs, 1805-1844).¹⁶³ Joseph had several careers before settling in Piatt County in 1866:

When he was about three years of age his parents moved to Elmira, N. Y., and he lived there until 1849. That year he came to Bloomington [Illinois]... and started a bakery, the first one in town. Later he moved to Clinton [Illinois] and worked as a civil engineer on the Illinois Central Railroad until the road was completed. He was the first railroad agent at Clinton. He afterwards served as assistant postmaster, both at Clinton and Bloomington. In 1859 he

¹⁵³ Golan, "William A. Foster, Jr. - Golan/Buerkett Family Tree"; U.S. Census Bureau, "Wm. [A.] Foster"; U.S. Census Bureau, "Wm. [A.] Foster."

¹⁵⁴ Golan, "William A. Foster, Jr. - Golan/Buerkett Family Tree."

¹⁵⁵ U.S. Census Bureau, "Wm. [A.] Foster."

¹⁵⁶ Warner & Beers, *Atlas of Piatt County and the State of Illinois*; Golan, "William T. Foster - Golan/Buerkett Family Tree."

¹⁵⁷ Piatt, *History of Piatt County*, 143.

¹⁵⁸ U.S. Census Bureau, "William [T.] Foster."

¹⁵⁹ "Piatt County 100 Years Old Jan. 27."

¹⁶⁰ U.S. Census Bureau, "William T. Foster."

¹⁶¹ U.S. Census Bureau, "1880 Agricultural Census - Piatt County, Illinois."

¹⁶² Warner & Beers, *Atlas of Piatt County and the State of Illinois*.

¹⁶³ Turpin, "Joseph G. Foster (1826-1915)"; Golan, "William A. Foster, Jr. - Golan/Buerkett Family Tree."

started with a wagon train to California, and visited all of the northwestern states before returning home.¹⁶⁴

Joseph married Caroline E. Waller in 1863, and shortly thereafter they were living in Piatt County.¹⁶⁵ From 1866 through 1874, Joseph served as deputy Circuit Clerk under his brother, William T. Foster.¹⁶⁶ By 1875, he owned the Research Area land. Additionally, Enoch Judy granted land to Joseph in the same year, but records are unclear as to which parcel of land Foster acquired.¹⁶⁷ The 1875 atlas for Piatt County shows Enoch Judy owning land adjacent to the Research Area – it’s possible that is the land he granted to Foster. Foster was operating a farm within the Research Area by 1880 according to the 1880 Agricultural Census for the Monticello township.¹⁶⁸

According to this census, Foster owned approximately 150 acres of improved land. In this instance, “improved” means that this land was tilled for farming. On 50 acres of this land, he cultivated approximately 2,000 bushels of corn. He also grew 50 bushels of potatoes. Eighty chickens produced approximately 600 dozen eggs in 1879. Other livestock on the land included three horses, twenty pigs, and two cows. Foster additionally produced 200 pounds of butter in 1879.¹⁶⁹

Sometime between 1880 and 1896, Foster sold the land. At present, it is unclear if Foster owned the land until 1896 when it was acquired by William Ridgely, or if there was an additional owner or owners during that time. Additional deed research is needed to confirm landownership during this period.

3.9 William Ridgely, 1880-1896 – c. 1907

William Ridgely (1834-1925) acquired the land sometime between 1880 and 1896 and owned it until 1907 at the latest.¹⁷⁰ Ridgely (also spelled Ridgley) was born in Virginia but came to the Sangamon township of Piatt County in 1855, where he married Louisa Castor (1838-1900) in 1857.¹⁷¹ The couple had five children: Frank L., Charles H., John G., William S., and Jennie Ridgley.¹⁷² Charles H. Ridgley would go on to own the Pepsin Syrup Company.¹⁷³ William Ridgely’s obituary provides the following details of his life in Illinois:

In 1857 he acquired 80 acres of swamp land in Goose Creek township, Piatt county [*sic*]. Later he sold that property and acquired another smaller but better farm and continued to trade and sell until in 1877 he had acquired 320 acres of farm land [*sic*] in Monticello township. He operated that farm for 13 years and then retired, moving to Monticello. During his time on the

¹⁶⁴ “Death of Joseph G. Foster.”

¹⁶⁵ Golan, “Caroline E. Waller - Golan/Buerkett Family Tree.”

¹⁶⁶ “Death of Joseph G. Foster.”

¹⁶⁷ “Real Estate Transfers.”

¹⁶⁸ U.S. Census Bureau, “1880 Agricultural Census - Piatt County, Illinois.”

¹⁶⁹ U.S. Census Bureau.

¹⁷⁰ “William Ridgely Dies in Decatur”; Young, “William Ridgely - Young Family Tree.”

¹⁷¹ “William Ridgely Dies in Decatur”; Young, “William Ridgely - Young Family Tree.”

¹⁷² Piatt, *History of Piatt County*, 589.

¹⁷³ McIntosh, *Past and Present of Piatt County, Illinois*, 45.

farm he gave much attention to stock raising, became an exhibitor and prize winner in stock shows and was widely known as a successful stock man.¹⁷⁴

In the 1880s, Ridgely Sr. also owned 280 acres of “greatly improved” land in Sangamon township where he constructed a new barn.¹⁷⁵ By 1896, Ridgely owned approximately 150 acres in the Monticello township: 70 acres in the Research Area, and 80 acres in the W ½ NW ¼ of Section 2.¹⁷⁶ By 1907, Ridgely had sold the Research Area land and was living in Decatur, Illinois with his wife Catherine Roper, whom he married in 1902.¹⁷⁷

It’s possible that Ridgely used the Research Area land for farming during his period of ownership. However, because he owned land elsewhere in the Monticello township and throughout county, it’s possible that those lands were also used for farming. The phrase “greatly improved” during this time usually referred to land that had been cleared, drained, and was then suitable for farming. It’s highly likely that the “greatly improved” land in the Sangamon township was used for farming for this reason. Ridgely may have used every parcel of land he owned for farming during this time, including the Research Area. Due to gaps in documentation, land use cannot be definitively confirmed.

3.10 Lodge Brothers, c. 1907 – c. 1915

The Lodge Brothers owned the land from c. 1907 through c. 1915. There is a gap in land ownership documentation between 1896 and 1907, so it is possible that they acquired the land prior to the earliest available documentation in 1907.

“Lodge Bros.” was a business partnership operated by two brothers from the Lodge family, William Franklin Lodge (1868-1935) and James Piatt Lodge (1870-1949). Three other brothers in the family – Paul Edmund Lodge (1878-1961), Charles Van Albaid Lodge (1870-1948), and Fred Sterling Lodge (1884-1973) – were likely not involved in the partnership as all three had moved away from Piatt County sometime between 1900 and 1910.¹⁷⁸ It is unclear which brothers were directly involved in day-to-day business operations in Piatt County based on available sources.

The Lodge brothers were born to William Edmonson Lodge (1834-1901) and Frances Ann Piatt (1843-1895).¹⁷⁹ The Piatt family were among the first settlers to Piatt County before it was established as such in the late 1820s and 1830s. The Lodge family brought agricultural innovation to the area upon arrival in the 1850s. Descendants of both families were especially prominent members of the county who contributed to its business and agricultural growth throughout the last half of the nineteenth century.

¹⁷⁴ “William Ridgely Dies in Decatur.”

¹⁷⁵ Piatt, *History of Piatt County*, 589.

¹⁷⁶ “Monticello Township Plat,” 1896.

¹⁷⁷ “William Ridgely Dies in Decatur.”

¹⁷⁸ Hicks, “Paul Edmund Lodge - Hicks Family Tree”; McKean, “Charles VanAlbaid Lodge - Wayne McKean Family Tree”; Hicks, “Fred S. Lodge - Hicks Family Tree.”

¹⁷⁹ Behrend, “William Edmonson Lodge (1834-1901)”; Behrend, “Frances Ann Piatt Lodge (1843-1895).”

William Edmonson Lodge (1834-1901) was born in Hamilton County, Ohio and lived in Paris, Illinois (Edgar County) with his family until adulthood. William E. attended law school in Paris, IL and moved to Monticello in 1859 to establish a law practice.¹⁸⁰ Additionally, William E. bought out the local newspaper *The Conservative* and owned it until 1864 when he sold it to N. E. Rhoades.¹⁸¹ Lodge advocated for a town hall in the Monticello township, was “the leading spirit in giving [Monticello] its electric light system,” and “took an active part in getting the present Wabash railroad.”¹⁸²

Perhaps inspired by his own father (Benjamin F. Lodge, 1796-1893), who was renowned in Edgar County for improving and operating 1,100 acres of prairie land for farming, William E. “did not confine his attention solely to his professional duties [and] became extensively connected with farming.”¹⁸³

According to Charles McIntosh in *Past and Present of Piatt County*:

He [William E. Lodge] always maintained a deep interest in the occupation to which he had been reared and regarded it as the basis of all national prosperity. From time to time he made judicious investments in real estate, and ultimately became the owner of six hundred acres of land in Monticello and Sangamon townships of Piatt county. Upon his land he made many improvements, developing farms modern in all their equipments [*sic*] and supplied with all accessories necessary to carry on agricultural work. He was the first in the county to use tile in draining his land, and was the first to advocate surface cultivation.¹⁸⁴

William Edmonson Lodge married Frances Ann Piatt (1843-1895) in 1868.¹⁸⁵ Frances was the granddaughter of James Andrew Piatt (1783-1838), for whom the county was named. James settled in the area in 1829 with his family (including his son William Hart Piatt, Frances’s father).¹⁸⁶ McIntosh succinctly describes the family’s importance to local and state history: “Since the time that the first members of the Piatt family located in this section of the state the name has figured conspicuously in connection with its material, social, intellectual, and moral development.”¹⁸⁷

William Hart Piatt (1816-1906) married Clarinda Marquiss (1819-1893) in 1838.¹⁸⁸ McIntosh describes Piatt’s success in agriculture and business:

In his farm work he prospered. The land was rich and proved very productive, returning excellent crops in reward for the labors bestowed upon the fields. As his financial resources increased Mr. Piatt made judicious investments in real estate, and from time to time has made purchases and sales that have proven of profit and added largely to his income. He entered

¹⁸⁰ Piatt, *History of Piatt County*, 149; “Death of William E. Lodge,” 1.

¹⁸¹ Piatt, *History of Piatt County*, 146.

¹⁸² “Death of William E. Lodge,” 1.

¹⁸³ McIntosh, *Past and Present of Piatt County, Illinois*, 131–32.

¹⁸⁴ McIntosh, 132.

¹⁸⁵ “Death of William E. Lodge,” 1.

¹⁸⁶ Piatt, *History of Piatt County*, 225.

¹⁸⁷ McIntosh, *Past and Present of Piatt County, Illinois*, 86.

¹⁸⁸ Piatt, *History of Piatt County*, 226; Turpin, “William Hart Piatt (1816-1906)”; Turpin, “Clarinda Marquiss Piatt (1819-1893).”

land in various parts of the country, much of which he improved and sold to his children. He has fenced and broken over two thousand acres and he now has in his possession about one hundred and seventy acres of this land, upon which he has made many fine improvements....

Mr. Piatt has not confined his attention solely to the cultivation of his fields and to the purchase and sale of property, but has also engaged in large measure in cattle dealing. He began this business in 1841... [and in] 1851 he drove his first herd of cattle to Philadelphia and thence to the New York city market.... For several years he dealt very extensively in stock which he purchased in various states and drove to the eastern market. Thus he added annually to his income and to-day Mr. Piatt is one of the wealthy men of the county.¹⁸⁹

The Lodge Brothers, Research Area landowners, carried on their family's legacy of working in business and agriculture in Piatt County. William Franklin Lodge was born on November 12, 1868. After attending public school in Monticello, he attended Illinois State University and later Northwestern University where he received a law degree and was admitted to the bar in 1892.¹⁹⁰ McIntosh describes William's varied career upon return to Monticello:

Returning to Monticello, Mr. Lodge joined his father as a member of the firm of Lodge, Hicks & Lodge, and became interested in the manufacture of building brick and tile, the plant being situated just outside the city limits on the north. This enterprise was established in 1891, and the machinery is of the latest improved patterns. The output of the industry is now large, and employment is furnished to a number of men and boys. Mr. Lodge also became secretary and incorporation promoter of the electric light company, and was instrumental in erecting the plant. He succeeded in selling ten thousand dollars' worth of stock, and for nine years efficiently served as manager of the company, and also as electrician. He still owns a part of the stock. Mr. Lodge was also one of the organizers of the Monticello Mutual Telephone Company, which was afterward merged into the Piatt Telephone Company with exchanges at Bement, Monticello and DeLand, and about five hundred phones in use. This company was organized and incorporated in 1896, with a capital stock of ten thousand dollars. Our subject and his brother, James P. [Piatt], now own about seven hundred telephones in operation throughout Piatt county [*sic*], and he gives his personal supervision to that business.¹⁹¹

McIntosh further describes William as "a young man of marked business ability and executive force, of keen sagacity and unfaltering energy, and along many lines he has contributed to the substantial improvement and permanent development of his native county."¹⁹² Alongside his brother, James Piatt Lodge was "practicing law and looking after the farming interests of the family."¹⁹³

¹⁸⁹ McIntosh, *Past and Present of Piatt County, Illinois*, 91.

¹⁹⁰ McIntosh, 443.

¹⁹¹ McIntosh, 444.

¹⁹² McIntosh, 444.

¹⁹³ McIntosh, 133.

During the few decades of the Lodge Brothers partnership that lasted from the early 1890s until 1915, they operated a dairy farm, cultivated crops and livestock, and took on construction contracting projects. The Lodge Brothers ran the Camp Creek Dairy in the late 1890s.¹⁹⁴ The location of the dairy farm is described as north of Monticello.¹⁹⁵ The Lodge Brothers sold ice cream and operated a milk route.¹⁹⁶

The Lodge Brothers also worked in agriculture. By 1898, they owned “15 horses, ...4 thoroughbred Holstein cows, 73 sheep and 30 hogs at their farm north of Monticello.”¹⁹⁷ At the turn of the twentieth century, they were cultivating crops that included corn, flax, buckwheat, and strawberries.¹⁹⁸ By the time the partnership was dissolved in 1915, the Lodge Brothers owned 52 horses, 22 cattle, 112 sheep, 9 goats, and 30 pigs.¹⁹⁹

The Lodge Brothers pursued construction projects during the last few years of their partnership. In 1912, they pumped sand from the Sangamon River for “roadbuilding north of the city.”²⁰⁰ In the same year, they won a \$15,000 contract to build the first “hard roads” in the county on State Street, between the city limits and the cemetery.²⁰¹ In 1913, they completed the construction of a new roof on the court house [sic]...²⁰²

In addition to the Research Area land, the Lodge Brothers owned land elsewhere in the Monticello township (Section 1, NW ¼ NE ¼). The brothers also individually owned land, and likely inherited land from their late father which is marked on the 1910 plat as “W. E. Lodge – Heirs” or “W. E. Lodge – Estate.”²⁰³ It is not possible at present to know which, if any, of the Lodge Brothers’ agricultural ventures took place on the Research Area land.

3.11 Fred Sterling Lodge, c. 1915 – c. 1949

Fred Sterling Lodge acquired the land in the Research Area in c. 1915. The earliest documentation that lists Fred as the sole owner of this land is from 1919; however, c. 1915 is assumed because in that year the Lodge Brothers dissolved their business partnership.

Fred was born on June 9, 1884, to William Edmonson Lodge (1834-1901) and Frances Ann Lodge (née Piatt).²⁰⁴ See [3.10 Lodge Brothers, c. 1907 – c. 1915](#) for more information about the Lodge and Piatt families. In 1900, he was still living with his family in Monticello.²⁰⁵ By 1910, however, he had moved to

¹⁹⁴ “Monticello in the Late 90’s,” 8; “Telephone Exchange 1898,” 7; “Nineteen Years Ago”; “From the Files - Forty Years Ago,” 2.

¹⁹⁵ “A Look into the Past,” 4.

¹⁹⁶ “A Look into the Past,” 4; “Monticellians,” January 6, 1898.

¹⁹⁷ “Lodge Bros. Public Sale,” 4.

¹⁹⁸ “Monticellians,” December 12, 1901, 3; “County News,” October 8, 1903; “County News,” October 15, 1903; “Strawberries.”

¹⁹⁹ “Closing Out Sale,” 5.

²⁰⁰ “Sand Pumped from Bed of River,” 1.

²⁰¹ “Hard Roads to Cemetery,” 1.

²⁰² “47,000 Tax Levy Made.”

²⁰³ “Monticello Township Plat,” 1910.

²⁰⁴ Turpin, “Fred Sterling Lodge (1884-1973).”

²⁰⁵ U.S. Census Bureau, “Fred S. Lodge,” 1900.

Chicago and was working as a chemical engineer at a meatpacking factory.²⁰⁶ He married Louise Retz around 1915 and continued to live in Chicago until the early 1930s.²⁰⁷ By 1936, Fred and his wife lived in Washington D.C. where he worked as a chemical engineer for the National Fertilizer Association.²⁰⁸ Following Louise's death in 1946, he remarried to Grace E. Retz in 1948.²⁰⁹ He lived in Washington D.C. until at least 1950.²¹⁰ His whereabouts from 1950 through his death in 1973 in Florida are unknown due to available source limitations.²¹¹

Fred sold the land to Elverton and Zelma Kruse sometime between 1943 and 1949.²¹² Land use during his era of ownership is unknown.

3.12 Elverton H. Kruse and Zelma Marie Kruse, 1949 – 24 April 1956

Elverton Henry Kruse and his wife, Zelma Marie Kruse (née Nelson) owned the land in the Research Area by 1949 until April of 1956.²¹³ Elverton was born in Fort Wayne, Indiana on May 1, 1897, to William Christian Kruse (1871-1930) and Wilhelmina C. "Minnie" Kruse (née Bolman; 1873-1954).²¹⁴ In 1900, Elverton lived with his parents and siblings Wilmer (b. 1899) and Harold (b. 1899) at 65 Brackenridge Street in Fort Wayne, and by 1910 the family was living at 215 West Lewis Street. Elverton started his career as a salesman for a soap company by 1917 at the latest, when he was approximately 20 years old.²¹⁵ He continued to live with his family at 215 West Lewis Street until shortly following his marriage to Zelma Marie Nelson in June of 1936.²¹⁶

Zelma Marie Kruse (née Nelson) was born in Monticello, Illinois on October 24, 1912, to Eldo E. Nelson (1887-1949) and Della Nelson (née Castang, 1890-1970).²¹⁷ The Nelson family has been living in Piatt County since the 1860s. Her great-grandparents William O. Nelson (1829-1869) and Lucinda Mary Nelson (née McGuffy, 1828-1903) were living in the Goose Creek township by the early 1860s.²¹⁸ Her maternal grandparents Louis Gottfried Castang (1844-1918) and Emma Castang (née Francis, 1856-1924) arrived in Piatt County around 1900.²¹⁹ Zelma and her family lived at 822 North Market Street in Monticello.²²⁰ After graduating high school, Zelma attended the Anthony Wayne Institute in Fort

²⁰⁶ U.S. Census Bureau, "Fred S. Lodge," 1910.

²⁰⁷ U.S. Census Bureau; U.S. Census Bureau, "Fred S. Lodge," 1920; U.S. Census Bureau, "Fred S. Lodge," 1930.

²⁰⁸ *Boyd's District of Columbia Directory, 1936*, 1345.

²⁰⁹ Turpin, "Fred Sterling Lodge (1884-1973)"; Hicks, "Fred S. Lodge - Hicks Family Tree."

²¹⁰ U.S. Census Bureau, "Fred S. Lodge," 1950.

²¹¹ Hicks, "Fred S. Lodge - Hicks Family Tree."

²¹² "Monticello Township"; "Monticello Township Plat," 1949.

²¹³ "Monticello Township Plat," 1949; "Assessment List Lands"; "Monticello Township Plat," 1954; Piatt County Clerk & Recorder's Office, "Deed from Elverton H. Kruse and Zelma Marie Kruse to Cleo Troike."

²¹⁴ Find A Grave, "Elverton Henry 'Al' Kruse (1897-1965)"; Find A Grave, "Wilhelmina C. 'Minnie' Bolman Kruse (1873-1954)"; "William Christian Kruse (1871-1930)."

²¹⁵ *Fort Wayne City and Allen County Directory*.

²¹⁶ Michigan Department of Community Health, "Marriage License No. 12011 Elverton H. Kruse and Zelma Nelson."

²¹⁷ Find A Grave, "Zelma Marie Nelson Kruse (1912-2006)."

²¹⁸ Owen, "William O. Nelson - Kruse/Nelson Family Tree"; Owen, "Lucinda Mary McGuffy - Kruse/Nelson Family Tree."

²¹⁹ Owen, "Louis Gottfried Castang - Kruse/Nelson Family Tree"; Owen, "Emma Frances - Kruse/Nelson Family Tree."

²²⁰ U.S. Census Bureau, "Zelma Nelson."

Wayne, Indiana in 1930.²²¹ The school offered coursework in business and adjacent fields including stenography, accounting, bookkeeping, sales, and secretarial work.²²² It's likely that she met Elverton Kruse in Fort Wayne during her time attending this school.

Zelma moved from Monticello to Fort Wayne to live with Elverton shortly after their marriage on June 28, 1936. They lived at 30 West Creighton Street in Fort Wayne for a short time, but then by 1940 they were living at 926 Curdes Avenue.²²³ Elverton continued his career in sales in the 1940s and 1950s, and Zelma was a homemaker during this time.²²⁴ In 1941 they had a child, Karen.²²⁵ By 1960, Zelma was working for the Lincoln National Life Insurance Company as a stenographer.²²⁶

The Kruses lived at 926 Curdes Avenue from c. 1940 until at least 1960.²²⁷ Elverton Kruse died in 1965 at the age of 67 or 68 and is buried in the Concordia Lutheran Cemetery in Fort Wayne.²²⁸ Zelma Kruse died on January 25, 2006, at the age of 93, and is buried at Greenlawn Memorial Park in Fort Wayne.²²⁹

Records indicate that the Kruses lived only in Fort Wayne, Indiana during their duration of ownership of the land in Monticello. It is currently not possible to discern how the Kruses used the land based on a gap in available records and the Kruses' place of permanent residence outside of Monticello.

3.13 Walter H. Troike and Cleo Troike, 24 April 1956 – 1963

Walter H. Troike and his wife Cleo Troike, née Plankenhorn, owned the property from April 14, 1952, through 1963.²³⁰ Walter was born on April 21, 1898, in Fayette County, Illinois, to William Troike and Louisa Troike (née Lemke).²³¹ He had five siblings: Johanna (b. 1894), William Jr. (b. 1896), Hildegard (b. 1901), Otto (b. 1902), and Elsa (b. 1908). By 1910 his family was living in Bates County, Missouri, and in Crawford County, Kansas by 1920.²³² He attended business college in Pittsburgh, Kansas.²³³ In the early 1920s Walter moved to Monticello and soon thereafter was the owner and manager of the Route 10 Garage, a mechanic shop and used car sales business that he purchased from Roy Albert in 1926. In 1928, Walter transferred ownership of this business to his brother Otto Troike.²³⁴

²²¹ "Local and Personal Items."

²²² *Anthony Wayne Institute Catalog*.

²²³ *Polk's Fort Wayne City Directory*, 1938; *Polk's Fort Wayne City Directory*, 1940; Michigan Department of Community Health, "Marriage License No. 12011 Elverton H. Kruse and Zelma Nelson."

²²⁴ U.S. Census Bureau, "Elverton H Kruse," 1940; U.S. Census Bureau, "Elverton H Kruse," 1950; U.S. Census Bureau, "Zelma M Kruse," 1940; U.S. Census Bureau, "Zelma M Kruse," 1950.

²²⁵ U.S. Census Bureau, "Karen K. Kruse."

²²⁶ *Polk's Fort Wayne City Directory*, 1960.

²²⁷ *Polk's Fort Wayne City Directory*, 1940; *Polk's Fort Wayne City Directory*, 1960.

²²⁸ Find A Grave, "Elverton Henry 'Al' Kruse (1897-1965)."

²²⁹ Find A Grave, "Zelma Marie Nelson Kruse (1912-2006)."

²³⁰ Piatt County Clerk & Recorder's Office, "Deed from Elverton H. Kruse and Zelma Marie Kruse to Cleo Troike"; Piatt County Clerk & Recorder's Office, "Deed from C. G. Holforthy to William Burgess."

²³¹ Turpin, "Walter H. Troike (1898-1962)"; U.S. Census Bureau, "Walter Troike," 1900.

²³² U.S. Census Bureau, "Walter Troike," 1910; U.S. Census Bureau, "Walter H. Troike."

²³³ "Cleo Plankenhorn, Walter F. Troike Marry Wednesday."

²³⁴ "Route 10 Garage Change in Ownership," 5; "Move to Champaign," 16.

Cleo Glenda Troike, née Plankenhorn, was born on May 10, 1899, in the Goose Creek Township of Piatt County to James Oliver Plankenhorn (1876-1963) and Olive Bell Plankenhorn (née Welch, 1880-1953).²³⁵ Cleo was a fourth-generation resident of Piatt County. Her maternal great-grandparents Rev. Thomas Henry Welch (1785-1858) and his wife Elizabeth Welch (née Rudisill, 1818-1871) were living in the Goose Creek township of Piatt County by 1850.²³⁶ Thomas Welch moved to Piatt County in 1839 and was a preacher from the time of his arrival in the area until 1858.²³⁷ Thomas and Elizabeth's son Cephas Welch, Cleo's grandfather, was born in Goose Creek on October 6, 1855. Cleo's grandmother Harriet E. Welch (née Hott) was also born in Goose Creek on October 31, 1855.²³⁸

Cleo's immediate family left Goose Creek sometime between 1900 and 1910 and moved to 217 East Bond Street in Monticello.²³⁹ After graduating high school in 1918, Cleo became a teacher. In 1919, she taught at a school in Mansfield, a town in the Sangamon township of Piatt County.²⁴⁰ For most of the 1920s, Cleo taught at a school in La Place in the Cerro Gordo township of Piatt County. She taught grammar for primary school aged children, typically grades 1 through 8.²⁴¹

Walter Troike and Cleo Plankenhorn married on October 29, 1930, in Monticello.²⁴² They lived at 416 South Independence Street from 1932 through 1960.²⁴³ Records indicate that Cleo quit her teaching position shortly after marriage.

By 1930 Walter founded a construction business named W. H. Troike Construction Company (W. H. Troike Co.) after transferring ownership of the Route 10 Garage to Otto Troike. The company specialized in "the gravel business and drainage ditch contracting" and by the 1950s was based out of Mahomet, Illinois in Champaign County.²⁴⁴ The company's projects focused on drainage projects including construction of new drainage systems and dredging, cleaning, or extension of existing systems. Additionally, W. H. Troike Co. supplied gravel, dirt, and sand and worked on road construction projects. The company operated for approximately thirty years and projects spanned several counties in Illinois.

Road construction was a focus of the early years of the company. In 1932, Troike was awarded a \$13,000 contract to construct "7.49 miles of motor fuel tax road, near Leroy [sic]" in McLean County,

²³⁵ Turpin, "Cleo Glenda Plankenhorn Troike (1899-1961)"; "Mrs. Cleo Troike Dies, Services Held Wednesday."

²³⁶ Holliday, "Thomas Henry Welch - Dennis Family Tree"; Holliday, "Elizabeth Rudisill - Dennis Family Tree."

²³⁷ Piatt, *History of Piatt County*, 561.

²³⁸ Holliday, "Cephas Welch - Dennis Family Tree"; Holliday, "Harriet Elizabeth Hott - Dennis Family Tree."

²³⁹ U.S. Census Bureau, "Cleo Plankenhorn," 1900; U.S. Census Bureau, "Cleo Plankenhorn," 1910; U.S. Census Bureau, "Cleo Plankenhorn," 1920.

²⁴⁰ "Monticello"; "Personals."

²⁴¹ "La Place," October 22, 1924; "La Place," March 11, 1925; "La Place Board Hires Teachers"; "Social Events"; "Court Convened"; "La Place," September 8, 1927; "Teachers' Directory."

²⁴² "Cleo Plankenhorn, Walter F. Troike Marry Wednesday."

²⁴³ "Mrs. Cleo Troike Dies, Services Held Wednesday"; "List of Streets - Monticello"; *Telephone Directory for Bement, Deland, Mahomet, and Monticello*; *Telephone Directory for Bement, Deland, Mahomet, Monticello*, 1954; *Telephone Directory for Bement, Deland, Mahomet, Monticello*, 1955; *Telephone Directory of Monticello, Bement, Deland, and Mahomet*.

²⁴⁴ "Cleo Plankenhorn, Walter F. Troike Marry Wednesday"; "W. H. Troike Co. Advertisement."

Illinois.²⁴⁵ In Danvers, Illinois, also in McLean County, W. H. Troike Co. surfaced six miles of road in 1934 as part of a government relief program during the Great Depression that resumed project work not completed by the defunct CWA.²⁴⁶ The company continued to bid on road construction projects and supplied gravel and sand for projects throughout the 1940s and 1950s in several Piatt County townships, including Monticello, Blue Ridge, and Goose Creek, and in other counties, such as Ford County.²⁴⁷

Troike's construction company also specialized in drainage ditch construction and cleaning. One of the company's large early projects was the cleaning and repair of a 35-mile ditch in the Whiteside and Rock Island County drainage district in 1935. Troike was awarded the contract with his bid of \$44,953 for the work, an amount considered "low for [the] job of moving 647,500 cubic yards of dirt."²⁴⁸ Troike and three members of his crew were given approximately 6 months to complete the work.²⁴⁹ His company also repaired levee breaks, dredged a drainage ditch, and repaired a bridge in the Coon Run drainage district in Morgan County, Illinois.²⁵⁰

Troike was awarded the contract for improving and extending the main ditch of Lake Fork special drainage district on a bid of \$92,100.01. This drainage district is the oldest in Piatt County, organized in October 1882 shortly following the enactment of the Levee Act and the Farm Drainage Act in 1879. The work included "dredging the district's main ditch and leveling its banks" and "extension of the ditch some five miles." The ditch was approximately 17 miles and crossed into Champaign and Douglas counties, where the district extends.²⁵¹

Walter Troike died on November 25, 1962, at the age of 64, and Cleo Troike died on June 11, 1961, at the age of 62. Both are buried in Monticello Cemetery.²⁵² After Walter's death, C. G. Holforty was the executor of the Troike's estate. Holforty sold the land to William Burgess in 1963.²⁵³ Troike's real estate assets at the time of his death were valued at \$200,000, and he was referred to as "a large landowner in the area."²⁵⁴ Additionally, Cleo held \$35,000 worth of real estate assets by the time of her death.²⁵⁵

Tetra Tech attributes the construction of the levees to Walter Troike and assumes that he constructed them sometime between 1956 and 1962, the year of his death. Tetra Tech reached this conclusion from 1) historic aerial photographs (see [Figure 3-1](#) and [Figure 3-2](#) below), 2) discussion with a local resident, and 3) consideration of Troike's career in drainage infrastructure construction.

²⁴⁵ "County Road Projects Given State Approval."

²⁴⁶ "Farm and Rural Interests - Danvers."

²⁴⁷ "Expenditures"; "Supervisor's Annual Report"; "Annual Report, 1948-1949"; "Township Treasurer's Annual Report."

²⁴⁸ "Ditch Cleaning Contract Given."

²⁴⁹ "Drainage Ditch Work to Begin."

²⁵⁰ "Drainage District Plans Extension of Levee, Drains."

²⁵¹ "Troike Gets Piatt Contract"; Herget, "Taming the Environment: The Drainage District in Illinois."

²⁵² Turpin, "Cleo Glenda Plankenhorn Troike (1899-1961)"; Turpin, "Walter H. Troike (1898-1962)."

²⁵³ Piatt County Clerk & Recorder's Office, "Deed from C. G. Holforty to William Burgess."

²⁵⁴ "List Troike Assets Valued at \$250,000"; "Drainage District Plans Extension of Levee, Drains," 16.

²⁵⁵ "Three Monticello Wills Filed in Piatt Court."

- 1) Historic aerial photographs from April of 1956 ([Figure 3-1](#)) and October of 1969 ([Figure 3-2](#)) reveal that the levees were constructed sometime within this time frame, as demonstrated by a significant change in the landscape. Because the Research Area was undeveloped in April of 1956, landowners prior to Troike could not have constructed the levees. There is no aerial imagery between 1956 and 1969 for this area that are currently available in the public record. See below for each image, using the path of the Sangamon River as a point of comparison.



Figure 3-1. Research Area, 1956. Aerial photograph of the Research Area (center) prior to the construction of the levees. Photograph taken on April 24, 1956. USGS Earth Explorer.²⁵⁶

²⁵⁶ USGS [United States Geological Survey], "Aerial Imagery, Piatt County, Illinois," April 24, 1956.



Figure 3-2. Research Area, 1969. Aerial photograph of the Research Area (center) after the construction of the levees. Photograph taken on October 7, 1969. USGS Earth Explorer.²⁵⁷

- 2) Lifelong Monticello resident Jack Stiverson attests that Troike constructed the levees sometime in the mid- to late-1950s. As an adolescent, Stiverson lived nearby the Research Area and spent considerable time in the surrounding woods. He recalled seeing Troike and his crew constructing the levees on one or more of these occasions. Assuming Stiverson did witness Troike himself, this recollection considered alongside the aerial imagery places the levee construction between April of 1956 and November of 1962 (Troike's death).
- 3) Troike's 30+ year career in drainage infrastructure construction supports the information presented from aerial photographs and Stiverson's recollections.

It is unlikely that Troike constructed the levees to make the land suitable for his own agricultural use. Troike's work with his construction company was the focus of his career: at present, there is no documentation suggesting that he was involved in any agricultural ventures. His motivation behind

²⁵⁷ USGS, "Aerial Imagery, Piatt County, Illinois," October 7, 1969.

constructing the levees is more likely explained by a desire to improve the land's overall value for future sale by making it suitable for farming and thus attractive to prospective buyers.

Further research is needed about what drainage district, if any, the Research Area was part of during this time. At present, the Research Area is not located within any drainage districts according to current documentation from the Piatt County Office of the Supervisor of Assessments. See [1.3.4 Challenges and Limitations](#) for discussion about source repository challenges regarding historic drainage district documentation, and [6.2.1 Drainage District Documentation](#) for suggestions for future research regarding drainage districts.

3.14 William Burgess, 1963 – 1973

William Burgess owned the land in the Research Area from 1963 through 1974. He was born on May 26, 1916, to Louis C. Burgess (1875-1955) and Mary Dighton (1873-1938).²⁵⁸ Both families were prominent figures in the history of Piatt County.

Gilbert Burgess (1848-1922), William's grandfather, was the first of the Burgess family to arrive in Piatt County in the late 1860s.²⁵⁹ Gilbert was born on February 12, 1848, in Iowa. With his family he moved to Illinois mid-1850s and began his teaching career in Kankakee County in 1866, but shortly thereafter moved to Piatt County to continue teaching. He received a graduate degree in 1878 and then became superintendent of Piatt County schools from 1881 through 1886. He "brought the Piatt County schools up to a high standard" and "was ably assisted by his wife, who was also a teacher."²⁶⁰ By 1883, Gilbert owned a 120-acre farm in the Bement township of Piatt County but resided in Monticello.²⁶¹

Gilbert then pivoted his career towards journalism. He published the first edition of the *Piatt County Independent* in 1887, and in 1892 he bought the *Piatt County Herald* and consolidated it with the *Piatt County Independent* to form the *Piatt County Republican*.²⁶² Gilbert sold the *Piatt County Republican* in 1910 and afterward devoted the most of his time to his farms in the south [Muskogee, Oklahoma].²⁶³ Louis C. Burgess, Gilbert's son and William Burgess's father, worked with Gilbert at the Piatt County Republican. After the newspaper was sold, Louis formed the Burgess & Cline Insurance Agency in 1915.²⁶⁴

William Burgess's paternal grandmother was Jane Conoway. Jane was born on April 24, 1851, in McLean County, Illinois. She had lived in Monticello since c. 1855 when her parents died and her aunt and uncle from the town took her in. Jane and Gilbert married in 1874.²⁶⁵

²⁵⁸ Turpin, "William Dighton Burgess (1916-1973)."

²⁵⁹ "Piatt County Newspaper Man Dies Monday," 11.

²⁶⁰ "Piatt County Newspaper Man Dies Monday," 11.

²⁶¹ Piatt, *History of Piatt County*, 264.

²⁶² "Piatt County Newspaper Man Dies Monday," 11; McIntosh, *Past and Present of Piatt County, Illinois*, 24.

²⁶³ "Piatt County Newspaper Man Dies Monday," 11; "L. C. Burgess, Monticello, Dies," 2.

²⁶⁴ "L. C. Burgess, Monticello, Dies," 2.

²⁶⁵ "Much Beloved Woman Dies," 1; Turpin, "Jane C. Conoway Burgess (1851-1933)."

The Dightons on the maternal line of William's lineage were large landowners in Piatt County. Andrew Dighton (1822-1878), William's maternal grandfather, was born in Erie County, Pennsylvania. He attended law school in Kentucky and was admitted to the bar, but he never practiced law throughout his lifetime. Andrew and his new wife Sarah Catherine Netherton (1834-1918) moved to Piatt County in the mid-1850s where Andrew had purchased a farm. Their daughter Mary, William Burgess's mother, was born in 1873.²⁶⁶ At the time of Andrew's death on December 25, 1878, he owned 1,520 acres of land. Most of this land was located in Piatt County, but he also owned land in Champaign County.²⁶⁷

Sarah Catherine Netherton, William's maternal grandmother, was born on August 26, 1834 in Kentucky. Shortly following her arrival in Piatt County, she and Andrew "accumulated several hundred acres of land and built... a commodious residence."²⁶⁸ Following Andrew's death, Sarah moved to North State Street in Monticello. She "took control and by her fine business precepts and guidance has made her children and their descendants the largest land owners [sic] in Piatt and Champaign Counties," with nearly 100,000 acres owned by the family at the time of her death on October 24, 1918.²⁶⁹

William Burgess graduated from Monticello High School in 1934. He then attended the University of Alabama where he graduated in 1938.²⁷⁰ William and Frances Tully married on September 14, 1938. Frances also attended the University of Alabama and "taught in Texas a number of years."²⁷¹ Following their marriage, they lived with William's father Louis at 719 North State Street in Monticello until at least 1950.²⁷² For more information about Frances Tully, see 3.15 Frances Burgess, Arno Lee Tipsword, and Sharon K. Tipsword, 1973– 1982.

William was a farmer who was very active in local civic organizations and local government. His career in agriculture, particularly in livestock cultivation, earned him international recognition. Early in his career in 1939 and again in 1941, he was appointed the Monticello township officer for a local chapter of the Agricultural Conservation Association, a group associated with the Agricultural Adjustment Act of the New Deal.²⁷³ Burgess was named president of the board of directors of the Monticello Grain Company in 1955 and reelected again in 1956 and 1957.²⁷⁴ The Monticello Grain Company was founded in 1904 as a farmer-owned alternative to an existing grain storage corporation operating in Monticello.²⁷⁵

²⁶⁶ "Mrs. L. C. Burgess Dies Suddenly," 1.

²⁶⁷ Piatt, *History of Piatt County*, 271–72.

²⁶⁸ "Dies at Ripe Old Age," 1.

²⁶⁹ "Dies at Ripe Old Age," 1.

²⁷⁰ "Monticello High School Commencement May 31," 11; "Piatt County," 10.

²⁷¹ "Monticello Man Weds," 6.

²⁷² U.S. Census Bureau, "William D. Burgess," 6.

²⁷³ "Downey Piatt Head," 14; "AAA Delegates Deadlock Over Piatt Chairman," 5.

²⁷⁴ "Monticello Grain Co. Elects New Officers," 14; "Monticello Grain Co. Re-Names 11 Directors," 24; "Monticello Firm Elects," 3.

²⁷⁵ "Monticello Grain Company," 3.

William was elected to the Monticello City Council in 1947, and then in 1949 he was re-elected to a four-year term.²⁷⁶ As a city councilman, he was appointed to the finance committee for the 1950 fiscal year.²⁷⁷ In 1965, Monticello Mayor Richard R. O'Dell appointed him to the Board of Appeals for a five-year term to end in 1970.²⁷⁸ Other civic involvement includes his election as treasurer for the Monticello PTA in 1948, and his appointment as Directory of the Piatt County Loan Association in 1954.²⁷⁹

Burgess began cultivating livestock in the late 1940s and by the 1960s had become a well-known innovator and leading expert within the field. The farm where Burgess raised livestock was located on 800 acres of land situated southeast of Monticello.²⁸⁰ The land consisted of the W ½ SW ¼ of Section 16; the S ½ of Section 17; the NE ¼ and the E ½ SE ¼ of Section 20; and the NW ¼ of Section 21.²⁸¹ The Burgesses owned this land by December of 1958, but their initial date of acquisition is unknown.²⁸² It's possible that the Burgesses lived on this land and moved out of the city following the death of William's father Louis in 1955.

In 1947, Burgess began raising Brahman cattle, a breed native to India and believed to be one of the oldest breeds of cattle. He raised the majority of this breed at a farm he owned in Texas, but he also raised some on his farm in Monticello.²⁸³ He continued to raise cattle into the 1950s and also competed in livestock expositions: one of his cattle won 3rd place in the crossbred class at the International Livestock Exposition in November 1956, held in Chicago, and one of his Brahma bulls was the grand champion of the breed's category at the 1957 Illinois State Fair.²⁸⁴ By 1962, Burgess had an office in Monticello where he "direct[ed] his business and farming operations that include[d] holdings in Texas."²⁸⁵

By the early 1960s, William was an internationally recognized expert of the Charolais cattle breed. The breed became popular in the United States around this time because inbreeding purebred cattle was disrupting the livestock cultivation industry, and cattle importation from Europe into the United States was prohibited.²⁸⁶ As a workaround to the ban, William was part of the 2,000 farmers that began crossbreeding Charolais cattle with English breeds.²⁸⁷ Charolais cattle had faster rates of gain, higher dressing percentages, and produced leaner, better marbled meat, and William travelled all over the

²⁷⁶ "G.O.P. Sweeps Monticello," 4; "7 Seek Posts In Monticello," 25.

²⁷⁷ "List Officials in Monticello," 18.

²⁷⁸ "Monticello Mayor Appoints Committees," 4.

²⁷⁹ "Monticello P.T.A Elects Mrs. Bruhn," 7; "A.C. Miller Heads Piatt Loan Group," 5.

²⁸⁰ Tippet, "Six Central Illinois Stock Exhibitors Win State Fair Championship Honors," 1.

²⁸¹ "Monticello Township Plat," 1963; "Monticello Township Plat," 1967.

²⁸² "Monticello Township Personal Assessment List," 9.

²⁸³ Sanders, "Monticello Man Avid Charolais Promoter," 4; Tippet, "Livestock," 6.

²⁸⁴ Tippet, "Livestock," 6.

²⁸⁵ Sanders, "Monticello Man Avid Charolais Promoter," 4.

²⁸⁶ Orr, "French Cattle Win Fans," 25.

²⁸⁷ Orr, 25.

United States educating farmers about the breed.²⁸⁸ In 1961, he was the vice president of the American-International Charolais Association, and then president in 1962.²⁸⁹ By 1964, the Burgesses had acquired an additional 140 acres, making their farm 940 acres. He kept 150 Charolais cattle on the farm by this time.²⁹⁰

William was also active in local real estate. When Monticello experienced a housing construction boom in 1964, tracts of land on the outskirts of the city were subdivided and sold as smaller lots for new home construction. Burgess owned one of these large tracts of land and in the mid-1960s opened a subdivision addition located southeast of Monticello, bounded by Hamilton Street to the west and McClelland Street to the north. Soon after, he opened a second addition that extended further southeast, bounded by South Piatt Street to the east and Kratz Road to the south. By 1967, all 129 lots of land in this subdivision had sold.²⁹¹

References to William Burgess's farming activities frequently mention his large farm southeast of Monticello. At present, no sources have been located that indicate William also used the Research Area land for farming. However, a 1970 newspaper article references a proposed landfill that appears to reference the Research Area land that Burgess still owned. In this year, the Monticello City Council considered a 22.5-acre tract for a new landfill adjacent to an existing landfill on land which Burgess also owned: "The tract under consideration is immediately south of and contiguous to the present landfill at the west edge of the city on the Allerton Park Road."²⁹² This reference appears to be supported by plats from 1967 and 1972: between these years, the city of Monticello purchased a portion of the land that was previously owned by Walter Troike.²⁹³ Burgess then owned all land west and south of the city's parcel – the present-day Research Area. Although more research is needed, this information appears to suggest that at least part of the Research Area land was slated to become a landfill.

By 1972 the Burgesses sold their farm and had retired.²⁹⁴ William Burgess died on July 9, 1973, at 57 years old.²⁹⁵ Burgess was successful in agriculture in Monticello, and his contributions to livestock cultivation reverberated nationwide. At present, his use of the Research Area land is unknown.

3.15 Frances Burgess, Arno Lee Tipsword, and Sharon K. Tipsword, 1973– 1982

Frances Burgess (née Tully) was co-owner of the Research Area land from around the time of her late husband William Burgess's death in 1973 until 1981, when co-owners Arno Lee Tipsword and Sharon

²⁸⁸ Sanders, "Monticello Man Avid Charolais Promoter," 4.

²⁸⁹ "French-Bred Cattle Shown at Exposition," 9; "Ancient French Cattle Breed Comes to U.S.," 19.

²⁹⁰ Orr, "French Cattle Win Fans," 25.

²⁹¹ "Monticello in Home Construction Boom," 1.

²⁹² "Council Eyes Landfill Site," 12.

²⁹³ "Monticello Township Plat," 1967; "Monticello Township Plat," 1972.

²⁹⁴ "Monticello Township Plat," 1972.

²⁹⁵ "William Burgess, Prominent Piatt Farmer, Dies," 5.

K. Tipsword assumed full ownership.²⁹⁶ For more information about the Tipswords, see [3.16 Arno Lee Tipsword and Sharon K. Tipsword, 1982 – 2012](#).

Frances was born on November 28, 1914, in Cuero, Texas to Edward Andrew Tully (1870-1946) and Buena Guilford Tully (née Wofford, 1887-1969). She attended the University of Alabama and “taught in Texas a number of years” following graduation. Frances married William Burgess on September 14, 1938.²⁹⁷ After marriage to William, Frances was a homemaker and the couple lived with William’s father Louis at 719 North State Street in Monticello until at least 1950.²⁹⁸ Frances died on January 6, 2001. Her obituary notes that she was a member of the Monticello First Presbyterian Church and a longtime volunteer for Kirby Hospital Auxiliary.²⁹⁹

3.16 Arno Lee Tipsword and Sharon K. Tipsword, 1982 – 2012

Arno Lee Tipsword (1950-2022) and his wife Sharon K. Tipsword owned the Research Area land from 1982 until 2012 when the LCF acquired the land.³⁰⁰ The Tipswords lived southeast of the Research Area at 800 Allerton Road on a parcel of land in the NE ¼ SE ¼ of Section 14 in the Monticello township.³⁰¹

Arno Lee Tipsword, who went by Lee, was born on October 12, 1950 to Arno Layne Tipsword (1913-1980) and Irene Tipsword (née Searles, 1915-1918).³⁰² Arno Layne Tipsword’s parents, Lee’s paternal grandparents, were Joseph Tipsword (1890-1940) and Carrie Mildred Tipsword (née Holly, 1891-1979).³⁰³ They were earliest generation of the Tipswords living in Monticello and moved to the area from Fayette County, Illinois sometime between 1910 and 1920.³⁰⁴ Joseph and Carrie married in 1909.³⁰⁵ Irene Searles’s parents, Lee’s maternal grandparents, were Luther Searles (1879-1966) and Lila Lynch (1880-1969).³⁰⁶ They were living in Monticello by 1910.³⁰⁷

Lee Tipsword was a farmer like his father and grandfathers before him.³⁰⁸ He used the Research Area land as well as additional land southeast (800 Allerton Road) for farming.

²⁹⁶ “Monticello Township Plat,” 1982.

²⁹⁷ “Monticello Man Weds,” 6.

²⁹⁸ U.S. Census Bureau, “William D. Burgess,” 6.

²⁹⁹ Turpin, “Frances Tully Burgess (1914-2001);” “Obituaries - Burgess,” 13.

³⁰⁰ Reynolds, “Arno Lee Tipsword (1950-2022);” “Monticello Township Plat,” 1982.

³⁰¹ “Estate Farm Auction,” B5; “Monticello Township Plat,” 2009.

³⁰² Reynolds, “Arno Lee Tipsword (1950-2022);” Sweeney and Anguzza, “Arno Layne Tipsword (1913-1980);” Sweeney and Anguzza, “Irene Searles Tipsword (1915-1998).”

³⁰³ Sweeney and Anguzza, “Joseph Legora Tipsword (1890-1940);” Sweeney and Anguzza, “Carrie Mildred Holly Tipsword (1891-1979).”

³⁰⁴ U.S. Census Bureau, “Joseph Tipsword”; U.S. Census Bureau, “Joe Tipsword.”

³⁰⁵ Sweeney and Anguzza, “Carrie Mildred Holly Tipsword (1891-1979).”

³⁰⁶ Turpin, “Luther Searles (1879-1966);” Turpin, “Lila Lynch Searles (1880-1969).”

³⁰⁷ U.S. Census Bureau, “Luther Searles.”

³⁰⁸ U.S. Census Bureau; U.S. Census Bureau, “Joe Tipsword”; “Central Illinois Deaths - Tipsword,” B16; “Estate Farm Auction,” B5.

There is limited publicly available information about Sharon Tipsword or any of the Tipsword's children, as all are still living.

4. CURRENT SITE CONDITIONS AND PREVIOUS DOCUMENTATION

4.1 Current Site Conditions

Tetra Tech conducted a field survey of the BHLT in February of 2024. At the time of survey there was no flooding, allowing for complete visibility of the levees and the surrounding floodplains. Historic refuse was present in the floodplain forest and visible from the trail. This refuse included concrete drainage tiles, a metal oil drum, a hewn wood beam, a small metal wagon, brick pavers, and a tiller. Additionally, chunks of concrete and brick pavers were scattered in and around the culvert at Tour Stop 12.

The locations of all Tour Stops are documented on the following maps (Figure 4-1 and Figure 4-2). Additionally, some photos in Figures 4-3 through 4-26 reference a feature number, such as BH-RR-01. Refer to the maps for the precise location of these features. A small number of the modern culverts were documented on the map and photographed as examples of the work that the LCF has completed in recent years to restore the former farmland back to a floodplain. Finally, small portions of the levees that are not part of the established trail (near the northeast and southwest parts of the trail loop) were documented and appear on the maps (Figure 4-1 and Figure 4-2).

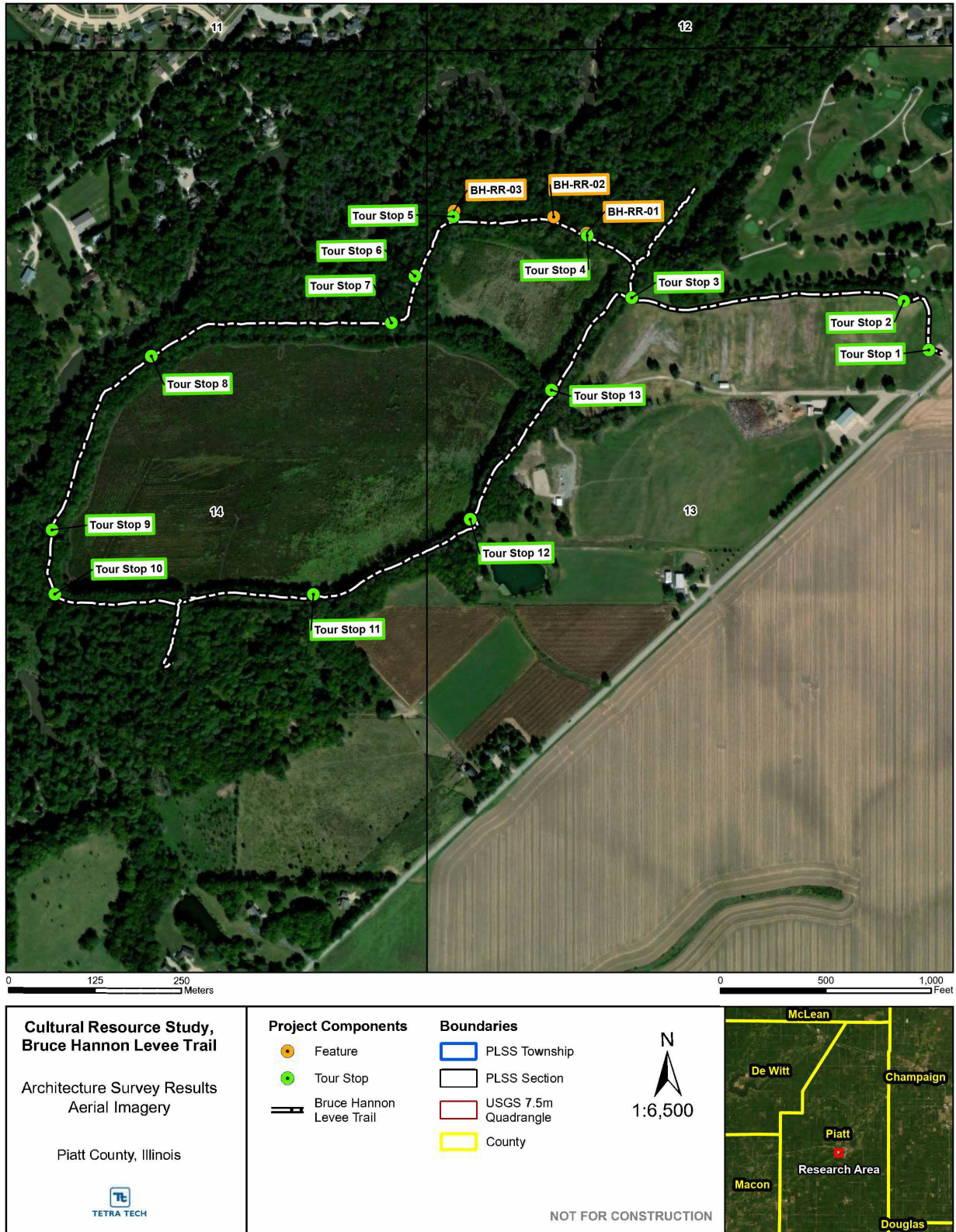


Figure 4-1. Bruce Hannon Levee Trail. Map of Research Area Survey, Aerial Imagery. Tetra Tech, 2024.

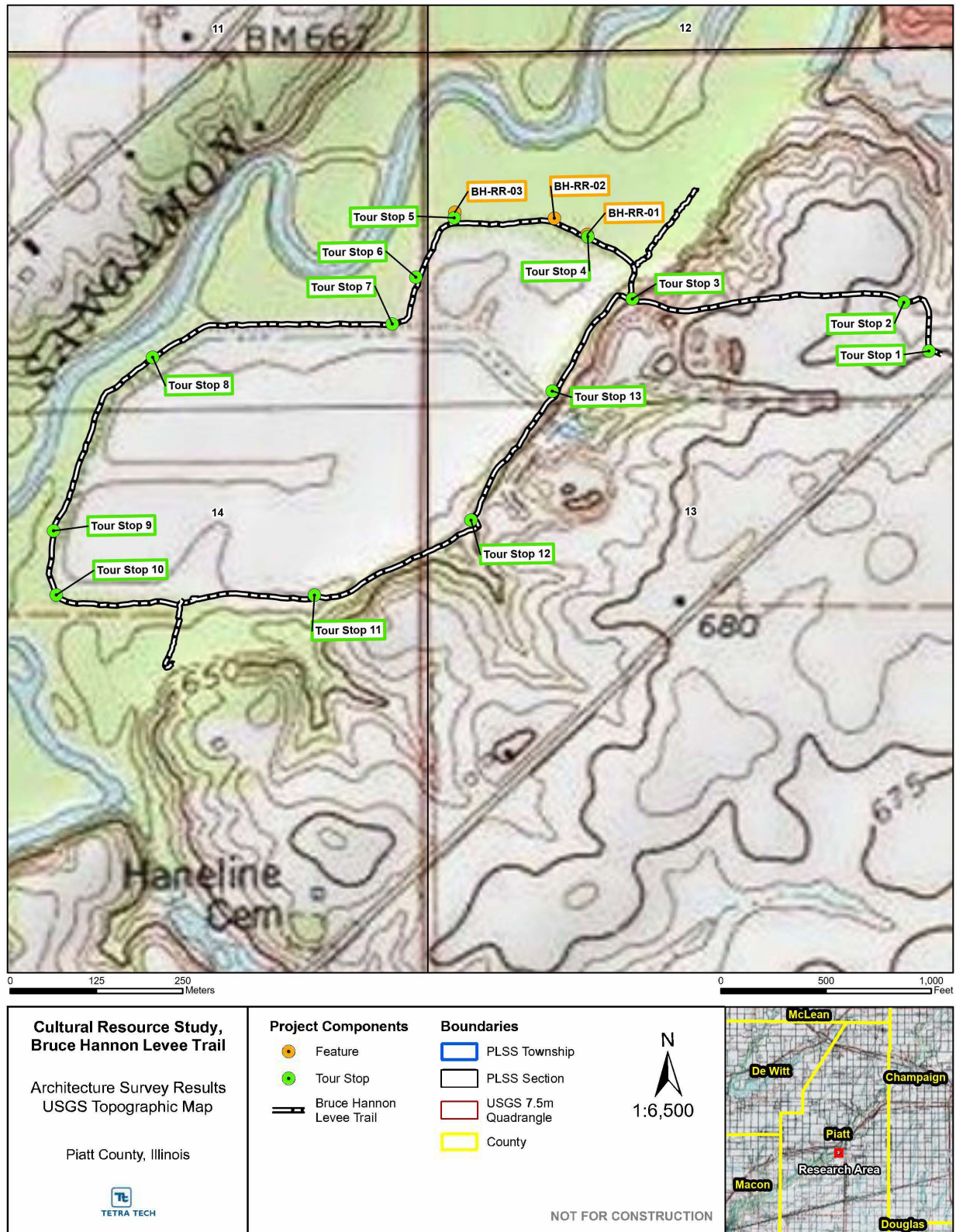


Figure 4-2. Bruce Hannon Levee Trail. Map of Research Area Survey, USGS Topographic Imagery. Tetra Tech, 2024.



Figure 4-3. Bruce Hannon Levee Trail. Trail Map and Information Sign. View to the West. Tetra Tech, 2024.



Figure 4-4. Bruce Hannon Levee Trail. View towards Trail Map and Information Sign. Photograph taken between Tour Stop 2 and the Trailhead/Tour Stop 3. View to the East. Tetra Tech, 2024.



Figure 4-5. Bruce Hannon Levee Trail. Trailhead Sign. View to the West. Tetra Tech, 2024.



Figure 4-6. Bruce Hannon Levee Trail. Levee Overview. Photograph taken between Tour Stop 3 and Tour Stop 4. View to the Northwest. Tetra Tech, 2024.



Figure 4-7. BH-RR-01. Bruce Hannon Levee Trail. Culvert and Water Level Gauge. Photograph taken from Tour Stop 4. View to the Northwest. Tetra Tech, 2024.



Figure 4-8. BH-RR-01. Bruce Hannon Levee Trail. Culvert. Photograph taken near Tour Stop 4. View to the North-Northeast. Tetra Tech, 2024.



Figure 4-9. Bruce Hannon Levee Trail. Levees branch off from established trail, traveling north. Photograph taken between Tour Stop 4 and Tour Stop 5. View to the Northeast. Tetra Tech, 2024.



Figure 4-10. BH-RR-02. Bruce Hannon Levee Trail. Detail of Drainage Tiles. Photograph taken between Tour Stop 4 and Tour Stop 5. Tetra Tech, 2024.



Figure 4-11. BH-RR-02. Bruce Hannon Levee Trail. Levee Overview with Drainage Tiles on the Trail. Photograph taken between Tour Stop 4 and Tour Stop 5. View to the West. Tetra Tech, 2024.



Figure 4-12. Bruce Hannon Levee Trail. Levee Overview. Photograph taken between Tour Stop 4 and Tour Stop 5. View to the Southwest. Tetra Tech, 2024.



Figure 4-13. Bruce Hannon Levee Trail. Floodplain Forest. Photograph taken between Tour Stop 4 and Tour Stop 5. View to the Northwest. Tetra Tech, 2024.



Figure 4-14. BH-RR-03. Bruce Hannon Levee Trail. Culvert. Photograph taken from Tour Stop 5. View to the Southeast. Tetra Tech, 2024.



Figure 4-15. BH-RR-03. Bruce Hannon Levee Trail. Culvert. Photograph taken from Tour Stop 5. View to the East. Tetra Tech, 2024.



Figure 4-16. Bruce Hannon Levee Trail. Levee and Floodplain Forest Overview. Photograph taken between Tour Stop 6 and Tour Stop 7. View to the Southwest. Tetra Tech, 2024.



Figure 4-17. Bruce Hannon Levee Trail. Levee Overview, with Floodplain Restoration area at left, and Floodplain Forest at right. Photograph taken between Tour Stop 6 and Tour Stop 7. View to the West. Tetra Tech, 2024.



Figure 4-18. Bruce Hannon Levee Trail. Floodplain Restoration Area. Photograph taken between Tour Stop 8 and Tour Stop 10. View to the East. Tetra Tech, 2024.



Figure 4-19. Bruce Hannon Levee Trail. Culvert and Water Level Gauge. Photograph taken from Tour Stop 10. View to the East-Southeast. Tetra Tech, 2024.



Figure 4-20. Bruce Hannon Levee Trail. Floodplain Forest. Photograph taken between Tour Stop 10 and Tour Stop 11. View to the Southeast. Tetra Tech, 2024.



Figure 4-21. Bruce Hannon Levee Trail. Levee Overview, with Floodplain Restoration area at left, and Floodplain Forest at right. Photograph taken between Tour Stop 10 and Tour Stop 11. View to the Southeast. Tetra Tech, 2024.



Figure 4-22. Bruce Hannon Levee Trail. Floodplain Restoration Area. Photograph taken between Tour Stop 10 and Tour Stop 11. View to the Northeast. Tetra Tech, 2024.



Figure 4-23. Bruce Hannon Levee Trail. Levees branch off from established trail, traveling south. Photograph taken between Tour Stop 10 and Tour Stop 11. View to the South. Tetra Tech, 2024.



Figure 4-24. Bruce Hannon Levee Trail. Levee Overview, with Floodplain Restoration Area at left, and Floodplain Forest at right. Photograph taken between Tour Stop 11 and Tour Stop 12. View to the East. Tetra Tech, 2024.



Figure 4-25. Bruce Hannon Levee Trail. Levee Overview. Photograph taken between Tour Stop 11 and Tour Stop 12. View to the Northeast. Tetra Tech, 2024.



Figure 4-26. Bruce Hannon Levee Trail. Levee Overview. Photograph taken from Tour Stop 12. View to the Northwest. Tetra Tech, 2024.

4.2 Previous Documentation of Cultural Resources

Tetra Tech conducted desktop research to locate previously documented cultural resources within the Research Area. No previously documented archaeological resources were identified. One historic built environment resource, the Henline Log Cabin, was identified within the Research Area.

4.2.1 Henline Log Cabin, HARGIS Reference Number 303217

The Henline Log Cabin (also spelt Haneline) was built in the mid- to late-nineteenth century in Section 11 of Township 18 North, Range 5 East in the 3rd Principal Meridian.³⁰⁹ In c. 1908, the cabin was moved south of the Sangamon River, into the northeast quarter of Section 15.³¹⁰ The cabin was built in the Midland Tradition style with full dovetail corner notches.³¹¹ Documentation of the cabin in 1973 stated

³⁰⁹ Sculle, "Henline Log Cabin."

³¹⁰ Sculle.

³¹¹ Sculle; Savage McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses: The Definitive Guide to Understanding America's Domestic Architecture*.

that the cabin may have been built by Nate (Nathan) Henline.³¹² At the time of field observation, the Henline Log Cabin could not be located. Due to dense vegetation in the area, observations of USGS historic aerial imagery could not determine when the cabin was removed.

³¹² Sculle, "Henline Log Cabin."

5. HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE AND INTEGRITY EVALUATION

The historic significance and integrity of the levees are evaluated using the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The NRHP is “the nation’s official list of buildings, structures, objects, sites, and districts (referred to as “properties” or “places”) significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture.”³¹³ The eligibility criteria are codified in the Code of Federal Regulations (36 CFR 60.4) and are specified below.

- A. The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and: that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- B. that are associated with the lives of persons significant in the past; or
- C. that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represents the work of a master, or that possess high artistic value, or that represent a significant or distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D. that have yielded, or are likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Ordinarily, cemeteries, birthplaces, or graves of historical figures; property owned by religious institutions or used for religious purposes; structures that have been removed from their original location; reconstructed historic buildings; properties that are primarily commemorative in nature; and properties that have achieved significance within the last 50 years shall not be considered eligible for the National Register. However, such properties will qualify if they are integral parts of districts that do meet the criteria, or if they fall within the following categories:

- a religious property deriving primary significance from architectural or artistic distinction or historical importance; or
- a building or structure removed from its original location, but which is significant primarily for its architecture, or which is the surviving structure most importantly associated with a historic person or event; or
- a birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance if there is no other appropriate site or building directly associated with his or her productive life; or
- a cemetery which derives its primary significance from graves of persons of transcendent importance, from age, from distinctive design features, or from association with historic events; or

³¹³ National Park Service, “Info Sheet: What Is the National Register of Historic Places?”

- a reconstructed building when accurately executed in a suitable environment and presented in a dignified manner as part of a restoration master plan and when no building or structure with the same association has survived; or
- a property primarily commemorative in intent if design, age, tradition, or symbolic value has invested it with its own historical significance; or
- a property achieving significance within the past 50 years if it is of exceptional importance.

In addition to meeting at least one of the criteria, properties must also retain sufficient integrity to convey its significance. Integrity is assessed on the following aspects: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Eligible sites are those that display one or more of the criteria for eligibility. In addition, sites evaluated as eligible must retain physical integrity. Eroded or otherwise heavily disturbed sites are generally not considered eligible. Sites evaluated as needing data are those sites that may conform to the eligibility criteria but require further work to determine NRHP status. In most cases, these sites are precontact or historic sites with suspected buried materials, or historic sites where additional research is necessary to determine historical importance. Sites that are evaluated as not eligible do not meet any of the eligibility criteria and/or have lost physical integrity.

To summarize, to be eligible for the NRHP, a property must possess historic significance, integrity (has the ability to convey its historic significance), and meet one or more of Criteria A, B, C, or D.

5.1 Criterion A

The levees are associated with the history of drainage infrastructure development in Illinois that proliferated following the passage of comprehensive drainage legislation in 1879. This legislation made it easier for individual landowners to improve the value of their land and make it suitable for agricultural use or settlement.

Mere association with a pattern of events or an historic trend is not a strong enough qualifier for eligibility under Criterion A.³¹⁴ Drainage projects were common in this area at the time that the levees in the Research Area were constructed, and there is little evidence to suggest that these levees had a significant impact on history at a local or national level. Therefore, Tetra Tech recommends the levees not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A.

5.2 Criterion B

While research and discussions with locals attributes the levee construction to a specific person, Walter Troike, there was insufficient documentation to indicate that Troike had a significant impact on history at a local or national level. Therefore, Tetra Tech recommends the levees not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B.

³¹⁴ National Park Service, "National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation," 12.

5.3 Criterion C

While construction of the levees undoubtedly took considerable effort and time, they are simple earthen structures that do not embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or engineering. Additionally, the levees do not represent the work of a master or possess high artistic values. Therefore, Tetra Tech recommends the levees not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion C.

5.4 Criterion D

As the purpose and historical use of the levees are apparent, there is little information that the structures can yield about history that is not already documented. Therefore, Tetra Tech recommends the levees not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion D.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Interpretive Recommendations

Current interpretation at the site consists of one large wayside sign at the start of the trail and 13 stops (indicated by signage) with corresponding interpretation available on the Prairie State Hike App. A .pdf document of the text is available on the trail's website. 10 of the 13 stops focus exclusively on wetland biology and geomorphology. The final two stops discuss preservation and the creation of LCF and BHLT. Only one stop addresses history of people at the site, using the following text:

STOP 6 Moving Water

In the 1800s, European settlers saw the land in Illinois as “a garden four hundred miles long, and one hundred and fifty miles wide.” But much of the land was swampy. Before it could be farmed, it had to be drained.

So a richly diverse ecosystem of prairie, wetland, and woodland gave way to farmland. Levees like the one here were built to keep floodplains dry. Miles of field tiles (clay cylinders) were laid underground to carry water to drainage ditches. In her 1883 History of Piatt County, Emma C. Piatt said, “It will not be long before every foot of soil in this county will be under cultivation.”

On this site, we are turning back time. Culverts in the levee let the area flood naturally again. A forest of native trees adapted to flooding will flourish here.

FUN FACT: The east side of the river, where you stand, was a lifesaver for Native Americans who lived here in the 1700s. Why? When prairie fires spread with a wind from the west, the river would stop the flames, keeping the people on the far side safe.³¹⁵

Given the nature of LCF as well as the information that Tetra Tech has uncovered, Tetra Tech recommends the addition of limited historical interpretation. Additional interpretation may include adding another stop on the trail or adding a pamphlet to the wayside at the beginning of the trail. Tetra Tech recommends that future interpretation include briefly expanding on the significance of wetland alteration to the settlement of Illinois and its growth as a center of agriculture in the United States. The relationship between wetland alteration and farming offers an avenue by which instances of farming in the land's history can be discussed. The date of construction for the levee and its builder should also be added. Finally, association with founding members of Piatt County and Monticello offers chance for brief descriptions of early county history.

Mention of specific previous landowners in expanded interpretation will root the site's history in place. Offering visitors a specific connection to history can emphasize the significance of that history and deepen their connection to the land.

³¹⁵ Land Conservation Foundation, “Bruce Hannon Levee Trail Tour.”

6.2 Suggestions for Future Research

6.2.1 Drainage District Documentation

Tetra Tech has attributed the construction of the levees to Walter H. Troike in the late 1950s based on historic aerial imagery, Troike's thirty-year career in drainage infrastructure construction, recollection from a local resident, and situation of the levees' construction within historical context. Depending on the type of drainage district or districts the land was located within, it is also possible that no records exist of the levees' construction. At present, it is unclear if the more informal mutual drainage districts were required to keep records in the same manner as districts with elected commissioners. Further research could generate a more specific date at reason for construction of the levees as well as an elaboration on their impact to the Research Area. For Piatt County, drainage district records are held at the Circuit Clerk's office in Monticello and must be researched in-person.

6.2.2 Oral History

Research gaps pertaining to land use could be aided by conducting formal oral history interviews, or by simply documenting conversations or email correspondence. Discussion with descendants of known landowners or other individuals with knowledge of the Research Area, like Jack Stiverson would be most helpful.

6.2.3 Deed Research

Due to time constraints during the survey and research trip, Tetra Tech was unable to complete deed research to fill in all landownership documentation gaps. See [Appendix A: Property Ownership Table](#) for information about when these gaps occur. Tetra Tech recommends visiting the Piatt County Circuit Clerk and Recorder's Office to conduct additional deed research.

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APPENDIX A: PROPERTY OWNERSHIP TABLE

Date of Purchase	Date of Sale	Landowner(s)	Notes
1839	1841	William Stage	Portion of Research Area located in Section 14, T18N, R5E
1839	Unknown	Samuel B. Abbott	Portion of Research Area located in Section 13, T18N, R5E
19 March 1841	1847	Samuel Sharp	
1847 - 7 May 1853	7 May 1853	Chester Denning	
7 May 1853	14 August 1855	Daniel Stickel	
14 August 1855	1864	Enoch Judy	
1864	1864-1875	William Foster	Gap in documentation between 1864 and 1875.
1864-1875	1896 at the latest	Joseph Green Foster	Gap in documentation between 1875 and 1896.
1880-1896	1907 at the latest	William Ridgely	Gap in documentation between 1896 and 1907.
Between 1896 and 1907	c. 1915	Lodge Brothers	Gap in documentation between 1910-1919. C. 1915 is assumed because the Lodge Brothers dissolved their business partnership in this year.
c. 1915	1943-1949	Fred Sterling Lodge	Gap in documentation between 1944 and 1949.
1943-1949	24 April 1956	Elverton H. Kruse and Zelma Marie Kruse	
24 April 1956	1963	Walter H. Troike and Cleo Troike	
1963	1973	William Burgess	
1973	1978	Frances Burgess	Widow of William Burgess.
1978	1982	Frances Burgess, Arno Lee Tipword, and Sharon K. Tipword	
1982	2012	Arno Lee Tipword and Sharon K. Tipword	