

GUIDE to RESOURCES: SURVEYS

Hamilton County land was surveyed in **three parts**, each by a different method.
The Miami Rivers divide the county into those three parts.
The mini-maps on the facing page should help you follow the descriptions below.
Maybe you will only need to understand one of them for your research.

MIAMI [Symmes] PURCHASE—From Great Miami River to the Little Miami River

In 1788 John Cleves Symmes contracted to buy this land. The surveyors he hired surveyed six-mile-deep *Ranges*, running east-west, then divided them into six-mile-square *Towns*, and then divided each *Town* into 36 one-mile-square *Sections*.

They “numbered” the *Ranges* from south to north and the *Towns* from west to east within each range. *Sections* in a *Town* were numbered in a fixed pattern (see map).

For some reason they named the first ranges “Fractional” 1 & 2. Succeeding ranges were “Entire” 1, 2, 3 etc. up to the end of the survey in mid-Ohio. And why is Fractional Range 1 is only three miles deep?
The northern boundary of Hamilton county runs along a line only one mile into Entire Range 2.

All those curves in the three rivers meant that all *Ranges*, some *Towns*, and some *Sections* have irregular boundaries. Also, some *Towns* are missing a few or many whole *Sections*; regardless of that *Sections* are numbered by the fixed pattern. Unfortunately, the rivers are not the only lines that are not straight. Crude tools and methods resulted in poorly drawn lines and many un-square *Sections*. Efforts after statehood to resurvey and correct the errors were abandoned after howls like, “My house will be his land” were heard.

The Federal Land Ordinance of 1785 had established the country’s first orderly rectangular survey system. Symmes’s surveyors followed the rule for Section numbering but did their own thing with the directions and numbering of Ranges and Towns. The Miami Purchase is one of a kind among U.S. surveys.

CONGRESS LANDS [1st Meridian Survey]—From Indiana Line to Great Miami River

In 1795 the Indians ceded this land in the Greenville Treaty. A year later Congress created new surveying rules. So the Congress Lands surveyors first drew the “1st Meridian” [later the Indiana Line]. Parallel to it, they surveyed six-mile-wide *Ranges*, running north-south, then divided them into six-mile-square *Towns*, and then divided each *Town* into 36 one-mile-square *Sections*.

They “numbered” the *Ranges* from west to east and the *Towns* from south to north within each range. *Sections* in a *Town* were numbered by the new fixed pattern (see map). The *Range* names are “Range 1 East” and “Range 2 East” because they are on the east side of the Meridian [there are west ranges on the Indiana side of that line].

The curves in the Great Miami meant that both *Ranges*, all four *Towns*, and some *Sections* have irregular boundaries. Also, three of those *Towns* are missing many whole *Sections*; regardless of that *Sections* are numbered by the new fixed pattern. Surveying was still imperfect so some lines aren’t just right.

VIRGINIA MILITARY DISTRICT—From the Little Miami R. to Clermont County Line.

In 1784 Virginia ceded its claim to its “western” lands to the Federal Government. In turn it received rights to 6570 square miles of land between the Little Miami and Scioto Rivers to “pay” its Revolutionary War soldiers. Our Anderson Township is the southwest corner of that Virginia Military District (see map).

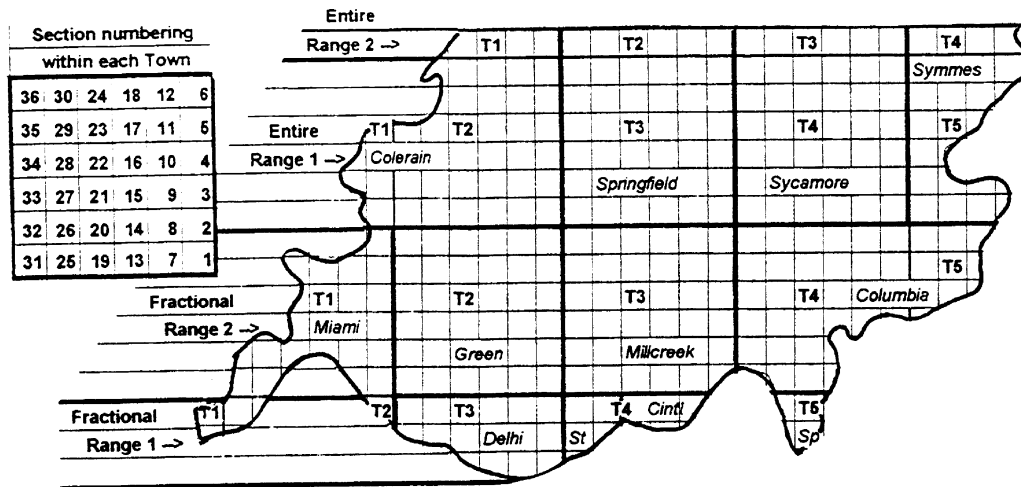
A soldier got a “warrant” for a number of acres, “entered” a roughly worded claim, had a professional “survey” drawn with a unique number assigned, sent that to Richmond VA [later to U.S.], and received a Patent [Deed]. The surveyor drew lines from trees to rocks and along streams [the old metes & bounds method] so there is no pattern of lines for this set of Surveys [but many law suits].

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MIAMI [Symmes] PURCHASE—From Great Miami River to the Little Miami River.

Surveyed Ranges run east-west and Town numbers are shown as T1, T2. . . .

Townships are named in *Italics* and bounded with the heaviest lines. They are/were civil districts and the Record-ers have used these area definitions to help organize their indexing and mapping. In the earliest times other Townships were created, redefined and eliminated. One of these, Fulton Township, a narrow strip along the Ohio River east from of Downtown, appears on a few existing maps.

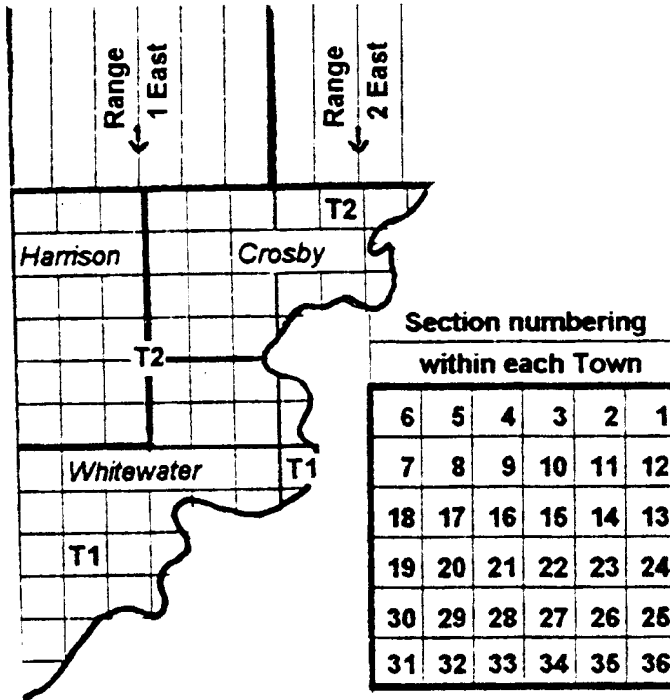


Fractional Range 1 is strange with three disjointed parts. Its tiny **Town 1** has fooled some map makers into ignoring it and numbering Towns 2, 3, 4, & 5 as 1, 2, 3, & 4 so watch out now that you know. Three small Townships along the Ohio River, *St*, *Cinti*, & *Sp*, are Storrs, Cincinnati, and Spencer.

CONGRESS LANDS [1st Meridian Survey]—

From Indiana Line to Great Miami River.

Surveyed Ranges run north-south and Town numbers are shown as T1, T2



Townships are named in *Italics* and bounded with the heaviest lines. They are civil districts. Harrison Township was formed in 1853 out of parts of Crosby and Whitewater Townships.

