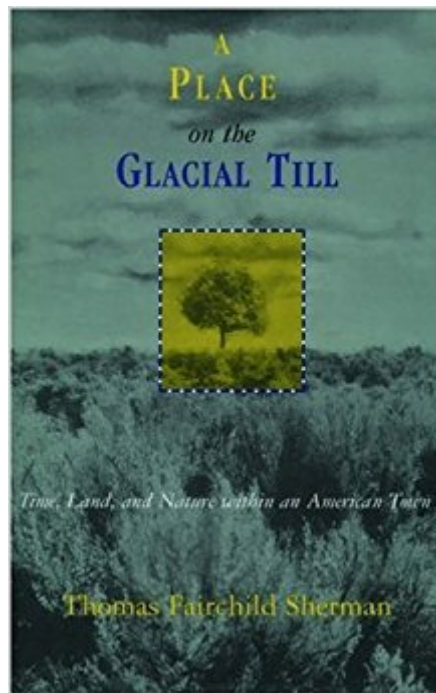




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# A Place On The Glacial Till: Time, Land, And Nature Within An American Town



## Synopsis

It was one of Thoreau's great rules of life that any pond, or lake, or stream contains the reflections of the entire world within it--that one can see and know and feel more at one's own doorstep than hurried travels will ever reveal in the far corners of the earth. A place for sensing the wonder of the world could be any place, for all have shared a common journey that has made the earth our home. To listen from any spot is to hear the quiet echoes of a billion cycles around the sun. In *A Place on the Glacial Till*, Thomas Fairchild Sherman writes about the history of the life and land around his long-time home in Oberlin, Ohio, offering a quiet message that speaks to us wherever we are: that all time and nature abide within the rocks and soil, with connections, beauty, and meaning as deep as history and as broad as human understanding. The area surrounding Oberlin has a rich and varied past, and Sherman weaves together old and new findings from geology, archeology, and ecology to remind us of its elemental roots. Over the millennia this region of north central Ohio has been a barren, glacier-covered land mass; a sea bed teeming with marine life; the homeland of the Adena, Hopewell, and Erie peoples; a part of the Connecticut Western Reserve; and the home of a small, distinguished college dedicated to music and the arts and sciences. The land today holds all the wildernesses of its past, and all the dreams and aspirations of those who have lived upon it. Reminiscent of the meditative prose of Annie Dillard and the environmental writing of John McPhee, *A Place on the Glacial Till* recalls a multitude of studies of time and nature and joins them in a new appreciation of the land and its meaning for our lives.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Like Anne Dillard, Sherman writes with passion, accuracy, and a poet's sensibility that make even the rocks sing.... The fresh view in this concise and evocative history may open a secret door into the familiar Ohio landscape. Readers may never look at that landscape the same way again."--The Plain Dealer

About the Author: A native of the Finger Lakes region of New York, Thomas Fairchild Sherman acquired an early appreciation for the outdoors, and while a student at Oberlin College, found summer employment as a wilderness guide in the Superior-Quetico country of Minnesota and Canada. As a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford University, he combined his doctoral studies in biochemistry with bicycle explorations across the British countryside. For three decades until his recent retirement to the north woods of Maine, he taught biology at Oberlin, save for research fellowships at Yale, Harvard, Oxford, Johns Hopkins, and Duke. He has led Oberlin students on biological field studies in England, the Great Smoky Mountains, and the Canadian wilderness, but most especially in the land which is the cherished subject of this book.

this is a gentle and instructional read of a seasoned teacher who learned by walking his environs. I think it holds up with time.

Sherman's excellent book was recommended to me by a colleague while I was preparing to teach a college course in bioregional biographies, and it is clearly the best I've seen. His rendering of geological, botanical, and biological information is both lucid and lyrical, and--unlike David Raines Wallace, whose Klamath Knot is also a wonderful model of this sort of writing--Sherman needs no incidental narrative device to hold the layers of deep history together. Mr. Sherman is a gifted writer and naturalist, and *A Place on the Glacial Till* is clearly a classic of natural history writing.

The author manages to make his various topics (glaciers and their effects on our world here in Ohio, development of flora and fauna of the region through history, etc.) very accessible to the lay person. He has a sense of humour about nature and a beautifully descriptive eye.

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