

# The Time Traveler

Scioto County Past and Present **By Kaitlin Setty**



## Join the Local History Facebook Group!

### *Follow these easy steps below*

From your News Feed click **Groups** in the left menu.  
In the search bar at the top, enter some keywords for the group you're looking for: "local history."  
Select the group then click + Join Group below the cover photo.  
Select whether you'd like to join as your profile or your Page and click **Join Group**.

**OR**

Go to the Portsmouth Public Library's Facebook page  
Select the "More" tab with a downward arrow beside it  
Select groups from the drop down menu  
Click on "Join Group" by Local History

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## Tween Club

Our Tween Club has been suspended due to COVID-19 Guidelines until further notice.





## Timeless Treasure: PHS Band Championship Medal (1934)

Our January/February Timeless Treasures is this Portsmouth High School Championship Band Medal. The medal is engraved with "Division II Won by Portsmouth H. S. Band Portsmouth, Ohio at Des Moines, Iowa 1934." On the other side, it says "National High School Band Championship." There is also a multi-colored ribbon with pin attached. In May of 1934, the 70 member PHS band traveled to Des Moines, Iowa to compete in the National High School Band Competition. The band was awarded with a rating of "Excellent," a rating equivalent to Third Place, and won second place in the Drum Major Twirling Contest. View this image and many more at <https://www.yourppl.org/history/> Have a timeless treasure of your own you'd like to share? Contribute images of your regional historic interest to our website!



## The Taylor Museum

Around the year 1915, Lafayette Taylor, president of both the Taylor Stone Company and the Scioto County Fair Board, erected a museum in McDermott. The building was constructed using stones from the Taylor Stone Company, and it was used to house his famous stuffed animal collection. In addition to local animals, the museum showcased creatures that Taylor had hunted during a trip to Alaska and other places. Findings included elk, moose, mountain goats, sheep, sea lions, and an eight foot Alaskan brown bear. In the early 1900's, the Taylor Museum was a popular place to go and would entertain thousands of people on a sunny afternoon. After Lafayette's death in 1950, the museum still operated, but eventually it closed. The animals were housed in the home of Lafayette's daughter, Mrs. Spencer K. Lewis on Grandview Avenue in Portsmouth. In 1966, however, his daughter donated the twenty animal collection to Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, her alma mater.

## Who am I?

Clue 1: I was born in Athens, Ohio on April 1, 1846.

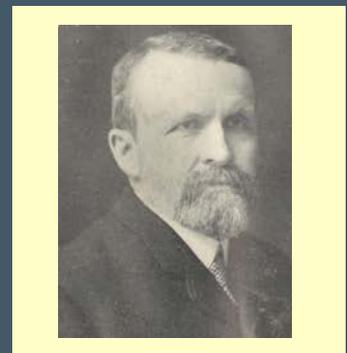
Clue 2: I married Lydia Webster of Meigs County, OH on September 26, 1867.

Clue 2: I came to Portsmouth in 1867, as an agent for the Singer Sewing Company until I became interested in the manufacturing of shoes.

Clue 3: I went into the shoe business with Irving Drew and B. Damon in 1880.

Clue 4: The Selby Company lasted until 1957 in Portsmouth.

Clue 5: I died on December 2, 1927.



Hold your copy up to a mirror to view the answer!

*George D. Selby*

## Do you know this place?

Clue 1: This place was located near the old Children's Home (Mound Park).

Clue 2: This large section of land was purchased by Martin Funk in 1809.

Clue 3: Further adding to his purchase, in 1810, Funk bought 23 acres of land on the east end beside Lawson's Run.

Clue 4: A small waterway cut through this section of land, near what is now known as Jackson Street, and spilled into the river.

**Answer in the next issue!**



## Images from the Taylor Museum



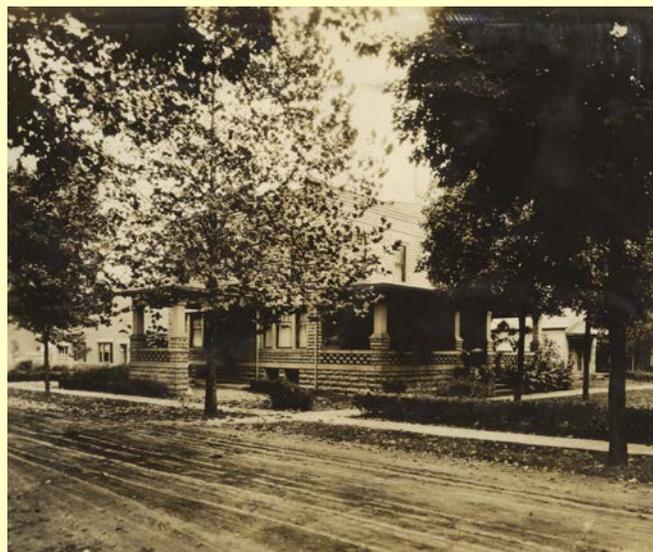
Taylor Museum, McDermott, OH



Lafayette Taylor and mounted 8 ft. Alaskan Brown Bear



Interior of the Taylor Museum



Taylor Museum, McDermott, OH



Lafayette Taylor and mounted Sea Lion

Last Issue's:  
"Do you know this place?"  
Powellsville

## Local Mystery: Man is Murdered in Own Yard



On July 19, 1916, C & O construction worker M. F. Nelson was on his way to work at around 5:30 AM. He saw a body in the yard of Madison Powell's home on Back Run in Lucasville. Moving to take a closer look, Nelson discovered that the body was Powell. He was lying in his own yard with his arm bent underneath him in a pool of blood. A wound had formed directly over his heart. Nelson darted to another neighbor's residence, Mrs. Margaret Giles, and called Coroner Dr. J. W. Daehler who contacted the police. Neighbors of Powell were quick to think that robbery had been the motive, but after authorities searched the house and found \$400 in the attic, that idea was quickly dismissed. Powell was a likeable farmer who generally minded his own business. Locals had never reported problems with Powell, so his murder left many puzzled. Who could have killed the farmer, and what was their motive?

Police instantly began questioning the neighbors for any information. They discovered that David Berry, living close to Powell, had gotten into an argument with the farmer, making him an immediate person of interest. Berry said that about a year ago, he and Powell had struck a deal. Berry had a collection of farm horses, and Powell was willing to give Berry another horse. In exchange, Berry agreed to clear a portion of Powell's land from brush and debris. Berry said that he had the horse for only about three or four weeks before it died. He'd already completed the clearing, and Powell came asking him if he was planning on stacking the logs on his farm for him, as he believed that this should have been included in the clearing that Berry had agreed to. Berry told Powell that he'd done all his work and refused to stack the logs. They got into a heated argument, that led to the men not speaking to each other for a long time. Then, about a week before the murder, Berry received a note from Powell telling him to construct a fence because his horses had escaped onto Powell's property. Berry claimed that he sent his two sons to retrieve the horses because he didn't like to go out in the dew of the morning since he was a sickly man. He heard no gunshots, and his sons returned with the horses. Although Berry assured the authorities that he spoke the truth, police still arrested him and his two sons in connection to the murder. Police searched Berry's house after the arrests. They found a revolver there, but it was jammed so badly that it wouldn't work. They were immediately suspicious that the gun had been tampered with, so they took it in for evidence.

After staying in a cell for a few days, Berry finally confessed to the murder and also admitted that his wife had removed the spring from the gun after Berry had used it to kill Madison Powell, so that it would look like it couldn't be shot. Police waited patiently, and eventually, the true story came out.

Berry told police how he had really gone over to Powell's house to retrieve the horses himself, carrying his gun. He claimed that he went into Powell's pasture looking for his horses. While lingering by the barn, he saw Powell emerge from the field carrying a hammer. He lunged at Berry, and he fired two shots into Powell's chest. He claimed that he had killed Powell in self defense. Berry then went home and told his wife what had happened. Berry signed a paper claiming that this story was the truth, but for his trial in October, he entered with a plea of not guilty to the murder of Madison Powell. Authorities wanted to get him for murder in the first degree, and that was what he had been charged with. After Berry's previous confession, this new revelation left many puzzled. His attorney was Theo. K. Funk, of a prominent Portsmouth family, and many people believed that he would be able to get Berry off on all charges. Elaborate plans were made for the case, and it was supposed to go before Judge Thomas. After weeks with no update on the case, the Portsmouth Daily Times released an article telling of how Berry had changed his plea to guilty of manslaughter. He was charged and sentenced to the Ohio Penitentiary for hard labor.