

## LOCAL MYSTERY

### IN THE NIGHT.

Lew H. Young Meets Death at the Hands of an Unknown.



On September 16, 1893, an article ran in the *Portsmouth Times* on the dark and mysterious death of Lew H. Young, a well known resident and steamboat clerk. Young's body was discovered in an alley between Seventh and Eighth Streets around 10 o'clock pm. After examination, it was discovered that Young had a mark under his right eye and the back of his head appeared to have been severely bludgeoned. Money and a golden watch were still on Young's person, suggesting robbery had not been the motive for the murder. Someone had killed the steamboat clerk, and further investigation would show a case involving unreliable witnesses and misdirection.

It was soon discovered that Mrs. McCarty had been seen spending time with Young. Although a married woman, Mrs. McCarty and her husband had separated last summer. The *Times* claims Mrs. McCarty was a loose woman and "continually sought the company of other men." Young had been warned by her to "look out for her husband." As it turns out, Mr. James McCarty was living at the Farmers' Hotel on Market Street at the time. Instantly suspicion was cast upon James because it was said that he knew of Young's illicit relationship with his wife. James, however, had an alibi. Apparently, he had been seeing someone else just like his wife. Ida May Dewitt met James near the courthouse around 7:30 pm. After spending the evening together, Ida claimed that she and James parted ways, and she arrived at her home at 10:40 pm. Shortly after, James McCarty was arrested for the murder of Lew H. Young. However, the Coroner Davidson advised the release of McCarty. An accusation of jobbery (using a public office or position for one's own gain) was laid at the feet of police department. A reward was offered to find the murderer of Young by the Commissioner. The Marshal, Mr. Schmitt did not want a reward released as he was building a case with substantial evidence against James McCarty. When the reward was announced, Mr. Schmitt become suspicious of several officers and Coroner Davidson, wondering if they were seeking to cash in on the reward. After all of this, the case seemingly vanished altogether. Only in May of 1894 does it resurface in an article of the *Portsmouth Times* claiming that Ida May Dewitt, the woman who said she was meeting James McCarty on the night of Lew Young's murder, recounted her previous statement and said that McCarty *did* murder Young. Nothing ever came of the claim though because several years later, Ida May Dewitt was ruled insane and sent to the Athens Asylum.

We have the *Portsmouth Times* on microfilm from 1858 to 2010. After 2010, we have them scanned on our computers. You can also search on our in-house database <https://access.newspaperarchive.com/>



#### Family History Class

Do you want to delve deeper into your family's past? Or preserve your family stories and photos for future generations? Starting January 28th, our monthly program will teach participants about basic research methods and resources to document, preserve, and publish their family history.

**January 28, 2019  
at 4:30 P.M. in the  
Meeting Room at the  
Portsmouth Public Library**

#### Contact Us

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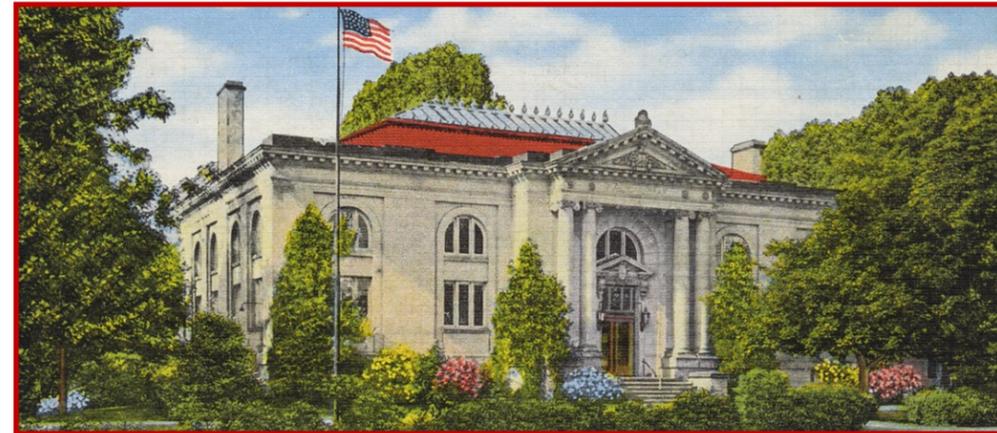
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## The Time Traveler

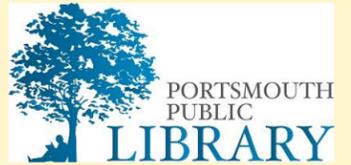
### Portsmouth Past and Present

**BY: KAITLIN SETTY**

Welcome to *The Time Traveler: Portsmouth Past and Present!* Our goal is to bring Scioto County, Ohio's past to life through engaging articles, archives, and images that residents can be proud to share today. Be on the lookout for our next issue in March!

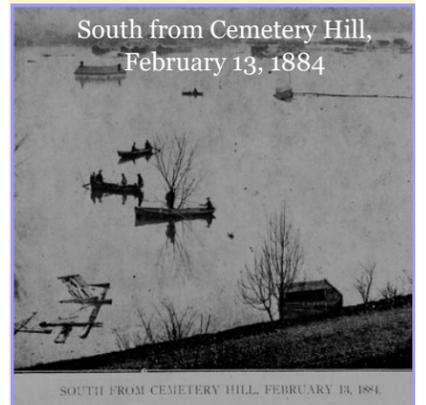
### Real-Life Account of the 1884 Flood

Louisiana Moore Ricker, daughter of the well-known steamboat captain William Moore, lived a very prominent life in Portsmouth and was very interested in the history of Scioto County. She was born on September 8, 1848 aboard the steamer called the "Grace Darling." The steamboat was moored at the landing near Gretna Green, Louisiana. On September 7, 1864, her family moved to Portsmouth, and she began keeping a diary every year upon her arrival to the city. Louisiana was very diligent with her entries. Her father had kept a journal as well and taught her how to write. Louisiana wrote her last entry the day before she passed away. She died on October 6, 1934 and was buried in Greenlawn Cemetery in Portsmouth. You can read Louisiana's diary entries in the Local History Department. We are currently transcribing the original journals and creating copies for you to view.

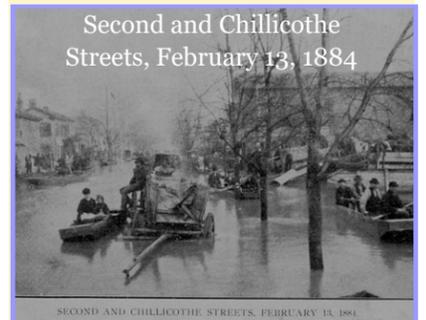


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**Source:**  
<https://www.yourppl.org/history>  
Book: *Pictorial Portsmouth*,  
pg 37, H. A. Lorberg



**Source:** <https://www.yourppl.org/history>  
Book: *Pictorial Portsmouth*,  
pg 31, H. A. Lorberg

Turn to page 3 to read an entry from Louisiana's diary during the 1884 flood!

Our January/February Timeless Treasure is this photographic postcard of the Municipal building in January during the 1937 flood. The rising river water surpassed the top of the 60 ft. flood wall to a record breaking 74.23 ft.

View this and thousands more of our historical items at <https://www.yourppl.org/history/>.

Have a Timeless Treasure of your own you would like to share? Contribute images of your regional historical interest items at

<https://www.yourppl.org/history/contribution>.

**FROM THE VAULT: THIS ISSUE'S TIMELESS TREASURE**



**Saturday, February 9, 1884**  
*"54° Noon Cloudy all day with slight sprinkling rain most of the time. We arose about 6:30 AM and found the water opposite the windows of our bedroom. Has been rising all day and at 9:30 PM it has surrounded our house, filled the cellar and covered the top steps at the front porch and still rises slowly, about 3/4 in an hour. The greater part of the town is under water and we cannot walk far in any direction. Our only way to get out of the yard being through the back alley. 5<sup>th</sup> Court + Market streets as far as we can see from our (see end of book) front windows are being navigated by boats, rafts etc. All day yesterday and nearly all night we heard the sound of hammer + saw people making boats + putting goods up higher. The weather has been so warm and mild that open doors and windows were not uncomfortable. We have all been boat riding today. Willie has spent most of the time yesterday + today on his raft, Carl had one in the side yard. Maggie went skiff riding with the home folks and in the afternoon Jimmie, Carl, Mary, Lizzie and I went out in the skiff.*

*already, have coal and a good supply of cistern water in the house ready for use. The water is nearly into the stable and the feed was moved higher. Everything is ready to seal up the cistern if the water rises three or four inches more. The flood last year seemed terrible but this is much worse. It was a foot higher this forenoon and has risen steadily ever since. The mark of 1832 is said to be covered new. While I wait and watch the mark and Jimmie takes a nap, I'll write a few lines more to Mary Warner who was with us at this time last year and saw the other flood. Later began another sheet to Mary but did not write much. About 10:30 we decided water would not reach the floor before tomorrow so both went to bed and slept some I did not get up again but Jimmie was up several times and about 4 o'clock went out and sealed up the cistern as the water was almost up on it."*

**Front Street, Ohio River, Flood, Feb. 13, 1884**



**Source:** <https://www.yourppl.org/history>  
 Book: Pictorial Portsmouth, pg 37, H. A. Lorberg

**FEATURED RESEARCH TOOL**

**Free African Americans of North Carolina and Virginia**  
*Paul Heinegg*

Located in the African American section of the Local History Department, this books gives brief histories of freed slaves from the North Carolina and Virginia area.



**WHO AM I?**

**Clue # 1**

**I was born on April 1, 1781**

**Clue # 2**

**My father was named William and my mother was Susannah**

**Clue # 3**

**My brother, John, platted Lucasville on August 7, 1819.**

**Clue # 4**

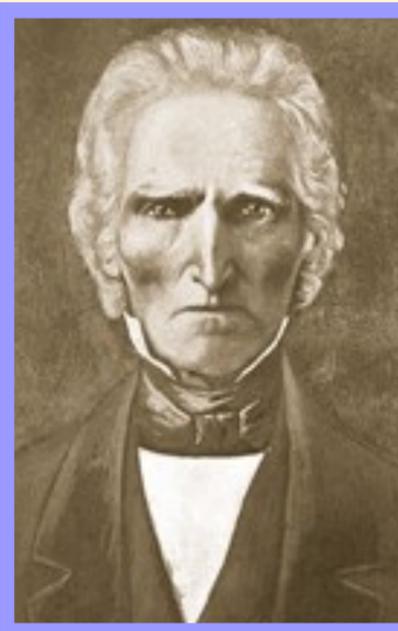
**I served as a general in the War of 1812**

**Clue # 5**

**I was the Governor of Ohio from 1832 to 1836**

**Clue # 6**

**I was the first Territorial Governor of Iowa from 1838 to 1841**



*Hold your copy of The Time Traveler up to a mirror and the answer will magically*

*I am Robert Lucas*