

LOCAL MYSTERY

On page three of the October 28, 1921 edition of the *Portsmouth Daily Times*, (headline right) readers would find a

Couple Had Been Missing Since October 21; Coroner Says They Were Murdered

shocking article about a missing man and woman. John Wheeler Newman and Miss Louise Doyle had been missing since October 21, 1921. Around noon on October 28th, their bodies were found in an abandoned four room cottage on the George Davis Farm. Further examination revealed that the pair had been shot to death, but the coroner believed that the bodies had been moved into the cottage from somewhere else. Both still had their belongings, ruling out robbery as a motive. So, what had caused such a crime? The coming weeks would force the police to delve into every possible suspect until the truth emerged. On November 2, 1921, the *Times* ran an article that said “city and county officials continued to be at a loss to obtain the remotest information.” Detectives toyed with the idea of a robbery gang committing the murders to the couple committing double suicide. Ultimately, every idea was dismissed for lack of evidence to support each theory. This left the investigators feeling frustrated. Then, out of nowhere, on November 5, 1921, the *Portsmouth Times* announced that an arrest had been made for the murders. The prisoner was Roy Chamblin, and he confessed to Sherriff Rickey that he had killed both Louise Doyle and John Newman in the abandoned cottage. He appeared repentant and thought that he deserved to die for the crimes. Chamblin told police exactly what had happened: He had committed a robbery and ran to the cottage where Doyle and Newman were. Slipping inside, Chamblin thought to hide. That proved difficult when he was discovered by the unsuspecting couple. Fearing they would tell the authorities, he shot them to keep them quiet about his crimes. The case seemed cut and dry, and Chamblin was sentenced to be executed on February 24, 1922. Chamblin got a reprieve that pushed his execution back thirty days. This upset the families of the deceased, but Chamblin still stood by his story and stoically awaited his punishment. As the second date approached, however, Chamblin’s story of the murder of John Newman and Louise Doyle began to change. On the day of his execution, Chamblin said that he held up the victims when he happened across them in their car. He forced them to go into the cottage where he executed them. The victims’ families claim that the full truth of that fateful day will never be revealed, believing that Chamblin was insane, though no tests were performed to prove this belief.

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>



Roy Chamblin: confessed murderer of John Newman and Louise Doyle
Source: *Portsmouth Daily Times*, March 24, 1922

1913 Flood

Join us March 19, 2019 at 4 pm as we discuss the 1913 flood and how it affected Portsmouth.

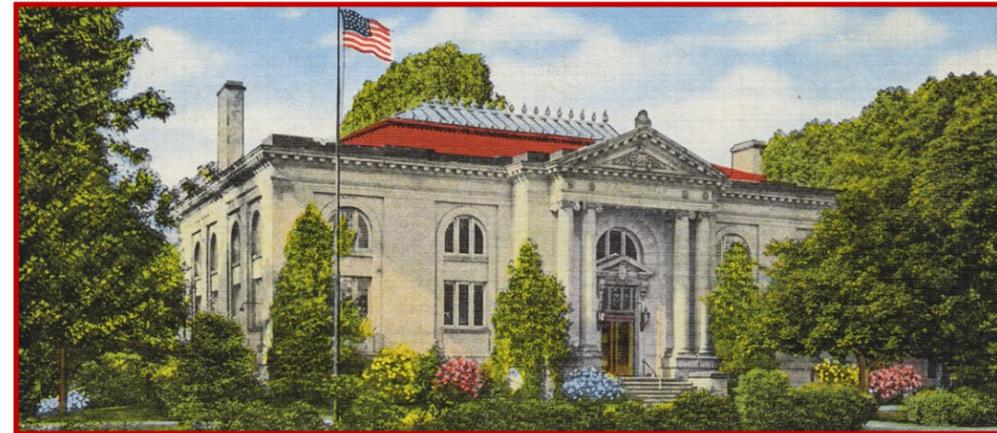
Contact Us

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Portsmouth Public Library
1220 Gallia Street
Portsmouth, Ohio 45662
Phone: (740) 354-5304
E-mail: localhistory@yourppl.org

If you want to know more about the story (left) the library has copies of the book *The Man Who Limped* by local author Dick Burdette for you to check out!

Henry A. Lorberg Local History Department
Portsmouth Public Library, Portsmouth, Ohio

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The Time Traveler

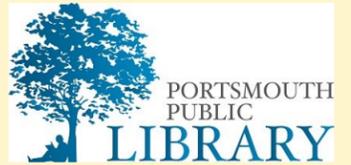
Portsmouth Past and Present

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 May!

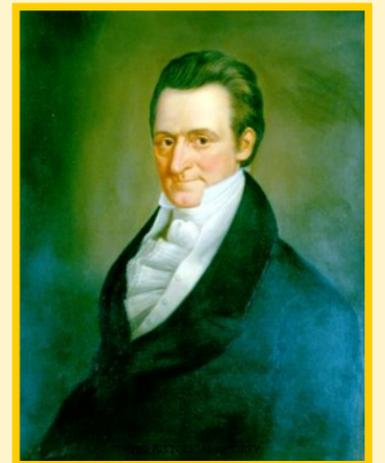
Scioto County’s Efforts in the War of 1812

The War of 1812 was a conflict that arose on the American front as a result of restrictions brought on by France and Great Britain. Both countries were at war with each other and were trying to take any means necessary to weaken the other, especially in regard to maritime trade. Both nations sought to impose strict trading regulations on the now independent United States to block trade with the other. While the U. S. prospered by trade with France by creating loopholes in trade deals, the relationship with Great Britain was still suffering the effects of the Revolutionary War. With the addition of the trade regulations, relations only continued to deteriorate. Feeling constrained and restricted, the United States decided to declare war on Great Britain. From the *Pioneers of Scioto County* by James Keyes (1801-1883) and “The Robert Lucas Journal” published by the State Historical Society of Iowa in 1906, comes a lively tale about Scioto County and the prominent role it played in the War of 1812.

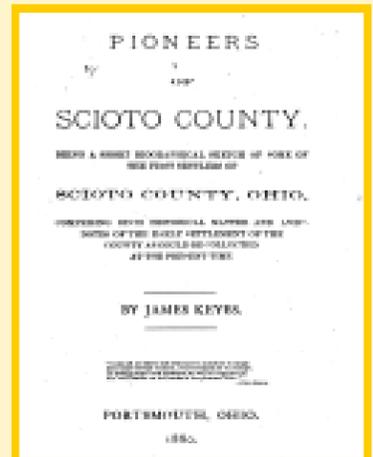


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Fourth Ohio Governor Return J. Meigs, served December 8, 1810 to March 24, 1814
Source: ohiohistorycentral.org



Turn to page 3 to read the rest of this story!



