



VOL 3 ISSUE 1 JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2020

The Time Traveler

Scioto County Past and Present

By Kaitlin Setty

NEW

Tween Club

Starting in January 2020, the Local History Department will be implementing our Tween Club! Join us every Thursday at 4:30 pm for fun crafts and activities for children ages 8-12. Please register beforehand with the Local History Department, or call 740-354-5304

Programs

January 2, 2020 @ 4:30 pm: New Year's Bingo and Leaf Fireworks

January 9, 2020 @ 4:30 pm: Melting Snowman

January 16, 2020 @ 4:30 pm: Movie Night: Toy Story 4

January 23, 2020 @ 4:30 pm: Chinese Lantern Craft

January 30, 2020 @ 4:30 pm: I Survived Program

February 6, 2020 @ 4:30 pm: Winter Penguin

February 13, 2020 @ 4:30 pm: Button Heart

February 20, 2020 @ 4:30 pm: Movie: The Watsons go to Birmingham

February 27, 2020 @ 4:30 pm: Groovy Lava Lamps

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Did You Know that...

Portsmouth used to be the Shoe Capital of the World?

Portsmouth used to have Opera Houses?

The U. S. Grant Bridge used to be a Toll Bridge?

For all tween programs, please register with the Local History Department
740-354-5304



Timeless Treasure: Atlas Company Folding Metal Nail File

Our January/February Timeless Treasure is this metal nail file for the Atlas Company, Portsmouth, Ohio. Henry Atlas began his clothing and dry goods business in Portsmouth in 1895 on West 2nd Street. He left Portsmouth in 1904 to open a business in Dayton. He went bankrupt in 1904 and returned to Portsmouth to reopened his clothing business.

View this and thousands more of our historical items 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 onto our website!



Portsmouth's Sister Cities

A Sister City is a long term partnership between two cities that spans across the globe to different countries. The relationship is established and recognized after the highest ranking official in each city signs off on the agreement. Did you know that Portsmouth has three Sister Cities? They are Orizaba, Mexico, Zittau, Germany, and Great Corby, England. Representatives from these cities have visited Portsmouth in the past, and there have been gift exchanges and shared cultural experiences.

Orizaba was Portsmouth's first Sister City, recognized in 1964.

After many negotiations in which the Portsmouth Sister City Committee worked with a similarly represented committee from Orizaba, the sister city was adopted.

Planning for this moment had begun in January of 1964. The negotiations had to be approved by Washington, D. C. and the signing of a letter by Jorge Rodriguez Pacheco, spokesman for the citizens of Orizaba. After all the paperwork was completed, it was official, and the two cities worked on sending and receiving representatives from each to begin establishing a lasting and prosperous relationship.

Who am I?

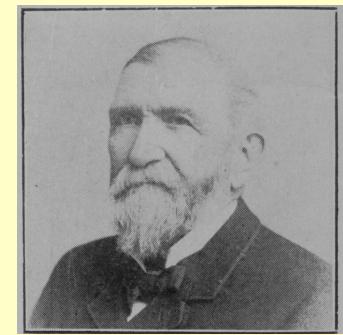
Clue 1: I was born in Scioto County December 27, 1823 to Levi and Amanda.

Clue 2: I grew up on my father's farm near Carey's Run and had intentions to be a lawyer.

Clue 3: My plans changed when a flatboat from New Orleans landed on the corner of my father's farm. Lured by the promise of adventure, I joined the crew and followed the career of boatman.

Clue 4: For 42 years, I was in this occupation, boating on the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers.

Clue 5: I died in Portsmouth in 1903 and am buried in Greenlawn Cemetery.



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

Greenwood House Museum

Do you know this place?

Clue 1: It was the first settlement in Green Township.

Clue 2: This place was originally established in 1797 by Jean G. Gervais.

Clue 3: It was originally named Burrsburg in honor of Aaron Burr, an early settler.

Clue 4: It was a shipping point for pig iron and a docking point for charcoal and ore from Kentucky.

Answer in the next issue!

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Story continued on page 3

Sister Cities Continued

Representatives from Portsmouth traveled to Orizaba in mid 1965. Then, in September, representatives from Orizaba traveled to Portsmouth to participate in the River Days Parade. They brought a Mariachi Band and were greeted at the entrance to the city. During their stay, the delegates were given honorary citizen status. The band interacted with the crowds at the parade, and this prompted for many other visits between the two cities throughout the 1970's and 1980's. Great Corby, England became Portsmouth's next Sister City. The relationship was established sometime between the late 1960's and 1990. Not much has been recorded about the relationship with this city.

In 1991 Zittau, Germany became Portsmouth's third Sister City. Organization for a meeting between representatives for both places began, and the first representatives arrived in Portsmouth in the mid 1990's. Then the partnership tapered off until it was renewed in 2001. Since this renewal, many visits have been scheduled throughout the early 2000's. 2012 was the 20th anniversary of partnership between the two cities. It was celebrated with delegates from Germany coming to Portsmouth. In 2018, the lord mayor of Zittau came to Portsmouth for a visit.

Since relations between Orizaba and Great Corby had not been kept up in recent years, it was announced in 2018 that Portsmouth would be looking into finding another Sister City: Ennis, the county town of County Clare, Ireland. The Irish name is short for Inis Cluana Ramhfhada. Due to the Irish roots and history in Portsmouth, the Sister Cities Committee was eagerly looking for a place in Ireland. They have put the thought out there and reached out to contact officials in the town.

Below: "Portsmouth's Windows on the World," the mural dedicated to Portsmouth's three original Sister Cities. The mural was completed by Robert Dafford in 1995.



Louisiana Moore Ricker's Diary Entry

Below is a diary entry from New Year's Day in 1868. Louisiana wrote about how she and her family celebrated the holiday in Portsmouth.

Wednesday, January 1, 1868

Happy New Year!

The ground is covered with snow and it looks a little more like a winter holiday than Christmas did. We spent the forenoon at S.S. Celebration. It was noon when we got home. Soon after dinner we had two callers and during the course of the afternoon John Peebles, Mr. Blaine, D.P. Pratt, Will Connolly, Mr. Damarin, Mr. Tracy & Davy Jones called. The last three after the first church bell had ceased ringing. The custom of New Year's calling is not observed to a very great extent in Portsmouth. Mary and I went to prayer meeting.

**Answer to last issue's
"Do you know this place?"**

Scioto



Local Mystery: Child's Testimony Convicts Father

In May of 1916, local residents were shocked to learn of the death of Mrs. Permelia Jordan in Lucasville. She had died of a gunshot wound, and the authorities were investigating whether the incident was a homicide or suicide. They seemed to be keeping things quiet until May 5th, when the Portsmouth Daily Times ran an article with the headline "Coroner's Verdict Accuses Jordan of Murder." Coroner Dr. J. W. Daehler reached this verdict after the inquest held in his office. He claimed that Permelia's husband, Roy, had shot her in the head. One of the couple's sons, George, aged eight, told the sheriff that his father had shot his mother, confirming Daehler's suspicions. Shortly after, Roy Jordan was charged with the murder of his wife and taken to the county jail. The case seemed to be closed, the loose ends wrapped up nicely. What followed, however, would leave the authorities puzzled.

The other boys of the couple, Roy Jr., James, and Fred told a different tale than their brother George. They said that their father had often talked to them of how their mother had wanted to kill herself. When Permelia was found by Roy Sr., he told the boys that she had been thinking of taking her own life. Even though the couple had quarreled just before this, the three boys, Roy Jr., James, and Fred, seemed to want to believe that their father was innocent. They were getting confused about the events of the evening, leading some to think that they were hiding something. Little George was the only one who stuck to his story that his father had killed his mother. This was the key evidence that prosecutors sought to use as they crafted their case against Roy Jordan over the next month. Interestingly enough, another piece of evidence that they used was Pomelia's head. Her body was exhumed, but her head was severed and stored to be used in the case to show exactly how Pomelia was killed. They wanted to completely rule out the idea of suicide.

On June 27, 1916, the case against Roy Jordan began. All the children were questioned. For the most part, no new information was gleaned. However, when Roy Jordan Jr. was brought to the stand. He was questioned about a recent development in the case. Little Freddie Jordan, four years old, had mentioned to him that his brother George had actually killed his mother. It had been an accident, one that involved George playing around with a gun in the house. He had accidentally pulled the trigger and shot Pomelia in the head. Upon hearing this information, Roy Jr. promptly told Mr. Smith, the man whose care they had been in since their father's arrest and the doctor who came to see them, Dr. Seitz. Roy Jr. wanted Dr. Seitz called to the stand to corroborate his story. The defense called the doctor to the stand and questioned him about the story. Seitz said that he spoke with Roy Jr. and then with Freddie. The boy told him that George had "killed my mama," and he had shot her in the eye with a gun from "up in the attic." The doctor then went and spoke with George. Crying, the child said he had done it and agreed with Fred's story.

After this revelation, George was called to the stand to be questioned about the accusation. In front of the court, George claimed that he had not shot his mother. He said that he hadn't actually seen his father pull the trigger on the gun, but he had been the only one in the room when the shot was fired. The boy said he didn't want to see his father "get into trouble" and had therefore agreed to what Fred had said about him accidentally killing his mother. The courtroom was filled with confusion, and the judge ultimately made the claim that the boy was too young to understand the solemnity of an oath taken in court. However, the fact that Freddie, George's younger brother, had directly pointed out George as the killer was a key point of evidence. With Fred being even younger than George, his testimony was taken as fact because it was said that there was no way the child could comprehend any deals of any kind that could have been presented to him in order to change his mind. With the statements swirling around the courtroom, the jury was sent to make their decision. After a short time deliberating they came back and declared that Roy Jordan was innocent of the charge of his wife's murder. The jury concluded that the shooting was an accident, done by one of the boys. There wasn't enough concrete evidence to convict Roy, and there was too much confusion going on with the childrens' statements, which the jury believed was due the children being bribed by the defense. As soon as the verdict was read, Roy Jordan left the courtroom and went to pick up his sons, who had been residing at the Children's Home since he'd been arrested. While there were some who questioned the jury's verdict, many thought that it was the right outcome for the case. Roy was able to go on about his life and live out his days peacefully with his sons in the Lucasville area.

Roy died in 1945. He was buried by Pomelia in Lucasville Cemetery.