

Northwest Ohio Quarterly

Volume 9

Issue 4

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BULLETIN No. 4—VOL. 9

OCTOBER, 1937

“THE IMMORTAL J. N.”

Jacob Neuman Free (1828-1906)

EDITOR'S NOTE—Among the famous characters in the history of Ohio there have been few more unique than “The Immortal J. N.”

Although he died a full generation ago, there are still living many people who remember him well—a queer romantic character, mysterious and attractive—a periodic visitor to most of the larger towns in Ohio—a traveler over the whole country.

Most of the details of his life are in doubt. Commonly reputed to have been born in 1828 in McCutchenville, Ohio, even this is disputed. Tiffin, Mansfield and Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, have been named as the place of his birth. He is known to have joined the gold rush to California in 1849. He made a fortune there and lost it—no one knows just how.

A man of brilliant intellect, classically trained, speaking several languages, he, in some strange, tragical way, lost his reason: but there are conflicting traditions as to the cause of that loss. Two stories concerning the latter are given below, but as to the eccentricities of his character in his later years and as to his habits while on the road there is substantial agreement.

The quotations following, conflicting as they are, give most of the known facts and many extant traditions about this singular character.

I. Typed Statement Received from Cincinnati Public Library, December 10, 1934.

July 6, 1884. Cincinnati honored by a visit by one of her former prominent citizens, the “Immortal J. N.” His name, known to but a few, was Jacob Newman Free, and he was a native of Tiffin, Ohio. A child prodigy, he had read the Bible through at four years of age and acquired a usable knowledge of the dozen languages at an early age.

After a lurid and brilliant career he practiced law in Cincinnati in the 50's of the last century, and here he suffered the collapse that unbalanced his most unusual intellect. He defended a man charged with murder, and by dint of energy and eloquence procured his acquittal, only to have his client then confess his guilt. He rushed back to the court room and in an impassioned speech undertook to explain his predicament.

The strain brought on an attack of apoplexy, after which he was harmlessly demented. He abandoned practice, took on his sobriquet and devoted his time to travel. It is said he visited every city and town in the country of a population exceeding 2,000—on railroad passes issued by the presidents of many roads and stopping at the leading hotels, few of which expected and none received payment.

His chief aim in life seemed to be meeting prominent and influential men and telling them how the affairs of the world should be run. He believed

himself to be the sole master of a mysterious "pressure" for the alleviation of human ills and, though it seemed not to work in great affairs, it proved his passport to the best of entertainment on his travels. When he was 80 years of age, nearly 25 years ago, he was adjudged insane and sent to an institution in Toledo. He did not long survive confinement, and his passing removed the second of two most remarkable Ohio characters—"Applesseed Johnny" and the "Immortal J. N."

**Copy of letter written in the office of W. J. Sherman
by Jacob Neuman Free, 1828-1906.**

Editor:—

"J. N." cries for Sammy Steele. Tell them all around that "J. N." thinks they are not quite ready. He is postponing most of his appointments—all for truth which wants time.

Regards to Jim, Mac and all the fellows.

J. N.

2. From Cleveland Public Library

a. Extract from letter of Marilla W. Freeman, Librarian, December 11, 1934.

We are enclosing copies of a letter and editorial sent us by Mr. David Gibson, of Cleveland, which seems to be the only information we can furnish about "The Immortal J. N." The other newspaper men in Cleveland whom we were able to approach did not remember Mr. Free, and we do not find his name in print.

For your information, the Poor House mentioned by Mr. Gibson is the Wyandot County Home, R.F.D. 8, Upper Sandusky, Ohio. The name of the Superintendent was W. H. Link some years ago, but we have no very recent information about the Home.

b. Letter from David Gibson, December 7, 1934.

David Gibson, 1370 Ontario Street, Cleveland, December 7, 1934.
The Public Library
Main Branch

Dear Sirs:—Through Mr. Frank Dickel, of this city, I have a copy of a letter of inquiry from the Indianapolis Public Library relative to "The Immortal J. N." for Mr. Hilton U. Brown of that city.

I am enclosing a transcription of an editorial from the two newspapers of which I am the publisher and which contains the information in part.

The last time I saw him was in Marion, Indiana, at the Spencer House there—about 1898 or 1899. He was beautifully tailored and groomed—broadcloth Prince Albert coat—rather long white hair and beard, suggesting, Walt Whitman, the poet.

He always carried a roll of money and would stand his share of treating at a hotel bar and cigar counter, but he was in no way a dissipated man. He carried a pass in his pocket signed by President Scott, the Pennsylvania Railroad; "Pass the Immortal J. N. over the Pennsylvania Lines West of Pittsburgh until Hell freezes over." Obviously, this was before the Interstate Commerce Committee ruling against passes.

For small fees he lectured in hotel parlors or any place he could get an audience and always on the same subject, "Lifting the Pressure."

Matching my memory of this lecture with later economic knowledge, what he meant was "economic pressure," and which is about our trouble today.

"The Immortal J. N." (J. N. Free) died in the Poor House at Upper Sandusky, Wyandot County, Ohio, about 20 years ago and where he had been an inmate for some years previous to his passing.

It is possible that the Public Library, Upper Sandusky, or one of the two newspapers there could give exact dates and more details as to his history.

I never heard of his being a lawyer or his association with any important criminal case.

Any of the older hotel keepers of the Central West were always glad to give him bed and board; for he was an engaging personality in entertaining guests, and then there was the attending newspaper publicity.

Give my kind regards to Mr. Brown; I was born in Indianapolis, spent the first 30 years of my life there and remember him well and most favorably.

Sincerely,

(Signed) David Gibson.

c. Transcript of Editorial from *Mansfield News Journal*, January 27, 1934.

WHAT ONE MAN THINKS, BY DAVID GIBSON

About a month ago I had an editorial to the effect that we make preachments and pass laws in an effort to morally control human conduct, and all the while maintain an economic system to overbalance it all; that the economic pressure is too great against the Golden Rule, the brotherhood of man, etc.

I have a letter from a man asking if I remember the immortal J. N.

Yes, I do; and I recall that this was the subject and conclusion of this lecture, "Lifting the Pressure."

Obviously, in J. N.'s time, 35 years ago, nobody, including myself knew what he was talking about.

His real name was J. N. Free and he came around Upper Sandusky, Ohio. A sort of respectable tramp—always well groomed and dressed, traveled in luxury and never paid a cent in the way of railroad fare or hotel bills. It didn't do any good to kick him off a train—he'd just get on the next one.

All the old time keepers of hotels took him in—Dave Hawley and Billy Akers, Cleveland; or Terry Cullen or Walter Maxwell, Cincinnati.

He was generally credited with being about half insane, but I think he was violently sane.

I always secretly admired him and if I had my life to live over again, why I would be another Immortal J. N.; for he was about as happy as any man I ever knew.

He died in the poor house and all that, but so will some of the rest of us who have tried to express our ego by "keeping on the pressure."

3. Letter from Jay M. Swerlein, Superintendent Wyandot County Home at Upper Sandusky, Ohio, December 27, 1934

L. L. Dickerson, Librarian, Indianapolis Public Library,
Indianapolis, Indiana.

Dear Sirs:

Jacob Neuman Free, better known as Immortal J. N. was born at Chambersburg, Pa., in 1828, was never married. Died at Toledo State

Hospital, June 27, 1906. The body was shipped to McCutchensville, Ohio, and was buried in McCutchensville Cemetery. Records do not show that he ever was in the Wyandot County Home.

His father moved to Wyandot County in 1831, and settled one mile south of McCutchensville where J. N. spent his boyhood days.

Hoping this is the information you wish, I remain,

Yours respectfully,

(Signed) Jay M. Swerlein.

The Immortal J. N.

EDITOR'S NOTE—We also quote freely, by permission, from the well known work by Hon. John M. Killits, Judge of the District Court of the United States—"Toledo and Lucas County," Volume I, Page 717-721.

No history of Toledo would be complete without some reference to a late frequenter of its streets known all through the middle west as the "Immortal J. N.," a title which was self-conferred. This "immortal" was J. N. Free. No character in Ohio was better known generally in northwestern Ohio during the last third of the nineteenth century. He was born near the little village of McCutchenville, fourteen miles west of Bucyrus, of well to do and intelligent people, his father being a teacher who wielded a great influence in the early school history of northwestern Ohio. It was a home of culture, with the equipment of a very pretentious library, and the son was carefully reared and educated. When gold was discovered in 1848, young Free, who had already made a reputation for oratorical and literary ability, was among those who crossed the plains, reaching California in 1849. There he was very successful. He lost, however, all of his accumulations in a great fire which destroyed the then city of Marysville, Calif., in 1852. This disaster affected his mind. He soon returned to the states, his mental aberration taking the fancy that he was "the Demosthenes of America," charged with a special mission to reveal the truth. He was, when at his best, a fine speaker with a special mission—a successful debater and orator, with a striking personality.

Thereafter, for more than forty years, he moved about the state, from county seat to county seat, making the acquaintance of all the leading men. Arriving in a county seat town, the first place visited would be a newspaper office where he would prepare an announcement generally of this tenor: "The Immortal J. N. reached town this morning. Tonight at the courthouse he will lift the veil and marshal the forces to relieve the pressure." The lecture seldom materialized, however.

During the Civil War he held to the notion that Lincoln and Davis were both right on the war "viewed from their standpoints." He announced that "the Immortal J. N." would become a "martyr for the truth," holding the theory that if he were confined in a dungeon such a light would break upon these magnates that the war would come to an end, his confinement being indispensable to such a result. He so followed the sheriff of Seneca County with a demand that he be confined for this purpose that at last his desire was granted, and from his cell he bombarded the newspapers of the state with his views. He would not permit the sheriff to release him unless the officers and the Tiffin papers should acknowledge the correctness of his theory. They had to make this concession in order to get him out. He then

made his way to Washington, where an interview with Lincoln was had, the harassed president being entertained by the quaintness and eccentricities of his visitor. From Washington he went to Richmond, getting through the pickets and dodging the lines of guards until he reached the capitol of the Confederacy. There he was confined as a Yankee spy until it was discovered that his madness had nothing mischievous about it.

His unique and queer ways triumphed over the suspicions of the Confederates and at last he was accorded an interview with Davis to whom, he unfolded his theory. He was then allowed to return through the lines, believing that he had made converts of both Lincoln and Davis.

Until prevented by the passage of the Interstate Commerce law he was given passes on practically all of the railroads of the central west. A story was prevalent throughout the territory frequented by him that early in his career as a revealer of the truth, a hotel keeper, impressed by his grandiloquent manner of dignity of carriage, said he would "throw off" half of the hotel bill, whereupon the "Immortal" said that he would not be outdone in generosity by any tavern-keeper, wherefore he would "throw off" the other half. In fact no hotel expected to be paid for his entertainment. With great assurance he would register at a hotel, accept of its accommodations, and walk out with no reference to an obligation to pay. He was a good speaker, but was unable to keep to a subject and his lectures, when he occasionally deigned to deliver them, were made up of singular expressions and strange thoughts, although he had once possessed, obviously, the arts of literary address. It was a favorite expression of his that "I made a moving speech last night. When I began all of the seats were full. When I finished no one was left but the janitor."

Every one who knew him had a great deal of sympathy for him, for he was of a kindly nature, and he was never refused hospitality. He had a singularly comprehensive memory for names and faces. Once seen and known by him, a person would be readily recognized in any distant part of the country, even after a great lapse of time, and hailed by his right name.

His quaint personality was a familiar sight on the streets of Toledo for years and likewise in most of the county seats of northwestern Ohio. A newspaper man who knew him well for years thus describes him: "He was over six feet tall, straight as an arrow, with black, straight hair falling to his shoulders, which were massive. His carriage was erect and he possessed small, searching eyes which seemed to be black; great shaggy black eyebrows and an eagle-beak of a nose. He always wore a black slouch hat, a string bow tie, and presented a professional and shabby genteel appearance, with a very dignified bearing."

Other accounts, but apocryphal, have been given of Mr. Free's insanity, one that he had been crossed in love, and another that reason had departed upon the discovery that a client he had successfully defended from a murder charge was actually guilty. In March, 1906, his condition made necessary a formal finding of insanity and he was committed to the Toledo Hospital. In less than three months he died. The date of his birth is uncertain. It is believed to have been in 1828, and that he died in his 78th year.

Reprinted from John M. Killits' *Toledo and Lucas County*,
Volume I, Page 717-721.

From the Toledo Blade of August 1, 1902

LATEST ON THE "IMMORTAL J. N."
Chats Brilliantly While Helping Himself

TO A STRANGER'S LUNCH ON TRAIN

Story of the Wreck of a Fine Intellect.

Free a Native of Northwestern Ohio and Comes of a Fine Old Family—
Sisters Live in McCutchenville.

Special Telegram to The Blade.
Tiffin, Ohio, August 1, 1902.

The latest story of the Immortal J. N. comes from Kansas City, and it is told by J. E. Kelly, of Bowling Green, who, while en route to Oklahoma rode some distance in the car with that remarkable man. When near Kansas City, one of the passengers started to eat a luncheon which he had brought with him. What was his astonishment when the Immortal quietly seated himself beside the stranger and proceeded to help himself to the viands, partaking of the delicacies with the same gusto and vigor as if he had been invited to dine.

This remarkable man's home was at McCutchenville, which is on the line between Seneca and Wyandot counties, and where one or two of his sisters still reside. He has a mania for traveling, and never pays for either transportation or entertainment, though he always puts up at the best hotels. He holds a pass over the B. & O. which reads: "Pass J. N. forever." Wherever he goes, he makes addresses, and the topic is always "Pressure." To the mind of the Immortal J. N., when the veil is torn aside and the pressure lifted the millenium will have come. This is his mission in life—to "lift the pressure." Many stories are told of J. N. Free, and how his misfortune came upon him, all of them tinged with romance, and the old man, with his straight, tall figure and long, white hair, floating over his shoulders, and blue eyes looking steadfastly at you—fine eyes, even though the light of reason has fled—is a romantic figure. Free, in his youth had the physique of a Roman gladiator, combined with the grace and beauty of a prince, and mind whose brilliance seemed to forecast a dazzling future for its possessor. In the 40s, when the California gold fever was turning the heads of so many, Free saw in that land of gold his opportunity, and joined the vast throng of westward-bound travelers.

Arrived in the country where all his golden dreams were to be realized and his fortune made, he cast about him for a suitable investment. He became proprietor of a wagon train, carrying supplies to the miners in the mountains. One bright day, which was, however, to turn into a black and fateful one for J. N. Free, he started up the trail into the mountains with his load of supplies, \$20,000 worth. All his fortune was invested in that load. All went well until, when far up the mountain, one of those sudden and furious storms peculiar to the west burst upon him. It is told how this heroic man fought death in that lonely mountain pass for two days and won the battle where a man of less rugged constitution, or less courage would have succumbed. But, though he saved his life, all his worldly wealth he lost, and his constitution was greatly undermined by the exposure and subsequent distress. He no longer had the heart to try to win a fortune from this treacherous country, which had despoiled him in the hour when she was smiling her sweetest.

So J. N. Free returned to his Ohio home and decided to devote his brilliant intellect to the exposition of the law. He was man of prepossessing appearance, and it was predicted that he would make a powerful attorney. He studied hard, and at last his great opportunity to make a name for himself came. He was attorney for the defense in a murder trial. He believed his client innocent, and worked with the energy of a giant to clear his man and win the case. He pleaded his cause fervently, and with such eloquence that onlookers, judge, jury, rival attorneys, were all held spellbound under the magic of his wonderful personality. Men marveled and said he would leap to the highest pinnacle of fame in his profession. After receiving the felicitations of his friends, the lawyer stepped into a private room with his client—the man he had cleared of a charge of brutal murder, believing him innocent. Just what passed in that room none ever knew, save this—that the scoundrel whom Free had cleared, either through natural depravity or some unknown reason, confessed to his attorney that he was guilty of the charge. The shock was too great for the noble man, whose sensitive and upright nature could ill brook the knowledge that through his efforts such a villain had been turned loose upon society. He fell unconscious to the floor, and it was only after a long illness that he was seen on the streets again. And upon his recovery it was seen that the brilliant intellect was shattered; and thus he became a wanderer and in time acquired the title of the Immortal J. N.

There are but few places in the country where J. N. is not known. During the Civil War, he, in some manner, slipped through the lines. He wanted to see Jeff Davis, and was sure if he could only get an interview with the great southern leader he could stop the war. Another man would have met death then, but J. N. was received with kindness and sent back through the lines to the land that gave him birth.

The Immortal J. N. never forgets a name or a face, and stories are told of his recognizing persons he has met only in a casual way, ten or fifteen years later. There is a hint of a love story in the life of this notable man, and it also is tinged with melancholy. It is reported that before leaving for the west, Free was engaged to be married to a beautiful McCutchenville girl, who proved faithless, for on the day he returned from California, the first sound that greeted his ears was the church bells ringing for the marriage of sweetheart and another man. And so J. N. Free, retaining his native nobility, even though his mind is wrecked, passes through life striving ever to "lift the pressure," which, in all probability, will never be lifted for him until the light of eternity dispels all mist from his mind.

God bless J. N. Free, a noble man if there was one.

Special Telegram to The Blade
Upper Sandusky, Ohio, March 29, 1906.

The infirmary directors returned late last night from Perry county with the eccentric philosopher, the "Immortal J. N." Free. This morning he was adjudged insane before Judge Brown, and this afternoon he was taken to the asylum at Toledo, which will put an end to his ceaseless travels far and wide, that have gone on for over half a century. He is 78 years old, and his health is unimpaired. He never uses glasses or takes medicine.

Thursday Morning, April 5, 1906.

The "Immortal J. N.", all that is mortal of him, is taking kindly to his new life at the Toledo State Hospital, whence he was brought last Thursday.

Leading for a half a century the life the sparrows lead, Jacob Newman Free, one of the most eccentric characters of a generation, has reached the end of his weary wanderings and he expresses himself as thoroughly satisfied with his surroundings under the kindly care of Dr. Love.

At the age of 78 he is still as straight as an Indian and reminds one of a sturdy oak into whose rugged heart the rottenness of age has just begun to creep. Like the apostles of old, he took neither script nor purse on his incessant journeys. He had passes on all railroads and every inn was his free lodging house. There was no better known character throughout the middle west.

The "Immortal J. N.", as he called himself, not out of egotism but of sincerity, was princely in physique. As a young man he was the leading criminal lawyer of Cincinnati. A half century ago his mind became unhinged and he became a wanderer on the face of the earth.

J. N. posed only as the apostle of truth and righteousness. He believed all men were under a "pressure" which it was his mission to lift from their shoulders. "Men say I am crazy," the cheery itinerant was accustomed to say. "It is they who are crazy. Look at them!"

Although warped mentally his best instincts were preserved. Grace, courtesy, knightliness, purity and wondrous kindness marked him. Occasionally flashes of the once imperial mind bespoke the inherent greatness of the man.

Every newspaper man in the middle west knew J. N. He was always coming and going and always welcome. Had he not been so bustling he would have been pathetic. Harmless as a child, gentle as a woman he reminded one in a way of Christ, as he must have been.

And now in his old age he goes as willingly to the hospital as ever he went to his dinner. There will be no trouble with him. He will go on trying to "lift the pressure" from the burdened minds of his hospital fellows.

Toledo Blade of 1906.

"The Immortal J. N." is still trying to lift the pressure at the asylum. Superintendent George Love says the man is a good natured, harmless old soul who doesn't seem to realize where he is. Whenever Dr. Love addresses him the eccentric wanderer tells him that he certainly has a great hotel, which gives him ample opportunity to lift the pressure. Dr. Love says the man will undoubtedly die in the institution as there is little prospect of his recovering from his mental disability. He is about the finest patient the asylum has, however, and so well known is he throughout the country that every visitor wants to see him.

Toledo Blade of June, 1906.

The "Immortal J. N." is dead. He passed away at the state hospital at 9:30 this morning from valvular heart trouble, having been ill for several weeks. Because of his eccentricities, J. N. Free was known in every section of the country, he having been a rover for many years up to the time he was committed to the asylum here on March 29 last.

Mr. Free was self-styled the "Immortal J. N.," and was unceasingly promising to "relieve the pressure," a task which he never attempted to explain and never accomplished. Upon entering a city or town Mr. Free would walk along the streets, waving his arms, and informing the populace that he would "lift the veil" at a certain hour.

Free was a magnificent specimen of physical manhood, more than six feet in height, broad shouldered and muscular retaining his ruggedness even in his declining years.

Possessing a pair of piercing black eyes, and his hair hanging over his shoulders, Mr. Free was a striking figure, and many persons not acquainted with his derangement gazed upon him in awe, really believing that he was possessed of supernatural powers. It was a hobby of Free's to visit the newspaper offices immediately upon entering a town. He would ask for an announcement in the columns to the effect that he would lift the veil upon a certain day and he would then depart, carrying with him a huge bundle of exchanges.

He was seldom seen upon the streets without the newspapers under his arm. In all his travels, which embraced every state in the Union, Free was never known to pay railroad fare or hotel bills. At one time it was said he possessed annual passes upon nearly every steam railroad in the country.

About six years ago Free made the announcement that he was no longer the "Immortal J. N.," but the "Only Philosopher" instead. The former name, however, clung to him through all the years and up to the time of his death.

Deceased's mind had been affected for more than forty years, but he was never violent, and even rational at times.

He was a cultured and educated man, and in his speech and manner showed plainly the result of his early training. Conflicting statements have been published from time to time as to the cause of Free's insanity, the most generally accepted reason being that he lost his mind while trying a criminal case in the Cincinnati courts.

Free, so the story goes, then one of the most brilliant lawyers in the state, was defending a man charged with murder, and through his matchless eloquence secured a verdict of acquittal. One night, some time after the trial, his client visited him and then told him that he was guilty of the charge upon which he had been cleared, which so affected Mr. Free that he became demented from that time on.

This story was never substantiated, and vigorously denied by Mr. Free. When asked about the occurrence he was wont to say:

"J. N. never was a lawyer and never defended a man on trial for murder."

"J. N." received a welcome wherever he went and became a familiar figure in every section in the country he visited. Within the last few years prior to his commitment to the state asylum, Mr. Free confined his visits chiefly to northwestern Ohio, coming to Toledo at frequent intervals.

Free was a figure of national fame, and columns, accompanied by cuts of the man and his wanderings found their way from time to time into the columns of all the leading dailies in the country.

During the days of the civil war, Free first came into the limelight because of his moving between the north and south, trying to convince both sides that each was right from their own standpoint.

There is some question as to the birth place of Jacob Neuman Free, Tiffin, Mansfield and McCutcheonville, Ohio, being mentioned as the places where he first saw the light of day, but the latter is believed to be correct from the fact that during his life "J. N." had often said that he was born in Wyandotte county.

Of late years Mr. Free's health had been failing rapidly, but he never desisted in his wanderings. One day while sitting in the depot at a small town in Perry country he became very ill and the infirmary directors of Wyandot county were notified.

The Historical Society

On the morning of March 29, he was adjudged insane before Judge Brown, at Upper Sandusky, and taken to the State hospital. While at the latter institution he has always maintained the cheerful disposition so characteristic of the man, and up to a few hours before his death reiterated his oft-repeated willingness to "relieve the pressure."

Mr. Free was well liked by the officials and attendants of the State hospital, because of his ever readiness to obey the rules of the institution. He was a man of great promise in his youth and possessed of considerable wealth. Jacob Neuman Free was 77 years of age at the time of his death. He has a sister residing at McCutcheonville, who has been notified and will take charge of his body.

Recollections of J. N. Free ("The Immortal J. N.")

(By Chub DeWolfe)

Mr. Wm. DeWolfe, now on the TOLEDO BLADE, is a life-long newspaper man. His father also was a newspaper man.

Mr. DeWolfe as a boy five or six years of age, recalls visits of Mr. Free. He remembers him as a tall man with long hair and yellow-green eyes. In the summer he wore a long linen duster. "When he came my father had literally to sit on our EXCHANGES to keep him from carrying them away."

Mr. DeWolfe also recalled a story about his many passes on the various railroads. He applied for a pass on the Toledo & Ohio Central (now a part of the New York Central system) running between Toledo and Columbus. The president of the company issued a pass to the "Immortal J. N.," permitting him to walk to and from Toledo to Columbus. "J. N." accepted the pass but got around the difficulty by walking back and forth the length of the train after boarding it until he arrived in Columbus.

He had a daughter Nellie who was something of an actress.

Bibliography—The Immortal J. N.—Jacob Newman Free (1828-1906)

Papers on this record:

1. Typed statement received from Cincinnati Public Library, December 10, 1934.
2. From Cleveland Public Library.
 - a. Extract from letter of Marilla W. Freeman, Librarian, December 11, 1934.
 - b. Letter from David Gibson, December 7, 1934.
 - c. Transcript of Editorial from Mansfield News Journal, January 27, 1934.
3. Letter from Jay M. Swerlein, Superintendent Wyandot County Home at Upper Sandusky, Ohio, December 27, 1934.
4. Toledo Public Library: Data supplied December, 1934, consisting of:
 - a. Extract from "Toledo and Lucas County, Ohio," by Killits, Vol. 1, pp. 717-721.
 - b. Copies of five articles from Toledo Blade:
 - I. August 1, 1902.
 - II. March 29, 1902.
 - III. April 5, 1906.
 - IV. Blank Date, 1906.
 - V. June, 1906.
 - c. Statement from Chub DeWolfe, December 15, 1934.

Maumee River

Dedicated to Mary Barnes Suydam

Once I heard a stranger asking
On the bus one soft May midnight,
As the city glowed below us,
"Is this Toledo? What is this river?"
"Yes—Toledo—Maumee River—"
Maumee River—oh—the answer,
That to her meant nothing, nothing,
As she went her way unheeding;
Not for her the vivid pictures
That to me came swiftly crowding . . .

Lyric phrases—Maumee River,
In themselves a flowing poem
Written by the dateless ages;
Cutting courses through the valley,
Bearing islands on its bosom
As a mother holds her children;
Now mature and yet not aged,
As of old the river labors,
Cheering men with grace and beauty,
Serving men in trade and traffic;
Blending smoothly with Lake Erie,
On its way to wed the ocean.

Changing swiftly with the seasons,
Draped in mist on April dawns,
Smoke perhaps of ancient camp-fires;
A stream of gold it runs at sunset,
Splashed with dyes of mid-October.
Piled with ice as dark December
Mutely locks its liquid murmur,
Freezes in its sands the sedges.
Ruthless rides it in a torrent
When the equinox is bringing
Spring again to wake the river.

As long ago as sixteen-eighty,
The French had built a post for trading;
In its place the British later,
At the present site of Maumee,
Made a fort they called Maimi,
Named it from the tribe Miami,

Spelled it as the Indians said it,
Made the word to us familiar.
Before the white man tamed its waters,
Birch canoes rode down the Maumee,
Drifting to Detroit, the center
For the Indians near the lake shores.

Trails ran outward to Sandusky
And the Portage at Bucyrus,
Linking fast the Mississippi,
Through the Beautiful Ohio,
Through the thunder of Niagara,
With the splendor of St. Lawrence;
Trails of land and trails of water,
Which the white men traveled later.

Dark these trails with blood of captives,
Awful with the shrieks of torture
Wrung from men like Colonel Crawford,
Burned at Carey in reprisal,
Before John Stewart's patient preaching
Civilized the dying Wyandots,
Taught them prayers and peaceful living;
Stewart, resting from labors
With the Indians of his Mission.

General Wayne at Fort Defiance
Sent his challenge to the red men,
To the Eries and the Shawnees;
Broke their power at Fallen Timbers,
Chased them down as far as Greenville;
Forced their chiefs to sign a treaty
Giving safety to the settlers.
Hanging in the State Museum
On the campus in Columbus,
Vividly in picture—writing
Bears it Little Turtle's pledges—
Sullen promise never broken.

At Fort Meigs before the breastworks,
Proctor's British soldiers loosened
Their hold forever on the valley;
Aided by the youthful Croghan
At Fremont with one small cannon,
On Put-in-Bay the gallant Perry
Crushed their empire in Ohio,
Restored to peace the Maumee River.

of Northwestern Ohio

Over Indian trails the settlers
Came with hopes of high endeavor;
From the forest raised their cabins,
Reared their babies, built their homesteads,
Built their lives with rugged virtues
For their sons to follow after.
Mill-wheels turned with creaking axles,
Grinding corn and sawing timbers,
Building towns from Ft. Wayne onward,
Nestled by the winding river,
To the harbor of Toledo.

Bridges linked its early mudroads;
Clumsy ox-carts, rumbling railways,
Purring motors, claimed their places,
While the bones of men forgotten,
Crumbled under fallen headstones.

One among them claims remembrance;
Johnny Appleseed, the Christian,
Wearing gunny-sacking, barefoot,
Gentle, loving as St. Francis,
Planted apples on the hillsides,
Father of Ohio orchards.
Laid him down to die one morning,
Simply as an epic passing;
At Ft. Wayne lies humbly buried,
At the head of these sweet waters
Drawing fragrance from his spirit.

Miamis, Eries, French, and English,
All have left upon the valley,
Records of their loves and labors;
Pioneering men and women,
Bringing faith and patient courage,
Honored in their children's children,
All have gone into the making
Of this rich and gracious valley,
Blending with the classic beauty,
Of this noble, flowing poem;
In summer guarded by Arcturus,
By Orion warmed in winter;
Blending with shores and shallows
Of this graceful, living poem,
Of this epic not yet ended . . .
Lyric waters—Maumee River.

—Mabel J. Bourquin

Read at Rock Ledge Farms, Perrysburg, Ohio,
To the Toledo Writers' Club
June 13, 1936

Midwest Historical Notes

NEW NAME GIVEN FOR NO GOD ROAD—Norwalk, January 25—The name of No God road in Huron county has been changed to Edwards by Charles Ogan, engineer of Huron county, at the request of residents of the road.

According to local legend, the road was named nearly 100 years ago by a stranger who, surprised when he found residents of the road working on a Sunday, asked one: "Do you know God?" and was told:

"Sorry, stranger, I cannot help you. No one of that name lives around here."

BOSTON TEA PARTY MARKED BY MURAL—Boston (AP).—The Boston Tea Party, held in the dusk of early evening at the end of Griffin's Wharf on December 16, 163 years ago, is commemorated in a mural unveiled at a Kilby Street tavern.

The much-storied tea party was one of the events which brought on the Revolution twelve years later.

The East India Company had sent three vessels loaded with tea to Boston. Town officials protested the landing of the cargoes, and when the royal Governor failed to answer the protests, a citizens' meeting was held in the Old South Meeting House.

That meeting adjourned in an uproar and customs officers announced the tea would be landed on the following day under protection of the guns of the British fleet.

Nobody ever told the names of the leaders of a band of sixty men who, dressed as Indians, ran to Griffin's Wharf in the early evening, tomahawked the 340 chests of tea aboard the East India Company's vessels and dumped the contents in the harbor.

Nor was it ever told why the British fleet, lying alongside the tea-laden vessels, permitted it, nor why the captains and crews of the cargo ships made only feeble protests.

The last survivor of that tea party was George Robert Twelve Hewes, who, at the age of 81, and while living in Otsego County, N. Y., told what he knew of the tea destruction—which wasn't much.

He said a Leonard Pitt, who ran beside him, was the only man in the party he knew. He added but one brief item to the tale as it appears in countless histories.

One man, he said, was handled roughly when he attempted to carry off some of the tea in his pockets.

The Old South Meeting House still stands on busy downtown Washington Street. It is still a meeting place—the scene of Sunday forums—and houses a collection of historical relics.

The mural, which is in a tavern, not far from the site of the old

wharf, is the work of Raymond Stickney, prominent Boston and Providence, R. I., artist. It is carefully painted and much research has gone into the work. Most of the figures, however, are dressed in Continental costumes.

20,000 INDIAN RELICS COLLECTED BY OHIOAN—Norwalk, Feb. 11—B. B. Thomas, Townsend township farmer, has accumulated a large collection of Indian arrow heads and other stone implements in the country. He has more than 20,000 exhibits including many rare pieces from many states, including the Pacific coast and the southeast.

The curios are housed in a small store and office building on his farm eight miles east of here. Indian relic students from all parts of the country visit the collection.

Mr. Collins gave a lecture on arrow heads at the Fitchville grange February 19 and displayed some of his rarest pieces.

. . . . Chinese dish which many foreigners have eaten is chop suey. It has been called by some "the national dish of China." Now, the truth of the matter is that chop suey, as we know it, is not only not the national dish of China, but no Chinese ever eats it. The only chop suey which the Chinese know is a cheap kind of Cantonese beggars' hash.

Dr. Wu Ting Fang, the famous Chinese diplomat, told me the peculiar circumstances under which this beggar dish became a favorite abroad. The discovery of gold in California brought thousands of Chinese coolies to San Francisco, and soon the Chinese colony in the city was large enough to support a couple of Cantonese restaurants. One night a crowd of miners decided to see what these pigtailed yellow men ate. When they got to the restaurant the regular customers had finished, and the proprietor was ready to close. But the miners demanded food, so he dumped together all the food his Chinese patrons had left, put a dash of Chinese sauce on top and served it to his unwelcome guests. They didn't know what he meant when he told them that they were eating chop suey, or "beggars hash."

At any rate, they liked it so well that they came back for more, and in that chance way the great chop suey industry was established. Many more Chinese fortunes have been made from it than were ever made from gold mining, and for generations thousands of Chinese have laughed because every dish of chop suey served is a culinary joke at the expense of the foreigner. Chop suey restaurants are to be found in big cities all over the world—except in China.

—The Reader's Digest.

As he made his hospital rounds one morning, Dr. John C. Berry, an early missionary in Kobe, observed a patient smoking his pipe in bed and left with him a tract on the evils of tobacco. The patient, young Murai, was so impressed with figures in the pamphlet showing the number of educational

institutions which could have been built with the money spent annually in America and Europe for cigarettes, that he introduced the cigarette in Japan and made a large fortune before selling out to the tobacco trust.

—Frank Cary, *The Lighter Side of History*.

President Roosevelt's "peace mission" to South America last winter produced some ironic results. Leaving Brazil to visit Argentina, the President was escorted by 120 airplanes from the Brazilian army and navy. So impressed were the Argentines by this display that within 15 days they had appropriated almost \$2,500,000 to buy airplanes from the United States. And when Chile discovered that the Argentine planes could easily cross the Andes—loaded with bombs—she too sent an aviation mission to the U. S. All in all, it was the biggest armament race South America had had in many years.

—The Christian Century.