

# The Time Traveler

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



## Local History Toy Drive

**Come donate a toy to our Local History Toy Drive. You can bring a toy to the Portsmouth Public Library, our bookmobile, or any of our branches in New Boston, Wheelersburg, South Webster, and Lucasville! This year we will be working with Operation Grace. We are looking for toys for children ages 4- 16. The toy pickup date is December 6, 2019**

## Local History Donations

**Did you know that the Local History Department accepts items that pertain to the history of Scioto County? We scan donated items onto our online digital collection and list them with their donors on our website.**

**Some of the donations we have received in 2019:**

- Linda Foster- 187 journals of Charles Hayward
- Marcy English and Martha Jean Allman- Various Allman ephemera
- Portsmouth Police Department- Fingerprint card and old scrapbook of newspapers

**View all of these donations online at <https://www.yourppl.org/history/>**

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## Programs

- \*November 6, 2019 @ 4:30 pm:  
**Monster Bag Monster Puppet**- tween
- \*November 13, 2019 @ 4:30 pm:  
**Leaf Painting**- tween
- \*November 19, 2019 @ 4:30 pm:  
**Wooden Spoon Turkey**- tween
- \*December 5, 2019 @ 4:30 pm:  
**Clothespin Reindeer**- tween
- \*December 11, 2019 @ 4:30 pm:  
**Grinch Slime**- tween
- \*December 18, 2019 4:30 pm:  
**Snowman Bulb Ornament**- tween

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



## Local Mystery: Alleged Suicide Gives Way To Murder

In late August 1897, local residents were shocked to learn of the suicide of young George Englert. At age twenty-three, he had his whole life ahead of him, so why would he want to kill himself? Englert's body was found in his room at his parent's house. There was a bullet wound in his skull, and the gun was lying beside the body. His mother stated that she and George had argued before she left him alone in his room. Apparently, George had hidden a pistol underneath his pillow. After his mother left, he pulled the gun out and shot himself in the right temple. However, after examining the body and looking at the bullet wounds, police would change their original suspicions from suicide to murder.

"From the very start, there was foul play at the bottom of his death," Marshal Schmitt said. He didn't trust George Englert's mother, and he thought the circumstances regarding her witness statement seemed "peculiar." He spoke with Olark Englert, George's father. He corroborated his wife's story saying that he heard a gunshot shortly after his son had gone to bed. Dr. Albert L. Abbott, a friend of the family's, came to assist Mrs. Englert and her husband. They called the police. Policemen Herrick and Adkins were called in to investigate. They examined the body and the room, making notes. However, a post-mortem was never performed and each witness was only questioned for a few minutes. So, Englert's death was ruled as suicide.

It wasn't until October that the police launched an official investigation into the crime. Why did they wait so long to do this? It could be explained by the strained relations that existed between Marshal Schmitt and Coroner Davidson. Their disgruntled relationship dated back to the Lew Young murder in 1893 where their clash resulted in a murderer going free. Schmitt vowed that he would never take on another case in which the coroner was involved. Unfortunately, that was the case with the George Englert suicide, thus explaining the stall in the investigation and the nice easy wrap up.

However, On October 30, 1897, the Portsmouth Times ran a headline claiming that Dr. Albert L. Abbot had been arrested and was "charged with the premeditated murder of George Englert." The warrant was signed by amateur detective George Sauers. There was a lot of circumstantial evidence that led to the arrest. Mostly, the authorities were banking on the reasoning behind Abbott being the first person on the scene after the sound of gunshots and the results of the autopsy. The examination of Englert's body was performed by Dr. William Herbert Bell. He told the police that after examining the gunshot wounds, he believed George Englert had been murdered. "The hole in the right temple was an inch and a quarter wide and the one in the back of the head one half an inch wide." Dr. Bell said that this proved his theory of murder because "it is well known that a bullet entering the flesh will make a small hole." The hole at the back of the head was too wide to be the exit wound hole. If George Englert had shot himself in the temple then there should have been a larger hole on one side of his head and a smaller one on the other side. This was not the case. It was impossible for a gun to be angled in that way to force the bullet hole at the back of the head. To Dr. Bell, it looked like someone had shot George in the back of the head, and then tried to make it look like a suicide. This claim was further supported by the fact that there was no gunpowder on Englert's head or body. Dr. Bell said that if the gun was fired at close range then there would have been residue left over from the shot. In this case, there was none. Had Dr. Albert Abbott been the one to actually pull the trigger? The police certainly thought so. Especially since it was later discovered that Abbott had come to the city with the Englert family and had been lodging with them at the time of George's death. Witnesses said that the two men did not get along and that Abbott had assaulted George on a trip to Cincinnati in the past.

The case against Abbott was brought before the court and presented. The police believed they had all the right witness accounts, and they had gathered as much evidence to convict the doctor. The case, however did not last long. The Dr. was acquitted of all charged because it was ruled that most of the evidence presented was too circumstantial. Several months after his trial, Abbott charged Sauers with perjury in the affidavit charging him with murder. Many suspected it was a quest for revenge and the besmirching of Abbott's character that drove him to make such a case, even though interestingly enough, the Portsmouth Times had proclaimed Abbott's innocence throughout the whole case. There were others that thought Abbott was pressing the charges as a way to get the heat off of himself. Eventually the charges were dropped, and Dr. Albert Abbott was able to move on with his life. Did he murder George Englert? We will never know.



## More Letters to Santa

Dear Santa:

I am a boy 7 and in the second grade. I would like a punching bag and boxing gloves.

If you can, Bring me a pair of mittens as I wear out so many gloves.

I will leave you some tea and cakes, under the tree.

You had better come to my house first or the mice may get your cakes

Your Pal

JACK DIAALE,  
808 Lakeview Ave.,  
New Boston, O.

Dear Santa Claus:!

I am seven years old. I will be eight this Jan. I go to Wilson school. I never did get a red mark.

Do you put rags around you to keep the soot off of you.

I want a electric train and a Mickey Mouse wrist watch and candy and nuts and thats all. Be carefull don't get sick. I have been sick myself.

HAROLD CONKLE,  
815 Murray St.

## All letters from the Portsmouth Times December 19, 1937

Dear Santa:

I have tried to be good and I am looking for you to bring me a tricycle and doll please don't dissapoint me and bring me a telephone to and maybe I will call you up if the lines is not to busy.

I hope I will see you soon,  
MONICA POWELL,  
2010 Robinson Ave.

## Louisiana Moore Ricker's Diary Entry

Below is a diary entry from Thanksgiving in 1900. Louisiana always wrote about how she and her family celebrated the holiday.

### Thursday, November 30, 1900

*A pleasant Thanksgiving. We had the family dinner with Father + Mother, John, Enos + Helen, Barton Green, Mr. Smith and our own family excepting Will. Sister Mary went to Mrs. Arnold's to dinner. Several of the Peebles children were here during the day. I did not go to church. There was to be a Union service at Sixth St. with Rev. Geo. Stewart to preach the sermon and I knew the house would be crowded. In the evening Jas + I went to Bigelow to the Gospel Temperance service but the house was full and not even desirable standing room left so we came home.*

## Introducing our new Tween Club in 2020!

In 2020, we will be introducing our new Tween Club. We will meet every Thursday at 4:30 pm to do craft projects, watch movies, play games, and much more!

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

South Webster





## Timeless Treasure:

### New Boston Methodist Episcopal Church

Our November/December Timeless Treasure is this photo of the New Boston M. E. Church, located on Gallia Avenue, at the northeast corner of Glenwood Avenue. The photo was part of a collection donated by the Taylor Stone Company.

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!



## Who am I?

Clue 1: I was born in Clay County, Kentucky in 1848.

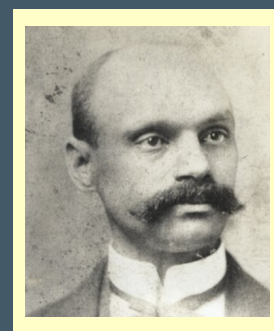
Clue 2: I served in the U. S. Colored Troops during the Civil War.

Clue 3: When the Portsmouth "Light Guards" Colored was formed in 1871, I was Second Lieutenant of the regiment.

Clue 4: I was a local barber, owning my own business for over thirty years.

Clue 5: I died in Portsmouth in 1911.

Clue 6: I am buried in Soldiers' Circle in Greenlawn Cemetery.



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



## Do you know this place?

Clue 1: It was originally laid out in 1841.

Clue 2: This place was named after the Little Scioto River.

Clue 3: It was first named Edwardsville after Colonel Edwards.

Clue 4: This town was originally in Porter Township.

Clue 5: It was best known for its production of fire brick and tile.

## Letters to Santa in the Portsmouth Times

Did you know that the Portsmouth Times used to publish children's letters to Santa Claus? They held competitions, and prizes were given to the best letters.

Enjoy reading this one below and others on page 3!

Portsmouth Times  
December 19, 1937

Dear Santa:  
I like your red suit and your white beard I am a little girl six years old I like the things that you brought me last year this year I would like to have a eight piece house cleaning set a reed cradle a doll and candy and nuts and fruit don't forget the poor people they all so want toys to  
Your little Friend,  
**LOIS MEYER,**  
1227 Allard St.  
Sciotoville.

Letters continued on page 3

Answer in the next issue!