

The Story of Indian Head Rock

Documentary Screening
August 24, 2017 @ 7 pm

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Portsmouth Ohio If?”
Facebook history group

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A Documentary by
**STEVEN
MIDDLETON**

**FREE SCREENING AT
PORTSMOUTH WELCOME
CENTER
August 24th, 2017 @7:00 PM**

WHEN A LEGENDARY
BUT LONG
FORGOTTEN ROCK
IS PULLED FROM
THE OHIO RIVER
IT IS SUDDENLY
THE CENTER
OF A BATTLE
BETWEEN
TWO STATES.



**BETWEEN THE ROCK
AND THE
COMMONWEALTH**

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TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 1908

THE PORTSMOUTH DAILY TIMES.

ONE THOUSAND VISITED THE INDIAN ROCK

It is said that over 1000 people viewed the Indian Rock near the Kentucky shore opposite Road street, Sunday, the water being so low that the historic relic is now plainly visible to the naked eye.

Much interest was aroused when it became known that the D. Ford, carved on the rock on Oct. 11, 1861, could be seen. Ford, who has since passed away, was the father of Tim Ford, one of Portsmouth's most highly respected residents. When he carved the letters on the rock he paddled his log. The letters are about 12 inches tall, and the water has

not made any impression whatever upon them.

Another interesting land mark that can be seen is the stone imbedded in the Ohio, in 1881 by Capt. Sam Moore, at the foot of Market street. At that time the water was 16 inches deep, the lowest point ever reached by the Ohio in the memory of the oldest living citizen. The letters carved on this rock was the work of Jules Faivre, who died several months ago. According to this rock there is now but 22 1-2 inches of water.

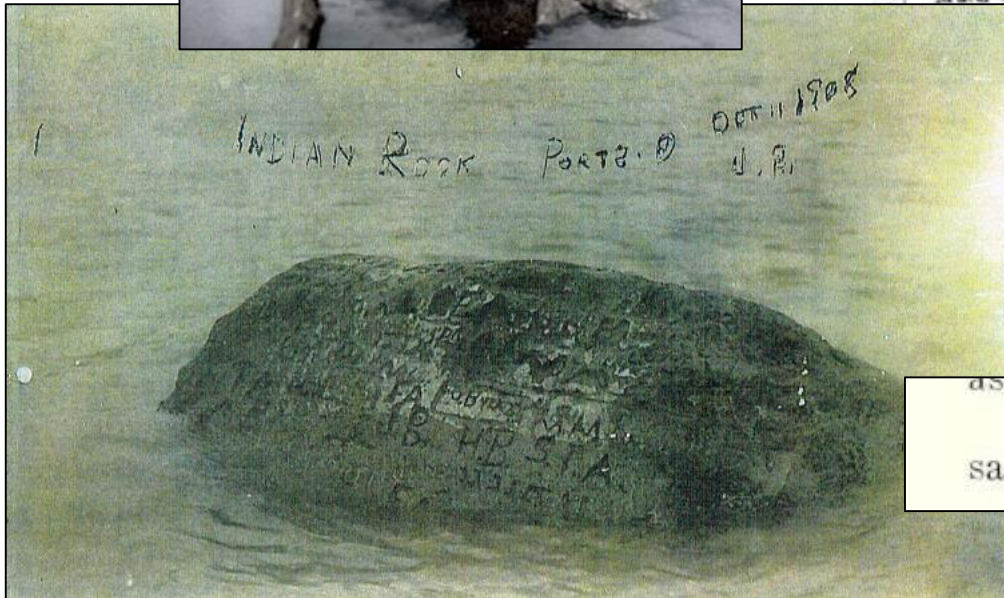
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John lumb in No reason was sary him John four

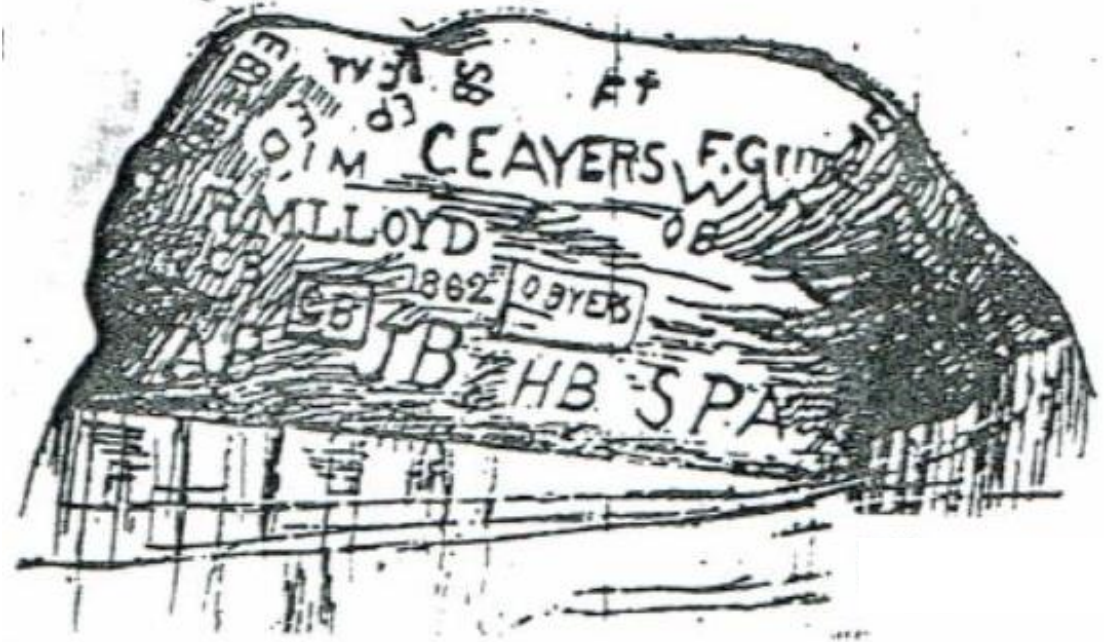
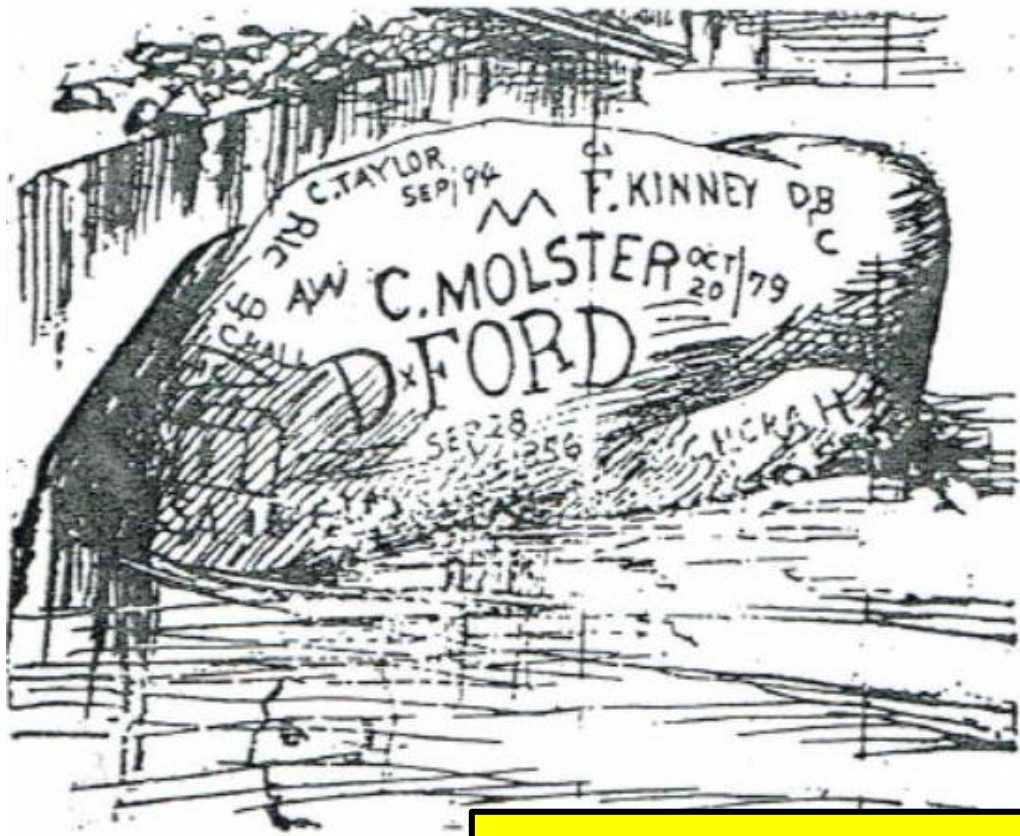
King Veasy Hurt.

King Veasy, manager of Price Bros.' branch store at Circleville, while unloading buggies the other day ran a spindle into his groin inflicting a painful injury.

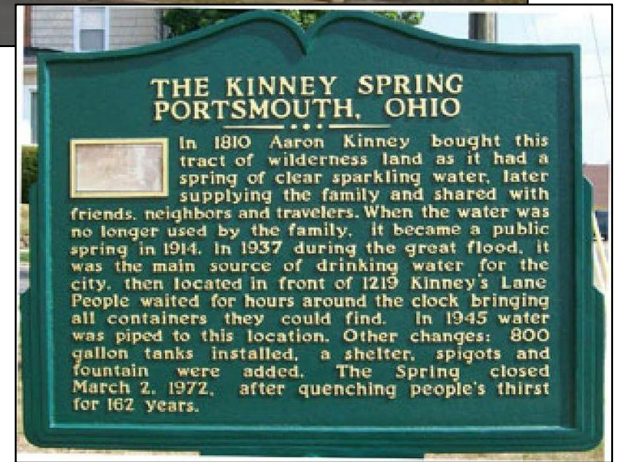
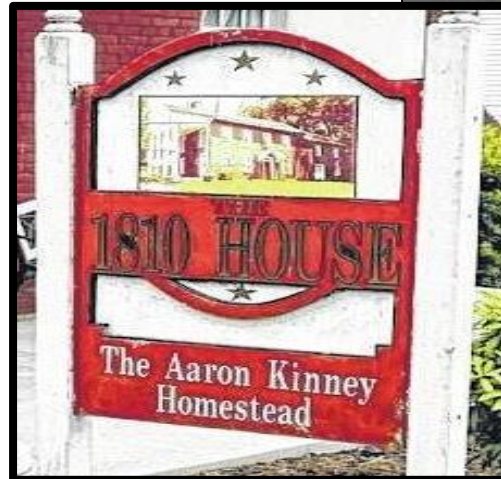
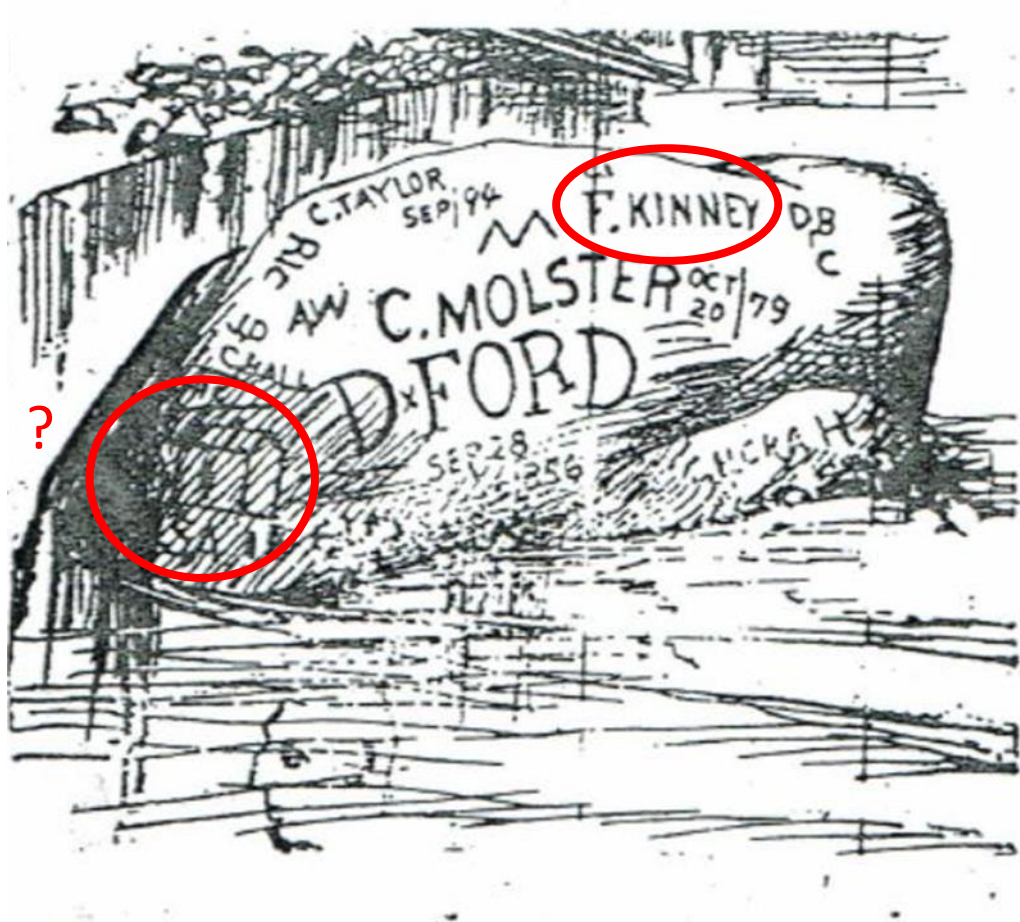
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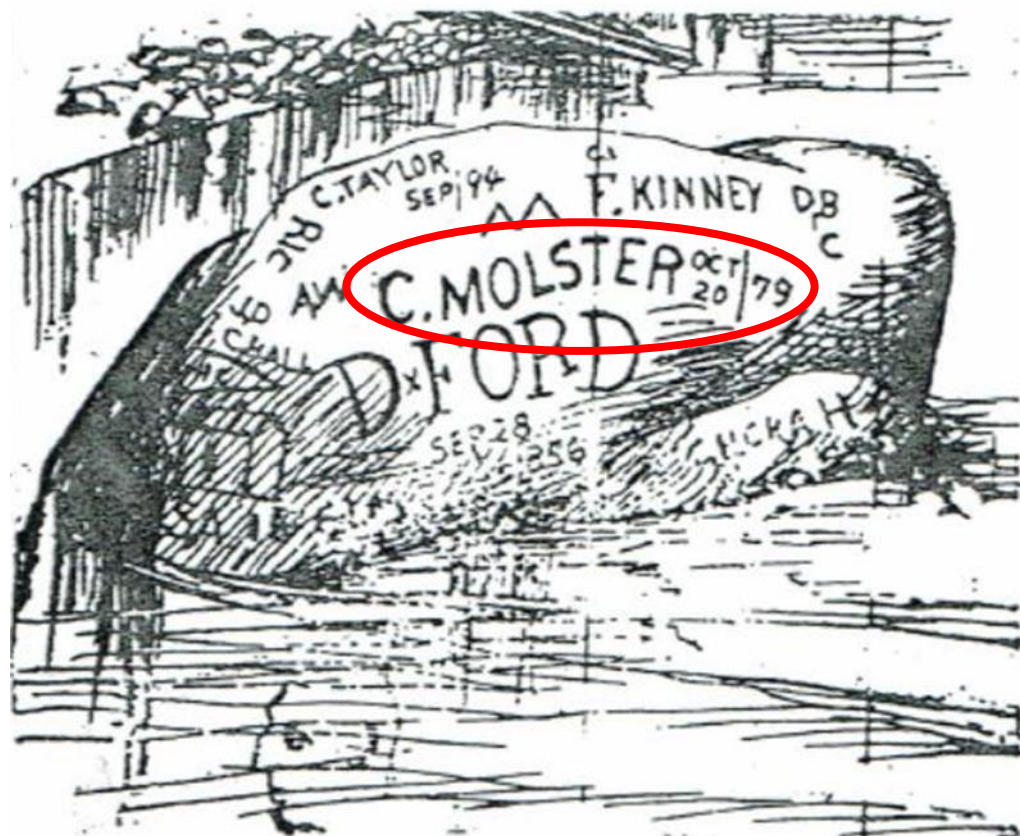


asked the City Council for the right to build the Street Railroad. October 17, 1891, the Indian rock appeared in the river. G. H. Gharky saw it in the river in 1841. It is in the river nearly opposite the Water Works.



Drawing of Indian Head Rock
Portsmouth Blade (September 22, 1894)





ORGANIZATION OF THE DEPARTMENT.

[September 15, 1922.]

Secretary of Commerce.....	HERBERT HOOVER.
Assistant Secretary of Commerce.....	CLAUDIUS H. HUSTON
Solicitor.....	
Assistant to the Secretary.....	D. W. MULVANE.
Private Secretary to the Secretary.....	RICHARD S. EMMET.
Chief Clerk and Superintendent.....	EDWARD W. LIBBEY.
Disbursing Clerk.....	CHARLES E. MOLSTER.
Chief, Appointment Division.....	CLIFFORD HASTINGS.
Chief, Division of Publications.....	THOMAS F. MCKEON.
Chief, Division of Supplies.....	FRANCIS M. SHORE.
Director of the Census.....	WILLIAM M. STEUART.
Director, Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce.....	JULIUS KLEIN.
Director, Bureau of Standards.....	S. W. STRATTON.
Commissioner of Fisheries.....	HENRY O'MALLEY.
Commissioner of Lighthouses.....	GEORGE R. PUTNAM.
Director, Coast and Geodetic Survey.....	E. LESTER JONES.
Commissioner of Navigation.....	DAVID B. CARSON.
Supervising Inspector General, Steamboat Inspection Service.....	GEORGE UHLER.

Charles E. Molster
1862-1946

after a trip to Boston by sea.

A joint meeting of the Ladies' Aid and Missionary Circle of the Brookland Baptist Church was held at Lord Memorial Hall Wednesday afternoon.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles E. Molster were hosts Saturday evening to the members of the Neighborhood Card Club.

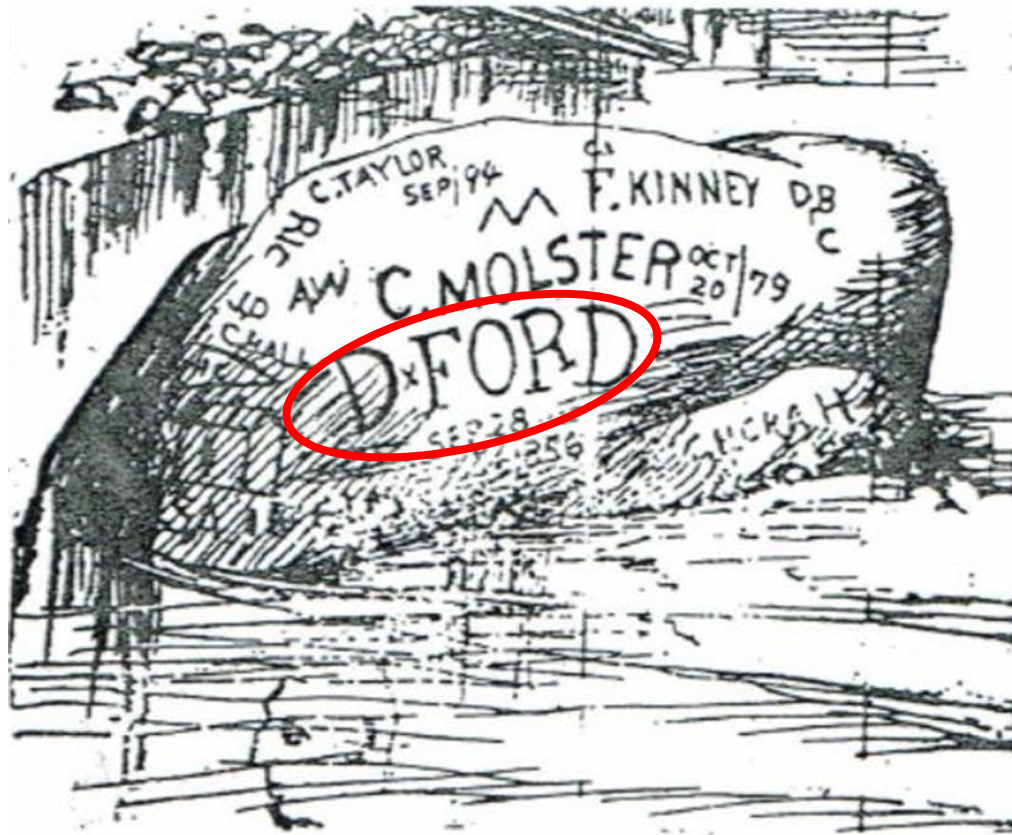
Mr. and Mrs. George B. Johnston have returned from a trip to Atlantic City, N. J.

Mr. Brewster Marean of Dalton, Mass., has arrived to spend the winter with his grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Delzene Marean.

Miss Jean Molster returned to her home last week from a month's visit with relatives at Portsmouth, Ohio.

Miss Vernat Heitheid is back after a fortnight's trip to Toronto, Quebec and Montreal, Canada, returning by

Jean Molster (daughter)
1895-1977



THE PORTSMOUTH

ONE THOUSAND VISITED THE INDIAN ROCK

It is said that over 1000 people viewed the Indian Rock near the Kentucky shore opposite Bond street, Sunday, the water being so low that the historic relic is now plainly visible to the naked eye.

Much interest was aroused when the fact became known that the name of D. Ford, carved on the rock September 11, 1861, could be seen. Mr. Ford, who has since passed away, was the father of Tim Ford, one of Portsmouth's most highly respected residents. When he carved his name on the rock he paddled his way on a log. The letters are about six inches tall, and the water has

R. M. LLOYD & CO.,

Exclusively Wholesale Dealers in

Boots and Shoes, Hats and Caps,

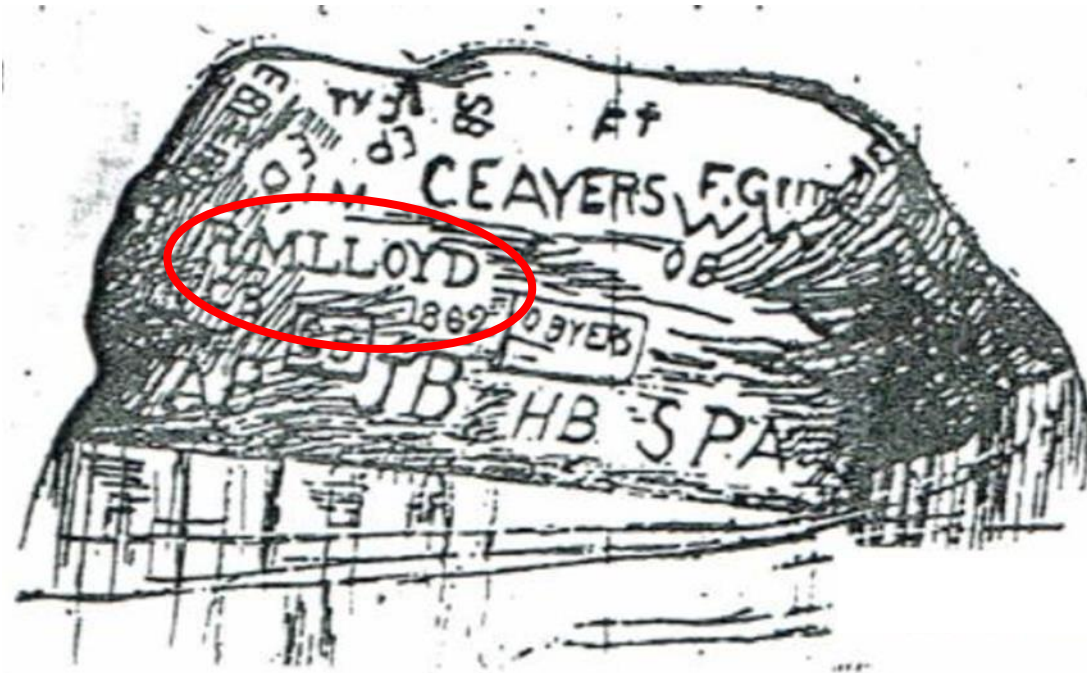
Ladies', Misses' and Children's Straw Goods,

NO. 3 BUCKEYE BLOCK, FRONT STREET,

Portsmouth, Ohio.

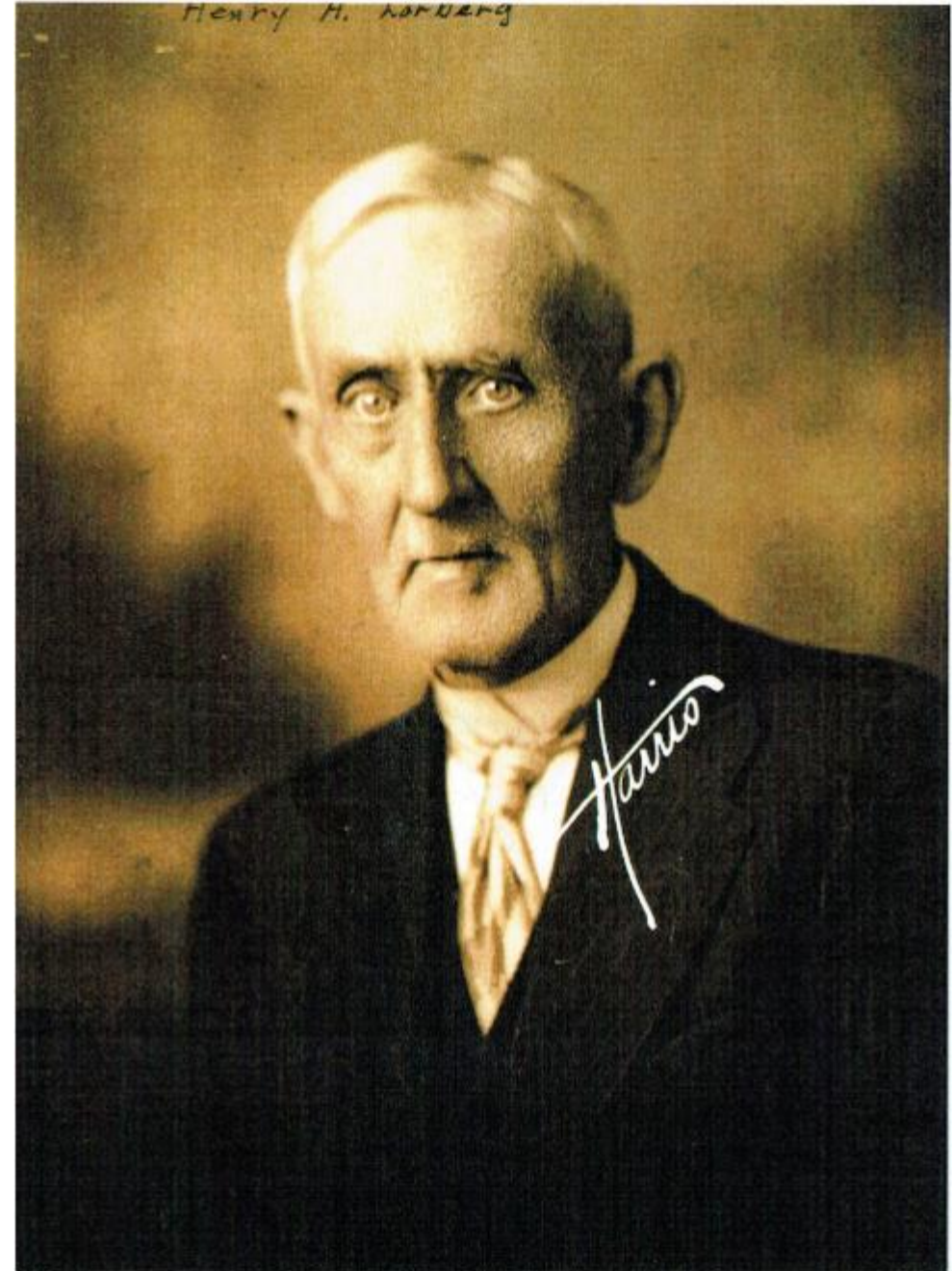
Special Attention is Called to Our Custom Work.

ALL ORDERS PROMPTLY FILLED AT LOWEST FIGURES.



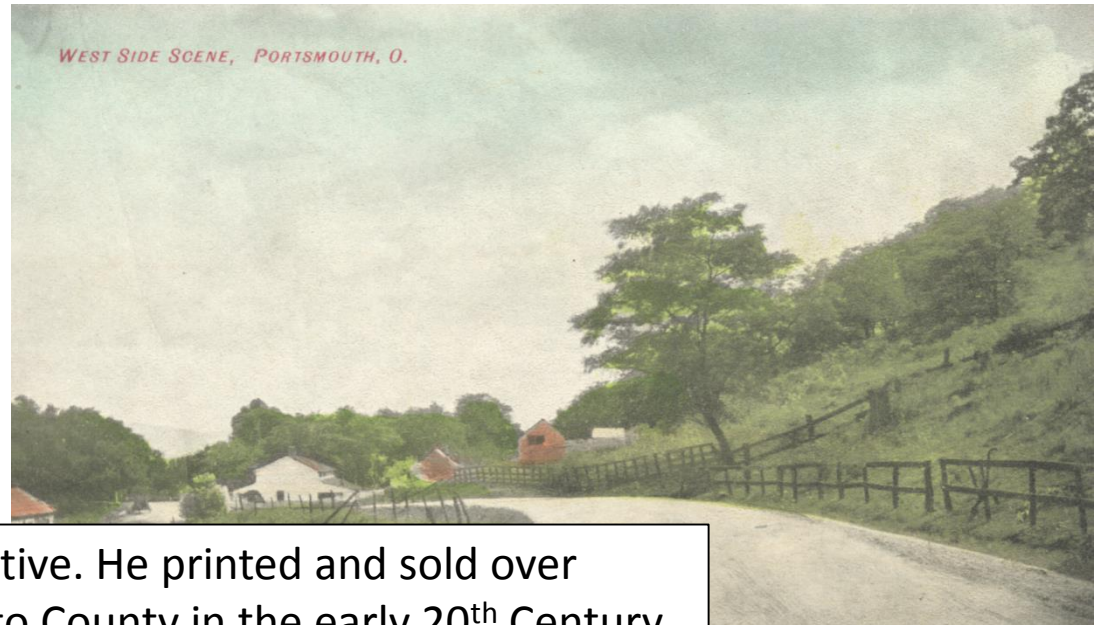
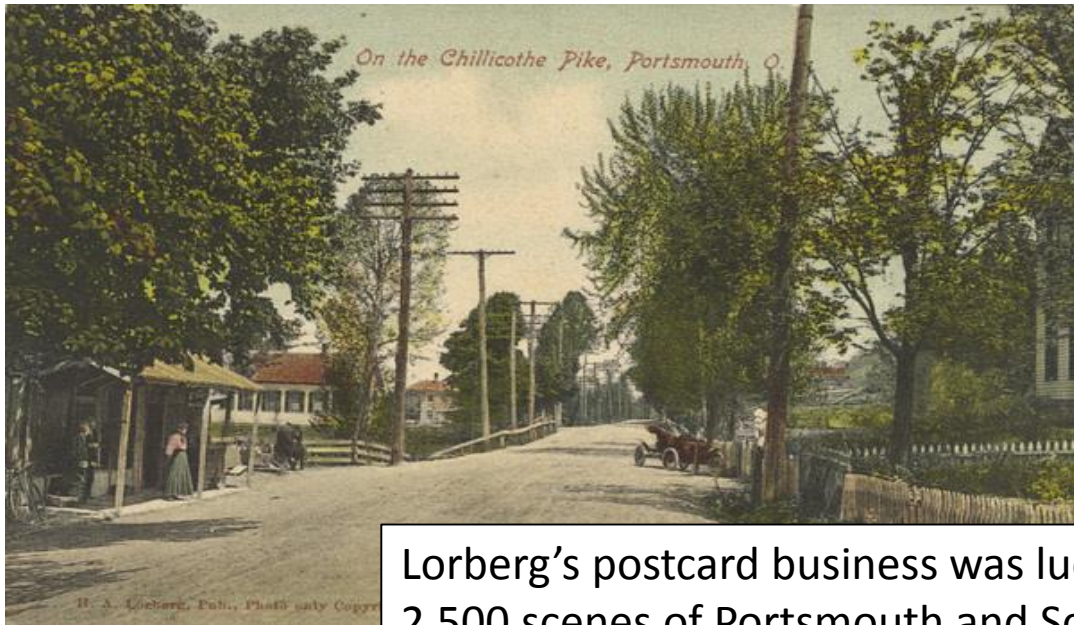
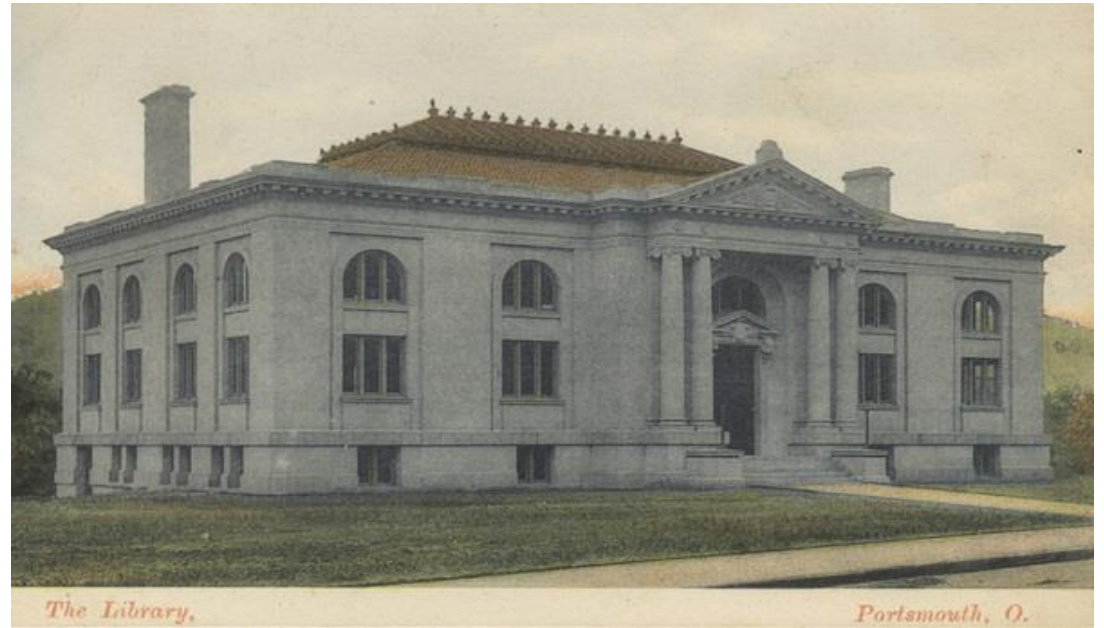
Henry A. Lorberg (1856–1943)

- Son of German Immigrants
- Worked for Portsmouth Daily Times, Portsmouth Blade, and Portsmouth Daily Star newspapers (1875-1902)
- Also worked for Ironton Tribune.
- Called Portsmouth's foremost historian
- Established lucrative postcard/souvenir business

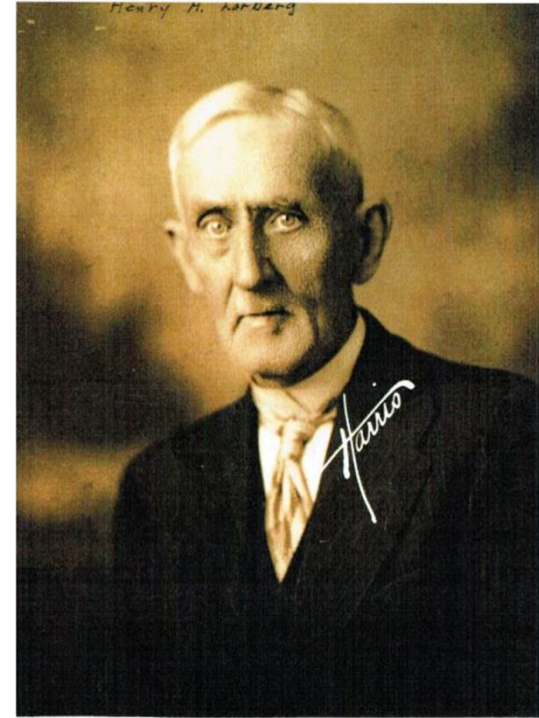
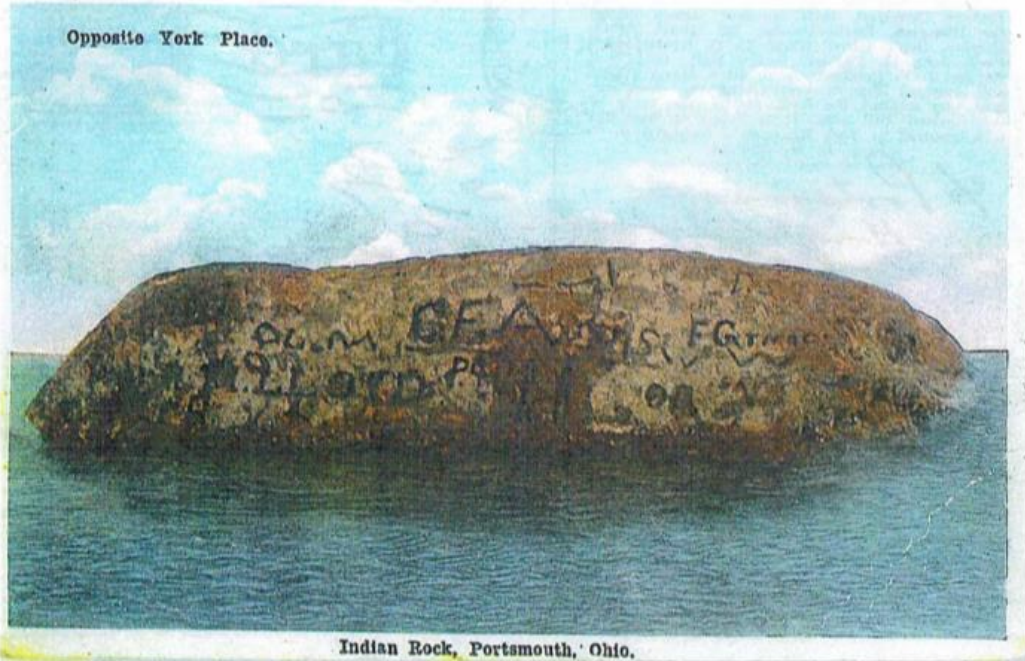


- Wrote at least 6 books about the history of Portsmouth
- Traveled with Billy Sunday on a preaching tour from New York to Omaha in 1901.
- Acquired \$50,000 from Andrew Carnegie to build Portsmouth Public Library.
- Built a bandstand on Market Square and a fountain on Government Square (the Esplanade).
- The Portsmouth Public Library genealogy department is named after him.





Lorberg's postcard business was lucrative. He printed and sold over 2,500 scenes of Portsmouth and Scioto County in the early 20th Century.



Lorberg printed at least two versions of his “Famous Indian Rock” postcard:

“This rock, locally famous, has been a land-mark for over a century, and is only visible when the Ohio River is extremely low...It is hoped to have the rock removed to York Place as a memorial.”
(from the back of the postcard, c. 1920)

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8, 1908

Would Preserve The Historic Indian Rock

Henry Lorberg is going to communicate with the light house department with a view to having the snag boat Woodruff pull up the Indian rock, the idea of Mr. Lorberg being to have the city place the historic boulder in York park, in a position overlooking the river, with an iron railing around it and a history of the rock, as far as obtainable, engraved or painted on the face. The wonder is the government hasn't pulled the rock out of its place long ago and crushed it with dynamite, as it is an undoubted menace to navigation with the river between five and fifteen feet.

The bottom of many a boat and barge was torn out by it in the old days when steamboats were plentiful. It would doubtless not be difficult to have the snagboat pull out the boulder, but the matter of placing it in the park would have to be attended to by the city and private subscriptions. Mr. Lorberg is sounding the sentiments of officials and citizens on the subject. Portsmouth is the River City, and to preserve the rock in the manner referred to, would be highly appropriate. That the rock rolled off the hill at some remote period seems assured, as it is of the same formation as the summit of the river hills. It is now smooth as a bowling ball, made so by the motion of the water for generations. Histories of the river of course date as far as 1811 mention the

NIGHT CLERK PULLS WRONG FIRE ALARM

GILGEN & BALMERT HAVE NO PLANS

Messrs. Lewis Gilgen and George Balmert, who are partners in the liquor business on Chilli-cothe street, have decided to take things easy this winter. They have formulated no business plans whatever and hope to devote their time to pleasure seeking. Lew is an ardent nirod and much of his time will be spent in the field.

Owing to the rather careless action of Night Clerk Godby, the guests of the Washington, were given the scare of their lives, Wednesday night.

Godby, it seems, happened to see the reflection of a burning lurch wagon and forthwith had visions of being a hero, by turning in the fire alarm. He pulled a lever, and in less than 10 seconds every bell about the hotel was pealing out the alarm of fire. The guests, some of them dressed rather scantily for an October night, swarmed in the lobby of the hotel, and the clerk was scared out of his wits. He had turned in the hotel alarm, thinking it was the city alarm. Some of the guests were so frightened that they slept no more that night, and the clerk had a tall time explaining his notions to the proprietor.

Sick And Homeless

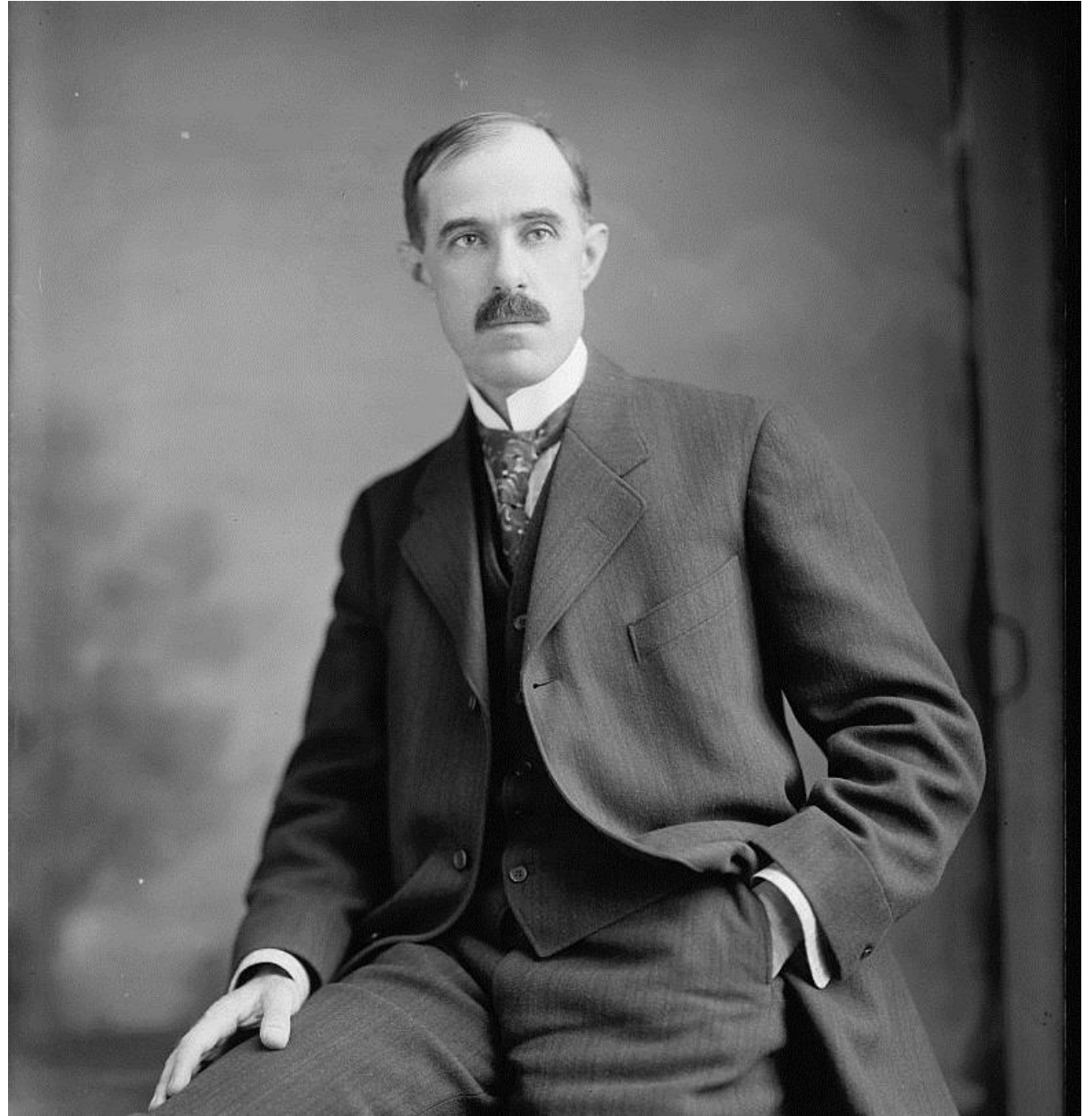
Taken sick in Columbus where he had been working, Joe Mincham, returned here on an S. & W. train Wednesday evening only to find his old home broken up. Mincham's aged mother had been admitted to the county infirmary and his oldest brother, Henry Mincham gone to Slate Run during the week. City Physician Dr. Smith accordingly ordered his removal to Hempstead

"Henry Lorberg is going to communicate with the light house department with a view to having the snag boat Woodruff pull up the Indian rock, the idea of Mr. Lorberg being to have the city place the historic boulder in York park, in a position overlooking the river, with an iron railing around it and a history of the rock, as far as obtainable, engraved or painted on the face. The wonder is the government hasn't pulled the rock out of its place long ago and crushed it with dynamite, as it is an undoubted menace to navigation of the river between five and fifteen feet. The bottom of many a boat and barge was torn out by it in the old days when steamboats were plentiful...Portsmouth is the River City and to preserve the rock in the manner referred to would be highly appropriate."
Portsmouth Times, 10/8/1908

Henry T. Bannon (1867–1950)

US Congressman, Portsmouth (1905-1909)

- Grandson of Irish immigrants
- Bannon, Howland & Dever law firm
(Founded by Henry's father, James)
- Scioto County Prosecutor (1897-1902)
- Fourth Ward City Councilman
- Attorney for Norfolk Western Railroad
- Home at 1926 Franklin Blvd.





(Postcard by Henry Lorberg)

Ohio River Lock and Dam No. 31

2.5 miles west of
Portsmouth

- Completed in 1917.

This dam raised the
Ohio River about 15 feet,
permanently submerging
Indian Head Rock.

Passing steamboat damaged
the dam during a period of
drought in 1920.

Portsmouth Daily Times

MONDAY, OCTOBER 25, 1920

"Wanderer" Is In Custody

John Palmer, aged 33 years, was the name of a man claiming Greensburg, Ind., as his home, who was found wandering on the West Side, Sunday, and taken into custody by Sheriff E. E. Rickey.

He claims he has been wandering about the country for several months, sleeping in the woods and begging his food, and from all indications he is mentally irresponsible. He is held for the Greensburg authorities.

Cox In Huntington Tonight

Governor James M. Cox, who is to speak in Government Square here Tuesday afternoon, will speak in Vanity Fair Hall in Huntington tonight. This hall has been leased by F. W. Baesman, a local dancing master.

MANY PICTURES TAKEN OF INDIAN ROCK

Hundreds of Portsmouth people Sunday took advantage of an opportunity to view the famous In-

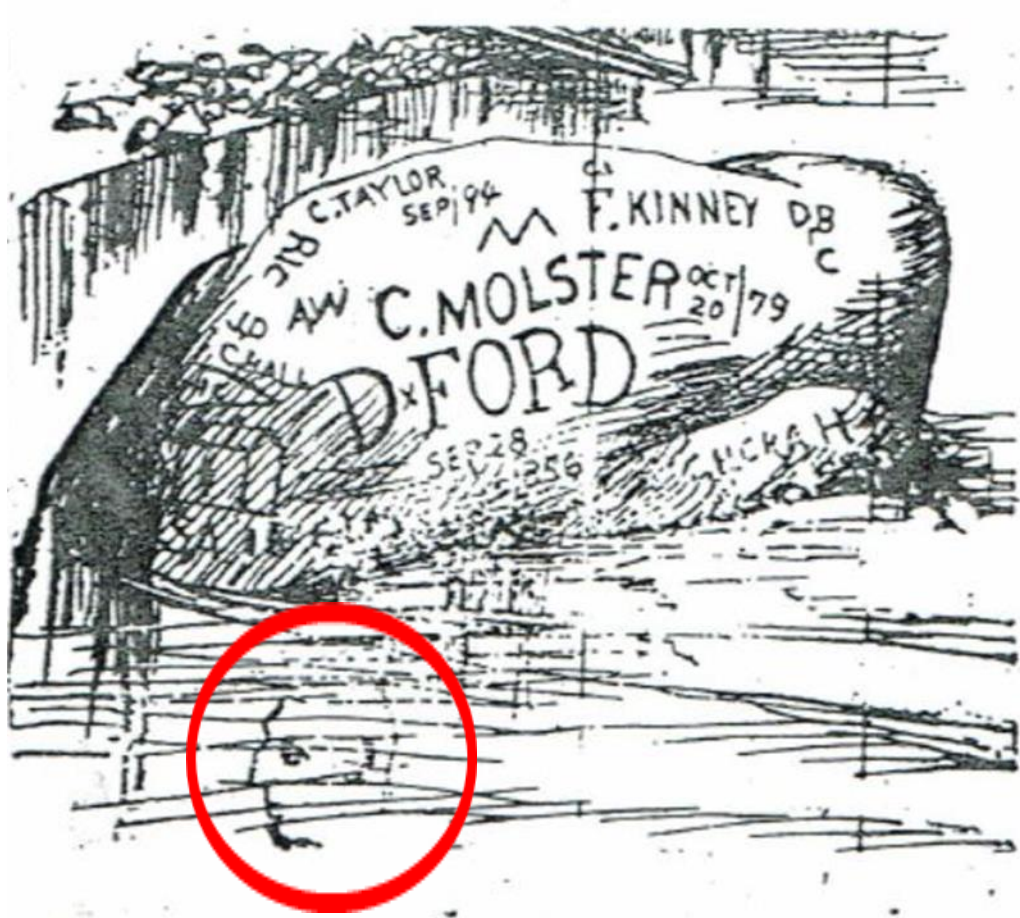
dian Rock, which is located just across from the old waterworks plant. Many pictures of it were taken from all angles Sunday.

Indian Head Rock
exposed due to damage
by steamboat

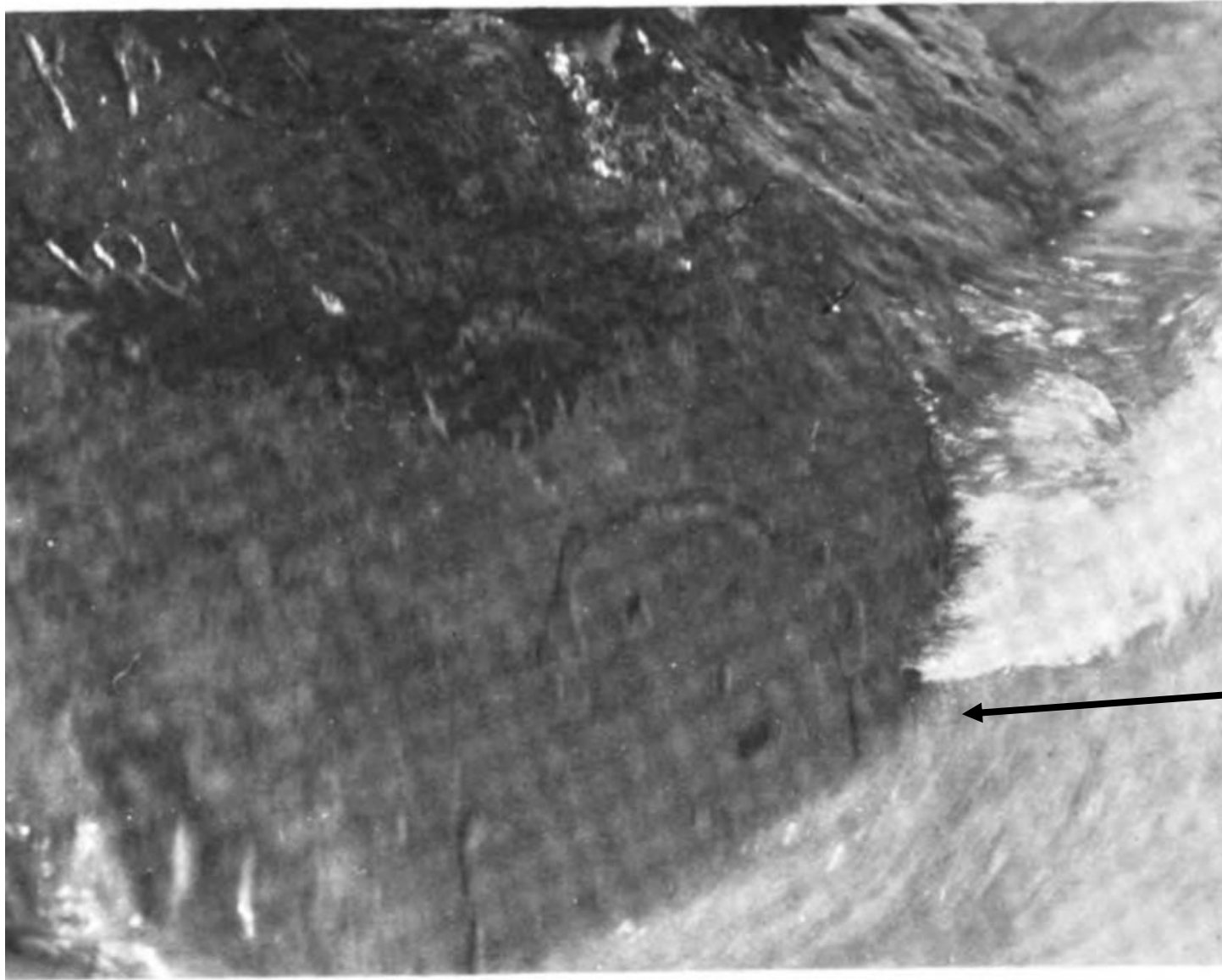


Henry Bannon (standing)
with Indian Head Rock

Note: Original Portsmouth
Water Works and Floodwall
in background



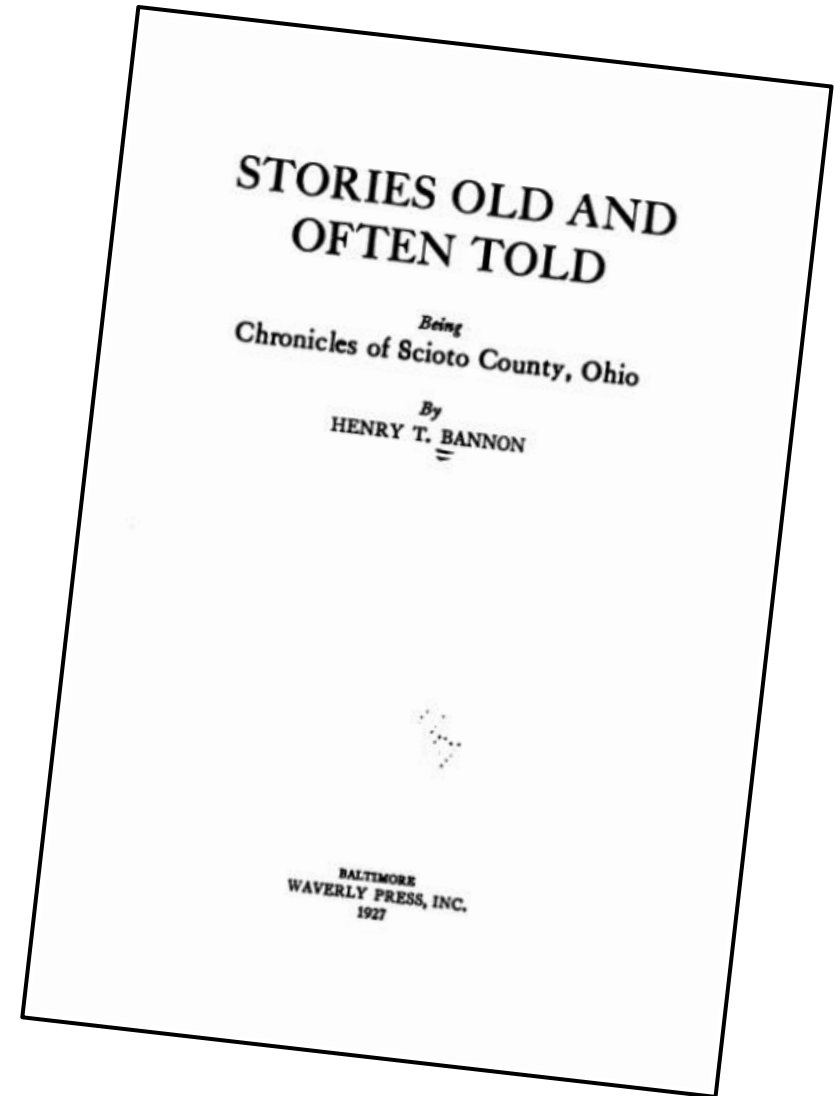
No accurate depiction of the carved face on Indian Head Rock was in existence.

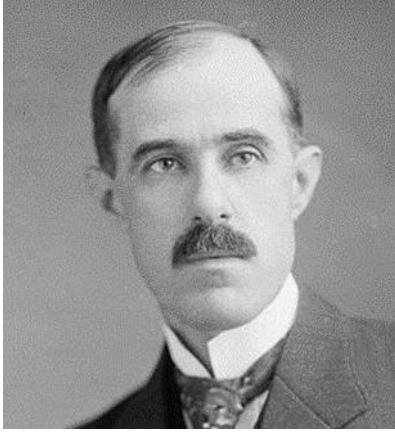


First ever photograph
of "Indian Head."

Henry Bannon wrote about Indian Head Rock in at least three publications:

- 1. Scioto Sketches: An Account of Discovery and Settlement of Scioto County, Ohio (1920)**
- 2. Journal of the Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society (1921)**
- 3. Stories Old and Often Told: Being Chronicles of Scioto County, Ohio (1927)**



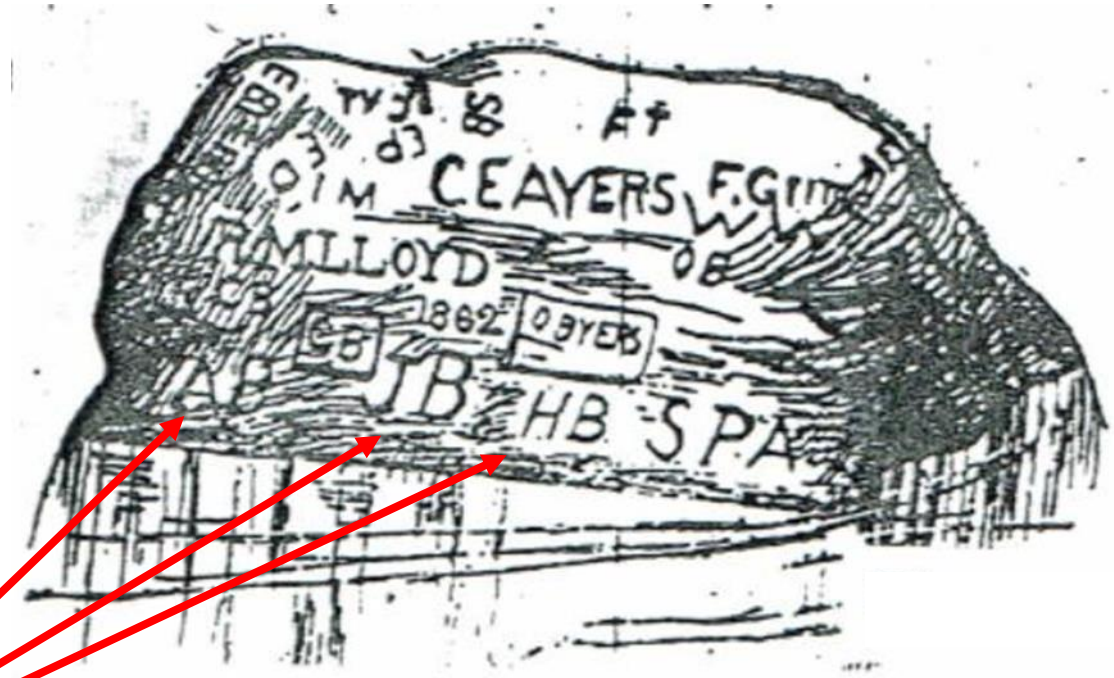


Arthur Bannon

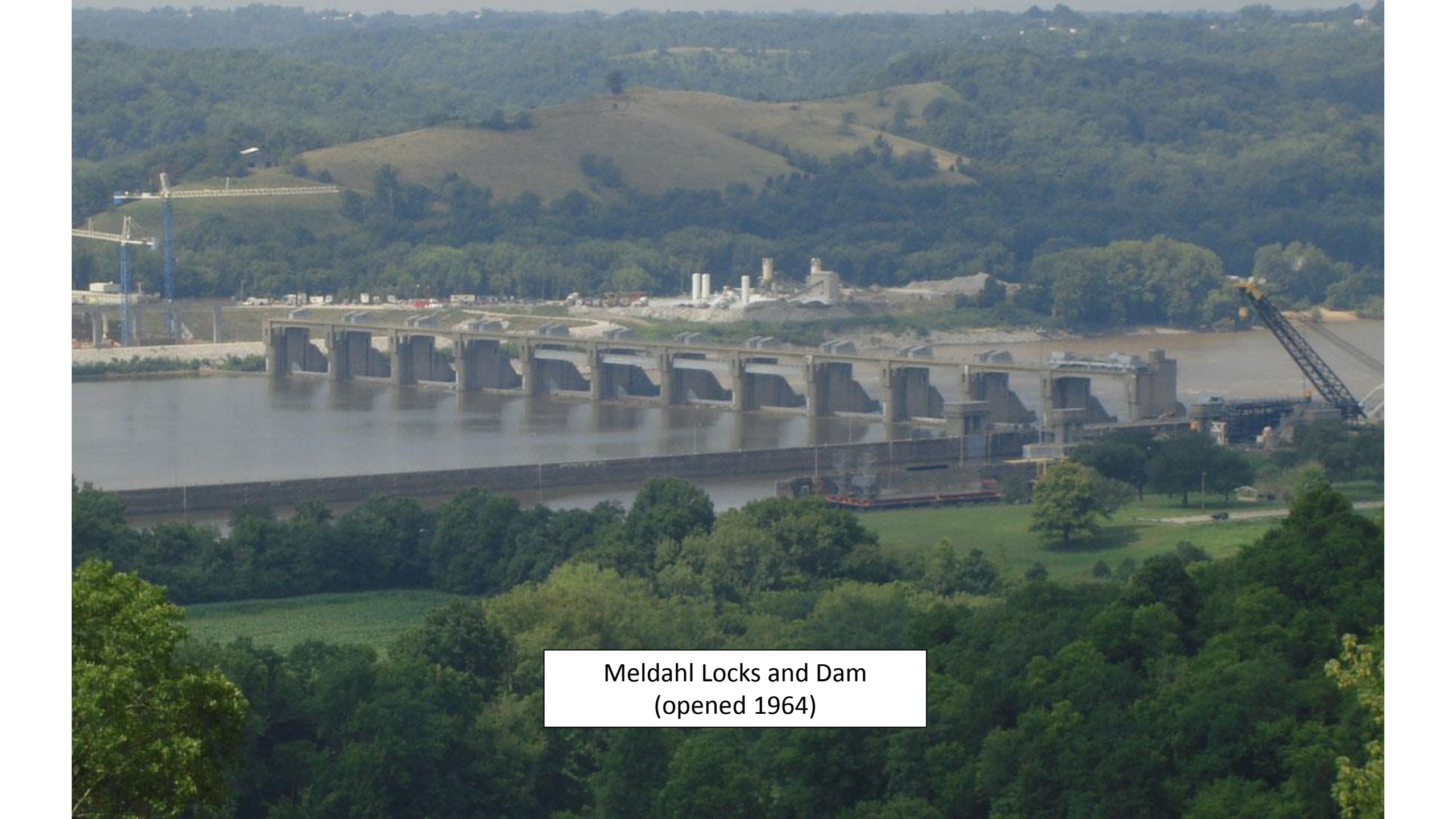
James

Bannon, Jr.

Henry Bannon



As youngsters, Henry Bannon and his two brothers carved their initials in the rock in the late 19th Century.

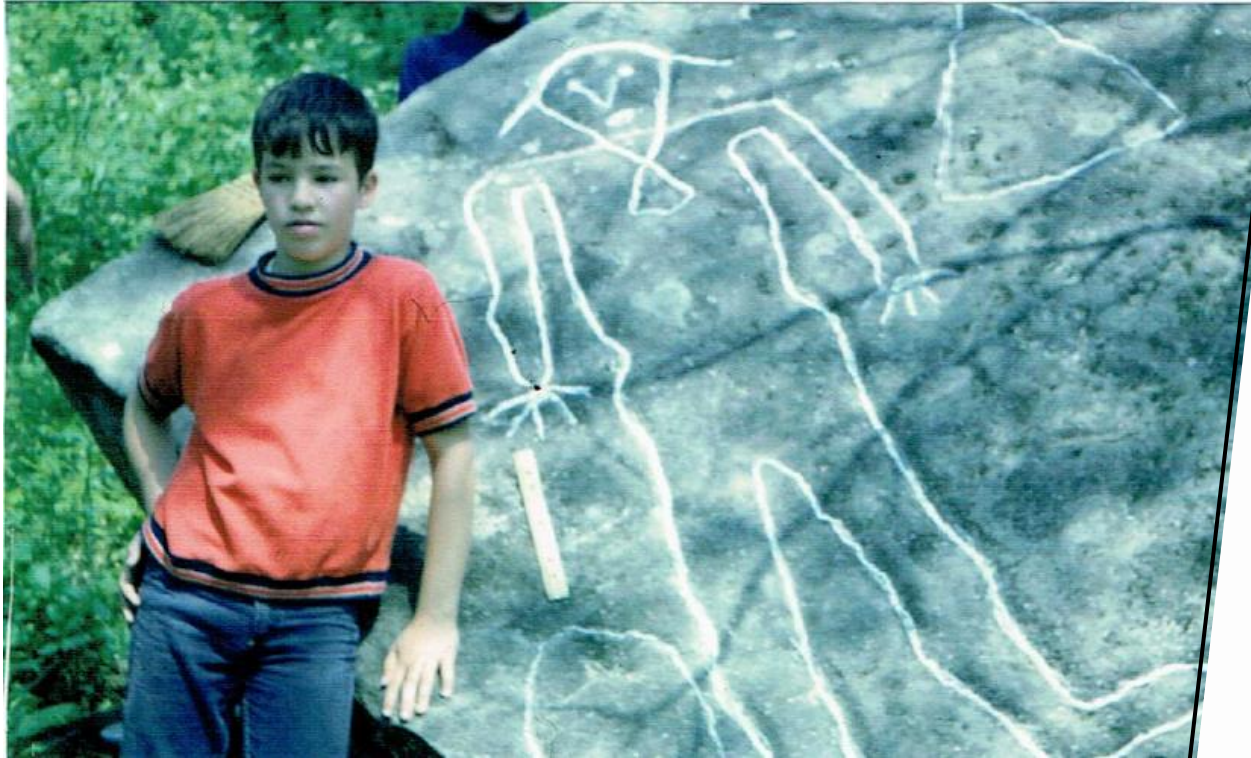


Meldahl Locks and Dam
(opened 1964)

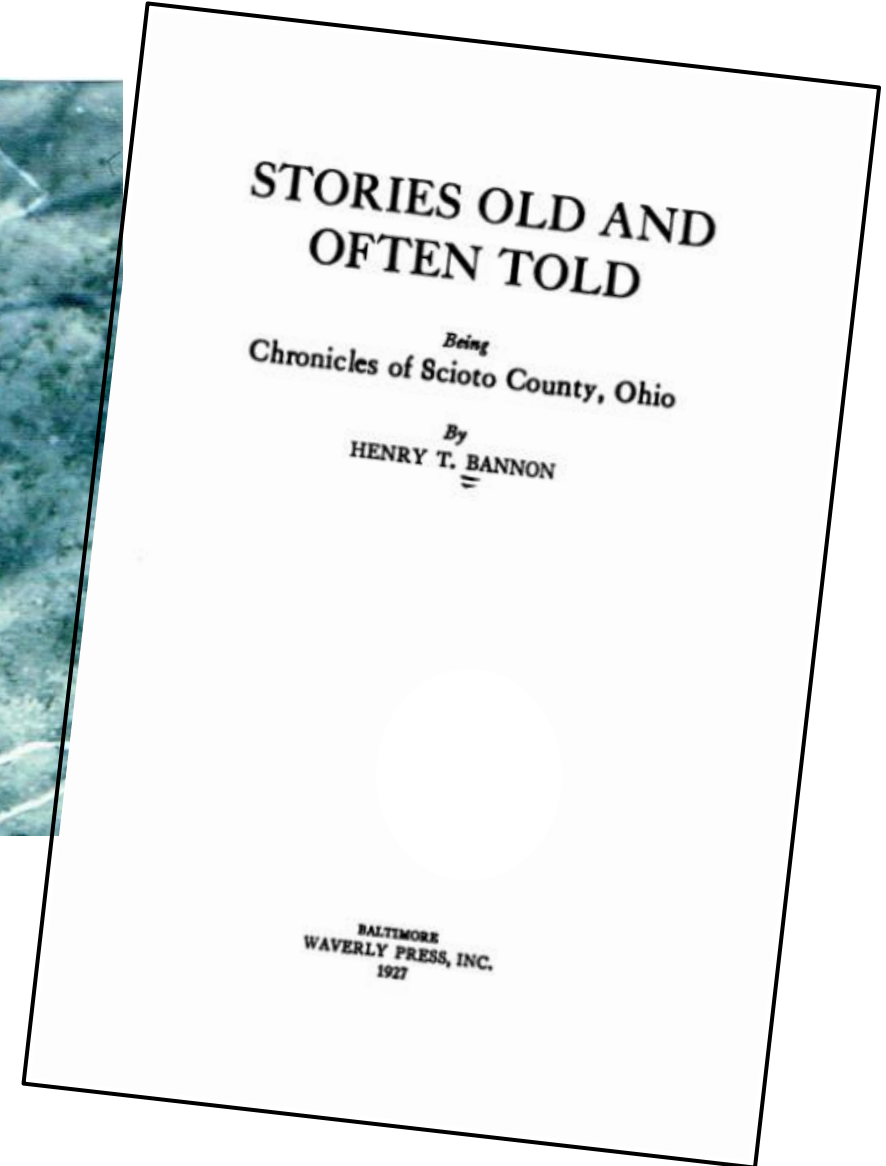
Steve Shaffer (Ironton, Ohio)

- Amateur historian from Ironton, Ohio
- Shaffer and his father collected Indian artifacts.
- Steve studied and wrote about native American petroglyphs (rock carvings)





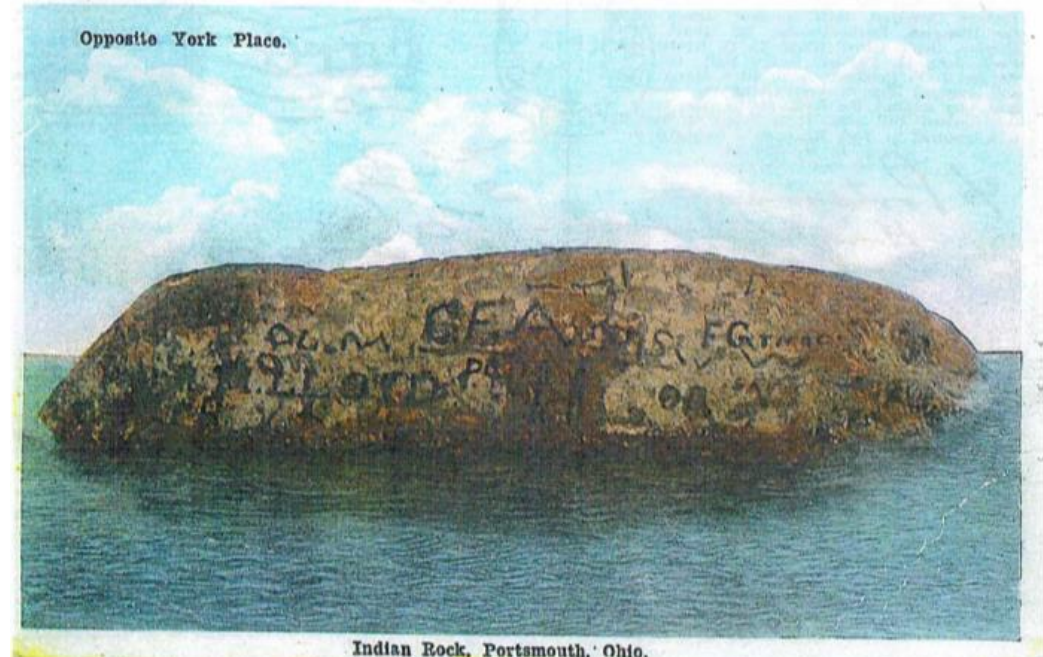
In the sixth grade, Steve Shaffer read Henry Bannon's book, "Stories Old and Often Told." The book's chapter on the Indian Head Rock sparked Steve's interest.



Shaffer and a group of divers located the Indian Head Rock in 2005 after several years of searching.

The rock was retrieved in 2007 in an effort to preserve a part of Portsmouth's history. It was loaded onto a trailer in York Park.

Henry Lorberg had first proposed saving and displaying Indian Head Rock in York Park ninety-nine years previously.

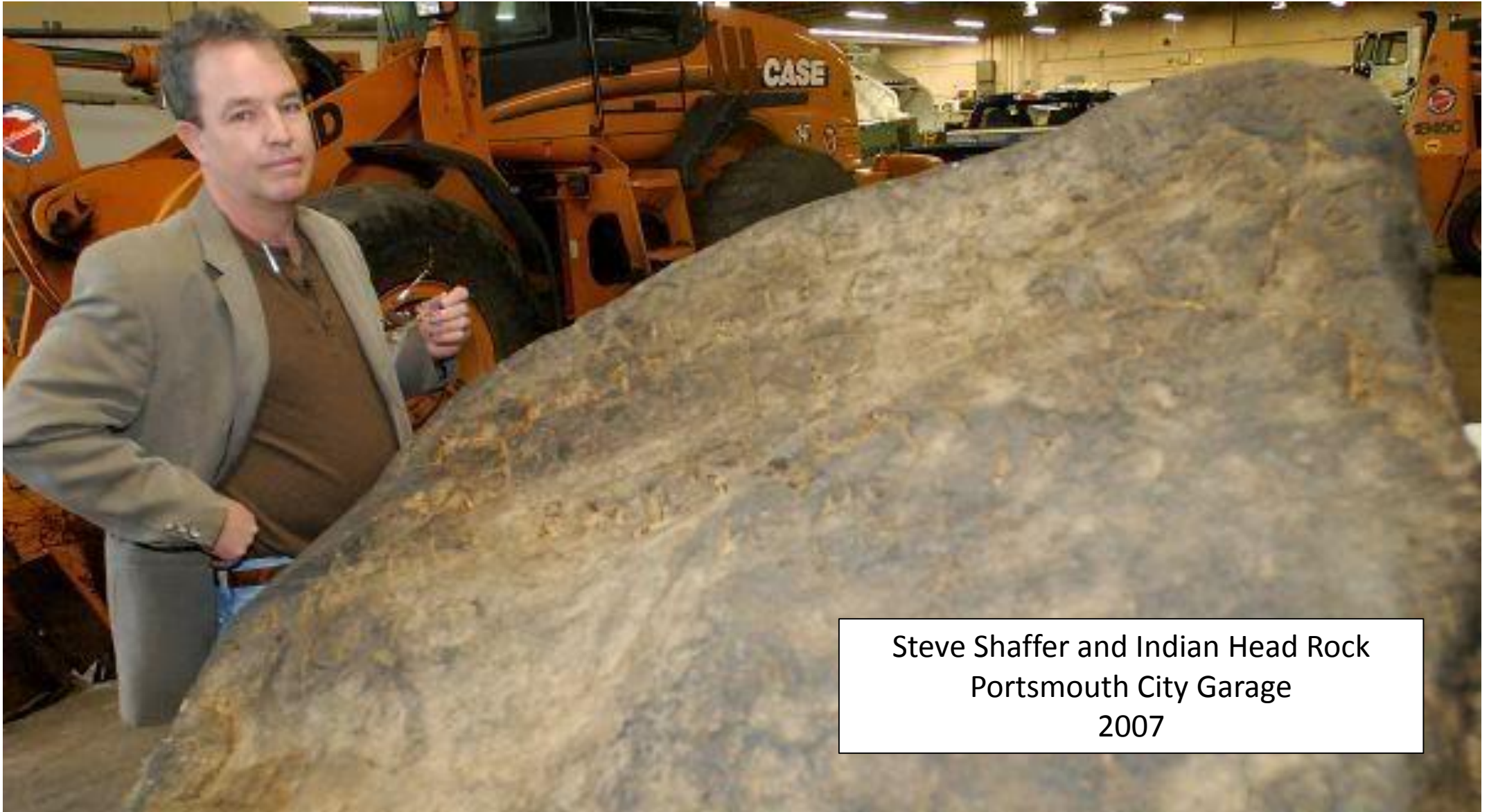


INDIAN ROCK.

This Rock, locally famous, has been a land-mark for a century, and is only visible about once in a decade, when the Ohio River is extremely low. Frances Cleveland, early surveyor, James Keyes, the Historian, David Grarky, Eli Glover, Moses Gregory, Gen'l. Oliver Wood, C. C. Hyatt, Judge Peck, John G. Peebles, Squire Hall, Col. Wm. Raynor, J. V. Robinson, S. R. Ross, Mayor Waller and Amstead Fawcett were among the older citizens who recalled the rock, as did also many of the Gaylord Mill men. It is hoped to have the rock removed to York Place as a memorial to Hon. B. B. Gaylord. "One of God's Noblemen."



Steve Shaffer (second from right) with Indian Head Rock in 2007. The rock was finally in York Park (briefly) as Henry Lorberg proposed in 1908.



Steve Shaffer and Indian Head Rock
Portsmouth City Garage
2007