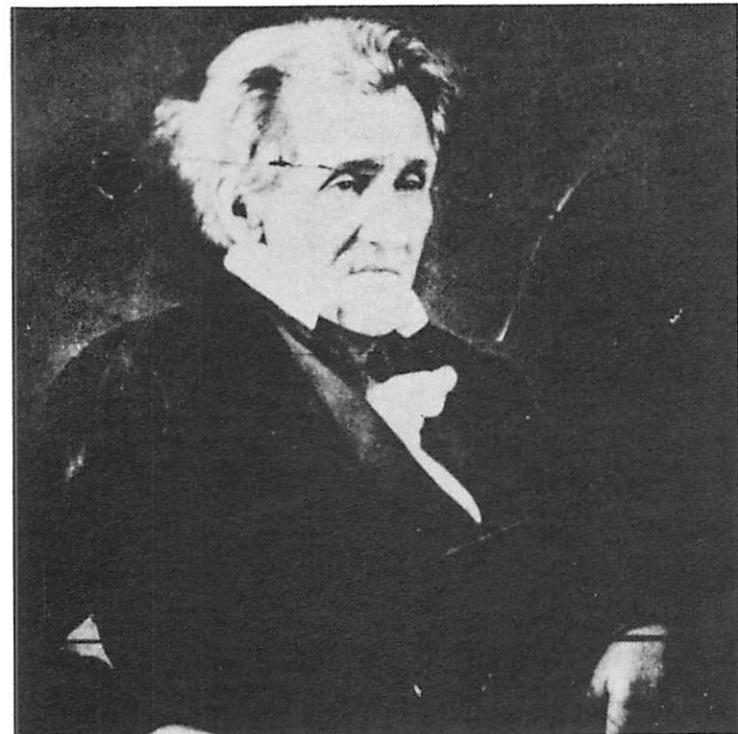


Famous Visitors to Guernsey County

No less than eight United States Presidents have honored Guernsey County with their presence during its 175 years.

First chief executive to visit was Andrew Jackson, and he made his brief appearance a memorable one for his adoring public. It was during the third year of his first term in the fall of 1831 that his private carriage crossed the log bridge at the west end of Cambridge and stopped at Bridge House Tavern. Accompanied by only a driver, a servant, and a young boy riding his old white horse, the popular warrior changed to the full dress of a major general, mounted the white horse himself, and passed through the town in state.

Led by Major James Dunlap, a War of 1812 officer, preceded by a drum corps, and followed by a parade of carriages, former soldiers, and citizens, the colorful soldier-executive waved his white-plumed three-cocked hat left and right to appreciative bystanders, his long white hair fluttering in the autumn breeze. At the top of the hill at the east end of town he dismounted, changed clothes, and continued his journey in the carriage again.



Andrew Jackson

William Henry Harrison was the next president to travel through the county, although both of his visits were made prior to his reaching the highest office. In 1836 he stopped at Hutchison's Tavern. On his arrival from the east, people gathered at that end of Wheeling Avenue and watched as his coach, decorated with flags and bunting, a drum corps on top playing martial music, passed by followed by a long train of carriages and horsemen.

Earlier he had stopped on an eastward trip in a private coach at Metcalf Tavern on the west end of town. A procession of well-wishers, including admiring veterans of the War of 1812, preceded him to the court house where he greeted many people.

Rutherford B. Hayes spoke in Cambridge several times, but his most noteworthy visit was Friday, Sept. 3, 1869 when he addressed a Republican mass Meeting and a gathering of 20 county veterans of the War of 1812. He promised them that he would urge enactment of laws to liberalize veteran pensions.

One of two presidents with personal ties in Guernsey County, James A. Garfield visited here several times. His mother, the former Elizabeth Ballou, had taught school at Uniondale School in western Westland Township. In 1879 when he was Congressman and a candidate for the Senate, he spoke at Quaker City as well as the great Cambridge soldiers' reunion of the same year.

Although he was defeated for the presidency, James G. Blaine spoke in Cambridge once while he was Republican candidate. It was Saturday, Oct. 4, 1884 at 3 p.m. when he debarked from a train, addressed 10,000 people at the Cambridge school park. He left at 4 p.m., stopping to speak at Quaker City the same afternoon on his eastward journey.

Ohio's own William McKinley visited the local area many times and was probably as highly regarded on both sides of the political fence in the county as any state or national political figure.

The following incident emphasizes the reason he was so highly thought of here. While still Ohio's governor he stopped overnight at the Morton Hotel on West Eighth Street. Before leaving the next morning he asked to see a cousin who lived in the western part of town. In order to avoid embarrassing her, he chose to walk to her home located on an alley in miserable surroundings. Appearing not to notice the squalor, he greeted her with a kiss, talked to her as an equal, slipped two 10-dollar bills into her hand on leaving, and never mentioned the visit after leaving her.

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Bonham's of Cambridge

The Frisbee Motel
Warden's Coal & Salvage

In 1889 during his last term in Congress, McKinley spoke to a political rally in Hammond's Opera House.

Teddy Roosevelt visited Cambridge three times, first in 1902, which was one year after his election to the presidency. He spoke to a large crowd at Union Station on that occasion. When seeking a third term, he addressed a local throng Monday, May 13, 1912. A week later he returned and spoke to a crowd of 8,000 at the court square.

The last president to speak here was William Howard Taft, first in 1908 as a presidential candidate, then four years later on May 13 at 11 a.m. while seeking reelection. On his final visit he spoke for 30 minutes to 10,000 listeners.

Guernsey Countians saw other U.S. presidents passing through, including Woodrow Wilson, Warren G. Harding, and Calvin Coolidge, but none stopped to address their constituents.

Other famous personages passed through on the National Road, and they were probably more interesting if not more notorious than the political figures already mentioned.

There was the infamous Indian chief, Black Hawk, who had led an uprising against settlers in Illinois and Wisconsin in 1832 despite the fact that the Indians had sold the land to the settlers. Black Hawk, who stayed overnight in the spring of 1833 at the Hutchison Hotel (the site of which is now being cleared for parking in the 800 block of Wheeling Avenue), was a prisoner being taken to Washington D.C. Accompanying him was a young Army lieutenant who was to become even more well known. He was Jefferson Davis.

Three years later another prisoner passed through, stopped overnight, and drew much local attention. He was the Mexican general Santa Anna, and he was here Dec. 13, 1836 stopping at the McMurry Hotel two miles east of Cambridge in the company of two Texas officers. In February of that year he had led the massacre of the Alamo defenders and two months later had been defeated and taken prisoner by General Sam Houston at the battle of San Jacinto.

Undoubtedly the county's earliest visiting celebrity was the man known as Johnny Appleseed. Born in Massachusetts in 1775, John Chapman roamed as far west as Indiana and was very probably here, because he lived with his family on Duck Creek, which has its beginning in what was once part of Guernsey County. He is believed to have planted a small orchard in Spencer Township one-half mile east of Cumberland.



Theodore Roosevelt



Santa Anna

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