

CHILLICOTHE AND ROSS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

CHILLICOTHE IN STORY AND SONG

Chillicothe's contributions to Ohio and the United States instill a keen sense of pride among its residents, and this heritage is reflected throughout the community today. Chillicothe also lends its name and character to fictional settings, due in part to its place in history but more probably to its distinctive name and presumed Midwestern integrity and innocence.

Most of the authors clearly refer to Chillicothe, Ohio, and not to one of our counterparts in Illinois, Iowa, Missouri, or Texas. What is not at all clear, with rare exceptions, is why they chose to have their characters born in, pass through, reside in, or hear of Chillicothe. "Chillicothe in Story and Song" includes entries based upon novels, short stories, motion pictures, songs, a print and an animated cartoon, a fanciful obituary, and a fabricated news report. A professionally produced version appears at <www.crpl.org/StorySong.htm>.

Persons who provided leads to new entries since the second version of this text appeared in February 2008, or who assisted in obtaining needed documents, are acknowledged with their permission in brackets following the entries. Entries and commentary new to this version are identified by (*).

* Roy Pritzen wrote the lyrics and music to *I'm Going Down to Chillicothe* in 1917 as a tribute to the young men reporting for basic training at Camp Sherman. He ended its two verses with the chorus, "I'm going down to Chillicothe / I'm going down there right away/ I'll get myself a suit of khaki / And fight for the good old U.S.A. / And when we get into the trenches / We'll make the Kaiser's hair turn grey / Conscript or not I'll be Johnny on the spot / I'm going down to Chillicothe." [Tom Castor]

* P. G. Wodehouse, the incomparable English humorist, in *Laughing Gas* (1936) recounts the experiences of 12-year-old movie star Joey Cooley, who was kept on a strict diet in Hollywood while dreaming all the while of the fried chicken his mother used to cook for him in Chillicothe, Ohio, his hometown, "where hearts are pure and men are men" and he was taught "the difference between right and wrong." Wodehouse cites Chillicothe no fewer than 11 times in this short novel.

* Wodehouse later in *The Return of Jeeves* (1954), published in England a year earlier as *Ring for Jeeves*, introduced readers to "Rosalinda Banks of the Chillicothe, Ohio, Bankses, with no assets beyond a lovely face, a superb figure and a mild talent for vers libre, [who had] come to Greenwich Village to seek her fortune and had found it first crack out of the box." Wodehouse scholar Norman Murphy could not suggest a specific reason why Wodehouse selected Chillicothe as Joey's and Rosalinda's hometown. (A Wodehouse Handbook, 2006)

* The song *Hooray for Hollywood* premiered in *Hollywood Hotel* (1937) and has become a standard soundtrack as Hollywood's unofficial theme song at events such as the Academy Awards. Richard Whiting's music is catchy and memorable, but Johnny Mercer's 35-line lyrics are not what the title might suggest. Rather than a tribute to what made Hollywood great, the song is a spoof on the types of entertainment and entertainers the town attracts, as in "Come on and try your luck / You could be Donald Duck / Hooray for Hollywood!" His third verse tells us "They come from Chillicothes and Padukas [sic] / With their bazookas [several possible interpretations] / To see their names up in lights / All armed with photos / From local rotos / With their hair in curlers / And legs in tights / Hooray for Hollywood!" Rather than having the five Chillicothes specifically in mind, Mercer probably needed a town's name of four syllables and hit upon the distinctive one he used as representative of communities likely to nurture star-struck candidates for Tinsel Town. [David Butcher]

(*) Titles of the novels in Conrad Richter's *The Awakening Land* trilogy--*The Trees* (1940), *The Fields* (1940), and *The Town* (1950), the latter a Pulitzer Prize winner in 1951--refer to the changing landscape as settlers transformed the Ohio Valley in the late 1700s and early 1800s. The key characters are Sayward and Portius Wheeler and their children, she a daughter of pioneers who founded the settlement that in *The Town* became Americus, and he a Massachusetts lawyer who ventured west under suspicious circumstances. Portius was in the Northwest Territory capital of Chillicothe in *The Fields* when Sayward at home gave birth to the first of their ten children. Upon returning, he excitedly reported that "The convention has ratified the constitution!" and "I was present at Chillicothe and witnessed it" and "I heard the speeches and saw the document signed." "You now live in Ohio [and] that means a new county with our own seat of justice and government!" Portius in time became the county judge, and a son of theirs became Ohio governor in *The Town*, but by then Chillicothe no longer would have been the capital. NBC aired a three-part *The Awakening Land* mini-series in 1978 starring Elizabeth Montgomery and Hal Holbrook, which is not commercially available. [Ken Roberts]

* Three young women in *The Harvey Girls* by Samuel Hopkins Adams (1942) head west by train in the 1890s to the rough frontier town of Sandrock to join Harvey Girls already employed at one of the Harvey House restaurants along the Santa Fe Railroad. One of the three, Alma Seelye, had attended the Methodist Young Ladies' Seminary in Chillicothe, Ohio, for two years, where dancing was not allowed and she surreptitiously read dime novels. The restaurant's and employees' influence help lead the town to prosperity, and Alma in due course becomes the governor's wife.

* *The Harvey Girls*, a 1946 movie musical based upon the Adams novel, starred Judy Garland as an Ohioan (not Alma) traveling west by train to seek her fortune in Sandrock. She is befriended by a group of women on the train who are headed there to staff a new Harvey's restaurant. One of them offers her an award-winning "Chillicothe sandwich" on the train, and they become friends and coworkers at the restaurant. Her friend later makes clear in a musical number about hometowns that she is from Chillicothe, Ohio.

* Nelson Algren's short story, "The Captain Has Bad Dreams" in his collection *The Neon Wilderness* (1947), depicts an alleged marijuana dealer admitting simply to a Chicago police officer that he recently had been incarcerated in Chillicothe, Ohio.

* Ervin Drake, Jimmy Shirl, and Irving Fields declare in their song *Chillicothe, Ohio* (1947) that other towns in Ohio are just fine but "on that map there's a tiny dot / In my book it's the garden spot! / Chill-chill-chill-chill-chill-CHIL-LI-COTH-E O-O-hi-o," where a certain justice of the peace soon will send a couple "hon, hon, hon, hon-ey moonin'." The "Chill-chill-chill-chill-chill" phrasing appears two other times, once in rhyme with the singer's anticipated "thrill, thrill, thrill" at seeing the town again. The popularity of this song in the late 40s and early 50s might have brought Chillicothe to mind when other authors needed an unusual name. [Joy Gough, Tennent Hoey, Pat Medert, and Lloyd Savage]

* In the action movie *Battleground* (1949), a chaplain portrayed by Leon Ames begins a service in the field for battle-worn American soldiers during World War II's Battle of the Bulge in Belgium by asking, "Any of you from Ohio?" After receiving several affirmative replies, he adds "I'm from Chillicothe." The film won two Academy Awards, including Best Screenplay, an honor no doubt prompted largely by that three-word line. [Dan Marsh, Jackie Story Hummel, and Nelson Coleman]

* Rex Stout is best known for creating Nero Wolfe, that cerebral, corpulent, stay-at-home detective who loved fine food and rare orchids nearly as much as the 87 convoluted mysteries he solved in novels and shorter works. He is nearly as well known for creating Archie Goodwin, the street-wise, energetic, and witty younger detective who teamed with Wolfe as his live-in employee in a New York City townhouse and followed Wolfe's instructions and applied his own talents to help solve 72 of those mysteries. More importantly, Goodwin also narrated them for readers in an unequalled style admired by literary critics. It seems altogether fitting that a person of such caliber was born and raised in Chillicothe, Ohio.

In the novella *The Cop-Killer* (1951), published in *Triple Jeopardy* (1952), a married couple illegally in the United States consulted Goodwin about leaving New York because they feared their status would be discovered. When they declared their love for this country, Goodwin replied, "Wait till you see Chillicothe, Ohio, where I was born. Then you *will* love it." After holding his own in confrontations with detectives in a district attorney's office, Archie tells us in *The Final Deduction* (1961) that "I walked three blocks to a place I knew about, called Mary Jane's, where someone makes chicken pie the way my Aunt Anna used to make it in Chillicothe, Ohio, with fluffy little dumplings."

Stout's biographer, John McAleer, knew Stout well and in *Rex Stout: A Biography* (1977) related that Stout's maternal great- great-grandfather in 1805 purchased 1,200 acres of the original tract on which Nathaniel Massie founded Chillicothe in 1796, that his mother's family in the 1890s had known Chillicothe well for 90 years, and that Stout had been in Chillicothe at least once as a child. McAleer quoted Stout as saying that "Chillicothe is a funny word, without being silly." [Anna Stout and Mary Glascock of The Wolf Pack]

(*) Morton Thompson's best-selling novel *Not as a Stranger* (1954) traces the life of Lucas Marsh from a childhood of dreaming about becoming a doctor to a successful career as physician and surgeon in small-town America. During his first year in medical school, Lucas received a letter from his father, Job Marsh, in an envelope postmarked Chillicothe, Ohio, explaining that he was managing a harness store there after experiencing financial unpleasantness in the town where they had lived, when in fact he was a temporary clerk filling in for an ill employee. Job owned a harness store when Lucas was born, but his vision of owning a chain of them was thwarted by his greed and duplicity, arrival of the automobile, and finally the Great Depression.

Lucas learned that Job had gone bankrupt after spending all the money in a college fund his mother had set aside for him before her death, borrowing heavily from townspeople, and forging Lucas's signature to sell property his mother left him. Lucas married an operating room nurse, Kristina Hedvigsen, whose savings were sufficient to pay his overdue tuition, and she continued to work until he graduated in 1930. A second letter postmarked Chillicothe informed Lucas that Job now owned the harness store, and that is the last we hear of Chillicothe. An impoverished Job years later called on Lucas and Kristina in the town where they were working and asked for money. He left for the train station with fifty dollars, and that is the last we hear of Job.

Readers are not told in what state Lucas was born or studied medicine or practiced his profession, and the nearly 20 other towns named in the novel also are fictitious and not in any named state, yet we are told that the real town of Chillicothe is in Ohio. Perhaps that was to suggest that Job moved across a state line in avoiding angry creditors or to distinguish that Chillicothe from the four in other states. But why name Chillicothe at all? Perhaps the author wanted a fanciful name that matched Job's fanciful imagination. Then why not a fanciful imaginary name? Screenwriters assigned Job a miniscule role in the 1955 movie of the same title and thus didn't mention Chillicothe, which probably explains why so few VCRs and no DVDs were produced, despite a first-rate cast led by Olivia de Havilland and Robert Mitchum. [Lesley Howson Stavola]

(*) Science-fiction author Robert Heinlein imagined in *Methuselah's Children* (1958) that some participants in a centuries-long project on human longevity were over 200 years old with expectations of living much longer. This success generated animosity among other humans, who wrongly believed that secret procedures extended those lives more than selective breeding did. For the participants and their progeny to escape this increasing hostility, one of their leaders, Lazarus Long, traded his personal spacecraft for a much larger one that could transport them to safety elsewhere in the galaxy. In his mind, he shortened the name of spaceship *City of Chillicothe* to *Chili* in honor of a favorite dish he had not tasted in years. He guided his loaded ship to the orbiting giant starship *New Frontiers*, which he high-jacked, and then sent that ship's crew to Earth in *City of Chillicothe*. Passengers in the pirated ship spent nearly 75 years in a futile search for safe and secure refuge before most of them agreed to return to Earth, where they discovered that other humans had succeeded in greatly extending their lifetimes through periodic injections of artificial blood. [Randy Runyon]

* On his first day in New York City to begin life as a street hustler, a confident but soon-to-be disenchanted Joe Buck from Texas was swindled by "Ratso" Rizzo and found himself alone in a grimy hotel room with an apparently deranged evangelist. James Leo Herlihy in *Midnight Cowboy* (1966) wrote that the Bible-quoting Mr. O'Daniel's voice "had some old-fashioned element in it--a riverboat orator's elongated vowels, a medicine man's persuasion--but mostly he sounded like a plain person from Chillicothe or some such place." (The one in Texas?) The dismissive reference to Chillicothe didn't survive the transition from paper to celluloid in the 1969 movie of the same title. Even a script remarkably faithful to the underlying text is unlikely to include a line that didn't appear as dialogue. Excluding that line from the movie probably contributed to its Academy Awards for Best Picture, Best Adapted Screenplay, and Best Director. [Henry Herrnstein]

* While interviewing Chad Gates (Elvis Presley) for a job as tour guide in Honolulu, the company president in *Blue Hawaii* (1961) tests him by asking, "Now then, I am a tourist from Chillicothe, Ohio, and I want to see some night-blooming blossoms: where would you take me?" His correct answer impresses the president and secures him the job, but he later starts his own tourist business. [Karen Lancaster]

* In the romantic musical *Viva Las Vegas* (1964), casino swimming-pool manager Rusty Martin (Ann-Margret) tells race-car driver Lucky Jackson (Elvis Presley) that she was born in Las Vegas but has lived in Dubuque (Iowa); Chillicothe, Ohio; and Helena, Arkansas. Jackson repeats "Chillicothe, Ohio" and says he never has been there. Noted screen writer Sally Benson offers no clue to why she selected those cities. [Karen Lancaster, Don Marsh, and Anonymous]

(*) MADD Magazine in October 1966 sorrowfully reported the demise of Donald Duck, 36, when two hunters mistook him for a wild canvasback. The short obituary noted that "Duck was born in a marsh near Chillicothe, Ohio," and became an orphan at the age of five when his parents strayed too close to a pillow factory. It acknowledged his eccentric nature and savage bursts of temper but emphasized his clever wit, "all of which was unintelligible." The notice listed survivors as an uncle, Scrooge, and three nephews, Huey, Dewey, and Louie. It ended solemnly by observing, "In accordance with the wishes of the family, Duck's body will be sautéed over a low flame at 300 degrees." [Henry Herrnstein and Allan Pollchik]

* The protagonist in Walker Percy's *The Last Gentleman* (1966) tries to get his bearings after driving into an unfamiliar town in Alabama, "but there was only an old tin arrow pointing north to *Chillicothe Business College, Chillicothe, Ohio, 892 miles.*" Percy provides no explanation for the sign's existence.

* Hanna-Barbera's animated cartoon series *Wacky Races* aired on television between September 1968 and September 1970, introducing Saturday morning audiences to the villainous Dick Dasterly, the vivacious Penelope Pitstop, and nine other individuals or teams who race their vehicles across various

parts of the United States. Two of the 34 episodes aired in each half-hour program, but we are interested here only in episode 18, "Hot Race at Chillicothe." The racers are not averse to taking shortcuts, impersonating a police officer, or playing dirty tricks to impede others, and a stop at a Little League ballpark affords opportunities for more pratfalls before the racers "zip their zany way toward the finish line in Chillicothe, Ohio," with the Army Surplus Special coming in first, just a few yards ahead of Penelope Pitstop. [Anonymous]

* A 1971 cartoon by Joseph Farris in the former *Look* magazine shows a disappointed man, who has consulted a bearded sage high on a mountain peak, complaining, "I travel all the way from Chillicothe, Ohio, and your only advice is 'Keep your options open'?"

(*) Helen Santmyer's ". . . *And Ladies of the Club*" (1982) chronicles life in fictional Waynesboro in southwestern Ohio from the founding of the Waynesboro's Woman's Club in 1868 until the memorial service for its last surviving charter member in 1932. She presents detailed accounts in its 1,176 pages of how the club and its members responded to and promoted social changes. Chillicothe Street as a main thoroughfare ran from the east end through downtown, where it defined one side of Court House Square. Women preferred to walk on the side of Chillicothe Street with the town's "good stores" rather than the side with barber shops, small groceries, and a beer parlor. This street was busy with horse-drawn buggies and wagons before arrival of the automobile and was a standard route for political parades and demonstrations. It was the first street in town to be paved with bricks, and it shared the roadway with a trolley line that connected Waynesboro with other small towns. Santmyer refers to but doesn't name Chillicothe in a somber reference to the influenza epidemic of 1918, when in "Waynesboro the railroad station platform was piled high with crated caskets waiting trans-shipment to Camp Sherman." [Anna Stout]

(*) Present-day Chillicothe, founded in 1796, was not the first town of that name in what is now Ohio. An earlier Chillicothe, known also as Chillicothe Town and later as Old Chillicothe, on the Miami River in today's east-central Ohio was the largest of many permanent Shawnee villages in the region and took its name from the Shawnee word for "village" or "gathering place." James Thom, in his historical novel *Panther in the Sky* (1989), depicts the Shawnees' struggle to retain their homeland and preserve their customs in the face of advancing white settlement. Much of the action in Thom's narrative centers on Chillicothe and on the life of the great Shawnee chief Tecumseh, whose birth sign "Panther's Eye" provided the book's title. In his story, for example, Chillicothe in the years 1780 through 1784 was torched twice, first by the Shawnees to prevent its falling under white settlers' control, followed by their reconstruction and reoccupation of the town, and then by the settlers, followed by their reconstruction and permanent occupation as the Shawnees were forced westward. [Jim Smith]

(*) A popular story can live through retelling over the years even if historically suspect as a blend of truth and romanticized lore. An example is the account of the famous Shawnee leader Tecumseh's proposal of marriage to Rebecca Galloway, the teen-aged daughter of a white settler and friend of Tecumseh's, in the original town called Chillicothe in what is now east-central Ohio in the late 1700s.

They were in love, each had learned the other's language, and he had presented her many valuable gifts. She accepted his proposal on condition that he forsake his native ways and live as a white man, a condition he could not accept. They parted, never to see one another again.

Canadian singer, songwriter, and guitarist James Keelaghan described in haunting lyrics and music Rebecca's feelings upon their parting in *Rebecca's Lament* on his album *Small Rebellions* (1990). Tecumseh is not mentioned by name, and Rebecca's name appears only in the title, but the album's liner notes explain why she is mourning. Each of the four verses ends with the harsh mispronunciation of the village's name, which appears in the lyrics as "Chilicote." Consider, for example, how much more pleasing this splendid line would be if it ended with a correctly pronounced "Chillicothe": "The chill that went through me is the chilled wind that blows through the soft midnight stillness of [CHILL-a-koth (long 'o')] town." A fan reports that Keelaghan apologized for his earlier pronunciation when he included his song in a concert performance. [Joe Kiefer]

* In her comedic novel *Moo* (1995) about academic life on Moo U's rural campus, Jane Smiley has a research scientist refer to a possible career move as being "sent down to the minors, but only to, say, Omaha, not to, say, Chillicothe." Let's credit another Chillicothe with this one.

* The movie *Chillicothe*, written and directed by Todd Edwards (1999), concerns the travails of young male college graduates who ponder the meaning of life in this uncertain world. Chillicothe is mentioned only once in passing as the site of a chance meeting of a man and a woman, and its name is seen once later on a highway sign in a young man's imaginary reenactment of that meeting. Some promotional materials and movie reviews state that it was set (not filmed) in Chillicothe, Ohio.

(*) Roxie Dockery, the twelve-year-old narrator of C. L. Davis's delightful children's book *The Christmas Barn* (2001), lived with her parents and five siblings in a log house nearly 20 miles from the nearest post office in the North Carolina mountains. A snow storm isolated them just before Christmas in 1930, and it toppled a large pine tree that damaged the house so badly that the family moved into the barn, thus the book's title. Heavy snow prevented her father from getting into town as usual to purchase modest presents for family members, so they made their own as best they could. Mail for local residents was delivered one day a month to a church five miles from their home. The previous delivery included a letter from her mother's sister who hadn't written since leaving the mountains six years earlier. She wrote that she and her husband "have settled near the town of Chillicothe, in Ohio, [which is] a good size town with a lot of people [and] there are enough families here that haven't been wiped out by the Depression to keep the store going [where I work selling] dresses and hats and such." She also sent Roxie a present that Roxie gleefully described Christmas morning as a "for-honest-to-goodness, store-bought doll." [Debbie Dowler]

(*) A movie filmed in Chillicothe without identifying the town would not be included in this collection, just as a novel would not be included merely because its author wrote it while in Chillicothe. However, a scene filmed here might depict Chillicothe as a setting for some of the action, even though its name is not mentioned or seen. In *A Little Inside*, an independently produced movie copyrighted in 2000 and released in 2002, a professional baseball player for the Columbus Clippers (Ed Mills, portrayed by Benjamin King) balances his career aspirations with the responsibilities and pleasures of a single father raising his young daughter, Abby (Hallie Kate Eisenberg). The dialogue never mentions Chillicothe, and the name is never seen.

Still, the camera reveals that it captured the action at two Chillicothe sites, a baseball stadium and a restaurant. VA Memorial Stadium serves as home field for the Chillicothe Paints, a professional baseball team in the Frontier League. Several crowd scenes and some of the action during ball games were filmed there, as when the Clippers supposedly were playing the Charlotte Knights in North Carolina. Some of the stadium's design features identify it, as does the view looking from the stadium past center field. John Wend of the Chillicothe Paints' organization was on hand during filming at the VA stadium, and he confirmed in a conversation (24 March 08) that many of the ball players in the film were active players on the Paints' roster. Two brief scenes record Ed's visit to a restaurant, which viewers familiar with the interior of Dock on Water immediately will recognize, although its name is not seen or mentioned. The film's credits recognize the cooperation of the Chillicothe Paints and the Dock on Water Restaurant. [Anonymous and Stan Planton]

* The first episode of the three-year serialized HBO movie *Deadwood* in 2004 introduces two merchants newly arrived in that lawless, booming, gold-mining camp in Dakota Territory in 1876. A young man they pay to safeguard their merchandise at night volunteers that he is from Louisville, Kentucky, and merchant Seth Bullock (played by Timothy Olyphant) replies that he is from Ontario, Canada. His business partner Sol Star (John Hawkes) says he was "born in Austria and grew up in Chillicothe, Ohio," before moving west and meeting Seth Bullock in Montana Territory. [Dan Marsh and Doris Rapp]

* A spoof of a news report on the Web site "unconfirmed sources.com" announced that "U.S. Marines Prepare to Liberate Falluja's Sister City: Chillicothe, Ohio" (attributed to Wade Motawi, January 2005). It relates that Chillicothe once had been linked with Falluja, Iraq, through a Sister Cities program, which was sufficient evidence for the Pentagon to announce plans for ridding Chillicothe of insurgents. Chillicothe's mayor is quoted as saying that Sister Cities "seemed like a good idea at the time," but the program never was a success.

(*) The 18 loosely connected stories in Donald Ray Pollack's *Knockemstiff* (2008) describe a range of sordid activities perpetrated, witnessed, or experienced by residents of that unincorporated area in Ross County about 12 miles southwest of Chillicothe. Knockemstiff is a real place, as are the nearly 20 other communities cited in the book, with one exception: Chillicothe is known as the fictional Meade, which often is mentioned as the unnamed nearby town where characters live or visit. These references, together with the ones specifically naming Meade, reveal its true identity, although Chillicothe never is named.

Doubters need only look at the book's frontispiece, a map of where much of the book's action takes place, which shows Meade as the town at the intersection of US 23 and US 50. Or they could read the author's "Acknowledgments," where he remembers "all my old friends and co-workers at the paper mill in Chillicothe, Ohio." The paper mill is mentioned in seven of the stories. In response to a question at a book signing in Chillicothe (Book World, 22 March 08), Pollack said he referred to Chillicothe as Meade to acknowledge the Mead Paper Company's longtime contributions to the town's economy, and to its role in his family's employment history, including the 32 years he worked at the paper mill, now owned and operated by Glatfelter.

"Chillicothe in Story and Song" features references to Chillicothe in works of fiction, but two autobiographical songs merit attention.

* Pearl R. Nye was born in 1872 on a family boat docked in Chillicothe on the Ohio and Erie Canal. He became a canal boat captain and wrote and collected songs of the times. His *Chillicothe* opens with "In Chillicothe where I was born" and continues for 40 lines to describe his life on the canal and activities on the waterfront, emphasizing that "Chillicothe was a great canal town, / Yes, she drew everything for miles around." The lyrics appears in various historical publications, including John Grabb's authoritative *The Canal--Its Rise and Fall in Ross County* (1985).

* Country singer and songwriter Johnny Paycheck (born Donald Lytle), in a concert while confined in the Chillicothe Correctional Institute (CCI) in 1989 for wounding a man with a firearm, sang *Chillicothe, You Got a Hold on Me*, which included that title line followed by "There's a lot of places I'd rather be." It appears that songwriter Billy Don Burns wrote it for Paycheck's one CCI performance, and it never was recorded or published, but Paycheck's fans keep the lyrics alive.

(*) Are there patterns to be discerned among all these references? For instance, Rex Stout (1886-1975) and P.G. Wodehouse (1881-1975) greatly admired each other's literary achievements. If one of them influenced the other's use of Chillicothe, it would seem reasonable that Stout used it first because of his family's connection to the area, but Stout didn't write his first mystery novel until 1933 at age 47. Wodehouse by then had written over 50 novels or collections of stories, and he referred to Chillicothe nearly a dozen times in his *Laughing Gas* in 1936. Archie Goodwin tells us in *Over My Dead Body* (1939) that he is from Ohio, but he doesn't reveal until 1951 in the novella *The Cop Killer* that he was born in Chillicothe. Still, we might speculate that Stout's use of Chillicothe was triggered, consciously or subconsciously, by Wodehouse's repeated reference to the town Stout already knew. Perhaps we'll never know, but that's the way it usually goes with "Why Chillicothe?" quests.

(*) Authors of the Federal Writers' Project of Ohio in its guide *Chillicothe and Ross County* (1938) observed that Chillicothe is "proud of its beginnings and of its progress in the new American scene" and that "[t]he word Chillicothe is a part of the American language [and] has come to have definite meaning, particularly to persons who have never been in Chillicothe." What meaning, they didn't say, but they added that Chillicothe "is a funny word and has been used as a sure-fire laugh in some of the plays produced by George Tyler, a Chillicothe boy." What plays, they didn't say.

(*) George Tyler (1867-1946) in his memoir of decades in the theater business, *Whatever Goes Up--* (1934), said that the Chillicothe of his boyhood "was the finest little place in the world [but] not even well enough known yet for the wise-cracker to have got busy with its good old Indian name the same way they used to get funny about [other towns' names]," which might suggest that the wise-crackers used it to their advantage later. He confessed to thinking in later years that "Chillicothe sounded too small and a little comic," so when asked while working out West where he was raised "I always said Cincinnati."

The library has copies of the books, sheet music or CDs, cartoons, and VCRs or DVDs on display at its main branch in Chillicothe, with copies of many of the books and videos also available in its permanent collection.

Accounts of this ongoing project graciously provided by Chillicothe Ross Chamber of Commerce, *Chillicothe Gazette*, *Columbus Dispatch*, and Ross-Chillicothe Convention and Visitors Bureau generated many leads to possible new entries. We invite anyone with ideas for "Chillicothe in Story and Song" to send them to Tom Thomas at 257 Independence Drive, Chillicothe OH 45601, or at <lawscience@roadrunner.com>. Tom Thomas is an adjunct professor at Ohio University-Chillicothe and a friend of the library.

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