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Johnny Appleseed, orchardist



Johnny Appleseed
Orchardist

JOHNNY APPLESEED
ORCHARDIST

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Prepared by the Staff of the
Public Library of Fort Wayne and Allen County
1963

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FOREWORD

The scanty details of the life of John Chapman, better known among his contemporaries and latter-day Americans as Johnny Appleseed, have been amplified in story and song so frequently that another narrative about him may seem superfluous. The popular interest in John Chapman, however, as evidenced by the requests of countless adult patrons of the Public Library of Fort Wayne and Allen County for information on his life, seems to justify the appearance of another sketch of this well-beloved and colorful personality.

It is noteworthy that Chapman's last years were spent in the country about Fort Wayne; likewise, the final important episode in the life of Anthony Wayne culminated in the building of the fort bearing his name. Chapman's connection with this area, however, was some forty-three years later. Little Turtle, the great Indian chief, was a contemporary of both Wayne and Chapman; he outlived the former by sixteen years, but predeceased the latter by thirty-three years. This stellar trio--Wayne, the peerless fighter; Little Turtle, the valiant Indian patriot; and Johnny Appleseed, the genius who directed men toward peacetime pursuits--constitutes a triumvirate of truly great men associated with the early annals of our community.

Chapman was a versatile personality, and his claims to fame are based upon a variety of factors. He played a unique role in the drama of great events on the western frontier; for example, he participated in the War of 1812. His contribution toward nursery culture and his dissemination of the edible apple tree over the entire western frontier were substantial. His love of man and beast, which was exemplified by his every action for all to see, furnished both precept and example for the guidance of a population living close to nature. His profound religious nature motivated and emphasized every act and made religious conduct a teammate of his zeal in persuading men to accept his religious views.

This little essay is an attempt to isolate from the rather large collection of legends, stories, poems, traditions, and facts of record, a coherent narrative of the known or credible episodes in the career of John Chapman.

John Chapman, colloquially known as Johnny Appleseed, was probably born in Springfield, Massachusetts, September 26, 1774. Little is known of his childhood and early life. His half-sister later recalled that as a child he loved nature, observed birds, plants, and flowers and that he also enjoyed natural scenery. Always humane to animals, he early acquired skill in ministering to wounded or distressed beasts; he often bandaged their wounds and injuries. He derived great pleasure in caring for, caressing, and fondling God's creatures. Johnny collected herbs--horehound, catnip, pennyroyal, ginseng, and dog fennel--all were reputed to possess medicinal qualities in that bygone day. In accordance with practices of the times he compounded these into medicines. Whether he carried a skunk around in his arms or doctored a sick dog with evil-tasting herb medicines, he was always the friend of small animals.

Nathaniel Chapman, Johnny's father, apprenticed the boy to a Mr. Crawford, an orchardist owning extensive (for that day) apple orchard holdings. Young Chapman learned to prune and to cultivate the apple trees and to harvest the fruit in the fall. The practical training acquired in Crawford's orchards helped determine the pattern of Johnny's conduct in later life as a purveyor of orchard stock to the settlers on the frontier.

Johnny became acquainted with Aesop's FABLES and read the book repeatedly. He was fascinated, no doubt, by the fabulist's characterization of animals being capable of performing the everyday actions of human beings. Like many other contemporaries, Johnny became interested in that eighteenth century best-seller, PILGRIM'S PROGRESS; he studied Bunyan's great work with the Bible. The evidence indicates an early development of an intensely religious attitude. About this time Johnny possibly attended Harvard College; he was reputed to have received excellent grades and to have acquired the so-called liberal education of the times. Certainly his lifelong conduct bespoke him a gentleman of more than the usual amount of learning.

Johnny's religious interests caused him to investigate the cult of Emanuel Swedenborg thoroughly; he was soon afterwards converted to that faith. The Conference of the Church of Swedenborg at Boston invited Johnny for an interview and as a result ordained him a minister because of his unusual insight into Sweden-

borgian doctrines. He was commissioned a missionary and directed to work with another young missionary along the Potomac River in Virginia. His missionary labors, which included distribution of tracts, books, and Bibles, and preaching Swedenborgian beliefs, continued until the spring of 1792; then he made a final report to the Conference at Boston, ended his missionary work, and returned to Springfield. Johnny remained faithful to the Swedenborgian creed and practiced its tenets throughout his long life. He professed to believe that he had frequent conversations with angels and spirits; two of these spirits were women, and he is reputed to have believed that should he remain celibate during his earthly existence, they would be his wives in the next world. Johnny always carried a few religious books with him and shared them with the pioneers; he encouraged reading and exchange of books among the early settlers. The scarcity of books on the frontier prompted Johnny to divide each book in several parts; he left fragments of a book with several persons so that each might have some reading material, thus enabling greater numbers access to the printed word.

Johnny's religious nature and early vocational interest in fruitgrowing provided fertile soil for nurturing an intense feeling of responsibility to provide nursery stock for the white settlers on the frontier. In his self-appointed vocation he manifested, as in everything else, an intense religious fervor, even deifying the apple as a divine favor and gift to man. Johnny rejected all pruning and grafting of nursery stocks, for he believed that to cut or prune a tree was as cruel and unprincipled as to maim a human being, hence morally wrong. Johnny spent some time in western Pennsylvania and many years in Ohio where he roamed the valleys of the Muskingum River and its tributaries. He repeatedly stated that the two chief objectives of his life were to make apples available to all and to preach the doctrines of Emanuel Swedenborg. The purveyance of nursery stock afforded him opportunities to propagate the Swedenborgian faith.

One of Johnny's personality traits was self-reliance. He did not ask anyone's hospitality if it were at all possible for him to eat and sleep out-of-doors. His traveling pack provided the necessities including cooking utensils. His mush pan frequently served as a hat. Whenever he did accept the bed and board of a frontier



Johnny Appleseed.
(HARPER'S MAGAZINE, November, 1871)

home, his cooking equipment pillowed his head. The pioneers familiarly called him Johnny Appleseed. Johnny's wearing apparel is described by John W. Dawson as follows: "next to his body a coarse coffee sack, with a hole cut in the center through which he passed his head. He had on the waists of four pairs of pants. These were cut off at the forks, ripped up at the sides and the fronts thrown away, saving the waist-band attached to the hinder part. These hinder parts were buttoned around him, lapping like shingles so as to cover the lower part of his body, and over all these were drawn a pair of what was once pantaloons."

The first appearance of this lovable figure in the Territory of Ohio was in 1801. Arriving with a horseload of apple seeds, he planted future orchards along Licking Creek in Licking County; he probably continued to plant apple seeds in this vicinity for the next five years, although it cannot be definitely established as a fact. Western Pennsylvania was the source of supply for his stock of apple seeds.

Chapman generally located his nurseries along streams; he planted the seeds and surrounded the sites with brush fences. With an eye to both utility and beauty, the plantings were always made in suitable, well-drained soil; the settings were picturesque in appearance and well protected by nature. When the pioneers arrived on the scene, thanks to the foresight of Chapman, the young fruit trees were ready for them. His earliest known nursery was planted about nine miles below Steubenville in a narrow valley off the Ohio River at a point then called LaGrange (later known as Brilliant) just opposite Wellsburg, West Virginia. After planting numerous nurseries along the Ohio River front, he extended his work into the interior of the state, particularly into Richland County. He made his home here for many years and developed probably his most important nursery.

The record indicates that Chapman appeared on the Ohio River along the Jefferson County shore in 1806. Two canoes lashed together carried his cargo of apple seeds. He ascended the Muskingum River, thence to the Walhonding River and up the Mohican to the head of navigation. This region lies in Ashland and Richland counties along the course of the present Pennsylvania Railroad from Fort Wayne, Indiana, to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The long, weary voyage was interrupted by frequent stops for plantings.

Chapman thus provided for the creation of future orchards and nurseries in central Ohio.

Chapman had already acquired eccentric habits and a dignified mien; his clothing was shabby and outlandish even on the frontier. It was inevitable that he should become known and regarded as a "character" in every pioneer community he visited. Whether his heart was tortured by disappointments or personal injuries, or whether he pursued his benevolent career solely because of a burning desire to assist his fellow men, is a matter for speculation. Whatever his reasons, he dedicated his life to a rather singular mission--the planting of apple seeds.

Long, tiresome journeys to Pennsylvania were required time and again to replenish the stock of apple seeds. Chapman always traveled on foot and carried the seeds in leathern bags either on his shoulders or on the back of a horse. The leathern bags were essential; no other available material could have remained impervious to the briars and underbrush of the trail and the inclemencies of weather. On these expeditions he often frequented the old Indian trail extending from Fort Duquesne at Pittsburgh to Detroit via Fort Sandusky. A century and a half ago the region was a primeval wilderness with very infrequent habitations of white men. Bears, wolves, deer, and wild hogs infested the area; its human inhabitants were chiefly savage Indians. Black rattlesnakes were so numerous that civilized persons entering the area found it imperative to wear protective coverings on their feet and legs. John Chapman walked through this forest barefoot and emerged unharmed as did Shadrach from the fiery furnace. He believed that his Swedenborgian books, which he always carried with him, were a suitable and sufficient protection against the violent hazards of the forest.

Although Johnny Appleseed was eccentric in behavior, ridiculous in attire, and unusually religious, his gentle nature and personal dignity commanded wholehearted respect from rude frontiersmen and callow youth alike. No evidence exists that any youth ever jeered at him or that any adult ever took advantage of this lonely and completely defenseless man. He loved children, especially little girls, whom he delighted with precious gifts of ribbon and calico. He always deferred to children at mealtime, making certain that there was adequate provision for them before he

partook of food.

Johnny's religious zeal never flagged during his frontier wanderings. His material interest in creating nurseries and apple orchards was paralleled by his missionary fervor in propagating and perpetuating interest in the word of God. After he had shared the humble fare of a pioneer cabin, he invited his hosts to listen to "some news right fresh from heaven." He would then unpack his New Testament, which was always included among his dog-eared books. Reading aloud, he expounded the text to his often crude and illiterate audience, whose limited learning prevented them from grasping the full meaning of text and explanation. John Chapman, reclining on the floor of a log cabin, became a genius to his auditors because his powerful eloquence neutralized all that might otherwise have made him seem incongruous and absurd. His sublime faith and simple methods required no impressive ritual, no clerical vestments, no architectural magnificence.

Johnny Appleseed's activities in northern Ohio continued during the War of 1812. At that time most of the Indian tribes in the area were the allies of Great Britain. Instigated by the English, they terrorized the frontier settlers, burned their homes, and tortured any luckless prisoners falling into their hands. Johnny, however, roamed freely and without hindrance throughout this large area. He was never harmed by the Indians; on the contrary, he was highly regarded as a great medicine man by the red men. He frequently warned American settlers of impending danger from the hostile redskins, thus enabling them to seek refuge in nearby forts and blockhouses and avoid attack. He was especially active in aiding settlers after the surrender of General Hull at Detroit. At the time the Indians had perpetrated a particularly cruel murder of a white settler near Mansfield, Ohio. The villagers of Mansfield, fearing further atrocities from the savages, decided to send a messenger requesting assistance from Captain Douglas, the commandant of a detachment of soldiers at Mount Vernon some thirty miles away. It was a hazardous mission; night was falling, and the way lay along a new-cut road through a wilderness inhabited by dangerous animals and hostile red men. Undaunted by the perils of the venture, Johnny Appleseed, bareheaded, barefoot, and unarmed, volunteered his services. This meek, saintly, and stronghearted man seemed a slender reed to rely on, but he was



"News right fresh from heaven."
(HARPER'S MAGAZINE, November, 1871)

entrusted with the mission. He thought of himself as "a watchman on the walls of Jezreel," to protect the settlers from the marauding Indians. Like Paul Revere, that Massachusetts patriot of an earlier day, Johnny made the journey through forest and countryside, but on foot, spreading the alarm along the way, warning the settlers of imminent danger, and advising them to seek shelter in the blockhouse at Mansfield. Johnny accomplished his mission and presented the appeal for aid to Captain Douglas at Mount Vernon; by daybreak the next morning the soldiers had arrived to garrison the blockhouse at Mansfield.

Johnny was a strict vegetarian; he violently condemned the slaughter of any animal for food. In a day when the forests were well-stocked with animal life and the pioneers were dependent on that game supply for food, Johnny's diet must have seemed most extraordinary. He was a peaceful man, and he never carried a weapon either to kill game or to protect himself against man or beast. His dietary practices may have been a corollary to his early and lifelong love of animals and their companionship. Any waste of food was repugnant to him, and he used every opportunity to reprehend his fellow men for the sin of waste. Once he observed pieces of bread afloat in a slops bucket intended for the pigs. Salvaging the bread, he admonished the surprised housewife against wasting even a minute quantity of any human food.

Johnny Appleseed's respect for animal life was idealistic and carried him to extremes far beyond the usual practices of the most humane today. Abuse of any animal was most repugnant to him. He had a special love for horses; if he witnessed or heard of the ill-treatment of a horse, he offered to buy the animal or to find a kinder owner elsewhere. Old, lame, or broken-down horses on the frontier were usually abandoned by their owners when no longer serviceable. In the fall Johnny sought out the abandoned creatures and provided food and shelter for them during the winter. Those horses regaining sufficient strength for work were not sold; he bartered their services in return for their good treatment.

All members of the animal kingdom were recipients of Johnny's sympathy and compassion. To wound or destroy any form of animal life, he believed, was an attack upon Divinity. On one occasion while he was planting apple seeds, a rattlesnake struck him. He recounted the incident later: "Poor fellow, he only just touched

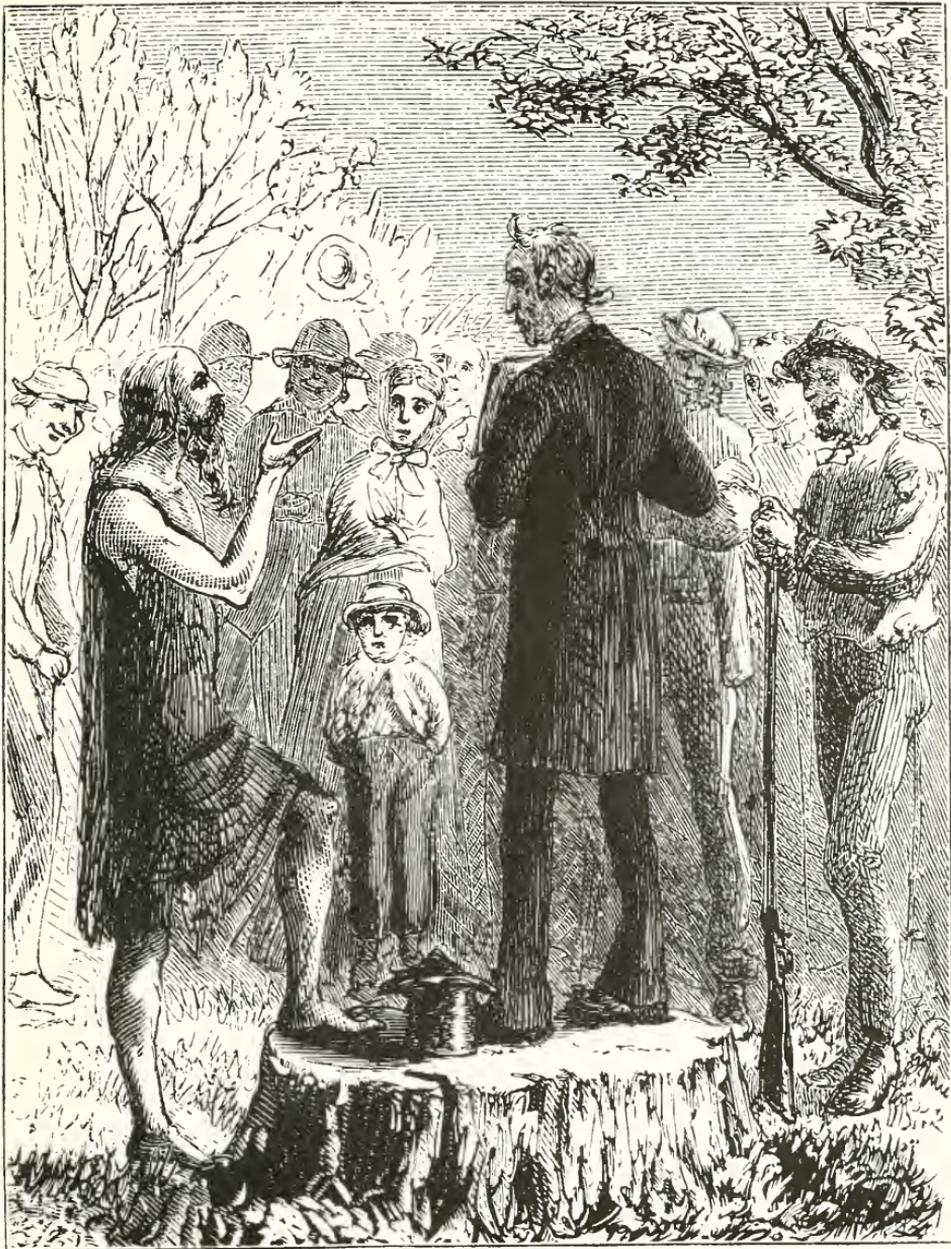


"The tribes of the heathen are round about your doors, and a
devouring flame followeth after them."
(HARPER'S MAGAZINE, November, 1871)

me, when I, in the heat of my ungodly passion, put the heel of my scythe in him and went away. Some time afterward I went back, and there lay the poor fellow dead." Once while camping under the open sky, he observed that mosquitoes flew into the blazing campfire and were consumed; he immediately quenched the fire with water. He said: "God forbid that I should build a fire for my comfort which should be the means of destroying any of His creatures." On another occasion, noting that his campfire near a hollow log had disturbed a bear and her cubs lodged inside, he removed his fire from their den and slept in the snow. While he was working with a road-building crew in the woods one day, the men discovered and destroyed a hornets' nest. One of the hornets penetrated Johnny's coffee sack cloak and stung him. The kindly man, although in severe pain, carefully removed and liberated the wasp. His fellow workmen expressed surprise that he had not destroyed the insect, but he replied reverently: "It would not be right to kill the poor thing, for it did not hurt me."

Although Johnny Appleseed appeared to live a vagabond's life and spent much time and substance in ministering to the needs of others, he was in some respects as careful and orderly in his business affairs as any merchant. His nurseries were not only picturesque but were carefully located for maximum usefulness. His usual price for an apple tree was the pioneer unit of exchange, a "fip-penny-bit." He made no charge for those unable to pay. Old clothing and corn meal were usually given him in payment for trees. He was always willing to accept a promissory note payable at some indefinite future date; he did not trouble to collect unpaid debts. He lived frugally, and his expenditures for food and clothing were negligible. Frequently he had more money on hand than he wished; he used the surplus to provide winter quarters for infirm horses or to furnish the necessities for impoverished families. In one case, he invested his funds in a tract of land in Ashland County. His failure to record the deed resulted in loss of the property and the nursery which he had planted on the land.

Johnny sought earnestly to follow the example of the primitive Christians; this way of life brought him happiness and did not include gloom and self-chastisement. That he was endowed with a sense of humor and occasionally manifested his wit is evident from an episode late in his life. A traveling missionary was preaching



"Here's your primitive Christian."
(HARPER'S MAGAZINE, November, 1871)

to an open-air congregation at Mansfield, Ohio. Johnny was among his auditors. Speaking loud and long, the minister dilated on the sin of extravagance, singling out particularly the evils of calico and "store tea." The bombastic and repetitious parson inquired numerous times: "Where now is there a man who, like the primitive Christians, is traveling to heaven barefooted and clad in coarse raiment?" Finally, after the minister had repeated the question for the umpteenth time, Johnny arose from his log seat. He walked toward the missionary and raised one of his bare feet to the top of the stump serving as a pulpit. Pointing to his clothing of sackcloth he said: "Here's your primitive Christian." The well-dressed minister was nonplused and confused; his sermon speedily became incoherent; and he lost little time in dismissing his audience.

Malaria was a recurrent scourge on the frontier, and a cure for its ravages was sorely needed. Johnny, always seeking herbs with medicinal power to alleviate human suffering, believed that the weed then called mayweed (now known as dog fennel) would cure the disease. He brought seeds of the weed from Pennsylvania and sowed them near the homes he visited. Ohio farmers soon found dog fennel one of the worst pests ever encountered. Some people believed that this was a practical joke, but Johnny's purpose was wholly altruistic.

During the thirty-seven years Johnny had spent in Ohio, the frontier had advanced far to the west. In 1838, realizing that his work in Ohio was accomplished, he planned to move westward. He called at every home and bade his friends farewell. Little girls, who had been delighted with his thoughtful gifts, had grown to womanhood. Boys, who had marveled at Johnny's indifference to pain caused by pushing needles into his flesh, were men. He now took leave of these old friends sadly and departed westward. The years intervening between 1838 and his death in 1845 were devoted to his benevolent activities on behalf of his fellow men in the Fort Wayne area, although he did return to Richland County, Ohio, for a brief visit in 1843.

Nationally, the political and economic background during the period of Chapman's residence in Allen County deserves attention. In the nation's capital Presidents Van Buren, Harrison, Tyler, and Polk successively occupied the White House. These years witnessed great political issues--the annexation of Texas, the disputes

with Mexico, the Maine and Oregon boundaries controversies with Great Britain, and the continued debate over a protective tariff. In 1844 Henry Clay made his final unsuccessful bid for the Presidency; the rallies of the Democrats resounded with their battle cry: "Fifty-four forty or fight."

Locally, the Indian problem was diminishing in importance for the red men were being eliminated by deportation and by their own weakness. The depression following in the wake of the Panic of 1837 had its effect on the local community. Progress in the construction of the Wabash and Erie Canal was impeded, but local leaders determined that the Canal must be completed. Despite the depression, immigrants from the East continued to pour into Allen County. Later, a newly completed section of the Canal served to promote local commerce despite the ruinous low prices prevailing.

It was, however, a relatively prosperous period in the life of Johnny Appleseed. The country was so new--scarcely any white inhabitant had been in the area fifteen years when he arrived--that nursery stock was urgently needed for the development of new farms. Johnny expanded his facilities for supplying the ever-growing demand of his market. The culture and sale of nursery stock and the preaching of the religion of New Jerusalem remained his chief interests until his death. He probably turned a deaf ear to the stirring current issues of the times. There is no extant evidence that he concerned himself in any way with politics.

The passing years and frequent exposure to physical hardship had taken their toll; Johnny was somewhat enfeebled in his last years, but he completed the Biblical span of life and died at the age of seventy-two. On a day in the late winter of 1845, learning that cattle had invaded his nursery in St. Joseph Township twenty miles away, he set out on foot to protect his trees. The exertion proved too great for his frail strength; overcome by fatigue and exposure, he was forced to seek lodging at the home of William Worth. His host had formerly resided in Richland County, Ohio, and he extended every courtesy to the aged nurseryman. Johnny sat at the cabin door and contented himself with a bowl of bread and milk.

As the day waned, the weather became milder, and the sun seemed brighter and warmer. Johnny watched this promise of spring at sunset, possibly dreaming of the spring flowers he loved

so well. At nightfall he entered the house and accepted a quilt and pillow on the floor, but he refused the bed offered him. Requesting the family to join him in worship, he chose the Sermon on the Mount as his scriptural reading and especially emphasized the beatitude: "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." After the reading, he uttered prayers beseeching divine guidance in the ways of righteousness for all men. The depth of his thought, the truth of his Christianity, and the sincerity of his words and voice made an indelible impression on the Worth family.

The following morning Johnny was mortally ill with pneumonia and in the grip of a raging fever. The hastily-called physician realized that the patient was beyond the help of medical science. His worst fears were confirmed, for Johnny died soon afterwards. He remarked of Johnny that he had never observed anyone await death so placidly. Johnny's fatal malady was diagnosed as winter plague, then prevalent on the frontier.

The obituary notice printed in the March 22, 1845, issue of the FORT WAYNE SENTINEL reads: "On the same day [March 18, 1845] in this neighborhood, at an advanced age, Mr. John Chapman (better known as Johnny Appleseed).

"The deceased was well known through this region by his eccentricity and the strange garb he usually wore. He followed the occupation of a nurseryman and has been a regular visitor here upwards of twenty years. He was a native of Pennsylvania, we understand, but his home--if home he had--for some years past was in the neighborhood of Cleveland, Ohio, where he has relatives living. He is supposed to have considerable property; yet he denied himself almost the common necessities of life--not so much perhaps for avarice as from his peculiar notions on religious subjects. He was a follower of Swedenborg and devoutly believed that the more he endured in this world the less he would have to suffer and the greater would be his happiness hereafter--he submitted to every privation with cheerfulness and content, believing that in so doing he was securing snug quarters hereafter.

"In the most inclement weather he might be seen barefooted and almost naked except when he chanced to pick up articles of old clothing. Notwithstanding the privations and exposure he endured, he lived to an extreme old age, not less than eighty [sic] years at

the time of his death--though no person would have judged from his appearance that he was sixty.

"He always carried with him some work on the doctrines of Swedenborg. He was perfectly familiar with his writings and would readily converse and argue on his tenets, using much shrewdness and penetration.

"His death was quite sudden. He was seen on our streets a day or two previously."

John H. Archer, grandson of David Archer, wrote in a letter dated October 4, 1900:

"During his life and residence in this vicinity I suppose that every man, woman, and child knew something of 'Johnny Appleseed.' I find that there were quite a number of persons yet living here that remember him well and enjoy relating reminiscences and peculiarities of his habits and life. The historical account of his death and burial by the Worths and their neighbors, the Pettits, Goinges, Porters, Notestems, Parkers, Beckets, Whitesides, Pechons, Hatfields, Parrants, Ballards, Randsells, and the Archers in David Archer's private burial grounds is substantially correct. The headboard, of the type used in those days, has long since decayed and become entirely obliterated, and at this time I do not think that any person could with any degree of certainty come within fifty feet of pointing out the location of his grave. Suffice it to say that he has been gathered in with his neighbors and friends, as I have enumerated, for the majority of them lie in David Archer's graveyard with him."

The following laudatory passage appeared in an article in the November, 1871, issue of HARPER'S MAGAZINE:

"Thus died one of the memorable men of pioneer times, who never inflicted pain or knew an enemy--a man of strange habits, in whom there dwelt a comprehensive love that reached with one hand downward to the lowest forms of life, and with the other upward to the very throne of God. A laboring, self-denying benefactor of his race, homeless, solitary, and ragged, he trod the thorny earth with bare and bleeding feet, intent only upon making the wilderness fruitful. But his deeds will live in the fragrance of the apple blossoms he loved so well, and the story of his life, however crudely narrated, will be a perpetual proof that true heroism, pure benevolence, noble virtues, and deeds that deserve immortality

may be found under meanest apparel and far from gilded halls and towering spires."

The following excerpts from the Report of a Special Committee of the Johnny Appleseed Commission to the Common Council of the City of Fort Wayne (December 27, 1934) synthesize the controversy over the final resting place of Johnny Appleseed and state the Committee's decision.

"With the creation of this commission a controversy arose concerning the location of the grave of Johnny Appleseed. It was claimed by W. S. Roebuck and others that he was buried in an unmarked grave on the Roebuck farm on the east side of the St. Joseph River. The Horticulture Society of Indiana together with certain citizens of Fort Wayne marked a spot in the Archer graveyard with an iron fence and an inscription in the year 1916. The fence was a gift of Stephen B. Fleming. The Archer graveyard is located on the west side of the St. Joseph River along the old feeder canal about four hundred feet east of Parnell Avenue.

"The commission invited those interested in the controversy to submit evidence. Both oral and written evidence has been submitted.

"It was through the fine service rendered by the Fort Wayne Library that members of the commission discovered the article of John W. Dawson of Spy Run Avenue which was written October 20, 1871, and published in the FORT WAYNE SENTINEL October 21 and 23, 1871. The following is quoted from the article of John W. Dawson: 'Johnny Appleseed died on the eleventh of March, 1845, at the house of William Worth in St. Joseph Township, Allen County, Indiana, on the land now owned by Jesse Cole, on the feeder canal. He was buried in a reasonable time thereafter at the family burying ground set apart by David Archer, deceased. The plat is owned by Mr. Emanuel Rudisill and may be seen by the passer up the towing path of the feeder; it occupies a beautiful natural mound. At the east side of this near its foot, Johnny Appleseed was buried, and a stone was put up to mark the spot by our townsmen. Samuel C. Fletter, who attended his dying hours, dressed his body, laid it out, and made his coffin. These are indisputable and are in general confirmed by the papers on file in the Probate Court, where his estate was eleven years in being "gobbled up"--from April, 1845, till the summer of 1856.'

"Members of the commission feel that the public invites a statement from them concerning the location of the grave of Johnny Appleseed. As a part of the celebration of Indiana's one-hundredth birthday in 1916, an iron fence, setting off the grave of Johnny Appleseed, was placed in the Archer graveyard by the Horticulture Society of Indiana. At that time, there were men living who had attended the funeral of Johnny Appleseed. Direct and accurate evidence was available then. There was little or no reason for them to make a mistake about the location of this grave. They located the grave in the Archer burying ground.

"We have been urged to change this location. Both sides have presented new evidence which is for the most part secondary, hearsay, and contradictory.

"In an ancient story, which is probably a myth, the Queen of Sheba asked King Solomon to decide which was the picture and which was the real rose. King Solomon opened a window, a bee came in and lit upon the real rose. The members of your commission believe that the Dawson article is the proverbial bee that came through the window of research and lit upon Solomon's rose in the Archer graveyard. The Dawson article strengthens the evidence in favor of the Archer burying ground. Therefore, the members of the commission do not recommend a change in the accepted location of the grave of Johnny Appleseed."

The estate papers of John Chapman still on file in the Allen County Courthouse reveal that at his death he owned two nurseries--one with fifteen thousand trees in Milan Township, Allen County, and one with two thousand trees in Jay County, Indiana--as well as several small tracts of land in Allen County. The evil years following the financial panic of 1837 exacted their toll from Johnny's business. Trees were cheap and brought only two or three cents each. He found it difficult to pay his taxes, and some of his real estate was sold for taxes after his death. Thereafter, litigation consumed much of the substance of his estate.

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