

Olive A. Colton Scrapbooks Inventory and Notes

Miss Colton's clippings were taken from the three Toledo newspapers of that decade: the *Blade*, the *News-Bee*, and the *Times*. Occasionally, she clipped articles from ethnic, special interest, and out-of-town papers.

The general topic with which these scrapbooks deal is the local political scene from 1934 – 1943, a subject of much interest, no doubt, to a former suffragette. It was a time of much political change, as Toledo switched from a mayor-council government to a city manager government, experimented with proportional representation voting, and sought to implement New Deal policies. It was also a time of social tensions, with the threat of a rise in Ku Klux Klan activities, crackdowns on gambling, prostitution, and drugs, and labor unrest.

Each scrapbook is briefly summarized for the convenience of the patron; when it deals at length with a single topic, that topic is summarized.

Scrapbook 1. October - November 1934. 38 pages.

Most of the articles in this scrapbook deal with the mayor-council-city manager controversy.

Scrapbook 2. January to May 1935. 125 pages.

A continuation of the mayor-council-city manager controversy, with emphasis on the activities of the City Manager League and the special election called to "reconsider" voter approval of the city manager government. Two articles of special interest in this scrapbook are an editorial on women on city council (pg. 65), and a "Letter to the Editor," by Olive A. Colton, on pg. 96. Major figures include Solon Klotz, and Ray Hildebrand, agitator for repeal of city management government.

Scrapbook 3. Early 1935. 76 pages.

This scrapbook is thematic in approach, dealing with club activities. The major ones are Democratic and Republican clubs, the P.T.A., and ethnic and patriotic organizations.

Scrapbook 4. 1934 - 1935. 98 pages.

More on the "repeal election" (second vote on city manager government). This scrapbook is not strictly chronological.

Scrapbook 5. May - September 1935. 109 pages.

Repeal election and political controversy.

Olive A. Colton Scrapbooks Inventory and Notes

Scrapbook 6. October - November 1935. 118 pages.

This scrapbook deals extensively with Proportional Representation voting.

Toledo in the 1930's experimented with a new type of voting called "proportional representation" (PR), in which voters marked their ballots by numbering their choices in order of preference. A candidate needed so many "first-choice" votes to qualify for victory; the candidates with the most votes above the minimum were elected. The balloting was for councilmen, all of whom were elected at large, instead of from individual wards.

It was felt that such a system made for greater representation of minority groups, and the elected men were the representatives of the entire city, not a specific area. Its major drawback was the length of time needed to count the ballots, and announce the winners; in this election, it took over two weeks.

Scrapbook 7. October – December 1935. 97 pages.

In addition to more coverage of the "PR Election," there is quite a bit of treatment of the Fassett Street Bridge, an East Side "monument" that had fallen into disrepair. It was a classic case of buck-passing among city, state, and federal governments over who was going to repair it.

Scrapbook 8. December 1935 to July 1936. 107 pages.

The first city manager of Toledo was John Nelson Edy of Missouri. In the euphoria of the guaranteed good government of city managership promised by the newspapers, Edy could do no wrong. He pushed through several reforms, but in 1938 was fired by Mayor Roy C. Start. This scrapbook treats his first months in office.

Scrapbook 9. 1936. 32 pages.

John N. Edy's city managership, continued.

Scrapbook 10. November 1936. 43 pages.

There is no major subject in this scrapbook.

Scrapbook 11. January to June 1937. 78 pages.

One of the many challenges to the city manager government was made by William Cahill, a high ranking member of the Ku Klux Klan, who attempted to force a third election on the type of city government. He obtained sufficient signatures on his petition, but they were invalidated when it was shown that many signatures were forgeries.

Olive A. Colton Scrapbooks Inventory and Notes

Scrapbook 12. June to July 1937. 50 pages.

Cahill's petitions were no sooner disposed of than another anti-city manager challenge arose in the person of Josephine Guitteau, a prominent Toledo teacher, lawyer, and Republican spokeswoman. The Board of Elections attempted to invalidate her petition by claiming some of the signatures were signed in pencil, and therefore not valid. The newspapers, while deploring Mrs. Guitteau's action, urged the Board of Elections to act fairly upon her petition.

Scrapbook 13. November to December 1937. 70 pages.

There is no major subject in this book.

Scrapbook 14. January 1938. 98 pages.

The crackdown on gambling-pinball machines and numbers racket – began early in 1838, and eventually led to a row between Edy and Councilman Ira Bame, who was accused by Edy of interfering with the police who had arrested Bame's brother-in-law. Bame eventually apologized, but it was, in retrospect, the beginning of the end for Edy. The attempts to suppress "lewd literature," and the formation of a police censorship team, also get a fair amount of coverage.

Scrapbook 15. January – March 1938. 126 pages.

A continuation of the gambling problem.

Scrapbook 16. September 1938. 23 pages.

A strong movement to oust City Manager Edy begins, but is not supported by either the press or public. While none of Miss Colton's scrapbooks cover it, Edy was fired by Mayor Roy C. Start, causing quite a popular uproar (see MVHS Coll. 9 – City of Toledo Official Correspondence, Folder 6, for letters to Mayor Start protesting Edy's ouster).

Scrapbook 17. December 1938 to August 1943. 111 pages.

The coverage in this scrapbook is quite thorough for two subjects, the Citizen's Tax League of Ohio and school financing and threatened strikes. The Tax League was an organization that audited public books, and made suggestions on how to save tax money. A study done for the Toledo Board of Education recommended cuts in teachers' salaries, and caused quite a stir.