

# FUNERAL OF COLONEL HOWARD

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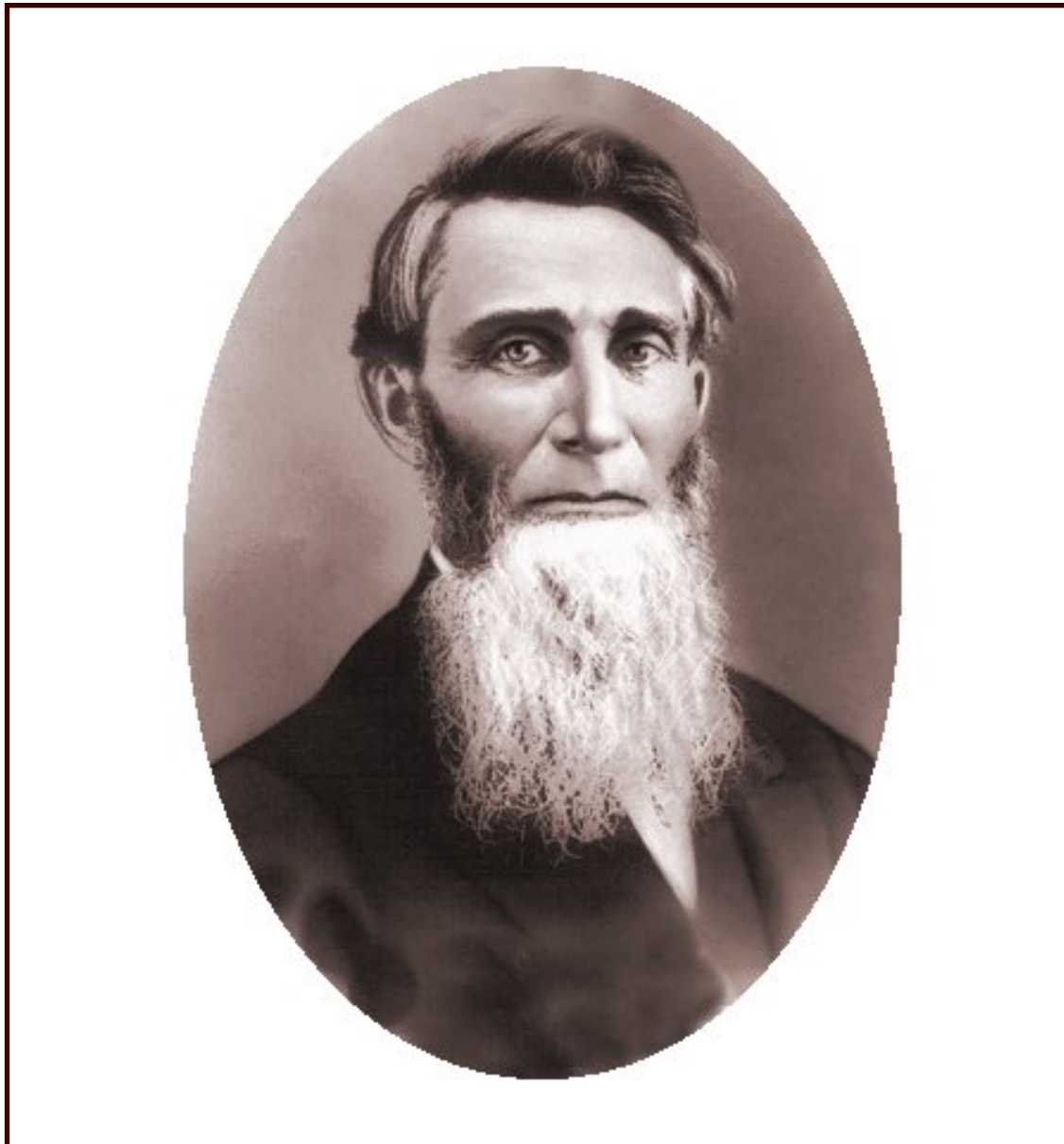
LAID TO REST IN A TOMB FASHIONED BY HIMSELF

Impressive Services at the Old Homestead

The Colonel's Last Christmas Gifts

1897

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**Colonel Dresden Winfield Huston Howard**

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**At Last He too Has Gone.**

**HON. D. W. H. HOWARD IS  
DEAD.**

**A Leader Among the Pioneers  
of the Maumee Valley.**



Dresden Win-  
field Huston  
Howard, born  
in Dresden,  
Yates Co., N.  
Y., Nov. 3rd,  
1817, died at  
his home at  
Winameg, O.,  
Nov. 9, 1897.

The follow  
ing is a very

brief sketch of his life.



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### **Staff Correspondence of the Toledo Blade**

Winameg, O., Nov 13 – A few miles back from Delta, Fulton County, among the picturesque hills that border upon the Michigan state line, in a grave fashioned by himself, was laid to rest yesterday one of the sturdy pioneers of Northwestern Ohio – Dresden W. H. Howard. It is a beautiful spot, shaded by the famous old Council Oak, where old Chief Winameg first met the man who now sleeps at his side. At the top of the hill, which is skirted by tall evergreens and spruce pines, some of which are over 100 feet in height, and all of which were planted by the hand that now lies in the palsy of death, is an old fashioned colonial residence, built 47 years ago. This was the summer home of Col. Howard and his aged companion, and of late years they had been accustomed to moving into their snug cottage in Wauseon for the winter. The house reminds one of the old wartime mansions of the Virginias, in style of architecture. Yesterday, shortly after noon, in the presence of a few immediate relatives and a hundred or so friends from adjacent communities, the last rites were performed over the inanimate clay of Dresden W. H. Howard. With words of song by a local choir, a fitting and eloquent eulogium by Gen. J. Kent Hamilton, of Toledo, and a few kindly reminiscent remarks by Rev. J. W. Lillie, of Hicksville. Tender hands reverently laid the Remains at rest in the little stone chambered tomb at the foot of the hill upon which the family residence stands at a distance of perhaps not more than 100 feet from the door.





Among the picturesque hills shaded by the famous old Council Oak



Colonel Howard was laid to rest in a tomb fashioned by himself



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The funeral oration of Gen. Hamilton is herewith reproduced:

### **Gen. Hamilton's Eulogy**

Dresden W. H. Howard was born November 3, 1817; came to this valley with his father on June 17, 1821, landing at Ft. Meigs. The family moved to Grand Rapids, on the Maumee, eighteen miles above, in May 1823. On the opposite side was an Indian village, called Kinjoino, or Apatowajowin. The only schooling he received in childhood was at an Indian mission maintained by the Presbyterian denomination, some ten miles above Ft. Meigs. He attended this school some four years, and then, according to the

memorandum he at one time furnished me, he began his life as a fur-trader and Indian interpreter, so that he could not have been over eleven years old at that time. For a number of years he was engaged in this life, traversing on foot or with Indian ponies the wild territory west of us, then uninhabited save only by the Indians. In bark canoes he traveled the long coast line of the great lakes of the interior; up beyond Mackinaw, through Lake Huron and Lake Superior and the rivers tributary. And all that vast region where the only commerce was bartering with the Indians and half-breeds for furs, skins and pelts. In 1832 and again in 1838 he aided the government in removing the Indians from the Maumee country and portions of Michigan to their homes west of the Mississippi. In 1840, he was sent by a fur company to establish trading posts on the waters of the Upper Missouri and the branches of the Yellowstone, and while engaged in that work in 1842 at the death of his father, he returned to this Maumee country, relinquishing what he deemed his life's business and commenced the more quiet and domestic life which he led till the time of his death, Mr. Howard was in the convention which nominated Abraham Lincoln to the Presidency in 1860, was a Presidential elector of the Fifth district, and a delegate to the Baltimore convention that nominated Lincoln for a second term in 1864. He was a member of the board of equalization in Ohio in 1870, and a member of the state senate for 1872 and 1873; was a trustee of Toledo asylum for the insane April 1, 1887, under appointment of Governor Foraker. I am here today obeying the request of these lips now silent, made months ago, that when this hour should come, I should say some words beside his grave. However inadequate be the words I may speak, that request, coming with the binding force of many years' friendship, is an imperative command.

The home of Dresden W. H. Howard all his life from infancy till death was in the Maumee Valley. He saw this region grow from a wilderness inhabited almost entirely by the Indian savage till it became the abode of hundreds of thousands of civilized people. During all that time Dresden W. H. Howard sympathized and participated in the pursuits and was active in the guidance and direction of the affairs of the people of this valley, whether Indian or white. No man's face has been more familiar; no voice better known; no name more frequently spoken than that of our friend. Along the banks of the St. Mary's and the Auglaize, from Ft. Wayne to Toledo, all the people knew him; all respected and admired him. Upon the history of this region he made a wide and deep impress. Who is left as familiar as he with

the Indian tribes that once inhabited the valley, their traditions, and their language, the names of their chiefs, stories of their sorrows, and the sad tale of the passing away? Who so well as he knew the history of all the old families, all the villages and hamlets and towns and cities, the story of the growth and progress of this region, beginning with the gradual displacement of the red men and ending in the splendid fruition of the civilization which crowns and glorifies the last days of the nineteenth century? Now that he is gone, who there left so willing and so able to defend the character of the aborigines, the first possessors of the soil? Who is left who by voice and pen can so graphically describe all the paths and byroads which combined to make the great highway of progress of the past three quarters of a century?

In the affairs of his country Dresden W. H. Howard took a most active interest. Toward the settlement of public questions he always, by his writings, by his private conversation and by public address contributed. From the time of President Monroe to McKinley, he observed and studied and had been an actor in matters which concerned his fellow citizens.

Consider for a moment the advancement of America during that period, its enormous growth in territory, in population, wealth and all elements of national greatness. When he came here almost all the region west of us was an unsettled wilderness. Today from the Maumee river to the Pacific stretches a vast empire, divided into prosperous states filled with great cities, traversed by innumerable railroads from end to end; crowded with innumerable evidences of the prosperity of a powerful people. The story of that miraculous growth he knew by heart. He had seen it all, had been a participator in it all and in no small degree had aided in the wonderful results.

Mr. Howard was never unwilling to express his judgment as to what would best sub serve the interests of his country. No matter how he might differ from his fellow citizens they have ever recognized in him sturdiness of character, honesty and independence of judgment and devotion to loftiest ideals of patriotism. Frequently called to serve his fellow citizens in positions of public trust he invariably performed those trusts faithfully, honestly and ably. Nature had endowed him with a vigorous constitution, a nervous and active temperament, a bright and capacious intellect. The friends and companions of his boyhood, the associates of his matured

manhood and the surviving compeers who were left to travel with him life's journey toward old age had most of them yielded to disease and the infirmities of age and sank beneath the advancing flood. But Dresden W. H. Howard seemed more than any man I knew, up to the past year or two, proof against the attacks of that grim warrior who had carried away so many of his fellow soldiers in life's struggle. For his eye was not dim, nor was his natural force abated. The weight of years seemed not to make his steps less agile, nor to weaken the vital forces of his body. His memory, whether in summoning up the scenes of his early childhood, telling some tale of Indian life, reciting some page in the history of this splendid commonwealth within the range of his own experience, or going back earlier to those stirring events which have made the Maumee Valley famous in the history of this Western country, always seemed an accurate and perfect recorder of the past. If he was old in years his mind and heart were young. And time seemed not to weaken him by its attacks. But at last the day came when an insidious and painful disease seized upon him. Its approaches were gradual but nevertheless certain, and with the progress of the disease towards its ultimate culmination came to that vigorous frame great pain and suffering. The warning was not unheeded the end was fore seen. But with fortitude undaunted the agony and distress of the later months of his life drew from his lips no complaint, and the inevitable approach of the death he foresaw was met with equanimity and stoicism characteristic of the Indian race whose friend and defender he was.

Mr. Howard will long be remembered by the community with whom he lived, by all Northwestern Ohio, and by people throughout the state as a patriot, a good citizen, a leader of his people, a man learned in the early and later history of this region and as a splendid and vigorous specimen of the Anglo Saxon race. His memory will be cherished and his fame preserved particularly because of his great zeal and earnestness in calling the attention of his fellow citizens to the rich field of historical associations which here exists. At all meetings of the Maumee Valley Pioneer Association he was present, sickness alone preventing actively participating in its proceedings.

Through his efforts, mainly public attention was called to the propriety of reclaiming and preserving for the public the sites of memorable historical events which mark either side of the Maumee River from its source to its mouth. The history of all those events he knew. Their great importance in

the development of this country he understood and appreciated, and the propriety of marking out by monuments and setting apart as parks or reservations those places he always earnestly and eloquently advocated. He was the organizer of the Maumee Valley Monumental Association, of which the first president was Chief Justice Morrison R. Waite, succeeded later by Rutherford B. Hayes, ex President of the United States and afterward by himself. He was still president at the time of his death. To his efforts in the organization of that association was largely due the interest which has been taken in this great project. Shall we not hope that although disease and death have stilled his voice the patriotic sentiment and feeling of the people of this Maumee Valley will continue to push forward those projects until either by private, state or national effort these battle grounds will all be marked by suitable monuments?

Shall I speak of the personal character of our friend? Who had more friends? Who was better liked? Genial, pleasant, kindly hearted, companionable, agreeable nothing in his bearing or in his manners indicated that his early life had been that of an adventurous frontiersman, industrious, temperate, prudent and honest moral in conduct and in word. I do not believe that Dresden W. H. Howard all his life long did a thing that would cause him or his friends a moment's regret. In short he had all the virtues that adorn and usually accompany the simple and frugal life he had always lived.

I have spoken of his love of the red man; No one survives in all this region, I doubt if any one survives in the country, whose life's experiences have enabled them to see so much of the early inhabitants of America. He knew all of the different tribes. He knew most of their chiefs. He knew their language. For the antiquarian, historian and inquirer in the early history of the land his memory was always a rich store house of information. But while admitting the weaknesses and failings of the Indian races, yet he, with a friendship rare among white men, was ready to speak a kindly word in defense of their character. The Indian boys were the playmates of his childhood. His early youth was spent largely in adventures among them. He had seen their noted chiefs; had heard them speak at the gathering of the tribes and at the great councils where they gathered to confer with the agents of the government. And he often spoke of the simple yet striking oratory so frequently displayed by the Indian leaders.

But this was one instance only of the great predominating characteristic of Dresden W. H. Howard, vs.; his profound love for humanity. He believed in the Golden Rule of doing unto others as you would they should do unto you. He recognized all conditions and colors of men as belonging to a common humanity and a common brotherhood. The weak and the poor in towns and cities always had in him a ready friend. The Negro slave of the South had in him a profound sympathizer in their oppression, ready to lend a helping hand to guide them from the land of slavery to the land of freedom. And when at last the great civil war came, throughout the whole length and breadth of this country, there was no more earnest upholder of the hands of Abraham Lincoln and no more staunch defender of the Union than was Dresden W. H. Howard, It was this love of humanity in the broad and generous sense, and his warm affection for his red hued friends of the forest that led him to feel so friendly toward the Indian. And with him has gone their most generous advocate.

I have spoken of Dresden W. H. Howard as a citizen and as a man. Here at this gathering of his neighbors, friends and kindred coming together to pay a last tribute of respect to his memory. What further can I say concerning that gentle kindly spirit, that he was a good neighbor, fond and devoted husband, a kind father and a good man. Is not that the sum of virtue and can any more fitting epitaph be written concerning him who is gone?

We may inquire perhaps what were the religious views of a man of so fine a mind and of so powerful and strange an experience? Almost all his life he had lived in close touch with nature. Whether wandering through the pathless forests, shirting with his canoe the lakes and rivers of the West, or with his Indian friends or with his white neighbors leading a more quiet life upon the banks of our beautiful Maumee, or by these broad avenues his home for half a century he had seen and loved nature in all his varied moods and through nature he had looked up to nature's God. He loved his fellow man and he believed in an all wise God. Let me read to you what he himself sat down one time as the substance of his belief:

**“Do unto others as you would be done by.”**

**“I believe in the Great Spirit, God, the Creator and Ruler of the Universe.**

**I see Him in the heavens and in the earth; in the great ocean and in the rivers and lakes, in the forests and in the plains and in the mountains and valleys.**

**I see Him in all created life, from the insect to the mastodon.**

**I see Him in His perfect system of government. He cares for and protects the merest atom of living organism as well as the greatest.**

**He protects and provides for men here on earth. Why will He not for all time and eternity?**

**His wisdom and goodness to man on earth is the best evidence of His kindness through all eternity.**

**The most savage and the highest cultured of civilized man believe in a future and in a God.”**

**But what have all the past ages taught us of that future? Nothing! It is still guarded by an impenetrable veil.**

Let me read to you as a fitting close his own words concerning this very place where we are now to bury him.

On the summer of 1837 I was the interpreter for the government at a council held under the Council Oak by the aged Sachem (Chief) Winameg, who lies buried in the hill. At the foot of the Great Council Oak the Indian council fire burned out and he sleeps his last sleep in the hill by the spring. And may we too when the drum beats the last roll call, be permitted

to pitch Eternity's Bivouac on the hillside, in the shade of the beautiful trees planted by our own hands and so bountifully watered by His loving kindness. So may it be.

The children of three nations sleep in this historic hill. The Mound Builders of whom we have little or any history, the Indian, whose sun is now setting in gloom in the western sky and the Saxon, who has later taken possession of the American continent.



Artist representation of Colonel Howard's Home with Council Oak beside it. Dresden was also a major promoter of the Fulton County Fair represented in the background of this collage. This is a portion of the collage that is a mural on the hallway wall of the new Fulton County Court Annex.

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**This is a small portion of a Mural painted on the  Fulton County Court Annex hallway wall, painted by Nancy Ruffer**

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## **Prepared to Die.**

Col. Howard had a singular intuition the months ago that he would die before he did. He expected to be buried on the 6th of last June, as witness the following memorandum, discovered after his death and which accords with what he told Gen. Hamilton about the same time:

## **Residence of D.W.H. Howard, Dec 25th 1896 (Memorandum)**

“ J. Kent Hamilton selected to deliver his obituary address in the yard at the old home on June 6 or the first Sunday; stand to be erected near middle ground in the shade. Should his death occur before that time, there is to be only prayer by Elder Lillie. Schofield to act as undertaker.” “There is not to be a sermon of any character.”

These requests were carried out without an exception, only that the date the funeral was not when Col. Howard for some reason or other had felt an intuition that he would die and the inclement weather made the use of the house imperative.

Mrs. Howard, although 76 years of age, is a woman of wonderfully bright and retentive mind and a most pleasing conversationalist to the Blade representative she said: “she was born in Seneca County, New York, but when very young my parents moved to Fort Deposit, Delaware County, that state. My father was a physician of the old school, and amassed little in the way of riches. When 14 years of age I was left an orphan by the death of both of my parents, my surroundings not being congenial, I determined to strike out in the world for myself, so I came to Grand Rapids, Ohio where were living some people whom I had known in the East. I struggled along as best I could, picking up a precarious education, until, while yet quite young, I began teaching school at the Rapids as a means of earning a livelihood, as I was left absolutely upon my own resources. I first met Mr. Howard in 1840 and in 1843 we were married. We have always lived contentedly and happy in our little home here.

## **Sad Christmas Day.**

“I have often thought, since his death more especially, of the delicate manner in which he told his family that he believed his death was near. It was characteristic of the man. It was last Christmas Day. All the family was present except our son, who lives in San Diego, California. He had been quite feeble for some time, and I could see that he was failing, although not

one word had passed his lips to the effect that he did not anticipate recovery. He was lying on the couch near the table when we sat down to dinner, my daughter, son in law, grandchildren and myself. He came over to the table and sat down until blessing was asked, when without a word he returned to his couch. As we turned our plates, beneath each one was found a letter. I felt instinctively that I could almost read that letter before the seal was broken; I knew what it contained in substance. Silently each read the letter, and then the message to the little ones were read and explained to them. In each envelope was a kind notification that he believed he was happily approaching dissolution and a little souvenir of remembrance. It was a sad Christmas dinner. I felt my heart sink within me and I knew that I would soon be left alone. That he anticipated death in June last, I never knew until the memorandum was discovered, and I learned what he had told Mr. Hamilton. For fifty four years we have lived happily together, and no one can realize how I shall miss him.

When I first saw this spot, the old Council Oak was pointed out to me. Upon its trunk were places cut where a prisoner had been tied by the Indians. Thousands of bullets were to be seen embedded about the spot where the unfortunate victim had come to his death. They had stood on the hill above and evidently, from what we could learn shot, not to kill, but to see how near they could strike his body without inflicting death. The marks were plainly discernable for many years.

But Mr. Howard never had any trouble with these people. Of course, I knew little of them, only from Mr. Howard's lips. He always spoke endearingly of them and was careful to mark the supposed resting place of Chief Winameg, which you have noticed a short distance from his tomb. He never mentioned to me, or to any of the rest of the family that he was preparing the tomb in which he was laid, but where I shall some day sleep at his side. It was never referred to. He always avoided causing me any apprehension, but was ever kindly solicitous."

Mrs. Howard will soon come to Toledo to remain with relatives, Mr. and Mrs. Geo. Laskey, for a time and will probably make her future home with her son in law W.B. McClarren, who lives directly opposite the Howard homestead.



### **The Howard Homestead.**

It is one of the picturesque points in Ohio, this old colonial mansion. All the large maples, and perhaps a hundred large pines and evergreens were planted by Col. Howard. At the entrance to the stone vault in the side of the hill, stands a large cotton wood tree, perhaps two and a half feet in diameter; this was brought from the banks of the Maumee years ago by Mr. Howard and planted there. A few years ago it was struck and badly seared by lightning, an incident that exercised the owner of the property very much. In the orchard, planted by Col. Howard's hands are a number of Indian graves, as well as a number of evidences of the prehistoric mound builders. These spots were all sacred to their keeper. He loved the Indians, revered the memory of many of their chiefs, and wanted to enjoy his eternal rest alongside the places they had selected.

There was many a sympathetic tear shed by the country folk who came to do their neighbor the last homage. They loved him as who that knew him, did not? What Dresden W. H. Howard was among the men of his age, so is his bereaved relict among the women of today. They had many characteristics in common. He was an able man, a polished student of nature a scholar of such lore as men of genius are made; all of those inherent traits are evident in Mrs. Howard, who is today, when approaching the four score years of those who have lived beyond the natural allotment of mankind, one of the brightest and most intellectual women it has been the good fortune of the writer to meet. In the language of a near relative, their condition in life was thus most fitly expressed: "They were the best mated pair I ever knew."

**ARTHUR E. CHASE**