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TOLEDO, OHIO



(587 alt., 281,096 pop.)

Toledo is the third largest port on the Great Lakes.

People:

Toledo has a many-tongued, but lessening, old-world murmur. Its foreign or mixed parentage groups, gathered in the last half-century of industrial growth, make up 38 per cent of the population. The German, a third of this cosmopolitan Toledo, is the largest group, followed by the Polish, who comprise a fourth. The Canadians are numerous (8,409), and the Hungarians, English and Irish have groups from 5,000 to 6,000 each. The Germans came early, and some of their plain, neat houses seem almost as old as the town. There are old German singing societies, such as the Teutonia Maennerchor, and local Saengerfests are frequent; the Schulplattler, an old German folk dance, is still to be seen. In the large Polish section around Detroit and Nebraska Avenues live approximately 11,000 Poles, with their own stores, churches, and other institutions. Here some of the customs from the banks of the Vistula prevail; now and then the mazurka is danced to gay and vigorous airs. Another large Polish section is north along Lagrange Street. The Hungarians and their Birmingham section, the Russians, Czechoslovakians, Swiss, French, Italians and other nationalities add to Toledo's varied Old World flavor, but it diminishes steadily as American schools, factories, and civic institutions continuously assimilate yesterday's newcomers.

The city's largest Negro neighborhood, populated by approximately 3,000 of Toledo's 13,423 Negroes, lies in an area along and outward from the eastern end of Nebraska Avenue. Here the Brand Whitlock Homes, completed by the FWA in 1936, are in sharp contrast to the aged and worn structures that comprise much of the remainder of the section. There are seven smaller Negro neighborhoods which contribute to the varied scene of Toledo.

Industry:

The 1880's brought a new industrial epoch to Toledo, with glass the measure of the city's new importance. The recently discovered Maumee Valley gas field, an apparently inexhaustible producing area, lured the new industry with cheap fuel. In 1888, Edward Libbey closed his East Cambridge, Massachusetts glass factory and, bringing 100 glass craftsmen with him, founded the Libbey Glass Company of Toledo. For a while he manufactured high-grade crystal and lamp globes. Then, at Wheeling, West Virginia, he hired Michael Owens, glass blower extraordinary, as superintendent of his Toledo plant; together they revolutionized the glass business. Owens first invented an automatic foot pedal to open molds, thereby eliminating much of the child labor from the industry, and a short time later developed a semi-automatic machine to make drinking glasses. The third of Toledo's noted glassmakers, Edward Ford, son of America's pioneer plate-glass manufacturer, came to Toledo in 1896 to establish a plate-glass plant. He built his plant below Toledo on the east side of the Maumee, founding there the model industrial town of Rossford and one of the largest plate-glass factories in the world.

The Willys-Overland automobile company is located here.

Twenty-four railroads converge on the city. Coal trains rumble in from Ohio, West Virginia, and Kentucky. At 40 wharves huge machines pick up freight cars one by one and dump their contents into the holds of freighters with the ease of a farm girl emptying a pail of water. Equally Gargantuan are the scoops that unburden the incoming freighters of their red ore.

History:

- 1794 - Fort Industry erected on present site of Toledo. Abandoned in 1812
- 1832 - Permanent settlement
- 1837 - Incorporated
- 1835-1836 - Toledo War between Ohio and Michigan over town
- 1836 - Became part of Ohio
- 1836 - First railroad
- 1843 - Wabash and Erie Canal opened
- 1850's - Important station on Underground Railroad
- 1903 - Michael Owens invented the Owens glass bottle machine
- 1908 - John Willys began the manufacture of automobiles
- 1933 - Seven of city's ten banks closed
- 1934 - Electric Auto-Lite strike



Note: The era that elsewhere inspired Lincoln Steffens' Shame of the Cities saw the rise of two famous reform leaders in Toledo. Samuel M. Jones became mayor in 1897, and began to apply to the city government the same "Golden Rule" policy with which he had managed his oil-well supplies factory. As "Golden Rule" Jones he became a national celebrity; until his death in 1904, he warred against misuse of public funds, favoritism, and bossism, and repeatedly defeated both major parties with his nonpartisan ticket. He established in Toledo one of the first municipal utilities, the Toledo Municipal Gas Company, the city's first free kindergartens, public playgrounds, band concerts, and the eight-hour day for city employees. Brand Whitlock, his successor as mayor from 1905 to 1913, four times elected, carried on the independent movement. He was instrumental in securing the passage of a State law providing for the election of all judges on a nonpartisan ballot, and was prominently identified with the campaign leading to the adoption of Ohio's initiative and referendum law in 1912.

Election Statistics: Lucas County

(Presidential)

1940 - Democratic	77,948	1944 - Democratic	76,109
Republican	76,405	Republican	77,247

(U. S. Representative, 9th Ohio District -- Lucas and Ottawa Counties)

1944 - Democratic	77,693	1946 - Democratic	59,057
Republican	82,735	Republican	59,394

(Congressional Election - 1948)

9th District (Toledo) - Doubtful Republican. Representative Homer A. Ramey (R), who got only 50.1 per cent of the 1946 vote, is opposed by Thomas H. Burke (D), vice-mayor of Toledo, former legislator, and former secretary-treasurer of the CIO in Toledo. Registration has increased since 1946, and the auto workers and glass workers are gunning for Ramey with housing and the Taft-Hartley Act the big issues. Both parties agree it will be close. Democrats think Burke can win.



