

BULLETIN

of the

Kenton County Historical Society

organized in 1977; non-profit member,
Historical Confederation of Kentucky,
Publisher of the new regional magazine,
Northern Kentucky Heritage



INSIDE SEE:

HISTORY OF COVINGTON
BY O.J. WIGGINS
(16th in a series)

April 1995

KENTON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P. O. Box 641
Covington, KY 41012

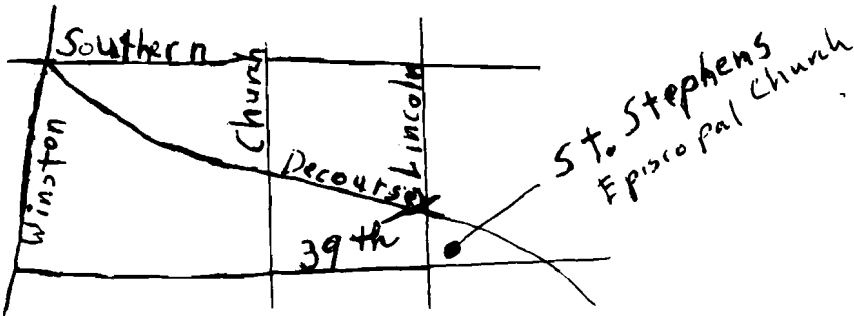
April 1995

PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT:

On Tuesday, April 4th, 7:00 PM, at ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL Church, 312 East 39th street, Latonia, there will be a general membership business meeting followed by a TOUR of the church.

The Bishop of the diocese organized a mission and saw the building of St. Stephen's church in 1910. The quaint little structure, which looks like a country church, remains a pleasing sight, situated as it is in the midst of residential Latonia.

The Kenton County Historical Society will sponsor this meeting and tour which will be free and open to the public.



TREASURER

The Kenton County Historical Society is looking for someone to act as treasurer, one who would handle the checking account and attend occasional meetings in the evening. Send name and address to KCHS..

NORTHERN KENTUCKY HERITAGE MAGAZINE

Subscription is \$15.00 per year to those persons already belonging to a participating organization; membership/subscription in the Kenton County Historical Society is \$25.00, \$20.00 for Senior Citizens and Students. The lead story in the last (Fall/Winter 1994-1995) issue was "Northern Kentucky Had Covered Bridges, Too." Back issues are available.

HISTORY OF COVINGTON

By O. J. Wiggins

Daily Commonwealth, August 2, 1884

THE EARLY NEWSPAPERS

(Sixteenth in a Series)

The Farmers Record and Covington Literary Journal the first paper published in Covington ended its existence as near as can be determined in the issue dated May 12, 1832, which has been previously mentioned in this work. In the following August Mr. R. C. Langdon, the editor, issued the first number of the "Working Men's Shield," "a weekly journal devoted to mechanics literature and art sciences," announcing the publication office to be in Langdon's reading room, back of the post office, in Cincinnati (1). The second number which was dated September 8, 1832, contains several references to Covington, vis: An advertisement of a tax sale by M. M. Benton, Collector of a dying establishment kept by John Colon, of a manufacturer of wheat fans by David W. Fuller., of a request for creditors to settle signed by Joe Wolfe, and of a notification that J. S. Stocklin will not pay notes given to Nath Price because of failure to comply with contract on Price's part. The following advertisement also appears, and is here reproduced in full, as giving the graphic idea of the size of Covington at that early date and the value of land hereabouts:

One good bargain or three as you like it.

For sale, sixteen acres of land, a snug little cottage, garden, and other improvements, one mile from the Covington landing, lying on each side of the main public road, leading from Covington to Georgetown, Lexington, Paris, Winchester, Frankfort, Louisville, &c, &c: also twenty eight acres of woodland within one mile of the aforesaid sixteen acres, either whole forty four acres for which I will take five thousand five hundred dollars, or I will take four thousand and eight hundred dollars for the sixteen acres including improvements; or I will take three thousand five hundred dollars for ten acres lying on both side of the road and encompassing the cottage, garden, improvements, &c. The situation is high, fine, and healthy. The air and water not to be surpassed if equalled by [?] in the neighborhood of Covington. Should I not sell the above property by the first day of November next I will rent or lease the same to any gentleman for the term of one year.

Alfred Sandford.

The cottage named stood in the neighborhood of where the Budington residence, on Russell street (owned by the Powell estate) now stands (2).

The Licking Valley Register was the next newspaper venture in Covington and Mr. Langston the editor says in the first issue which was dated July 21, 1841 (3).

"When we left this place some nine years since it contained less than 1000 inhabitants, and here we are again in the midst of a flourishing and enterprising little city of about 3000 inhabitants fully determined never to pull up stakes again unless driven to it by forces beyond their control.

There is no place in the West more desirable for private residence or one where capital can be safer invested either in property or business. The

people are industrious, thrifty, and so far as the doctors are concerned, provokingly healthy. We have fine air, pure water, good society and religion and science and the arts all moving onward, giving character and stability to our people. There is no spot in Kentucky blessed with so many flourishing schools as Covington and nowhere presenting so many advantages for a thorough education to the sons and daughters of the sunny South. We have two female schools in both of which all that belongs for a complete and accomplished and polished education under the care of superintendents and professors eminently qualified, can be attained. The high schools for boys are under the charge of good scholars and moral and accomplished gentlemen and besides a number of primary and public schools, the Baptist Theological Institute and College now building to the rear of this city, will be opened in a few months offering to the ambitious and aspiring young man all the advantages of ripe scholarship in science and religion, We have a rolling mill, cotton factory, flouring mill, hemp bagging factory, brewery, slaughter houses on a large scale, and packing houses in which are slaughtered and packed upwards to 20,000 hogs per year, and then comes our great staple tobacco. It is almost incredible, but it is nevertheless true that there has been and will be manufactured in this city in the year 1841 upwards of 15,000 kegs and boxes of chewing tobacco, equal in value to \$200,000 besides we ship hundreds of hogheads and boxes of leaf to all parts of the chewing and smoking world (4). See then we have a bank, but we never see any of our notes. They are strangers even in the place of their nativity. We have a fair market six days in the week, well supplied with good and choice meats but badly sustained with vegetables. We mention this fact by way of inducing some enterprising gardeners to locate in our vicinity and make an easy future and educate their children. Our streets are well paved and macadamized in the center, but the sidewalks we shall not speak of because they are not here and then what a place for children fat and plump, rosy cheeked chaps with plenty to eat and no fever or ague; and last but not least, as confirmed by myself, no man or woman ever goes away but what they come back again, and few, very few, ever die; and it is no wonder we are growing in wealth and population."

August 11.--The result of the late election for members of the Legislature is announced as follows:

Senate--Composed of Kenton, Campbell and Pendleton: Dr. John Bennett, Whig (5) elected over J. A. Goodson, (Democrat) by eight votes.

Representative--Campbell, Geo. Morin, Whig.

Kenton--Robert Carlisle (Democrat) no opposition.

Pendleton--Samuel Swoope [Swope], Democrat.

September 8--On the night of the 2nd some white youths were badly punished in a fight with some colored youths in Cincinnati, and the next night a riot ensued for the purpose of cleaning out the free negroes and the abolitionists. The printing establishment of "The Philanthropist," an abolition paper, was gutted and the presses and type destroyed; the store of the late Alf Burnet was broken open and demolished, and he had to flee the city. Other depredations were committed, and the Cincinnati papers charged that

the mob was led by Kentuckians. The Register of Setember 8th notices this "vile enemy" and denies it emphatically and with proper spirit.

September 29--"Great improvements have been made and are now in progress in our city. Several fine brick buildings have been erected during this season. One by our neighbor Cooper, across the street from our office, has been put up and completed within a few weeks. It is a handsome block--is three stories high and well proportioned. The Baptist Theological Seminary is another fine, substantial brick ediface and with its out buildings nearly completed. This establishment pleasantly located as it is, bids fair to be a great public utility as well as an ornament to our city."

"A public well has just been dug on Scott street below the bank. It is nearly 70 feet deep, and we are told there is now plenty of water in it. This is a very desireable item in our public improvements, as good well water has been somewhat of a scarce item with us for some time past as our public wells are nearly dry."

COVINGTON 1842

January 1--"We have taken some trouble to ascertain the extent of improvements made in this city in the year 1841, and we are advised to say that there have been 85 buildings erected within the corporation during the past year; many of which are business and dwelling houses of the first class. There are no vacant houses, all manner of healthy, industrious and enterprising people. It is high compliment to the enterprise and character of our people that not withstanding the pressure of the time, and business, the people are industrious without the advantages of bank capital. We hear of extensive improvements in contemplation of the year 1842. The people speak of calling upon the city authority to erect upon the public square a building spacious enough to accomodate the Mayor and City Council, fire department and public schools, City Hall &c. We think invariably of this project. The people want some great hall where they can meet and consult upon questions that interest them. It is proposed also to grade and pave the entire bank of the Ohio river from the mouth of the Licking to the foot of Scott street, to the the end, that when the great road to Lexington shall be finished our business men may be ready to become the factors and commission merchants for our wealthy brethren of the fertile interior. It is certainly true that our merchants can and do sell the heavy articles of iron, salt, and castings, and in fact, sugar, coffee, tea, &c. as cheap as they can be purchased in any western city, and we look forward to the time when our Licking improvement and road shall be finished as the period it will be the interest of that great country between the Kentucky and Licking rivers to unite with us in mutually advancing the prosperity of each. We say in conclusion to the capitalist and men of labor, come and examine and satisfy yourself that here in this beautiful valley are all the elements to make a great and wealthy city."

The Covington and Lexington Turnpike mentioned here had been built at this time from Lexington to a point about twenty miles beyond, and from Georgetown about thirty miles this way.

In regard to the Licking river improvement mentioned, Collins' history says:

"In 1837-8 \$5,383 were expended by the State in excavating a channel across the ledge of rocks at the mouth of the Licking into the Ohio, to the depth of twenty inches, at the lowest stage of the water ever known in the Ohio river. In 1837 under the comprehensive system of stock water {slackwater} navigation and macadamized roads, upon which the state of Kentucky had entered, the survey of the Licking river was continued to West Liberty, 231 miles from its mouth, and giving a total ascent to be overcome of 310 feet. The lockage was arranged for twenty-one locks, the lifts varying from nine to eighteen feet.

Between Covington and Falmouth the locks were located as follows:

No. of Lock and Dam	Miles from mouth	Locality	Lift of lock	Height of Dam	Length of Pools	Estimated Cost
No. 1	3	three mile ripple	17 1/2 ft	22ft	3 miles	\$94,347
No. 2	6	six mile ripple	18	26 ft	16 3/4	94,670
No. 3	22 3/4	Dutchman's ripple	16	24	11 1/2	74,166
No. 4	33 1/4	Willow ripple	17	27	9 1/2	81,255
No. 5	44	Hendrick's ripple	16	25	7 1/4	80,962
No. 6	51 1/4	Falmouth	16	24	16	82,251

The total estimated cost of the improvement to West Liberty was \$1,826 408, and it could be completed in four years. In October, 1837, the first five locks and dams reaching to Falmouth, Pendleton county, were put under contract.

In 1842, owing to the extraordinary stringency in the money market, the public works were almost entirely stopped. On Licking river the work was never resumed, and the outlay of \$372,520 thus proved a total loss. If concentrated upon four of the locks it would have completed them and given permanent navigation of forty four miles.

ENDNOTES

1. Richard C. Langdon, printer; Elam P. Langdon, assistant Post Master; Post Office on Third street between Main and Walnut (1831 Cincinnati directory). R. C. Langdon publisher, Western Shield, Post Office alley; E. P. Langdon, Assistant Post master; Post Office at north side of Third between Main and Walnut (1834 Cincinnati directory). R. C. Langdon is not listed in the 1834 or the 1839-40 Covington directories.

2. No "Budington" listed; Wiggins probably meant Buffington. James H. Buffington, Lovell and Buffington, home 1032 Russell; Lovell and Buffington (Howell Lovell and J. H. B.), tobacco manufacturers (1880-1881 directory). Eugene Buffington, rooms 1032 Russell (1884-85 directory). E. J. Buffington, Treasurer, the American Wire Nail company, home 526 Montgomery (1886-87 directory). Major Alfred Sandford built the historic house which still stands at 1028 Russell street (Kentucky Historic Highway marker).

3. The first issue of the Licking Valley Register, Richard C. Langdon, editor, to be published "weekly and semi weekly," carried a prospectus in its first issue, July 21, 1841, Covington, Kentucky, including this last paragraph, "The latest intelligence, whether foreign, domestic, or Congressional, will be laid before the reader. Prices current of Covington, Cincinnati, Louisville and New Orleans will be regularly and correctly published together with a Bank Note list." Register printing office, corner of Market and Scott, Howell's building, second story.

4. Some of Covington's wealthiest and best known business people were in the tobacco business including John B. Casey and members of the Gedge family (Covington city directories). The Baptist Theological College campus square was located between Robbins, Madison, Eleventh and Russell streets (1851 Covington map). In the 1850s the square was bisected by the laying of the Covington and Lexington railroad tracks.

5. In June 1831 Dr. John Bennett opened a drug store; In July 1831 Dr. John Bennett and Dr. F. M. Myers entered into a joint medical practice (Allen Webb Smith, Beginning at the Point, A Documentary History of Northern Kentucky and Environs, the Town of Covington in Particular, 1751-1834, published locally, 1977).

**A FORGOTTEN FRENCH ACTIVIST
IN THE AMERICAN & FRENCH REVOLUTIONS**

**A Presentation by Dr. Thomas Schaeper, Professor of History at St. Bonaventure University, Thomas More College Alumnus, and author of ...
FRANCE AND AMERICA IN THE REVOLUTIONARY ERA: THE LIFE OF
JACQUES-DONATIEN LERAY DE CHAUMONT**

**7:00 p. m. on Saturday, March 25
in the Science Lecture Hall at Thomas More College**

**--Sponsored by Lambda Sigma Chapter of Phi Alpha Theta History Honorary
and by the Thomas More College History Club**

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Society for German-American Studies SGAS News Release....

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513-741-1011 (H)**

GERMAN-AMERICAN STUDIES SYMPOSIUM

The Society for German-American Studies will hold its Nineteenth Annual Symposium in Louisville, Kentucky April 6-9, 1995. This year the SGAS Symposium is being co-sponsored by the Kentuckiana Germanic Heritage Society and the University of Louisville, and most conference sessions will take place at the Galt House. The Saturday awards banquet will take place at the University Club on the U. of L. campus.

The symposium in Louisville promises to be an interesting one. Sessions of papers will focus on the German presence in the Ohio valley, Religions and religious communities in the Ohio valley, War experiences of German-Americans, German-Americans and publishing. Other sessions will deal with art, architecture, music, literature, politics, builders, and manufacturers. A special education seminar devoted to teaching German-Americana is being held on Friday morning in connection with the symposium. This year there will again be a session of readings by authors of poetry and prose. Tours are also available: on Sunday to St. Meinrad, Fulda, Ferdinand and Jasper, Indiana and on Friday to Louisville's Butchertown.

For more information also contact: J. William Klapper, P. O. Box 37271, Louisville, KY 40232, or by telephone: (502) 451-3792.

**Kenton County Historical Society
P.O. Box 641
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