

BULLETIN

of the

Kenton County Historical Society

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Historical Confederation of Kentucky,
Publisher of the new regional magazine,
Northern Kentucky Heritage



INSIDE SEE:

HISTORY OF COVINGTON
BY O.J. WIGGINS
(7th in a series)

August 1994

**Kenton County Historical Society
P.O. Box 641
Covington, KY 41012**

August 1994

(see map on back page)

The **August Meeting** of the Kenton County Historical Society will feature a presentation on the local color stories of John Uri Lloyd at the Lloyd Library. The director of the Library, Michael Flannery, will discuss Lloyd's Northern Kentucky connections, his Stringtown novels, and his Sam Hill stories. The evening will include displays of Martin Justice's illustrations to the Lloyd stories and the original manuscripts to the novels, a slide presentation featuring Northern Kentucky's scenes and characters from Lloyd's era., a tour of the library, and refreshments.

Come and see the world famous library that the Lloyd brothers built over a century ago.

Where: 917 Plum Street, downtown Cincinnati (next to the Cincinnati Fire Museum). Free parking will be available next to the museum (between the Fire Museum and Lloyd Library, see map on back page).

When: Tuesday, August 2, 1994 7:00PM

This tour of the Lloyd Library in Cincinnati will be sponsored by the Kenton County Historical Society. Anyone interested in local history and culture is invited.

Northern Kentucky Heritage

Our new regional magazine is now one year old. The next issue starts the second year. Now is the time to renew your subscription to receive the next issue due out this fall. Subscribe now so that no issue will be missed. Some features articles include: "Covered Bridges of N. Kentucky", "KKK Murder in Owen County", "The Last Mayor of Latonia, KY", three "Sam Hill Stories" and more.

Subscription with membership in the Kenton County Historical Society - \$25.00

Senior citizen and student subscription with membership in KCSH - \$20.00

Subscription without membership - \$20.00

Kenton County Historical Society, P.O. Box 641, Covington, KY 41012

HISTORY OF COVINGTON
 by O. J. Wiggins
 Daily Commonwealth, May 17, 1884
 (Seventh in a series herein transcribed)

The earliest records of the town of Covington have disappeared, and there is nothing now on file at the City Clerk's office bearing a date previous to 1832, but through the research of Hon. John B. (sic) Harrison, while City Attorney, many interesting documents of that early time were brought to light; and the writer depends upon his notes for much information (1). It seems that A. G. Gano, who acted as clerk for the first trustees of the town of Covington, from 1815 to 1826, retained possession of their record books, and they probably never came into the hands of the subsequent city authorities. An act was passed by the Legislature Dec. 14, 1825, empowering the city to choose its own Trustees. The first election took place on the first Saturday in April, 1826, but upon the 31st of March preceding the judges were chosen as the following original notice explains:

"At a meeting held in the school house in the town of Covington, Campbell County, Kentucky, by the citizens thereof, for the purpose of nominating and appointing judges of the election for Trustees for said town of Covington, March 31, 1826. Samuel Caniday (Kennedy), chairman, and J. P. Biddle, secretary, motioned and seconded that the judges be chosen from the among the citizens of Covington, and resolved that Messrs. Jacob White, Jacob Hardin, and J. P. Biddle be judges therefore and that the citizens vote by the voice that the election commences at 10 and continue until 5 o'clock, Saturday, April 1, 1826. Also wherever there is a tie between candidates the casting vote will be by lot tery as blank and number.

Attest,

J. P. Biddle

Signed,

Samuel Kennedy

N. B. By order of the judges decreed that Wm. Barnes furnish as much necessary drink, &c.; as said judges may deem proper, and the same accounted for by the trustees of Covington, April 1, 1826.

J. P. Biddle,

Jacob Hardin,

Jacob White.

Thirty-eight votes were cast at this first election and the Trustees chosen were W. W. Southgate, W. C. Bell, Alexander Connelly, James Hayden, Carey Clemmons, John Beasley and Newman Yates.

The thirty-eight voters were:

William Reed,

_____ Cherry,

J. G. Arnold,

R. Canady, (Kennedy)

J. Hill,

S. Canady, (Kennedy)

_____ Margrave,

J. Hardin,

_____ Krout,

Dr. Rowell,

_____ Hudson

_____ Genkins.

T. Connelly,

E. Dennison.
Wm. Scholes.
C. Mountz.
J. Sills.
W. E. Bell.
_____ Clemons.
_____ Hayden.
_____ Casey.
J. Connelley.
D. Laren.
Wm. Hayes.
W. W. Southgate.
_____ Merryman.

W. Barnes.
William Hawley.
J. Gray.
_____ Yates.
A. Connelly.
Patrick Maden,
D. Owens.
W. Flemon.
D. Scholds.
John Haley,
_____ Lankester.
_____ Hurd.

April 7, 1826.--The newly elected Trustees met and organized by choosing Alexander Connelly chairman and W. C. Bell secretary pro tem. The next day the Trustees met again and elected James G. Arnold clerk.

July 8. - Wm. Barnes was appointed Commissioner and Collector of taxes, and a law was passed fixing the first tax levy as follows: Upon each milch cow or other cattle suffered to run at large on the commons. 12 1/2 cents; upon each horse, mare, or gelding suffered to run at large. 50 cents; upon each hog over six months old upon the commons or streets. 12 1/2 cents; upon each sheep at large. 6 1/4 cents; upon every dog at large. 50 cents; upon each bitch or slut at large. \$5. and if a person keep more than one dog, for every other dog the sum of \$2. Neither merchandise nor real estate were taxed in those days. The Collector called upon each family, took their taxable list and collected forthwith. Another law passed at this meeting assessed a fine of \$10 for cock fighting, the same fine for retailing liquor without a licence from the County Court, a fine of \$1 for bathing in the river after sunrise in the morning and before 8 o'clock in the evening, and \$5 for shooting within the town limits.

December 15.-This was the date of next recorded meeting of the Trustees. John Hardin was elected to fill the vacancy in the Board caused by the removal of William C. Bell to Cincinnati.

The taxing of real estate was discussed and also the justice of selling for failure to pay on same.

The law against cock fighting was modified to permit fights in enclosures.

Four days after the Trustees met again and resolved that all taxes must be paid in gold or silver or their equivalent in paper.

Carey Clemens was elected Treasurer.

1827

The next meeting was held February 17, 1827 The tax on milch cows was repealed.

A committee was empowered to contract with some suitable person to keep the public well in repair at a cost not to exceed \$15 for the year.

Jacob Hardin was recommended to the County Court as Supervisor of the Georgetown road from the forks of said road, in Fowlers lane, through the streets

of the town to the Ohio River.

February 24.-A law was passed fixing a tax of one dollar per year upon each lot in the town, the same to be paid proportionately by the owners where the lot was divided.

April 4-A special committee was appointed to secure the records of the original Trustees of the town. Mr. Gano had refused to deliver them June 19, 1826, when demanded by Mr. Arnold under instructions from the Trustees, and had given as his reason for refusing that as Clerk of the original Trustees, he was subject to their orders alone, and that he would retain their records until instructed by them to do otherwise. These records, from 1815 to 1826, from appearances, never came into the possession of the town after the latter date, because several subsequent entries in the minutes speak of fruitless efforts to obtain them.

At this meeting, April 4th, the clerk was allowed \$15 salary for his services the previous year.

The total amount of taxes assessed for the year 1826 was \$24 56.

April 7, 1817, the second election was held, when the following Trustees were chosen: Carey Clemons, James Hayden, Jacob Hardin, James Hudson, Jacob White and David Musselman.

Jacob White was afterwards elected Chairman and J. G. Arnold, Clerk of the Board, and William Barnes Collector. Carey Clemons was reelected treasurer, and his bond fixed at \$500.

June 13.-The purchase of a plough not to cost more than \$12, was ordered.

August 25.-An entry was made, and Judge Harrison makes note of it and deeply regrets that so valuable a document as it mentions has disappeared. It was as follows:

"The map or plat and duplicate of Covington, made by Mr. James Adams for use of Trustees and citizens, was presented and received, and an order made to pay Mr. Adams \$6 for the same."

This was the first map recognized by the Trustees.

At the same meeting various citizens petitioned to have Greenup street graded, in order to have a good road to the river. This was the first street graded.

September 15.--Major Jefferson Phelps was allowed \$10 as a retaining fee to act as legal advisor for the Board. He was to be paid from time to time as his services were required.

October 13.-Alexander Connelly resigned as Trustee, and Samuel Kennedy was elected.

November 19.-Jacob Hardin resigned and Platt Kennedy was elected.

November 28.-A law was passed against fast riding in the streets, and the project of a new ferry was discussed. Judge Harrison, in his notes, says, "That new ferry business cost the town a great deal of money, a vast deal of litigation in brief, a long continued war between the town and the Kennedys as to the ownership of the wharf and the right to the ferry franchise. It was finally decided in 1839 by the court of Appeals, at which court M. C. Johnson, Salmon P. Chase, and Mr. Gaines appeared as attorneys for the Kennedys, and Mr. Owsley and James F. Robinson for the town of Covington" (2).

December 8--The sum of \$40 was allowed Jefferson Phelps for his expenses in going to Frankfort to secure some desired amendment to the city

charter, and to secure an act for a new ferry.

1828

At the first meeting of the Trustees in 1828 cornerstones were placed throughout the city under the direction of Onerias R. Powell, who laid out the original tract (3).

March 8. - John Gray was appointed Assessor.

April 28.-An election was held and Carey Clemons, James Hayden, Jacob White, Platt Kennedy, John B. Casey, John Gray, and Samuel Pierce were chosen Trustees.

Mr. Kennedy refused to serve, and William Jenkins was elected in his place. John Gray was re-elected Assessor by the trustees; William Barnes Collector; and Carey Clemons Treasurer.

May 29.-Henry Meiers was employed to operate the ferry at a compensation of \$1 per day and granted authority to employ two skiffs.

Mr. Clemens resigned as Treasurer, and Mr. Gray was appointed.

In June Thomas D. Carneal received a letter from Wm. McAllister, who represented a stock company organized to manufacture cotton, saying that the offer of the site donated by Mr. Carneal (viz. seven lots) would be accepted, provided that the city authorities close a certain alley, grant permission to lay water supply pipe to the river, and make free communication by a street down the river to Riddle's ferry (now Main street).

A public meeting was held at the school-house, the proposition accepted, and Covington got a cotton factory.

July 5.-An ad valorem tax of 50 cents on the \$400 was ordered.

December 23.-M. M. Benton served in his first public capacity as clerk pro tem. of the trustees in the absence of Mr. Arnold.

1829

April 1, 1829.-Cary Clemons was allowed \$15 for the care of the public well. The Clerk of Trustees was allowed \$25 for his services for the preceding year. Statements regarding taxation were made as follows:

For the year 1827-Taxes levied, \$331; amount collected, \$232; expense, \$226.75. Balance in Treasury, \$4 25.

For the year 1828.-Taxes levied, \$446 07; amount collected, \$156.07.

This year, at the April election, Newman Yates, John B. Casey, Lemuel M. Wilson, Carey Clemons, Wm. Hopkins and William Musselman were chosen as Trustees. Newman Yates refused to serve. Leonard Alden was elected by the Trustees to fill the vacancy.

John Gray was chosen Chairman and Treasurer; James G. Arnold, Clerk, and Dr. Neal Powell, Tax Commissioner.

June 30.-Certain alterations of street and alleys were ordered. Notably the line of Second street was changed from a direct line to a few feet further north at a point west of Scott street (4).

The rate of taxation was fixed at 40 cents on the \$100. James G. Arnold was appointed Collector.

During this year Dr. Neal Powell was elected a Trustee to succeed John Gray, who resigned. The only other record worthy of mention was the payment of 10 per cent. for a loan of \$100, and a few months later of 12 1/2 per cent. for a loan of \$200 for the use of the town.

1830

The Trustees elected in 1830 were W. W. Southgate, John Hardin, John B. Casey, Carey Clemons, Wm. Musselman, Joseph Paxton, and George Payne. Mr. Southgate was elected chairman, Leonard Aldens, clerk. Platt Kennedy was appointed Assessor during the year the suit over the ferry franchise was up in the Circuit Court and Hon. J. W. Denny represented the city. Concerning the case the following entry appears:

"The committee reported that they have raised \$40 for Mr. Denny in the following manner: \$20 advanced by John B. Casey as cash loaned to Trustees, to be reimbursed to him out of the taxes of 1830, with 12 1/2 per cent interest, and until paid, \$20 raised by the sale of the judgement in favor of the Trustees versus Hardin and Leathers to James G. Arnold, and order given for the same, which if not collected, is to be a voucher against the Trustees for the amount. The committee appointed to procure \$25 for J. Phelps to go to Frankfort report that they have procured \$9, which is to be reimbursed to Carey Clemons and Wm. Hopkins with 12 1/2 per cent interest until paid."

A later entry shows the expenses of Mr. Phelps to have been: passage to Frankfort by steamboat \$10; expenses at Frankfort \$33; passage home \$7.

In April of this year the clerk was instructed to make a correct transcript of the ordinances and by-laws of the town and post copies in two public places. Messrs. Southgate and Payne were appointed to revise and add to said by-laws. At a subsequent meeting coffee house license was fixed at \$10 per year, and license for exhibitions, &c., at a sum ten times the amount of admission fee.

The rate of taxation this year was fixed at 29 cents, and the Assessor reported a total valuation of property, \$170,220. Stocks and merchandise were taxed this year for the first time.

Thomas D. Carneal transferred to the trustees the bridge over Fish Gut upon condition that they keep it in repair and pass laws for its protection.

Fish Gut was the gully in the neighborhood of the present Glass-Works (5).

In November of this year, Leonard Alden resigned as Clerk and M. M. Benton was chosen to fill the vacancy.

At the same meeting a passway was ordered built over a ditch at the southeast corner of the public square, that is, corner of Third and Greenup streets.

1831

At the annual election in April the following Trustees were elected: John B. Casey, Carey Clemons, Alonzo P. Smith, Thomas Callant, Alexander Greer, Gustavus Fisher, and Joel Wolf. Mr. Callant was made Chairman. Mr. Benton, Clerk and Mr. Casey, Treasurer.

Early in this year small-pox broke out but due precautions were promptly

taken by The Trustees and was soon under control; but in June, several weeks later, it broke out to an alarming extent. A pest house was erected on the lands of the U. S. Bank, lying west of the town, and other precautions checked the spread of more disease and allayed much excitement (6).

The tax rate for the year 1831 was 29 1/2 cents.

An ordinance was passed forbidding the playing of marbles on Sunday, and the Clerk was instructed to post it in prominent places.

June 25, 1831.-Elijah Owens was appointed sexton of the graveyard, and A. L. Greer was recommended by the County Court for Road Supervisor.

December--Mr. Hubbard was allowed \$275 for a fire engine.

1832

The Trustees elected this year were Isaac Martin, John B. Casey, W. W. Southgate, Gustavus Fisher, A. L. Greer, and Thos. Callant. Mr. Southgate was made Chairman, Mr. Casey, Treasurer, Mr. Benton, Clerk, and Platt Kennedy, Esq., Tax Commissioner.

The tax valuation was reported that year at \$231,345, and Mr. Benton was appointed Collector.

A temporary engine-house for the Covington fire engine was erected.

The Legislature had granted the Trustees the right to improve streets at the cost of lot owners, and this year, on as petition signed by two-thirds of the property-holders abutting, Greenup street was graded and paved from Fourth street to the river.

Mr. Callant was elected street commissioner, the first.

This year was the year of the great flood, and Fish Gut bridge was carried away, and private subscriptions were ordered to replace it. These subscriptions were so slow in coming in that they were placed in the hands of an officer for collection by law (7).

The Trustees met occasionally during this year in the school-room of G. B. Marshall (8).

ENDNOTES

1. On July 8, 1876, John Pollard Harrison (1829-1908) read a paper on the early history of Covington before the Pioneer Association of Covington, and many have done the research primarily to prepare for this gathering. John P. Harrison, attorney, Covington, was born in Louisville and died at his farm near Mt. Repose, Ohio. His father was Dr. John P. Harrison, dean of Faculty of the old Ohio Medical College; his grandfather was Major John Harrison; his great-grandfather Charles Harrison, brother of William Henry Harrison, ninth President of the United States; his great-great grandfather was Benjamin Harrison, a signer of the Declaration of Independence (biographical data in preface to John Pollard Harrison, "History of Covington, Kentucky," Collected Papers of the Kenton County Historical Society, volume II).

John P. Harrison, attorney 26 West Sixth Street, boards 127 West Fifth Street, Cincinnati (1855 Directory); John P. Harrison, attorney and magistrate, s.e.c. Fifth and Madison, Covington (1860 Directory); J.P. Harrison, attorney, s.e.c. Fifth and Madison, home north side of Fifth between Scott and Madison (1866-67 Directory); John P. Harrison, county judge and attorney, office southeast corner Sixth and Madison, Drexilius building (1867-68 Directory); John P. Harrison, county judge, attorney and notary, northwest corner Fifth and Scott, home 28 East Fifth (1869 Directory); John P. Harrison, city attorney, 49 East Third, home 105 West Third (1872-73 Directory); John P. Harrison, city attorney, term expires January 1878, 336 Scott, residence 105 West Third (1876 Directory); John P. Harrison, attorney, 336 Scott, residence 105 West Third (1878-79 Directory); John P. Harrison not listed in 1884-85 directory.

John P. Harrison married Nancy Hays, then Nancy Kennedy. His father, Dr. John Pollard Harrison (1796-1849), was born in Louisville, graduated in medicine from the University of Pennsylvania in 1819, after which he practiced successfully in his native city. Then desiring to teach, and after applying at the University of Pennsylvania, from 1835 to 1839 he was a professor in the Cincinnati Medical College, organized by Dr. Daniel Drake. In 1841 he joined the faculty of the Medical College of Ohio and in one instance of his writing in 1845 published "Elements of Materia Medica." He died of cholera in 1849 (Charles F. Goss, Cincinnati the Queen City, volume II, 1912). Dr. Harrison married Mary Thomas Warner in Philadelphia, and they had at least six children including John P. Harrison. In 1857 she purchased property in Covington. She died in Jersey City, New Jersey, but is buried with Dr. Harrison at Spring Grove Cemetery, Cincinnati (Richard S. Morgan, The Morgan-Palmer Chronicles...being accounts of the lives of the ancestors and descendants of Sherley Warner Morgan and Ethel Josephine Palmer, State College, Pa., 1977).

In 1857 Mary T. Harrison purchased real estate from Dr. T. N. Wise close to the northwest corner of Fourth and Scott Streets with mortgage arrangements involving her son, John P. Harrison (Mortgage book 1, p. 608, Independence, found by Pat Wolcott to answer query from Richard S. Morgan, State College, Pennsylvania, December, 1976). In the 1850's John P. Harrison also executed real estate transactions involving property owned by his first wife's family, the family of S.K. Hayes of Northern Kentucky (Wolcott). Mary T. Harrison, widow, 90 West Third Street, Covington (1869 Directory); Mary Harrison, 72, Born Pa.; John P. Harrison, 42, born Ky. (1870 Federal Census for Kenton County).

"Our readers will be gratified to learn that John P. Harrison, Esq., will, on Friday evening next, repeat his excellent lecture upon Shakespeare's Ophelia, in compliance with the requests of several leading gentlemen of this city" (C.J. 4-18-57). "Judge John P. Harrison is the best City Attorney Covington has ever had. Furthermore, he is a Democrat, unflinching... without a spot or blemish..." Yet the political machine opposes him (Ticket 12-29-72).

2. Thomas D. Carneal, Richard M. Gano, and John S. Gano, had purchased from Thomas Kennedy (1741-1821) the land that became the original town of Covington, together with the Kennedy stone house and Kennedy's Ferry. Partly because the buyer's found themselves overextended in the aftermath of the economic crisis of 1819, Thomas Kennedy's son, Samuel, and family, repossessed the stone house and in 1822 reclaimed the ferry franchise. The family claimed that their private ownership excluded other private owners, and also Covington from operating a publicly owned ferry. This claim received court support, then follow-up appellate court treatment, but later became unimportant with the opening of the Roebling Suspension Bridge (John Burns, "History of Covington to 1865," unpublished; William B. O'Neal, "Early Covington Growing Pains, 1825-1832", Christopher Gist Papers; Allen Webb Smith, Beginning at "the point," A Documented History of Northern Kentucky and Environs, the Town of Covington in Particular, 1751 - 1834, printed locally, 1977).

3. As deputy surveyor of Campbell County, Onerias Powell (1771-1863) platted the original town of Covington, dated 1815 (Smith). Born in Orange County, Virginia, Powell arrived in the Covington area when it was still a wilderness and lived to be 93 years old; he amassed a fortune valued at more than \$200,000; appointed High Sheriff of Campbell County in 1831, he was also a longtime Justice of the Peace (obituary, C.D.E. 7-10-63). Powell's name is seen on nineteenth century maps of Covington in various locations as speculator, developer, etc.; East Fifteenth Street, Covington, near Powell family subdivisions, was formerly called Powell Street (1851 city map, 1877 City Atlas); Onerias and Mary Ann Byrd (1871-1862) Powell had these children: Dr. William Byrd Powell (1799-1866) an authority on eclectic medicine, etc., who never married; Isaac Newton Powell, who married Janette Boyle and Armilda Steers; Hiram Powell (1810-1878) who married Ann Krileigh; Abraham P. Powell (1812 - 1854) who married Susanna -----; Mary Ann Powell who married Hiram Martin; Lucinda Powell who married Albert Noe; Malinda Powell who married William Scholes; Milton Powell who died young; Onerias Powell, Jr. (1832-1871) who married Darcus Jane Lees and Harriet Abbot (Powell genealogy).

4. At the request of Thomas D. Cameal, Edward Colston, and James G. Arnold, Second Street was, west of Scott Street, relocated fifty feet northward, and was for a while called "New Street" (Bums). In 1830 Raleigh Colston of Virginia owned on the "few brick houses" in the town on the west side of Madison between Second and Third Street. In 1828 Cameal built a brick home on the south side of Second Street between Scott and Madison, which, in 1831, he sold to John McNickel proprietor of the new Covington Rolling Mill which was located between Second Street and the river, between Madison and Scott Streets (Smith).

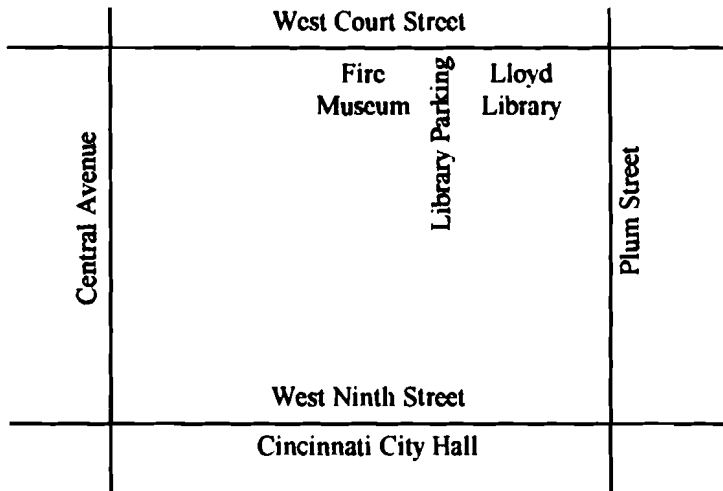
5. The Hemingray Glass Works was located between Second Street and the river, immediately west of Madison and manufactured glass products there from the 1850's through most of the 1880's (city directories).

6. In 1826 in a foreclosure the Bank of the U. S. took the 580 acre farm and ferry franchise of James Riddle for \$26,000. The farm was located west of the original town of Covington. The Ferry franchise, which the state legislature had awarded to Riddle in 1822, was at the foot of present-day Main street, and then beyond legal claim of the Kennedy family regarding their private rights, or of the town regarding public ferry rights. In the early 1830s the Bank platted part of what became the West side, the first addition to original Covington (Smith).

7. In February, 1832 there occurred the "fourth" major flood on the Ohio river "of which we have an authentic account....From the 7th to the 19th of February the water continued to rise, until, at Covington, it reached the height of sixty-three feet above low-watermark...(Lewis Collins, History of Kentucky, revised by Richard Collins, 1874, volume I).

8. On April 10, 1834 G. B. Marshall was appointed city clerk in the first administration after Covington was incorporated as a city. On April 22 city council passed an ordinance making it illegal to "open a school without a certificate of qualification from the School Trustees." For 1834 Henderson H. Phelps, George M. Southgate, Milton Hemdon, Bushrod W. Foley, and G. B. Marshall were appointed school trustees (Smith).

(Transcription by Joe Gastright; endnotes by John Boh)



Query

Seeking information on CHARLES CARROLL RICE b 27 Oct., 1856, Covington, KY. Parents died when he was very young (age 4?). Raised by Aunt & Uncle. Need birth record, parents & aunt/uncle's names, details of parents death, were there siblings? ANY INFO?
Carrol Swanson, 845 S. La Grange Ave., Newbury Park, CA 91320

NOMINATIONS OF CANDIDATES FOR ELECTION TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF KCHS:

The annual election of our Board of Directors will take place in September, 1994. The following offices are up for election: President, Vice-President, Secretary, and two directors (annually two of the six director positions are up for election to terms of three years each). Please mail your nomination(s) to our post office box, and/or report your nomination(s) in person at our election meeting in September. Nominate one or more persons and specify title of office nominated. If you would have a nomination for just one of the offices, it would be appreciated as an important contribution to the election process. Thanks.

**Kenton County Historical Society
P.O. Box 641
Covington, KY 41012**

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