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INSIDE SEE:

HISTORY OF COVINGTON
BY O.J. WIGGINS
(25th in a series; last in the series)

October 1995

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

At our September meeting we decided not to arrange a monthly program for October, given the many events already scheduled, such as:

-SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 24--Erlanger Heritage Day.
-THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 7:30 P. M., ERLANGER BRANCH OF THE KENTON COUNTY LIBRARY--"Ben Lucien Burman, his life in literature," by Dr. C. Harvey Gardiner. Dr. Gardiner has just written a book on the life of Burman, a Covington native, who won a world reputation as an author, but who is now almost a forgotten man in our area. The Northern Kentucky Heritage League has sponsored a state historical marker to memorialize Burman on this his 100th Anniversary. Presented by the Kenton County Historical Society, this program is free and open to the public.

-TUESDAY, OCTOBER 3RD THROUGH OCTOBER 24TH, 7:00-9:00 P. M.--Genealogy: Discovering Your Heritage, basic information on how to trace your family tree. 4 week class. Mail in registration (\$15.00 plus \$2.00 registration fee) to Community Education office, Park Hills Center, 1030 Old State Road, Park Hills, KY. 41011, and/or call 491-4411 or 261-4499.

ON SEPTEMBER 12 WE HAD A MONTHLY MEETING AT VILLA MADONNA IN ST. WALBURG MONASTERY. About 19 members attended.--We learned about the history of the Monastery, located in a suburb, but with a history also in Covington that goes back to the Civil War era.--Karl Lietzenmayer reported on his trip to Saratoga Springs, New York, where he received an award of national recognition for the quality of Northern Kentucky Heritage Magazine, given by the American Association of State and Local History.--This evening also saw our annual election. John Boh, Ted Harris, Karl Lietzenmayer were re-elected. Ruth Eubank is our new Treasurer, and Lisa Gilham and Mike Averdick are our two new Directors. Thanks.

HISTORY OF COVINGTON

by O. J. Wiggins

Daily Commonwealth, December 20, 1884
(Twenty-fifth, last, in the series)
1846

June 14--The school visitors now in office are appointed to serve the ensuing year.

June 25--D. Moore resigned as Councilman from the Second Ward.

July 2--On motion of Wm. Ernst the Committee on Internal Improvements were ordered to receive proposals for the grading and macadamizing "Turnpike street," between Washington and Madison, and instructed to have the work done the same width as the Covington and Lexington turnpike had been made according to law (1).

July 10--Fifty dollars was appropriated to sink a public well at Greenup and Robbins streets (Berte's corner).

Under same date the obliging city fathers granted the use of the City Hall to the young ladies of the city on the last day of the present month for their exhibition. The use of the City Hall was also granted the Montgomery Guards provided they had no theatrical performances in said hall. The use of the hall was also granted the citizens of Covington for a tea party.

July 30--Colonel Littlefield, having been elected on the 27th, took his seat as member of Council from the Second Ward.

John Kearney, who was engaged in paving and grading Madison street, from Sixth to Ninth, was instructed to continue his work to Tenth street (2).

Sealed proposal were (sic) invited for the paving and grading of Scott street, from Sixth to corporation line, and building of a culvert in the hollow between Sixth and Seventh streets. The work was done by G. Moore & Co.

August 3--John S. Perry resigned as Chief Engineer of the Fire Department.

Fifth between Scott and Greenup was ordered graded and paved. The work was done by

J. W. Connelly. Also Sixth from Scott to "Craig's road." The work was done by David Boyle.

September 10--John M. Bowen was granted a contract for building a market house on Lower Market space. The draft of the was made by William Ernst.

September 12--Drs. Bennett and Pretlow were appointed to attend the poor of the city.

September 24--J. B. Lendrum resigned as City Treasurer, and A. Crihfield was elected defeating G. B. Marshall and James B. Jones.

December 10--The City Clerk, who was instructed to take a census of the city, preparatory to rearranging the various wards of the city, reported the total number of inhabitants at 4,976.

December 10--An ordinance was passed changing the boundaries of the various wards as follows: First Ward--All east of the center of Greenup street and south of the Ohio river. Second Ward--All south of the Ohio river, between the center of Greenup street and the center of Scott street. Third--All south of the Ohio river and between the center of Scott and the Center of Madison street. Fourth Ward--All south of the Ohio river and between the center of Madison street and the center of Russell street. Fifth Ward--All that part of the city south of the Ohio river between the center of Russell street and the Western Corporation line. The ordinance to take effect on and after January 2, 1847 (3).

1847

January 2--The following members of the Council were elected, two from each ward, and took their seats January 7th: Herman J. Groesbeck, Samuel Kennedy, James G. Arnold, Charles A. Withers, F. G. Gedge, Wm. Wason, Wm Ernst, John Mackoy, Wm. E. Ashbrook, and Lewis Roach.

January 7--Herman Groesbeck was chosen President of the City Council without opposition.

John W. Menzies was elected City Clerk, defeating John Calvin, Chas. W. Clayton and Hiram B. Clemons.

G. E. Laney was unanimously elected City Marshal.

Samuel M. Moore was elected City Treasurer, defeating Daniel Senour and James B. Jones.

A resolution was passed providing for the election on only one Assessor instead of two as heretofore, and fixing his compensation at one hundred dollars: John Colvin was elected City Assessor defeating Samuel Reynolds, A. Rouz, C. W. Clayton, H. B. Clemons and J. Rusk.

William Casey was elected jailer, sexton and graveyard keeper, defeating S. W. Eggleston and Mr. Masters.

Simon Perry was unanimously elected Clerk of the Markets.

Jacob Hardin was elected Street Commissioner, defeating Jacob Wolf.

S. T. Wall was elected City Attorney defeating Daniel Mooar and E. Phelps.

The market stalls were ordered to be rented after the manner of auction.

The City Marshal nominated Robert H. Perry and James W. Long as Deputies. The nominations were confirmed.

January 21--Fire Wardens were elected as follows:

First Ward--Daniel Saville, Robert Lancaster and Jackson Sparrow.

Second Ward--L. C. Bakes, C. A. Littlefield and James Adams.

Third Ward--David Boyle, Richard Mayberry and C. C. Ward.

Fourth Ward--Andrew Porter, Wm. A. Elliot and Jacob Wolf.

Fifth Ward--Benjamin Eggleston, Enos Pratt and Thomas P. Thornton.

January 30--On this day, according to the direction of Council, an election for Mayor was held and resulted in the choice of B. W. Foley over Daniel Senour the vote standing 210 to 17.

February 18--An ordinance was passed regulating weights and measures, and the Clerk of the Markets was made Inspector of Weights and Measures.

March 4--On motion of Mr. Ernst Dr. Pretlow was chosen City Physician by a unanimous vote with a salary of \$75 per year (4).

April 1--School Visitors, one from each Ward, in the order named were chosen: M. M. Benton, T. N. Wise, J. M. Preston, A. H. Jamison and Matthew McMurtry.

The rate of taxation was fixed at 40 cents ad valorem and \$1 50 poll tax.

April 15--Wm. E. Ashbrook resigned as member of Council.

Wm. J. Pegg was elected Fire Warden in place of Lewis C. Baker, (sic) resigned.

May 13--C. Kirkpatrick was sworn in as member of Council elect from the Fifth Ward to fill vacancy caused by resignation of Mr. Ashbrook.

June 10--Henry Hawley was allowed \$8 for digging a public well on Ninth street between Madison and Washington.

June 24--An appropriation was made for digging a well at Seventh and Willard streets.

September 16--In compliance with a petition emanating from a public mass meeting, Council authorized an election to be held 25th inst., to decide upon levying a tax of 15 cents on the \$100 to buy fire apparatus for the city.

October 28--An allowance was made for repairing a well on Riddle street.

November 24--It having been decided to secure Legislative authority to levy the tax for fire apparatus purposes, Council appointed a committee to investigate, and that committee reported under this date as follows. The recommendation was concurred in:

"The select committee appointed to make contracts for engine, one hose carriage and one thousand feet of hose, subject to the decision of the City Council; would respectfully report that they have received the following propositions: Mr. D. S. Farnham proposes to build a first class engine like the---in the same style of finish, with some additional improvements which he has made since they were constructed for \$1 200; payable in city bonds

date June 10th, 1848, bearing interest; or a second class engine like the one now in possession of the Marion Fire Co., of Cincinnati, for \$840, and copper riveted hose of the best quality, including cappings and one spanner for each length, for 70 cents per foot. Your committee are of the opinion that the first class engine would meet the views of the fire company and the citizens in general, the committee would therefore recommend that the committee be instructed to close a contract with Mr. Farnham for the same together with a thousand feet of hose, immediately."

C. Kirkpatrick, Ch'n.

Nov. 25--Rev. J. M. Frost, from the Second, G. B. Marshall, from the Third, Charles M. Clayton, from the Fourth, and H. G. Estill, from the Fifth Ward, were appointed school visitors for the residue of the present term.

Dec. 15--A meeting was held to take action in regard to the poor affected by high water.

A committee was appointed and \$100 appropriated in aid of the sufferers.

Dec. 30--The office of Street Commissioner was abolished and the duties added to those of City Marshal.

1848

January 1st--The following were elected members of Council: Herman J. Groesbeck, Alexander H. Jameson, Charles A. Withers, Calvin A. Littlefield, Frederick G. Gedge, William Lowry, Hiram Bond, C. Carpenter, Alfred McCormick and Benjamin Eggleston.

Jan. 6--The new Council took their seats.

H. J. Groesbeck was chosen President without opposition.

C. W. Clayton was chosen City Clerk, defeating Herman Carlton, John W. Clemons, Stephen H. Cambron and Geo. W. Cutter.

G. F. Laney was chosen City Marshal, defeating Daniel Senour, A. R. Hughes and W. H. Lacey.

Samuel M. Moore was elected City Treasurer, defeating James B. Jones, Saml. Walker and William Wason.

Joel A. Levl was elected City Attorney,

defeating S. T. Wall.

William Casey was chosen City Jailer, defeating D. Tidd, ___Watters and Jonathan Masters.

Simeon Perry was chosen Market-master defeating Robert Lancaster.

Jan. 20--A resolution was passed asking the Legislature for amendments to the city charter, permitting the Council to appoint as many firemen as deemed necessary; giving the Assessor forty-five days in which to make his report; to fix the appointment of that officer at some time within the last four months each year, and releasing the city from payment of \$100 per year to the State.

Samuel Walker was elected City Assessor, defeating Danl. Senour, John Davidson and John Colvin.

Thomas O'Donnell was appointed Fire Warden in the Second Ward, to fill the vacancy occasioned by the election of Wm. Littlefield to Council.

John Mackoy was appointed to the board of school visitors to fill the vacancy caused by the election of C. W. Clayton as City Clerk.

R. H. Perry was appointed Assistant City Marshal on recommendation of the City Marshal.

Feb. 3--The Committee on Ways and Means, who were instructed to report the condition of city finances, reported the following as the result of their investigation, covering a period from January to June, and recommending that no extra appropriations be made during that period, as their estimate was based upon an increase of 20 per cent. in taxable property, and the facts might fall below their estimate of receipts.

ESTIMATE OF LIABILITIES

There are outstanding orders on the Treasurer from the best information they can arrive at to the sum of..... \$5,798 38
 Due the Northern Bank on the names of sundry individuals..... 3,644 60
 On contract of engine, hose and hose carriage2,370 00
 Supposed amount wanted to pay Moore on contract for grading and paving Scott

street.....	700 00
Interest and exchange on debts.....	810 00
City schools for two quarters.....	575 00
Amount of expenses.....	1,000 00
Total	14,897 98

ESTIMATE OF RESOURCES

Amount of Revenue for 1848.....	\$9,160 80
Special tax of 15 on each \$100.....	2,850 00
Amount from licenses.....	100 00
From school Fund of State.....	280 00
Bal. in Treas. Jan. 1, 1848.....	114 42
Total.....	12,805 22
Leaving a deficit of.....	\$2,092 76

Mr. Walker having resigned as City Assessor, John Colvin was elected defeating Messrs. Martin, Senour, Clemons, Davidson and Rust.

Dr. Hall was elected City Physician defeating Drs. Bennett, Pretlow, Chambers, Cooper and Russell.

Fire Wardens were appointed as follows:

First Ward--Jackson Sparrow, Daniel Saville and Robert Lancaster.

Second Ward--Thomas O'Donnell, L. C. Bakes, Sr. and James Adams.

Third Ward--David Boyle, Richard Mayberry and Wm. Lacy.

Fourth Ward--W. A. Elliott, John O'Donnell and Jacob Wolf.

Fifth Ward--John Owens, Enos Pratt and John Davidson.

March 28--On the 18th the voters of the city authorized by ballot, the City Council to borrow \$25,000, and at a meeting held the 24th an ordinance was passed providing for such a loan. The debt was to be represented by bonds bearing at--per cent interest payable semi-annually, and running thirty years. An annual tax levy was also ordered to pay said interest.

April 13--William Maxwell was sworn as member of Council to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of F. G. Gedge.

May 4--The rate of taxation was fixed at poll tax \$1 50; dog \$1; slut \$5; ad valorem 10 cents on the \$100 valuation and 45 cts. extra.

The old market house on Market Space was ordered enclosed as a temporary engine house.

May 11--A committee was appointed to secure plans and proposal for a building to be erected on the lot at the juncture of Seventh and Turnpike street to be used as an engine house for Company No. 2 (5).

June 8--The following ordinance was passed "No slave shall be put into the jail or workhouse for safe keeping or under any pretense save and except when he, she or they shall be placed there for some felonious offence, unless by written order or permission on the Mayor of said city."

June 10--The plans for the proposed engine house were adopted.

June 22--T. L. Brashear was appointed Deputy Marshal.

Aug. 17--Mr. Jameson resigned as member of Council.

Aug. 31--S. H. Cambron, who was elected August 26, took his seat as Councilman from the First Ward to fill vacancy occasioned by the resignation of Mr. Jameson.

Oct 21--J. C. Harrison was appointed Health Officer.

Dec. 7--The Board having granted the use of Council Chamber for a course of lectures on law, the faculty of the law department (Messrs. Pryor and Moorehead) of the Covington Collegiate Institute tendered the Board a scholarship, which was accepted, and James Bellman appointed as the recipient thereof.

Messrs. Maxwell, Cambron and McCormack were appointed a Committee of Investigation on the action of the members of Council during the past year regarding accepting outside pay for services. The committee reported Dec. 21 that a member had been found guilty of such action.

Dec. 21--John Colvin was elected City Assessor for 1849 defeating L. M. Rees (?) and R. H. Perry.

(End notes)

1. William Ernst was the teller, later Cashier, and later President, of the Covington Branch of the Northern Bank of Kentucky. He became President of the Covington and Lexington Turnpike company, was an organizer of the First Presbyterian church, and was the father of Richard Pretlow Ernst, U. S. Senator, 1921-27 (Covington Preservation office records compiled by Walter E. Langsam).

2. A decade or so later, when the railroad built a roundhouse at present-day Thirteenth and Madison, it filled in the "large hollow" there. Subsequently, Madison was developed as the main avenue to the city's southern corporate limits, in place of the old Banklick road south of Pike street, now just another city street (Joseph F. Gastright, Gentlemen Farmers to City Folks. A Study of Wallace Woods, Covington, Kentucky, 1980).

3. In 1841 the city annexed property west of the original town and "south as far as Twelfth street." Soon the city then annexed the area of the Western Baptist Theological Seminary which extended city limits at one point past present-day Fifteenth Street toward today's Wallace Woods neighborhood (Gastright, city maps).

4. Dr. Richard Pretlow (1811-1894); born in Virginia; as a teenager lived in Springboro, Ohio; graduated from the Ohio Medical college in 1835; practiced in Richmond, Indiana; in 1837 married Elizabeth Lynch of Lynchburg, Virginia; in 1843 moved to Covington where he practiced medicine "for over half a century"; was trustee of the Presbyterian church; built and lived "for fifty years" in his beautiful home at the corner of Fourth and Greenup (Biographical Cyclopedia of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, 1896). Richard Pretlow, physician, office and residence southeast corner of Fourth and Greenup (1861 directory); President of Farmers Bank of Kentucky, northwest corner Fourth and Scott (1866-67); physician, 93 E Fourth, also residence (1888-89 directory). R. H. Pretlow, 67, Doctor, born Virginia, (1880 census). His funeral was from his home southeast corner of Fourth and Greenup (K. P., 2-23-94).

5. About 1850 future Judge, George Gilpin Perkins, moved with his family to Covington where he attended "the private school of Professor Sackett Head....[with] my older brother Harry, and James and Lewis Casey, John Sandford, William Backoy, Mortimer Benton, John Hopkins, the Riggs brothers....The school room was a large second-story hall in the fire engine brick building on the southwest corner of Pike and Washington streets, where the 'Henry Clay,' a volunteer row-boat hand fire engine had its quarters." The city's other engine, the "Neptune," was also sheltered in a brick engine house with a hall above, located just north of Third street on an alley, later Court avenue to the Suspension bridge. (George G. Perkins, A Kentucky Judge, Washington, D. C., 1931).

(Transcription and end notes by John Boh)

**Kenton County Historical Society
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