

KENTON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Bulletin

September 2000

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Program Coordinator

Nancy Grall

Editor of Bulletin

Jo Ann C. Brown

KCHS MEETING

DATE Tues. September 12
TIME 7 - 9 PM
PLACE Trinity Church
4th & Madison
Covington
AGENDA Annual Election
PROGRAM Statistical Growth
of Kenton County

Dr. Paul Tencotte will present our program this evening. Dr. Tencotte is professor of History at Thomas More College. He is author of the book, Spires, Steeples As Statements To God.

From the President.....

In August, two hundred participants sailed up the Licking River, an ancient waterway that has been important to the development of this area. It was one of the most educational and enjoyable programs ever presented. Joe Gastright from KCHS, Mike Sweeney of CCHS and yours truly contributed historic comments as the boat passed sites.

Very few have experienced this river from the water's surface. Even the boat captain mentioned that he had only been up the Licking five times in his 10 years of giving river tours. With perfect weather, our entourage reached south over 6 miles, passing under I-275. Much of the river appears surprisingly bucolic, much as it appeared in early times.

An audible awe was heard when the mouth of Banklick Creek was passed. In the 18th Century, John Filson and company followed this creek to reach the Licking River and hence the Ohio River to found Losantville (Cincinnati).

Perhaps CCHS and KCHS should plan this trip again in a couple of years. CCHS is creating another unusual trip--to Pleasant Hill (Shakertown), Kentucky by bus to have lunch and a tour of this precious artifact. Cost and date to be announced.

From the Editor.....

We are sorry to report that Nancy Grall has resigned as Program Coordinator in order to focus on some special needs in her life. For over 2 years, she has planned some creative programs which many times included music. For the past two years, she had each program set up at least a year in advance. They have been fun and always informative.

Nancy has already planned the following year's programs. We need a volunteer to follow up on the programs for each month and keep the ball rolling. We also need someone to make sure the church is always available and have the room set up with any equipment that may be needed, and a volunteer is needed to make sure some simple refreshments are set up. We could also use a volunteer to publicize the meetings and programs.

Speaking of volunteers, Carol Wenger needs help folding and labeling our monthly Bulletin. Emily Bailey does a great job helping Carol, but another person is needed. The work is usually done at her home and it takes about 2 hours once a month at the end of the month. Call her at 292-8396.

A big thank you to Joe Gastright who gave us the following essay on the Licking River and the engraving of the Mouth of the Licking from an 1850 issue of Western Literary Magazine.

The Annual Election to the Board is held at the next meeting, September 12. We will elect 2 Directors for 3 year terms. Carol Wenger volunteered to run for another term. Karl Lietzenmayer agreed to be president for a third term as well as John Boh as Secretary. However, nominations are still welcome and will be taken from the floor before the election.

From: *Western Literary Magazine* 1850

MOUTH OF THE LICKING RIVER.

(OPPOSITE CINCINNATI.)

Original.

BY WILLIAM WELLS.

(See Engraving.)

A PILGRIMAGE to the mouth of the Licking, is one so easily performed by the denizens of the Queen City, that its austere "Fathers" should resolve that it is the duty of every good citizen to perform it at least once in his lifetime. That it is worthy of this honor, the accompanying View will convince any unprejudiced mind; and yet, how few comparatively have ever sailed up between its banks, or strolled along its shores!—how few have patronized the "Licking Packet," and expended a dime in enjoying the scenery through which said vessel daily sports and smokes!

We wash our hands of this neglect—for we not only paid a dime to go, but one to return; and feel inclined to tell the story of the trip, and the cogitations that accompanied it. We shall be repaid if the simple narration induces others to go and do likewise.

In the first place, the Licking river, after a romantic course of several hundred miles through the state of Kentucky, flows into the noble Ohio directly opposite to Cincinnati. On the right bank, at its junction with the Ohio, lies Newport; and on the left bank, Covington. These two cities have a fertile future in store for them, as the Queen City is already beginning to disgorge its dense population into their bosom. The approach by the numerous steam ferries is so easy, that they afford more accessible residences for business men, than do the suburban districts of Cincinnati. Owing to this fact, both those cities have of late rapidly increased in population and wealth, and the price of property has augmented in proportion.

The "acres" of yesterday are the "lots" of to-day, and speculation runs wild and rampant in its thirsty chase after fortune. The bravest will deserve the enticing goddess, and perhaps win her.

A reform most loudly called for, is an improvement in the boats destined to convey humanity across the stream. Such a huddling

together of men and horses, women and cows, pigs and children, as occasionally takes place in these swimming timber-boxes, would afford a picture for Hogarth, and a fit subject for the society for the prevention of cruelty to animals. As a matter of gain, property holders might well afford to make a sacrifice to effect a more pleasant conveyance to their cities. It is said that a mammoth bridge will some day span the Ohio at this point, and form a highway across the waters. Speed the hour!

'To return to the "Licking Packet." As soon as it leaves the Ohio landing, and wends its way toward the mouth of the stream whose name it bears, we perceive, on the Newport bank, the buildings of the garrison of the United States' army, here stationed. The stars and stripes flow gaily from the staff; and the periodical discoursing of martial music on its lawn, keeps up the courage of the Buckeyes on the opposite shore, as well as that of the residents of its own precincts. Its bull-dogs occasionally bellow out their gruff tones, to announce the arrival of a hero, or do honor to the memory of a martial patriot.

In a few moments we are in the midst of the scene on which the artist has tried his pencil; and we are happy to say that he has done justice to the "Licking Packet." Fortunately for those on board, it is steaming its way up the stream in gallant style. Its crying sin is its propensity to stop along the banks, to pick up or hand its living cargo. A map of its zigzag course would prove to a demonstration that its patrons receive more of a journey than they bargain for. But this is a fault on virtue's side, and indeed on the side of prudence; for to our shame be it said, the "Licking Packet" receives more of its support from those that reside on its banks, than from those who visit them. To judge from the gay assemblage gathered on its deck, to look at the sketch, we should call this day a sunny one in its history, and a bright augury for ours.

The spot here given might be called the steamboat hospital, and it will be seen that some are now lying in the wards. It is so retired, so near the Ohio, that disabled boats commonly seek it as a refuge in their adversity—some to reduce a fracture, others to set a dislocated joint, and again others suffering from a general debility, requiring rest, and a complete reformation of their system. Added to this, it affords them a pleasant retreat when the water is low; for

low water with the steamers, as with the frail sons of Adam, generally produces an inclination to "lay up" until affairs are flush. A return of high water produces a return of spirits, and both commence steaming it again in fine style.

The busy hum of industry on either bank tells of the proximity of a large city, and the fine old mansion on the right, adds an air of comfort to the beauty of the scene. We pass up the graceful windings of the stream, and presently arrive at the end of the excursion—a spot about three miles from the city. Nature has here been lavish in her gifts, and spread out a region peculiarly picturesque and romantic. On the heights above the landing are wooded lawns, provided with various contrivances for pastime and recreation, and near by are dells and ravines for a solitary ramble. The view from the high banks of the river is attractive in the extreme to the lover of nature, and a valuable picture for the devotee of art.

But the moral of the story is the refining effect that popular resorts of this nature have on the dense population of large cities. Cincinnati possesses so many charming spots in its immediate vicinity, that might be devoted to a relaxation from toil, and a renovation of overstrained faculties, that it is sinful to spurn the beauties that Providence has given us, and pass all our lives among brick walls and impure vapors. Why not cherish life while the taper glows, and enjoy more of nature's refining influence, and less of artificial pleasures, that heat the brain, and sear the heart?

Indeed, it is the duty, and should be the business of those in authority, to provide cheap excursions for the masses, whose humble position in life dooms them to a career of unremitting toil. The banks of the Ohio teem with nooks and hills of the most inviting nature; and nothing is wanted, but frequent and cheap communication with them, to make them gay with the worn-out inhabitants of this ever-toiling city. The day may not be far distant, when some enterprising citizens will set this ball in motion, and enliven the waters of the Ohio with merry-making barges, in search of shady groves and cool retreats, in which to while away a leisure hour, now swallowed up by the study, the counting-room, and the work-shop.

"You make the songs of a people, and I will make its laws," was the sentiment of an ancient philosopher, and it showed a deep insight into human nature: it showed that man is governed more by the

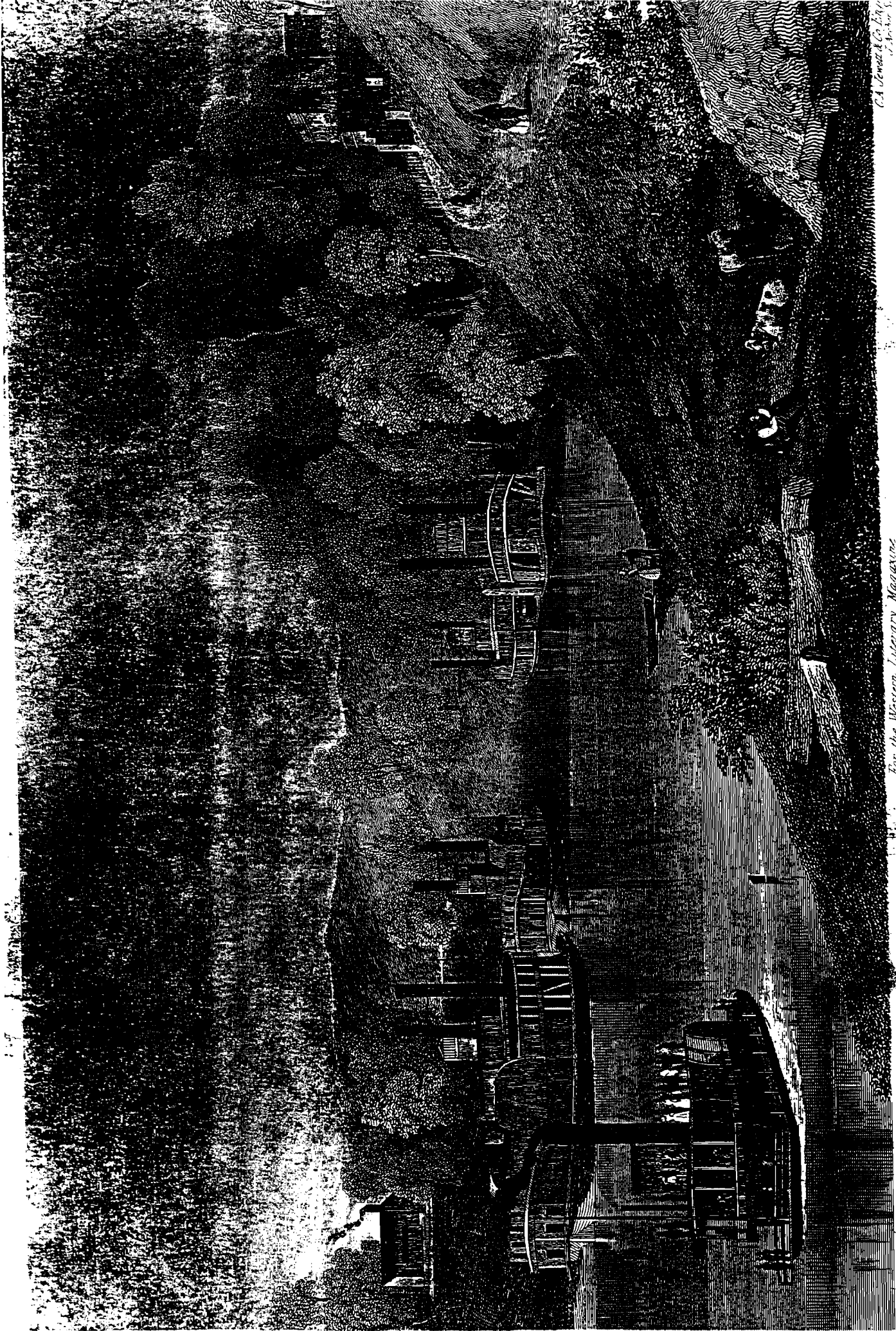
heart than by reason, and that the masses of mankind are more easily led than driven. Laws, in our country, are seldom obeyed *because* they are understood, but rather because they are happily formed in conformity with the dictates of common sense. The people therefore may make their own songs, as they make their own laws; but it behooves those in power to see that they have innocent amusements to give zest to their being, that it may not be said of our nation, that "all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy."

**Erlanger Historical Society
Annual Heritage Day Celebration**

**Sunday September 17
Noon to 6 PM**

**At the Erlanger Railroad Park and
Depot Museum**

**Music
Drinks
Many Booths**



C. A. Newman & Co. Litho. N. York.

Middleton Printer

For the Western Literary Magazine.

Maple Hill, N. York

(Opposite Cincinnati)

Dear Sir,

News from Historical Confederation of Kentucky

HCK announced a 2000 Membership Drive. KCHS is a member and probably many of our members are as well. If you are not a member, they encourage you to join during the fall membership campaign. As a special incentive, all new or renewing individual members will receive their choice of an HCK mug or T-shirt with the HCK 2000 logo. Organization members who renew or join by October 15 will receive a coupon good for a \$5 discount on the registration fee for this year's annual HCK meeting. Memberships for individuals are \$10 per year if you are a staff, board member, volunteer, or member of an HCK member organization or \$15 per year for nonmembers. Contact Karla Nicholson for more information at Karla.Nicolson@mail.state.ky.us or 100 West Broadway, Frankfort, KY 40601; 502-564-1792, ext. 4478

HCK Annual Meeting

October 27-28, Lake Barkley State Park. The theme is "Impressions of the Past: Maintaining Community Identity." The meeting will be an opportunity for HCK members and other history practitioners in the state and region to get together to discuss issues and attend workshops, network, and learn about the projects and activities of other organizations in the state. The meeting will feature a pre-conference tour on Thursday, October 26, of historic sites in Caldwell County including the home of Dr. Amoss who was the leader of the Black Patch Tobacco Wars of the early 20th Century. Other tour opportu-

nities will go to the Adsmore House in Princeton, the Kentucky Dam and Power House, Eddyville, and more. HCK has reserved a block of rooms at Lake Barkley State Park at the special rate of \$58 per night for one or \$68 for two people. Make your reservation now by calling 800-255-park and ask for the HCK block of rooms. Registration packets will be mailed out in September.

Cemetery Preservation Institute Sunday, September 10-12, General Butler State Park, Carrollton. Learn the proper techniques for cleaning and making simple repairs to gravestones. The institute will include hands-on training in the 150 year-old Butler family cemetery on the grounds of the state park. To register, call Karla Nicholson.

Dinsmore Homestead, Burlington Dinsmore Homestead and Hillforest, in Aurora, Indiana, are working together to develop an education program for school field trips that would include a visit to each museum site and a boat ride on the Dottie G paddle wheel boat. The program is designed to teach students about life along the Ohio River during the 19th century. To bring river lore to life, an actor will portray an 1870s riverboat hand on the Dottie G. The Riverboat Days program is being developed through a grant from the Rising Sun Regional Foundation and the Rising Sun Elementary school.

Hillforest is looking for photographs or slides of Hillforest

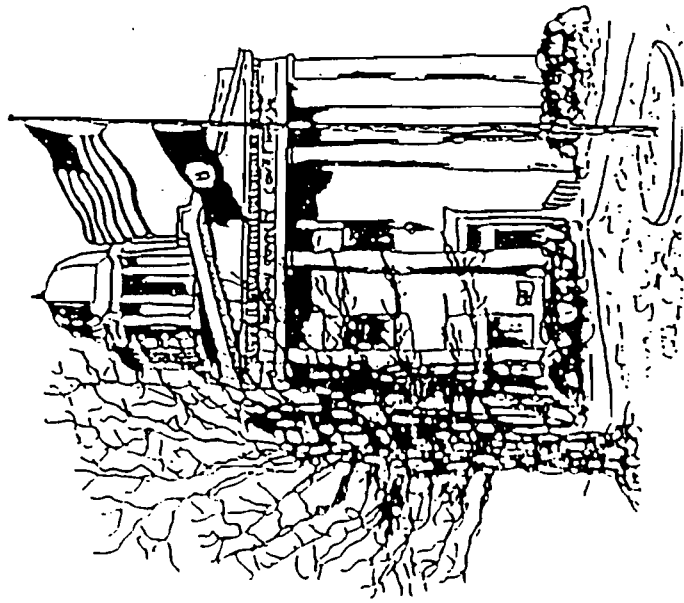
mansion, grounds and carriage house prior to the 1960s. If you have wedding, special event, or family photos that were taken at Hillforest before 1960 and are willing to allow the museum to copy them for research and possible exhibition purposes, please contact Sue Small or Linda Early at 812-926-0087.

"Kentucky: Is it Southern?" is the topic for the Fall Conference of EKU Center for the Study of History and Politics, September 21, 2000, held in the Carl D. Perkins Building, Eastern Kentucky University, Richmond.

The Keynote speaker for this conference will be author John Egerton. Egerton is the author of several books including, Generations. Other speakers will be Kentucky historians James Klotter, Lowell Harrison, Tom Appleton, Gerald Smith, Nelson Dawson, Carol Crowe-Carrico, and Laurie Risch (of Covington's Behringer-Crawford Museum). The cost for the conference is \$20 (\$10 for full time students). For more information call 606-622-480

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The Mouth of the Licking, An Article
From 1850

Kenton County Historical Society
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Dedicated to preserving our heritage as the "Gateway to the South"