

Bulletin of the Kenton County Historical Society

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September/October

2003

September Program – Greater Cincinnati Amusement Parks

Tuesday, September 9th – 7 p.m.

Trinity Episcopal, 4th & Madison, Covington

Robert J. Wimberg will present an overview and detail of past and present of amusement parks in our area. Mr. Wimberg's family has been associated with amusement parks for many years. His latest book "Amusement Parks of Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky" was published by the Ohio Book Store in 2002 and reviewed in the last issue of *Northern Kentucky Heritage Magazine*. His book is full of fascinating photos and illustrations of parks gone by. He will have his publication available at the program.

Wimberg's has published several previous volumes for the Ohio Book Store series – one on Cincinnati Breweries and two works on Cincinnati and the Civil War.

Election of officers will precede the program – an important meeting for members!

October Program – Slide Discussion of Newport's Cote' Brillante Neighborhood

Tuesday, October 14th – 7 p.m.

Trinity Episcopal, 4th & Madison, Covington

Michael Sweeney will discuss the history and significance of this Newport neighborhood, now slated for demolition. Michael is personally familiar with the area and has numerous slides to aid the discussion. He is a long time resident of Newport.

Mr. Sweeney is a genealogist and researcher for the Kenton County Public Library and on the editorial staff of *Northern Kentucky Heritage Magazine*.

Board Members Use Personal Contact for September Election

The KCHS Board have been combing through the Society members' list to solicit personally a request to serve on the Board. With almost 500 members (a significant number residing locally), it shouldn't seem like a Herculean task to find 2 or 3 new faces to serve a term.

The Society is in the midst of two massive publishing tasks that need direction: the Northern Kentucky Encyclopedia and our own Covington Bicentennial History. Besides the indexing and other tasks that need tending, one of the Board's jobs is to find accomplishment solutions to some of these challenges.

Three of the Board's members are not seeking re-election because they have too many commitments. As of this writing, there are vacancies for one Board seat, Treasurer and Vice-president. Member attendance at the September meeting is extremely important for the immediate future direction of the Society.

President, James Kiger; Vice-president/Programs, Dr. Joseph Gastright; Treasurer, Dan Carter; Secretary, John Boh, Board Members: Emily Bailey, George Gressle, Charles King, San Juan Romero, Editor: Karl J. Lietzenmayer, one open seat.

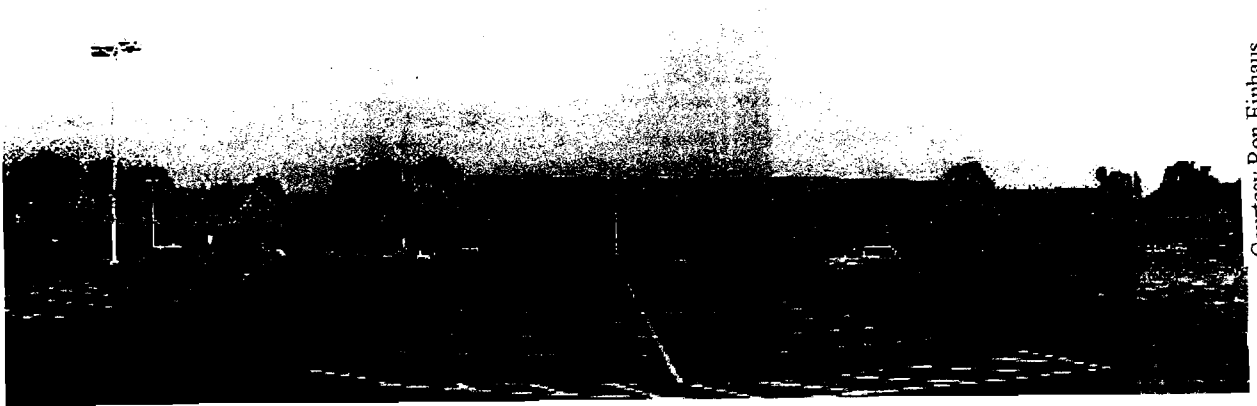
www.kenton.lib.ky.us/~histsoc

Erlanger Historical Society News

The EHS maintains the Erlanger Railroad Passenger Depot [Southern Line] as a museum. This is the only surviving passenger station on the Southern Line from Cincinnati to Chattanooga, Tennessee. This precious piece of rail history is open each Saturday afternoon. The Erlanger Society invites your visit. The display of artifacts within is impressive.

Then & Now.....

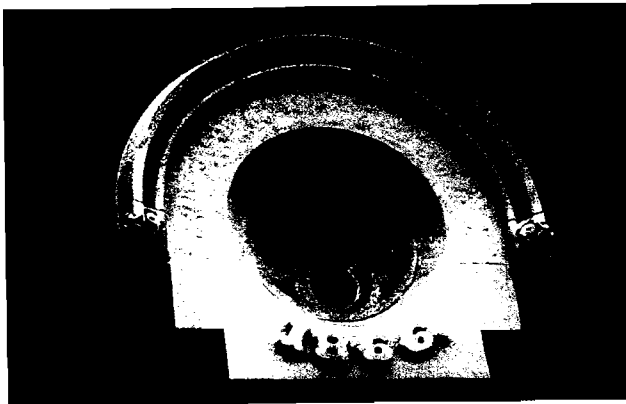
Member and researcher Kathy Romero is investigating the Foltz family of Northern Kentucky. As often happens, she has come upon numerous unexpected story pieces. The research required is more than originally anticipated. Branches of the Foltz family established early farms along the Dixie Highway and Dudley Road in Kenton County. Shown below is the farmhouse of Mathias and Elizabeth Foltz *circa* 1908. Now the SteinMart Shopping Center in Ft. Wright occupies the farm. Look for the complete story in the Spring issue of *Northern Kentucky Heritage*.



Courtesy Ron Einhaus

Mystery Picture (below): Can you guess what building this picture detail is from?

**Hint – the building is in Covington.
Come to the September meeting to learn the answer !!**



"Good Fences Make Good Neighbors"
Stewart Iron Works Show
Baker-Hunt Foundation
620 Greenup Street, Covington
Friday September 5, 2003 – 6-10 pm
Show runs Sept 8-11. Call (859)431-0020

KATE TRIMBLE WOOLSEY: FEMINIST AND CELEBRITY

John Boh

In 1915 the *Kentucky Post* named seven Kentuckians said to be flourishing in New York City. Two were Covington celebrities. Former Mayor and Congressman Joseph Rhinock, was "treasurer" for the Shubert Theater chain, and was caring for his own business interests and those of his close friend George B. Cox of Cincinnati.

Kate Trimble Woolsey was doing "propaganda work," as "one of the leading writers in the suffrage cause" and was spending most of her time in New York, but regularly visiting Europe and Covington.¹ Born around 1858, Kate's career spanned years leading up to passage of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920.² Her family's political involvement also extended back to pioneer times. In fact, Kate's feminist, hard covered volume, "Republics Versus Women" (1903) interpreted U. S. history negatively.

A Kentucky Pioneer Family

Kate Trimble Woolsey's great uncle, Robert Trimble (1777-1828) was born in Virginia. In his youth Robert, younger brother John and family moved to the Kentucky frontier where they survived clearing the land, farming and defending themselves. Robert attended the Bourbon Academy and later the Kentucky Academy in Woodford County. He read law under George Nicholas and James Brown. George Nicholas had been a Revolutionary War officer, had served at the convention that ratified the Federal Constitution and had helped write the first Kentucky Constitution. In 1800 Robert was admitted to the bar in Paris, Kentucky, his permanent home. A Jeffersonian Republican he served in the legislature, as a judge in the Kentucky Court of Appeals, developed a substantial law practice and from 1813 to 1817 was a district attorney.

In 1817 President Madison appointed Robert to be a judge in the Federal District Court of Kentucky. These were years of a national financial crisis that included the Panic of 1819. During the "relief crisis" era Judge Trimble contributed to the evolution of early

¹ "Kentuckians Who Made Good in New York—Commonwealth Well Represented," by Milton Bronner, *Kentucky Post*, February 3, 1915, page 1.

² 1860 Federal Census.



Kate Trimble Woolsey

[photo from *Ky. Post* 3 Feb 1915]

constitutional law. His interpretations generally disfavored and helped nullify legislative law entering the federal courts that would mitigate and postpone contractual debt obligations. Castigated as a traitor and Federalist, rather than a real Jeffersonian, he was also by the end of his career credited with innovative, even brilliant, interpretations. In 1826 President John Quincy Adams appointed Robert Trimble a justice of the U. S. Supreme Court.³

Kate Trimble Woolsey's grandparents were Elizabeth Porter and John Trimble (1783-1852). From 1807 to 1816 John Trimble developed his law practice in Paris, Kentucky, then was appointed a circuit court judge. He relocated permanently to Cynthiana in Harrison County. Also involved in the "relief crises," in 1825 Kentucky Governor Desha appointed John Trimble the "the third judge" of the short-lived "new" court of appeals. Due to poor health in 1826 he refused President John Quincy Adams' offer of the judgeship for the district of Kentucky. He then served in the Kentucky Legislature. Opposition in his Democratic Party to his "strong" advocacy of a new railroad from

³ See "Robert Trimble" by Sandra F. VanBurkleo, page 900 and "Relief Crisis" by VanBurkleo, page 762, 763, *The Kentucky Encyclopedia*, John E. Kleber, Editor in Chief, The University Press of Kentucky, 1992; "George Nicholas," *The Kentucky Encyclopedia*, pages 680-681; "Kentucky" Supreme Court justices: Thomas Todd (1807-26), Robert Trimble (1826-28), John Marshall Harlan (1877-1911), Horace Harmon Lurton (1910-1914), Louis Brandeis (1916-1939) Stanley Reed (1938-1957) and Fred Vinson (1946-1953), Jim Reis, *Kentucky Post*, October 3, 1988, page 4K.

Charleston to Cincinnati effectively ended his political career.⁴

In her "Republics Versus Monarchies" Kate claimed that her great-aunt had first urged her great-uncle Robert Trimble to draft a bill for married women's property rights and guardianship rights in 1802. She also claimed that her grandfather John Trimble drafted a similar bill in 1804. But the legislators would not entertain first readings. Nevertheless her forebears had not abandoned Abigail Adams' embryonic admonition to her husband, "remember the ladies."⁵

William W. Trimble

Kate Trimble Woolsey's father, William Wallace Trimble (1821-1886) was an abolitionist, Republican, legal scholar and financier, who left a fortune "estimated at \$500,000." William "was educated at Danville," studied privately under his father and later authored "Trimble's Kentucky Digest," a textbook used in the Cincinnati Law School. Born in Cynthiana he practiced law there for about 20 years, then relocated to Covington in 1873.⁶ In 1856 William Trimble lost an election for circuit court judge to Samuel M. Moore of Covington when the 9th Judicial District included Bracken, Pendleton, Campbell, Kenton and Harrison Counties.⁷ In August 1861 W. W. Trimble of Cynthiana aided in distributing "Lincoln Guns," for the Union cause.⁸

The 1860 Harrison County census indicated that Trimble was age 38, a lawyer with \$8,000 in real estate and \$68,000 in commercial property. His wife Mary was 28, daughter Elizabeth, 8, Fanny, 6, Lawrence 5 and Kate was 2. In the 1870 Census William Trimble was worth \$40,000 in real estate and \$140,000 in commercial property while Mary claimed another \$6,000. William and Mary had since added two more sons, William, 7 and Robert age

1.⁹ After his death William's estate included stock in banks, the Trimble home and other Covington property, real estate in and outside of Cynthiana and west of Harrodsburg.¹⁰

Mary Barlow Trimble

It seems that young Kate Trimble found a role model in her own mother. In 1874 when Kate's father, purchased the family mansion at the southeast corner Madison and Robbins he recorded the new title in the name of his wife Mary Trimble.¹¹ In 1894 when the suffrage movement was gaining momentum, Mrs. Eugenia B. Farmer, president of the "Equal Rights Society of Covington," attended the Ohio Woman State Suffrage Convention's annual meeting in Cincinnati. Mrs. Elizabeth Shepard also represented Kenton County and Mary Trimble of Covington had Mrs. Helen Taylor Upton and Susan B. Anthony as houseguests.¹²

In 1895 Mary Trimble hosted the "noted" woman suffragist lecturer Mrs. Lillian Deveraux Blake from New York. Mary invited the ERA ladies and some 200 called on the lecturer at the Trimble home. Mrs. Blake told the newspaper reporter that she actually was a southern woman born in Raleigh, North Carolina. Her father was a southern gentleman of Irish descent, her mother descended from Knickerbocker and Puritan families. Since 1863 she had devoted herself to suffrage.¹³

In 1904 Mary Trimble wrote a letter to the *Kentucky Post* to argue that getting the vote was the only way to improve women's lot, which would also elevate municipal life to a "higher plane." Like a house a city needs women to keep it clean and orderly as does the state and the whole country. Men have no right to expect women to maintain their homes in which they have no real voice. The *Kentucky Post* editor noted that Mrs. Trimble was another woman who was convinced like her daughter Kate that women's suffrage was the only answer.¹⁴

But there was dissent. In 1905 Ida S. Blick of Covington wrote to the *Kentucky Post* in response to publicity Mary Trimble had caused.

⁴Lewis Collins, *History of Kentucky*, Vol. II, page 331.

⁵*Republics Versus Women, Contrasting the Treatment Accorded to Women in Aristocracies with that Meted Out to Her in Democracies* by Mrs. Woolsey [sic], The Grafton Press, New York, the United States and Great Britain [Gay and Bird, London], 179 pages, see page 49.

⁶ See obituary, *Kentucky State Journal*, September 2, 1886; according to this source William Trimble's first marriage was to the granddaughter of Kentucky Governor James Garrard (1796-1804). *Biographical Cyclopaedia of the Commonwealth of Kentucky*, 1896, page 149.

⁷ *Covington Journal*, March 29, 1856, page 2; August 9, 1856, page 2.

⁸ *Covington Journal*, August 3, 1861, page 2.

⁹ 1860 Federal Census; 1870 Federal Census.

¹⁰ Will Book 4, page 211, Covington Courthouse; for some references of property in Cynthiana see Virgil Pedicord, *Cynthiana Since 1790*, Cynthiana, Kentucky, 1986.

¹¹ Deed book 32, page 13; see "Mary Trimble," lot northeast corner Madison and Robbins, *City Atlas of Covington, Kentucky*, 1877, page 34.

¹² *Kentucky Post*, October 19, 1894, page 1.

¹³ *Kentucky Post*, January 23, 1895, page 3.

¹⁴ *Kentucky Post*, February 10, 1904, page 8.

KCHS FrigNote

- **Tuesday, September 9th – Amusement Parks**
7 p.m. Trinity Episcopal
- **Tuesday, October 14th - Cote/Brilliante**
7 p.m. Trinity Episcopal

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KCHS Board Election Ballot – Due September 9th

President:

_____ **Joseph Gastright**

Treasurer: (2 yr. term)

Board Seats (Directors) 2

_____ **Ron Einhaus**

Vice-president:

Secretary:

_____ **John Boh**

Supposedly, Mary had written an open letter to President Roosevelt expressing pessimism about women's future in America. It is women's status that leads to "race suicide." The only answer is woman's suffrage. "Life holds nothing for women of wealth but to become show dolls of husbands of means." Working girls who take available jobs suffer "slow starvation" and "physical wreckage." Ida Blick answered that Mary exaggerated the plight of women. Women should pay more attention to their husbands and children. "Instead of riding around in her carriage with a white poodle beside her and attending a ceaseless round of receptions, teas, &c. let her find her enjoyment in the nursery among her children." Ida Blick said that she was a "working girl," proud to be self-supporting. Incompetent girls taking jobs keep wages down. Girls who seek work outside the home for frivolous reasons cheat the needy working girls out of work. Even girls forced to work before completing their education could improve themselves in night school and with other training opportunities. Ida Blick found men to be courteous and considerate in the workplace where a self-respecting girl can find happiness. Mary had complained that men sacrifice women's wellbeing for their own pleasure.¹⁵

Immediately after Mary Barlow Trimble (age 81) died in 1912 the Equal Rights Club of Covington passed a resolution. President Mrs. Charles Firth praised her for publicly supporting equal rights when it was controversial. Mary Trimble died in New York. She left her estate to her five children. Reverend Magruder from Trinity Episcopal, Rev. Plemmons from Madison Avenue Baptist, relatives and friends crowded the Trimble home for her funeral. Burial was at Cynthiana.¹⁶ Kate became sole executor.¹⁷

Daughter of Wealth

Not many years before his death "Judge" Trimble in 1881 gave "an elegant reception" for his daughter Kate and her husband Eugene de Roode recently married, back from their honeymoon. Guests came from Covington, Newport and "quite a number" from Cincinnati. Her first husband was Eugene de Roode of Lexington, the eldest son of a prominent

¹⁵ *Kentucky Post*, October 16, 1905, page 4.

¹⁶ *Kentucky Post*, September 23, 1912, page 8; "Pass Resolutions on Mrs. Trimble's Death"; September 24, 1912, page 2; September 26, 1912, page 2.

¹⁷ Order Book 27, Covington courthouse, page 271.

musician and teacher.¹⁸ In 1893, a writer recalled that her native Cynthiana was too small. Kate's first marriage had suffered from her preference for high society.

In 1893 Kate, age 37, married Edward J. Woolsey of New York in the "beautiful residence of her mother." Kate's second husband owned "a vast amount of property near Astoria, New York," also a country residence and the divorce from his first wife had created a sensation in high society. A New York newspaper recalled that Kate was the niece of a late U. S. Supreme Court Justice. She had resided in London, England during her four years of widowhood, where "her wealth made her a favorite of the highest society there." Her mother invited many, many dignitaries including Secretary of the Treasury John G. Carlisle from Washington and foreign guests mostly with royal or aristocratic titles. They included Prince Ferdinand, King of Bulgaria, Princess Maria De Bourbon, the Dowager Duchess of Wellington and the Chinese ambassadress [sic].¹⁹

"Republics Versus Women"

In coming years Kate made headlines. In 1903 the *Lexington Leader* said that besides publishing her sensational "Republics Versus Women," Kate also protested by turning in her membership in the Daughters of the American Revolution.²⁰ Then, too, in 1907 the Society of Colonial Daughters (organized in 1907) entertained Kate Trimble Woolsey "of New York City," the Vice President General of the new organization and guest of honor at its semiannual meeting. She talked about "Women of the Colonial Period."²¹

On a frontal page of her "Republics Versus Women" Kate declared that "this book is dedicated with feelings of congratulations to women who are subjects of monarchies, and with feelings of sympathy to women who are citizens of republics." She set the scene by recalling that while traveling in Europe she had met a radical who assumed that women were better off in

¹⁸ "Elegant Reception," *Daily Commonwealth*, June 1, 1881, page 1; "Social and Personal," *Lexington Leader*, April 30, 1903, page 6. Thanks to Michael Sweeney for locating this and other items.

¹⁹ "Mr. Woolsey Is Not In Covington for Nothing," *Kentucky Post*, October 2, 1893, page 1; "Yellow Wedding," *Kentucky Post*, October 9, 1893, page 4.

²⁰ "A Sharp Protest," *Lexington Leader*, April 12, 1903, page 7.

²¹ "Colonial Daughters Hold A Meeting," *Kentucky Post*, December 2, 1907, page 3.

America. The woman invited Kate to a meeting of fellow radical women. The main text of this book is Kate's lecture. She quoted free thinkers and rationalists. But her myriad arguments favored the old "Christian Monarchies."

A century of American laws and manners had failed women. Queen Victoria presided over a British Empire friendlier to women from London to Australia. Empreses, queens, princesses and others in aristocracies enjoyed public recognition and participated in public coronations and ceremonies. Women enjoyed voting rights even though contingent on property ownership, on proxy, or they were limited to municipal jurisdictions. She argued for feudal and lamented capitalist aristocracy. She belabored the false hopes of anarchism, socialism as well as republican democracy (the "three isms"). Her listeners should return home to become "loyal subjects of their sovereign."

The privileges of wealth did not prevent Kate from denouncing injustices suffered by females working for slave wages in the southern textile factories. Women's status had fallen below that of male immigrants, African American ex-slaves and the lower classes. Property, marriage and criminal jurisprudence all denigrate women. American government "is today not only the most despotic and corrupt government in Christendom." 62 % own "1 %" of the wealth. "Less than 100 men" control over one-half of the country's resources. Yet it was only the native-born American men who were really to blame.²²

In 1910 the *New York American* reported that Kate Trimble Woolsey "from Covington, Ky" came to New York to campaign against a uniform divorce law, about which the Conference of Governors had deliberated the past week. Due to illness she had been unable to attend. But Kate said that U. S. women are not so much for or against regulation of divorce as they are for reform of the marriage laws which would eliminate "the necessity for having any kind of divorce laws." The following month Kate was assisting Mrs. Belmont with newspaper articles. In a previous issue Kate's lengthy article argued that a uniform divorce law would only block states from reforming marriage laws. Women

seek 90 % of divorces. Of course women should have a say in the reforms.²³

"In the history of the International Free Thought Conference," Kate in 1910 was the first woman to preside at an opening, before "several thousand delegates," including "the scientists and advanced thinkers in the world." She was the U. S. delegate at large. But a dispatch from Brussels stated that Kate "of Covington, Ky" was claiming that a "kinsman" had saved Tom Paine's "manuscript of" the "Age of Reason" from flames during the French Revolution. And Robert and John Trimble had written, "the first bill ever drafted" giving married American women legal control of their own property.²⁴

Battle of the Sexes

In 1911 the newspaper reported on Kate's thoughts about "mere man." The paper described her as "formally a resident of Covington, Ky," a member of 75 women's organizations and author of "Republics Versus Women." She answered a man seeking a divorce who had claimed that marriage had only a biological purpose. Kate answered in kind that it was man who was merely a biological factor. Aided by the suffragist movement women were going to rule the world and the husband was the first to be caught in the middle. Her views were shared "by more progressive suffragists" and "by leading writers and scientists of Europe." She had discussed these issues at the Brussels conference. Now society is built on women's dependence on man, but women are "catching up" and the present forms of remarriage, religion and laws will collapse. With a new civilization men will feel as helpless as women have.²⁵

Towards the 19th Amendment

In May 1913 Kate was a delegate appointed by the New York governor to the International Institute of Agriculture in Rome. She was the only woman to have received a "commission" to represent the state government.

²² Kate Trimble Woolsey, *Republics Versus Women*, sounding patriarchal Kate called herself "Mrs. Woolsey." For statistics she cited only the New York World Almanac.

²³ "Society News," *Kentucky Post*, January 26, 1910, page 8; "Mrs. Trimble Woolsey Assists Mrs. Belmont," *Kentucky Post*, February 9, 1910, page 2.

²⁴ "Society News," by Pearl Respass, *Kentucky Post*, August 5, 1910, page 5; "Covington Woman Will Preside At Free Thought Meet," *Kentucky Post*, August 19, 1910, page 9.

²⁵ "Mere Man Is Only Biological Factor," *Kentucky Post*, July 24, 1911, pages 1 and 7.

She would be the only woman among the delegates mostly European.²⁶

In June 1913 the *Kentucky Post* reported that Kate was back in town from Rome to look after the Trimble estate. Concerned for the welfare of “working girls and women,” she was working on a plan for a large industrial cooperative farm for families that would choose to leave crowded tenements and live in a little house on a farm with plenty of fresh air for the children.²⁷ In August 1913 the *United Press* reported from Boston that Kate was “willing to subscribe half a million dollars to found an “Adamless Eden,” a colony for women only” where women could work the soil and establish their own municipal services and elect their own officials.²⁸

In November 1913 four “prominent” suffragettes including Kate’s sister Helen Highton represented Covington at a convention of the Kentucky Equal Rights Association in Louisville. In 1912-13, Helen was widow of Arthur, residing at the Trimble mansion.²⁹

In 1916 Kate Trimble Woolsey “of Covington” welcomed the Colonel Daughters to New York “during the biennial convention of the Federated Woman’s Clubs. By 1916 she had been a vice president for ten years. Due to the war, Kate also agreed to represent a Belgian and a Russian women’s club.³⁰

In 1916 the Trimble residence was offered at auction.³¹ In 1920, the year that the Nineteenth Amendment was ratified, the Trimble homestead was sold. The buyers, Dr. and Mrs. Baynes, apparently turned the Trimble mansion into “an institution for treatment of disease.”³² Of the mansion the octogenarian Eleanor Childs Meehan wrote, “I remember when the late Trimble residence was erected by Mr. Phillip Bush, there stood by a pond, at Tenth [Robins]

²⁶ “Mrs. Woolsey Is Delegate,” *Kentucky Post*, April 21, 1913, page 2.

²⁷ *Society News*, *Kentucky Post*, June 24, 1913, page 8.

²⁸ “Woman Has \$500,000 To Form An Adamless Eden,” *Kentucky Post*, August 6, 1913, page 6.

²⁹ “Four Women Are Delegates,” *Kentucky Times Star*, November 11, 1913, page 14; Covington street directories, 1912-13, 1914-15.

³⁰ “Society News,” *Kentucky Post*, May 22, 1916, page 1.

³¹ “Auction ‘Trimble Residence,’” *Kentucky Post*, May 8, 1916, page 3.

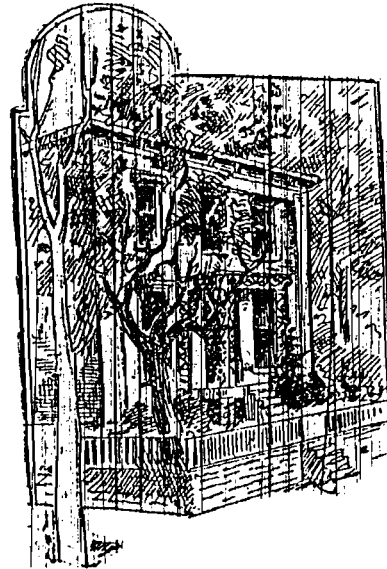
³² “Trimble Homestead in Covington Sold,” *Kentucky Times Star*, May 4, 1920, page 11; deed book 178, page 400.

and Madison Streets, a flowering tulip tree. The odor and beauty of its flowers remain with me.”³³

In 1920 Kate’s age was over 60. Her death date and obituary are now unseen. As the years passed the Trimble family survivors settled elsewhere, especially New York.

1856 ELECTION--CIRCUIT COURT JUDGES³⁴
W. W. Trimble of Cynthiana vs. S. M. Moore of Covington

Kenton County		
Voting places	Trimble	Moore
Stevenson	83	119
Coxes	12	84
Staffordsburg	23	85
Independence	64	218
Scotts	39	102
Rushes	75	100
2 toll gate	25	19
Ludlow	60	52
City Hall	233	109
Bond’s Stone yd	138	252
Farmer’s	202	228
Drover’s Inn	132	252
Kenton co total	1086	1629
Campbell Co.	?	349 “maj.”
Pendleton Co.	725	550
Harrison Co.	971	1,083
Bracken Co.	728	586



Artist Rendering: The Trimble Mansion
SE corner Robbins & Madison
[from *Ky. Post* 9 Oct 1898]

³³ An Octogenarian’s Personal Recollections of a Beloved Old Kentucky town “Old Covington,” by Mrs. Eleanor Childs Meehan revised, 1924.

³⁴ *Covington Journal*, August 9, 1856, page 2

KENTON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Sept/Oct

2003



**INSIDE: Kate Woolsey Trimble, Feminist
Then & Now – Foltz Family
KCHS Board Elections**

Dedicated to preserving our heritage as the "Gateway to the South"

Kenton County Historical Society
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