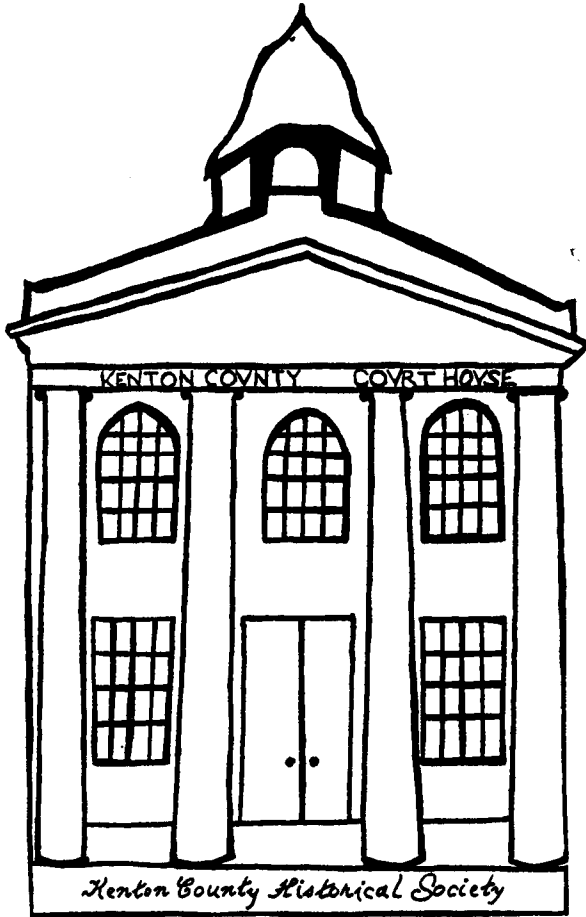


KENTON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



October 1992

Kenton County Historical Society

P. O. Box 641
Covington, Kentucky 41019

R E V I E W

October 1992

ANNOUNCEMENT: GENEALOGY PROGRAM

On Saturday, October 3rd, 2:00 PM, at the Kenton County Public Library, Fifth and Scott streets, Covington, Ms. Pat Van Skaik from the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County, will discuss...

TOOLS AND RESOURCES OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY OF CINCINNATI'S GENEALOGY COLLECTION....

The program will be sponsored by the Kenton County Historical Society and will be free and open to the public.

There will be a very brief business session before the program.

Saturday
October 3rd
2:00 PM
Kenton County Public Library
Fifth and Scott streets
Covington

ANNOUNCEMENT TO MEMBERS: PROPOSED BYLAWS AMENDMENT

Article IV, SEC. 1.: the amendment would read: "The officers shall be a president, a vice-president, and a secretary...one year; and a treasurer...two years; and six directors [instead of three], who shall be elected for terms of two years. At the annual meeting in 1992 one director shall be elected for one year; one for two years; and two for three years. Henceforth, two will be elected each year for regular three year terms [two directors will have unexpired terms; so four would be elected in 1992 only if amendment passes].

In September the election was tabled pending the vote on this amendment; Please attend our meeting on October 3rd and vote on the amendment; then, help nominate and elect new officers for the coming year.

THE PIONEER, MONTGOMERY, & RUSK COAL COMPANIES

"In 1870, the Pioneer Coal Company was organized by Richard Channing Moore Lovell, the son of pioneer salt maker Col. Joseph Lovell....[he leased] 218-acres of coal land situated in Hawkins Hollow and the Dry Branch of Campbell's Creek...."

-Campbell's Creek. A Portrait of a Coal Mining Community, 1989, by Todd Henson

In the 1867 directory R. C. M. Lovell (1822-1909) was listed in Covington as a salt merchant. In 1863 in Cincinnati Lovell was a "commission merchant" and in 1865 an agent for the Kanawha Salt company and for the Kanawha and Ohio Coal company. Then in 1876 he was with the Cincinnati Coal and Coke company, but then was residing back home at the Kanawha river (West Virginia) "Salines."

In Covington Lovell lived on East Fifth, West Fourth, East Seventh, and the 400 block of Russell street. After the sellout of Pioneer, he evidently re-directed his career; in the years around 1900 he was at Covington "U, S. Storekeeper," located in the Internal Revenue office. His brother Howell Lewis came also to Cincinnati after the Civil War, went into the tobacco business, built (with his partner) a factory on Scott street, Covington, and resided as a wealthy tobacco manufacturer on East Second street. And, it might be noted, R. C. M. and H. L.'s mother was a granddaughter of George Washington's only sister.

By 1885 the original Pioneer company mines were depleted; more land was leased; in 1885 the Pioneer railway company was incorporated in order to construct a rail line which would bring coal from up the creek to the company's tipple on the Kanawha. However, it was reported in a Kentucky paper

Daily Commonwealth (April 5, 1883), that Lovell had attempted to eliminate obligations (\$109,000 worth) by assigning property in West Virginia to various creditors, especially Covington banks.

By 1883 Alexander Montgomery "of Covington, Kentucky, had emerged as the company's president". James J. Lovell (a son) and Joseph B. Lovell remained as general manager and secretary-treasurer respectively (Henson).

Montgomery, born in Ireland according to the census, was first listed in the Covington directory as head of Montgomery and co., retail and wholesale coal dealers, in 1869 (with a partner, Thomas Singleton). And by 1880 Montgomery had succeeded Wm. Lovell (another son) as president of the Cincinnati Coal and Coke co. Montgomery was still president when the company last appeared in the Cincinnati directory in 1895.

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According to Henson, Pioneer "merged" with the Campbell's Creek company in 1893. The Campbell's Creek company seemed to dominate the mining vicinity at Campbell's creek (which blocked Pioneer's desire to develop further); and in Cincinnati Campbell's Creek (the Dana family, etc) had an "extensive retail office" and a river terminal. In 1928 another prosperous Covington coal dealer, James T. Hatfield, who already was consolidated with Cincinnati Julius Fleischmann's coal operations, purchased controlling interest in the Campbell's Creek Combine.

However, after 1893, in Covington, the Montgomery company continued to supply coal and coke. Alex remained president and George H. Montgomery was superintendent when Alex died (in 1904 at the age of 70).

According to maps (1877 Covington atlas and Sanborn insurance maps, 1886, 1894, 1909) the Montgomery company supplied the Mitchell Tranter Rolling Mill (which commenced operations about 1873), and also the smelting operations of its successor, the Republic Iron and Steel combine, near the river above Second, just west of Philadelphia street. Montgomery (including in 1886 its coke furnace) was located just east on the river bank below second street (also adjacent to the Covington Waterworks pump until the latter was relocated to Ft Thomas). Montgomery continued in the area (including after the flood wall was built) until the Rusk family sold off the remnants of its century-old coal and oil business around 1972.

J. Wayne Rusk appeared in the directory as president, treasurer, and general manager of Montgomery Coal as early as 1920. He was obviously related to Joseph H. Rusk who had operated an oil business on Shaler street (near the railroad tracks) even before 1900. J. Wayne had four children involved with the company: J. Wayne, Jr.; Anna L. (Mrs. Harold Morrison); Robert H. (a salesman); and Thomas R. (Doc) Rusk.

Doc Rusk, a college graduate, headed development of the present comfort heating business. Since his death in July 1992, the company has been left to his nephew, James Morrison, whose sons comprise a fourth generation. While Doc Rusk will be remembered for his salesmanship, and community activities, it might be recalled that Montgomery was once a big name and that the present company goes back, indirectly at least, to a man named Lovell, from a pioneer Virginia family. (John Boh)

CORRECTIONS FROM LAST MONTH:
POMEROY, OHIO WAS MISSPELLED THROUGHOUT
AMOS SHINKLE PROVIDED LEADERSHIP FOR THE
UNION (NOT THEN UNITED) METHODIST CHURCH.

Kenton County Historical Society
P. O. Box 641
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