

KENTON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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MEETING

DATE Tuesday, September 10

TIME 7 PM

PLACE Baker-Hunt Foundation
620 Greenup Street
Covington, Kentucky

PROGRAM

Early Roads: Their
Evolution thru Politics
and Finance (Part 1)

The first state road was authorized in 1793, a wagon road between Frankfort and Cincinnati. Dr. Gastright will begin a very interesting 2-part series, the second to be held at the December meeting. Parking is available off Sanford St.

Bulletin

September 2002

Meeting Notes.....

Please note the change in place for our September meeting. It will be at Baker-Hunt Foundation at 620 Greenup Street.

This is an important meeting for all the membership to attend. Besides an interesting program, it is the annual election of officers and Directors of the Kenton County Historical Society. We will also vote on an amendment to the By-Laws.

In Article I, Seniors and Students annual membership fees shall be eliminated beginning in January 2003, raising the cost of Seniors and Students to \$10 per year. It is still a bargain. Those who join KCHS between September and January will pay the current fee, and it will be good through December 2003.

The one-year terms of office for Secretary, Vice President, and President are completed. The terms of Directors San Juan Romero and George Gressle are complete, and Carol Wenger has vacated a seat on the Board. San Juan and George are willing to serve again. Therefore, we need to elect someone to fill Carol's seat to complete her three-year term.

Current officers and Directors are willing to serve again; however, new candidates for these offices are welcome. We will have nominations from the floor.

We wish George Gressle a speedy recovery from his open heart surgery the last week of August.

Because of interest in this month's article which John Boh wrote about Kruempelmann farm, and the interest of a developer in this property, a Fort Mitchell Historical Society is forming. Those interesting should call Becky Dildo, 331-0610, or Kim Plummer, 331-4603.

Other Announcements.....

Erlanger Heritage Day is Sunday, September 15, noon to 6 PM, at the Erlanger Depot on Crescent and Erlanger Road. Activities include carriage rides, health fair, arts and crafts, food and drinks, music, entertainment for the kids such as clowns and face painting. At 4 PM there will be a pie eating contest for local dignitaries, and from 3 to 4, politicians have the opportunity for a little stumping (short speeches).

Anyone who is interested in working on the Lewis and Clark Commemoration are welcome to come to a planning meeting of the Tri-State OKI on Tuesday September 10 at 1:30 PM at Mike Fink Restaurant.

We have had a request from a Deschler descendent for a Covington map in the 1890-1910 period.

Reminiscences of the Kruempelmann Farm, Fort Mitchel Kentucky by John Boh

The following is the story of the last active farm on the Covington & Lexington Pike (Dixie Highway, present US 25/42) from Covington to beyond Florence, Kentucky. [ed]

The Kruempelmann farm recalls an older, rural, more picturesque Kenton County of rolling green fields, of trees, little herds of dairy cows, patches of corn and garden vegetables, farmhouses, smokehouses, red painted barns, dirt and paved lanes and roads, even cemeteries and street cars.

From 1910 to 1950 the Ft. Mitchell streetcar line passed in the rear of the Kruempelmann farm. An original stone retaining wall at the entrance to St. John's Cemetery marks the old right-of-way as does a row of utility wires. The rear of the farm looks over the Pleasant Run Creek valley. Its front faces US 25/42, the Dixie Highway (former Covington and Lexington Pike). The streetcar line here ran roughly parallel to the highway but through woods in the back. A quaint photograph of the old line shows a streetcar passing on the high trestle over Sleepy Hollow Road, if not one over the "bridge" at St. John's Cemetery entrance.¹

Henry Kruempelmann, Jr. (1808-1995) once recalled that his great grandfather "Casper" Meimann purchased the 25-acre Kruempelmann farm on the Lexington Pike in 1865.² In 1865 Washington and Hannah Cleveland sold 26 acres fronting the Lexington Pike for \$7,500 to George Kruempelmann and John Jasper Meimann. The description indicated that J. H. Perkins' property on the west and Louisa Kennedy's on the east surrounded the farm.³ In 1866 St. John's Church of Covington purchased 42 acres of adjoining land for St.

John's Cemetery

The 1883 county atlas shows "Geo Kruemppelmann" [sic] and "St. John's Cemetery." It also shows G. Meimann near Turkeyfoot Road and "Mrs. F. Meimann" some distance northeast of the Krumpelmann farm. The 1914 Kenton County map shows "H. Kruemppelmann" [sic] on a thin rectangular farm and nearby St. John's Cemetery with the Ft. Mitchell Country Club adjoining it to the west. It also shows George Meimann (maybe John Jasper's son, nephew or cousin) with 85 acres facing the Lexington Pike and bordering Turkeyfoot Road in the rear. Today *Dillard's* store and mall stand on that former Meimann property in Crestview Hills.⁵

Henry's parents were Henry, Sr. and Mary Hanneken Kruempelmann. His grandparents were George Henry and Margaretha Meimann Kruempelmann. His great grandfather was John Jasper ("Casper") Meimann (1807-1896).⁵ The 1880 census says Casper was born in "Prussia," as was George Henry Kruempelmann and other

Kruempelmanns. Other Meimann birthplaces were described as "Oldenberg," and "Hanover."⁷

According to a descendant, Henry's mother, Mary Hanneken, emigrated from Germany in 1891 with her father, Theodore Hanneken. Beginning in the 1890s Theodore and descendants purchased and merged with small Northern Kentucky milk delivery dairies: in 1957 with Kahmann and Rehkamp Dairy and in the 1960s with Clover Leaf Dairy, which had bought out Summe and Rattermann.⁸

The Kruempelmann family were pillars of St. John's Church on Pike Street. Established in 1854, St. John's was the third Catholic and second German-speaking parish in Covington.⁹ In recent times the family hosted church fund-raisers on the farm, which attracted 200-300 guests, the Sunday before Labor Day. The arrangement was discontinued on the retirement of long time friend and pastor, Father Henry Hanses.¹⁰

Father Hanses was a nephew of an earlier pastor of St. John's, Rev.



Henry Kruempelmann, Jr.



The Kruempelman Farm

G. Anthony Goebel (1909-1954).¹⁰ He became assistant pastor in 1919, and succeeded his uncle to serve as pastor from 1954 to 1971 after which he was "assistant pastor" again until retirement in 1975.¹¹ In 1979 during the church's 125th anniversary ceremony, Henry Kruempelman received a plaque which also recognized other members "who have given generously of time and talents and financial support over the years."¹³

Henry's older brother, George, served as sexton of St. John's Cemetery "for a half century" until his death in 1977 at age 81. He had also served as Kenton County Commissioner for 16 years. His wife Margaret Bilz Kruempelman preceded him in death by two days.¹⁴ Their daughter, Carol Sue, then assumed on site cemetery duties.¹⁵

In a 1974 interview, Henry recalled that right after his parents married, the original frame house burned. In the 1880s, the family replaced it at a cost of \$2,200 with the

five-bay, two story red brick farmhouse (accented today by a lengthy front porch). It still overlooks the front field, a distance from Dixie Highway. His sister, Ann, was residing there while Henry occupied a newer house in the rear built for himself. The 150-year old brick smokehouse survived it all. They once fed some cattle, 150 chickens, and horses. The last of the animals, a 35-year-old horse, died in the early 1970s. Henry was planting only twelve of his 26 acres and keeping the remaining fields idle or "sowed down." In the 1970s a shopping center across the highway, a motel down a little, and an apartment complex next door, partially surrounded the farm.

When his eldest brother got married, his father took Henry Jr. out of the seventh grade of St. John's School (Covington) and put him to work. In the 1970s, Henry's wife, Katherine, his sister, Ann, and daughter, Mary Catherine, (the fifth generation) remained to help, as did one full-

time hired man and his sons on occasion.

A truck gardener sells small crops such as bibb, leaf, and romaine lettuce, tomatoes, and mixed greens such as kale, turnip greens, mustard greens and bunch turnips. Henry was delivering "everything" over to the Castellini Company in Cincinnati. Most was being shipped out to Detroit, Chicago and Pittsburgh. In three previous years in the 1970s, he harvested more than at any time in the farm's history. He could not grow enough lettuce, greens, and tomatoes for the market.

The costs of labor, fertilizer, seed and containers were high, especially containers. Tomato seeds cost \$42 per pound, kale, and leaf lettuce \$15 per pound. In the 1970s, he grossed \$20,000 to \$30,000 selling wholesale.¹⁶ In years just past, Kruempelman grew bibb lettuce in the spring, tomatoes in the summer and greens and rhubarb in the fall. If Castellini called, Kruempelman would get up at 3:00 AM and with a flashlight go to the field to cut some greens.¹⁷

Weather, of course, often played havoc. Long dry periods caused dirt to harden so that even in a heavy rainfall, rainwater would run off rather than soak in. So he was irrigating his rows. He also had "catch basins" saving run off soil for redistribution. He grew his own seeds under plastic and in cold beds. Regularly he introduced new strains of plants. He was doing all of this in the midst of dense suburbs, but he could still vividly recall when a family next door milked 60 cows on their dairy farm. In the early 1990s his farm still ran a vegetable stand on the farm, sold lots of tomato plants, and Henry was regularly providing horticultural counseling to neighbors and visitors.¹⁸

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- ¹ Earl Clark, "Streetcars in Northern Kentucky," *Northern Kentucky Heritage*, Vol. III, No. 2 Spring/Summer 1996.
 - ² "Henry Kruempelman Dies On Ft. Mitchell Farm He Loved," *The Kentucky Post*, June 10, 1995.
 - ³ Deed Book 9, pp. 522-3, 9 Nov 1865, Cov. Court records.
 - ⁴ Rev. Paul E. Ryan, *History of Diocese of Covington, Kentucky*, The Diocese of Covington, 1954. But a road marker says the cemetery was consecrated in "1865."
 - ⁵ *An Atlas of Boone, Kenton, and Campbell Counties*, 1883, "Official Map of Kenton County of Kentucky, The Fiscal Court, 1914."
 - ⁶ Shelby Meyer, Jr., St. John Cemetery Inscriptions; will books; directories.
 - ⁷ Federal Census Index, 1880, compiled by Dorothy Wieck, Kenton County Historical Society.
 - ⁸ Interview, Larry Hanneken by John Boh, 1988.
 - ⁹ Rev. Paul E. Ryan.
 - ¹⁰ "Henry Kreumpelman dies..."
 - ¹¹ Rev. Paul Ryan.
 - ¹² *How Handsome Before the Lord! A Brief Diary of a Kentucky Mountain Missioner*. Prepared and edited by Rev. Ralph C. Hartman. Published by Katherine Landwehr.
 - ¹³ Diamond Anniversary 1924-1999 souvenir, St. John's Church, Covington, Kentucky.
 - ¹⁴ *The Kentucky Post*, May 12, 1977.
 - ¹⁵ *Northern Kentucky Directory*.
 - ¹⁶ George Palmer, "Farmer Kruempelman Hold on to Fertile Soil," *The Kentucky Post*, June 20, 1976.
 - ¹⁷ "Henry Kreumpelman dies..."
 - ¹⁸ Jack Hicks, "Truck Garden Defies Forces of Man, Nature," *The Kentucky Post*, August 28 1991.

Editor's note: The old German spelling of Kruempelmann and Meimann were with a double "n." They were later dropped. The [sic] shows the misspelling of some of the old records and maps.

Kenton County Historical Society
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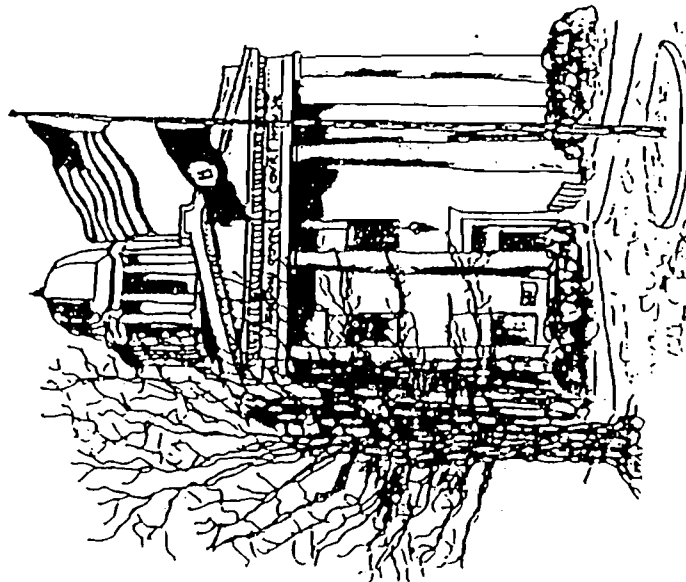
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12/02

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

**KENTON COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

Bulletin September 2002



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Farm, Fort Mitchell**