



# Bulletin of the Kenton County Historical Society

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**From Buffalo to Banks:  
Pike and Madison and Beyond**

# From Buffalo to Banks: Pike and Madison and Beyond

John Boh

In the picturesque words of retired Judge George G. Perkins: *“After its all-day run from Lexington to Covington, when the sun was sinking, I witnessed it [the stagecoach] rounding the turn at Pike and Madison Streets at full speed, the guard’s horn sounding and the coachman reining up his dripping team, their feet bringing fire from the hard street in front of the old brick Madison House at the Sixth Street Corner.”*<sup>1</sup>

A Covington map dated 1851 shows building lots laid out beyond 15<sup>th</sup> Street. In the Civil War era, the new railroad terminus near 7<sup>th</sup> and Pike began to make Pike and Madison and surrounding blocks into a much busier business center, with more warehouses, factory and handicraft enterprises, retail and service shops, professional offices, banks and hotels.

Yet, after the War the “civic” center of Covington remained close to the venerable Ohio River, close to Cincinnati, the Roebling Bridge, the streetcar line over the bridge, the city’s oldest and best residential neighborhood, near the city, county and Federal offices and courtrooms.

## From “The Point” to Pike & Madison and Beyond

In the 1700s, buffalo herds crossing the Ohio River marked a general direction for Pike Street. From the mouths of the Little Miami and Great Miami rivers, herds in late winter and early spring crossed over to Kentucky landings. One landing was at the higher, western bank of the Licking (called “the Point”) where it empties into the Ohio River. Today, a floodwall mural near the Roebling Bridge shows herds crossing, headed toward grasslands and salt licks.

A pioneer resident recalled that a “country lane as a public road” passed near present day Madison and Pike streets. In this vicinity drovers once

herded cattle to Cincinnati. When not bothering with the ferry, they “would push the cattle rapidly until they became warmed up and would willingly take to the water” to be “goaded on to swim across.”<sup>2</sup>

Warriors and militia used Licking River trails; Indians returned from central Kentucky by canoes loaded with dead game. Indians, settlers and militia would seek paths along streams; yet dryer high ground like the “Dry Ridge” was a preferred trail for ease and safety. The pioneer “Old Lexington Road” used the Dry Ridge.

## From Covington to the Dry Ridge

Going southward, Pike Street converges diagonally with 7<sup>th</sup> Street; past Washington Street, the path of this old “country lane” turned on to the Banklick Road (Street); this was high ground between Willow Run Creek and the Licking River. From present-day Latonia, buffalo reached salt water at what became known as Latonia Springs; the route followed the direction of the buffalo and Indian traces through the Banklick Creek valley to the Dry Ridge.

Segments of buffalo and Indian trails became early “lanes,” and primitive state “roads.” The earlier state road out of Covington to Lexington, most commonly used at the time, was Banklick Street (road).<sup>3</sup>

In 1819, the legislature chartered a second route through Boone County onto the Dry Ridge. It was on generally higher ground than along Banklick Creek; it was always to be more densely populated.

There was briefly a transitional route, the “Old Lexington State Road.” The 1877 city atlas shows it. From Banklick Street it turned westward passing along the southern border of the Linden Grove Cemetery, crossed Willow Run Creek and ascended a steep incline up to present-day Old State



Above: View of Madison Avenue at Pike Street, looking south.  
 On the cover: Pike Street, circa 1945, looking toward Madison Avenue from near Washington Street.

*Courtesy: Kenton County Public Library*

Road in Park Hills.<sup>4</sup> Later, the permanent direction of the Lexington Turnpike was built.

By displacing the makeshift road, the Lexington Turnpike (Pike Street) became a straight run, curving at Lewisburg and reaching the “big bend” below Park Hills; then westward eventually through Boone County at Florence and southward on the Dry Ridge. The Lexington Turnpike became the Dixie Highway.

The Covington & Lexington Turnpike was chartered a second time in 1834 (when the “town” of Covington became a “city”), this time requiring it to be paved with crushed stone (macadamized). The difficult construction suffered delays. Finally, by the early 1850s Northern Kentucky could celebrate a major achievement. The Covington & Lexington Turnpike was fully improved and macadamized, rivaling two other turnpikes, one connecting Lexington with Maysville, the other Lexington with Louisville.<sup>5</sup>

Farmers from as far away as Bourbon, Clark, Harrison and other counties - taking maybe a week - drove livestock along the turnpike, stopping at holding pens to water and feed and possibly to make a sale before reaching Covington. If not, the drovers would continue into Covington to a stockyard at Lewisburg or elsewhere.<sup>6</sup>

Business needed to be finalized; weary drovers stayed over at local hotels - also to imbibe in the local culture - before heading back. At Pike and Banklick, there once was a famous hostelry known as Ashbrook’s Drovers Inn. After 1854, nearby pens would hold livestock delivered by the railroad, as the era of long drives on the turnpike faded away.<sup>7</sup>

J. Ashbrook was proprietor of the Drovers Inn at Banklick and Pike in 1839. John and Lewis Ashbrook were stock dealers. Boarding at the Inn, W. E. Ashbrook was a law officer. In 1856, Lewis Ashbrook was a cattle dealer. W. E. Ashbrook was the

operator of cattle pens along the tracks, and he was a railroad agent. In 1858 to 1862, he served as Sheriff of Kenton County. In 1876, W. E. Ashbrook and Co. operated the Covington Stock Yards, located between Washington and Russell and 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> streets.<sup>8</sup>

### Retail and Commercial Vibrancy

When the Northern Bank of Kentucky was built in the 1830s, at 3rd and Scott, the Ohio River's commercial advantages were in focus. When the Odd Fellows building was erected in the 1850s, at 5<sup>th</sup> and Madison, the southward movement of the business center was underway. Madison became an "Avenue" sometime after the railroad in the 1850s, and filled in a hollow around 13<sup>th</sup> Street. Madison became a through street, a strait artery for commerce between the Ohio River and South Covington.<sup>9</sup> The influx of immigrants and very rapid population growth also much favored southward expansion.

The Covington & Lexington Railroad passenger and freight service had begun by 1855. The terminus and depot near 7th and Pike attracted old and new businesses to surrounding streets. Emblematic still today is "1860" seen on a Pike Street façade of the former Covington Paint Store.

The Covington plat of 1815 reveals a "Market Space" three blocks from the river between Greenup and Scott streets, reserved for market and civic activities. This location eventually became obsolete. Later plats provided for market squares at 7<sup>th</sup> Street west of Madison (in the 1930s relocated to Scott at 7<sup>th</sup>); at 11<sup>th</sup> Street between Scott and Greenup, and on West 6<sup>th</sup> Street at Main. Local butcher shops and farmers from "out the pike" sold their products to nearby residents in the expanding city.<sup>10</sup> Wagons hitched to horses crowded Pike Street with its dry goods, grocery stores, barbershops, saloons, liquor stores and warehouses, harness and wagon making, its cigar and chewing tobacco factories and shops.

Pioneer banker and insurance man, Phillip S. Bush, was an agent for Athenaeum Fire Insurance Society of London and a real estate agent. His office was at the southeast corner of Pike and Madison. John Mackoy had a dry goods business near the city's

first Market Square in the 1830s, and then later a store on Pike between Washington and Madison.<sup>11</sup>

After moving from Boone County, John H. Perkins and Co. manufactured saddles, harness and trunks on the west side of Pike between Madison and Washington.<sup>12</sup> Then, as Judge Perkins also recalled, Jesse Grant "... trafficked [in leather] from a salesroom on Madison Street near Pike... and went his quiet way, a tall figure with slightly bent shoulders, a long staff his unfailing way, and a stop at the tavern his customary habit. His son, Ulysses, was from time to time... in Covington, and while there, bought his cigars at the emporium of Jacob Lehman, a small one story frame on Madison Street above Fifth..."<sup>13</sup>

When Jesse was postmaster, the Covington post office had moved from the Odd Fellows Hall to the northwest corner of 6<sup>th</sup> and Madison. Isaac Cooper & Co., a prominent real estate firm, operated on the second floor. This same Isaac Cooper was also living at the northwest corner of 6<sup>th</sup> and Greenup, the former home of the late Thomas Kennedy, who had sold his farm at "The Point" to the developers of the original town.<sup>14</sup> Westward along the Lexington Pike stood the home of Alexander Greer, a major financial power in the construction of the Covington & Lexington Railroad.<sup>15</sup>

### Hotels

Hotels and boarding houses in the area actually preceded the opening of the railroad. Mrs. Meehan remembered a frame building at Madison and 6<sup>th</sup> Street with double porches that she called the "Virginia Inn" which served boarders. The "Madison House" operated at 6th and Madison throughout the 1850s and beyond the end of the Civil War. In 1853 the "Magnolia House" was in operation on the east side of Madison between Pike & 7<sup>th</sup> streets.<sup>16</sup>

Later, near Pike and Washington, hotels had various names and locations: in the 1859 directory the Lexington House; in the 1876 directory the Central Hotel, the Kentucky House, the Jackson House, the National House and the Washington House. The Clinton Hotel was on the east side of Madison between 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>, by then Drovers Inn was called the Day House.<sup>17</sup>

### **Pike and Madison Motch Jewelers Corner**

Started in 1857, Motch Jewelers “the oldest jewelry store in the Midwest,” has operated at 613 Madison since 1871. Beginning in the early 1870s, developers replaced pre-Civil War structures near the northwest corner of Pike and Madison with commercial buildings still standing. Michael C. Motch built his new jewelry store and installed the picturesque street clock also still in operation to this day.<sup>18</sup>

### **Pike and Madison**

#### **Mutual Insurance Building Corner**

In 1912, the old homestead of prominent physician Charles Kerns, at the northwest Corner of 8<sup>th</sup> and Madison, had become the first home of the new Covington Industrial Club, a combination meeting and banquet facility. Four years later, J. Robert Kelley, President of the Kelley-Koett X-ray Co., argued that to boost civic pride and promote business, the Kearns building was inadequate.<sup>19</sup> The Industrial Club had by 1919 relocated to the southwest corner of Pike and Madison in a new, office-meeting-banquet facility on an upper floor. In addition, there were street level storefront spaces. It was a beautifully grand edifice, known as the Mutual Insurance Co. Building. It replaced those old, smaller store front buildings remembered by Mrs. Meehan.<sup>20</sup> In 2014-2015, it was being completely remodeled and a replica of the original cornice restored as part of the city’s renaissance.

#### **Pike and Madison Eilerman’s Corner**

At the northeast corner of Pike and Madison, Eilerman & Sons Men’s Clothing built a store in 1896. Eilerman’s had a number of locations - its first in Newport and others in Ohio, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. The Covington store was the last in the chain to close in 1973. Today, U.S. Bank has that whole block at street level from the corner of 6th to Pike.<sup>21</sup>

### **Pike and Madison**

#### **Citizens National and YMCA Corner**

The southeast corner of Pike and Madison was long the site of Citizens National Bank. The former YMCA building still faces both Pike and Madison, surrounding the former bank site on the corner. Opening in 1913, the YMCA soon began programs for women and families and was expanded in 1929 to

provide more substantial women’s facilities. It closed downtown in 1987.<sup>22</sup>

### **Corners of 7<sup>th</sup> and Madison**

Started in 1873, Covington’s first department store moved into its new building, the tallest in Covington, at the northeast corner of 7<sup>th</sup> and Madison Avenue, serving shoppers between 1909 and 1977 with offices above.<sup>23</sup>

Woolworth’s five and dime relocated to its new building at the southeast corner of 7<sup>th</sup> and Madison. Woolworth, with its signature lunch counter, closed finally in 1990. Now it is The Madison, a banquet and meeting facility.

Near the southwest corner of 7<sup>th</sup> and Madison, jewelers were conspicuous around 1960: Rich’s (701 Madison), Kirk Jewelers (709 Madison), Mayor Jewelry (712 Madison), plus other jewelers besides Motch, up and down Madison: Herzog (806); Macey’s (609) Schulz & Son (621 Madison).

Wilfred Geisen once oversaw the old 7<sup>th</sup> Street Market House, torn down around 1930, where an open air parking lot now prevails. Geisen in 1917 was listed at 16 West 7th and was still there in 1930-31. Heringer wholesale meats were listed at 8 West 7<sup>th</sup>; still operating there to this day. Occupants of this block between Madison and Washington have included Hoerlein Meats, the George W. Hill Grocery Co., fruit, poultry and fish markets, restaurants, real estate dealers, Sears & Roebuck, Mergard’s Recreation with a bowling alley, and the Broadway Theater.<sup>24</sup>

#### **Banking: 6<sup>th</sup> and Madison and Beyond**

For 1908, “eight” was the number of banks (not “savings and Loan”) counted in the vicinity of 6th and Madison. With the merger of Peoples Bank & Trust with Liberty Nation in 1928, the number was four, the same number beyond 1970.<sup>25</sup>

Organizers of First National Bank in 1864 included John G. Carlisle, John Fisk and Amos Shinkle, its first president. First National Bank of Covington operated first in the Odd Fellows Hall, then at 515 Madison. Among other corporate changes and

acquisitions, First National had merged with Covington City National Bank around 1893. About 1912, First National moved into the new bank building, its long time permanent location - at the northwest corner of 6<sup>th</sup> and Madison.

The Farmers & Traders Bank had operated there in the old Cooper Building, where Jessie Grant had served as Covington Postmaster. Absorbed by First National, the Farmers and Traders Bank had demolished the Cooper Building around 1912 and built the present bank building. First National was acquired in 1983, renamed Kentucky National Bank in 1985 as a branch bank, and in 1990 relocated to River Center. Further acquisitions, renaming and relocations followed.<sup>26</sup>

Located at the northeast corner of 6<sup>th</sup> and Madison, Covington Savings & Trust was one of the oldest. In 1912, it was said to be handling probably more real estate than any other bank. It operated under that name beyond 1970. In 1983, Covington Bank & Trust became Huntington Bank.<sup>27</sup>

Peoples Savings Bank (started in 1903), unlike Farmers and Traders, relocated in 1912 from the Cooper Building to the southwest corner of 6<sup>th</sup> and Madison, the recent site of the 46 year-old Degginger Dry Goods store.<sup>28</sup> In 1928, Peoples Savings Bank & Trust Co. merged with Liberty National Bank.<sup>29</sup>

The former "Peoples" building became the "WCKY" building. This Covington radio station broadcasted from the top floor. Four floors high, it now houses a wedding dress shop at street level operated by Fabulous Furs.<sup>30</sup>

Liberty National Bank moved into a new building constructed around 1918, at the southeast corner of 6<sup>th</sup> and Madison. German National had started in 1871 at 609 Madison, in a "Richardsonian" building with a stone facade (still standing). Due to strong anti-German bias, it had been renamed Liberty National. In 1928, the directors of both the Peoples Savings Bank & Trust Co. and Liberty National Bank voted unanimously to merge it with the Peoples Savings Bank across the street to form the Peoples Liberty Bank & Trust Co.<sup>31</sup>

Started in 1890, the Citizens National Bank at the southeast corner of Pike and Madison stayed there beyond 1970. But it is not to be confused with Citizens Federal a long ago established savings and loan at the northwest 5<sup>th</sup> and Madison.<sup>32</sup>

### **A Lot of Movie Theater History<sup>33</sup>**

Movie houses generated both daytime and nighttime sidewalk crowds - another element of once very busy street life downtown. Robert Webster, in his *The Balcony is Closed*, recalled downtown theaters from vaudeville to movie houses. He also discovered what a recent owner of many American movie theaters, and then head of MGM Studios, had told an interviewer for a 1925 issue of *Cosmopolitan* magazine: Marcus Loew owed success to advice from an operator in Covington, Kentucky! Following up on the interview, investigators found two men who claimed the same site and time for the first motion picture in Northern Kentucky. It occurred November 1905 using an Edison Movie Machine at 521 Madison Ave. Mr. Webster showed a copy of the first moving picture ad in Northern Kentucky, advertising a showing of "The Great Train Robbery" and other items on the second floor of the Edisonian Building, 521 Madison.

An early Lyric theater operated at 532 Madison Avenue from around 1909 to 1912. That year, another Lyric theater opened in Covington with vaudeville at 730 Madison Ave. In 1927, Ernst Reality (L. B. Wilson, George Hill, Frank P. Thorpe and Richard P. Ernst) purchased, remodeled and reopened it in 1928 as the L.B. Wilson Theater. Remodeled around 1942, it caught fire in 1944 (\$150,000 damage). It reopened in 1946 and finally closed as a movie theater in 1977. In 2001, it reopened and continues to operate as an entertainment facility.

Located at the southeast corner of 7<sup>th</sup> and Washington, the Hippodrome opened around 1912. Previously there had been live entertainment at the site. The Hippodrome burned down in January 1917, was rebuilt and in 1928 became one in a chain of theaters owned by entrepreneur L.B. Wilson. In 1930, the Hippodrome became the Broadway Theater, which operated into the 1950s. The Strand, at

132 Pike Street, opened around 1916. In 1930, L.B. Wilson added it to his chain of Covington movie theaters. It operated into the early 1950s.

### **Liberty<sup>34</sup>**

Anti-German sentiment and the Liberty Bond campaigns of 1917-1918 made "Liberty" a popular emblem. But the Liberty Cherry & Fruit Co. at 2<sup>nd</sup> and Madison almost seemed to be prematurely named in the 1916-17 directory. In 1918-19, there was of course also Liberty Bank; in 1920-21 Liberty Hall at 140 Pike (formerly Germania Hall), and the Liberty Products Co.; in 1923-24 the new Liberty Theater next door to the bank; in 1928-29 Liberty Cherry & Fruit, Liberty Bank, Liberty Theater, Liberty Insurance, and the Liberty U-Drive-It (car rental!). The perennial Liberty Chile at 512 Madison first appeared in the 1940-41 directory, and served enthusiasts at the same location into the 1980s.

### **Chain Stores<sup>35</sup>**

Dan Cohen in the late 1890s opened a shoe store at 124 Pike Street and had stores on Monmouth Street in Newport and in Cincinnati. His surviving three sons built the "largest shoe store in Kentucky" at 22-24-26 Pike Street. The sons developed the Cohen chain of up of to 38 Midwestern stores and operated a wholesale warehouse in Cincinnati. The Cohen Co. ended operations in 1957.<sup>36</sup>

By 1941, when JC Penny opened in the Cohen shoe store building, it had 1600 stores in 48 states. Started in 1902, JC Penny had 175 stores by 1917, 500 by 1924. JC,Penny closed its Covington store in 1984 to become one of the anchor stores in the Florence Mall.<sup>37</sup>

Started in Cincinnati by Cora Dow, a graduate of the Cincinnati School of Pharmacy, Dow drug stores were a chain of eleven by 1915. In Covington, she opened a store in 1916; by 1918 the street directory listed Dow at both the corner of 7<sup>th</sup> and Madison and the southwest corner of Pike and Madison, in the Mutual Insurance Building. Dow closed in the 1950s.

At the northwest corner of 8<sup>th</sup> and Madison, was the first home of the Covington Industrial Club. In 1929, Montgomery Ward opened its store there,

occupying multiple city lots (721-741 Madison). Founded in 1872 as a mail order business, Montgomery Ward in 1926 began opening retail stores and by 1928 had 244 outlets. It closed in Covington around 1961-62. The row building with ornate façade now is occupied by an office and a furniture store.

Founded in Memphis, Tennessee as a five and dime, by 1912 S.S. Kresge had 85 stores. S.S. Kresge opened in Covington by 1921, and closed at 624 Madison in 1966. Kresge in 1977 was renamed K-Mart, opening stores in the suburbs.

Begun in 1886 as a mail order business, Sears & Roebuck built downtown stores around the country from the 1920s to the 1950s. Then, it replaced downtown stores with suburban locations. Sears & Roebuck opened in 1935 at 13 West 7th in Covington, but closed in 1976 to be an anchor store in the new Florence Mall.

### **Other Covington Retailers<sup>38</sup>**

Dalton's Women's Wear opened in 1936, operated in a couple locations on Madison Avenue before closing in the 1950s. Goldsmith's ladies and children's wear was at 18 Pike street in the 1930s, but closed in 1966 at 630-636 Madison. The Parisian men's shop at the northeast corner of Pike and Washington opened in 1913 and closed in 1996. Then, it was remodeled for attorneys' offices. In 1908, Luhn & Stevie at 28-30 Pike Street was selling men's and lady's clothing and dry goods; in the 1930s mainly men's clothing and dry goods. It lasted beyond World War II. The decades-old Frank's Men's Shop remains open on Pike Street.

George H. Hill was a local military supplier during the Civil War. In 1948 it was called the "George W. Hill Wholesale & Retail Grocers & Meats, Field & Garden Seeds" on Pike Street, but later it discontinued groceries and meats. Hill's Seed Store operated until 1991.

Two long-time hardware stores have not disappeared. Landwehr Hardware had stores simultaneously on Greenup and on Madison in 1931, and has been in operation at 826 Madison for many years. Klingenberg's opened in 1928 in eastside Covington,

at 1228 Greenup, before moving in the early 1990s into the former Hills Seed Store building with storefronts both at 25 Pike and 24 West 7<sup>th</sup>.

In 1914, the R. J. Dibowski Café and Saloon at 6 West Pike Street won first prize (a large inscribed silver cup) for the “best decorated business house” in celebration of the Covington Centennial. The *Covington Centennial Official Book & Program* said he was manager of the Club House and Restaurant at the Latonia Race Track. He operated his café from around 1912 to around 1920, before becoming an executive with the Wadsworth Electric Co.<sup>39</sup>

Lang’s Cafeteria at 623 Madison opened in 1928 and operated several venues: including once a cafeteria seating 90, open from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. and a sandwich shop and restaurant upstairs that closed after midnight. Under new ownership, Lang’s finally closed after 40 years in 1969.<sup>40</sup>

The various furniture stores on Madison included Modern Furniture (1931 to 1987); Louis Marx & Brothers (mid 1890s to the 1980s); A. J. Ostrow’s Radio Shop (opened in 1926, later furniture and appliances store); Edward P. Cooper Furniture & Alliance (southwest corner of 5<sup>th</sup> and Madison into the 1980s); Dine-Schabell, later Dine (in the 500 block of Madison closed in 1960s); and Tillman’s radio and appliance store opened in the 1920s, became an appliance and furniture store, closing at the northeast corner of 8<sup>th</sup> and Madison in the 1980s.

The vicinity had barbershops and drugstores; restaurants, sandwich shops, toy stores, music stores; repair shops, and small manufacturing, appliance and household equipment sales and service, attorney, accounting, medical and other services, private and public schools and agencies. Shop owners or tenants occupied residential spaces above small stores.

In 1931, the Covington Trust Bank rented the basement, and second through fifth floors to lawyers, real estate, insurance, investor firms, the American Red Cross, Kenton Co. Chapter and also to the Highland Cemetery (office on the first floor). The WCKY building had lawyers and an investment company as tenants on the second floor while the radio

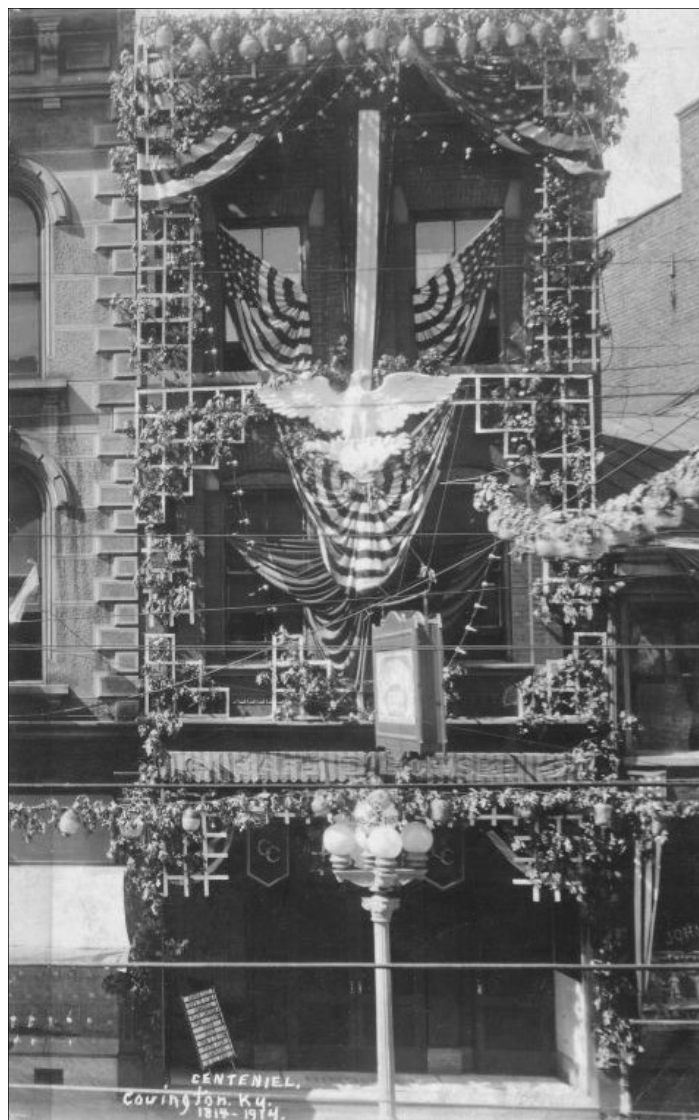


Image of the R.J. Dibowski Café and Saloon, located at 6 West Pike, which received the grand prize as “best decorated business house” for Covington’s Centennial in 1914.

*Courtesy: Kenton County Public Library*

station had the fourth (top) floor. First National Bank building had rental offices from the second to the sixth floor; the Coppin building the fourth through the seventh floor.

The closing off of Pike Street between Madison and Washington to vehicular traffic to create a pedestrian mall in 1977 (then a popular strategy elsewhere) failed to revitalize the downtown vicinity. Merchants were asked to restore buildings to 1890s vintage. Nevertheless, the block was reopened to traffic in 1993.



Until the 1970s, Covington had the largest shopping and service district in Northern Kentucky. Current “renaissance” efforts hope to revitalize it.

1. George Gilpin Perkins, *A Kentucky Judge*, Washington, D. C.: W. G. Roberts Company, 1931, p. 92
2. Memories of John Sandford Perry reported in the “History of Covington,” a series of articles, by O. J. Wiggins, *Daily Commonwealth*, April 15, 1884
3. Willard Rouse, Jillson, *Pioneer Kentucky*, the State Journal Co., 1934; Joseph F. Gastright, *Gentlemen Farmers to City Folks, a Study of Wallace Woods, Covington, Kentucky*, Cincinnati, OH: Cincinnati Historical Society, 1980, pp. 7, 8, 9; “Personal Reminiscences of Hiram Martin” reported in the “History of Covington,” a series of articles, by O. J. Wiggins, *Daily Commonwealth*, April 19, 1884
4. Gastright, pp. 7, 8; see “Old Lexington State Road,” at Linden Grove Cemetery; *City Atlas Of Covington, Kentucky, 1877*, p. 58
5. Paul A. Tenkotte, *Rival Cities to Suburbs: Covington and Newport, Kentucky, 1790-1890*, a dissertation submitted, Department of History, College of Arts and Sciences, Cincinnati, OH: University of Cincinnati, 1989 pp. 79-92
6. Michael R. Sweeney, “Meatpacking,” *The Encyclopedia of Northern Kentucky*, edited by Paul A. Tenkotte and James C. Claypool, Lexington, KY: the University Press of Kentucky, 2009, pp. 608, 609; breweries and slaughterhouses once were familiar industry in the Lewisburg neighborhood below the Lexington Pike and above Willow Run Creek; Milward & Oldershaw, a huge slaughterhouse on the Licking River near 11<sup>th</sup> Street, served a European market; Tenkotte, *Rival Cities*, pp. 79-92; there were others including, until recent decades, the Rice meat packing company on Patton Street near the Licking
7. Eleanor Childs Meehan, “An Octogenarian’s Personal Recollections of a Beloved Old Kentucky Town ‘Old Covington’ (revised),” 1924 (a booklet)
8. Covington street directories; Sweeney, *Encyclopedia of Northern Kentucky*, pp. 608, 609
9. Gastright
10. David E. Schroeder, “City Markets,” *Encyclopedia of Northern Kentucky*, pp. 184, 185; Covington Map, 1851
11. 1839, 1856, 1860 Covington directories; Mrs. Meehan remembered also the popular and well known “Uncle Billy Wasson” “holding forth” from his store at this southwest corner; Wasson was the grandfather of Mrs. John G. Carlisle
12. Perkins, George G.,” *The Encyclopedia of Northern Kentucky*, pp. 710, 711
13. Perkins p. 133; earlier Jesse Grant leather merchant was listed on south side of 3<sup>rd</sup> between Russell & Johnston; 1856 Covington directory
14. Jessie R. Grant, Postmaster, at northwest corner of 6<sup>th</sup> & Madison; 1869 Covington directory
15. Meehan
16. Almost a century later the 1940-41 directory listed another “Magnolia House” at 116-118 Pike Street.
17. 1859, 1876 Covington directories
18. Karl Lietzenmayer, “M. C. Motch, Jewelers: A Kentucky Centennial Company,” *Northern Kentucky Heritage*, Vol. XVIII, No. 2, Spring – Summer 2011, pp. 75-70; Jeanne Greiser, “Motch Jewelers,” *Encyclopedia of Northern Kentucky*, pp. 629, 630
19. *KP*, Dec. 13, 1916, p. 1
20. 1918-19 Covington directory; Pictorial and Industrial Review, 1923 “Boost Northern Kentucky,” p. 20
21. Chuck Eilerman, “Eilerman & Sons, Men’s Clothiers,” *Encyclopedia of Northern Kentucky*, p. 296

22. Clare Poynter, “An Immeasurable Legacy: The Ernst Family of Northern Kentucky,” *Northern Kentucky Heritage*, Vol. XVIII, No. 2, Spring – Summer 2011, pp. 59-64
23. Karl J. Lietzenmayer, “Coppin’s Department Store,” *Encyclopedia of Northern Kentucky*, p. 225
24. 1959, 1966-17, 1930-31, 1936-37, 1948 Covington directories
25. Covington directories
26. 1867-68 Covington directory; “Our 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary...the First National Bank and Trust Co,” *K. P. & T. S*, Special Edition, Dec. 10, 1963; Paul A. Tenkotte, “First National Bank and Trust Company of Covington,” *Encyclopedia of Northern Kentucky*, pp. 338-339
27. The proposed consolidation failed; “Two Covington Banks Plan to Consolidate,” *K. P.*, June 8, 1912, p. 2; see Covington directories through the years
28. Degginger’s operated 46 years; Fred Degginger had taken over from his late father Augustus who started his dry goods business in a little store on Pike Street; it relocated elsewhere nearby and finally to 6<sup>th</sup> and Madison; “Old Covington House Will Quit Wednesday,” *K. P.*, April 3, 1911, p. 3; Covington directory
29. “Covington Banks Merge,” *K. P.*, Jan. 10, 1928, p. 1
30. 1920-21, 1931-32, 1940-41 Covington directories
31. “Peoples Liberty Bancorporation 1871-1983 Annual Report”; *Covington Journal*, July 8, 1871, p. 3; Sept. 2, 1871, p. 3
32. 1970 Covington directory; the Citizens Building Assoc. became Citizens Federal Savings & Loan Assoc.; *K. P.*, Nov. 19, 1934, p. 2
33. Robert D. Webster, *The Balcony Is Closed – A History of North Kentucky’s Long-Forgotten Neighborhood Movie Theaters*, The Kenton County Historical Society
34. Covington directories
35. Except for Cohen, information on store chains taken from Wikipedia; also Covington directories
36. “Cohen Shoe Stores,” *The Encyclopedia of Northern Kentucky*, pp. 206-207
37. In the 1980s Covington moved City Hall out of the old city-county building on Court Street to the empty Cohen/JC Penny building; year’s later Covington moved into the Coppin Department Store Building; in 2014 Covington again remodeled and re-occupied the former Cohen/JC Penny store building again as a temporary City Hall.
38. For this overview see Tenkotte, “Covington, Downtown,” *The Encyclopedia of Northern Kentucky*, pp. 234-236; details also added from Covington directories
39. “Prizes Given for Finest Decorations,” *KP*, Sept. 18, 1914, p. 1; *Covington Centennial Official Book & Program – Celebrating the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Founding of Covington September 14-19, 1914*
40. Judy Lang Klosterman, “Lange’s Cafeteria,” *The Encyclopedia of Northern Kentucky*, p. 533

## Want to be Published?

The Kenton County Historical Society is always looking for authors for article submissions to their publications, the *Bulletin*, and *Northern Kentucky Heritage* magazine.

*Bulletin* articles should be on a Kenton County topic, be 2 to 6 pages of text, and have at least two references. Magazine submissions should be at least eight pages in length with footnotes, and should cover a topic within the 10-county Northern Kentucky region.

Submit articles to:

Kenton County Historical Society  
P.O. Box 641 Covington, KY 41011  
or nkyhist@zoomtown.com

## A Look Back at The Headlines

*An on-going feature reliving local headlines.*

*This issue features:*

*The Daily Commonwealth – March 5, 1880.*

### The City

Some geraniums at Penkhaus's pharmacy are blooming for the second time this winter.

Mrs. Joseph Fussinger, of Eleventh Street, who gave birth to a child only last week, died yesterday of Typhoid fever.

The congregation of the Ninth-street Presbyterian Church will have a "social" this evening at the residence of Mrs. J.N. Turber, 1040 Scott Street.

Col. Seely says he has discovered an old law which obliges everybody to attend church, Sunday, at least once. Let us have it enforced.

### Young Women You Are Needed in Dakota

Dakota wants women; would like to have them healthy, handsome and young, but any passable quality are welcome.

### Announcement

John Leathers is a candidate for Sheriff of Kenton County; W.L. Grant, Henry C. Hallam, and John Metcalfe for position of Circuit Court Clerk.

### Runaways

Rising Sun, Ind., March 4 – A runaway couple from Kentucky, William Sheets and Miss Belle Simpson, were married at the courthouse today.

### Musical

Charles Baetens, Professor of Music, late of the College of Music, desires to make known to the musical public that he will receive pupils in harmony, piano and violin (for the present), at his residence, 452 Elm Street, Cincinnati. Terms on application.

## Letters to the Editor

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This note refers to an article in the *Bulletin March/April 2015*, written by D. H. Toltzmann, and published on page 2 of the *Bulletin*. The article is praiseworthy for giving overdue credit to Wilhelm Hildenbrand. It contains an unfortunate assumption derived from uncertainties about Mr. Hildenbrand's age.

Hildenbrand was believed to be 63 at the time of his death in 1908, i.e. apparently the *New York Times* editors believed he was born in 1845. In the memoir published in *Engineering News*, his birth date was given as June 1, 1845. In the MS Memoir of his father [MS Page 255], Washington A. Roebling stated: "*I returned from Europe in March, 1868, and found to my surprise a large amount of preliminary work done on the Brooklyn Bridge. My father had engaged two young German engineers, Hildenbrand and Greifenberg, to help him. Hildenbrand was a valuable man and afterwards was of great assistance to me.*"

Obviously, John A. Roebling met him at least a year prior to his own unfortunate death in July 1869.

Donald Sayenga  
Tucson, AZ

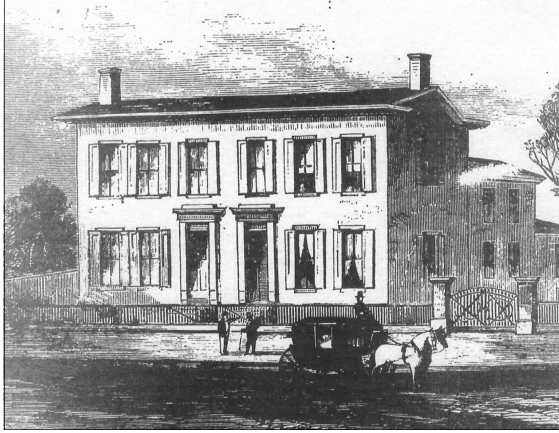
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Dear Kenton County Historical Society

I very much enjoyed your excellent newsletter and wanted to say thank you for your service and diligence.

John Kenton Thompson  
with Mary Elizabeth  
The Woodlands Texas

## Then and Now

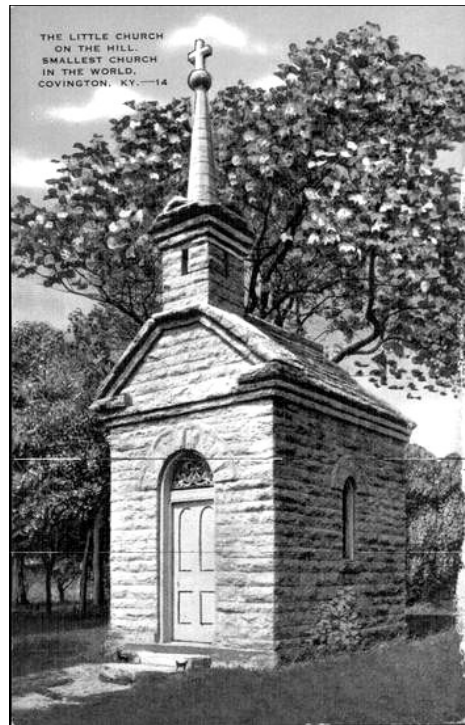


Jess Grant home on Greenup near 6th Street, circa 1875 – right photo 2015.

Left photo courtesy Kenton County Public Library. Right photo courtesy Bob Webster.

## Mystery Photo

Can you identify the mystery photo below? The answer can be found at the bottom of the page.



ANSWER:

Chapel in its original location at Monte Casino, overlooking Covington and Latonia.  
It was relocated in the 1970s to the campus of Thomas More College.

# Kenton County Historical Society

September-October 2015

ARTICLES FROM BACK ISSUES ARE INDEXED ON OUR WEBSITE!

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Karl Lietzenmayer (Ex Officio)

## I Bet You Didn't Know

*Tidbits from Kentucky's heritage  
for every day of the calendar year*

September 3 1867: John LaRue Helm was inaugurated as governor in his home at Elizabethtown. He died five days later.

September 4, 1916: President Woodrow Wilson visited Kentucky to accept, on behalf of the entire nation, the Lincoln Memorial near Hodgenville.

September 8, 1775: Daniel Boone arrived at Boonesborough with his family and others, for what has been classified as the beginning of the settlement for Kentucky.

October 11, 1887: The State Normal School for Colored Persons opened in Frankfort to formally train teachers. It became Kentucky State University in the 1970s.

*"On This Day In Kentucky" — Robert Powell*

## Programs and Notices

### 2015 "Annual Meeting of the Membership of the Kenton County Historical Society"

#### Historic Linden Grove Cemetery Tour

(see special insert in this issue)

This year, our annual meeting of the KCHS, along with our election of officers, will be held in conjunction with a wonderful historic tour of Covington's Linden Grove Cemetery. This special program will be held

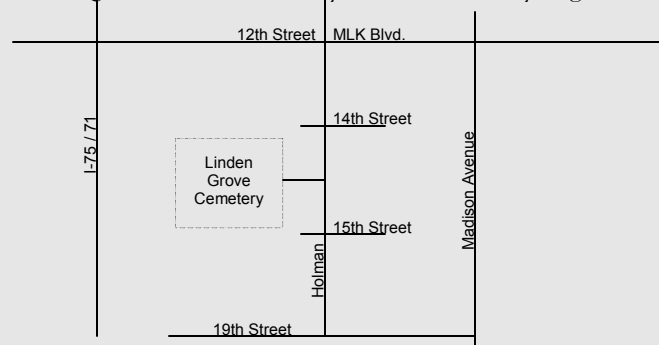
on

Saturday, September 26th, 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., and is FREE.

Linden Grove Cemetery is located at 1421 Holman Avenue.

Join the Society and the Local History & Genealogy Department staff of the Kenton County Public Library for this informative and entertaining event. Appropriate walking attire recommended.

Email Questions to: [history@kentonlibrary.org](mailto:history@kentonlibrary.org)



**Did you know... the Kenton County Historical Society is also the proud publisher of**

### *Northern Kentucky Heritage*

**the only publication dedicated specifically to this region's history!**

This award-winning periodical is published twice a year, and each issue contains several articles on various topics of interest for the entire 10 county region. Expertly researched and written, it is a **must** for anyone interested in local history!

**Still, only \$20.00 per year!**

Three easy ways to subscribe!

1. order on-line at: [www.kentoncountyhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.kentoncountyhistoricalsociety.org)
2. email us at: [info@kentoncountyhistoricalsociety.org](mailto:info@kentoncountyhistoricalsociety.org) — we can bill you
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