Greenup County

Greenup County was formed in 1803 and was named in honor of Governor Christopher Greenup. It lies on the waters of the Ohio and Little Sandy rivers. The county is rich in mineral resources, her iron ore being of a very superior Character.

Colonel Daniel Boone, for a short time, in 1799 was a citizen of Greenup County, living on the bank of the Ohio river where Riverton now is, according to a sworn statement made by a Mr. Wroadock in 1857, who was then 79 years old. He said he saw Daniel Boone at a point 1½ miles up Little Sandy river cut down a tree out of which to make a canoe, and that soon after, he saw Boone in the Canoe when he started for his new home in Missouri.

The first white child born of American parents, west of the Allegheny mountains was Mrs. Lucy Downs who was a resident of old Town, Greenup County for over forty years. She was the daughter of Jeremiah and Lucy Virgin, born Sept., 17, 1769 in what is now Fayette County, Pa., near Uniontown.

She lived in Maysville in 1790 with her parents and brother Brice Virgin, and moved to Cincinnati in 1792 where she was married in 1800.

She distinctly remembered Gen. Washington's visit to her father's and a neighbor's in 1773, when surveying what was afterwards called Washington's Bottom.

The first village in Kentucky, and the only one village within the borders of the State prior to the settlement at Harrodsburg in 1774-75 was in Greenup County opposite the then mouth of the Sciota River, where in 1805 stood the little village of Alexandria, about a mile below where Portsmouth, Ohio, now stands - built by the Shawnee Indians and some French traders, years before the French war in 1753. It consisted, in 1773 of 19 or 20 long cabins and some cleared ground. The cabins and all vestiges of such a village disappeared before 1790. Previous to this, in January 1751 Christopher Gist, in company with George Croghan, Andrew Montour, Robert Kallendar reached the mouth of the
Sciota creek opposite to the Shawnee town, and the traders came and ferried them over. The town is described as situated on both sides of the Ohio just below the mouth of the Sciota creek and containing about 900 men.

There were about 40 houses on the south side of the river and 100 on the north side, with a kind of State house about 90 feet long where they held their councils.

Old Town for many years has been claimed to have been in early times an Indian village. Tomahawks, flints, pipes and other articles of Indian wear were once found there in abundance. If it is true that comparatively modern Indians ever dwelt there, this is the only portion of Kentucky ever inhabited by them, except a part of the land along the Cumberland river, south and west of it, which was once the home of the Shawnees. Kentucky was the middle ground where the Indian tribes of the north and the south met to hunt and to fight.

Greenup, the County-seat was incorporated Feb 4, 1818 as Greenupsburg and always known by that name until an act of the legislature, March 13, 1872, changed it to Greenup to prevent further inconvenience.

It is situated on the Ohio river, immediately above the Little Sandy river. Years ago the town was known as Hangtown. At that time it served as the seat of justice for a much larger territory than it does at present, and its knickname was due to the hangings that took place in the Court House yard with very little ceremony. The condemned was hauled on a wagon until he reached the tree from which was a suspended noosed rope. After the noose was placed about his neck the wagon was driven from under his feet. That was all.

The aged, musty and yellow records of the Greenup County Circuit Court contain invaluable facts and information relative to the early history of Eastern Kentucky.

Two of the most valuable papers in the possession of the Greenup Court ruling which in all probability set a precedent for the Dred Scott Decision.
According to the story, which is clearly narrated in the Court ruling on record in Greenup Court, a lady of fashion living on the Kentucky side of the river, took one of her slaves, a negro girl by name of America, to an afternoon tea at the home of a friend in Haverhill, Ohio, which is located directly across the river from Greenup. At the conclusion of the tea, the negro maid refused to return with her mistress, as she was then in free territory. The court upheld the negro girl in her actions.

The town as a whole offers much for research as there are a number of interesting land sites, and the court records are historical and interesting.

Daniel Boone was a frequent visitor in Greenup, and had quite a few drinks "charged to his account", in a record unearthed recently. History records that Boone in an effort to escape from hostile Indians, swing over a huge rock cliff on a grape vine at a point below hanging Rock, 0, and later swam the river to Kentucky where he received aid.
Very scenes of interest lie along the highways of Greenup County, many of them of rich historical association. The first settlement in Kentucky was in Greenup County. This little outpost was built years before the French War of 1753 and was inhabited by French traders and Shawnee Indians. It was known as Lower Town and stood where the little village of Alexandria stood in 1805 and one mile below where South Portsmouth now stands. It was destroyed by a great flood from the Scioto River. The first white child born of American parents west of the Allegheny Mountains was Mrs. Lucy Down, a resident of Oldtown, Greenup County.

This small village is still in existence and is situated 15 miles south of Greenup. Daniel Boone was once a resident of Greenup County. He lived on the bank of the Ohio River where Riverton now stands. The rock known as "Indian Leap Rock" or "Daniel Boone Rock" may be seen at Raceland, below Ironton, Ohio. It may be seen from several points along State Highway 23.

Greenup, the county seat, was incorporated February 4, 1818 as Greensburg, and always known by that name until an act of the legislature March 15, 1872, changed it to Greenup. It has one of the oldest courthouses in Kentucky. It is almost 100 years old, and stands in the center of the town surrounded by spacious lawns and beautiful trees. Priceless records that reveal much of the early history of the county are filed away in this old building. In the clerk's office can be found letters from Abraham Lincoln, Jefferson Davis, and other noted statesmen. It was in a room in this old courthouse that a body of men comprising the county court of Greenup County met and upon motion of a young explorer, Jesse B. Boone, drew an order to lay off a road leading from the mouth of the Little
Sandy River to historic old Washington, the first county seat of Mason County. Today this same road is under reconstruction and will soon be a complete highway.

At one time Greenup, famous for its Saturday night hangings was nicknamed "Hangtown." These gruesome affairs took place at the west end of the Little Sandy bridge. The elm tree, the scene of many a tragic hanging, still stands and is ever a source of much interest to visitors and tourists.

Raceland race track known as the "Saratoga of the West" is a recent attraction. It is resplendent in its natural beauty. Famous blue bloods of the tracts are brought here each summer for several days of racing.

The many different roads leading from Greenup are ever a source of attraction to tourists. The surrounding country is gorgeous in the summer months with its blossoming hills and valleys. The beautiful Tygarts Valley, the Little Sandy River road, and the old grist mill at Argillite, are among the numerous other scenic spots in Greenup County.

Kentucky Progress Magazine
August, 1929
Russell is the largest city in Greenup County and is 6 miles west of Ashland, directly opposite Ironton, Ohio. It was named for John Russell of Ashland, Kentucky. It was incorporated in 1874 as a 5th class city, but became a 4th class city in 1924. Its first Mayor was J. M. McCleave.

Russell has the distinction of having the largest railroad yard in this country that is owned and operated by one railroad which is the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway Company. One hundred and forty-seven miles of track are operated within the limits of the yard. Russell yard has a car storage capacity of 10,500 cars and a receiving and dispatching capacity of 7,500 cars per day. It has the largest and best equipped engine terminal on the C. & O. system, having a capacity of dispatching 150 engines daily. All locomotives that run into Russell from the east and west are inspected and maintained here. It has the largest and most modern car shop on the system. It has the capacity of rebuilding 45 cars daily.

Russell has a modern water station and treating plant for both locomotive and drinking water. The pumping capacity is two million gallons per day, the storage capacity is one and one-half million gallons and the daily consumption is one and one-half million gallons of water.

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The Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad Company pays to Greenup County annually $136,838.00 in taxes which included $69,249.00 for the schools of Greenup County.

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Gateway. Empty coal cars returning from these gateways are inspected and distributed to the mines according to the proper kind and number. So important is this function performed at Russell and so imperative that it be done in perfect coordination with the operation on either side from the coal mines to Toledo and Cincinnati that it constitutes, in itself, a separate operating division, known as the Russell Division.

The Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad Y.M.C.A. at Russell, is a three-story building which is located at the convenient point for railroad men coming and going out on the road. It has a present membership of 1,200. It has a sleeping capacity of 110 beds, an up-to-date library, reading room, cafeteria, barber shop, and other conveniences. The Railway company considers the Y.M.C.A. one of its greatest assets.

Russell has always shown a great cooperative spirit in educational affairs. As part proof of this: the first graded school in Greenup County was organized in Russell; in the past 21 years, three bond issues for new buildings have been voted by large majorities in each case: in 1923 when increased business of the C. & O. caused an abnormally large increase in school attendance and 5 new teachers were added in one year, more than $3,000. was donated by patrons and friends of the school to secure the benefits of 9 months term of school. The present school system consists of four grade divisions, two junior high sections and one senior high. All teachers in the system have two or more years college training. In the past twenty years the faculty of Russell School System has increased from 5 to 55 and the census from 270 to 1900.

Russell is well supplied with churches. Thirty years ago the first substantial church was built.

There are two fraternal orders that are very dominant in Russell, Odd Fellows and Masonic Order.

Practically all the wage earners of Russell are employees of the C. & O. Railway Co. and in consequence Russell has a representative group
of Labor Organizations whose membership is striving for the best of their respective crafts and all that is good for the development of the city.

The city of Russell has one bank, the First and Peoples, an institution that has withstood the depression where many banks have failed, and within the last six months (April 1936) it has stepped into the million dollar class.

P. A. Williams, merchant
W. S. Butler, R. R. Employee
John W. Millis, mayor
B. F. Kidwell, Supt. of Schools
Greenup, pop. 770, alt. 474 ft., lies on the Ohio riv. on an elevated riv. bottom 13 mi. below Ashland, 20 mi. above Portsmouth, Ohio, and 133 mi. above Cincinnati. It is a riv. town of wide streets and fine trees.

Greenup was incorporated in 1848 as Greenupsburg, but had its name changed in 1872 to avoid confusion with Greensburg, in Green co. It is the center of an area rich in pre-historic activity, lying near the celebrated Portsmouth group of fortifications left by the Mound Builders, the Indian village on the present site of Oldtown, 10 mi. to the S. E., and the first village in Wy. inhabited by whitesmen, near the present Fullerton. The history of the town itself has not been eventful, since it lies too far up the riv. from the mouth of the Scioto to have participated in the history that occurred in the Portsmouth area.

That part of the co. of which Greenup is the center is primarily agricultural, with truck gardening, apple-growing, and stock raising of greatest importance. It is principally a banking town and the co. seat of a farming area.

The Raceland track, one of the minor tracks of the state, is the chief point of interest near Greenup.
Population 1,350. Greenup is located on the banks of the Ohio and Little Sandy Rivers, on State Route #23.

The Chesapeake & Ohio Railway Company furnished excellent train service. The Blue Ribbon Bus Company furnished hourly bus service to near by points east, making connection at 13th Street, Ashland, Kentucky, with the Blue & Grey Transit Company to all points both north, east, south and west.

History: (As related by an old resident, D. B. Warnock, Greenup). The first Greenup County Court was held at Oldtown, about 6 miles from Greenup in an old log house. It was then decided to establish a County Seat. Some preferred Oldtown, others Greenup; a vote was held and Greenup was decided upon by one vote.

The Fiscal Court Commissioners went to work, built a log court house with puncheon floors and puncheon benches to sit on, also a log jail.

About 1811 with a small amount of money and a larger amount of debt it was decided to build a new court house of brick; the walls being about 18 inches thick. This building is being used today and is in very good condition.

The Clerk's office was built about 68 years ago, and since that time several offices have been added.

Records: The oldest marriage records for Greenup County date back to 1809. (Greenup is known as a "Gretna Green" for marriages).

Deed Books: The original plot of Greenup, Deed Book "C" made in 1815. Lot No. 1 located on N. W. Corner Public Square, River Bank. Deed Book "A" was lost in flood waters several years ago and others are in poor condition.

High Schools: The town of Greenup boasts one of the most up to date high schools in the county, located on Route No. 23.

Residence: Probably the oldest residence about 75 years old, situated on bank of Little Sandy River and Ferry Street.
First Christian Church established at first beginning of town, 1804, located on Main Street. M. E. Church South, first built in 1845, was destroyed by fire, but rebuilt on same site. Northern M. E. Church (known as "Old Church") built in 1844, is located on Laurel and Ferry Streets. Presbyterian Church located on Main Street, Catholic Church, located on Laurel Street, not active.

Colonel Andrew Steward Cooper, born September 16, 1849, poet, marrying parson, attorney, newspaper editor, former State Representative and former City Clerk will soon celebrate his 89th birthday. While not born in Greenup County, he has been located in the city of Greenup for over 32 years and is still an active figure around the courthouse where he still practices law.

W. B. Taylor, born August 13, 1848 in Lawrence County, will soon celebrate his 88th birthday. He has been a resident of Greenup for 80 years, coming to Greenup as a small boy of 8 years. He at one time was elected and served as Sheriff of Greenup County. He is also a retired undertaker and furniture dealer. While not in active business, he is a very prominent figure around the courthouse square where he passes the time of day and talks of days gone by.

John W. Collins, County Treasurer of Greenup County, came to Greenup with his parents at the age of six months, and has been a resident of Greenup practically his entire life. He will soon pass his 87th birthday, but says he has no superstitions and does not believe in black cats nor witches.

Mrs. Treacy Clark Collins, born in Kentucky April 24, 1850, a very quiet, dignified old lady of 86 summers, says she remembers the days of the hoop skirts, also the basque and bustle stage of dress. She thinks the present day dress is much more attractive and comfortable. She is a very devout church member and spends her spare time knitting and crocheting as well as passing on a helpful hand to others less fortunate.
Prominent County Figure: Jesse Stewart, Principal of McColl High School, promises to become one of our most well known as well as interesting figures of Greenup County, having obtained national fame, being proclaimed in both Europe and America, as a poet and author. He has written a number of short stories and from all present indications, is scheduled to become one of our most prominent "Truth is Stranger than Fiction" writers, due to the fact that he has lived at close hand and has seen the characteristic oddities of these mountain folk, and merely has to write the truth as he sees and understands it.

The first white child born of American parents, west of the Allegheny Mountains, --Mrs. Lucy Downs, was a resident of Oldtown, Greenup County for over 40 years.

Richard H. Collins, History of Kentucky. One copy possession of Mrs. Fannie Kouns, Greenup, other copy possession of Greenup Board of Education.

Newspapers: One copy Ulster County Gazette, dated Saturday, January 4, 1800. Published at Kingston (Ulster Co.) by Samuel Freer & Son, containing obituary of George Washington, - good condition.

One copy of New York Ledger, New York, Jan. 7, 1860. Fairly good condition. (Property of Mrs. Fannie Kouns, Greenup, Ky.)

Orchards: Apple orchard, 2200 acres in Greenup County, largest in Eastern Kentucky, located near St. Paul, between 2 and 3 miles off Route #10. Private road to orchard.

Indian Relics: Remains of an old Indian Graveyard at Siloan, Route "23, mostly excavated, but quite a private collection of relics owned by Mr. W. F. Hardin, may be viewed by the public, for the asking.

The marriage statutes of the fifties required the bridegroom to give bond in the sum of 50 pounds (equal to $166.2/3) that the marriage contract would be fulfilled. In many cases the father of the bride was named as surety.
Another entry in a slave case was the granting of an application to a slave owner to have his slave's ear marks recorded, which were as follows: "slit in right ear and smooth crop off left ear".

Furnaces: Laurel, located Laurel Fork, Oldtown, about 5 miles off Greenup-Grayson route. Bowl of furnace cut out of solid rock. Nothing else like it has been discovered in the world.

Raccoon, located at Raccoon, about 4 miles from Greenup. Last operated in 1872. Last change of iron put in furnace still there.

Libraries: McKell High School, Route #23, has 13 volumes of 16th and 17th Century English Books, donated by Dr. Wm. Scott McKell. These books are displayed in trophy case and are in good condition. McKell has best school library in the county.
Greenup County was formed in 1803 out of part of Mason County and was named in honor of Governor Christopher Greenup. It was the 45th County formed in the state. Greenup lies on the waters of the Ohio and Little Sandy Rivers. The county borders the Ohio River for 40 miles, with an average width of 12 miles.

Later, parts of Greenup County have been taken off in forming Lawrence in 1821, Carter in 1838 and Boyd in 1860. The county is a rich agricultural section and also rich in mineral resources. The chief agricultural crop is corn.

The iron ore is a very superior quality and the supply is inexhaustible. Seven varieties were found in one neighborhood. Coal is found in abundance and the water power is not excelled in the state.

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P. A. Williams, merchant
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REMARKS

The old Pennsylvania furnace stock in Greenup County, Kentucky which
made its initial cast in 1848.

Laurel Stock, in Greenup County, Kentucky, with its base of solid
stone, 30 feet square and 14 feet high, hollowed out in the center to receive
the hearth and blast.

"Amanda Furnace": A. D. 1829 is the inscription chisled in the native
stone wall which enclosed the stock bank of this stock in Greenup County, Ky.
Buffalo Stock: Greenup County, Kentucky which was built in 1825 and produced 3,000 net tons of charcoal iron annually.

An old store building brick in structure, is left standing at Bellfonte, Kentucky (Greenup Co.) This store was built in 1825 and for many years was used as a storage room for relics which were left of the furnaces, records of processes by which certain accomplishments were made in the iron industry, recipes, Indian relics and many others. These articles were sent in car loads to Henry Ford for a museum in Detroit, Michigan.

Dr. C. E. Bell, Ashland, Ky.

Greenup, the county seat was incorporated in February 1818 as Greensburg until an act of the legislature March 13, 1872 changed it to Greenup because of Greensburg, in Green County.

Daniel Boone for a time was a citizen of Greenup County, living on the bank of the Ohio River, 1 1/2 miles from the county seat. In March 1857 Mr. Warnock, then 79 years of age made an oath that in the fall of 1799 he saw Daniel Boone 1 1/2 miles up Little Sandy River cut down a tree out of which he made a canoe, and soon after he saw Boone when he started for his new home in Missouri.

In 1857 it was contemplated to dig up the roots of the tree and make canoes.

The first village of Greenup County, Alexandria, was founded in 1805 about a mile from where Portsmouth Ohio now stands. On this site, a village was built by the Shawnee Indians and some French traders. In 1773 this village consisted of 19 or 20 log cabins, clapboard roofs, doors, windows, and chimneys and some cleared ground. There is no evidence that the French traders ever penetrated the interior of the state and the cabins and all vestiges of the village disappeared before 1790.

On July 23, 1765 Colonel Croghan, an agent for the British government among the Indians was here in Greenup County with two oceaux, at least two white men and a delegation of Seneca, Shawnee and Delaware Indians. In
his journal he said, "On the Ohio just below the mouth of the Scioto River on a high bank (near 40 feet) formerly stood the Shawnee town called "Lower Town, which was carried away, except 3 or 4 houses by a great flood in the Scioto". The Shawnee afterwards built their town on the opposite side of the river.

Old Town- about 10 miles from the county seat, for many years has been claimed to have been in early times an Indian village. Old residents as far back as 1800 considered it such from all they could learn. Tomahawks, flints, and other articles of Indian ware and use were once found there in abundance.

This is the only portion of Kentucky ever inhabited by Indians; except a part of the land along the Cumberland River, south and west of it, which was once the home of the Shawnees who afterwards emigrated to the Scioto Valley. Kentucky was the middle ground where the Indian tribes of the north and the south met to hunt and fight.

Collins' History of Kentucky
Greenup, Kentucky. July 4. For years this day and date has been used as a day for gathering together from miles around, and also from different states. While some bring baskets loaded with all sorts of good things to eat and spend the entire day, restaurants are prepared to take care of the crowd. This day is looked forward to from one year to the next, and the country folk begin arriving in town from the break of dawn until noon.

Entertainment: There is an outside platform for square dancing, a place for all sorts of foot races, sack races, hog calling, nail driving, and other contests, with small rewards to the winners.

Raceland, Kentucky. Raceland Race Track, July 4. For the past few years the American Legion, Howard Thomas Post No. 43, have had their annual festival here and are planning to do so this year.

Entertainment: They have a hall for square dancing, all sorts of races, including both foot, mule, bicycle, automobile, motorcycle, and buggy races, and airplane rides. They have booths for all sorts of soft drinks, sandwiches and beer, and amusements. At the end of the day, tickets are drawn for prizes. These prizes usually consist of an automobile, electric washing machine, electric ice box and other smaller items.

Raceland, Kentucky. Raceland Race Track, Labor Day. First Monday in September (7th). A group of individuals usually lease the track for the day and have games and races of all sorts, including automobile and motorcycle as well as mule races. A small prize is awarded the winner. The admission price is usually small.

Greenup, Kentucky. Labor Day, Sept. 7th. This is a day also set apart as Greenup County "Get-to-Gether" day. It is also "Court Day," as Greenup County Court Starts the first Monday in September.

Entertainment: There is a platform for square dancing, a lot for horse trading, foot races, etc. People come in automobiles, trucks, wagons,
buggies, horse back, mule back, and any other way of transportation available including hitch hiking.

Russell, Kentucky. June 1st, Opening Day for Russell Y.M.C.A. Playground for Children. The entertainment will include foot races for all ages, from small children to grown-ups, with small prizes for the winners. The playground consists of a swimming pool for children up to 12 years, with an instructor, with accommodations for shower baths before and after swim; swings, slides, tennis court and baseball park.

There are usually several smaller events planned for the summer, but dates are decided on to suit convenience.
Industries:

Up river, in the south end of the county, several industries have been established; about half of the great steel plant of the American Rolling Mills Company is in the county, at Ashland and Russell, Kentucky.

The repair shops of the Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad are located at Russell, Ky., at Raceland, Ky., is the King Powder Company, a subsidiary of the E. I. du Pont de Nemours Company. These industries in addition to coal mining at Princess and Honeywell, and the manufacturing of railway ties throughout the county, give employment to many, yet farming is the main occupation of Greenup people.

TOWNS:

On U.S. 23 and the Ohio River, fourteen miles north of Ashland, Kentucky is Greenup, the county seat. The Little Sandy River empties into the Ohio here. This town was incorporated in 1814, and was called "Greenupsburg" until in 1871 the name was changed to Greenup, the name of one of the founders. Greenup has a population of about 1,300 (1930 census 1,125) and is a typical farmers' trading center.

It's business buildings are one and two story frame and brick structures, built along the main street, which runs parallel to the river to the public square at the court house.

The court house, the main part, is a two story brick with one story additions for county offices. The court house faces the public square and away from the Ohio River in the back, has been used as a court house for over 100 years, and owing to its location, and its lack of upper stories many of the county's records were lost in the flood of January of this year, while the interior of the first floor of the building is a wreck.
In the front yard is a large band stand, where the band plays on warm summer evenings, also affording a "ostrum for public speakers, and is a haven for loafers by day, not having anything else to do; one can go sit in the band stand and visit with one's neighbors who are likewise idle and lonesome. Rarely is this building emptied of folks by day.

At the rear of the court house is another reminder of old times, a ferry across the Ohio River. A small gasoline motored ferry boat for foot passengers, which tows alongside a large barge for the accommodation of teams and wagons, automobiles, etc.

At the top of the bank, at the ferry landing, is a large bell, of the old farm dinner bell variety, which can be tolled to call the ferry boat across the river when one finds it on the Ohio side when he wants to cross. Not many of these ferries are found today in this section of Kentucky as fine bridges span the river at other points, this ferry, however, seems to do a thriving business.

Greenup is a veritable "Gretna Green" for couples wishing to marry sooner than the laws of Ohio, and other states, permit; many licenses are sold here to people from distant parts.

In the town are three public school, including the high school, seven churches of all leading denominations, two hotels, a weekly newspaper, and is served by the Chesapeake & Ohio Railway.

While the streets of other towns are thronged by city folks in city clothes, this town is different, in that, here are farmers dressed in overalls and hickory shirts and about every other man seemed to be wearing rubber boots, while the old fashioned beards, so common in the early nineties, were to be seen on every hand.
At the court house square, the inevitable party citizen, red-faced and imposing, with the usual broadrimmed grey felt hat, going from one to another of the bystanders, shaking hands with everyone, the essence of affability, we correctly diagnosed this case, a politician.

While Greenup is a lovely small town, of comfortable homes, modern stores doing a thriving business, and shaded streets, it depends almost entirely on the farmers of the surrounding territory for trade, as these factories or other industrial plants in the city. The town lies low along the river, entirely in the flood area, the 1937 flood took a terrible toll of property damage here, we are told that every building in town was flooded most of them in their second stories. However, the residents are bravely cleaning up and rehabilitating themselves to a greater degree than many other river towns, about every store is opened up doing business as before the disaster.
Industries:

Up river, in the south end of the county, several industries have been established; about half of the great steel plant of the American Rolling Mills Company is in the county, at Ashland and Russell, Kentucky.

The repair shops of the Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad are located at Russell, Ky., at Raceland, Ky., is the King Powder Company, a subsidiary of the E. I. du Pont de Nemours Company. These industries in addition to coal mining at Princess and Honeywell, and the manufacturing of railway ties throughout the county, give employment to many, yet farming is the main occupation of Greenup people.

Towns:

On U.S. 23 and the Ohio River, fourteen miles north of Ashland, Kentucky is Greenup, the county seat. The Little Sandy River empties into the Ohio here. This town was incorporated in 1814, and was called "Greenupsburg" until in 1871 the name was changed to Greenup, the name of one of the founders. Greenup has a population of about 1,300 (1930 census 1,125) and is a typical farmers' trading center.

It has business buildings are one and two story frame and brick structures, built along the main street, which runs parallel to the river to the public square at the court house.

The court house, the main part, is a two story brick with one story additions for county offices. The court house faces the public square and away from the Ohio River in the back, has been used as a court house for over 100 years, and owing to its location, and its lack of upper stories many of the county's records were lost in the flood of January of this year, while the interior of the first floor of the building is a wreck.
In the front yard is a large band stand, where the band plays on warm summer evenings, also affording a platform for public speakers, and is a haven for loafers by day, not having anything else to do; one can go sit in the band stand and visit with one's neighbors who are likewise idle and lonesome. Rarely is this building emptied of folks by day.

At the rear of the court house is another reminder of old times, a ferry across the Ohio River. A small gasoline motored ferry boat for foot passengers, which tows alongside a large barge for the accommodation of teams and wagons, automobiles, etc.

At the top of the bank, at the ferry landing, is a large bell, of the old farm dinner bell variety, which can be tolled to call the ferry boat across the river when one finds it on the Ohio side when he wants to cross. Not many of these ferries are found today in this section of Kentucky as fine bridges span the river at other points, this ferry, however, seems to do a thriving business.

Greenup is a veritable "Gretna Green" for couples wishing to marry sooner than the laws of Ohio, and other states, permit; many licenses are sold here to people from distant parts.

In the town are three public schools, including the high school, seven churches of all leading denominations, two hotels, a weekly newspaper and is served by the Chesapeake & Ohio Railway.

While the streets of other towns are thronged by city folks in city clothes, this town is different, in that, here are farmers dressed in overalls and hickory shirts and about every other man seemed to be wearing rubber boots, while the old fashioned beards, so common in the early nineties, were to be seen on every hand.
At the courthouse square, the inevitable portly citizen, red faced and imposing, with the usual broadminded grey felt hat, going from one to another of the bystanders, shaking hands with everyone, the essence of affability, we correctly diagnosed this case, a politician.

While Greenup is a lovely small town, of comfortable homes, modern stores doing a thriving business, and shaded streets, it depends almost entirely on the farmers of the surrounding territory for trade, as these factories or other industrial plants in the city. The town lies low along the river, entirely in the flood area, the 1937 flood took a terrible toll of property damage here, we are told that every building in town was flooded most of them in their second stories. However, the residents are bravely cleaning up and rehabilitating themselves to a greater degree than many other river towns, about every store is opened up doing business as before the disaster.

Raceland: This town of 1,100 population (1930) (census) six miles south of Greenup, on U.S. 23, is the site of the large and important repair shops of the Chesapeake & Ohio Railway Company employing many men from surrounding towns as well as those who live here. Many of these workmen live in Huntington, W.Va., and come to and from their work, in automobiles, daily, a distance of 31 miles.

The town was formerly known as Chinville; in 1924, a company of sportsmen, headed by John Keene, of Lexington, Ky., built a racing plant here for running horses, at a cost of about one million dollars. The next year, 1925, the town was incorporated and the name changed to Raceland. For three years 1924 to 1927 many important horse race meets were held here, then the plant, being a heavy financial failure, it was abandoned for this purpose. Since that time the plant has been used for the county fairs and meets of the American Legion. It has
just been sold, 275 acres, a large grand stand, 25 stables, club house, garages and official's houses, for $50,000 to a company who are to convert the plant into a model dairy farm. Raceland is a beautiful place and deserves to grow.

Russell: At Russell, Greenup County, are located the largest individual railway freight yards in the world. More than 3,000 railroad workers are given employment here, their payroll amounts to from $300,000 to $500,000 per month. Some of these workers live here, many of them are from surrounding towns.

The 1930 census gives Russell's population as 2,086 residents. As Russell is really an extension of Ashland, about half of the steel plant of the Armco Company is in Russell, therefore, in Greenup County. Also Russell is the terminus, on the Kentucky side, of the great steel bridge connecting the city with Ironton Ohio. As the connecting link between two great states, this bridge is crossed by an almost constant stream of traffic daily.

The high reaches of this bridge seem to have a deadly fascination for some, as several people, who were tired of living, have walked out in the middle of the structure and dived into the muddy waters of the Ohio, and sank to rise no more.

Russell has six public schools, including one junior and one senior high school, seven churches a theater, public Library (Y.M.C.A.) with 3,000 volumes, and is served by five divisions of the Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad, U.S. Highway23 runs through the town.

Legend: In the early days before Greenup County was partitioned off into Boyd, Carter and Lawrence, it was a large area, and was noted for its many hangings. No time wasted in building gallows, any handy tree served the purpose, a rope thrown over a tree limb, and the hanging was quickly and efficiently done. So many hangings took place at
GREENUP COUNTY:

Modern industry, with factories employing workers from every point of the compass, has not yet invaded Greenup County. Therefore the rapid change of customs, that has affected it's industrialized neighbor county of Boyd, is not so apparent here.

The people here are about all natives, no foreigners and very few are from other states, in fact few hail from other counties in Kentucky.

Farming and stock raising are the leading occupations of the people, they live much as did their fathers, and as one of them so aptly expressed it. "We all work all day and go to bed at night." The gentleman who thus described their activities further explained that, "Folks, who stayed at home, leading peaceful, quiet lives and behaved themselves, rarely figured in the news headlines, only those who got out and stirred up something usually trouble, are mentioned in the newspapers.

Greenup County was formed about 1802 or 1803, at that time was a very large county, since that time however, parts of the county, have been taken to form Boyd, Carter and part of Lawrence Counties.

Among the first officials was a magistrate, Jesse Boone, a brother of that mighty hunter who figures so prominently in the history of Kentucky, Daniel Boone.

Beside the usual crops farmed elsewhere in the state, corn, wheat, oats and forage crops, the fertile soil of Greenup produces fine tobacco, which is a very important crop here.

Pure cattle, hogs and sheep are raised extensively, an important source of income to the farmers.
BOYD COUNTY KENTUCKY
GREENUP COUNTY:

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Early Blast Furnace Practice: Many old charcoal furnaces still stand in silent memory of men and women who labored to produce the iron of commerce starting over a century ago and continuing until the early 90's. The masonry on these furnaces is superb, even the exterior of the rocks that were in the stacks were chamfered and cranelcd as carefully as if they were stone in a structure of a present day building. Huge blocks of stone were carved out of a native rock and each craftsman left them his individual mark, some their initials, other figures of trees. In each instance the name of the builder, the date as well as the name of the furnace, was carved on the capstone.

The beginning of the iron industry in Eastern Kentucky after 1800 was not for commercial purposes, but for the purpose of aiding in making salt. The first charcoal iron manufactured in Eastern Kentucky was by a man of all trades, a tanner, a preacher, a dentist and a statesman. He manufactured salt for domestic purposes and salting hides, by evaporating it in wooden troughs. The process of evaporation was so slow that he conceived the idea of making iron in a small furnace and casting it into parts of 40 inches in diameter, called salts and using them as coals and using them for evaporating purposes.

This small furnace was built in the southern part of Greenup County and the blast was furnished by man driven bellows. It produced a ton of iron a day and was 16 or 18 feet high and about 8 feet at the base. The stack was made of sandstone and lined with native ganister. The irksome task of furnishing the blast was accomplished similar to the blast that is furnished for an ordinary blacksmith forge. How long it took to make a heat is unknown, but sufficient metal was tapped to make several castings.

After the castings were poured the slack probably was allowed to
cool off, then recharged and another heat made. After the owner had supplied his little community with salt, he then cast pots, pans, fire-place implements, waffle irons, trivets, sad irons, shoe lasts, hammers and wedges.

Later the owner of this stack built a dam and used an undershot water wheel to furnish power for the wooden flowing tube. The wheel actuated a rocker arm and the wheezing could be heard a long distance from the furnace. The stack made as high as 6 tons of metal per day.

Other furnaces sprang up and castings were shipped down the Little Sandy River and the Ohio River as far as Louisville. There was no bell on the old-time furnace. A plate covered the top at times other than when the top was being charged. Charcoal iron was also worked into blooms upon the anvil by trip hammers operated by cams and levers which were actuated by a water wheel. After being worked to the proper consistency, the metal was spun out on an iron rod, like a huge ball of taffy. The water wheel operated a series of cams that lifted the hammer of various weights and allowed it to drop and reduce to bloom and plates. These plates were shipped to Louisville for final rolling into sheets. Some, however, were drawn out and made into nails, grill work, oxen shoes, gun barrels, crooks and other dental instruments and farming instruments such as scythes and sickles.

The sturdiness of the German race was imported to these places to do the harder work as the iron industry assumed a commercial aspect. The English people who had learned metallurgy in their native country came as masters. Great tracts of land were bought, some numbering 10,000 acres; the price paid, if any, was probably less than 50¢ per acre. These were known as furnace tracts and were subdivided into hillside farms. The furnace was built in a convenient place where the bottom land was wide enough for a stock bank, pot house and furnace site. The master's house was built near by where a good view of the operation could be had at all times.

The sheds were put together with wooden pegs and pins. Even the roof was put on without the use of nails. Clapboards were fastened with pin and
from the first cast, that they would be married and the bonds of matrimony would prove as strong as the bonds of iron. Romance has it that one stroke of the iron-master's hammer, and he could join those initials that he most desired.

The commissary, a spacious building, was heated by an open fireplace, a large pudgy chimney being at one end and a double door at the other. This room was turned into a gathering place at night. A popping fire was built in the fireplace and at one side was a platform for the musicians. After the crowd had gathered, square dances were enjoyed. As the evening wore on refreshments were served consisting of cold sliced meat, native fruits, nut salad and cider, and there was parched corn and nuts that had been roasted on the hearth for the children.

The young women were bedecked in bright colors and occasionally a gay colored handkerchief, protruded from the pocket or a gay colored necktie adored a pretentious young man. The dance continued until the horn blew to announce the time for the next shift to come on duty at the furnace. Having refreshed themselves throughout the day they returned to the furnace at night, the second evening of the life of the new industry. They gathered around the pot house and waited until the furnace was tapped.

When the top of the furnace was removed instead of a great cloud of carbon flying out and dirty unsightly smoke, a pale blue smoke arose and a gust of wood ashes was blown out to settle down on the mossy banks of the hillside. All the picturesqueness is gone save the stones of the furnace proper and the master's house which was of early American architecture, embodying some of the English.

The front door was spacious and paneled, over which there was a fan light on either side of which were small panes of glass. The windows usually had 12 panes to the sash and were in alignment, two in each room upstairs and two down. The attic was lighted with fan lights on each side of the chimney. The first floor had big open fire places at each end.
second floor had none. The kitchen, much larger than the present day kitchen used an open fire place for cooking and was floored with poplar wood that was sanded and bleached. The other rooms were floored with white or black walnut with three wide boards, and the dining room usually was paneled. Slate brought from Pennsylvania sometimes was used for roofing and sometimes clapboards. A spacious warming house stood in the rear for storage and a well, with a sweep, stood in the front yard. The housing of the wood chopper was a low stock shed scarcely high enough in which to stand erect. Sometimes men came from nearby counties to chop wood after their crops had been laid by. They chopped wood by daylight and racked it by moonlight. This was the most laborious task of the iron industry.

The man who took up the wood after it was corded was known as an under manager, and he gave out the plots of land over which the men were to chop. The furnace workers always were docked whether they dug ore or chopped wood. If they stacked the wood too loosely, they were docked, or if the wood was in too large pieces they were docked. If the ore was wet, they were docked. There was always some way to cut from their earnings. Ricks like cooperage wagons were used to haul charcoal and were pulled by oxen from the charcoal bed to the furnace. The charcoal frequently would fire upon its journey from the pits and a bucket was carried that water might be taken from water holes to quench any such premature fires.

Carts were used to haul the ore and sometimes a long journey from the furnace up the haul road was necessary. Women as well as men dug ore. When they were not digging ore, they were hunting ore.

The men who placed the ore in long kilns were called ore "setters" and it took some weeks to burn the ore. If the ore fused in the process of burning, it was said to "loop"; if it fired too much at one point, a mixture of charcoal dust and dirt called green dust, was thrown over it.

The word "bash" meant to daub it up as one would daub the leak in a chimney; it also meant the larger part of the interior of the furnace; and the large wooden trough made by hallowing out a log in which the mud
GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT
GREENUP COUNTY

was kept for daubing up purposes. "Gone to pot" was an expression used when the iron was poor; which quality was used for heating purposes, the better quality being used for commercial pig iron. The top of the furnace was called the "bell", the casting house, "the pot house" and the air cylinder, the "blowing tub". The chunk of material left at the bottom of the furnace was called a "soggan". A mixture of spherules of iron and slag was called "bull dog".

(Superstition entered into the making of iron in early days) Salt-peter from the caves in the rocks added to the charge of the furnace, as well as sand and salt. The time of lighting the furnace had some superstitious meaning. No doubt the addition of sand and salt helped to glaze the inside of the furnace. The size of the hearths regulated the time of casting. When the hearth was small the furnace was cast every six hours, but as the hearth burned out the casting time was moved up to every eight hours and then to every 12 hours.

Some of these early furnaces are in good state of preservation. Mount Savage stack looks as if it had been blown out yesterday and the inside is as slick as a churn. Boone furnace is relined and the hearth is set ready for the bash. The masonry looks like it had been turned in a potters wheel instead of being built piece by piece. Laurel furnace is cut from a solid stone, the base 30 feet square at the bottom and about 12 or 14 feet high is one large monolith that is hollowed out in the center to receive the hearth and part of the bash. This huge stone was not left rough, but was cut smooth and craned, the corners being chased out with a chisel like a ribbon running down either side of each corner.

Over the capstone are cut these words, "Laurel, Built----", the rest of the inscription, the weather had destroyed. Huge piles of stone and rock in shapeless form are all that now remain of Amanda furnace.

Landmarks and Remains: The modern builder has taken the sides of old Bellefonte for foundation and chimney pieces. A slag pile alone marks
the site of Clinton. Sandy has fallendown. A red-scarred hillside is all that remains of Star / While Bauna Vista leaves behind a mere fragment of its former self. Steam, Pennsylvania, Hanny well and Hopewell still retain their general outline as good today as ever, but the inner lining has dropped from the wear of elements and fills up the bottom closing the three vents for air, iron and cinder with cairns of rocks. Kenton, Hampshire, Buffalo, Enterprise and Raccoon look like ivy mantled towers and being closer to the thoroughfares often are visited. One furnace alone left no scar of slag pile. They flushed into the river and as the slag was checked into tiny bits or blown up in foam the slag made its way down the river to oblivion.

Metal made in these crude but simple furnaces varied from 1 to 25 tons a day. Charlotte at Iron Hill was the first to use an iron jacket. Steam was the motive power. The stack made 25 tons in 24 hours. Part of the jacket was made of cast iron boiled together and cast at one of the adjoining furnaces. Many segments were required for this stack which in recent years was torn down and the iron recovered. People followed the business of hauling the soogan from these furnaces after they were blasted apart and melted in the modern blast furnace.

Many experiments were tried in old charcoal furnaces using stone coal, but with small success. Princess furnace operated with stone coal, and was the first to be built for this purpose in Eastern Kentucky. Later, when the stack was moved to Low Moor, Virginia the slag was reworked.

Several foundry men lost their jobs because they could not make iron with stone coal in the old type charcoal furnace. Most of these furnaces used cold blast and operated on 3 to 4 pounds pressure. However, the last to blow out---Bellefonte---was converted into a hot blast furnace in its later years. The stack was built in 1826 and made its last iron in 1893. It was believed by these early iron masters, that stone coal would mark the ore, that is it would have a spot of prenatal influence and for this reason stone coal was
not used for burning the ore. All iron was graded by fracture and it was described as open, opener, and openest.

By Dr. G. G. Bell, dentist
Ashland, Kentucky

Appeared in "Steel"--May 21, 1931
The old Pennsylvania furnace stock in Greenup County, Kentucky which made its initial cast in 1848.

Laures Stock, in Greenup County, Kentucky, with its base of solid stone, 30 feet square and 14 feet high, hollowed out in the center to receive the hearth and haah.

"Amanda Furnace" A. D. 1829 is the inscription chisled in the native stone wall which enclosed the stock bank of this stock in Greenup County, Kentucky.

Buffalo Stock: Greenup County, Kentucky which was built in 1855 and produced 3,000 metric tons of charcoal iron annually.

An old store building brick in structure, is left standing at Bellfonte, Kentucky (Greenup Co.) This store was built in 1825 and for many years was used as a storage room for relics which were left of the furnaces, records of processes by which certain accomplishments were made in the iron industry, recipes, Indian relics and many others. These articles were sent in car loads to Henry Ford for a museum in Detroit, Michigan.

Dr. G. B. Bell, Ashland, Ky.
In Greenup County...  

Mound Builders Left Their Mark

By Alvin and Fannie Madden-Girder

Driving down the gravel driveway to the Cropper family home on the Greenup County bank of the Ohio River in South Portsmouth, one notices a straight seven-foot-high narrow ridge to the left, covered with trees and vines over with honeysuckle and brush.

Nothing special at first sight, just an odd little ridge of some sort, at least until you walk on the other side with Dwight Cropper, and he points out that the ridge is one wall of a large square-shaped prehistoric enclosure, built by people who left little more than strange earthworks, skillfully crafted arrowheads and tools and a lot of unanswered questions.

These mound walls have been measured many times by historians, archaeologists and the curious. They form a perfect square with slightly rounded corners. Each wall is 800 feet long, and each square encloses about 15 acres of land. The walls have openings in their centers.

Generations of school children have passed the South Portsmouth mounds each day on their way to social studies classes where they learned about the ancient Egyptian pyramid builders. Probably very few, though, have learned about the earth-movers who worked in their own county centuries ago.

Cropper, a young farmer and musical instrument maker, says he has always been fascinated by the mounds and occasionally tours the site with a children’s class. A reverence and respect for heritage are apparent as he talks of the mounds and the history of the region. His family has lived on this piece of ground since the late 1700’s, about the time the last Shawnee in the area was reported killed. His is the seventh generation to live and farm the land directly opposite the old mouth of the Scioto River, where it used to empty into the Ohio before a canal was built to divert it upstream through Portsmouth, Ohio.

The mound on the Cropper farm is part of a group of earthwork constructions called the Portsmouth works. It includes mounds on both the Kentucky and Ohio sides of the river from South Portsmouth to Siloam, Kentucky, about eight miles upriver. The mound group is believed to have been constructed by the Hopewell people about 1,500 years ago, although evidence of both the Adena and Fort Ancient cultures has made the stretch along the river from South Portsmouth to Siloam the largest and most impressive prehistoric site in Kentucky.

“This is really just the tip of the iceberg,” says Cropper, pointing at the mound ridges. “There are many mounds like this throughout the state, but souvenir-hunters and construction have taken their toll on them.”

In order to prevent the South Portsmouth mounds from being easily destroyed, Cropper worked two years ago to place the mound site on the National Register of Historic Places. Such protection of the mounds may stave any future destructive forces until archaeologists have a chance to study the mounds.

Some damage, both natural and man inflicted, has already occurred. Originally, two pairs of parallel mounds ran 2,000 feet from the northeast and southwest walls of the square, according to Squier and Davis, the earliest archaeologists to visit the area and map the mounds. At the time of their mid-1800’s survey, the square’s mound walls were 20 feet high and the parallel walls were over 10 feet high. The walls of the square enclosure are now between seven and 12 feet high, worn down by the weather, and only one of the four long parallel walls still exists, a barely visible rise of ground on the southwest side of the square, its shape rounded and flattened by erosion and repeated cultivation. The mound parallel to it was destroyed by the construction of a Chesapeake and Ohio railroad track, and the two parallel mounds on the northeast side of the square were flattened by white people setting in an area which now has several roads and more than 20 buildings on it.

In Greenup County, there are more than a dozen sites of Indian mounds, forts and villages, representing three ancient cultures of native Americans. These sites, according to a 1932 report by University of Kentucky archaeologists W. S. Webb and W. D. Funkhouser, make Greenup “the richest county in Kentucky in archeological and materials and remains of Indians.”

But, according to Cropper, many of the county’s archeological riches are gone, hauled away from the sites by amateur archaeologists and souvenir-hunters. “They think they are doing something valuable to preserve these arrowheads and artifacts. But what they are really doing is destroying their meaning.”

Cropper says artifacts, without the knowledge of their location and their depth in the soil, are of little value historically.

“They become of no value because their only real value is in relation to the site. But arrowhead hunters not only devalue the piece they pick up, but also the area they take it from. They have removed a piece from the puzzle.”

For this reason, Cropper and his family deny souvenir-hunters who wish to dig on the land access to the site. Cropper only picks up those artifacts which surface, such as those which have been plowed out of the ground. “That way, I can keep them from being broken when we plow again next year,” he says. He also carefully records the location of any artifact he finds.

As Cropper is quick to point out, nobody knows very much at all about the area’s prehistoric residents and the purpose of their mounds. From the discovery of the first mounds in America, nearly all writing and research about them was stained with prejudice. One of the early theorists, Benjamin Smith Barton, in a 1787 book devoted to discussion of the Ohio River mounds, suggested that the mounds had been built by Danish immigrants of pre-Columbus times. Citing no evidence for this, Barton—who later denounced his theory as “premature publication” and the product of “youthful exuberance”—set off the myth of a lost race of white mound builders.

Continued on page 17
If hills could talk, these hills across the Ohio River from the Croppler farm might answer some of the many questions archeologists have about the prehistoric mound builders who lived in this area centuries ago.

Some of the artifacts found by Dwight Cropper span centuries of prehistoric time. Pictured are spearpoints, arrowheads, scrapers, a drill, an axe head and a hoe.

The South Portsmouth mounds are believed to have been built by the Hopewells about 400 B.C.

About the same time, Benjamin Franklin suggested in a letter to Noah Webster that perhaps sixteenth century Spanish explorer Hernando DeSoto had constructed the Ohio River earthworks. Webster tried to prove the theory, but after some research, concluded that all evidence showed that the mound builders were ancestors of the present-day Indians.

Other theorists grew more and more ridiculous, telling tales of the Ten Lost Tribes of biblical times and their connection to the mound builders, a story about a man who was carried from Asia by an angel, and theories about Jews who were led by God to the New World through an opening in the sea. A similar theory said that Jewish ancestors built the mounds in Ohio, hoping to climb into the sky and enter "the promised land."

The apparent aim of these early theories was to prove that the Indians were too savage and uncivilized to create anything of importance and beauty. Based on myths and prejudices, these theories made it easier for whites to take the Indians' lands from them, because the Indians had at one time conquered a superior "lost white race."

Modern-day archeologists, historians and anthropologists believe the mound builders were the same race of native Americans found here by early settlers, that their society experienced a period much like Europe's Dark Ages and subsequently the level of civilization fell to the point it was at when whites came to the New World.

But no one can know for sure, just as no one can ever be sure about the purpose of the mounds. When whites began settling the Eastern United States, the Indians' lives were so disrupted by displacement that many of the older legends and traditions were lost, and by the time most historians became concerned about these, it was too late.

Christopher Gist, an explorer who came through Kentucky and Ohio in 1751 on a surveying expedition for the Ohio Land Company, discovered Shawnees using the South Portsmouth mounds for ceremonies and burials. The Shawnee told him of an earlier tribe which regarded the mounds as sacred. The original purpose of the mounds is still unknown, although several theories have been developed.

When the first settlers came to Northeastern Kentucky, the Ohio River was very wide and quite shallow just above the mouth of the Scioto, enabling Dwight Cropper's ancestors to wade across the river to Portsmouth during dry summer seasons. Archeologists Webb and Funkhouser, who visited the site in 1930, wrote that the river had "once cut much closer to the mounds, perhaps within 200 yards, lending credence to the theory that the long walls and the square embankment were designed as floodwalls."

One theory suggests the mound was a defense system or fort. Another says the mounds were used to trap and enclose animals, and the natural ford in the river and nearby salt lakes made the site excellent for such interpretation since the area would have had many animals.

Other archeologists have speculated that the enclosures could have been used for race tracks or some form of recreation. Round stone balls, highly polished from much rolling, have been found on the Croppler farm, along with stone clubs resembling baseball bats. These may have been used to play a primitive version of lacrosse, and perhaps the square earthworks was a prehistoric stadium for this sport.

Whatever their purpose, the mounds continue to fascinate people and make them wonder about the men who moved tons of earth and carefully shaped them into prehistoric architecture.

And the mounds make Dwight Cropper wonder about all the time that has passed and the Indians who lived in the area for centuries before his own ancestors settled here. "A lot of people don't understand that," he says. "My family has been here for seven generations, but when you consider the people who built these mounds and how long they lived here, it's mindboggling."
An 1848 map of the South Portsmouth mounds. Only the square enclosure and one of the parallel mounds exist today. At the top left is the Ohio River.
Dr. Young,

Hello,

Enclosed is an article Fannie and I wrote for Back Home in Kentucky magazine. You may wish to read it at your leisure. It is about a group of Indian mounds in Western Greenup County. Just yesterday, we received a note from the farmer who owns some of the land the mounds are located on. He says a planned stripmine nearby may destroy part of the prehistoric structures.

While we still have to contact him about the extent of this threat, we were wondering if maybe you or some of your contacts at Kentucky Historical Society or elsewhere could help fight against the destruction of these important historical landmarks. Once they are lost, we can never regain them. While extensive archeological studies have never taken place at these mounds, perhaps some day someone will want to undertake such a project. Yet, if they are destroyed or harmed in any way now, that will be impossible.

You may know of other professors of history here at MSU who would be willing to work to preserve the mounds. While Fannie and I will help in what small way we can, historians like yourself can make perhaps the biggest impact on officials who will be deciding if the land will be stripmined.

Let us know what you think. In the meantime, we will contact Dwight Cropper and get all the details about the proposed mining.

Thanks,

Alvin Madden-Grider

P.S. Good news. Looks like we'll be around another semester. They couldn't locate a Ph.D. for the journalism job, so it looks as if I'll be teaching two courses in the spring and helping with the yearbook. Also, Fannie's getting a teaching assistantship in journalism.
Recalling The School Days Of Young Jesse Stuart

Noted Author's Struggle For Education Is An Inspiration!

By James Clell Neace & Virgil W. Preston - 1993

In the mid-1920's, author Preston attended Morehead State Normal School (now Morehead State University) where one of his classmates was Jesse Stuart (1906-1984). Author Preston, who is a Stuart fan and has some of Stuart's books in his home library, remembers Stuart at Morehead as "a heavy-set fellow, not studiously inclined."

In preparation for this article, author Neace examined some of Jesse Stuart's writings. No mention of Stuart's school days at Morehead was found. However, in one of his books Jesse stated that his brother James was kicked out of college for smoking a cigar on campus (school and date not specified). Putting two and two together, author Neace thinks the school was Morehead and the date was the 1930's. This conjecture is based on the following two events:

In the early 1930's, author Neace's aunt Drucilla Noble attended Morehead (then Morehead State Teacher's College). After returning home, she was teaching grade-school at Hardshell and author Neace was one of her pupils. One day in our spelling class the word "boulevard" came up and Drucilla was explaining the meaning of this word to the class. She told us that at Morehead there was a firm rule which stated: "Smoking is forbidden on the campus but is permitted on the boulevard."

In the early 1940's, author Neace attended Morehead (then Morehead State College). There he took a course in American literature under a tenured elderly professor, affectionately called "Miss Betty." One of Miss Betty's favorite jokes was about Jesse Stuart's younger brother, James. She stated that one day James came limping into class and she asked him what was the cause of his affliction. James' reply was, "I dropped a copy of 'Anthony Adverse' on my foot." (Note: In one of his books, Jesse stated that James became lame in one leg after a bout with typhoid fever brought on by him drinking polluted water from a creek.)

On August 8, 1906 baby Jesse was born to Mitchell and Martha Hilton Stuart in a log cabin in W-Hollow in Greenup County, Kentucky. Jesse's road to fame as a writer would take him, in turn, to Plum Grove School, Greenup High School, Lincoln Memorial University, Vanderbilt University, and George Peabody College.

In recalling his grade-school days at Plum Grove School (PGS), Jesse mentions his father as the person who taught him to observe, love, and respect the miracles of nature. This trait later served him well when he became a writer. Although Mitchell had no formal education himself, he instilled a yearning for knowledge in young Jesse. Mitchell was trustee of PGS and he took special interest in the hiring of the best available teachers for his children.

Plum Grove School was a one-room school where one teacher taught all eight grades. School began in July and lasted for five months each year. School lunches were carried from home in hard buckets. All children went barefoot until late October. Discipline was maintained by teachers who did not hesitate to use the rod.

Marker near Stuart's home in Greenup County.

While Jesse was in the upper grades, hard times came to the Stuart family due to crop failures two years in a row. To feed his family, Mitchell got a job as a section-hand on the railroad. Jesse was taken out of school to fill in for his father on the farm. Jesse earned some money for the family by working for local farmers who paid him twenty-five cents a day.

At the age of thirteen years, Jesse, who was large for his age, got a job as a helper on a street-paving job in the town of Greenup, four miles away. While working in front of Greenup High School (GHS), Jesse, inspired by the beauty of the building, dreamed of entering high-school there one day.

That fall, after the street-paving job was completed, Jesse
and his sister Sophia entered GHS. They reached school by walking through the hills. Except for Jesse failing algebra, both children did well in school that first year.

When the school term ended, Mitchell, still working away from home on the railroad, placed Jesse in charge of the family farm operations. This arrangement continued for each of Jesse's four years at GHS.

Jesse's second year at GHS was a happy time for him. Now more confident, Jesse took algebra over again and made a grade of A this time. He especially liked his English class where he was introduced to theme writing and to the poetry of Robert Burns.

In his third year at GHS, Jesse, still having trouble with math, made a grade of D-minus in geometry. Another blow to his self-esteem came in the form of a sneak-attack from the school bully who blackened both of Jesse's eyes and knocked him out cold.

This unfortunate incident was followed by a period of despondency for Jesse. He suffered from having to appear in public with his damaged face and from overhearing the remarks of people pointing him out as the boy whom the bully had beaten-up.

Determined to even the score, Jesse went into training. He made a punching bag by placing sand in a sack and hanging the sack from a rafter in the family smokehouse. There, day after day, week after week, Jesse would slug the sack with all his strength. Then it happened! In the same schoolroom where Jesse was beaten-up before, the bully again approached Jesse one day. This time Jesse was ready. The bully started to sing his little battle song, "Fe fi fo fum—" but before he could finish, he was on the floor, knocked out cold with both eyes blackened.

When Jesse graduated from GHS, he faced a troubling decision: would he stay at home and help with the family farm, or would he go to college? Jesse finally decided that his best, and perhaps only means for advancement was for him to enter college. He chose Berea College. Mitchell, who had come to depend upon Jesse to help with the family farm, forbade Jesse (who was still a minor) to leave home. Mitchell pointed out that James was still too small to plow. One day, while Mitchell was away, Jesse "slipped-off" from home and hitch-hiked to Berea. Mitchell, too poor to hire a plowman, now had to work all day on the railroad then come home and plow at night by moonlight.

At Berea College Jesse asked to see the college dean. The dean told Jesse that the college was already filled to capacity for that year and that there already were over a hundred new applicants for admission for the following year. The dean suggested that Jesse try Lincoln Memorial University (LMU) at Harrogate, Tennessee (near Cumberland Gap).

At first the dean at LMU was leery about taking Jesse aboard. Jesse had told him that he owned only ten dollars and could get no money from home. This meant that Jesse would have to earn all of his expenses there. To do this would require working a minimum of half a day each weekday and all day on Saturdays. Jesse persisted and finally persuaded the dean to let him give it a try. (Note: Jesse played an "ace in the hole" that the Berea dean had told him about—namely, that the LMU dean, like Jesse, was from the hills of Kentucky. Soon Jesse and the dean were talking about hills being so dark that hootowls there flew around in the daytime.)

Jesse made the grade but just barely. He worked at rock quarries, on water lines, on sewer lines, in the fields, in shops as a blacksmith—at any work needed at LMU. Food was always scarce and Jesse went hungry all the time. Once Jesse almost died from poisoning he got from a can of pork-and-beans he stole from the college kitchen. Classwork was stiff and there was never enough time for study.

Came the Christmas holidays and Jesse became homesick. Broke, he borrowed one dollar from a friend and started hitch-hiking toward Lexington in a cold December rain. Seven rides later, one of them in a wagon, Jesse was still only twenty

Character is not made in a crisis—it is only exhibited. —Dr. Robert Freeman
Jesse’s eighth ride was with an elderly man who had been in Florida and was now headed for his home in Michigan. He was driving a quarter-ton Ford truck. At Corbin the old man got lost, made a wrong turn, and headed back south. Even though Jesse expressed puzzlement about the way the hills were getting bigger instead of smaller, the old man did not discover his error until they were twenty miles from LMU. At this point they had two simultaneous blowouts and when they got out of the truck they saw that they were at the same place where Jesse had first climbed aboard.

The old man flew into a rage and said to Jesse, “I should not have picked you up; I was talking to you and made this mistake.” It was now night time and the rain was pouring. (Note: The authors well remember the old-style tires and rims of the day which, with their frequent blowouts, were the bane of early motorists. The problem was caused by a flexible, detachable rim-insert which sometimes pinched the pneumatic inner tube, causing the puncture.)

The old man turned the truck around and they “rode the rims” until they came to an empty chicken house. There the old man got some blankets from the back end of his truck and he and Jesse went inside to sleep. About midnight, the old man began hallucinating and in a loud voice laced with curses, repeatedly declared his intention to kill Jesse. Jesse jumped out of bed, broke off a rail from the chicken roost and, holding the club in his hand, sat up the rest of the night with a blanket wrapped around himself for warmth. The old man gradually quieted down and went back to sleep.

Next morning Jesse helped the old man fix the two flats and they headed north again. On Cumberland Mountain they had another blowout. Jesse now left the old man and caught another ride. This time he reached Lexington but it was now dark and further hitch-hiking was out of the question. Jesse purchased a train ticket to Winchester for sixty-seven cents. At Winchester, Jesse hid in the train toilet.

After the train passed Winchester, the conductor found Jesse in the toilet and threatened to kick his tail and throw him off the train. Jesse explained his situation but the conductor told him to either pay up or get off the train. Allie Young of Morehead (for whom Allie Young Hall was named) was on the train and heard the commotion. He paid Jesse’s fare which was $3.64. (Jesse insisted on pitching in his last thirty-three cents.) Jesse rode the train on to Ashland and from there he hitch-hiked to Greenup. It was now Christmas morning.

Walking on home, Jesse went to the kitchen window to see what his mom was doing. He saw her packing a box of Christmas goodies to send him, having given up hope of him coming home for Christmas. Jesse walked inside and had an emotional reunion with his family.

Jesse could see deeper lines across his father’s face. The hard work was taking its toll. Mitchell took Jesse for a walk over the hills he knew and loved so well. This had a soothing effect on Jesse. The quiet and peace he found there was a pleasant change from the constant turmoil he had been through ever since he ran away from home. Remembering how happy he had been before going away to school, Jesse asked himself why and for what reason he left home.

Jesse told his parents about owing Allie Young some money for train fare and that he was now completely broke. His mother gave him seven dollars “egg money” she had saved. Mitchell gave him what may have been his only five dollars, even though he had not yet forgiven Jesse for running away from home.

Back at LMU, Jesse entered some student writing contests, where monetary prizes were offered in each of the following three categories: poems, short stories, and essays. The submitted papers were identified by numbers only and impartial English professors from various other colleges were chosen as judges. Jesse entered a paper in each of the three categories. He won first place in poetry, and his two remaining papers took first and second place, respectively, in the short-story contest. Jesse’s writing ability was now firmly established.

Graduating from LMU, Jesse returned home. Mitchell, who stated that the young men working on the railroad had been giving him special treatment for having a son in college, now told Jesse that he had forgiven him for running away from home.

For the next three years Jesse taught school in his home county. The last two of these years was as principal of his old alma mater, GHS. Then he grew restless again. He longed to get back to writing. He decided to enter graduate school at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee.

Jesse’s days at Vanderbilt were not happy ones for him. The money he had earned as a schoolteacher was gone and, now broke, he was trying to scrape a living there while attending college. After numerous false starts, he finally landed a job as a school janitor where he worked seven hours of each day. The work was hard and he was the only white janitor among the fifty-nine janitors at Vanderbilt. He had no money for textbooks and could afford only eleven meals a week (instead of the usual twenty-one). This scantly diet showed, both in his general health...
and in his grades.

Because of lack of food, Jesse’s ‘guts were always growling for food.” He was so embarrassed, especially when girls were nearby, that he sat through many lectures with his hands pressed on his abdomen, trying to stop the incessant growling.

Nothing at LMU had prepared Jesse for what he found at Vanderbilt. Students who wished to do so smoked cigars, pipes, or cigarettes in all the classes. During class, pipe smokers would saunter up to the professor’s desk and casually fill their pipes from his tobacco pouch. Tennessee moonshine flowed freely on the campus, even among the faculty members. Drunks on campus were merely escorted to their rooms by campus security and put to bed. Clearly, Vanderbilt was not a work-oriented campus at that time. Some students laughed in Jesse’s face when he told them he was there to become a writer and poet. They told him he should be playing football.

Disaster came in the form of a fire which burned Jesse’s dormitory to the ground. Hundreds of Jesse’s poems and other literary works went up in smoke, along with any clothing and other possessions he had in his room. Also lost was his master’s thesis and this loss knocked him out of obtaining a MA degree. Jesse borrowed some clothing from an old friend in Greenup.

The saving grace for Jesse at Vanderbilt came when an English professor who, just before Jesse departed, read some of his literary works and immediately recognized his talent. The advice this professor gave Jesse changed his whole life. He said to Jesse, “Go back to your country. Go back there and write of your people... Be your honest self.”

Jesse returned home and began helping with the crops. One day three men appeared and asked for Jesse. They told Jesse they “Wanted him back in school.” Jesse immediately and firmly replied, “I am not going.” The men then told Jesse they wanted him for superintendent of the Greenup County Schools. Now that was different! Jesse, then just twenty-four years old, became very interested in the conversation.

Later in life Jesse would write that the superintendency was worse for him than World War II. His problem was that at LMU and Vanderbilt he had not taken any courses in education. As the hectic year drew to a close, the school board members, telling Jesse that he had tried to do too much in too short a time and that the people were riled against him, asked him to switch jobs and become principal of McKell High School. Things went better for Jesse at McKell. Even so, he decided that since he was making his living in the field of education, it was high time for him to get some formal training in the subject.

School out, Jesse entered summer school at George Peabody College for teachers in Nashville, Tennessee. He took his brother James along with him that summer. Now Jesse had two mouths to feed and he wrote, “Some days we didn’t know where our food would come from.” However, before long things began to look up for the Stuart brothers. At the suggestion of an English professor at Peabody, Jesse submitted some of his manuscripts to various publishers. Soon checks were coming in and Jesse and James began to get their meals in the college cafeteria instead of buying cut-rate stale bread at the local grocery. Jesse even began sending money home so his father could buy some needed farm implements.

Jesse spent a total of four summers at Peabody (the equivalent of one full year). Had he written a thesis, he would have been qualified for an MA degree.

Years later, now an experienced educator, Jesse Stuart was deeply disturbed by the social upheavals in America, on college campuses and elsewhere, during the 1960’s. He pointed out the salient fact that the very survival of our civilization is now at stake. He strongly advocated that we get back to the basics in education, as exemplified by the old one-room schools with their emphasis on training for discipline, citizenship, scholarship, self-reliance, and character building. Mr. Stuart declared, “We’ve lost something and we’ve got to get it back.” To this the authors, who remember their own years of teaching in one-room schools, say a resounding “Amen!”

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