

Northern Kentucky Views Presents:

Florence
Boone County
Kentucky

By

Members of the Boone County Historical Society

1958

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FLORENCE
BOONE COUNTY
KENTUCKY

PAPERS BY
MEMBERS OF THE
BOONE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
FLORENCE, KENTUCKY

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HISTORY OF FLORENCE

BY LUCILLE W. JONES

The original settlers of what is now known as the town of Florence, were believed to be some escaped Hessian soldiers, who came down the Ohio River and traveled by foot 10 miles from Cincinnati, Ohio. Florence is now one of the oldest and most interesting towns of Northern Kentucky. It has increased in population about 695 in the past ten years. There is only one other town in Northern Kentucky that has surpassed Florence. Our town is located at the intersection of two great highways, the Dixie and U. S. 42 just 10 miles south of Cincinnati, Ohio, which makes it easily accessible to the Queen City.

In the early days of the settlement of Kentucky, Florence was a trading post for the Indians and was called "Pow-Wow" and "Polecat" because Indians brought their furs here for exchange. The first English name was "Crossroads" because of the intersection of the roads to Union and Burlington with the Ridge Road (now the Dixie Highway). During the period 1815 to 1820 the Wilhoit family, the Crisler family, and the Conner family emigrated here and purchased land. In 1821 a young lawyer by the name of Thomas Madden came here from Covington, Kentucky, and saw the possibility of the beginning of a large town on account of the crossroads. He purchased a farm from Joshua Zimmerman at the junction of the Price Pike with the Burlington Pike. Mr. Madden, Wilhelm Wilhoit, Henry Crisler, and Jacob Conner laid out the village and it was called Maddentown, but a year later Mr. Madden sold his land and moved from the community. The village was then called "Connersville" in honor of Jacob Conner, who owned most of the land which had been mapped out for the town. It was called "Connersville" until 1829 when the U. S. Government was petitioned to establish a post office in the town. When the name Connersville was sent to the Postoffice Department they informed the residents of the town that they would have to choose another name since there was a town by that name in Harrison County. The village had previously organized and trustees had been elected but it was not incorporated. Therefore, the trustees held an election for the purpose of finding a suitable name for the village. Twenty-five votes were cast, 16 for the name "Florence," and on June 10, 1830, by an act of the legislature, "Florence" was incorporated with a

population of 63. The Post Office was established and located at the junction of Banklick Street and Dixie Highway. Pitman Clondis became the first Postmaster.

We have noticed that many of the streets were named for famous men of the county and state, such as Shelby, Girard, Montgomery and Youell Streets. Center Street was so named because it splits the west end of the town into two equal parts. The locust trees along the sides of the street gives Locust Street its name.

The Covington to Lexington Turnpike was completed in 1836, and proved to be a great help to the town, which grew slowly until 1870. At that time the population numbered 374, but there seems to have been a definite backslide for in the year 1890, the population had decreased to 250.

During the period between 1830-1900, several business places were started. Churches were built, a school was established and two hotels were in operation. These hotels were operated during the stagecoach days when the old Lexington Pike was one of the main routes. Since Florence was the first stop out of Covington and horses were changed here, many of the travelers would stop here to spend the night. They would often go back to the city in a carriage and then return for the night's stay. This made the hotel business very profitable. Also, because of the stagecoach, blacksmiths, harness makers and carriage makers had a lucrative trade. C. C. Bradford made carriages, Fred Reich had a blacksmith shop in which he made wagons, and a harness maker named Burke made harness, saddles, whips, dusters and other articles. It was a sad day for all these industries when the railroad was built through the neighboring town of Erlanger.

The Boone County Journal, edited by Ben Deering, was the beginning of the Boone County Recorder, now located in Burlington. This paper, printed in Florence, had for its slogan. "Independent in all things; neutral in nothing; hew to the line; let the chips fall where they may."

A four day fair was held every fall in the town. The fairgrounds located on the Lexington Turnpike, furnished all kinds of entertainment, and offered high premiums. It was operated by the Northern Agricultural Fair Association, and the capital stock was \$8,000. It was organized in 1896, and the first officers were; President, Ben F. McGlasson; Vice President, E. H. Blankenbecker; Secretary, G. J. Allen; and Treasurer, W. P. Carpenter.

Florence was very fortunate to have such well-known doctors

as B. A. Dulaney, J. A. Corey, Charles R. Slater; S. S. Scott, A. Sayre and Charles T. Souther to practise here during the latter part of the nineteenth century.

The Masonic Lodge held its meetings in the Town Hall, a building which has served the community well as an educational center. The Odd Fellows Lodge was fortunate enough to build a three story building in 1869. T. L. Swetman dealer in dry-goods, groceries, notions, and general merchandise leased this building about the year 1883. Riddell's Market is located here at the present time.

The small community of Hopeful was settled on the outskirts of Florence during the years between 1806-1820. The first church in the Florence neighborhood was founded in 1807, when the Lutheran Church was built in this small community, which has become a very important suburb of Florence.

The small Christian Church, located at the intersection of highways U.S. 42 and 25, was built in 1836. The ground upon which the church is built, was donated by Ben Stephens. This church is one of the oldest Christian churches in Kentucky.

During the war between the states, a skirmish between John Hunt Morgan's Raiders and a reconnoitering expedition under the leadership of Lew Wallace, was fought in front of this church and the building was used as a temporary hospital for the wounded.

Frank Grayson, in an article on Historic Spots in Greater Cincinnati, Times Star, August 28, 1933, has this to say about the skirmish. "The Florence Christian Church is a one story brick building standing at the junction of two highways. Around this edifice and also around the original Baptist Church, which stood diagonally across Lexington Pike, there was waged a battle that never rose to the dignity of a line in the romantic history of the Civil War. Yet it was a brisk while it lasted and for the time being turned "Stringtown" into a shambles. In its wake, it left 19 dead and wounded. Prof. Lloyd explained, "Distinctly I remember seeing the Yankees in rapid retreat through the Pike and parallel streets to Cincinnati, from whence they had come on reconnoitering expedition ordered by General Lew Wallace who was in command of the defending forces of the city."

Over the road came 150 of Morgan's rugged veterans. Not withstanding that they were outnumbered ten to one, the Confederates attacked fiercely, creating the impression that their strength was

on a parity with the Federals. The Federals were taken by surprise by this thunderbolt that seemed to have come out of the air upon their flank and they were thrown into instant confusion. There was much shooting and saboring. The attack resulted in a complete rout of the boys in blue. When things had quieted down, the dead and wounded were collected and carried into the shade of the trees that then stood around the Baptist Church. Later, the dead were carried over and laid out on the grass in the Christian Church yard before being sent back to Cincinnati fortifications. History had never allotted space to this little battle but nevertheless it went to show that the war was carried very close to Cincinnati and the skyscraper of which city, can be seen from the spot.

Memorial services were held in the Florence Christian Church for Felix Moses, gallant Confederate soldier, whose body was taken from the river below Aurora, Indiana, after the war. His body lies in a Cincinnati Jewish cemetery, but it was not surrendered until the people of Boone County had tried every means at their command to have the remains of this good man consigned to the soil of Kentucky.

When the town of Florence was incorporated in 1830, there were few families living here who held to the Methodist faith. During the period from 1830 to 1842, the Craigs, Robinsons, Conners, and Stansifers, held meetings in the different homes, and about four times a year a circuit rider would appear and conduct tent meetings or revival services.

A site for the first Methodist Church was purchased from Samuel Craig for the sum of \$80.00. The deed was made July 18, 1842 to the following trustees: T.F. Robinson, Will Respress, Thomas H. Conner, Miacham Baston Robinson, John Stansifer and Lewis Conner. This church was located on Banklick Street. The Craigs at this time had a sawmill that stood at the present junction of Banklick Street and route 42. The congregation got busy and most of the lumber was prepared in this mill. The distance from where the mill stood to where the church was being erected being short, it was an easy matter to transport the lumber and the church was soon built and continued to be the place of worship until 1943. The old church building was a plain frame building with a dirt floor and the seats were free from paint, backs, and upholstery, which kept the members awake during the sermon. Wiggling was not always caused by the one-and-a-half to two-hour sermons, but by fleas which infested the straw floor.

Rev. Rose, pastor at that time (1943) felt that after serving the public as a place of worship and badly needing repair, it would be expedient to erect a new edifice and a tract of land was purchased on the Dixie Highway. A brick building was erected at a cost of \$10,000 and dedicated October 31, 1943, under the leadership of Rev. Rose. Here, in 1951, the Methodist Church worships under the able leadership of Rev. C. N. Ogg.

Cornelius Ahern was largely responsible for the erection of the first Catholic Church in 1851. Services were first held in Mr. Ahern's log cabin on Shelby Street, and later, in a frame building on Shelby Street, built in 1856, and then moved to the present brick structure on the Dixie Highway 1911. The first resident pastor of this church came in 1874.

The Baptist Church of Florence was organized sometime before 1855. The small group of members met in different homes at first. A frame building was erected in 1855. One acre of ground was purchased from Milton and Harriet Wilhoit, in the south end of the town on the Dixie Highway, near the little Christian Church, at a cost of \$400.00. The first membership was eleven but now in 1951, its membership is near 400 members. This church has recently welcomed a new pastor in the person of Rev. Howard Gordon.

Also in Florence, there is a colored Baptist Church. This church is a white framed building, located on Girard Street. It is the second of its kind in the county.

The people of the Presbyterian Church worshiped in a building located next door to the Town Hall at one time. This building has been remodeled into a modern home.

The first school in Florence was located at the end of Bank lick Street, and was called "Squirrel Hollow School" because there were so many gray squirrels to be found in this locality. This building was very small, 14 x 20, and did not accomodate all the pupils, also another schoolbuilding was erected on Price Pike, where Mr. Perry Allen's house now stands (The proposed New Centralized Boone County High School will be erected near this site) This building was large enough to take care of the boys and girls until 1856 when John Uri Lloyd and his father came to the town as teachers and started private school in the Town Hall. School was conducted here until about 1890, when an acre of ground was purchased from a Mr. Galaway on Shelby Street, and a two-room public school building was constructed. The enrollment had increased so

much by 1911, that two more rooms had to be added to the structure. This building was adequate until 1926. At that time two more rooms were added. These six rooms were used until in 1931 a large three story brick building was erected. After this building was completed, the school was consolidated with Boone County School System.

The town of Florence has grown rapidly since the turn of the century. The population of 250 in 1890 seems small indeed to that of 1320, in 1950.

Sometime after 1900, John Uri Lloyd came back to Florence or Stringtown-on-the-Pike and asked permission to restore the Old Town Hall as it was when his father taught school there. The request was granted and the old building was "straightened amid a great groaning and whinny of ancient hewn rafters and joists until it was enabled to again look straight." A fund was set aside by Mr. Lloyd for keeping the old building in good condition. At the present time it is open to any religious or educational club or organization without obligation or charge.

The introduction of modern utilities to the town has had much to do with the growth in population. Electricity came into the town during the first World War. Gas lines were connected in 1926. The water system was obtained in 1933, and the Consolidated Telephone System was installed a short time later.

A fire department was organized in 1935, after city water was obtained, and has greatly decreased losses by fire. Al Hue organized the Florence Volunteer Fire Department and is its present chief.

About ten years ago, the Highway Department decided to widen the Dixie Highway through the town, but the citizens did not wish to have the beautiful maple trees that line the highway cut down, so a by-pass was constructed which takes the traffic out of the business section and connects U.S. 42 with U.S. 25.

The Florence Deposit Bank was started in 1904, and in 1925, the Building and Loan Association was organized, giving the people security and a safe place to invest their money.

Since Florence is near enough to the great city of Cincinnati, Ohio, for people to live out in a quiet, clean community and still be able to commute to their work, many new sub-divisions and streets have been opened up in recent years.

Florence, at the present time has a population of 1320, and is a thriving community of law-abiding citizens. (We have no jail and no need of one.) It is governed by a Board of Trustees, consisting of five men elected by the people every two years.

The town supports several businesses and professional people: Florence Dry Cleaners, Florence Drug Store, Riddell's Market, Conner's Grocery, Parkview Market plus several small delicatessens on the outskirts of town, Florence Hardware and Supply Company, Tanner's Hardware Store, Stringtown Stop, Dinn's Restaurant, Joe Littrel's Shoe Repair Shop, several Tourists' Homes and Motor Courts, Drive-In Theater, an antique shop, Ragland's China Shop a 5 and 10 cent store, and Marlou Beauty shop.

Professional people are: three doctors, a dentist, a chiropractor, two lawyers. The town also boasts a solid and thriving bank, a Rotary Club and the usual quota of garages and filling stations.

Two public buildings have recently been built. The Florence Fire Hall and Community Center is a beautiful building of colonial architecture and has ample space for the fire department quarters an auditorium, and banquet hall.

The other building houses the new second class Post-Office with two rural routes, the Building and Loan Association, a law office, and a spacious basement, suitable for any organizational meeting.

Four bus lines are available to the community; The Greyhound, American, Dixie Traction, and the Burlington Bus Lines.

There is a combined grade and high school, with an enrollment of about 550 pupils and also a parochial school which teaches the eight grades. There are churches of four denominations: Methodist, Baptist, Christian and Catholic, all located on the Dixie Highway.

The citizens of Florence are proud of their town and believe that it is a good place in which to live. It has room to expand in all directions and we are looking forward to a *great* future for Stringtown-on-the-Pike.

The 1958 session of the General Assembly raised Florence from a Sixth Class to Third Class City. This indicates a community of 8000 population.

FLORENCE CITY OFFICIALS FOR 1956-1957

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

William Fitzgerald, Chairman

G. R. Scott, Joseph A. Weaver,
Eugene Schroder, R. P. Coleman

Chas. E. Niblack, City Attorney

James E. Ransom, City Engineer

Henry S. Mays and Melvin Collins, Police

Harold Martin, Fire Chief

Albert Lucas, Building Inspector

SOME JOTS

Joe Littrel has managed a shoe repair shop for twenty-five years, which is the oldest business under the same management in Florence.

The town of Florence has a very pretty cemetery, located on Center Street, near the schoolhouse. No one seems to know anything concerning its history.

The first murder was committed in Florence when a slave boy named Joe, killed Lydia Bryant with a hoe and placed her body in a spring. Joe sold his body to some medical students for 10 cents worth of candy.

The oldest house now standing is the house in which Mr. James Tanner had a hardware and paint store. The first house to be built in Florence was erected across from the schoolhouse on Oblique Street. It was torn down and some of the lumber was used in building a house once occupied by Dr. Bustetter on Dixie Highway.

A carding factory was said to have existed near Banklick Street and the by-pass.

The first agricultural fair in Boone county was held at Florence, September 18, 1855.

General LaFayette passed the night in Florence in the year 1826.

Aaron Burr made his first trip through Florence in 1805
Second trip in 1806.

FLORENCE SCHOOLS

BY A. M. YEALEY

When Florence was laid out in 1819 by Maddens, Wilhoits, Conners and Crislers the most important question that needed to be solved by them was a school house where their children could receive at least the rudiments of an education. Therefore by subscription a sufficient amount of money was raised to build a house 16 by 24 feet with slab seats and rock fireplace. The first public school house was built at the end of Banklick Street and the place was commonly called "Squirrel Hollow" on account of the great number of gray squirrels inhabiting this locality.

From 1816 to 1823 Florence was known as Cross Road and the school house at Squirrel Hollow failed to accomodate the number of children in the village and the surrounding territory. It was during this period that the town had been surveyed and streets laid off. Dwelling houses were being erected at the junction of Shelby Street and Burlington Pike, also on Girard Street and Price Pike and two influential citizens at that time were Thomas Madden and Dr. Menzies. It became the duty of these two men to find a suitable location for the building. Mr. Madden had previously, on July 7, 1818 purchased 4 acres of land from Leonard Crisler and also had charge of the first hotel here and had the town's name changed to Maddentown. Mr. Menzies had a drug and general merchandise store and employed Thomas Rouse, age about 15 years as a clerk in the store. Thomas Rouse lived with his uncle Mr. Joshua Zimmerman who owned all the land at the corner of the Burlington and Price Pike (Mr. Zimmerman had no children) but saw the necessity of having a school close by for his nephew to attend.

These two men were instrumental in having Mr. Zimmerman donate a plot of land to the town for the purpose of building a larger school building than the one at Squirrel Hollow. The building was completed and paid for by a small tax of 15 cents on the hundred dollars plus a subscription. This building was used as a public school and controlled by the trustees of Florence from 1831 to May 7, 1881 when the land was sold to S. S. Scott for the sum of \$30.00. Mr. Scott at this time was the owner of the Joshua Zimmerman land.

The reader should be informed here that from the beginning 1816 to 1900 there were private schools in the village. Previous

to 1838 the State of Kentucky had a very weak school system and on February 28, 1838 Joseph J. Bullock was appointed by the Governor as Superintendent of Public Instruction and he established a system whereby all public schools in the state should have a term of three months. This system was changed when Zach F. Smith became Superintendent in 1837 to five months, and it continued to be five months until the graded High School system was established in 1908.

This building on the Price Pike served the school patrons until it was sold and the writer had the privilege to scrutinize work that boys and girls did in this building from its beginning to 1850. Previous to 1850 their mathematical books were generally compiled by the teacher in this school and their work included analytical arithmetic, algebra, and geometry. Peter Parley's Geography which was used in this school is at present in possession of the the writer.

The building of the Town Hall during 1851 was a great help in solving the school problem in Florence as this building was also used for school purposes. Nelson M. Lloyd came here in 1856 and being a teacher of the higher rank conducted a school in this building where all the higher branches were taught giving those who had completed the grade work an opportunity to continue their educational work. Mr. Lloyd left Florence about 1865 as the last record we find of him he was the clerk of the town council and his son John Uri was an apprentice to W. J. M. Gordon, druggist, Cincinnati, Ohio. After the Lloyds left the town council would sell the right to teach in the Town Hall to the highest bidder during the month of August yearly.

The teachers who expected to teach the following fall and winter term would be present and bid on the right to conduct a school in the building and our records show that the sum bid was from \$1.50 per month to \$3.00 per month. We have a list of the teachers who bid year after year but it seems there was a teacher in this neighborhood from 1865 to 1880 who generally outbid all comers as his bid was \$3.00 per month, his name was Professor D. J. Daughters. Did you ever hear of him?

Many private schools were established after the Lloyds left in 1865. The I. O. O. F. building was completed in 1869 and the second floor of this building was used for school purposes. Miss Jennie and Miss Naomi Ellis taught a private school in this building for several years. Mrs. Will Conner had a private school on

Youell Street. Mrs. Kirtley at the corner of Main and Girard Street. Miss Henrietta Glacken taught in the Town Hall. During this period Florence had men who followed the teaching profession. Viz: William Conner, Lee M. Fulton, Mannie Clutterbuck, Joseph Ambrose, William Clutterbuck and John W. Howe.

The trustees of our school were Noah Clore, Linville Souther, E. H. Ashley, on another occasion we find S. S. Scott, William E. Carpenter and Allen Wilhoit. The Commissioner of Common Schools of Boone County from 1862 to 1864 was James A. Wilson and James A. Nelson succeeded him and R. M. Graves was school examiner.

The School building on Price Pike was in need of repairing, but when a tax was suggested for that purpose the taxpayers rebelled and as we have previously stated the Town Board sold it July 7th, 1881 to S. S. Scott. This was the first time since the Squirrel Hollow school had been built that the patrons of Florence had no public school building of their own, and the Town Board still continued to sell the right to teach in the Town Hall to the highest bidder as late as 1887. Irene Bradford being the last to purchase this right.

From 1881 to 1888 private schools flourished. The head of every household became a teacher. From 1881 to 1888 selling the right to teach in the Town Hall to the highest bidder brought dissension every year after the Lloyds left as many of the patrons claimed the highest bidder failed to have the required qualifications. The town council then passed a resolution requiring all bidders to have the same qualifications as any teacher in the county. This did not meet their requirements as they wanted a public school building of their own and the only way to get one was to elect a new school board.

During 1887 a new Board of school directors was elected with the understanding that they would purchase a plot of ground and build a Public School house. After considerable argument an acre of land was purchased from Ned Galway with an outlet 30 feet wide or a continued lengthening of Montgomery Street. Here a building was erected which had two Rooms. This was the first Public School house at Florence which aimed to separate the primary grades and advanced grades. We shall now give you the names of teachers who taught in this building. John Vest and his mother, Maranda, Professor Arnold, Mrs. Ozark Ryle, Mrs. Maude Walton, Andrew Collins, Mattie Bradford, Bessie Talbart, Marie Khorn and Lizzie

Vest. At the beginning of 1900 A. M. Yealey contracted with the board of trustees as principal of the school and Miss Lizzy Vest a primary teacher, at this time Ezra Rouse, Henry Tanner, and Lewis Thompson were the members of the school board.

Mr. Yealey was principal of this school until 1931 when he decided he needed a rest from school work and built the Wild Wood Tourist Court on Route 42. During his teaching in 1908 the state of Kentucky passed a law whereby every county in the state was to have at least one High School and it had to be located at the county seat but all tax-payers no matter where they lived in the county were compelled to pay this tax. The distance and cost to a pupil living at Florence to Burlington 5 days a week was more than the patrons of Florence could endure and on the 5th of April 1909 a petition was filed with the county judge which also included the Pleasant Ridge School district to establish a Common Graded School. The petition was granted and two more rooms were added to the building and another teacher was employed, thus preparing the foundation for a Graded High School.

Our first graduates in 1915 were Mabel Tanner, Ruby Corbin, Harry Tanner and Robert Robbins. Their Class Sermon was delivered by Reverend Wallace at the Baptist Church, May 5th, 1915 and the Class Address by Reverend Harris at the Christian Church May 13, 1915. This was the first graduation from a High School of their own in Florence. This was a home demonstration and convinced them that their children could be educated while remaining at home. They were now ready to vote an additional tax and build another room and employ another teacher.

During 1925 another room was added and a teaching staff of 7 teachers was employed. During this year the first school tournament ever held in Boone County and composed of Boone County Schools alone was held at Florence on April 29, 30, and May 1st. Professor Jones of the State University conducted the examinations. The Boone County Recorder has the following remarks in reference to the tournament. "The afternoon sessions were devoted to Athletics, Petersburg, and Union distanced all comers in the preliminary contests in basket ball and no better girls game was ever played in Boone than the one on Friday between the two teams Union and Petersburg, Union winning by a margin of 2 points. The Union boys had previously won from Verona on Thursday.

The two night sessions held at the old Presbyterian church demonstrated to the large audience that Boone can produce the

goods, when it comes to the declamations, orations, and music. Professor A. M. Yealey, Secretary of the tournament financed it so well that no hardships were imposed on any locality and after all expenses were paid there would be a few dollars surplus. Eight schools participated in this tournament and the result was Hebron 105 points, Florence 98, Verona 62, Burlington 56, Petersburg 49, Union 34, Hamilton 10, Bellveiw 7. Bellveiw, Hamilton, and Petersburg had but one instructor in high school.

The class of 1929 was highly pleased when they were notified that the principal had selected John Uri Lloyd to deliver the Class Address, May 23, 1929 at the Rho-Albert Theater on Main Street. This address was appreciated by a spell-bound audience in a packed house but when Mr. Lloyd spoke of writing "Stringtown on the Pike" (the book that introduced Florence to the world), cheer after cheer greeted him.

The school laws enacted during 1908 did more for the welfare of education in Florence than any previous law by giving them the power to have a high school whereby their graduates were permitted to enter college without an examination. This convinced the patrons their school was equal to any school in the state. From this date 1908 we must awaken to the fact that the patrons of Florence school began to see a new era in their school system and we hereby give you a clipping of a reporter of the Boone County Recorder who attended a graduating exercise of this school May 11, 1916.

(Quote) Graduating exercises of Florence H. S. The graduating class of the High School at this place certainly should appreciate the interest the citizens here have shown in their graduating exercises.

First, a dance was given for their benefit at the Shelby Street theater, chaperoned by some of the members of the Mother's Welfare Club of this place. Next, as a preliminary exercise Reverend G. A. Royer delivered the Baccalaurate address to a large audience at the Baptist Church, Sunday, May 7. His remarks were well received, being broad minded and liberal, closely fitting the channel created by the trend of modern times, On May 11, at the Christian Church the graduating class met, composed of the following pupils: Gertrude Stephens, Charles Corbin, Miss Mary B. Conrad, Miss Pearl Long, Cecil Tanner, Miss Annita Tanner, Miss Martha Williams, to received their diplomas. The pupils certainly rendered their parts well, the girls in particular, after which Supt. W. P. King of the Newport Schools, delivered the class address, which was con-

ceded to be the most interesting talk on education ever delivered in the town. You could plainly read between the lines of his beautiful woven paragraphs, "Progression." The music was furnished by Mr. Albert Metzger, violinist, and Miss Nellie Rouse, pianist, and it was enjoyed by all.

Fifty years ago in this town school exercises were held in the Baptist church and no music was allowed in the building. I don't call it progress or any thing else. The readers can call it what they like but it is different now and it may be more different at the end of 50 years from now to you that are living, and are liable to eat the goose that eats the grass from our graves. Signed A. C. Souther (unquote)

To illustrate the fact that the school spirit still prevailed Mr. Yealey had the same man (Professor King) deliver the class address that preformed the same five years previous. Professor J. C. Gordon was our county School Superintendent at this time and while presenting the Diplomas made the following remark. "I am very happy to be here. It is the first time I have had the opportunity to be seated between two kings" (Evidently meaning between professor King and a graduate Miss Evelyn King) and this is what the Boone County Recorder had to say the following week.

(Quote) Long before the church doors were opened for the graduating exercises of Florence High School last Thursday evening, throngs gathered on the lawn, fathers and mother, brothers and sisters, kindred and friends of the graduating class, patrons of the school and friends of education, all eager to attend and enjoy the delightful exercises of the evening.

At the appointed time the church was filled to overflowing and many could not find room. The graduating class led by Prof. A. M. Yealey, principal of the school, and accompanied by Supt. W. P. King, of Campbell county, and Supt. E. C. Riley, of Boone county, marched up the aisle to strains of the grand march from Tannhauser, and took their places on the rostrum.

The graduating class presented a fine appearance, the beauty of youth and happiness shining from every countenance and hope gleaming in every eye. The orations showed deep thought, careful preparation and were full of purposes and the aspirations of their beautiful young lives for success and happiness. The piano selections by members of the class were well rendered and well received, the class acquitting itself in an admirable manner, doing great cre-

dit to the community of Florence. The violin and piano selections by Mr. Albert Metzger and Miss Nellie Rouse were beautiful and much appreciated by the large audience.

Supt. W. P. King delivered a masterly address to the graduating class and Supt. E. C. Riley, with some happy and felicitous remark, present the diplomas to the members of the class. The patience toil and care of Prof. A. M. Yealey, principal of Florence schools, were everywhere manifest in the exercises and contributed largely in making such a success possible.

The members of the board of trustees deserve much credit for their faithfulness and interest in the cause of education and for the manner in which they have managed the schools of the community. The evening was in every way a delightful occasion. It is the hope of many that the interest manifested in the schools and the cause of education will continue to grow until its quickening influence is left in every home. (Unquote)

Since the High School was established at Florence and the first graduates receiving their diplomas 1915 up to May 21, 1931, this school has had the pleasure to grant 80 diplomas to boys and girls. The last class under Prof. Yealey's principalship were Lorainne Osborn, Marjorie McKibben, Sarah L. McCardle, Elberta Ryle, Dot McHenry, and William Tryling. Mr. Yealey and the trustees of the Florence school in 1901 inherited a two room frame school building with two teachers and one acre of ground and a five month school and an ungraded school. In 1931 the staff of teachers had increased to seven, the school building had been enlarged and had six rooms and a large basement and all teachers salaries were greater than any paid in the county and five more acres of land had been added with all necessary equipment for High School purposes plus \$14,000.00 in the Florence Deposit Bank. All this was surrendered to the county, when it lost its independence under the county unit system.

FLORENCE, KENTUCKY, POST OFFICE

By Postmaster Lawrence Aylor, 1952

The Florence, Kentucky Post Office was established April 27, 1830 and the first Postmaster was Pitman Clondas. Mr. Clondas was associated with Thomas Madden (an early citizen) and purchased land in Florence, when it was known as Cross Roads, and he also became the first trustee of the town when it was incorporated in 1830.

Prominent citizens serving in the capacity of Postmaster down thru the years were: Floyd Wilson, John Oelsner, T. B. Castleman, James Murray, Ruby Corbin, Mildred Marshall, Nettie Corbin, Roy C. Lutes, Mabel Tanner, Oscie Castleman Lucas, Fanny L. Scott, (retired) and the present Postmaster, Lawrence L. Aylor, the former regular Clerk.

The first post office was located at the junction of Banklick St., and Main Street (building now gone). A short time later it was moved across the street on the opposite corner (building now gone). This building was known as the Boone Hotel. Other locations were: R. Scott Drug Store on Main Street, opposite Youell Street (building now gone). During this time, 1869, the I.O.O.F. Building was completed and the Post Office took quarters here, was later moved to property situated between Youell and Banklick Street known as the Jim Tanner Hardware Store (now the oldest building in town). The office changed location (5) times since and on Dec. 19, 1949 was moved to the present location, 313 Main Street in the new Building and Loan Building which also houses the McEvoy Brothers, Attorneys, the Leo Brophy Insurance Agency, The Boone Post No. 4 American Legion, the Boone County Health Department and the Building and Loan Association.

Since the beginning of World War II, the population has zoomed from 800 to 1800 and is continually growing each week. It has become the center of activity. The town now boasts a Community Center and Fire Hall, a new Drive-In Theater, several up-to-date Motels, a China Shop, and businesses of every description.

Florence is also known as "Stringtown-On-The-Pike" having been publicized in the Novel of the same name by a former citizen author-chemist, John Uri Lloyd. Mr. Lloyd preserved the town hall located on Main Street at Dortha Avenue, a former school room and which is now used for many civic purposes.

Bids are now being accepted at the present time for the erection of a super, ultra-modern school building to be known as the Boone County High School which will be located on Price Pike just beyond the new Sweetbriar Sub-division.

The Florence Post Office is a separation point for mail destined for Burlington (the County Seat), Union and Grant, Kentucky and is serviced by two Rural Routes and two Star Routes.

We are indebted to Congressman Brent Spence for aiding us in securing the present location. The people in the community as well as the employees in the office are most grateful for the modern facilities provided by the Post Office Department.

The Postmaster, Lawrence L. Aylor is capably aided by an efficient staff composed of: Thelma M. Smith, Reg. Clerk, Garnet S. Lucas, Sub-Clerk, Shelley H. Aylor, Temp. Sub-Clerk. Rural Route No. 1, is served by Roy C. Lutes, who has L. Clifford Tanner as his sub-Carrier. Rural Route No. 2 is served by William L. Oliver, with Shelley H. Aylor as Sub-Carrier. The Star Route Carriers are Claude Patterson of Burlington and A. G. (Buddy) Stephenson of Union, Ky.

THE STORY OF A SILVER HALF DOLLAR

BY A. M. YEALEY

Thomas Madden, one of the men who assisted in laying out the town of Florence owned the first tavern in the village and a family by the name of Williams had charge of it. During 1824 the Congress of the United States made a request to President Monroe that he invite the Marquis de Lafayette to visit the United States. He arrived in New York on the 13th day of August, 1824. He visited every state and most of the large cities. On his way from Cincinnati to Lexington by stage coach he stopped and dined at this tavern in Florence and left a half dollar to pay for his keep.

Mr. Yealey came into possession of this coin, which was coined in 1820, in 1900 through heirs of Mr. Williams. He holds it as a keep-sake in memory of the commanding equestrian statue of Lafayette erected in the center of Paris, in the grounds of the Louvre. On the base of this statue we read this inscription, "Erected by the school children of the United States, in grateful memory of Lafayette, statesman, soldier, patriot."

FLORENCE, KENTUCKY, POST OFFICE

By Postmaster Roy C. Lutes, 1958

Florence continued its growth until City Carrier Service, without Parcel Post delivery, was established April 1, 1954, with an estimated population of 2500. Leslie T. McMullen was our first carrier. The work load had grown faster than the estimates and within a week Carl Warner was employed as carrier on part time basis.

Postmaster L. L. Ayler was found dead in the Post Office on April 6, 1954, by Clerk Garnet Lucas.

Thelma Smith assumed charge of the Office and ably operated it until May 24, 1954, when Roy C. Lutes, who was formerly a Clerk in Camp Sherman and Cincinnati Post Office, and served as fourth Class Postmaster of Florence from 1924 to 1928, also as carrier of R. R. No. 1 at Florence for 26 years; was installed as Acting Postmaster.

Parcel Post delivery was granted during 1954 along with many route extensions to serve new areas which were being converted from farms to residential areas. The growth of the Post Office along with Florence has been remarkable until today we serve by city carrier, post office box holder, and one rural route carrier 2479 families or a total population of over 9900 people.

The Boone County High School now has an enrollment of about 1200 and graduates 126 in 1958. The Old Florence High School now is crowded with an equal number and new additions of rooms is an annual event. St. Paul School is burdened with growing pains.

The new expressway will accelerate the rapid flow from the large cities to our attractive community.

Postmaster Lutes still has as his assistants Thelma M. Smith and Garnet Lucas. L. Clifford Tanner is now a Civil Service City Carrier and operates the Mounted Route. L. McMullen, Robert White, Bernard McKinley and I. V. Smith are also City Carriers. Harold Baumgartner is Carrier on R. R. No. 1. Mildred Mundy is sub-clerk, and Claude Patterson is still star carrier for both Union and Burlington star routes.

The "New Quarters" of 1949 are out grown and more room will have to be provided soon.

EARLY EVENTS IN FLORENCE

By A. M. Yealey

1. Florence first called Cross Roads 1819 to 1823.
2. Florence called Maddentown 1823 to 1828.
3. Florence called Connersville 1828 to 1830.
4. Connersville changed to Florence 1830.
5. Florence incorporated 1830.
6. First chairman of trustees, Pitman Clondas 1830.
7. First postmaster, Pitman Clondas 1830,
8. First public school erected, Banklick Street, 1819.
9. Second public school erected, Price Pike, 1828.
This building served the village until 1881.
10. Third public school erected 1888, torn away 1934.
11. Fourth public school erected 1934, on Center Street.
12. Fifth public school erected 1953-54, Boone County High School on Price Pike.
13. Old Town Hall built 1851, on Main Street, used as a school house until 1900. "Still here."
14. I. O. O. F. Hall built 1869.
15. First newspaper, Boone County Journal, 1874.
16. Second newspaper, Boone County Banner, 1898.
17. Third newspaper, Northern Kentucky News, 1954.
18. First murder, Lynda Bryant, 1859.
19. First jail in Florence 1885.
20. First volunteer fire department 1874.
21. Woolen and carding mill at end of Banklick Street owned and operated by Mr. Craig, 1834.
22. Creggs' bakery (where Dinns now live) 1850.
23. Spencer Fish lived in Lute Aylor's house 1848.
24. Tin shop at the Cahill building 1840; later a saloon by Mr. McAfee 1850.
25. Ferneding Tavern (at Denham drug store site) 1855.
26. Ezra Fish donated two lots for a Catholic Church on Shelby Street 1855.
27. First Catholic Church built 1856.
28. First Catholic Priest, Rev. Force, from 1856 to 1874.
29. First colored church 1871.

30. A large barn stood where Lucas Hardware is now 1843.
31. Dr. Sam Poor at corner of Main and Youell 1850.
32. Adam Finch and Absolem Conner had post office at corner of Main and Banklick Street 1835.
33. Mr. Tracy had a tailor shop on Youell Street 1850.
34. Mr. Schott made coffins on Union Pike 1845.
35. First doctor, Dr. Thomas Madden, 1828.
36. Second doctor, Dr. Menzies, 1829.
37. Florence cemetery incorporated by the Legislature 1869.
38. Nelson Lloyd moved to Florence 1856.
39. Exchange Hotel granted license December 4, 1882.
40. Confederate forces advanced toward Covington as far as Florence (a skirmish ensued); Larkin Vaughn killed September 16, 1862.

FLORENCE CITY OFFICIALS FOR 1958-1959

R. P. Coleman, Mayor

COUNCILMEN

G. R. Scott, Joseph A. Weaver, Eugene Schroder,
Mrs. Roy Lutes, Wallace Lucas, H. M. Crist, Jesse H. Cyrus,
Hayden Markesberry, Thomas O'Daniel, Robert Hammersmith,
Robert L. Webster, Lonnie Paxton

Chas. E. Niblack, City Attorney
James E. Ransom, City Engineer
Henry Mays, Police Chief
Harold Martin, Fire Chief

Donald A. Mager, Police Judge
Mrs. Mager's grandfather, George Groves,
was Police Judge for many years.