Grass Roots of Kenton County

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THE GRASS ROOTS OF KENTON COUNTY

A paper read by Mr. Robert S. Tate, on Tuesday night, December 8th, 1953, before the Christopher Gist Historical Society at the Covington Women's Club House, Covington, Kentucky.

The good thinkers of the country are not all in the great centers of population or places of learning. Back where the grass grows green and there are no city noises to disturb them, men can take time to sit and think things through. Therefore, when opinions are sought on various public questions, those interested go back into the smaller communities, where common sense usually dominates, to seek answers. Thus originated the expression "Grass Roots of the Country", as humans living close to the soil, without layers of cement between them and the roots of the grass, can better reach the root of the matter under discussion. In other words, for the good, plain, honest thinking which made this country great in the beginning, one must go back to the countryside - or the "Grass Roots".

Kentucky's chief title to distinction in our nation's history was won during the period before the Louisiana Purchase in 1803. Her people have taken notable parts in the later history of the United States but none comparable in national significance to the one played during and for a score of years after the American Revolution. One of the most impressive events in our history was the planting of American civilization in the great West in the second part of the Eighteenth Century and the people in Kentucky played preeminently the leading part.

And let it not be said that the present site of Kenton County, long before it was known as such, did not share in this heroic roll of winning the West against the hardships of the wilderness and in conflict with the savage Indian warriors. It was distinctly a "Grass Roots" campaign.

Kenton County is rich in history and tradition as men and women with adventurous souls burned with a passion to carve out homes for themselves in the great wilderness, a part of which is now our own beloved county. These hearty pioneers were brave men and women of a broad vision for the future. We only wish that Simon Kenton who lies buried in Urbana, Ohio could know what the intervening years since 1771, when he first gazed on our County, has brought us in material wealth and a knowledge that our county has played a big part in the development of our state and nation.

Our county, named in honor of Simon Kenton, was the 90th of our 120 counties in formation and was not organized until 1840 out of the West half of Campbell County. Prior to 1794, when Campbell County was formed, Kenton, Campbell and Boone Counties were all a part of Fayette, which with Jefferson and Lincoln were the three original Kentucky counties. Amongst all the Kentucky counties, Kenton stands second in population and material resources. It is 25 miles long and varies in width from six miles in the South to 12 miles in the North.

Mere physical statistics and even a modest recital of the abundance of our material resources and wealth, as Kenton County can speak of today in all justice, are relatively unimportant. What really matters is an honest effort to find out the basic, fundamental and primal qualities of character which enabled our heroic forefathers to carry forward the vitally important work of scouting, foraging and overcoming the difficulties of transportation in the rough country of that day. And during all that, while in actual battle, they had to call into play their training, courage and accurate marksmanship if they were to survive. Nearly every where it was totally rural. The settlements were small and widely scattered, both in distance and in time. The following is a simple narrative of a magnificent incident, part of which pertains to Kenton County, which illustrates what we have in mind:

The mouth of the Licking River was one of the prominent points in the navigation of the Ohio and in the Indian raids into Kentucky. It was also the point of rendezvous of Kentucky troops on several expeditions against the Indians on the Miami River in Ohio. The terrain on the Kenton County side at the confluence of the Ohio and Licking Rivers was known as "The Point" and it looms large in the development of our Western civilization. It was here that Christopher Gist and his band of sturdy followers of the Ohio Company landed in March, 1751. He was the first white visitor to set foot onKenton County soil. It is also believed it was from "The Point" that Mary Inglis and her sister-in-law departed on their hazardous journey across the Ohio on a log and continued up the Ohio until they reached the Kanawha. She was the first white woman ever upon the soil of Kenton County. Two years after the heroism of George Rogers Clark had saved the old Northwest to the Union, the Indians of Ohio, taking the warpath, devastated the towns and settlements of that state. Clark, hastening from Vincennes gathered together a force of some eleven hundred men who met at "The Point", the site of future Covington, their camp extending from the point of the Licking to what is now Fifth Street in Covington and, extending West as far as the present Madison

Avenue. From that point Clark led his men into Ohio and dealt a blow to the savages from which they did not recover for years. In that expedition, Simon Kenton commanded a company as he did in a later expedition to avenge the disastrous battle of the Blue Licks.

It was on the return from the expedition into Ohio on November 4, 1782 that the pioneers composing it entered into a romantic agreement that fifty years thereafter, the survivors would meet on the same ground to talk over and reminisce on the happenings of the campaign and the dangers and hardships of the past. This suggestion first came from Capt. V. McCracken who was dying from a wound suffered in an attach at Piqua, Ohio. To carry out the request of the dying hero, a resolution was brought forward and the meeting, fifty years hence, was decided on.

The interesting and eventful day that was to witness the reunion of surviving heroes of 1782 fell on the fourth of November, 1832. Shortly before the day set for the reunion, Simon Kenton then living at Urbana, Ohio issued a call to his old comrades. In it he said, "Being one of the first, after Daniel Boone, to aid in the conquest of Kentucky and the West, I am called upon to address you. My heart melts on such an occasion. I look forward to the meeting with melancholy pleasure. I wish to see once more, before I die, my few surviving friends. My solemn promise made fifty years ago, binds me to meet them." The day at last came so long looked for by our pioneer heroes. However, the terrible cholera, more barbarous than the savages of yore spread death far and wide over the West. Covington was wrapped in gloom. Yet, many of the patriots assembled and they were given a dinner by the city of Cincinnati. But, as to Simon Kenton, after waiting months for the beginning of the journey, the "melancholy pleasure" was denied him by advancing years and severe illness. The program arranged for the veterans provided for the reunion at Covington November 3, 1832. On the next day, Sunday, they were to attend church in Covington and then on Monday, they were to meet at Ft. Washington and there to be entertained by the citizens of Cincinnati. But Simon Kenton met his beloved companions no more until he met them in the spirit land. Four years later he died, in April, 1836.

Many other instances could be given of meetings of the heroic pioneers of that day who used the present site of Kenton County as a base of operations and made sallies in many directions in search of the enemy. Some of those were Col. John Bowman, Wm. Harrod, Capt. Benj. Logan, Capt. Josannah Harlan, Capt. Levi Todd and Capt. John Holder. It is putting it very mildly to say that these men and many others in the coming years have reflected tremendous credit on our County.

But heroic exploits are not confined to "The Point", the site of future Covington, but they occurred throughout the width and length of our entire County. In many places on sites of towns not yet named there lived men who provided the rudimentary and fundamental qualities, the very foundation stones, the "Grass Roots", of Kenton County. We, of the present day generation, owe many of the great things which we are enjoying to the men from these "Grass Root" communities. Let us now make a tour of some of these "Grass Roots" which extend more than a century and a half ago and have provided our very nutriment of our life.

The first settlers of the city of Covington certainly were not inclined to be prophetic about the future real estate values of our fair city. On St. Valentine's Day, 1780, George Muse, a soldier of Virginia in the French and Indian War, swapped for a keg of whiskey his scrip for 200 acres of land alloted to him for military service. The new owner of the land traded it for a quarter of buffalo that General James Taylor offered him. Taylor dickered it off to Col. Stephen Trigg who got rid of it to John Todd, Jr., who unloaded it on James Welch. Welch held it long enough to get it surveyed and in 1801 he sold it to Thomas Kennedy for $750.00. Kennedy erected a high stone house overlooking the Licking River near the present Suspension Bridge, living in it as a tavern keeper and ferry boat operator until 1814 when he sold 150 acres to Gen. John S. Gano, Richard M. Gano, and Thomas D. Carneal. The town was established by an act of the Kentucky Legislature in 1815. It was named after a Maryland hero of the War of 1812, Gen. Leonard Covington, who died in battle more than a year before the incorporation of the town. In 1834 an act of Legislature was passed making Covington a city.

Dan Carter Beard's boyhood home was at 322 East Third Street and dates back to the midnineteenth century. It bears a plaque that "Here lived in his boyhood the founder of the Boy Scouts of America."

The Carneal house, now the Rothier home, was built in 1818 by Thomas Carneal and is still standing at 405 East Second Street, Covington.

So far as space permitted, it would be most interesting to trace the beginning of the component parts of present day Covington - Austinburg, Lewisburg, Latonia, named from the Lettonian Springs situated four miles from Covington on the Banklick Road; West Covington, formerly known as Economy - with its two original mansions, the large brick house built in 1837 by Jefferson Phelps and later bought by George W. Clark, and on the opposite hill, the old Henry Hathaway place, colonial style mansion, built 120 years ago and still standing and later owned by Bernard Wisenall the well-known Covington architect; back of that location was Forest Hills, at one time the residence of Edwin Forrest, tragedian.

None can say but what Covington, although now a city of considerable properties, did not provide a goodly share of "Grass Roots" for Kenton County.

The present day petite City of Ludlow was once one of the foundation stones, a basic rock bottom - truly some of the "Grass Roots" of Kenton County. What is now the corporate area of the City of Ludlow, prior to about 1792, was uninhabited by white men. It was a wooded wilderness, traversed, perhaps, by the Cherokees, Creeks and Catawbas of the South and the Shawnees, Delawares and Wyandots of the North. However, it had been visited by Simon Kenton in his search for the "Cane Land", accompanied by George Yeager and John Strader as early as 1771. Ludlow was founded as a result of a spirit of restlessness prevalent in the more adventuresome settlers from Cincinnati and who, because of the rapidly increasing population of that city, were ill at ease without virgin wilderness and raw nature all about them. Shortly after the establishment of Fort Washington, the eventual site of Cincinnati, three men named Beal, Mayo and Oldham soon thereafter staked out small claims on the land that is now Ludlow and the Federal Government granted the remainder of the tract to General Thomas Sandford, the distinguished Kentucky Indian fighter, for his valiant deed of fighting the Red Man. The grant comprised about 1200 acres and extended south from the Ohio River to where the Southern Railway trestle spans the entrance to Devou Park and west to Lagoon Avenue. At this time the city had spread far enough west for the housetops of Cincinnati to be visible from the log cabin on General Sandford's tract. The General, even though in retirement, cast resentful eyes toward the rapidly rising city across the stream. Again, the spirit of restlessness and the love for solitude and raw nature overcame the pioneer. The unexploited lands a few miles southward attracted him.

Eventually, when one Thomas D. Carneal, member of the Kentucky Legislature, aristocratic gentleman of great wealth and owner of a large tract of land situated about where Highland Cemetery now stands, offered an even trade in lands to General Sandford, he enthusiastically accepted. Each obtained what he most desired; Sanford - wild life, solitude, contentment; Carneal - a quiet rural home near enough to the convenience just across the river.

In the year 1818, Sanford and Carneal began construction of homes on the respective sites of their new acquisition. The simple frame dwelling erected by General Sanford for his abode stood in the near vicinity of Highland Cemetery. It has passed into oblivion, having been destroyed by fire in comparatively recent years. The aristocratic Carneal chose the spot where the log cabin stood upon which to build his

home. The result was a pretentious mansion, considered then as the finest home in the West and one of the finest in all the States. It reflected the aristocracy of its builder and the beauty of his soul. The home was named "Elmwood Hall", suggested perhaps by the many lordly elm trees on the grounds. It was in this house in 1825 that the Carneals entertained General Lafayette, the great French benefactor to the Revolutionary cause. The home still stands today on Forest Avenue, a magnificent landmark, bearing testimonial to the fortitude of its builder and well illustrating the resolute strength and grass root fibres of our illustrious forebears.

Mr. Carneal lived in the house for six years and sold it and the entire estate to William Bullock, a wealthy Englishman. This enterprising man conceived the idea of building a model town on the site. Immediately after its purchase, he returned to England and engaged the services of the architect to the King of Wurtemburg to draft plans for his model city. But the new West was not ready for such a place and he was forced to abandon the idea. He sold Elmwood Hall and 710 acres of land to Israel Ludlow, son of the distinguished Israel Ludlow who plotted out Cincinnati. Five years later, the remainder of the tract to the same purchaser. It was in 1836 that Israel Ludlow come into possession of all the land that forms the present city of Ludlow. It was for him the city was named. A man of keen business acumen, he started selling his large acreage in small parcels and as a result the little community started to grow. The Ludlow family contined their residence in the locality and retained much land. Some of the early settlers who took their residence after Ludlow began the reduction of the once single estate were the Goodloes, Ryans, Venns, Hamiltons, Winters, Glossons, Ritchies, Dillons and the Bentleys.

Finally in 1864, fourteen months before the close of the civil war, when Thomas E. Bramlette was Governor and E. L. Van Winkle was Secretary of State, a charter was granted. From a rural community at that time, it has increased in population to about 7000, a modern community of fine homes, improved streets and a number of industries.

The town of Bromley was named for Bromley, Kent, England and was said to have been settled by a brother of the Earl of Bromley of that English city. The Richmans, the Rotherts and Traylors were some of the early families who constituted the "Grass Roots" there.

In 1802 Bartlett Graves of Virginia planted some "Grass Roots" of Kenton County in Erlanger. Landing in Newport from his Ohio River journey from Virginia, he bought a hatchet there and blazed the trail to Erlanger. He was elected to the Kentucky Legislature in 1805 and Sheriff of Campbell County 1814 and 1815. He purchased from Thomas Carneal a large tract

of land along the north side of what is now known as Dixie Highway at a price of $2.50 per acre and in 1807 on Commonwealth Avenue built a log house of eight rooms, each room being 18 ft. square and with walls 18 inches thick. Other purchasers of land in this vicinity were Major Thornton Timberlake, Colonel Thomas Buckner, William Longmoor, Thomas Tupman, David Riggs and Dr. B. F. Bedinger, and General Leonard Stephens. In 1819 Mr. Graves built a large brick house on the lot now designated as 125 Commonwealth, where Mr. Carver Kuch now lives. He called it "Walnut Grove" until he sold it to Dr. B. F. Bedinger in 1866 and it was then called "The Elms". Geo. M. Bedinger, son of Dr. Bedinger, a man of sterling qualities reared a large family in "The Elms", all of whom were held in high esteem.

There was no special growth or development of this section, now known as Erlanger until the building of the Covington and Lexington turnpike. This road was chartered in 1829, being one of the first roads to be granted a charter by the Legislature. This historic highway was traversed by Henry Clay and other notable men of that day. It is now, of course, a part of the great Dixie Highway. It immediately became the outlet for Central Kentucky and thousands of hogs, sheep, and cattle were driven over it every year to the Cincinnati market, stagecoach lines were established, taverns were built all along the route for the convenience of the public.

A post office is said to have been established here and called Timberlake in honor of Major Thornton Timberlake. The Major was one of the pioneer settlers of this section and was the owner of thousands of acres of land on the south side of what is now the Dixie Highway. Major Timberlake was the father of Miss Alice E. Timberlake, who was the wife of Dr. John H. Stevenson; the grandfather of Mr. Thomas J. Stevenson, Miss Mary A. Stevenson and Mrs. Theodore F. Hallam and great-grandfather of Miss Mary Alice Stevenson and Miss Alice Hallam. Dr. John H. Stevenson, son-in-law of Major Timberlake was one of the leading physicians of Kenton and Boone Counties.

Col. Thomas Buckner, another of the early settlers of this section came here in 1812 and was the owner of thousands of acres of land.

The Southern Railway was completed in 1877 and the first time card shows the station as Greenwood Lake in honor of Miles Greenwood, the first president of the road. Later it was found that there were five other stations on the road which began with "Green" and in order to avoid confusion the name was changed to Silver Lake. This name was not acceptable to the Post Office Department. It was then that Mrs. Hannah Bedinger selected the name of Erlanger, in honor of Baron Frederick Emile D. Erlanger, who was the head of the Erlanger syndicate which leased the Southern Railway October 11, 1881.

On May 11, 1896 the Towm of Elsmere up to that time known as South Erlanger was incorporated. The name means "By a lake."

The town of Erlanger was incorporated on January 25, 1897. It was said that the incorporation came when it did, due to the fact that it was rumored that Elsmere contemplated annexing Erlanger.

No account of the basic background of Kenton County would be complete without General Leonard Stephens and Locust Grove. General Stephens, who came to Kentucky from Virginia with his father, Benjamin Stephens, the latter part of the Eighteenth Century, when he was a young boy, erected in the early part of the Nineteenth Century the first brick house in Kenton County, to which he took his bride, Miss Katherine Sandford. The bricks for the house were burned in a kiln on the plantation. The house originally had a large veranda across the front and south side. It was situated on a large tract of land known as a plantation about 12 miles from Covington, on what is now Richardson Pike and one mile from the Old State Road, the Lexington Pike and now known as the Dixie Highway. It was in this house, called "Locust Grove" that General Stephens entertained General Lafayette in 1825. The illustrious French General was met by General Stephens when he was en-route from Lexington to Cincinnati and taken to this home and was extended lavish hospitality. On the way they stopped at a little log school house where General Stephens' children, Napoleon, Lucy, Statira and Lucien Stephens attended a private school on the Stephens plantation.

General Stephens was a man of genial social nature and he loved to gather about him his friends and kinspeople. Among them were the Sandfords, Bristows, Clevelands, Perrys and Herndons. The Highland Stock Farm on the Dixie Highway, formerly owned by Jerome Bristow Respess, a great-grandson of General Stephens, includes the site of the old homestead. General Stephens owned the first carriage in Northern Kentucky and drove through to Frankfort when he represented the county as State Senator. Undoubtably some more of the "Grass Roots" of Kenton County.

Fiskburg in the southern half of our county was named for Dr. Fisk. The toll gate and post office were in the same building and one man was both post master and toll gate keeper.

Atwood was named in honor Atwood Bird, President of the Independence Bank. Bird's maternal grandfather, Robert Stephens, came from Virginia in 1813 and settled at the place now known as Atwood.

On or about 1820, a man named Nathaniel Vise settled on the west bank of the Licking River. Soon after some four or five others moved in and built their log cabins near the river and near each other. In honor of the original settler, Mr. Vice, they named their little settlement Visalia. Of course, at this time, the territory now Kenton County was a part of Campbell County. And it is very interesting to note that Visalia later was the county seat of Campbell County for a short time.

Morning View was formerly known as Mullins Station. But one morning many years ago some railroad officials were riding through on a hand car with some of the crew when the sun was rising. They exclaimed on the wonderful "morning view" and later when designating the place officially they would add "Where they have the wonderful morning view". This gradually became general and was condensed to Morning View and has carried the name ever since.

Nicholson was named for Dr. H. C. Nicholson, father of Mr. Geo. Nicholson, the well known contractor who is now living in Walton, Kentucky.

Independence, the official county seat of Kenton County was incorporated in 1842. It is the exact center of Kenton County and it is most interesting to read of the great pains taken in 1840 to see that it was the exact center.

Whites Tower was named in honor of George White. George Stephens was the first settler. He acquired 300 acres of land and erected large barns to house his herd of cattle which he drove through to Covington and Cincinnati over the old Taylor Mill Road. A sturdy "Grass Root" of our county.

Bracht Station was named by the Southern Railway after the Bracht family and the post office accepted the name. For many years it was the principal cattle, hog and sheep shipping point between Williamstown and Covington.

The first mail carrier at Piner was Jack Edmonds who walked to the post office at Fiskburg (2 miles) and returned with the mail, also selling Kentucky Posts on the return trip. Mrs. Lewis Gabriel of Piner has a letter addressed to her great-great-grandmother, Mrs. Sarah Rich from her son. The letter was addressed to "Piner's Cross Roads, Kenton County, Kentucky". The date of the letter is 1854. At that time someone walked to the railroad and brought the mail back. This procedure was called a Star Route.

The early settlers of Kenton were a truly God-fearing group and gathered whenever possible for religious services. However, there was no concerted program nor were there church buildings. Time passed, the communities grew larger, and

efforts were made to make religion a part of the daily life. The first church on record to be organized was the Wilmington Baptist Church, located on Bryant's Ford in Wilmington Bottom. The date was June 3, 1804, and was comprised of six members. Despite the salary of $3.00 per month paid the pastors the church contined to grow. In 1840, when Kenton County was cut from Campbell, it became very active with the church near Fiskburg.

The first Catholic Church in Kenton County was located on Fifth Street in Covington, and called St. Mary's. It was a mission church under the control of the Diocese established at Bardstown, near Louisville. This was in 1833, and Mass was celebrated whenever the mission priest from Bardstown could make the journey by horse through the Indian infested country and over the almost impassable road. In 1837 the church was declared a pastorate, with a resident pastor, and services were conducted regularly.

On April 12, 1849, deed was made to the Goshen Christian Church erected at Piner. At that time the community asked for the name of "Goshen" for the town, but it was already being used elsewhere, so they changed it to "Piner" for Brack Piner, the storekeeper. Ezra Fish, who deeded the land, was an ancestor of Hamilton Fish, of our day, a New York millionaire and politician. Here, too, the preacher was paid $3.00 to $5.00 per month.

Crescent Springs was so-called because of the many springs in the neighborhood and because of the shaped crescent formed by a bend of the old "Queen and Crescent" Railroad which passed through this community.

In the Fall of 1862, during the war between the States, General Lew Wallace was placed in command of the Union forces assigned to the defense of Cincinnati. The day that he arrived in the Queen City he summoned Prof. Ormsby MacKnight Mitchell to his headquarters. The Professor, recently appointed Brigadier Beneral of Volunteers, had for ten years been Professor of Mathematics, Astronomy and Philosophy at Cincinnati College, where he had achieved international fame for his lectures and writings in Astronomy. He inspired the building of the Cincinnati Observatory. General Wallace told Brig. Gen. Mitchell that Kirby Smith and his rebels had taken Lexington, Frankfort and Maysville and that Morgan's cavalry was joining up with Smith. They could attach Cincinnati in a very short time. General Mitchell was instructed to build the first line of defense - a series of earth works on the Kentucky Hills across the river. Making a quick survey on horseback, General Mitchell decided to dig approximately ten miles of intrenchment, making a semi-circle from the Ohio River at Bromley in the West to a point on the river near Font Thomas.

At sunrise September 10, 1862, a pontoon bridge was thrown across the river. Wagon loads of munitions and steady streams of sturdy men from the rural districts of Ohio and Indiana poured across the river and on their way to a line of defense. One would have thought that the spirit of Daniel Boone was standing in the hills and was beckoning them into Kentucky. General Ormsby Mitchell rode tirelessly back and forth, inspiring the motley crew to greater effort, tirelessly building the outer defense for a threatened city. After a weary march in the boiling September sun the bedraggled civilian army from Cincinnati reached the summit of the Kentucky hills. After three days of feverish work the earth works and firing pits were constructed. But alas! All in vain, as the Confederate forces fell back, with the only action being small skirmishes between outposts. On the fourth day, the civilian army was ordered to return to Cincinnati.

The present site of Fort Mitchell was one of the great defensive earth works on the Kentucky Hills in spite of almost insurmountable difficulties and his success in inspiring the men with courage and determination, undoubtably, had much to do with persuading Kirby Smith not to attach the Queen City. It is fitting that the beautiful community of Fort Mitchell, Kentucky should perpetuate the name and deeds of this brave scholarly man.

At this same time, a series of fortifications on the hilltops surrounding Covington were built and named Ft. Kyle, Ft. Henry, Ft. Wright, Ft. Rich and Fort Perry.

Chartered as a sixth class city on St. Valentine's Day in 1910, Ft. Mitchell, Kentucky today is a beautiful residential community.

About 110 years ago, Coran, Spencer and Corry owned a considerable tract of land which is now embraced in the city of Park Hills and undertook to develop it. They subdivided the tract of land and laid off many streets which were never graded. Along the Old State Road a number of their lots were sold and built upon but their remaining lots, which were later acquired by Simmons and Renz, have since been incorporated in a re-subdivision of lots which are much larger than originally planned by Coran, Spencer and Corry. A tract of land containing about 60 acres, on the north side of what is now Park Hills, was known as the Light property. The Light property was at one time the land of the Montague family. The Montague home was located where the Club House of the Devou Park Golf and Tennis Club now stands. The old Montague Cemetery lies west of the tennis courts, a section of which was devoted to the burial of slaves. Rufus Light and his sisters mortgaged their interest in this property to a Covington bank. There was a prolonged litigation between the Trust Company and the Light family. Throughout this litigation, Rufus Light operated a

refreshment stand located at the junction of Montague Road with the Park Road. At one time he was evicted but he moved across the road and set up a tent on park property. Rufus claimed that he owned some property on the north side of Montague Road occupied by the park, contending that there was an old property line dispute and that his mother had told him at one time that the Devou family had wrongfully taken possession of a part of her land.

This was the basis of a long family feud between the Lights and Devous, with Rufus the loser.

For many years the Light family had sold moulding sand on their property on Breckenridge Road and in the construction of Emerson Road the steam shovels uncovered a number of tunnels which had formerly been used in quarrying the moulding sand and whose existence had been forgotten. Rufus Light sold some of the most valuable clay to the Rookwood Pottery and he always thought that the mineral rights to this property were worth a large fortune.

Later, through the close friendship between Mr. E. S. Lee of the First National Bank and Wm. Devou, Mr. Devou was persuaded to give the entire 515 acres now known as Devou Park to the city of Covington.

Mr. Lee's son, D. Collins Lee and Mr. Robert Simmons later teamed up in purchasing the various parcels of land and developed Park Hills. It is now a Fifth Class city with a population of 3500.

Thus we complete the "Grass Roots" tour of our county. Of course, there are several more thriving suburban municipalities and communities of a more recent vintage which are doing their part in the upbuilding and developing of Kenton County. As the years relentlessly mark the milestones on the pathway of time, the older generation slowly gives way to the new and gradually there passes from our midst the men and women who made our county what it is and who built up this part of our empire for the men of today. In every generation and in every community some few men leave an indelible imprint upon the history of that community and upon the memory of those who have known them by their ability to fight and win even against great odds.

We, of this present generation, should never read of the exploits of our ancestors without feeling a burning desire to emulate their noble achievements. It can scarcely be conceived that the youthful Kenton Countian could read the history of our county without having his valor kindled and his patriotism confirmed. They could scarcely create characters more daring and intrepid than the adventurous men who first penetrated our

forests and traversed the wilderness of Kenton County; who with invincible spirit sustained every privation and withstood the savage attacks of the Indian foe. We are very proud to herein chronicle the exploits of these men of our county who planted their "Grass Roots" in so many places. May we profit therefrom and in some way attempt to raise the level of our lives to theirs.