KENTUCKY & the Revolutionary Era 1770-1815

An Exhibition of The Reuben T. Durrett Collection, The University of Chicago Library

KENTUCKY & the Revolutionary Era 1770-1815

An Essay Prepared by WILLIAM T. HUTCHINSON *on the Occasion of an Exhibition of Manuscripts and Early Printed Material Selected From* THE REUBEN T. DURRETT COLLECTION. *Presented at The Joseph Regenstein Library of The University of Chicago, November 1976-February 1977*

The publication of this catalogue
was made possible by funds established by
The University of Chicago Library Society

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 76-44264

Printed in the United States of America

Design by Lynn Martin

Preface

The Reuben T. Durrett Collection was the first major collection relating to American history acquired by the University of Chicago Library. The large body of manuscripts and books, so assiduously and so passionately assembled by Colonel Durrett, also began the Library's commitment to acquiring original documentation in support of historical inquiry at the University. The removal of the collection from its native ground was rightfully the cause of some alarm, but since its arrival in Chicago some six decades ago the University Library has been gratified by making its riches available to all scholars, and most especially to those from Kentucky. The long and complex negotiations which surrounded the acquisition are touched upon in the introduction. Perhaps it contains an object lesson about the preservation of our historical past which has now happily been learned.

During the University Library's custody of the Collection we cannot recall an exhibition based on its varied contents. It seemed fitting then, in this our nation's bicentennial year, to select from the Collection pieces which would introduce readers of this catalogue to its richness. At the same time this catalogue proposes to illustrate the formative years of a region which played a strategic role in our country's quest for independence.

The sweeping interests of Colonel Durrett are reflected in the presentation chosen for this catalogue. The narrative form has allowed considerable latitude in selection from a body of material that is inevitably uneven in coverage. Yet the presentation of a narrative imposed its own demand that the incidental and particular be brought into an integrated and lucid stream. There was no better person from the University of Chicago to do this than Professor William T. Hutchinson, now formally retired but still actively pursuing an understanding of our national history. We are grateful to him for undertaking the task of writing this catalogue with such care and devotion.

Robert Rosenthal
Curator
Special Collections

Introduction

The Genesis of the REUBEN T. DURRETT COLLECTION *and How it Came to Be at the* UNIVERSITY *of* CHICAGO

The Reverend Thomas W. Goodspeed, whose devotion to the University of Chicago was unstinted and effective even before the institution became a reality, wrote in 1905: "One of the most urgent needs of a new University is books and more books and still more books." From its outset about a dozen years earlier, he and his faculty colleagues, including President Harper, believed that no center of learning merited the title "University" unless abundant primary sources, both in manuscripts and in print, were readily available on its campus for use by graduate students and their instructors in the humanities and social sciences. Following the death of Harper in January 1906, his friends agreed that a greatly needed library building would be the most fitting and durable tribute to so talented a scholar and administrator. The dedication of the William Rainey Harper Memorial Library took place almost exactly two years after its cornerstone was laid on June 14, 1910.

Two of the principal members of the Department of History—its head, Andrew C. McLaughlin, and William E. Dodd—both specialists in United States history, did not witness the cornerstone ceremony. They were in Louisville, surveying the remarkable library—already consulted several times by Dodd in his research—of the honorary Kentucky colonel, Reuben T. Durrett (1824-1913). Although the two envoys were courteously received and highly impressed by the size and richness of the collection—especially as bearing upon the history of the Ohio River Valley between 1750 and 1830—they found their host in declining health and with no definite plan about the future of his "treasures." It was clear, however, that if he decided to dispose of them his asking price would be high—perhaps even as much as forty-five or fifty thousand dollars. McLaughlin and Dodd returned to Chicago, convinced that what they had seen would add significantly to the scanty research materials in their favorite area of history, but also recognizing that the financially pinched University lacked sufficient contingent funds to entice Durrett to sell.

For almost three years thereafter, in furtherance of their objective, influential members of the so-called "Social Science Group" and other scholars at the University, including Ernest D. Burton, Director of its Library, continued to seek and gain monetary help from private donors as well as the endorsement of President Harry P. Judson and the Board of Trustees. At the same time, Colonel Durrett was being impelled by a sequence of increasingly adverse circumstances to dispose of his collection in a manner far contrary to his long cherished dream.

A native born Kentuckian of Virginia antecedents, Reuben T. Durrett was graduated by Brown University in 1849 and by the Law School of the University of Louisville the next year. During the next thirty years he was a highly successful attorney, interspersing his practice with frequent excursions in local and state politics, and with service as chief editor of the *Louisville Daily Courier* between 1857 and 1859. As early as 1850 he made the history of Kentucky his hobby and soon his passion, recounting aspects of its dramatic story in numerous magazine and newspaper articles. He further enjoyed the companionship of Kentucky's past by amassing in his home on Front Street, through purchase or gift, whatever holograph manuscripts, transcripts, pamphlets, etc., rewarded his avid search for them. Six feet two inches tall, and holding himself as "erect as an Indian chieftain," he was sometimes called "Mr. Kentucky" in token of his range and depth of

knowledge about the history of his state.

Being hospitable and an excellent raconteur, the Colonel delighted in occasionally drawing about him in his library a small coterie of friends, mostly of "old-line" Kentucky families, who also liked to transport themselves back to the days of their ancestors. In May 1884, this congenial group of ten men decided to call themselves the Filson Club, in some measure as a compliment to Durrett who had nearly completed a biography of John Filson. Filson in 1784 had published a thin volume which, with considerable leniency of definition, could be called the first "history" of Kentucky.

Besides cooperating in garnering primary source materials, and encouraging the study of the history of their state in its schools and colleges, the aim of the club was to publish annually a work authored or edited by one of its members, on some subject of mutual interest. After listening to a formal paper or discussing a pre-arranged topic, they customarily closed each monthly meeting by enjoying crabapple cider and their specially made Filson Club cigars. The cost of these refreshments was scarcely covered by the three dollars annual dues. More than any other member Colonel Durrett balanced the yearly financial accounts by gifts from his own purse. For thirty years he was both the president and librarian of the club. As librarian he often shelved among his own collection books or pamphlets owned by one or another of "the brethren." He found neither the time nor the disposition to catalogue his library, or even, in many instances, to arrange it by topics or types of materials.

By 1910, although as a closely knit and productive history-centered group the Filson Club had been an outstanding success, it seemed destined never to attain one of its most cherished goals. In that year Colonel Durrett, suffering with lumbago, and soon to be stricken with paralysis, felt obliged to cease his long-continued efforts to persuade the government of his city or state, or a college in Kentucky to provide a fireproof depository for his collection. To prevent it from being scattered by sale at auction, to find a buyer—even one outside Kentucky—who would offer a fair price and guarantee to keep it intact and available to scholarly use, comprised his last hope.

Within this context the agents of the University of Chicago sought now and again for nearly three years to acquire the collection. Representing the University, Walter Lichtenstein, highly regarded for his knowledge of old volumes and manuscripts, appraised the collection. He reported that its commercial worth was far less than what Durrett believed it to be. Lichtenstein characterized much of it as "a perfect hodge-podge," its manuscripts mostly transcripts rather than holographs, and all of the mass so carelessly kept as to require much cleaning, binding or rebinding, re-arranging, and cataloguing. He emphasized that the high cost of this processing should be kept in mind when negotiating the purchase. On the latter score, he did not exaggerate, but he far underestimated the worth of the collection—at least in terms of its future monetary value. Late in December 1912, in an obviously feeble hand, Durrett signed his name, witnessed by Professor Dodd, to a brief document agreeing to sell the collection to the University—but the determination of price required about four months more of occasional negotiations. The formal contract is dated April 30, 1913. By then the Colonel was believed to be near death (it occurred on September 16). The University purchased the collection for $22,500—or approximately one-half of Durrett's original asking price.

Some notion of the size of his accumulation is signified by the need to use 287 large crates to ship it by rail to Chicago early in May. Besides the boxes there were four paintings, a large wall map, a Torah, and the mummy of an American Indian woman. Travel expenses to and from Louisville, the packaging, cartage and freight added almost $1,500 to the cost of the collection. Upon their arrival on the campus, the crates were stored in the north end of the basement of Haskell Museum—now a building of the Graduate School of Business—to await adequate accommodation in the newly opened Harper Memorial Library.

Even before the collection left Louisville the newspapers of that city lamented its loss. The corresponding gain to the University simultaneously elicited much favorable comment in the press of Chicago.

As a result of this publicity, Dr. Burton and Mr. Edward A. Henry, the Associate Director of the library, received numerous letters or telephone calls, each expressing the hope that, if some document was in the collection, the inquirer might be privileged to examine it or be furnished with a copy made at his expense. Less welcome were requests from a few members of the Filson Club for the return of books or other items owned by them, but which had been shelved and appraised among Colonel Durrett's collection. Among material of this sort returned by the Library were some public records of Jefferson County, Kentucky, or of its Louisville metropolis. As for the Filson Club, after recovering from the loss of Durrett's leadership and most of his library, it flourished anew. By the close of the 1920s it had its own building in Louisville, its own quarterly magazine, and well over two hundred members.

Following the arrival of the Collection at the University of Chicago, weeks went by before Mr. Henry and his small staff analyzed its contents in terms of the approximate numbers of books, pamphlets, magazines, files of newspapers, holographs, transcripts, and miscellanea. Almost all of the newspaper titles were represented by more or less incomplete "runs." About 135 titles had been published in Kentucky and 110 outside that state. In 1914 a listing of these newspapers prepared by Mr. Henry appeared in print. The next year the University merged with the Durrett Collection about 100 volumes of miscellaneous newspapers and approximately 550 books and pamphlets. These had been purchased for $450 from Mrs. Joel R. Lyle and her brother, Robert C. Boggs of Lexington, Kentucky. Besides newspapers, the Durrett Collection comprised with this addition some 30,000 volumes; 2,800 holographs; probably 50,000 pages of handwritten, typed or photocopied transcripts; and an uncounted number of college catalogues, other pamphlets, landplats, maps, clippings, and photographs. Among the most extensive of the transcripts are the Diego de Gardoqui and Frederick Haldimand despatches from the Wisconsin State Historical Society and Canadian Public Archives, respectively. Except for the holographs and transcripts, and some rare books of which the University had no other copy, the volumes were identified with an appropriate bookplate and distributed among the departmental libraries. Duplicates, unless needed, were exchanged with other libraries for works which the University lacked.

Processing and re-processing the collection has gone forward periodically for over six decades. By now this tedious, complicated, and costly work is virtually completed in a form which probably will need no further revision. Robert Rosenthal, Curator of the Department of Special Collections of the University Library, and his efficient staff deserve great credit for this accomplishment.

The following account of early Kentucky reflects mainly the source materials in the Reuben T. Durrett Collection, but the author also gratefully acknowledges the assistance afforded by Mann Butler, *A History of the Commonwealth of Kentucky . . . to . . . 1813* (1834); George Morgan Chinn, *Kentucky Settlement and Statehood 1750-1800* (1975); and Thomas D. Clark, *A History of Kentucky* (1937). Robert W. Allison, Judith Cushman, and Jacqueline McGlamery of the Special Collections staff, and Susan G. Allison have been most helpful associates in forwarding the completion of this project.

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Filson's Map of Kentucky. From John Filson, *The Discovery, Settlement and Present State of Kentucke. . . .* 1784

KENTUCKY & the Revolutionary Era

KENTUCKY'S *First White* SETTLERS *and the* REVOLUTION *Beyond the* ALLEGHENIES

The focus of the Durrett Collection is the source materials, dating between about 1750 and 1820, that bear upon the Americans from east of the Appalachians who explored and settled the area which became the state of Kentucky in 1792, and who largely shaped its history for the next twenty-five years. The present exhibit is intended to be a gesture of deference to the American Revolution in its bicentennial year and to supplement in a small degree the contents of many commemorations already held or still in progress. These latter, whether martial pageants, dramatic portrayals of a patriot's exploits, oral or written compositions with Revolutionary themes, advertisements with "Spirit of '76" connotations aimed to sell merchandise, or even fire hydrants painted to suggest George Washington or Betsy Ross, leave the impression that the seven years of war were almost wholly centered east of the Appalachians from Portsmouth, New Hampshire to Savannah, Georgia, except for an occasional naval battle in the Alantic Ocean or Caribbean Sea. Although today's residents of the Ohio Valley, who trace their ancestors back to its pioneers, apparently do not dissent from this emphasis, they may wish that the trans-Allegheny theater of the Revolution were more often memorialized.

United States Congress. Commission to Brigadier General Charles Scott, U.S. Army. January 8, 1780. 1 page.

The irritating but unenforceable Royal Proclamation of 1763 banned whites from settling west of the Appalachian watershed. Parliament's successive Sugar Act, Stamp Act, Mutiny Act, Declaratory Act, Townshend Acts, Tea Act, and so-called Intolerable Acts evoked on the Atlantic seaboard a flood of political eloquence, sermons, petitions, resolutions, essays in newspapers, intra- and intercolonial committees, and increasing acts of violence, but the adventurers, explorers, hunters, surveyors, and land scouts who were roaming over "the dark and bloody ground" of "Kentuck" (Caintuck, Cantuck, Kentucke, etc.) were not directly affected. Although most of them were law-abiding, they were beyond the geographical range of British statutes and almost all of those enacted by the General Assembly at Williamsburg. Legally the settlers were within the uncertain boundaries of Fincastle County, Virginia.

Samuel Duncan. Certificate of oath of allegiance to the state of Virginia. August 30, 1777. 1 page.

By a coincidence, the first white settlement in Kentucky destined to be

permanent and the Lexington-Concord battle occurred almost simultaneously in April, 1775. Thereafter, except for the very few Tories, Kentuckians would have grievances somewhat analogous to those of their seaboard kinfolk. But their complaints would differ in impact largely because the western frontier had no Atlantic littoral vulnerable to British blockade or assault from the sea. Moreover, liaison with their "mother country" of Virginia was slow, arduous, and hazardous, either by the "Wilderness Trail" through Cumberland Gap or by the Monongahela River to Fort Pitt and thence down the Ohio River. Rarely during the war could the government of Virginia, harried by the need to furnish troops to the Continental Army and to fight British invaders of its soil east of the Alleghenies, send human or material help to its citizens across the mountains.

William Brown. "Journal of his Journeys from Virginia to Kentucky by the Wilderness Road in 1782. . . ." 70 folios.

Numerically considered, the Kentuckians' principal enemies were not the British, but the Indians from a cluster of tribes living north of the Ohio River. These Indians marauded frequently across the river, partly at the instigation of the British who, from their Detroit headquarters, often supplied them with arms and small contingents of troops. They were a formidable enemy. From the redmen's standpoint the white pioneers were trespassers into a region where Indians had rarely settled, but which they deemed to be their traditional and exclusive hunting ground for its abundant buffalo, elk, deer, bear, turkeys, and water fowl. Indians from the south took much the same view of the white pioneers as their brothers to the north, and the Cherokees raided into Kentucky from the south both during and after the Revolution.

William Christian. Autograph letter to Isaac Shelby. September 30, 1776. 2 pages.

The strife between the Indians and the pioneers was ruthless. Each side used weapons which included fire as well as steel knives, tomahawks, and leaden bullets. Although the frontiersmen took few prisoners unless they were British, the Indians took many, of whom some were women and children (there were only a few to take in that early time), and delighted in "stealing" horses and other livestock. Some of the whites emulated their foe by hanging scalps from their belts as proof of their prowess.

Although the analogy can easily be overdrawn, the Indians with their British ally were to Kentucky what the military bands of Tories were to the patriots east of the Appalachians—precipitating within the Revolution a civil war disfigured by the atrocities often characterizing that type of conflict. In the East soon after the onset of the war, the Continentals sought unsuccessfully to drive the British from Montreal and Quebec, but later (October 1777) forced Burgoyne, invading New York State from Canada and relying on Iroquois Indians for assistance, to surrender at Saratoga. In the West the many incursions into Kentucky by Indians (with British help) during the early years of the Revolution and their attacks on most of the "stations" and forts were temporarily halted in 1778-1779 when the Kentucky militia led by Lieutenant Colonel

Joseph Martin. Autograph letter to Evan Shelby. September 10, 1778. 1 page.

Return of provisions for troops stationed at Fort Patrick Henry for two days. May 5, 1777. 1 page.

(later Brigadier General) George Rogers Clark captured Cahokia, Kaskaskia, and Vincennes in the "Illinois Country" north of the Ohio River, along with the British garrison under Lieutenant Governor Henry ("Hair-Buyer") Hamilton. The surrender of Cornwallis and his army at Yorktown in October 1781, however, had no parallel in the Ohio Valley. There the campaigns of the Revolution ended with the costly defeat of Kentuckians in the Battle of the Blue Licks in August 1782, and with a successful retaliatory raid three months later against the Indians living near the Miami River in the Ohio Country. Although Kentuckians shared the next year in the nation-wide jubilation which greeted the news that Great Britain had at last admitted its inability to crush the rebellion of the thirteen United States, the Indians living north of the Ohio River and influenced by British garrisons there, continued to be a menace to Kentucky until 1795.

Robert Patterson. Transcript of his *ca.* 1792 account entitled, "Battle of the Blue Licks." 15 pages.

Inventory of ordnance and military stores at Fort Nelson. October 1, 1783. 1 page.

Appraisal of articles for the use of Clark's expedition against the Wabash Indians. September 8, 1786. 1 page.

The western phase of the war exerted little, if any, influence on the terms of the peace treaty between the United States and Great Britain, but the military and monetary assistance extended by France had perhaps been decisive in the winning of America's independence. Two aspects of this aid affected Kentucky both temporarily and permanently. French inhabitants in the three "Illinois Country" posts of Cahokia, Kaskaskia, and Vincennes, who had resented British rule since 1763, welcomed Clark and his men the more warmly in 1778 because of the Franco-American alliance concluded at Paris in February of that year. A cluster of place names in Kentucky reflect gratitude to France for her military and monetary help during the Revolution. In 1780, the Virginia General Assembly, about four years after it had raised Kentucky to the status of a county, split it into three counties—Fayette, Lincoln, and Jefferson. Fayette already had, or would soon have, the congenial companionship of Bourbon County and of the towns, Louisville, Paris, Versailles, La Grange, and Frenchburg.

The LIFE *of the* PIONEERS *Before* STATEHOOD

During the fifteen years beginning in 1775, the Kentuckians obviously did not spend all of their time discharging firearms at their foes. Most of these frontiersmen had been drawn across the Appalachians by the hope of establishing homes on fertile soil. Agriculture was then, and for long would continue to be, the basis of their economic and social life. At the outset, their isolation was a primary conditioning factor, as, too, their heritage of ideas, institutions, and family ties brought usually from Virginia or North Carolina. Even though self-reliance, courage, ingenuity, and willingness to endure hardships were emphatically needed for survival in a "howling wilderness," the pioneers naturally varied in their

Typed transcript of extracts from a 1792 manuscript, "Some particulars relative to the soil, situation, production, &c. of Kentucky." 8 pages.

possession of these qualities. Nor in terms of financial assets, education, and influential friends were they on an equal plane, either at their start or in the future. Individual good luck or good judgment, for example, in escaping serious illness, in having a congenial, competent, and hard-working wife, and in choosing a fertile acreage advantageously located also affected the evolution of this never classless society.

In Kentucky, as on every frontier, there were not a few lethargic and humdrum folk who seemed satisfied to labor only enough to eke out a bare subsistence. The Kentucky wilderness also had a small but most useful group of non-conformists. Daniel Boone (1734-1820), the best known of these, was meagerly educated and lacking in business acumen, but his energy, courage, and skill as an explorer, hunter, trapper, and fighter made him highly serviceable to his less adventuresome neighbors. He was also a family man, devoted to his wife and children (two of his sons were slain by Indians) and eager to be a landholder. Eventually, after his own carelessness in preserving documentary proof of ownership largely accounted for court decisions invalidating most of his real-estate titles, he again yielded to "the call of the wild" by abandoning his residence in an area cluttered with too many people. Moving to the Missouri frontier about 1799, he rarely revisited Kentucky thereafter.

Daniel Boone. Autograph letter to William Christian. August 23, 1785. 1 page.

Daniel Boone. Record of the terms of a loan from the Continental Loan Office. April 11, 1778. 1 page.

At the opposite end of the social spectrum were a few easterners with sufficient means to delay their migration until advance agents with gangs of workmen, usually slaves, had readied their land for fairly comfortable living. This included a barn, a big log cabin, or even a house with closely fitted sides of split logs or of stone, glass-paned windows, a second story, stairs, a water-tight roof, smoothly puncheoned floors, commodious fireplaces, a cellar, a porch, and a well. After the owner and his family arrived, if he was so disposed and had ability, he soon became a justice of the peace, an officer of the militia, or possibly a delegate to the Virginia General Assembly in Richmond.

John Floyd. Appraisal of his estate. June 7, 1783. 1 page.

John Lewis. Account with James Wilkinson. September 14, 1789. 1 page.

In adjusting to a new environment the majority of Kentucky pioneers necessarily expended much more physical labor than these "aristocrats." Building and maintaining the rough-hewn log cabin chinked with clay, with its "lean-to," earthen floor, and ladder to the loft; cultivating a patch of corn perhaps surrounded by a fence of mauled rails; killing game for food, hides, and oil; gathering honey or maple sap for sweetening; fermenting corn mash or fruit juice for liquor; making soap, candles, vinegar, household furniture, and farm tools; acquiring a horse and some cattle, as well as swine which could fatten on the mast in the forest until the autumn round-up for butchering or branding; brining or drying pork and the flesh of other animals; spinning and weaving linsey-wolsey or even hemp fibers; and fashioning coonskin caps, deer-leather breeches, hunting shirts, and moccasins—these and many more were the customary tasks of a married couple and their teen-aged

Edmund Lynn. Two account books for salt transactions. January 1786-February 1788. 44 and 12 pages.

Notary's printed and autograph document of protest against Abner M. Dunn for nonpayment of a debt to James Wilkinson. June 30, 1789. 1 page.

"Lynn Station." Ground plan, ink on paper. 26.0 x 40.7 cm.

children. A big brood of children was prized, but rarely pampered. If a family amassed an unneeded surplus of any commodity, the husband would barter with it at the trading post or store, if any, for necessities or simple "luxuries." If he sold for cash, he would usually receive a confusing conglomeration of British, French, and Spanish coins, intermixed with the depreciated paper currencies of one or more American states.

Almost certainly the menfolk in a neighborhood would cooperate in building a stockade, "station," or fort as a place of refuge in case of an attack by Indians. Within it were rude accommodations for the besieged families. All the able-bodied white males usually comprised a vigilante group dedicated to maintaining a semblance of law and order; to spreading the alarm when hostile Indians were near, and to tracking down, flogging, or even stringing up thieves of livestock. Neither these defensive activities nor those domestic tasks mentioned above were uniquely Kentuckian. They were commonplace on all American frontiers east of the High Plains.

Isolated living promoted the hospitality of frontier families. Being without newspapers or mail deliveries they eagerly listened to whatever a friendly visitor had seen or been told on his travels. To relieve the tedium of workaday living they often gathered during an evening or on a Sunday afternoon—following Bible reading, prayers, and singing "lined-out" hymns—to exchange yarns, dance, and compete in games of various kinds. These "frolics," usually enlivened with "toddy," sometimes got out of hand and were marred by rough and tumble fights in which no holds were barred.

Taverns or ordinaries (so called if they had sleeping rooms for lodging guests) were also places of social gatherings. Their ledgers suggest "stag" parties were held with no little gambling, drinking, and roistering. Shooting matches, squirrel hunts, and horse racing, accompanied in each case by betting, furnished still other means of entertainment. One newcomer recorded in 1786 that a fine horse and saddle, a trustworthy "rifel gun," and a fiddle were the most prized possessions of every forward looking Kentuckian. The steed symbolized mobility, the firearm security, and the violin sociability.

A marriage also provided a welcome opportunity for feasting, toasting, and dancing. The celebration climaxed with the down-to-earth and traditional ritual of female participants putting the bride to bed in the newly-weds' cabin and the males thereafter escorting the groom to the same destination. Marriageable maidens or widows were in short supply and found husbands without difficulty. Unless the affianced couple were very impatient, they awaited the appearance of a justice of the peace or a circuit-riding clergyman—usually of Presbyterian, Baptist, or Methodist affiliation—to join them in wedlock. Before the minister departed he was easily persuaded to preach, to baptize children and regenerated oldsters in a nearby stream or pond, and to say a few

words at the graves of persons who had died since his or some other parson's previous visit.

The death rate was high even without counting the casualties of war. Malaria, pneumonia, dysentery, child-birth fever, measles, rheumatism, and "scalded" feet from wet moccasins were usual afflictions. Occasionally a scourge of smallpox beset a neighborhood. Measures to provide adequate sanitation were always primitive, and virtually nonexistent in a beleaguered fort. Physicians were rarely to be found. When one was available his penchant for "cupping" and purging a patient had at best a dubious efficacy. The pioneers collected herbs for medicinal use. Peruvian Bark (quinine) could occasionally be bought at a country store. At least the air was seldom contaminated, and the pioneers did not lack for out-of-doors exercise. The smoke of their wood fires helped to repel mosquitoes.

Joseph Colvill and others. Four medical bills and medicinal recipes. 1789-1793. 4 pages.

Edmund Pendleton. Autograph letter to Harry Innes. August 11, 1790. 2 pages.

But what of education? The General Assembly of Virginia in 1783 authorized the creation of a Board of Trustees to promote the establishment in Kentucky of a "Transylvania Seminary." Thirteen trustees met in Lincoln County for the first time on November 10, 1783 and unanimously chose a Presbyterian clergyman, the Rev. David Rice, to be their chairman. Although they declared that "the prosperity and happiness of States depend in a great measure on the liberal education of the Inhabitants," they also agreed that, lacking funds, their first step had to be a solicitation of money, land, or anything else of economic value. Progress thereafter was painfully slow, whether judged in terms of the amount of donations, the degree of support extended by most of the trustees, or the ability to muster a quorum at their sessions. Indian forays, illness, bad weather, and hazardous travel probably were valid reasons for some absences, but it appeared that very few leaders among the pioneers rated education high in their list of priorities.

Transylvania Seminary. Transcript of records of the Board of Trustees. 1783-1799. 229 pages.

By the time of Kentucky's statehood, however, the more loyal sponsors of the project could testify that their endeavors had not been wholly futile. A pastor in Virginia gave his "philosophical apparatus" and library as an "encouragement to science" in "the Western Country." A "Grammar School" with Rice as its principal teacher had been opened in or near his home. Escheated land once owned by a Tory in Jefferson County, as well as other escheated acreage, became the property of the projected Seminary. By an act of the General Assembly of Virginia in 1787 one-sixth of the fees paid to surveyors in the District of Kentucky benefited the institution's treasury. Such rents as the trustees managed to collect from squatters on or leasers of the Seminary's lands went to the same purpose.

William Cullen. Transcript of his lectures delivered *ca.* 1756-1790 at the University of Edinburgh, volume 3 of 6 volumes. 453 folios.

And yet as late as the autumn of 1793, the trustees, still woefully short of money, could only report that the permanent site of the institution most probably would be near Lexington. Aside from the value of their considerable acreage, their cash assets were only £200, or approximately

$800. The enrollment in Rice's grammar school had declined to less than a dozen students; the annual tuition of £4 paid by each pupil scarcely equalled the salary of the teacher. Ominous also was the threat of discontented Presbyterians, who had lost control of the Board of Trustees, to found their own academy.

Even though documents in the Durrett Collection demonstrate that some of the Kentucky pioneers could not even sign their own names, they also make clear that a slowly growing number of their youngsters were receiving rudimentary training in the three Rs and the Christian religion. A clergyman, schoolmistress, or schoolmaster, such as John Filson was for several years, might spread the word that he or she wished, for a fee, to instruct children in Latin and Greek, moral philosophy, literature, accounting, deportment, etc. But by early in the 1790s the condition of public schooling in Kentucky was still bleak. The state constitution by its silence on the subject virtually denied the legislature any authority in that field.

H. Toulmin. Draft of a proposal "to undertake the tuition of 20 young gentlemen . . . in English and classical learning." January 7, 1794. 2 pages.

During the first fifteen or twenty years after the earliest settlements, clergymen rather than lawyers or physicians deserved most of the credit for whatever educational opportunities were available for young Kentuckians. Methodist preachers shared with many of the pioneers a scorn of any deep book-learning except that of the Bible, but the Presbyterian and Baptist ministers generally extolled the worth of schooling and often sought to prove their faith by their works. They were few in number, however, compared with the total population, and lacking many church buildings, they deemed it their duty to go on circuit, even to remote clearings. This itineracy, although much welcomed by the pioneers, interfered with schoolteaching. Perhaps as many ministers of the Gospel in that early day came only to visit Kentucky as those who remained to establish homes.

"Long Run Baptist-Meeting House on the Land of Abraham Lincoln, Erected about 1797." Pencil sketch on paper. 26.2 x 38.7 cm.

The Anglican Church gained almost no foothold in Kentucky during the post-Revolution decade. The several Catholic priests also found it a most difficult field to cultivate. Surely the vast majority of the frontiersmen were not godless, even though few of them appear to have viewed the construction of a church building and parsonage, and the engagement of a clergyman to be their "settled" pastor, as prime requirements for being Christians.

Recreation, education, and religion were amenities which can easily be overemphasized in seeking to portray life in Kentucky prior to statehood. In many respects it was a time of troubles. Resistance to Indian forays temporarily united the settlers, but manifold economic, political, and constitutional issues divided them. In the 1780s the large migration, mainly from states north of Virginia, increased the District of Kentucky's white population to about 63,000. Although hailed as a blessing, this influx was by no means an unmixed one. Ever since the eve of the Revolution, both individuals and companies, either on the spot or

Adjudication of a contested claim. December 28, 1779. 1 page.

absentee, had been plagued by disputes over land titles. The thronging of newcomers greatly aggravated these quarrels—so profitable to lawyers, speculators, and claimants with political "clout." Lawsuits involving overlapping grants crowded Kentucky courts well into the nineteenth century. The major arenas of conflict were naturally the fertile bluegrass regions, the salt licks, and town sites along navigable streams.

Any brief summary of this almost infinitely complex situation is bound to distort its reality. Among the main strands of the maze were titles or alleged titles derived from service in the French and Indian War, Lord Dunmore's War, or the Revolution. Along with those claims were others based on purchases made with treasury warrants issued by Virginia, and many more emanating from her huge grant to those frontiersmen, including Daniel Boone, who had come to Kentucky under the aegis of the Transylvania Company. That association, led by Richard Henderson of North Carolina, had purchased from the Cherokee Indians a vast area and planned to create a separate state. Although the Virginia General Assembly, with the approval of North Carolina's government, naturally repudiated this trespass upon Virginia's soil and jurisdiction, it recompensed the Transylvanians with a mammoth acreage. Then, too, there were numerous "squatters" ("occupier claimants"), who, innocently or otherwise, had settled without legal right on land already patented or which was still public domain. Each of them in his opinion had earned his holding by residing on it, clearing, farming, and fencing some of it, and often defending it against Indians at the risk of his life. If an interloper had thus encroached on another's land he and the legal owner eventually came to terms by dickering or by letting a court decide. As for a squatter on the public domain, the Virginia General Assembly granted him a preemptive right to buy his steading at the minimum price.

To add to the confusion over land rights, the pioneer seldom observed the practice of primogeniture. Upon his death, the real estate, often with uncertain boundaries, was divided among his wife and children. The vague metes and bounds could frequently be blamed upon the surveyors. They, following a practice customary in their day, designated on their plats the contour of a grant with impermanent objects such as rocks, varieties of trees, etc.—thus almost assuring disputes among contiguous claimants. This "chaos," as one visitor labeled it in the mid-1780s, was exacerbated by the high rents charged by absentee title holders.

A quite different controversial subject, which was heating up in that decade and would continue with fluctuations of temperature until the Civil War, was slavery. Probably a majority of the whites were in favor of, or at least indifferent about, using forced black labor. Against it were most of the Presbyterian and Baptist preachers. So, too, were some of the recently arrived laymen from the Middle Atlantic Coast states.

Commonwealth of Virginia. Land Office treasury warrant No. 47 to John Scott Harding. October 15, 1799. 1 page.

Commonwealth of Virginia. Land Office treasury warrant No. 2360 to George Rogers Clark. January 29, 1780. 1 page.

Commonwealth of Virginia. Copy of a land grant to George Washington. July 14, 1780. 1 page.

Commonwealth of Kentucky. Land grant to Alexander D. Orr and James T. Moore. May 10, 1793. 1 page.

Daniel Smith. Autograph surveyor's journal. 1770-1773. 23 pages. With other documents and plats of survey, 1774-1788.

Rebecca Hite. Autograph certificate of emancipation for a slave named Buck. February 2, 1796. 1 page.

Aquila Whitaker and Reuben Case. Contract for the hire of a Negro woman. March 14, 1782. 1 page.

Edmund Lyne. Account of "things given to my Negroes." 1789. 21 leaves.

The scarcity in Kentucky of white or black hired hands also affected this issue. On farms devoted principally to the production of livestock, slaves were economically unsuitable because the work there was highly seasonal. For about eight months of every year the ranging cattle, horses, and sheep required little attention, but slaves and their children had to be housed, fed, and clothed the year round.

In contrast, a plantation used mainly for the growing of staple crops required almost continuous work—ploughing, seeding, cultivating, weeding, harvesting, flailing, bagging or baling, and removing trees and brush so as to make new fields. For such a steady routine slaves could be profitably used. If there had to be a "lay-by," some of them probably could be hired to the proprietor of a salt lick or to another person who had a temporary need for unskilled laborers. Soon after the appearance of the first newspaper, the *Kentucky Gazette* at Lexington in 1787, advertisements announced runaway slaves and slaves for sale alongside other notices about stray horses and horses for sale. In 1791 a Negro woman, twenty-two years of age, sold for £60 and a young mare for £15. Entries in storekeepers' account books list customers' purchases of "negro cloth" (coarse linen), "negro hats," "negro shoes," and other commodities so designated. Their prices were less than the corresponding articles without the depreciating adjective.

"UNITED *We Stand,* DIVIDED *We Fall:*" KENTUCKY *Becomes the* FIFTEENTH STATE *of the Union*

According to the United States census of 1790 there were in Kentucky 11,944 blacks among its 75,077 people. Although still a "district" of Virginia, it already had a larger population than two of the thirteen states (Delaware and Rhode Island). From that standpoint, Kentucky was eligible for statehood. Granted that a majority of its pioneers desired that status, would the Congress, with a considerable number of its northern members either neutral or hostile to the growth of the West, pass an act enabling Kentucky to enter the Union? Would Virginia, who in 1784 had already yielded to the United States her title to almost all of the Old Northwest, consent to diminish her size further by surrendering her "sovereignty" over Kentucky? In a few respects Virginia's legal relationship with Kentucky was that of a "mother country" with a colony. The Kentuckians nursed some grievances against their "parent," resembling Virginia's pre-Revolution complaints against Great Britain. More importantly, however, the time-distance handicap, as well as many ties of family consanguinity, made Virginia usually an indulgent, although seldom a markedly helpful, ruler of the district.

The Kentuckians' geographic and economic isolation was probably the most important circumstance shaping their outlook about their

political future, but they were far from agreeing upon what would be most advantageous. A few influential leaders advocated remaining a part of the Old Dominion—in part because they believed a state government would oblige heavy expenses for its maintenance. Others, who resented the censures of a Virginia governor for dispatching militia against Indians without his prior consent, urged that statehood was the only proper goal. They also could appeal to the pride of their listeners and cite the opinions of prominent Virginians, such as James Madison and John Marshall, that the difficulty in communication, the absence of any important cash-nexus, and the patent differences between the day-by-day problems of the two regions made separation advisable, if not inevitable. But even the statehood champions in Kentucky were not harmonious. One group, surely the smallest, dreamed of their country's becoming a wholly sovereign nation, divorced from both Virginia and the United States. A second group, with the lure of personal economic gain thinly veiled, was also ready to haul down the American flag, provided that Spain, which controlled the lower Mississippi River, would take the sovereign state of Kentucky under its protection and afford the exports of its citizens free access to New Orleans and the Gulf of Mexico. The able and influential James Wilkinson viewed this alternative as Kentucky's salvation and a speedy road to great personal wealth. A third group worked to have Kentucky admitted to the Confederation of the United States on a basis of equality with each of the thirteen states.

John Marshall. Autograph letter to James Wilkinson. January 1, 1787. 4 pages.

The procedure for attaining this last objective was long and complicated. Constitutionally, it obliged three high hurdles to be surmounted in proper sequence. The first two required that most of the divided Kentuckians united in favor of statehood and then persuade the government at Richmond to release the District of Kentucky on terms generous enough to gain their acceptance. These terms, among others, concerned boundaries, land titles in Kentucky both of its residents and absentees, the Virginia military bounty-land reserve there, the assumption by Kentucky of an equitable portion of Virginia's state debt, and a pledge by Kentucky's leaders neither to seek complete independence nor to throw the released district into the arms of Spain. Before all this was agreed upon, the Kentuckians met in ten constitutional conventions between 1784 and 1792, and the General Assembly of Virginia passed four enabling acts between 1786 and 1789. The last three of these four generously extended the deadline by which Kentucky had to attain statehood.

Benjamin Sebastian. Transcript of his "Journal of the conventions held at Danville, Ky., 1788, 1789, 1790 and 1792." 146 pages.

In considerable measure this long delay was caused by the simultaneous transition of the United States' central government. By the mid-1780s the Confederation's Congress was seriously ineffective, often failing to assemble a quorum sufficient for exercising its delegated powers, unable to enforce its ordinances and treaties, alarmingly poor in purse, and rent by sectionalism. Predictions were current that the fragile

Union, now that its bond of the war against Great Britain was broken, would shatter into at least two countries with the Potomac River as the dividing line. Worse still from the Kentuckians' standpoint, many of the political and economic leaders of the northern states appeared to be willing to follow Secretary of Foreign Affairs John Jay in upholding Spain's closure of the Mississippi River to American traffic in exchange for commercial concessions in the Spanish West Indies. By the end of 1787, however, Jay recognized that the Congress would not agree to such a *quid pro quo*.

James Madison. Autograph letter to George Nicholas. May 17, 1788. 9 pages.

Except for its anti-slavery provision the Northwest Ordinance, enacted in that year, pleased Kentuckians by its assurance that equal statehood would be the constitutional destiny of that area. At about the same time the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia drafted a fundamental law for the United States. From most Kentuckians' point of view, this document seemed to recommend that a dangerous degree of power be entrusted to a President and to the Congress, especially if they should both be anti-West in policy. Mainly for this reason, nearly all of the delegates from the Kentucky counties to the Virginia Convention early in the summer of 1788 were among the minority which tried to prevent the convention's ratification of the proposed Constitution. Before the end of that summer eleven of the thirteen states had expressed their approval. The Confederation Congress accepted this verdict for its demise, and resolved that the new regime be inaugurated the following spring. This expiring Congress also decided to relay Kentucky's petition for statehood to its successor.

James Madison. Autograph letter to George Nicholas. April 8, 1788. 5 pages.

George Nicholas. Autograph notes for a speech in support of the new Constitution. *Ca.* April, 1788. 8 pages.

The fact that George Washington, a friend of the West and a Kentucky landowner, would be the first President of the United States was a placating circumstance to the Kentuckians. Soon after he took office, the Congress—evidently eager to allay sectionalism and thus to assure that the new government would not be merely a transitory experiment—evinced in its debates a spirit of compromise. For Kentuckians, this, too, was a favorable omen. The admission of Vermont to the Union in 1791 suggested that this fourteenth state should be balanced by a fifteenth, particularly pleasing to the South and West. With no little difficulty they assembled in convention at Danville for the tenth time, drafted a constitution, dispatched it to the Congress, and gained admittance as a state on June 1, 1792—almost exactly the deadline date prescribed in Virginia's fourth enabling act. This constitution provided that electors, chosen by the qualified voters, should name the governor and members of the Senate. Isaac Shelby (1750-1826), who lived near that town and for nearly twenty years had earned public esteem by his military and civic services, was unanimously selected to be the governor. Amid much acclaim he took the oath of office at Lexington three days later. Before the year closed the General Assembly, reflecting the tensions which had harassed Kentuckians for so long, adopted as the state's motto the

Town of Danville. Letter to Isaac Shelby. June 3, 1792. 2 pages.

epigram in John Dickinson's "Liberty Song" (1768), "United We Stand, Divided We Fall."

As was customary, the first constitution erected a tri-partite structure of government, declared what each of its three branches should or could do, or must not do, and set forth the qualifications for office holding and voting. The document appended an exceptionally long bill of rights, putting further restraints on public officials and guaranteeing to every law-abiding white citizen the usual individual liberties, including those of religion, speech, press, assembly, and migration to or from Kentucky. By the American standards prevailing in 1790 the constitution was "democratic," even though it omitted mention of publicly supported education and forbade the legislature to abolish slavery either altogether on one date or gradually. The latter subject was long debated by the forty-two members of the constitutional convention. A small shift in the final vote would have blocked its passage. Also of much importance was the provision that the constitution would be subject to review after being in force for five years. By then, many occurrences, both within and without the state, had altered the views of some of Kentucky's leading politicians.

Although by 1792 more Kentuckians than a decade earlier were living in commodious residences on plantations or were comfortably housed in the increasing number of towns, most of the whites were still in cabins scattered along the rivers, near springs or salt licks, or crowded behind palisades in frontier forts or "stations." Fish, waterfowl, wild turkeys and deer were still plentiful, but buffalo, elk, bear, and the fur-bearing animals which had made hunting and trapping worthwhile in the earlier days, had become scarce, at least near the settlements.

ENDING *the* INDIAN MENACE *from the* NORTH *and* OPENING *the* MISSISSIPPI *to the* SOUTH

Continuing, however, was the menace from the Indians—especially those living in the Northwest Territory. Kentucky's Ohio River frontage, extending for about five hundred miles, was too long to be defended adequately by militia and the small detachments of U.S. regulars garrisoned in forts on the north shore of that stream. Besides attacking whites aboard boats, Indians frequently crossed the river to kill homemakers, burn cabins, destroy crops, and drive off livestock. In 1790 a federal judge in Kentucky informed Henry Knox, Secretary of War, that during the seven preceding years Indians had killed or captured 1,500 Kentuckians and stolen 20,000 horses. In the autumn of 1791 a band of "Savages" ambushed a joint force of U.S. troops and Kentucky militia, and soon thereafter severely worsted them in a full-scale battle. During the spring of the next year, while a convention in Kentucky drafted a

Walter Beale, Arthur Campbell and Mary Mitchell. Three autograph letters to Isaac Shelby. 1792-1793. 4 pages.

David Hughes. Deposition regarding an Indian attack at John Baker's Station. June 20, 1790. 1 page.

Isaac Shelby. Two autograph letters, to Samuel Wells and General Kennedy. 1793. 2 pages.

Transcript of Anthony Wayne's journal of a campaign in the Ohio region. July 28 - November 2, 1794. 48 pages.

state constitution and U.S. agents unsuccessfully negotiated with several tribes for a land cession and assurance of peace, Major General "Mad Anthony" Wayne of the United States Army continued his slow but thorough training of a disciplined army on the north shore of the Ohio River. This was to be used against the foe whenever President Washington decided that military coercion must supplant the futile negotiations. Not until July 1794 did Wayne receive orders to move. On the 20th of the next month his command of regulars, reinforced by about 1,200 mounted volunteers from Kentucky, won a decisive victory in the Battle of Fallen Timbers, near the present city of Maumee in Ohio. As a result, in the Treaty of Greenville (1795) the defeated foe ceded much of the area which seven years later became the state of Ohio. After the treaty Kentucky never again suffered a serious incursion of Indians from the north.

Kentuckians shared in Wayne's offensive the more readily because they knew that the British, despite the provisions of the peace treaty closing the Revolutionary War, supplied the Indians with military equipment from their bases in Canada and even south of Lake Erie, and urged them to yield no land to the United States. Three months after the Battle of Fallen Timbers, John Jay, who was so much disliked in Kentucky on account of his negotiations with Spain about a decade earlier, concluded in London a treaty wherein Great Britain agreed to withdraw her garrisons from American soil by June 1, 1796. In Congress, especially in the House of Representatives, the many opponents of the pact precipitated a bitter debate. This delayed its ratification and the appropriation of money for its enforcement until the autumn of 1795. Even then, one of the treaty's articles was rejected.

Siding with the opposition were the members of Congress from Kentucky. Their animosity toward Great Britain by 1794 reflected much more than their constituents' harassment by north-of-the-Ohio Indians urged on by the British. During the preceding five years many Americans, including most of those west of the Alleghenies, believed that President Washington had come to be more and more dominated by the Federalist Party, led by his Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton. This party was largely centered in the urban areas of the East Coast states north of Chesapeake Bay. Hamilton's financial program, including the creation of a National Bank and the levying of a protective tariff, favored to a large degree the commercial and industrial interests. Their overseas business correspondents were mostly British. Conspicuously absent from this financial program were acts to construct roads to the West, or to encourage migration there by opening the abundant U.S. public land to settlement at a low price per acre. On the contrary, spurred by Hamilton, Congress levied an excise tax on whiskey. This, if enforced, would take money from the pockets of many Kentuckians. As it was, not a few of them felt inclined to extend the Whiskey Rebellion in

Pennsylvania to their own neighborhoods. Little wonder that Jefferson, Madison, and other leaders rallied an increasingly formidable opposition which called itself the Democrat-Republican Party.

During the early 1790s, and continuing until 1815, the French Revolution and its outgrowth of more than twenty years of war in Europe had a dominant influence upon American politics. Beginning in 1789 the increasingly successful efforts by many of the French leaders to lessen the prerogatives of Louis XVI seemed to numerous citizens of the United States, especially those in the South and West, to have been fostered by the ideals of their own Revolutionary heroes in resisting tyranny. This sentiment was strengthened both by the allegedly pro-British policies of Hamilton and by the opening of war in 1793 between Great Britain and France. A Kentuckian could applaud the louder for France because, even before the execution of its king in January of that year, Spain's monarch had sought to aid his fellow Bourbon, but soon joined Great Britain in its conflict with France. To a westerner the closure of New Orleans and the mouth of the Mississippi to down-river traffic made Spain his enemy, even if he did not also blame the Spanish officials for encouraging the Indian tribes of the Old Southwest to raid Tennessee and Kentucky.

John Brown. Autograph letter to Isaac Shelby. June 2, 1793. 4 pages.

Amid these circumstances, Edmond Genet, the envoy of Revolutionary France, landed in Charleston, South Carolina, in April 1793. He was enthusiastically received both there and on his way northward to present his credentials to President Washington in Philadelphia. In Kentucky, as in the coastal states, liberty poles painted with red and white stripes and Democratic Clubs appeared in many of the towns.

While on his journey and afterwards, Genet issued commissions in the French army to George Rogers Clark and other veterans who were eager to drive Spain from the Old Southwest, including Florida. Genet also arranged for privateers to harry British and Spanish ships. In general, he was far more overtly indiscreet than the agents of the Second Continental Congress had been in France before its alliance with the United States in 1778. Upon reaching Philadelphia, he received a chilling reception from Washington. Even Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson, who for a time befriended Genet, was soon alienated by his outrageous conduct. Washington and General Wayne cautioned Kentucky's Governor Isaac Shelby, who only tepidly shared the pro-French bias of his fellow citizens, not to permit them to undertake an armed expedition against the Spanish. After alleging his inability under the Kentucky constitution to prevent citizens from leaving their state, Shelby was relieved by the collapse of the projected foray early in 1794, when news reached Kentucky that the French government had recalled Genet. His successor continued to dabble in American politics, but by no means so flagrantly.

French Revolutionary Legion. Commission to Captain Henry Lindsay. January 11, 1794. 1 page.

Although Genet's dismissal may have saved Spain's territory along

the Gulf Coast from invasion, her participation in the war overseas brought her disaster. French troops defeated her army and penetrated deep beyond the Pyrenees. Owing in some measure to this reverse, Spain agreed in October 1795 to a treaty, negotiated by Thomas Pinckney of the United States, to recognize the right of Americans to navigate the Mississippi River freely. Thus Washington's presidency, although aggrieving Kentuckians by many of its policies, earned their gratitude by forcibly dispelling the Indian menace from north of the Ohio River and peaceably opening the Mississsippi to their use.

Economic PROSPERITY *in the* 1790s *and the* QUESTION *of* EMANCIPATION

Every branch of Kentucky's economic activities, except for the peltry trade, prospered during the 1790s. More and more crop land was opened for the tillage of corn, hemp, wheat, potatoes, and tobacco. The nutritious blue grass, as well as other herbage, fostered the production of livestock. A few owners of this rich pasturage, besides supplying horses essential for farm work and land travel, began to breed and train trotters and runners for racing. Now that the wool and meat of buffalo had become very scarce, flocks of sheep multiplied for shearing or slaughtering. Cattle and hogs continued to be driven to eastern markets, but they, along with horses and mules, began to attract buyers living south of Kentucky.

John Thruston. Autograph letter to Isaac Shelby. January 7, 1795. 1 page.

Although the domestic industries showed little decline, there was a marked increase of mills producing flour, cloth, leather goods, hats, rope, bagging, canvas, casks and crates, furniture, iron ware, and, in short, processing any raw material of value supplied by the farms, forests, cane brakes, salt licks and mines. A more mellow whiskey, to be known as "bourbon," was accidentally discovered in 1789 by a distiller in Georgetown. It soon appealed to a host of consumers both within and outside the state. Peddlers of knick-knacks and lightweight luxuries, especially alluring to women, became a familiar sight in the countryside. These itinerants were welcomed for their news as well as for their wares. Along the navigable streams boat builders kept busy, often close to a growing number of warehouses providing safe storage for cargoes until the vessels docked to transport them to their consignees.

Alexander Hamilton. Autograph letter to James Wilkinson. February 12, 1799. 3 pages.

The scarcity of good roads, as well as considerations of cost, compelled most of the bulky exports to be moved to market by ship. In the settled parts of Kentucky the navigable rivers, east of the falls of the Ohio, flowed north into that stream. Unless its water was at a high stage, even rafts of shallow draft had to tie up above the rapids for the portage of their cargoes. This transfer business mainly determined the site of Louisville, much as Lexington owes its prominence to its location

at the hub of a network of pack-horse roads and not far from the Kentucky River.

The economic pull upon Kentuckians, even in these early years, was largely toward the south, via the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers, to Spanish New Orleans. As early as 1787 James Wilkinson and his partner shipped salt, flour, tobacco, and other commodities there. For a time—but only for a time—this trade yielded Wilkinson large profits. His enterprises were almost as varied as his goals—he speculated in land, nurtured the settlement known as Frankfort, and used his influence to make it the capital of the state. His dealings with the Spanish gained him both *éclat* and a pension from their government. Determined to eclipse George Rogers Clark as a Kentucky hero, he succeeded easily for a while. Although destined to live until 1818, Clark had already declined in health and fortune, and become embittered by the lack of recognition accorded him by Virginia and the United States for his military services during the Revolution.

James Wilkinson. Autograph letter to [Isaac Shelby]. January 20, 1790. 4 pages.

James Wilkinson and Peyton Short. Autograph letter to Isaac Shelby. December 19, 1789. 2 pages. With a printed subscription form for consignment of tobacco crops. 1 page.

Kentuckians' burgeoning economy, their striving for and attainment of statehood, their never ending political bickering, and their need for a medium to make official documents known probably account for the able John Bradford's success at Lexington as the publisher of the *Kentucky Gazette*—the first newspaper (1787) west of Pittsburgh. By 1802 five other newspapers had appeared in Kentucky towns. These weeklies, usually four folio-sized pages printed on poor quality but durable paper, contain many advertisements. They illustrate the growth of manufacturing and merchandising; the sale of real estate; the traffic in slaves and horses; the efforts to recapture slaves and apprentices when they ran away; the readiness of individuals to instruct youngsters, male or female; the alleged ability of pills or potions to cure most ills; the innkeepers' assurances of comfortable accommodations; the warning by a husband that a wife had left his "bed and board"; and the storekeepers' lists of goods for sale. From year to year these advertisements widened in their variety, including a growing number of books and pamphlets on diverse subjects, often religious. Except for these notices, there was little local news, unless the printing of ordinances and laws can be so regarded. Columns captioned "Mail from the East" and "Mail from the South" usually included much belated mention of overseas occurrences, especially in France. If there were too few items of these kinds to fill the available space, it was used for poetry—rarely of Kentucky origin—or for comical yarns. The political tone of these newspapers was dominantly Democrat-Republican rather than Federalist.

Dorsey Pentecost. Autograph letter to Isaac Shelby. March 24, 1793. 1 page.

State of Kentucky. Commission to Justices of the Peace Abraham Hite, William Croghan, and Isaac Hite. December 19, 1793. 1 page.

The Guardian of Freedom. May 30, 1799.

The Palladium. November 27, 1798.

One increasingly controversial topic seldom discussed in these newspapers was slavery. This institution had an impact far wider and deeper than partisan politics. Any classification of the defenders and opponents of slavery is of doubtful accuracy. In general, a defender was of Virginia, North Carolina, or Maryland origin. He insisted that slavery, although

obviously contrary to the ideals proclaimed in the Declaration of Independence, must be maintained as a safeguard against shattering the union of American states, as an economic and social necessity for the whites, and as a system extending many benefits to the blacks themselves. The advocate was usually a Christian who could quote verses in the Bible supporting his position. Those who deplored slave-holding were also Christian and similarly cited Biblical texts to confute their opponents. Among the most vocal and persistent antislavery leaders were Presbyterian and Baptist preachers. They and their lay supporters were usually, but by no means always, from the Middle Atlantic coastal states or New England. As a rule their economic occupations were not dependent upon cheap labor for success. Politically they divided between those who worked to have Kentucky's constitution amended so as to permit immediate and total emancipation of the slaves, with or without compensation to their owners, and those who apparently would have been contented if the children of slaves were declared free at an early age.

The primary sources permit no doubt that a few owners treated their slaves cruelly, even though they were a valuable property. A slave or freed black suffered many discriminations, including a harsher penalty upon conviction for a crime than a white found guilty of the same offense. On the other hand, even ardent upholders of slavery seem rarely to have expressed strong disapproval when one of them manumitted some or all of his slaves during his lifetime or in his will. Frontier conditions imposed hardships and toil upon almost everyone, whether he was white or black, but this truism obviously gives no weight to the tangible and intangible blessings of individual liberty. The proportion of Negroes among Kentucky's population rose from 15% to 19% during the 1790s. For several decades after 1800 the percentage continued to increase.

STATES' RIGHTS *vs.* NATIONALISM

Virtually inseparable from the pro- and antislavery agitation in the state was the rising discontent of many of its citizens because an "aristocracy," comprising owners of large plantations, manufacturers, and merchandizers, was more and more dominating Kentucky's economic, social, and political life. This unrest reflected the usual "democratic" determination of frontiersmen to have a simple government and to control it. In only a few respects were they "nationalists." Besides boisterously celebrating each Fourth of July with an oration, feast, at least thirteen toasts, and with an added liquid salute "to the ladies," they expected the central government in the East to help protect them from out-of-state enemies—whether marauding Indians or Spanish officials

John Breckinridge. Autograph letter to Isaac Shelby. March 11, 1798. 4 pages.

William Price. Autograph letter to Isaac Shelby. July 5, 1794. 1 page.

who violated every American's right to navigate the Mississippi River freely. On the other hand, almost every white Kentuckian, regardless of his social or economic status, was a Jeffersonian Democrat, believing in a maximum of individual liberty for himself and a maximum of sovereignty for his state, consistent with the public welfare. But they were far from a consensus about how these ideals should be institutionalized within Kentucky. Thus in the later years of the 1790s they agreed fundamentally on how to resist the Alien and Sedition Acts of Congress but differed drastically about how, if at all, their state constitution should be amended.

No doubt the Alien and Sedition Acts were the more disliked in Kentucky because they reflected the will of most of the Federalist leaders in the East and had been signed into law by President John Adams, a New Englander. His electoral vote in 1796 had topped that of their beloved Thomas Jefferson. The Alien Act, together with the Naturalization Act, was designed mainly to stop the coming of French émigrés to America. The Sedition Act served as a weapon against newspaper editors, pamphleteers, and other outspoken Democrats who lampooned Adams and the Federalist supporters of the undeclared naval war with France.

The Palladium. August 21, 1798.

Encouraged by prominent Kentucky Democrats, Vice-President Jefferson drafted the resolutions adopted, after a few changes, in November 1798 by an almost unanimous vote of the state's legislature. About a month later the General Assembly of Virginia agreed to James Madison's similar resolutions affirming the right and duty of a state government to declare unconstitutional a law of Congress violating the U.S. Constitution (in these instances, chiefly its First, Ninth, and Tenth Amendments) and thereby also encroaching upon the domain of each state's reserved sovereignty. Although the lack of response by the legislatures of the other southern states and of Tennessee may be interpreted as tacit assents to the tenor of these resolutions, most of the northern states' legislatures, under Federalist control, sharply dissented. They held that only the U.S. judiciary or the U.S. people via the amending process, could judge the constitutionality of a law of Congress. Thereupon the legislatures of Virginia and Kentucky reaffirmed their resolutions of 1798. These sharp differences of opinion merged with others less theoretical to add heat and significance to the national and state elections of 1800.

George Nicholas. Autograph draft of a speech on the Alien and Sedition Acts. 1798. 4 pages.

Kentucky Legislature. *In the House of Representatives*. November 10, 1798. 4 pages.

John Adair. Autograph letter to James Wilkinson. December 14, 1798. 1 page.

In the meantime the stipulation in Kentucky's constitution that it should be subject to review at the end of five years caused a long contest between voters as to the respects, if any, in which the document needed amendment. For a month in the summer of 1799 a convention assembled at Frankfort to draft a revised fundamental law. It became effective on June 1 of the next year. Except for a fairly inconsequential provision that any slave accused of a crime should be accorded a hearing

in court, the many citizens, who had labored to have slavery abolished, suffered defeat. As a major change, this second constitution provided that the governor, the lieutenant governor (a newly created office), and the members of the legislature were to be directly elected by the qualified voters. In general, the "aristocrats" worked their will, even though they did not succeed in limiting voters and office holders to quite as elite a group, in terms of landownership and tax payments, as they had hoped. But they succeeded in so complicating the process for amendment that it would be very difficult to alter the new constitution in the near future.

The LOUISIANA PURCHASE: *A Benefit to* KENTUCKY

While Kentuckians were thus moving toward political conservatism at home, they were helping to assure liberalism in the national arena by supporting Thomas Jefferson's second bid for the presidency. Most of them were jubilant when he delivered his memorable first inaugural address in March 1801. Besides being a Virginian who favored states' rights, individual liberties, and policies designed to prosper the agricultural interests of the South and West, he sought by diplomacy to widen foreign markets for their exports and keep the United States free from any political or military commitments to European powers.

The Palladium. March 17, 1801.

In line with this latter aim, as well as with his desire to keep the United States primarily a nation of farmers, Jefferson sought to expand its boundaries by peaceably acquiring from Spain the Mississippi Delta country and possibly even West and East Florida. Spain, harried by almost a decade of war in Europe, recognized her inability to govern those areas effectively. At the same time she was pressed by her dominant ally France to retrocede the territory of Louisiana. American westerners were enthusiastically, and some even belligerently, attuned to Jefferson's dream in that regard. Unknown to him until 1802, however, Spain had concluded with France in the autumn of 1800 a secret treaty promising to return Louisiana and also give France a half dozen warships in exchange for a large area in Italy already garrisoned by Napoleon's troops. In mid-October 1802, about the time when this exchange finally became effective, the Spanish authorities in New Orleans, despite the guarantee in the Pinckney Treaty of 1795, withdrew from American traders their "right of deposit" in that city. During the five months of the ban, many Kentuckians seemed eager to abolish it by force of arms.

James Henry. Autograph letter to James Wilkinson. March 30, 1798. 6 pages.

By then, however, events both in Europe and the West Indies had brought advantage to the United States. Upon the overthrow of the Directory in France, Napoleon became First Consul in 1800. Early the next year, as an outcome of his military victories, he effected a truce with

France's foes on the continent of Europe. Still at war with Great Britain, but building upon the secret treaty with Spain, he sought to make a reality of the forty-year-old vision of a reestablished empire of France in North America. Although his first step toward this goal—the recovery of Martinique from the British—was successful, the more important second step—the repossession of Haiti—proved to be far costlier in men, money, and time than he had expected. The troops he dispatched to that island were scourged by yellow fever and Toussaint L'Ouverture's rebels. Toussaint was eventually imprisoned in France, and Napoleon concluded the Peace of Amiens with Great Britain (March 27, 1802).

Napoleon abandoned his plan of keeping Louisiana Territory after Spain retroceded it, and was about ready to sell it as one means of financing an invasion of England if the fragile Peace of Amiens should end. In the meantime, having heard of the retrocession treaty and knowing that Great Britain would strongly oppose a new dominion of France in North America, Jefferson asked Edward Livingston, his ambassador in Paris, to point out to Talleyrand, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, how close the liaison between Britain and the United States would become if France took over the west bank of the Mississippi River and West Florida. He also sent James Monroe to France to reinforce Livingston's negotiations. Whatever may have been the complex motives leading Napoleon to his decision, he agreed on April 30, 1803, only a few days before the Anglo-French war resumed, to sell to the United States the whole of the vast but vaguely defined territory of Louisiana for about $15,000,000. In the autumn of that year, after long debate, Congress approved the treaty and appropriated the necessary money. Nearly the entire opposition had been voiced by its Federalist members. Almost amusing was the alacrity with which Democrats, including Jefferson and the contingent in Congress from Kentucky, in spite of their vigorous states' rights position not long before, became ardent constitutional nationalists. The Federalists, of course, somersaulted in the reverse direction.

Never before had Jefferson been so popular in the Ohio Valley. Western commerce could at last move unvexed to the Gulf of Mexico. Contrary to Spain's contention, the Executive Department in Washington deemed the Louisiana Territory to include West Florida—that is, the Gulf Coast as far east as Mobile. This stand further enhanced the gratification of the frontiersmen who were settling in the region which, about fifteen years later, became the states of Mississippi and Alabama. Kentuckians were also proud because Jefferson selected William Clark, their fellow citizen and a brother of George Rogers Clark, to accompany Meriwether Lewis on the memorable expedition overland (1804-1806) to the Pacific Northwest. In a word, the Westerners by then were almost irrepressible expansionists, even though they already had more land on both sides of the Mississippi than they and their children

John Adair. Autograph letter to James Wilkinson. December 10, 1804. 2 pages.

could use for homes. Soon they would look toward Canada as another prize to gain; a few of them were already eager to drive the Spanish from Mexico. Although the term "manifest destiny" would not be coined until the 1840s, it well describes their vision of the territory the United States was bound to embrace.

Brigadier General James Wilkinson was one of the two U.S. representatives who received at New Orleans on December 20, 1803 the formal cession of the Louisiana Territory from France. He commanded the troops of the United States in the West and soon (1805-1806) served as governor of that territory. For long a pensioner of Spain, he was able, unscrupulous, and reveled in intrigues. He appeared willing to share in any well-devised scheme to drive Spain from Mexico, or even to create an independent country including some of the southwestern United States. Among his friends were leading public officials and merchants in his home state of Kentucky and southward on both sides of the Mississippi River. By 1805 he welcomed Aaron Burr as a kindred spirit.

KENTUCKIANS *and the* BURR CONSPIRACY

In the election year of 1804, Vice President Burr, knowing that Jefferson would not have him as a running mate again, aspired to be the governor of New York. That bitterly fought campaign closed abruptly on July 12 when he mortally wounded in a duel his inveterate Federalist foe, Alexander Hamilton. Soon indicted for murder by a grand jury in Bergen County, N.J., the site of the duel, Burr prudently and pleasantly journeyed southward to receive the warm hospitality of Democrat friends. Returning to Washington, he presided impeccably over the Senate during his few remaining months as Vice President. After March 4, 1805, when he turned over that office to his successor, he could still rely upon many of his admirers to foster his ever-vaulting ambition to enhance his personal fortunes—cost what it might in terms of the public welfare. Two months later he was in Frankfort and Lexington, and soon in Nashville, Fort Massac, Natchez, New Orleans, and St. Louis, conferring with influential persons, including Wilkinson. Burr was seeking to further a grandiose but somewhat nebulous scheme either to develop a large area of land along the Ouachita River (Arkansas) or to carve an independent state in the far Southwest from Spanish territory in Mexico —perhaps with some overlap into the domain of his own country.

Claiburn Rice. Autograph letter to Joshua Lacy Wilson. January 14, 1807. 3 pages.

From the outset, some Kentuckians and other Westerners viewed Burr with suspicion. Three unsuccessful efforts were made to have him indicted for conspiracy, two in Kentucky and one in the Mississippi Territory, late in 1806 and early in 1807. By then, however, Wilkinson, recognizing that the plan of his erstwhile friend could not succeed, had denounced him to the receptive Jefferson. As for Wilkinson, if he can be

believed, he had listened to Burr merely to ascertain the full extent of his nefarious plan. Now a fugitive, Burr was captured near Fort Stoddert (in what would become the state of Alabama) and taken to Richmond, Virginia, for trial before the Circuit Court of the United States. There in 1807, to the patent satisfaction of his sympathizers but out of tune with Jefferson's desire, a jury found Burr not guilty of treason. In a sustaining opinion, Chief Justice John Marshall held that the accused had not shared in the so-called "overt act" of launching within the confines of Virginia an armed expedition on the Ohio River to go downstream against the United States or Spain. Four years later Wilkinson was acquitted of his alleged complicity in the Burr Conspiracy. By then the expansionist fervor in Kentucky, which Wilkinson encouraged as early as the mid-1780s, had long since veered from the Southwest to Canada.

During the half-dozen years after 1804 the always weak Kentucky Federalists, led by Humphrey Marshall, became politically moribund, but the dominant Democrats suffered from factionalism—in part caused by the impact of Burr's Conspiracy. The reputations of several of their prominent leaders, who had abetted Burr or had allegedly accepted gratuities from Spain in the olden days, were temporarily or permanently tarnished. Even the young lawyer, Henry Clay, had served as Burr's counsel in Kentucky in 1806. Being excoriated orally and in print by Marshall for this and other activities, the two men faced each other at ten paces near Evansville, Indiana Territory, in January 1809. Clay emerged from the duel with his honor as a gentleman intact, but with a bullet wound in his leg. As late as 1812 his opponent took further revenge upon his political foes by publishing a *History of Kentucky* in which he portrayed them as inept rascals.

Henry Clay. Autograph letter to [James Wilkinson]. January 16, 1807. 4 pages.

Henry R. Smith. Autograph letter to James Wilkinson. June 22, 1807. 3 pages.

James Morrison. Autograph letter to James Wilkinson. September 9, 1807. 3 pages.

James Madison. Autograph letter to James Wilkinson. October 12, 1811. 1 page.

KENTUCKIANS *and the* WAR *of* 1812

Kentuckians, after warmly supporting Jefferson's choice of Madison to be his successor as President in March 1809, grew increasingly restive under Madison's mild protests against the continuing maritime outrages by the British. Once before, on the eve of the Revolution, the westerners, although little affected by the new taxes levied by Parliament or by the closure of the port of Boston, had been ready to fight redcoats and their Indian allies either north or south of the Ohio River. Now a generation later, although scarcely harmed by the impressment of American sailors or by British Orders in Council restricting the destinations and cargoes of United States merchantmen on the high seas, they were eager to combat the same foes in Canada or along the Gulf of Mexico. Except for a few of Kentucky's prominent men, among whom Senator John Pope was probably the most important, her citizens by 1810 were calling for war.

John Pope. *Mr. Pope's Speech. Ca.* 1812.

W. D. Hardin. Autograph letter to Isaac Shelby. April 10, 1812. 3 pages.

Robert Wickliffe. Autograph letter to Isaac Shelby. June 21, 1812. 3 pages.

Aged Revolutionary veterans, such as former Governor Isaac Shelby, and young men, such as Henry Clay, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and his colleague, Richard M. Johnson, evidently thought that driving the British from all or most of Canada would be the best way to redeem the oft-insulted honor of their country. To do this would not, in their opinion, be overly difficult, especially since Great Britain was still locked in seemingly endless conflict with France. In the Senate of the United States on February 22, 1810, Clay exclaimed, "I verily believe that the militia of Kentucky are alone competent to place Montreal and Upper Canada at your feet." Although on November 7 of the next year a joint force of U.S. regular troops, Indiana militia, and Kentucky volunteers commanded by Brigadier General (and Governor of the Indiana Territory) William Henry Harrison, won merely a nominal victory over British-armed Indians at Tippecanoe, on the last day of 1811 Clay assured his fellow Congressmen that almost certainly Canada, if invaded, would fall "speedily" to American arms. Impatiently optimistic, he and many other Westerners apparently discounted the importance of the President's hesitation, and the opposition of some Eastern Democrats, including almost all of the commerce-centered New Englanders.

During the presidential election campaign of 1812, Madison, noting that Great Britain remained adamantly deaf to American protests and that the mood of his own political party was more and more belligerent, presented to Congress on June 1 a long message. In it, after reciting the many instances of sailors' impressments and of violations of the nation's neutral rights, concluded: "We behold . . . on the side of Great Britain a state of war against the United States, and on the side of the United States a state of peace toward Great Britain." Three days later in the House of Representatives, and on June 18 in the Senate, Congress by a sectionally divided vote declared a state of war to exist with Great Britain. Ironically, the delegates from the South and West insisted on redressing by force of arms the grievances of New Englanders who were content to have those grievances continue! Among the latter, only a few of the Vermonters, whose trade mostly flowed north to the St. Lawrence River, were even mildly in favor of annexing Canada. Nor were the Americans living in states south of Virginia or in the Old Southwest in favor of the proposal; they were more eager to oust Spain from West and East Florida.

At the outset of the war, President Madison called for 100,000 troops, including ten regiments (totaling 5,500 men) from Kentucky. Her citizens felt lucky to escape involvement in General William Hull's disgraceful surrender of Detroit in mid-August 1812 and were momentarily elated by driving the foe from Frenchtown (now Monroe, Michigan) in mid-January 1813. A few days later, however, Kentucky troops, as part of the army commanded by General James

Winchester, the unpopular successor of Hull, suffered fearful losses near that village, inflicted by a joint force of British and Indians. By then and at heavy cost Henry Clay's sanguine prediction that the reduction of Upper Canada would require little more than "a matter of marching" had been utterly disproved. The only victories to which Americans could point with pride had been won at sea by frigates mostly manned with New England crews. Nor could President Madison derive much comfort from the knowledge that on February 10, 1813 the Electoral College, dividing along sectional lines similar to those in Congress when it declared war, assured him of a second term by a margin of only 128 to 89 votes.

On the other hand, the men of Kentucky, by exceeding the troop-quota allotted to the state, and the women by keeping busy at their spinning wheels and looms, were determined to demonstrate that the prowess of Kentuckians on the battlefield was not a myth. In the spring of 1813 General Green Clay led about 1,200 of them to reinforce the garrison at Fort Meigs, near the mouth of the Maumee River, the present site of Toledo, Ohio. At a considerable cost in killed and wounded, his troops rendered decisive help in compelling a joint force of British and Indians led by Tecumseh to lift their siege of that stronghold. Early in August the young Kentucky Major George Croghan and the 160 men under his command, within Fort Stephenson on the Sandusky River in Ohio, earned fame by repelling a much larger contingent of the enemy. At approximately the same time the venerable General Isaac Shelby, serving as governor of Kentucky for a second term, raised about 3,000 troops to fight under his command in the army led by General William Henry Harrison. During the rest of 1813, following the exploit at Fort Stephenson, there was no significant fighting on land south of Lake Erie.

William Henry Harrison. Autograph letter to James Morrison. March 19, 1813. 2 pages.

Commonwealth of Kentucky. Commission to Paymaster Samuel Davis, Kentucky militia. May 18, 1813. 1 page.

Typed transcript of Isaac Shelby's proclamation to the militia of Kentucky. July 31, 1813. 2 pages.

This respite, as well as much else in the future course of the conflict in that area, can be credited in considerable degree to the victory on Lake Erie, September 10, 1813, of the squadron led by Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry, U.S.N. One hundred Kentucky sharpshooters aboard his ships contributed to the memorable outcome, and thus enhanced the reputation of their fellow citizens as expert marksmen. In Canada, not far from the lake, the war on land climaxed for Kentuckians about a month later in the Battle of the Thames. Outnumbering the enemy in that brief and decisive action, most of the American heroes were mounted Kentuckians led by their colonel, Congressman Richard M. Johnson. He reportedly slew Tecumseh in personal combat. The able chieftain's death shattered the Indian confederation, of which he had been a principal architect. The sobriquet "Tecumseh-killer" helped Johnson politically as late as 1837, when he became Vice President of the United States.

During the latter half of 1813 and all of 1814 the focus of the war's

Isaac Shelby. Claim to the United States for a horse lost in military service. February 8, 1817. 1 page.

northern front shifted eastward, well beyond Kentucky's military ambit, to the Lake Ontario, Lake Champlain, and upper St. Lawrence River areas. Although Kentuckians found no reason to applaud the bungling record of General James Wilkinson on that distant terrain, they rejoiced when a half-dozen more energetic and talented younger leaders finally broke the stalemate there in favor of the United States. By mid-1814, however, British armament, freed from service in Europe by the defeat and exile of Napoleon, was raiding New England coastal towns and nearly ending the succession of victories won by American ships on the high seas. Late in August the enemy captured Washington and burned the government buildings. About two weeks later the gloom caused by this disaster was partially dispelled by much better news. The captors of the Capital City met defeat close to Baltimore, and its Fort McHenry also successfully withstood bombardment by British vessels.

Long before these occurrences in the North and East the attention of Kentuckians had been increasingly drawn toward the Old Southwest and its Gulf Coast. There Spain, the military ally of Great Britain, held East Florida and Mobile. Spanish authorities, using means similar to those employed by the British in gaining the support of Tecumseh's confederacy, encouraged the numerous Creek Indians in present-day Alabama to harry white settlers there and in Tennessee and western Georgia. Although Congress refused to authorize President Madison to have East Florida invaded, it sanctioned the seizure of Mobile. A force led by General James Wilkinson handily effected this in April 1813, but his ambition to occupy Pensacola as well was frustrated by orders transferring him to the Great Lakes theater of the war. Thereafter the rampage of Creeks against white settlements accelerated until August 30, when they massacred about 200 men, women, and children in Fort Mims, some forty miles north of Mobile. Effectively arousing the whole Southwest, this shocking slaughter brought Brigadier General Andrew Jackson of Tennessee and other military leaders to the fore. Although hampered by the absence of roads leading to the Creeks' main bases and by the militia's short-term enlistments, lack of discipline, and inadequate equipment and food, the whites defeated them in several small encounters. But 1813 ended with the Indians far from being subdued. On March 27 of the following year, however, Jackson's army, with the aid of some U.S. regular troops and friendly Cherokees, won the hard fought and decisive Battle of Horseshoe Bend on the Talapoosa River (Alabama). This victory earned Jackson a major general's commission and forced the Creeks to a treaty on August 9 in which they ceded their claims to about one-fifth of Georgia and three-fifths of what would become the state of Alabama.

Four days after the treaty a small contingent of British troops occupied the Spanish fort at Pensacola, and soon, together with several armed ships, unsuccessfully threatened Mobile. Thereupon Jackson, al-

though lacking orders from Washington, moved into Spanish territory forcing the British out of Pensacola, destroying its fort, and humbling the Spanish authorities and their Indian friends. On December 2, having been warned that the British planned to attack New Orleans, Jackson and a portion of his troops arrived in that city. From Kentucky, about seven hundred miles north, approximately 2,200 volunteers, led by Major General John Thomas and Brigadier General John Adair, hurried downriver to reinforce Jackson. Not a few of the Kentuckians had little proper equipment except their long rifles and their eagerness to fire them at the enemy. They all reached New Orleans only four days before the battle on January 8, 1815. Contrary to the Kentuckians' own opinion after that sanguinary engagement, Jackson would profess to believe that, if they had conducted themselves better, he would have inflicted upon the foe an even more complete defeat. His strictures served only to heighten the praise accorded by Kentuckians to the accuracy of their sharpshooters. Much of the brunt of the British assaults had been on the left of the American line, where the Kentuckians were stationed. Their valor, they insisted, was a counterpart in the South of what they displayed over a year before in the Canadian Battle of the Thames.

Kentucky's self-esteem soon recieved a further spur from the news that on December 24, 1814 at Ghent in Belgium the peace treaty with Great Britain had been agreed upon. As one of the United States commissioners, Henry Clay shared conspicuously in the negotiations. In that pact it was clear that neither antagonist won its objectives. But Americans hailed the document with joy because it signified the end of the fighting.

KENTUCKY'S *Economic* DEVELOPMENT *After* 1800: *Land* SPECULATION *and River* TRAFFIC

National patriotism, state pride, individual ambition, and hostility toward British and Indians were among the forces impelling Kentuckians to expend their "blood and treasure" so liberally on the battlefields between 1811 and 1815. The number who served and the financial cost of their participation also signified how fast their commonwealth had grown in population and economic power by that time. The 220,955 inhabitants in 1800 approximately doubled by 1815. Nearly 20% of the total were blacks. This rise in the proportion of slaves connoted an increase not only in the acreage devoted to the production of staple crops but also in the use of forced labor in the towns to supply domestics for the homes and laborers for the processing plants.

The foundation of Kentucky's economic life continued to be primarily agricultural. Upon it was built an ever more complicated industrial

John Lewis. Autograph letter to Gabriel Lewis. July 13, 1802. 2 pages.

Thomas Jefferson. Autograph letter to [Harry] Innes. June 20, 1806. 1 page.

structure including firms or individuals engaged in manufacturing, retailing, transporting, banking, and insuring. As forward-looking plantation owners established an Agricultural Society to improve their methods of tillage and the quality of their livestock, so businessmen joined in partnerships or formed companies in the hope that by combining their skills and their capital they could reduce competition and enhance their profits. The state's domestic and export markets increased simultaneously. The rise of the "Cotton Kingdom" in the Old Southwest created a growing demand for Kentucky-bred horses, mules, and other livestock. As early as 1802 Kentucky's out-of-state trade, in which flour, dried or salt pork, and whiskey figured prominently, was estimated to be worth over $625,000.

During the first fifteen years of the nineteenth century, the assessed value of Kentucky's land and homes more than tripled to about $67,000,000. By then most of its best arable—above all within a twenty-five mile radius of Lexington—was being used as cropland or pasturage. And yet, many Kentuckians were still living amid primitive conditions on the hard-scrabble soil of the eastern and southeastern hill country and "Barrens." Until about 1820 only the northern boundary (Ohio River) of the state was clearly demarked. The so-called "Jackson Purchase" of 1818 from the Chickasaw Indians finally defined most of Kentucky's controversial borders west and southwest of the Tennessee River.

Statistics, such as the samples above, warranted good cheer about Kentucky's economic condition, but they were offset by abundant reasons for worry and discontent. Court suits challenging the validity of land titles continued almost unabated. Seeking to phase out this litigation, the General Assembly in 1809 stipulated that within the next seven years all controversies of that type must be adjudicated. Although this limitation helped, it could not end the challenges. Constitutionally, out-of-state owners, actual or alleged, could seek to oust "occupier claimants" by lodging suits against them in the federal courts.

Nicholas King and Joshua Moore. Report to the president of the North American Land Company. August 27, 1795. 17 pages.

Certain other statutes which the General Assembly enacted in the 1790s were praiseworthy in their purpose, but ultimately brought much trouble to the countryside. These laws aimed to attract settlers to a spacious region, comparatively unoccupied, in southwest Kentucky beyond the Green River. The first of these laws permitted installment-buying of up to 100 acres for as little as $30. Even after a subsequent act doubled the price it was still far below the normal worth of good soil. As a result, settlers rushed to the area. The selling price per acre of longer-occupied land toward the northeast declined and speculators temporarily enjoyed a field day. The appreciation in value of urban-neighborhood property and the heightening demand for real estate by migrants from the East also contributed to inflate the bubble of land-centered speculation. Early in the 1800s, the General Assembly began

to enact relief laws to aid debtors who had fallen behind in meeting the installments due on their land purchases.

Financial difficulties, however, could by no means be attributed solely to dealings in land. Even though the exports of Kentuckians grew apace they failed to equal the value of the goods imported. The adverse balance of trade in Kentucky meant a yearly outflow of hard money. Consequently, the interest rates paid by borrowers of gold and silver coins rose to usurious levels. As early as 1788 a convention in the District of Kentucky resolved against the further import and use of foreign-made products. Poverty, rather than an admonition of that tenor, kept most of the pre-statehood frontiersmen dressed in homespun or forest- or field-born leather.

Alexander Breckinridge, William Croghan, and others. Documents for assessment of property taxes in 1805. 289 pages.

John Jordan. Invoice to Samuel Hopkins for goods purchased. November 22, 1803. 1 page.

In 1802 and 1806, respectively, the General Assembly chartered the Kentucky Insurance Company and the Bank of Kentucky. Each of these institutions was empowered to issue bills of credit or banknotes. The state's government subscribed to half of the stock of the bank and named half of its directors. This naturally drew it deep into politics with the ancillary allurements to corruption, nepotism, and loans on easy terms for the politicians and their friends. Even before the War of 1812 the state had a superfluity of depreciated paper money and its high tide was still in the future. In 1818 Kentucky's legislature authorized forty-six more banks of issue. The price of consumer goods zoomed. Speculation was almost at its crest. The Second Bank of the United States, chartered by Congress in 1816, soon opened a branch in Kentucky. In the course of its daily business, it received many of these state banknotes and then called on the issuing institutions to redeem them in specie. These demands, as well as other circumstances, not directly an outgrowth of banking or speculation in land, made virtually unavoidable the nationwide crash known as the Panic of 1819.

Until long after 1815 travel or the transportation of goods in wheeled vehicles, except on a few stretches of road, continued to be difficult in Kentucky. Although its General Assembly very rarely appropriated public funds to create or improve highways, it was ready to authorize individuals or form companies to do it, and hopefully repay themselves with tolls and ferriage fees. But the initial costs were too great and the monetary returns too meager, in an era of more remunerative speculations, to attract much private investment. County officials found it difficult to induce tax payers to improve the thoroughfares, but a planter occasionally used a slave gang to repair a road bordering his property. In the many "out-backs" of the state the facilities for journeying by land were little, if any, better than the trail known as the Wilderness Road, which Daniel Boone had blazed on the eve of the Revolution. Of course, by the late 1790s, Indians were rarely a menace on these forested paths, and a weary traveler would sometimes come upon an inn or "ordinary" for his accommodation. Most highwaymen knew that they could ply

Isaac Shelby. Autograph letter to John Grant. [1795]. 3 pages.

their trade more profitably along the notorious Natchez Trace near the Mississippi River. Lexington had long been the center of a small network of narrow and poorly maintained pack-roads in Kentucky. The town's commercial but not its cultural growth had been slowed by the absence of a navigable river nearby. Even interior communities, fronting on streams sufficiently deep to float cargo-carrying barges, were often angered when the fish dams of farmers or the piers and rafts of ferrymen impeded the water traffic.

Jefferson County Court. Order establishing a public ferry at Louisville. October 1808. 2 pages.

For these reasons the main arteries of commerce and travel remained the Ohio and the lower reaches of the Kentucky rivers. Ship building was a considerable industry along both of these streams. The need for public ferry service provided an opportunity for private enterprise. The falls of the Ohio both hurt and helped Louisville, but the gain far overbalanced the loss. One of the town's chief economic assets was its location where passengers and goods, coming either from the East or the West, had to be portaged around the rapids. Besides being the place where many of Kentucky's exports were processed and warehoused, it also became the principal port for the delivery to her citizens of the wares loaded in New Orleans or elsewhere along the Mississippi River. At Louisville the crews of the broad-horns, arks, keelboats and barges were usually rough, raucous, and sometimes lawless. They added a flavor to its waterfront which, however fertile in producing Mike Fink and his roistering mates, many of the townsfolk were unable to enjoy. When the river was at a flood stage a narrow-breadth, shallow-draft keelboat, skilfully propelled by oars, could navigate the rapids. After several unsuccessful attempts to build a canal around them, this long-desired improvement finally became a reality in 1830. Although a down-river trip from Pittsburgh was made in 1811 by the steam boat *Orleans*, four more years elapsed before the first steamboat, the *Enterprise*, reached Louisville from New Orleans. Its trip took twelve days. This was only half, or less than half, the time required for manpower, laboriously expended, to breast the down-current separating those two ports. But for Kentucky and the rest of the American Middle West the day of the steamboat was only at its dawn in 1815.

Warner Washington Lewis. Three autograph letters to his brother, Gabriel. December 29, 1805 - March 1, 1806. 4 pages.

LOUISVILLE *as an Example of* URBANISM *in Kentucky*

Being a devoted resident of Louisville, the county seat of Jefferson County, Colonel Durrett collected more documents illustrative of the early history of that community than of any other in his state. Although it was still very small in 1800, and would not even have a newspaper until the next year, its potential for rapid growth, for reasons suggested

above, was already evident. By 1815 it would be the largest town in Kentucky and by 1976 would exceed in the number of its inhabitants the combined total of the ten next most populous cities in that state.

Some of the earliest surveyors, explorers, land seekers, and soldiers had noted that the falls of the Ohio River were a prime site for a town. Among these was Dr. John Connelly, a British surgeon and veteran of the French and Indian War. For his services, King George III, by the terms of the Proclamation of 1763, granted him a considerable acreage there. He remained an absentee owner until 1779 when, because he was a Tory, the Virginia General Assembly declared his title forfeited. By then a few squatters had settled there and the site was being used as a jumping-off place for George Rogers Clark's campaigns against the British and Indians in the Ohio Country. In the same year the settlers, apparently without authorization from Richmond, chose seven trustees, laid off some half-acre plots at $30 apiece, and allocated them by lot. They also agreed that, subject to the penalty of forfeit, each owner must clear his holding of underbrush, cultivate a portion of it and, by the close of 1779, erect on it a "good covered house," at least sixteen feet by twenty feet in size. Their actions were in general approved the next year by the Virginia General Assembly. It granted the residents 1,000 acres of the former Connelly grant and put them under the control of eight trustees. Lots were sold by means of indentures issued by and subject to their authority, but thereafter the settlement grew very slowly. A visitor in 1786 reported that it comprised only fifty or sixty houses, "most of logs but some of frame."

Kentucky Title Company. Abstract of title to Louisville Lot number ten for 1785-1879. 17 pages.

Trustees of the Town of Louisville. Two deeds of sale for single lots of land. August 18, 1783 and February 21, 1785. 2 pages.

After 1795, when Kentucky's State Assembly authorized the owners of the half-acre lots in Louisville to elect seven trustees, the records of this group supply many interesting glimpses of "urban" problems in a growing town. For example, in 1797 it had eighty "tithables" and sixty-five slaves. These, of course, did not include the wives of the whites or their young children or those of the slaves. And, too, the transient boatmen seem to have been tax-free. In this little community were also fifty horses, six carriages, ten retail stores, five ordinaries, two billiard tables, and at least one church. The total budget of the town was about £32, or some $125.

William Sullivan. Autograph record of levies for taxation. *Ca.* 1789. 93 pages.

Although the trustees seem to have paid little attention to the repair of the streets and of the sidewalks, if any, they did, as the years went by, pay closer attention to the exterior appearance of the homes and yards, to the hazards of crime and fire, and to the conduct of the slaves when not at work. Thus regulations were passed which forbade residents to stack firewood in the street, to hang "kitchen wash" in front of their homes, to slaughter animals on town lots, to pile horse manure or to maintain a pig sty except in the back of a lot, to throw litter or dead animals into the street, to let swine run free, or to keep more than five

John Nelson, James Patten and others. Licenses for the operation of taverns and ordinaries. August 6, 1783 - April 6, 1807. 4 pages.

pounds of gunpowder in any home. Although some of these ordinances reflect an effort to promote cleanliness, rats became a nuisance. To lessen it the trustees appointed a town ratter. His wage was one cent a rat, provided he presented its "scalp" with both ears intact. In addition to maintaining the physical appearance of the town, regulations also governed the decorum of the residents in and about the ordinaries, by the terms under which licenses were renewed annually.

To reduce the danger of fire each householder had to possess two fire buckets. The night patrol was obliged by the trustees to carry more and more equipment, in addition to calling out the time and the state of the weather at every hour between ten o'clock in the evening and sunrise, opposite each square on the main streets. In 1821 this equipment comprised a staff tipped with a pike and hook, a dark lantern, a rattle or trumpet, a flambeau, a small ladder, a pair of scissors, and a tin pot with a spout to use in filling the two lamps with oil.

By then any slave caught on the streets without a pass between "the night and morning ringing of the Presbyterian Church bell" was to be put in "the watchhouse" and "dealt with according to law." On Sunday if more than three slaves "acted in a noisy or tumultuous manner" when together on the streets, each of them might be sentenced by a justice of the peace to receive fifteen lashes. The law for slaves was, from a very early date, more stringent than that for whites. As early as 1786 the Jefferson County sheriff noted that a jury had convicted a white of hog stealing and the culprit would receive twenty-five lashes on his bare back. In contrast, a slave convicted of filching "2¾ yards of cambrick & some Ribben & thread" was condemned to be hung by the neck until "dead dead dead." By 1807, the trustees had designated a part of the town's cemetery for the burial of Negroes. In 1820, Louisvillians probably numbered about 12,000, of whom 20% were slaves.

The Palladium. March 2, 1805.

Life in the other Kentucky towns early in the nineteenth century varied in accord with the particular reasons for their origin and growth. At Frankfort, the legislature, the state superior court and the federal district courts made legislators, judges, and lawyers a familiar sight, and politics a never-ending topic of discussion among the citizens and in its newspaper, the *Palladium*. Lexington was more culturally inclined than either Louisville or Frankfort. Transylvania University was in Lexington, and Centre College was in Danville, not far away. Lexington's *Kentucky Gazette*, with its advertisements, poetry, and letters to the editor, reflected this difference in tone. Covington, across the Ohio from Cincinnati, was influenced by its proximity to a faster-growing community. Boonesborough, Harrodsburg, and other small villages were feeling, by the late 1790s and early 1800s, the impact of the "Great Revival." A larger proportion of their residents were still more "homespun" than in Lexington or Frankfort. But each community, as too the countryside, had its elite, middle, and lower levels of residents.

The "GREAT REVIVAL" *of the* 1790s *and its* AFTERMATH

During the first five years of the nineteenth century the religious history of eastern and central Kentucky and Tennessee, and of western Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania focuses largely upon the dramatic upsurge of revivalism. Why it occurred, why its manifestations were so extraordinary, and whether in the long run it was beneficial or baneful to Protestantism have been variously answered by historians, psychologists, clergymen, and biographers. Some of them point out that similar emotional explosions punctuate the age-old story of the worship of a deity or deities ever since mortals began to leave a record. Others stress that in America's annals the "Great Revival" corresponds in many respects with the "Great Awakening" of the 1740s. Sixty years later the need for a revivification of Christianity had reached crisis proportions. Backsliding was woefully evident in scanty attendance at church, in the shallowness of devotion to God, and in the decline of personal morality. These regressions likely had been nurtured by the disorders associated with the coming and course of the Revolutionary War and the subsequent appeal of French Deism and free-thinking. Then, too, the impact upon frontier folk of their environment and experiences should not be discounted—their hardships, insecurity, isolation, loneliness, drudgery, and longing for entertainment amid the brooding, and often menacing, labyrinths of the forests.

All these, and no doubt other circumstances, prepared the way for the appearance late in the 1790s of impassioned preachers, depicting the sins of their hearers, the horrors of Hell, the joys of Heaven, the wrath of God Almighty, and His willingness to be merciful to any believer who repented and prayed for His forgiveness. The first of these mostly itinerant clergymen were Presbyterians, but they soon were joined in their crusade by those of Baptist and Methodist persuasion. The few churches were much too small to accommodate the throng of men, women, and children who gathered to listen. They came from miles around, on foot, on horseback, or in wagons, bringing blankets, canvas shelters, and food (usually including liquor) sufficient to last for several days. "Camp meetings," as the Methodists liked to call them, often took place in forest glades. Exhortations, sometimes by several evangelists holding forth simultaneously at different locations in the rendezvous, lasted through most of the daylight hours and well after sunset. Flickering candles, torches, and bonfires, accompanied by the night sounds of birds and beasts, helped to create a climate conducive to emotional responses.

Tereh Templin. Autograph letter to Joshua Lacy Wilson. February 2, 1803. 2 pages.

These camp meetings were highly dramatic—even hysterical—with weeping, fainting, singing, dancing, yelling, jerking, confessing, groveling, crawling, and lying prostrate and face down on the ground,

often for hours. Some in the assemblage who came to ridicule were soon among "the slain," as the penitents were called. Other skeptics remained unaffected, except that they were spellbound as at a theatrical performance. Occasionally the sermonizer appeared to hypnotize himself, along with many in his congregation. When this happened he was second to none in his physical contortions and inability to continue speaking with clarity and sanity. The movement spread westward in Kentucky, and climaxed in August 1801 at Cane (Cain) Ridge, Bourbon County, not far from Lexington. Thereafter the excitement in that state gradually ebbed and was over by 1805.

Beyond any doubt the aftermath included the building of many rural churches, a marked increase of communicants and of those persons who became active rather than listless Christians. Among these so-called "dissenting sects," both in 1800 and 1815, the numbers of Baptists far exceeded that of the Presbyterians and Methodists combined. Although the sermons of the revivalists rarely centered upon the evils of slaveholding, they may help to explain the sharp upward turn of manumissions in Kentucky during the first decade of the 1800s. How many persons who had been "converted" at the revival meetings remained active Christians as long as they lived, obviously cannot be known. The "Great Revival" split the Presbyterian Church. It also divided Baptist and Methodist ministers between those who did and those who did not favor a pulpit emotionalism of the Cane Ridge model. Although the Episcopalians and Catholics had remained aloof from the crusade, they continued to grow slowly in numbers, especially in the towns. Families, after rising in economic and social status, seemed often to feel more comfortable upon shifting to the former of these two religious groups.

Joshua Lacy Wilson. Autograph antislavery treatise "Valediction to his Religious Friends in Jefferson County." [1802.] 5 pages.

Robert Kearney Moore. Certificate of manumission for a slave named Nanny. January 13, 1802. 1 page.

St. Louis Church. Printed subscription form to support completion of the church building and parsonage. February 26, 1817. 1 page.

Trustees of the Catholic Chapel of Louisville. Plans for the Catholic Chapel. May 1, 1811. 11 pages.

"POLITE SOCIETY," EDUCATION, *and* CULTURE *in Kentucky*

For some Kentuckians, membership in the Episcopalian Church mirrored a result rather than a means of rising in social and economic well-being. On the other hand, those who participated whole-heartedly in the "Great Revival" were usually among the great majority of rural folk at or near the bottom of the ladder leading upward to worldly success. And yet, most of the elite preferred to live in the countryside, even though their wealth may have come from urban-located enterprises. To possess a large house, often basically Georgian in architecture, set in a grove of trees amid a wide expanse of cropland or pasturage, and to be served inside and outside the domicile by slaves, were badges of distinction. To be interested in genealogy; in adorning the walls of their parlors with paintings of themselves, their forebears, or their children; in using fine napery, china, and silverware in their dining

Thomas Johnson. *The Kentucky Miscellany*. Lexington: The Advertiser Office, 1821.

rooms; in enjoying music, dancing, and light conversation; and in attending a church service on Sunday morning, were tastes which successful Kentuckians shared with comfortably fixed families almost everywhere in the United States.

How this success was won in Kentucky admits of no short and simple answer. Some of the patricians stemmed from notable families in the East, usually Virginia or Maryland. They brought wealth to the wilderness, or inherited it, or made economically and socially advantageous marriages.

Other large landowners had reached the West with meager financial resources but "struck it rich" by fortunate investments. Still others immersed themselves in politics and found hob-nobbing with and helping influential Kentuckians a fairly rapid route to prestige. The able young lawyer Henry Clay, who first settled in Kentucky in 1797 and became in less than a decade the Speaker of its General Assembly, was an outstanding example of that group. And, too, there were the military heroes who by 1815 were revered throughout the state. Among these probably the first to be named would be Isaac Shelby, whose career in the armed services spanned from the Battle of King's Mountain in 1780 to several battles in the War of 1812. His fame, however, did not solely reflect his martial valor. He had twice been governor of Kentucky, and his plantation near Danville was widely known for its fine sheep. Lacking much formal education, he found, as others also had, that it was not a prerequisite for reaching the upper slopes of Kentucky's social pyramid.

By 1815, at least in Kentucky's cities, education was advancing toward institutionalization as an indispensable feature of civic life. The old ideal of the teacher as a tutor in whom were combined the virtues of father and sage was carried over into rudimentary public school systems together with his methods. Rote memorization, recognized as tedious, was justified as a means of instilling practical and good mental habits, diligence, and respect for authority. Exercises in orthography taught spelling as a habit of the hand as well as of the mind. Mathematical exercises were made relevant by being cast in terms of problems in barter, currency exchange, surveying, and other problems which had been typical of life in the new state of Kentucky. As in New England's institutions of higher learning, the classical, philosophical, and rhetorical education designed to produce astute lawyers and public officials of broad vision, gained added impetus from Kentucky's admission to statehood, and soon enjoyed undisputed preeminence there. And yet as late as 1798 the Trustees of Transylvania Seminary supported their petition to the General Assembly to sanction a merger with Kentucky Academy, so as to form Transylvania University, by stating that thereby Kentucky's youth would no longer return from out-of-state colleges "with corrupted principles and morals to be the pests and not the ornaments of the community."

Notes on English grammar. 4 pages.

James H. Boggs. Autograph mathematical exercise book. 26 pages.

Joseph Hamilton Daviess. Autograph letter to Thomas Steward. September 10, 1798. 3 pages.

Robert C. Boggs. Autograph draft for an Independence Day speech. 1809. 1 page.

Hiram Dean. Autograph draft of the "Prize Essay on the Theory of Education." *Ca.* 1831. 22 pages.

James Robertson. Autograph letter to Isaac Shelby. October 25, 1796. 1 page.

Joseph Hamilton Daviess. Two autograph letters to Thomas Steward. July 3, 1797 and September 10, 1798. 13 pages.

Two certificates of marriage. March 30, 1794 and September 3, 1797. 2 pages.

W. Kavanaugh. Autograph list of marriages performed April 1804 - February 1805. February 14, 1805. 1 page.

Fragment of a musical copybook. 1799. 3 pages.

The impact of training and practice in rhetoric is everywhere manifest in the letters of Kentucky's early political leaders and prominent civic figures, who took pride in performing that most sacred and prestigious ceremony of civic life, the Independence Day Oration. Education in all its facets was viewed as preparation for citizenship. Hiram Dean, looking back in 1831 over a quarter century of experience as an educator in Louisville, wrote in his "Prize Essay on the Theory of Eduation," "In a government like ours dependent upon the character of the public school for its own character so emphatically, can the duties of every individual in the commonwealth be too minutely or too engagingly dwelt on? If there is any branch of moral philosophy, which deserves enlarging, it is this momentous one of the duties of a free citizen to his country . . . . "

Kentuckians of social prominence, although consciously or unconsciously imitating the manners and mores of eastern planters, were at the same time striving, perhaps unwittingly, to make their way of life unique, or at least partially so. The distinctiveness of elite Kentuckians is both recognizable and elusive. Their early dislike of New Englanders and of eastern commercial "big-wigs" faded with the passage of time. Associating in Congress with men from the northern coastal states, sending their sons to colleges there, visiting there on vacation trips, and needing Yankee mechanics and machines as the state's economic life became diversified, tended to allay the earlier hostility. But, pride in their state simultaneously spurred them to brand themselves indelibly with its mark. In the social realm this determination to be obviously American when meeting anywhere in the nation with persons of their own class, but to retain the ethos conferred upon them by their home environment, corresponded with their views blending nationalism and states' rights in the constitutional realm.

Neither the place of women in Kentucky society nor the attitude of a Kentucky gentleman toward his wife and his daughters would have been deemed singular in another state, but these factors contribute to the total image of the Kentucky aristocracy. One point of view, which now seems shockingly old-fashioned, was well expressed by the culminating toast at a Fourth of July "stag" banquet at Frankfort in 1808: "The American Fair! May they rule the hearts, but not the heads of the Nation!" Belles in Kentucky were locally held to be outstandingly beautiful, but every state in the South thought the same of its own young women. A wife in Kentucky might prove, at need, to be an excellent manager of a plantation, but, if so, it was not because she had been formally educated for that task. In the state's newspapers, as time passed, advertisements became more frequent for girls' academies and for individual tutors, male or female, seeking to instruct young women in the 3 Rs, French, music, dancing, painting, poetry, needlework, proper social deportment, and the like. Musical instruments had separate genders. Spinets,

pianos, and harps were suitable for a woman, but not for a man to play, unless he were heedless of being called effeminate. Conversely, fiddles, banjos, and guitars were music-makers for males. Women, of course, could enjoy their tunes, but to bow or strum them was an "indelicacy."

As in every state of the Union, a husband in Kentucky controlled the property of his wife. She could at least count upon receiving her dower right, no matter whether he scrimped her in his will or died intestate. One pre-marital regulation or custom, which may have been found rarely outside Kentucky, was for a prospective groom to pledge to forfeit £50 to the governor if, by a specified date, he had not fulfilled his promise to wed his intended bride. Probably this guarantee was required only from a lover who found his fatherhood had become imminent during the courtship. Throughout rural America, including Kentucky, a married couple viewed numerous offspring as a blessing. Physicians were scarce, but midwives appear to have been plentiful. A high death rate among young children was often a recurring sorrow which parents had to accept as almost inevitable.

Lincoln County Court. Document of allotment of widow's dower to Lydia Blanker. December 23, 1809. 1 page.

John Edwards. Document of pre-marital pledge. April 23, 1804. 1 page.

By 1815 a Kentucky lady or gentleman was, as a rule, proficient in the handling of thoroughbred horses, whether in breeding, riding, or racing them. Even before Virginia had released its control of its District of Kentucky, racing, with its purses and bets, was a sport on its way to becoming a passionately pursued business. By 1800 many a large plantation owner had a prize stallion or two, ready—for a price—to sire a foal of notable lineage. The blood-lines of these animals were recorded with a care equalled only by that devoted to the genealogical entries in the big family Bibles.

Attracting smaller audiences than the race meets were the plays performed by traveling troupes of actors. These troupes especially favored Lexington with their repertoires, beginning as early as 1787. During their stay a room in the Court House was customarily provided for their use.

Joshua Lacy Wilson. Autograph letter to his wife, Sally. March 14, 1808. 3 pages.

Another facet of gracious living by Kentuckians comprised delectable foods and drinks prepared in original ways. Having invented them they probably had good reason to assume that they never were as enjoyable as when served in their own homes. Among these specialties were ham, chicken, bean soup, beaten biscuits, mint juleps, punch of sundry varieties, bourbon, and many more. Blue grass and limestone-tinctured soil and water probably deserve some of the credit for these gustatory delights.

BETWEEN *North and South:* KENTUCKY *at the* END *of an Era*

Up to 1815 at least, a main determinative factor in shaping the life of Kentuckians had been their isolation. More and more thereafter as

better mail service and means of personal travel tied them more closely with the other states they found it difficult to unscramble their westernness, easternness, and southernness. Ancestrally, socially, economically, and politically they were drawn more or less strongly in each of three directions. On the one hand their diversity promoted a hesitation in taking a definite stand on critical national issues. On the other hand it fostered a cosmopolitan outlook and a disposition to compromise. This dilemma of divisiveness, nurtured by being geographically on a middle ground, would beget tragedy with the onset of the Civil War. So had it been for the earliest white Kentuckians when Indians assailed them from both the north and south.

Harry Innes. Bill to Robert Peiry for boarding and educating a liberated slave. August 27, 1797. 1 page.

The problem of slavery troubled Kentucky during its first twenty years of statehood and even as early as 1785. In general the opposition to the institution would considerably decline near the close of that timespan. By 1815 the trend of opinion in the "mother state" of Virginia was moving in the opposite direction. Economic rather than moral factors mainly account for the contrast. In the Old Dominion, soil exhaustion had reduced the yield of staple crops, lessened the profits, and made the maintenance of many slaves an economic burden. From the rich soil of Kentucky the yield per acre of many of the same staples was greater. The southern market for them expanded.

Benjamin Merrell. Autograph claims regarding a runaway female slave. November 30 and December 7, 1805. 1 page.

To a slight extent Kentuckians compromised with slavery. After ten years of futile effort (1808-1818) the Abolition Society confessed its failure in their state. In 1816 the American Colonization Society became active there and attracted many members, including Henry Clay. Their motives were a tangled mixture of the philanthropic and the expedient. Some apparently believed, delusively, that to return blacks to Africa would be a kindness to them, as well as retributively just. Others deemed it a means of ridding their society of unassimilable persons likely to cause unrest among the slaves. Still others judged it would be a laudable act of charity and self-sacrifice to ship rambunctious Negroes to Sierra Leone, rather than to sell them, as a punishment, to new masters in the Old Southwest. Probably a few religiously centered Kentuckians, who shared in the foreign-missionary fervor of the period, believed that the freedmen would effectively carry Christianity to the heathen in Africa. Between about 1828 and 1832 not a few Virginians, especially from the western counties, sought unsuccessfully to have the constitution of their state provide for the gradual emancipation of slaves. Somewhat in contrast, although most Kentuckians by then were reconciled to the use of forced black labor, their General Assembly in 1833 banned the further importation of slaves to the state. Slave traders, no matter how necessary they had become to Kentucky's economic life, were deemed ineligible for admission to her polite society.

Jefferson County Court. Order for division of the estate of Jonathan Clark. December 24, 1811. 3 pages.

About 1820, the bitter and prolonged debates in Congress, culminating in the so-called Missouri Compromise, opened a new chapter

in the history of slavery in the United States. To the venerable Thomas Jefferson, the passions aroused by the issue of restricting the extension of slavery in the vast territory west of the Mississippi River was as alarming as "a firebell in the night." To a considerable degree the compromise marked the end of the era, which had opened with the comparatively mild opposition to the provision in the Ordinance of 1787 declaring the Old Northwest Territory "forever free."

RETROSPECTS *on Kentucky's* HISTORY *and* HEROES

In their writing and teaching, historians have always found it convenient to divide the past into chronological eras, even though they also stress that, in most respects, the life of a society does not alter drastically or perhaps even noticeably, during any one year. For European historians, 1815 is a favorite watershed. It is the date of Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo and his second exile; the close of about twenty-five years of nearly ceaseless war; the Congress of Vienna; the restoration of the Bourbon monarchy in France; and the terminus of its Revolutionary age. To Americans it marked the end of their second war with Great Britain. For them 1815 also seemed to be a line of significant demarcation between much of the old and much of the new. What they sensed appears retrospectively to have been warranted. They too had emerged from their Age of Revolution, and, after forty years of much storm and stress, the Republic was no longer merely an experiment.

At this crossroad, leading Kentuckians looked back with pride at the difficult trails they had blazed. It was a time for the enshrinement of their heroes—Daniel Boone, George Rogers Clark, Isaac Shelby, and many more. Their days of public service were over; younger leaders had come forward to take their places in almost every field of endeavor. New issues, or old ones in new contexts, were to the fore in politics, banking, currency, and transportation. The dominant Democratic-Republican party would soon split, with Henry Clay as a presidential aspirant of its National Republican wing, and Andrew Jackson of Tennessee as a much-talked-about Democrat. Between 1812 and 1821 Louisiana, Indiana, Mississippi, Illinois, Alabama, and Missouri successively became states. With Kentucky, Tennessee, and Ohio preceding them, the West had at last become a power to reckon with in national affairs. The East Coast, after Maine was admitted in 1820, had no more areas except the recently acquired Florida to nurture into statehood.

In Kentucky, however, aged men and women liked to reminisce about how it had been "way back when" rather than what the future probably held in store for their state. They, and other oldsters already in their graves, had sometimes kept journals, written memoirs, or preserved their correspondence. To these documents were added records of the

tales told orally by the surviving pioneers. John Bradford and other newspaper editors found that their subscribers welcomed columns about Kentucky's past. Thus the way was prepared for Mann Butler, who in 1834 published a first-rate history of Kentucky. By then, Reuben T. Durrett was ten years of age and an avid listener to the tales about the frontier people who had won his country from the wilderness, the Indians, and the British. About fifty years later, having begun much earlier to collect written or printed materials centered upon his beloved state, he counted it a high compliment to be called "Kentucky's Grand Old-Young Man." The present exhibit hopefully does him honor and also worthily commemorates the American Revolution in its bicentennial year.