

Northern Kentucky Views Presents:

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# The Stagecoach Comes to Northern Kentucky

By

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THE STAGECOACH COMES TO NORTHERN KENTUCKY

Northern Kentucky is presently provided with modern and complete transportation facilities. Our large Boone County Airport affords large luxury liners to take us to the four corners of the globe, comfortable motor buses are available to all parts of the country, water transportation with diesel and steam powered boats, a mixture of the old and of the new is on our doorstep, and three great railway systems pass through our counties to the farthest extremities of the deep South. We can look with some degree of satisfaction and pride on our local transportation development, for it was not always thus. Perhaps some future generation, in our advancing atomic age, will view our achievement with some amusement and even condescension, for such is the license of progress, and further development must be accomplished by scientific advance which may make our present efforts appear puny. But the sheer physical effort, the determination and endurance in the accomplishments of our early settlers in forcing transportation through the wilderness with packhorse and stagecoach may sometimes be equalled, but will never be outdone.

On February 14, 1780, Beverly Randolph, Lt. Governor of the State of Virginia, issued a patent to one, George Muse, a soldier of the King of England, George III, in the war with France, for 200 acres of land, embracing the Ohio River front from the mouth of the Licking River to what is now the foot of Philadelphia Street in the city of Covington. Wars come and go, but some qualities of our foot soldiers seem to survive the centuries and Mr. Muse, in a moment of temporal necessity, traded the grant to a man for a keg of whiskey, who later transferred it to James Taylor of Virginia for a quarter of a killed and dressed Buffalo. James Taylor in turn sold the grant to one, Stephen Trigg, who came to Kentucky in the Fall of 1779 as a member of the Court of Land Commissioners who surveyed it and established the grant, and was later killed in the battle of Blue Licks.

In 1801, this land, for the sum of \$750.00, found its way to the ownership of one, Thomas Kennedy, who, in 1814, sold 150 acres of it to General John S. Gano, Richard M. Gano and Thomas Davis Carneal for the sum of \$50,000.00, or quite an appreciation from the price of the keg of whiskey 34 years earlier. Covington was then established by an act of Legislature on these 150 acres on February 7, 1815 and was later incorporated as a city on February 24, 1834. The first sale of lots in the new town was by public auction on March 20, 1815 and the growth of the new city was under way.

Prior to this time, before the turn of the nineteenth century, travel to this locality had been mainly accomplished in two means, canoe and flatboat on the rivers and overland by foot travel and horse along the indian trails and buffalo traces. The buffalo, which had abounded in large numbers in Kentucky were of a migratory nature and traveled long distances, seeming to possess an instinct for selecting high ground and the most direct route in reaching their destination. Travel over these paths was attended by hardship and danger, not only from natural considerations but from indians and brigands who frequented these trails. To mutually protect themselves on these hazardous journeys, armed travelers would band together and would organize such companies by local newspaper advertisement. One such advertisement of an intended trip appeared in the Kentucky Gazette on November 1, 1788:



" A large Co. will meet at the Crab Orchard the 19th of November in order to start the next day through the wilderness. As it is very dangerous on account of the Indians, it is hoped each person will go well armed. "

Our early settlers soon chose a route to the settlements at or about Lexington which followed nearly a due southwardly course from the Ohio at the mouth of the Licking River. Jilson in his book on "Pioneer Kentucky" says in his description of this route:

" For long distances this pioneer trace followed the great drainage divide - Dry Ridge - between the waters of Licking on the East and the springs falling into Elkhorn and Eagle Creeks, tributaries of the Kentucky River on the West. Much of this route, particularly in what is now Kenton and Grant Counties was part of the Old Buffalo Trail from Big Bone Lick to the Lower Blue Licks. Buffalo paths made up other considerable portions of this route, as in some parts of Scott County. Furthermore, it is reasonably certain that a well defined Indian hunting trail connected the more sharply marked animal courses, for the aboriginal savage liked best to travel the high, unobstructed ridges, particularly if in so doing he could find the game he sought following their natural runways. This we may be sure was the case along the great Dry Ridge divide. However speculative this route may have been prior to the founding of Lexington in 1779, it assumed at this time an importance second to none of the North South paths broken by the pioneer. John Bowman took his woodsmen over it in 1779 and 1780 on his way to punish the Shawnees and their allies in the Miami Country. John Filson traversed it when he went north with Robert Patterson and Mathias Denman in 1788 to lay out the site of his Losantiville, opposite the mouth of the Licking, a village which Arthur St. Clair, a few years later, in a burst of revolutionary patriotism, was to rename - Cincinnati. It was down this Old Dry Ridge Route past Littell's Station and McClelland's Station that Federal soldiers helped open a wagon road finally between Ft. Washington, previously Fort Harmar, on the town site of present day Cincinnati to Lexington and thence by the old Wilderness Road through Boonesborough, Flat Lick and Cumberland Gap into the Upper Tennessee Valley. Today, this road, thoroughly modernized with every convenience for the traveller is the Eastern Dixie U. S. 25 from Covington to Middlesboro. The greater portion of the Dry Ridge Route was appropriated by the Queen & Crescent Division of the Southern R.R., a lasting testimonial to the sagacity of the unknown pioneers who first blazed this route from the heart of the blue-grass region to the all-important juncture of the Ohio and the Licking Rivers, where three great cities, Cincinnati, Covington and Newport were in later years to stand. "



This road continued with little or no improvement as a combination of indian trail and buffalo trace over which hunters, traders, trappers and immigrants passed in single file with their possessions on the backs of pack horses until around 1790, when private enterprises started making improvements on this trail to convert it for wagon travel over which wheeled vehicles might be drawn. The first road act of the Kentucky legislature on December 14, 1793, appointed Bennett Pemberton, Nathaniel Sanders and Daniel Weisiger Commissioners "to receive subscriptions in money, labor, or property to raise a fund for clearing a wagon road from Frankfort to Cincinnati, such road being deemed productive of private convenience and public utility, and the route lying through an unsettled country which cannot be cleared in the usual manner by the County Courts". These wagon roads were only the poorest makeshifts, being for the most part narrow winding trails cut through the wilderness. They were made ten or twelve feet wide with trees cut off close to the ground with the stumps well rounded and the surface of natural soil. One English traveler visiting Lexington in 1806 reported, "that from Lexington to Limestone and to Cincinnati on the Ohio, a distance of each of 70 miles, the roads with a few exceptions are no more than buffalo traces, that the inns along the route were generally log huts of one apartment, and the entertainment consists of bacon, whiskey and indian bread".

Bit by bit, with constant travel and usage and with sporadic attempts at construction and with the pecuniary inducement supplied by the toll gate system which resulted in the construction of turnpikes, the Covington-Lexington road was developed to a point where it would accommodate stage coach travel. Considerable credit for this improvement is due a man by the name of McAdam who conceived the McAdamized or artificial road of broken stone. But no such road of this type appeared in Kentucky until the year 1829.

A charter was granted on February 8, 1819 for a turnpike road between Georgetown and Covington but almost a year prior thereto the first stage line was established on May 6, 1818 when Abner Gaines, as proprietor, informed the public:

Lexington & Cincinnati Mail Stage

"Commencing running for the first time, Wednesday, May 6 inst. It will leave Cincinnati every Wednesday at 8 o'clock A.M. and arrive at Lexington on Thursday at 6 o'clock P.M.

Leave Lexington at 2 o'clock P.M. and arrive at Cincinnati on Monday at 8 o'clock P.M.

Fare for passengers 10¢ per mile with an allowance of 14 lbs. baggage; 100 lbs. baggage considered equal to one passenger. Books for the entrance of passengers will be kept at the Cincinnati Hotel, at Keen's Inn, Lexington, and at Capt. Brenin's, Georgetown. The proprietor who lives on the road will make every exertion to promote the comfort of passengers.

Abner Gaines - Proprietor."

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Abner Gaines was a resident of Williamstown and kept a tavern there. Travel on this line was expensive. Eight or nine dollars per passenger was charged with 100 lbs. of baggage considered as an extra fare. In 1931, although a depression



year, our currency was of much less value, and this same trip could be made by rail for 1-1/2 cents a mile.

As any change from the established, the advent of the stagecoach was met with resistance. Many of the hardy pioneers who were inured to hardships of all kinds of weather on horseback, looked on the stagecoach as an effeminate means of travel, suitable only to the aged and women and the dissolute. It was resented by the traders who made their living by transporting merchandise by packhorse and others claimed it was bad for business as less clothes were worn out than when people traveled by horseback or afoot. They claimed the health of the travelers was impaired by late arrivals and long stages, and the strongest opposition came from a school which claimed that the stages were destroying the breed of good horses and that saddlers and spurriers would be ruined by the hundreds.

Cincinnati, as well as Lexington, were centers for coach "repositories" or coach building firms. The first coaches had an oval body suspended on wrought iron springs. In 1827, a great improvement in coaches was made by the Abbott Downing Co. of Concord, New Hampshire, a coach manufacturer, when they introduced their famous, "Concord Coach". This coach continued in popularity until the late 1880's. The revolutionary feature of this coach consisted of the fact that instead of the iron springs it was suspended on two leather "thorough braces" extending lengthwise of the coach and attached at each end to a standard protruding up from the axle. These thorough braces were made of leather straps placed on top of each other to a thickness of about 3 inches. This leather swing absorbed the jars and permitted the coach to rock and thus absorbed the shock of violent jerks on the traces by the horses. These coaches were pronounced by many to be "the only perfect vehicle for traveling that has ever been made". The coach had room for 9 inside passengers, 3 to a seat and one or more outside. The body, constructed of stout white oak, was braced with iron bands. Behind the body of the coach was a triangular compartment or "boot" for baggage and express and another compartment under the driver's seat was known as the "box" and was used to carry valuables. Names for the coach lines were selected with a view toward popular appeal and to allay the fears of the traveling public as to the dangers of the road. Some of the companies operated as "The Peoples Line", "Good Interest Line" and "The Reliance". The better fashioned and equipped coaches were given individuality by being named for nations, states and cities, and famous men, past and contemporary. Also such names as Ivanhoe, Mayflower, Pathfinder and Sultana were used.

Four horse teams were generally used, but for bad stretches of road, hilly terrains and heavy loads, some lines used six horses. The two horses in front were known as the "leaders" and those next to the coach were called the "wheel horses". Being nearest the load their work was probably the heavier and hence, the expression of a hard working responsible person being a "wheelhorse" probably developed. "Off" meant right and "near" meant left. The right front horse was known as the "off leader" and left rear horse was called the "near wheeler".

The drivers of these stages were men highly regarded by the public generally and were true individualists, proud in their profession. They were hard, bitter gentlemen as a rule, jealous of their reputations, and quick to anger if their sovereignty was questioned. Fanciful names such as "knight of the ribbons" were given them by their admirers and their zealously in establishing themselves as masters of the road often resulted in disastrous accidents to their own and competing coaches.

"But to see him in his glory is to see him when he starts



out in the morning with a fresh team, proudly remarked one of the summer boarders who often witnessed the departure of the stage in front of Brennan's Inn and stage office in Lexington. Continuing in his admiration for the "knight of the ribbons" who was the acme of many a young man's ambitions, he gives us this picture.

He comes up in front of the stage office flying; the horses are nervous and uneasy while the passengers are getting aboard but he is master of the situation, he is happy for he knows that he is observed of all by the small boys and loungers gathered to see him off. Baggage all strapped; passengers all in; everything ready, he is prepared to act - he is not yet ready - first he slaps his hat over to one side of his head, gives the ends of the line a professional swing over the top of the coach, places his foot firmly on the footboard, pulls off his lines, whip in hand, rolls his quid of tobacco around to the right spot and then issues the command to the horses. Each horse is expected to press into his collar at that instant and do the best to forge ahead. The speed is kept up until he is out of sight of the loungers and small boys when he slackens the pace and settles down to a square trot, and the regular day's journey is begun".

The English appellation of coachman or coachmaster was never used by the American stage coach driver. He resented its use and found it as disagreeable to be called a coachman as to be offered a tip. He would accept a cigar, a drink or a \$10.00 bill but the small gratuity was shunned by him as being beneath his dignity.

The stage driver's most cherished possessions were his whip - the badge of his profession, and the stage horn or bugle. When approaching a hamlet, village or town, a vigorous blast was blown to apprise the townspeople of his coming, or within a half mile of the tavern the bugle was sounded for the table to be in readiness and for fresh horses to be brought forth and changed. Every driver blew two blasts on his horn to start, three to clear the road and one long blast when a station or tavern was reached.

All was not glory and adulation in the life of the driver, however, and he had to go through many hardships. Sitting high on his box, he had to face rain and snow, heat and cold, for he rode thus exposed night and day, in all seasons, sometimes with the mercury 10 below zero. One cold morning, the driver of the stage from Covington to Lexington left on time, perhaps 4 o'clock A.M. It was zero weather with blowing snow and large drifts on the road and in places over the fence tops, so that it was mid-afternoon when he reached Williamstown. Despite the conditions of the road and the weather, the stage passengers insisted going on to Lexington. With a hottle of whiskey and a fresh team the driver was on the road again. Inside the stage the passengers were warmed with hot bricks and sheltered from the wind and snow. Passing by several farm houses late in the afternoon the driver shouted about the frigid temperature and these were perhaps his last words for when the stage dragged into Georgetown, and the horses stopped by habit at the post office, he was found at his post, frozen to death.

The stage drivers vied with one another on the road, often racing to the distraction of the passengers. Those carrying the U. S. mail seemed to feel more



important than their brothers and would often refuse to yield the road. The following notice is taken from the "Cincinnati Whig" for August 22, 1838:

" A distressing stage accident occurred on Sunday morning last August 20, 1838, at the 10 Mile House, north of Lexington on the Maysville Turnpike. The stage contained 9 passengers besides the driver and an extra driver on the outside. The house stands back from the road some 70 or 80 yards and when the driver started, he gave the horses the whip, and they pitched off at full speed. In turning the acute angle from the yard to the road, the stage upset with great violence, dashing the top into a thousand pieces. The forewheels became immediately disengaged from the other parts of the stage and the horses ran off with them with great fury for several miles. Every person in or upon the stage was more or less injured. Judge Underwood of Kentucky and his daughter were both seriously wounded in the head and a young man by the name of Love from Tennessee, on his way to West Point, had his collar bone badly broken, and a gentleman from New York was seriously injured in the right side.

The driver had his ankle dislocated and the extra driver was badly hurt internally and the blood streaming profusely from his mouth. The rest were less though considerably injured. It is almost a miracle that none of the passengers was killed, as the accident occurred through the recklessness and imprudence of the driver, for whose conduct there seems no extenuation or apology".

Most drivers had a coach dog, usually a Dalmatian, and as it was impossible for the driver to see the rear boot, it was the dog's duty to guard it with his life. This they did, either riding in the rear boot, trotting directly under the coach or within easy sight of it. The stages often had to pass through flocks of sheep on the road, attended by large Shepherd dogs and the master's pugnacity was often reflected in his Dalmatian. For protection in these melees, most coach dogs wore large leather collars, studded with a double row of spikes.

Stage coach travel would not have been so colorful and picturesque if it had not been for the part the inns and taverns played in the accommodation of travelers and townsfolk. At first, there were so few towns and villages that hospitality was shown the traveler at every cabin, station, farm, or plantation. Every man's house was an inn.

The first inns or taverns were built mostly of log, though a few were of stone. They were ordinary wilderness cabins rendered professionally hospitable by stress of circumstance. They were more often of but 1 or 2 rooms where, before the open fireplace, guests were glad to sleep together in their traveling blankets or bear robes.

With advent of roads and stagecoach these were soon replaced with comfortable inns and taverns which were established in the settlements, at the country crossroads, and at frequent intervals in between these points. Taverns were sometimes called "ordinaries", universally pronounced "ornaries", and it is likely pronunciation hit the nail on the head more than the spelling.



Prices went up and down according to locality. In 1803 the magistrates of Fayette County, in consideration of the welfare of the travelers and with a desire to regulate sale of liquor, met and fixed tavern rates (Fayette County Court Order Book I, page 30, May term 1803). This is conceivably Kentucky's first introduction to price control.

To further protect travelers, the tavern keepers were required by law to obtain from the County Clerk a copy of the tavern rates as fixed by the magistrates and post them up under a penalty of 25 pounds fine.

Inns played a very important part in the political and social life of the people. There were many reasons to explain and to justify attendance at the old time tavern. One was that often the only newspaper that came to the village was kept there. This small sheet saw hard usage, for when it went its rounds, some could hardly read it and some pretended to read it. The extent and purpose to which this frail newspaper was put can be guessed from the following notice posted over the bar of one taproom:

"Gentlemen learning to spell are requested to use last week's newsletter".

It was the most natural that people should frequent taverns in order to learn what was going on in the eastern states and to acquire the latest local gossip. It was to these places of refuge that the traveler came and imparted information which he had gathered on his journey across the country. The tavern of the town often became the civic center from which radiated much of the social and intellectual life of the community. In fact, the tavern was of far greater importance to its neighborhood than to travelers.

The tavern was often a meeting place for the town trustees, county courts were held in its rooms, recruiting was done there, and it often offered shows, performances and exhibitions. In December, 1814, the following appeared in the "Western Citizen" a Paris, Kentucky publication:

"RARE SPORT"

"To the lovers of sport, their attention is called that on the 29th of December there will be a

BEAR BAITING

at my house on the Cynthiana Road, one mile from Paris at 10 o'clock A.M. when a 3 year old He Bear will be turned loose and five dogs will be entered every half hour to fight him, according to the regulations to be known at the time of entering.

Also, the half of a She Bear will be barbecued and as good a dinner furnished as the country can provide. No quarrelsome person will be permitted to remain a guest as peace and harmony will be promoted and expected."

"O. A. Forsythe".



One of the favorite potions served in these taverns was a fermented drink known as "Metheglin". It was made by grinding the long beans of the honey locust and mixing them with honey, herbs and water. Beer was difficult to obtain and hard cider was plentiful. To discourage "freeloaders" seeking credit at the bar, one tavern keeper had a sign which read:

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"My liquor's good, my measure's just,

But honest sirs, I will not trust."

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Small change was a problem to travelers and tavern patrons in the early days in payment for their meals and lodging, our mints not having been developed to the proficiency which they have attained today and most coins in circulation were silver dollars or "cartwheels" in the form of the Spanish piaster, Mexican and American dollar. Our present slang of "two bits" meaning a quarter, "4 bits" designating a half dollar and "6 bits" meaning seventy-five cents originated from the early practice of cutting these cartwheels into 8 pieces, much as a pie would be divided.

Thomas Ashe who visited Lexington in the fall of 1806 remained all night in one of the taverns, and on arising the next morning asked the proprietor what he owed, throwing down a silver dollar on the counter. The tavern keeper called in his Negro man servant and told him to "chop it, I want it changed and to take out of the dollar one quarter and one eighth". The servant executed his master's orders with great dexterity and returned the dollar to the guest with a section cut out making an angle running to the middle. An amusing incident of the problems created by this absence of small currency is related by Mr. Collins in his "History of Kentucky":

The First Bank in Covington was private and temporary, established in 1821 by Benjamin W. Leathers in connection with his store. It was the reign of fractional currency, nearly fifty years before the exigencies of the Civil War invented that handy designation. Instead of 3, 5, 10, 15, 25 and 50 cents currency, Mr. Leathers, like many others at the time, and a thousand imitators in 1837, issued his own promises to pay, or skin plasters, of the denominations of 6-1/4, 12-1/2, 25 and 50 cents, and perhaps of \$1.00 and \$2.00. Having served to bridge over the hard times, the day of redemption came around and Mr. Leathers took them in promptly like a true banker. It is said that as he redeemed them at his counter, he aimed to clear away the rubbish by consigning them to the devouring flames in the broad fireplace of his store; but, unobserved by him, the powerful draft of the chimney carried many of them into the outer and upper air, and rained them in beautiful profusion upon the ground outside and upon the roof of the store. Before he discovered that he had established such a bank of re-issue, a sort of "fire in the rear" to consume his capital, he had redeemed many handfuls brought in by the growing stream of panic stricken citizens, young and old. It was a run on his bank not anticipated and it worried him not a little when he discovered he had been made a victim of his own want of caution. An old trunk was made the recipient of the after redeemed skin plasters, and the surviving residents of the Beech Woods farm four miles out on the old road to Lexington will remember how patiently the ex-banker watched the actual destruction of his favorite notes as he committed them slowly but surely to the fire.

Duke's Hotel in Covington was an early tavern and stage office as was an estab-



lishment of Thomas Kennedy who erected a huge stone house near the river front between the Licking River and the Suspension Bridge where he lived as a tavernkeeper and ferry man. After his death in 1821, his son, Samuel, purchased it and with his family carried on the ferry, carrying the stage coaches and other traffic across the Ohio in skiffs and flatboats, manually propelled. Foot passengers were charged 12-1/2 cents each and vehicles \$1.00. In 1823, a horse ferry boat was introduced by one, Pliny Bliss. From 1833, until the discontinuance of the Vine Street Ferry in 1868, because of the Suspension Bridge, steam ferry boats were used. This was the principal crossing for the travel down the ridge road to Lexington and the interior of Kentucky.

One of the most graphic accounts of stage travel appears in the work of J. Winston Coleman, "Stage Coach Days in the Bluegrass":

"During the summer of 1834, a resident of Cincinnati, deciding that the city had no pleasures during the hot weather, started on a stage coach journey through Central Kentucky and from his recollections we gain one of the best views of stage travel through this section during the days of its zenith. After boarding at a local hotel in Cincinnati during the month of June, 1834, he felt that it was worth while to travel if only to get something to talk about. He experienced the truth of observation for his adventures began.

As the stage coach was the accepted means of travel through Kentucky, he decided to take the early morning stage from Cincinnati to Lexington. The time of departure was 3 o'clock A.M., but the picking up of passengers around the city and other delays, it was 5 o'clock before they left Cincinnati causing one of the passengers to remark that "a mailstage is about as uncertain as a female temper and more unaccommodating than anything else.

As the stage progressed along the route it gathered passengers. Already there were pocketed in the coach 8 adults and 3 children with 3 persons on the driver's seat and 3 more on top, making a sum total of 17 souls.

Continuing on the trip, the gentleman wrote: "Thus freighted, we turned our backs on the river and began to ascend the beautiful verdant hills of Kentucky over which the sun was just rising and pouring a flood of joyous daylight. It was slow work - but we went, dray, dray, dray, the horses sweating, the passengers nodding and the coach creaking under its heavy burden. Our deck passengers soon increased to five, which with the addition of baggage stowed on top made the vehicle so top heavy that it swerved from side to side, rolling like a ship in a storm with an awful inclination to capsize. Twice, we came within an ace of an upset, but did not quite go over. Then, one of the axle-trees took fire, the proprietor's wheels not being sufficiently greased. People may say what they will but mail contractors must be very poorly paid when they cannot afford grease enough to keep their axles from ignition. For the better part of the day, nothing of unusual interest took place. Stage relays were passed, fresh horses were brought forth and changed, passengers, particularly the men, got out at the taverns and refreshed themselves with drinks, and the stage continued on its journey to Lexington. Late in the afternoon, the next accident was occasioned by some country boys and girls. A large company had broken up and were riding home on horseback, as the stage passed. The young folks were gallantly prancing along and one of the boys thought it a good chance to show off a little before his sweetheart. So he flourished his whip and began to cut up a few rustics." Away dashed the stage as fast as four animals could draw a heavy carriage, full of people, trunks, carpet bags, band boxes, and mail bags. 'They made the dust fly' and the coach soon came to a hill and down it went 'faster than a streak of



lightening'. Suddenly, the passengers felt a jolt and the stage tilted nearly over, running for some yards on two wheels and then righted itself again. The driver was thrown from his box, the wheels passed over his ankles and the horses streaked it down the hill on their own responsibility. The women screamed, the men swore, the children cried and the old coach creaked worse than ever. Finally, a passenger who sat on the box had the presence of mind to get on the foot-board and thence to the tongue where he seized the reins of the wheel horses and brought the coach to a stop, thus becoming the hero of the trip. Finding their driver not much the worse for the scare, the stage continued on to Eagle Hills, which it reached sometime during the night. Becoming somewhat tired of the stage travel after his day's experience, our traveler hired a horse and 'rode pleasantly by moonlight 14 miles to Georgetown' where he arrived before the stagecoach.

The traveler reported What a contrast is presented between the arrival and departure of a stage. On one occasion you see a handsome vehicle in complete order, the horses slick and shiny, the harness clean, the passengers decently clad bustling full of excitement and all in high glee. The driver cracks his whip and off they dash at a canter.

On the other, the same vehicle comes rolling heavily into town, weighted down with its cumbrous load and spattered with mud. The horses are covered with foam and dirt, wearied, panting and with heads drooped. The passengers are all of one color and a monotonous gloom is seen on their visages; they are the saddest, sorriest, vilest looking set that can be imagined. They are alike tumbled, angry, dirty and silent. The gentlemen have not shaved lately and the ladies have had their dresses crushed out of shape. They are hungry, thirsty, sleepy and covered with dust. They started a genteel, well dressed, affable company, but now they have arrived a silent, haggard, unhappy looking set of creatures. One has lost his trunk - another his temper, one has forgotten her traveling basket and they all have forgotten their good manners. They have been upset, perhaps, an arm has been broken, an umbrella fractured, and a new bonnet knocked into a cocked hat. A painter might study their faces as they crawl out of the vehicle and would find depicted upon them all the varieties of impatience, peevishness and discontent."

But as the stage had replaced the pack horse so was it soon to be replaced by the ironhorse. It had reached its ascendancy in the middle of the 19th century and with the coming of the war between the States, it was being rapidly replaced with steam transportation.

Again change produced the inevitable opposition and people were generally distrustful of the steam cars. Several serious accidents strengthened their argument and they complained of cinders in the eyes, holes burned in the clothes and grass fires often set. Strongest resentment came from around the stage barns where drivers were heard to remark "20 miles an hour it goes! I say no good will come of people shooting around the country like skyrockets - - give me horses!"

But the year 1885 saw only 2 stage coach routes centering at Lexington and one of our most colorful periods in Kentucky history was finished. A nostalgic epitaph to the passing of the stage was written:

We hear no more of the clanging hoof  
And the stage coach rattling by  
For the steam king rules the traveled world  
And the old pike's left to die.

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