

Northern Kentucky Views Presents:

History of Brooksville

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History Of Brooksville

Along the pathway of exploration of the Ohio, Bracken County was cut off from Mason County in 1797, five years after Kentucky became a State. Courts were held at Augusta, Oxford and again at Augusta. After forty-two years a permanent location was selected, near the county's highest point at the crossing of a southbound trail (now Highway No. 19) with the Buffalo Trace (now Highway No. 10) a pioneer road following a time-worn path leading from the salt springs at Blue Licks on the Licking to that river's junction with the Ohio River. Early settled by the Woodward family, the junction was called Woodward's Cross Roads. Some of the original buildings are still standing.

David Brooks, for years a member of the state legislature, had piloted to passage, legislature necessary for the location. The new capitol was named Brooksville and had its first court session Nov. 23, 1839. The court house erected at this time housed the judiciary for more than twenty years and was the county place of public assembly in these two decades of bitter controversy over the slave question that ended in an appeal to arms.

New buildings were erected in years 1860-62 in the opening years of that unfortunate conflict.

The brick courthouse, together with two brick and two frame office buildings, were wrecked to make way for the present building twenty-four years ago.

The jail of that time, remodeled, is still in use.

In the early year of the last century a bank, a railroad, a flour mill, telephone and lights, and some factories came to town. Fires took toll of the older wooden buildings to bring from their ashes modern busi-

ness structures to house a growing trade. Passing years brought loose-leaf warehouses and a second bank to disappear in the drastic years that followed.

Hard surface roads and streets, concrete walks and recently water are among the permanent gains.

Churches have grown from the occasional call of the traveling minister, holding services wherever shelter could be found, to four churches housing as many creed, with sustaining congregations.

Schools have progressed from the one room, three R subscription institute to a high school of twenty teachers, caring for six hundred and fifty pupils, and a parochial school with three teachers and sixty pupils.

The city's financial condition is sound, with a new city building and fire equipment.

Travel in the long ago followed the streams up the James and the Potomac—and down the Ohio, the Cumberland and the Tennessee, to build civilization in the great valley. These fathers brought with them abiding faith in the right to life, individual liberty, and deep dislike to more than necessary government supervision.

Here they founded a county that financially, first in the one hundred and twenty counties of Kentucky and probably first in the more than three thousand counties of the United States, is a home loving, friendly rural town, where today the drone of a plane sends no one to shelter.

These pioneers from the Banks of James to the Mississippi and beyond, built houses of wood with a door of wood and hinges of wood and fastened by a latch of wood. From this latch hung outside the door a string, that a stranger might open the door to find warm welcome.

The "Latch String" is out at Brooksville in these October days.