

Northern Kentucky Views Presents:

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# Mason County, Kentucky

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# MASON COUNTY

# KENTUCKY

RESOURCES      ATTRACTIONS      OPPORTUNITIES

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**General Description.** Mason County is situated in northern Kentucky, with the Ohio River forming the border line between it and the State of Ohio. Its shape is irregular and only 4 counties of this State lie adjacent to it. It was established in 1788 by the Legislature of Virginia and extended at that time to the Big Sandy River. Nineteen counties have been formed in whole or in part from its original territory. The county was named for George Mason, a distinguished lawyer and statesman of Virginia. Early in the last century many relics were discovered, bearing evidence of the habitation of this district by some race long ante-dating the Indians. The county has an area of 145,280 acres. Government statistics accord it the unique distinction of having 100.9% of its area in farms in 1925. Explanation is offered that the entire acreage of a farm is tabulated as in the county in which the headquarters are located, although a part of the farm may be situated in an adjoining county. Greatest elevations reach 850 to 900 feet above sea level.

**Population.** The number of inhabitants shown by the 1920 census was 17,760. Nine-tenths of one per cent of the total population was classified as foreign-born. There were 3,363 males between the ages of 18 and 44 in 1920, and 3,483 females within the same age limits.

**Mineral Resources.\*** The hard rocks of Mason County consist of limestones, sandstones, and shales of the Cincinnati (Ordovician) and Silurian divisions of the Paleozoic. Occasional small Pleistocene (Canadian) igneous and metamorphosed erratics are found in this region evidently sourced from glacial outwash or ponding, while the flood plain of the Ohio River reveals a sequence of unconsolidated alluvial sediments of Pleistocene and

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Recent age. The structure of Mason County is essentially that of a northeastward dipping monocline flexed by a number of minor anticlines and synclines of fingering type, but unfaulted so far as is known.

The leading mineral resource of Mason County is limestone which is produced in quality and quantity suitable for regional building construction. It is also used as a road metal, railroad ballast and for concrete construction. Some grades of Mason County limestone, when combined with proper clays, might be used for cement making purposes, and others are high enough in their calcareous content to be suitable for agricultural lime. Sands and gravels are dredged from the bed of the Ohio River for general constructional purposes. Transported clays occurring in the bottoms of the Ohio River are used for brick manufacture in Maysville. Residual upland clays sourced from Ordovician and Silurian limestones might also be used in making common brick and tile. A geographic map (1926) of Mason County, (scale: 1 inch equals 1 mile), is available from the Kentucky Geological Survey. A soil map of the same scale was prepared by the U. S. Department of Agriculture in 1903.

**Bonded Indebtedness.** Bond issues aggregating \$350,000 have been authorized by the citizens for development of the county's highway system.

**Surface and Soil.** The central and southern parts of the county are undulating to rolling. Lowlands along the Ohio River are comparatively narrow. The region is regarded as one of high fertility. Crop lands harvested in 1924 amounted to 38,646 acres. Pasture lands totaled 101,721 acres. Only 822 acres were in woodlands not used for pasture.

**Water Supply.** The northern section is watered and drained by streams of minor importance emptying directly into the Ohio River, while the central and southern districts are drained by the North Fork of the Licking River.

**Industries.** Although agriculture is the major

industry of the county, manufacturing establishments of Maysville, the county seat, make a prominent contribution to the industrial record of this district. The manufactures census for 1919 fixed the number of establishments in the county at 61. The value of products that year was \$2,378,453. About \$350,000 represented the annual payroll of the factories. Crops for which production was reported in 1924 had a total value of \$2,125,206. Dairy products that year brought a revenue of \$213,636, and poultry and eggs, nearly \$300,000.

**Crops.** Mason is one of the leading tobacco counties. Its 1924 crop amounted to 6,034,745 pounds. The corn crop aggregated 658,889 bushels. Over 23,000 bushels of wheat were threshed, and the oats crop was 16,346 bushels. The harvest of rye was 5,057 bushels, and of hay, 9,426 tons.

Cattle led the livestock groups in the matter of valuation in 1925. The total value of cattle was \$340,267. Horses were valued at \$209,654, and sheep at \$165,073. Hogs had a combined valuation of \$85,633, and mules, \$46,214. The estimated milk production in 1924 was 2,014,980 gallons. The average per cow was 430 gallons.

**Transportation.** The main line of the Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad follows the river across the northern end of the county, including Maysville as its principal station. This city is a terminus for the Maysville and Paris Branch of the Louisville & Nashville Railroad which crosses the center of the county from north to south. Advantages of river transportation are enjoyed by Maysville and other centers of population along the Ohio. Bus service is maintained between Maysville and Lexington, via Carlisle, and between the county seat and Brooksville, Vanceburg, and Flemingsburg, respectively. By ferry connection with Ohio points, bus communication with Cincinnati is likewise given Maysville.

**Highways.** Maysville is a terminus of U. S. Route 68 which crosses the State via Lexington, Bowling Green, Hopkinsville and other leading county seats to Paducah. Construction was in progress in 1927 on the roads from Maysville to Brooksville, via Germantown, to Flemingsburg and to Carlisle, respectively. With surfacing of the highway to Vanceburg in prospect for 1928, the county's program for modernization of the primary road system appears to be shaping towards early completion. A project under way late in 1927 has for its ultimate result a vehicular bridge across the Ohio River at Maysville. A company for construction of such bridge has been organized and in December, 1927, its application for a permit was introduced at the opening of the 70th Congress.

**Tourist Attractions.** This county is rich in its appeal to the visitor interested in Kentucky history. Between Maysville and Washington is the site of a station erected in 1784 by Simon Kenton, described as the "most universally active, enterprising and useful of the pioneers of Kentucky." Site of a similar station established by his brother, John Kenton, is found a mile southwest of Washington. Mays-

ville was settled in 1784 and for many years afterwards was known as Limestone. Daniel Boone lived there for a while. Washington, established as a town in 1786, and for more than 50 years thereafter the county seat, has numerous buildings and sites to attract the tourist. Here Simon Kenton occupied a debtor's prison. The highway connecting Maysville and Washington is a portion of the historic "Maysville Pike," more than a century old, a sector in an early artery of coach travel designed to connect Zanesville, Ohio, and Florence, Ala.

**Educational.** Of the 9 high schools in Maysville and Mason County, 8 are white high schools and 1 colored, giving employment to 41 white and 3 colored teachers, respectively. There are also 15 white elementary schools in the county outside of Maysville, employing 58 teachers, and 6 colored elementary schools with 7 colored teachers. School statistics give 2,745 pupils as the average number in attendance in the county schools in 1926. The Mayslick and Maysville high schools are both schools with A ratings, and both are members of the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, the latter school having an average enrollment of about 205 pupils. There are no private schools or colleges in Mason County. The rural schools are operated on the "consolidated" system and have become the standard schools for the State. Pupils are transported by vehicle, under contract, to these schools, and the plan has proven most successful, being adopted by other counties in the State. There are only 5 one-room schools in the county.

**Cities and Towns.** Maysville, county seat and metropolis of the district, has a population of approximately 10,000 inhabitants. Its location in a narrow valley with the Ohio River on one side and prominent hills on the other, gives the city unusual length for a community of the population indicated. An attractive retail business section is marked by a "White Way." Beautiful homes adorn the hillsides overlooking the city. Streets are well paved. Electricity, water and gas systems are maintained by the Kentucky Power Company. Among the industries are a manufactory of wooden pulleys, a cotton yarn mill, an automobile accessories factory, 2 brick plants, a planing mill and 2 lumber plants. Two large wholesale houses are located here. There are a mammoth tobacco rehandling plant and a number of tobacco warehouses. Two banks, 3 newspapers, 8 churches, 2 hotels, modern high and graded school buildings for both white and colored pupils and an amusement park are numbered among the city's attractions and advantages. Other banking towns are Mayslick and Dover.

**Opportunities.** Location close to large markets, a good labor supply, attractive water and power rates, excellent transportation and facilities by rail and water, are all listed in the advantages Maysville offers those seeking locations for factories.

Mason County, its champions point out, offers varied opportunities for diversified farming. It is rapidly becoming one of the foremost dairying counties in the State. A census taken early in the fall of 1927 disclosed 44,000 dairy cows within a radius of 25 miles of Maysville. Establishment of a milk condensery in that city during 1928 is forecast as a probability. There are about 7,000 dairy cows in the county, nearly double the number 4 years ago. Sheep raising shows a similar increase. There were about 20,000 sheep in the county in 1927, as compared with 7,000 in 1923. A sandy loam soil in many localities is peculiarly adapted to truck growing, it is claimed. Melons of unusual quality and in great numbers are produced in some of the lands along the Ohio River.

**References.** Inquiries for specific information regarding the county may be addressed to:

R. M. Greene, County Agent, Maysville.  
The Bulletin, Maysville.  
The Daily Independent, Maysville.  
The Public Ledger, Maysville.