

Dover --- Nestling, neighborly, quietly and unobtrusively in a bend in the river is situated this progressive town in Mason County. Dover is the focal point of three highways; the Minerva Dover Road, the Tuckahoe Dover Road and the nearly completed Mary Ingles Highway, the town being bounded on the north by the Ohio River. This town is second in importance in the county and lying in the extreme north-west corner, eleven miles below and north-west of Mayville, and one mile from the Bracken County line. The population in 1870 was 532 white citizens and 67 colored ones. According to the 1959 census the population was 329.

Along these three highways are many fine old brick homes, most of which follow the lines of colonial architecture. Two of the loveliest are the old Masterson houses, on the Tuckahoe Dover road. Miss Fannie Masterson's house, now the Dan Scott place, and a similar house across the road, formerly owned by her sister, Mrs. Will Osborne. (Miss Mulsie Masterson) Minnie Hurst, niece of Miss Fannie lived with her. Each time she had callers, she served 'chocolate coffee'. The home of Miss Fannie has been entirely repaired outside, modernized and redecorated inside. Truly a show place. The George Schubert and Clarence Tobin homes on the Minerva Dover road are two other examples of the colonial brick houses of the period. These, too, have been completely modernized. On the Tobin farm is the burial plot of Lewis Craig.

These houses were all built with a hall in the middle and double parlors on one side, and a family, as we call them now, room and dining room on the other side

big canoe and induced the men to steer towards the Kentucky shore where they landed, a mile below Lee's Creek, buried the body of the man killed named McAllister, pushed their boats up Lee's Creek and spent the night there. Next Morning Jermiah Washburn started for Kenton's Station while Neal accompanied the boats down the river. These immigrants were headed to the Falls of the Ohio where they settled safely. Neal Washburn afterward married Hannah McAllister, daughter of the man killed. It was from this first log block house that the final lines were run locating all of the Dover land.

Again... and I know he was ubiquitous... Arthur Fox, jr. was the founder of yet another town, when in 1818, by the will of his father, Mr. Fox inherited the land, and the same year laid out the town of Dover and built a house in the town proper. Mr. Fox named the town Dover for the city of Dover, England.

History books reveal to us that in 1756, Mrs. Mary Ingles, "the first white female on Mason County soil" was at Dover, though Indians captured her, she later escaped through northern Kentucky. The present Mary Ingles Highway, linking Maysville and northern Kentucky was named for her and is now nearing completion. When finished, am sure will be a beautiful drive, as it so closely follows the Ohio River. South east from Dover, the Highway passes through Charlestown Bottoms, with its patches of watermelons, cantaloupes and tobacco. There are several very pretty houses located on this part of the highway.

During the summer of 1776, several companies built in the county, and Ignatius Mitchell, afterward, to found

the town of Charlestown, made claim to land above the mouth of Lawrence Creek, which he described as the "best banks ever he saw". Richardson Masterson was granted 1000 acres in 1776 for marking and improving same land lying between the heads of Limestone Creek and North Fork. Wonder if this isn't some of Miss Fannie's and Maulsie's ancestors? Not until 1787 did Ignatius Mitchell send a petition to the General Assembly of Virginia, noting, he had this tract of land ideally suited for a town, having excellent banks, and from surveys, a way for a road far better than any other of the time. Very soon the Assembly passed an act granting Mr. Mitchell permission to lay off 80 acres, into half acre lots with convenient streets and sell same at public auction. This settlement was to be called Charles Town, later, to be known as Charlestown

Bottoms. Again in 1789 history notes that Simon Kenton with Jermiah Washburn and John Masterson were ordered by the Court to view a way for a road leading from Charles Town, connecting at a convenient point to the road leading from Limestone to Washington. Due to severe Indian attacks the settlers of Charles Town were forced to be granted a stay of two years in order that they might be able to procure building material. It was at this time the Indians were attacking from canoes along the river banks. The year 1793 marked the last of the incursions of the Indians.

Lake Charles, with its summer lodges is also in Charlestown Bottoms. DuPont has recently purchased vast acreage of this land for future developments.

Of course the history of any town includes the families of the town, but since Miss Edith Davis, in her sketch of Dover for the Rotarians issue of the newspapers told of so

many of these families, I briefly mention but one; the Tabbs, .. for it was Langhorn Tabb, sr. who was a member of Tabb and Lyon, the largest purchasers of leaf tobacco in Kentucky in the 1840's. Most of Dover's earliest settlers were of English descent, so it goes without saying they were people of sterling character, strong of determination. The Trues, Tabbs, Hanna and Smith families, as was true of the Fox family were devout readers, being particularly interested in the classics which influenced their solid characters making them citizens of many sterling virtues, held in high esteem by all in the community -- steadfast in religious affiliations.

Of the seven types of soil found in Mason County, one of the two minor kinds is found in but two places, in Charlestown Bottoms and in land surrounding Dover. It is a fine sandy loam, and throughout the soil and sub-soil is a scattering of well rounded pebbles. Maybe this is one reason the most choice tobacco and tomatoes are grown at Dover, to say nothing of watermelons and cantaloupes.

Besides growing near perfect tobacco which is a continued trait of the Dover section of the county, in the middle 1840's the town was the principle leaf tobacco market in the world. The firm of Tabb and Lyon had as many as 150 wagons in line to be unloaded of their golden burley to be shipped to New Orleans and Boston. After this loose leaf business, around the early 1900's, Mrsrs. John and Scott Osborn and my Grandfather Bouldin were engaged in the purchasing and pricing of tobacco at Dover. At this time, representatives of the companies went to the farmer's barn and bid on the tobacco. Sometimes a farmer would have as many as three or four firms represented bidding on one year's crop. The tobacco was

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delivered to the companies and packed in hogsheads. Green pack, we call it now, later being shipped to Cincinnati, Louisville and other points south. The building used for this prizing still stands, a barn on the Tuckahoe Dover road in use this year for housing tobacco.

After being incorporated January 20, 1836, Dover continued to grow and was given quite a boost March 10, 1843 when Arthur Fox's addition, then known as New Dover, came into the town's limits proper. By this addition the town assumed proportions of importance as a place of habitation, and a place in the commercial and political life of the county. After the election of 1847, Dover having gained importance as a shipping port, the Trustees were empowered to grant licenses for taverns and coffee houses. The tax was ten dollars, to be paid to the County Clerk at Maysville. The best known taverns were the Melatt Tavern, located on the corner of Front and Market Streets. In the Dover fire of 1854 this tavern with twenty two other houses burned. The other was the Lee House, still standing.

Mr. Fox gave George Washington Creekbaum a lot on which to build a house, where he lived for sixty two years. Mr. Creekbaum, being a cooper, engaged himself in the business of making hogsheads. He made hogsheads for Tabb and Lyon, in which to green pack their tobacco, they buying around three million pounds a year.

W. E. Tabb, one of Dover's wealthier citizens established a private bank, W. E. Tabb & Company in 1860, later called the Bank of Dover which finally consolidated with the Farmers and Traders Bank, now known as Security Bank and Trust Company, Maysville.

W. E., H. G. and Langhorn Tabb, sr., with W. T. Evans built a large woolen mill at Dover in 1863 which burned twelve years later

with a loss of \$100,000. This Woolen Mill and a flour mill, considered at the time unequalled in the south, were never rebuilt.

James Earnshaw, who was born in Yorkshire, England in 1822, lived in Rhode Island and New Hampshire; after becoming a naturalized citizen, came to Dover in 1868. M. R. Earnshaw bought an interest in the Woolen Mill from William Baker, a New Hampshire man, who had to sell on account of poor eye sight, liking Dover because of its progressive atmosphere he continued to make it his home until his death in 1895; though some of his descendants are living there now.

As to mail, which in the early 1830's, indeed was news. Not like it is now for I read the other day that the modern house wife reads the daily paper just to see if the reporters are getting the news, not to see what is new. All mail was carried by four horse post coaches leaving Maysville twice weekly, on Sundays and Tuesdays, delivering mail to Dover, Germantown etc over a 69 mile route, returning to Maysville the following day. Of course this is entirely changed now, there being a modern post office of which Vern Dunham was Post Master for many years.

To get a franchise to carry mail, the bidder guaranteed to move the coach not less than four miles per hour. The mail was under lock and key, the coaches being allowed to carry three passengers, in seats outside the coach.

Arthur Fox Curran, who obtained his education in the Dover and Minerva schools spent many of his youthful hours in printers offices became publisher of the Dover News, of which I have a copy, though not too old, it surely contains no idle 'chit-chat'. This is a special edition. The Dover News later was published by Sam Stairs.

Lewis Craig, born in Orange County, Virginia of English descent was ordained a preacher at the age of thirty-three. Even at this early age, he had been arrested for preaching in public

twice before being ordained. Mr. Craig landed in Kentucky with members of his Traveling Church in 1781 and after two years settled for a period of nine years as pastor of the Elkhorn Church in Fayette County; during this time the Elkhorn Association was formed, which is the oldest fraternity of its kind west of the Alleghenies.

In 1792, Mr. Craig moved the scene of his operations as organizer, builder and preacher to Bracken County, and soon thereafter on to Minerva, where he built the Minerva Baptist Church.

(I understand the first Minerva church was built on the Walton Pike)
The congregation of the church increased from 45 members in 1795, when it was received into the Elkhorn Association to 156 members in 1799, when it entered into the constitution of the Bracken Association.

The Minerva Baptist Church is built at the intersection of roads leading to Dover and Augusta, on a five acre plot of ground. The church building is of simple Greek-Doric architecture, gracefully proportioned, 62 by 45 feet and 35 feet in height. It is built similar to other churches of the period, with four double windows in each side, two double doors in front and two large single doors in the back. The slave balcony, access to which is gained by two very narrow stairs, one on each side, is at the front of the church. In front are four pillars, at least thirty inches in diameter and made of brick, though, in later years some one has covered them with masonry. All of the brick used in the erection of this church was burned on the site, the walls being two feet thick. The floors are wide boards of white pine, and each board is tongue and grooved by hand. Among ministers who preached there, besides Mr. Craig, were Reverends O. D. Sears, A. W. Larue, W. M. and Jesse Holton. It was during Jesse Holton's pastorate that the big break was suffered. Reverend Holton became Pastor in 1815 and in 1829, taking all but thirty seven of the 251 members, he went over to Campbellism, as it was

then called. This building has not been used as a house of worship since 1875, being used now to house tobacco.

When the Minerva School had its first high school graduation exercises, they were held in this Church. In this class with quite a number of girls were two boys, Loyd Winter and the retired president of the University of Kentucky, Dr. Herman Donovan, who with his wife visit the Germantown Fair each year. Justice Stanley Reed is another illustrious Kentucky son, native to Minerva. Mr. Justice Reed retains his vast land holdings at Minerva.

Among Dover's distinguished citizens was John W. Showalter, who was appointed United States Circuit Judge for the Illinois District by President Cleveland in 1895. Judge Showalter attained prominence as a chess player, (which makes me envy him), also he was captain of a Dover Base Ball Club, and an extensive traveler, making six trips to Europe.

Approximately a mile below Dover there was a beautiful sandy beach where all day fish fries were held for the social life of the community. This 'community get together' was anticipated from one summer to the next. Everyone assembled and MOST OF ALL, THE CHILDREN "at the fishing shore" early in the morning. A colored man and three colored women were brought along to clean and cook the fish which were brought in, in huge seines by some of the men. This group of men went out in boats to drop the seines and when they were brought in, it was a treat for the children as well as the "grown ups", to see how many fish were caught and watch them jump and struggle to get free. Two huge copper wash boilers were filled with bacon grease and after cleaning and rolling the fish in salted corn meal they were dropped in the boiling grease, then when they floated, these delicious, crisp brown fish were quickly eaten. Am sure the three colored cooks had hush puppies floating close by.

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Across the river from the Fishing Shore, dug out of the river bank was an old wine cellar. This cellar was walled with limestone rock and contained barrels of various vintage.

There was a mill rebuilt about 1800 by Whitfield Craig and sold to James Mackoy in 1823. Mr. Mackoy, Virginia's great grandfather, an intimate of Partick Henry, who had the honor of hearing the great orator make his maiden speech, with his son operated this mill located up Lee's Creek. The site is inaccessible now. (Paper)

The mill, distillery and 200 acres of land was deeded to Mr. Craig by General Lee and his wife, Mary for \$400.00.

The oft mentioned Indian mounds were located near the present site of the Dover School. When the mounds were excavated, they contained nothing of exceptional value, trinkets, bones and some mica, though there is no answer as to why or where the mica came from, it being a manufactured product.

In the August 31, 1960 issue of our daily paper, we read of Dover's city water system being tested. This was organized as the Western Mason County Water district. Two wells were dug and one is supplying 75 gallons per minute of clear, cool good tasting water. At this time four other towns have followed the fine example set by Dover, - another pioneering first, set by this thriving little town. Since the Tuckahoe Dover road has been completed, there are a number of commuters living in Dover and working at various factories in Maysville. The real estate prices have more than doubled in the past few years. The Brownings have purchased a large tract of land on the Mary Ingles Highway for future development.

Dover now boasts three churches, Baptist, Methodist and Christian. Also two colored ones. Ser vices are held regularly in each. Each fall the colored churches have their Homecoming Day, when each female member tries to outdo the other, cooking. The white

citizens make their reservations well in advance, a few coming from out of the county. To show the old fashioned respectableness of the colored folks for the whites, there are tables set for white and others for the colored friends.

I could not find any information to determine the year, but riverwards from the Mary Ingles Highway, a well, the Audubon was drilled and a medicinal water was pumped from the ground. Many people would take their jugs and drive to Dover to get this sulphur water. Lots of times Daddy, Thelma Owens and I have gone and gotten a weeks supply of water from Audubon. This well was never developed and is now plugged, but maybe had the vein not changed its course, Dover would have become a resort.

The Methodist Church was the first church in Dover, being located across the railroad tracks. Only a few pieces of stones can be found now, and a few old flat grave markers from the cemetery directly back of the church. While a Mr. Rapp was pastor, some of the congregation -- paid but forgot to pray, other prayed but forgot to pay -- until the majority did neither so the few remaining faithful ones deemed it advisable to move the church. Money was raised in various ways, especially by presenting local entertainments. In one of the old homes the big back room upstairs was used as a theatre, with raised stage, wings and red velvet drop curtains. The ground floor room was used as storage for whole sale merchandise, while in the front part of same house was a drug store, all this being located on Market Street, convenient to the wharf, which was built in 1838.

Every community boasts of some legendary stories; this one is told of a ravine on the Tuckahoe Dover road. A man by the name of Bezikee had more troubles than he could bear, so decided to end them all. Saddling his horse one night and taking a rope, he rode to this ravine, tied one end of the rope to a tree limb, the other end around

his neck, then rode under the limb, gave his horse a slap and next morning was found hanging there by a passerby. To this day Bozikee's Hollow is a horror to children. One night Jim, an old colored man out coon hunting, followed his dogs to a pile of brush near this hollow, when the dogs suddenly stopped, began to bark and yelp, their hair stood on end, changed color and they ducked their tails, ran home and left Jim standing alone. When Jim, gasping for breath, reached the house shortly behind the dogs, his hair too, had turned white from seeing the ghost of Bozikee. This ravine is still known as Bozikee's Hollow.

In an old newspaper, I read that on March 16, 1751, Christopher Gist and a boy riding horse back, carrying surveyors tools and dried provisions, stopped on the bank of the river at the mouth of Lee's Creek and sat gazing in awe at the beauty and plenty of the spot. The Indians called this section of Mason County Adena meaning beauty and abundance, truly a Garden of Eden, not fully appreciated by Col. Scott Trus, who lives at the intersection of the Tuckahoe Dover Mary Ingles highways. His farm being named, "Eden by the River". There is no bus service, no trains stop at Dover, so, it truly is inaccessible, yet Col. Trus gets to the Radio Station and is enjoyed by each of us each day.

took place. Some 75 or 80 of the passengers were literally blown to bits. Among them was Miss Retta French, who was on her way to Cincinnati to buy her trousseau. Thomas W. Carran, of Dover was horribly burned but lived a number of years.

On May 8, 1860, the last duel was fought in Mason County, a few miles below Dover. William Caste, lawyer of Haysville handed his glove to his physician, Dr. Mahlon Smith and was ready to meet Leonidas Metcalf, a Colonel in the Regiment of the Federal Army, to avenge what he considered the only honorable course after a quarrel over politics. Caste felt Metcalf had caused him to be drafted in the Union army. On the day of the duel Caste passed by Dover on the boat Magnolia, laughing, jubilant and happy. Reaching the appointed spot, he found Metcalf waiting, he having driven in a carriage; all seemed like a happy picnic. Caste, a florid, portly man was a great favorite with the sporting crowd. Metcalf, tall slim with keen black eyes, quiet, cold and a deadly shot. Before taking their eighty paces, one standing in Bracken County, the other in Mason County, Metcalf sent word to Caste, he preferred not to kill him and would give him a chance to withdraw. Caste refused. At the given signal Caste fired first - missed. Metcalf stood quietly, like a statue, raised his gun -- and did not miss. Metcalf after this duel returned to his regiment, fought through the War, and came out a Brigadier. He later became prominent in merchantile business in Cincinnati. It is doubtful if ever he shook off the memory of Caste's death, a man for whom he had no personal grudge, but one he killed in obedience to a code of honor.

There are two cemeteries at Dover: Locust Grove, the older.

