

NORTHERN KENTUCKY VIEWS PRESENTS

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## Report from Trimble County Kentucky

*By*

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*From*

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## TRIMBLE COUNTY.

(Revised 1903 by D. H. Peak.)

Trimble county, the eighty-sixth in order of formation, was established in 1837, from parts of the counties of Gallatin, Henry and Oldham, and was named in honor of Judge Robert Trimble, who at one time was on the Supreme Bench of the United States. When first formed, the extreme northeastern corner extended to the big Kentucky river, but quite a large portion of this section was cut off in the following year (1838) in the formation of Carroll county. The Ohio river forms the northern and western boundaries of the county, a distance of about twenty miles, and is the only navigable stream within or on the border of the county. Oldham county forms the southern boundary, while Henry lies on the southeast, and Carroll on the northeast. The Little Kentucky river, Corn creek, Barebone creek, Middle creek, Patton's creek and Spring creek, are the chief water courses. The Little Kentucky river flows through the eastern part of the county for quite a distance and possess available water power to propel machinery. All the others flow into the Ohio on the western boundary, and their water power possibly might be utilized; but none of the streams can be made navigable by a system of locks and dams. The table land is four to five hundred feet above the level of the Ohio, and the surface of the county is very hilly. The rocks of the surface belong to the last part of the lower silurian group and the later groups, that of the creek and brook beds being the blue limestone of the Cincinnati group, filled with fossils characteristic of that period. Above that is found a light colored limestone, possibly the Niagara, and still higher and on the surface of the highlands is a layer of sandstone or free-stone. All of these are excellent stone for building purposes, and easily quarried. A kind of marble is found near the Ohio in the Corn creek neighborhood. It is known as chronchitic marble, and is susceptible of a high polish. A corresponding vein on the hills opposite, in Indiana, has been worked quite advantageously. A marble of reddish brown color is found further inland, but doubtless it is the continuation of the vein above spoken of. Crystalline quartz and calcite abound in the quartz rock and limestone respectively, and concretions or deposits of iron sulphide are found in small quantities. Jesse

Wentworth recently found on his farm, near Mt. Pleasant, an excellent specimen of lead ore. However, this may have been imported into the county and lost on the farm named. Oil and gas have been found in small quantities. Some interest has been aroused in these discoveries, and steps are being taken to make a more thorough examination as to the extent and value of the deposits. Many leases have been taken in various parts of the county within the last few years with this idea in view. A few wells have been sunk, but no paying strike has been made. Small caves and sink holes are quite numerous in certain sections of the county. A cave near the Carroll county line has been explored, to some extent. The known portions of it consist of a room, perhaps twenty-five feet square, with concave roof resembling a terrapin's back, and having numerous chimney-like holes extending upward.

There are many never-failing springs in the county, some of which are remarkable for their medicinal properties. Among these may be mentioned the "Bedford Springs," once a famous health resort. The chief ingredient of the water of this spring is epsom salts, although analysis has revealed compounds of lime, soda, iron and sulphur. The water is pleasant to the taste and is especially good for the relief of stomach troubles. The spring is located on the farm of the heirs of the late Wm. Parker, about one mile south of Bedford. This was open to the public in the year 1902, Dr. I. K. Fisher having charge of it. It seems that a great opportunity is being neglected in allowing this place to lie idle. Several other springs of about the same quality of water have been discovered in the same locality, and at one place on the Parker farm the evaporation of water from a seepy place leaves a deposit of epsomite.

The average price of farm land per acre is about \$12, the price ranging from \$5 to \$50. Much worn out unimproved land is worth very little, but there is a great deal of ridge and bottom land that is much improved and valuable. It may be said in this connection that the farmers are each year adopting the many means they have at hand to enrich the soil and increase its fertility. The land is either freestone or limestone land, the limestone portion being more productive than the freestone, the freestone, however, being the best adapted to fruit growing. General farm products are raised, but the chief exports are tobacco, wheat and corn, tobacco being the greatest source of income. Red clover and timothy in the meadows, white clover and bluegrass in the pasture lands are the principal

grasses grown, and those best adapted to the soil. Stock raising is engaged in to a considerable extent and is a source of no little income to the county.

Fruit growing is the latest developed and probably the most extensive industry in the county. Fruits of all kinds, both large and small, thrive so well and are so abundant in Trimble county that it has acquired the reputation of being one of the most foremost fruit growing sections in the country. It has long been known as the "blackberry county," having received this name because great abundance of this delightful and useful fruit grows wild on the uncultivated lands. In years past, the wild blackberry has been a source of much income to the county, but owing to clearing and increased cultivation it is each year becoming more scarce. The cultivation of dewberries has been quite extensive, especially in the northwestern portion of the county. Apples, pears and grapes are very successfully raised, but for quantity and quality, of the larger fruits especially, Trimble's greatest success lies in the production of peaches. This industry has grown rapidly and hundreds of acres have been set in peach trees; in fact, one might call the country northwest of Bedford one vast peach orchard. The total crop of an average year is approximately half million bushels. The trees are thrifty, the fruit large, well flavored and highly colored.

There are no vegetable or fruit canneries in the county. The nearest are located at Madison, Indiana, and Carrollton, Ky., and they receive much fruit from Trimble, as well as tomatoes, raised especially for them. The soil is well adapted to the production of tomatoes and vegetables in general and considering the wonderful success of fruit growing, canneries would meet with unbounded success.

Probably ten per cent. of the original timber growth remains, but this is being cut rapidly. The principal species of timber available for lumber purposes are beech, oak, poplar, walnut, ash, lynn, sugar-maple and elm. The saw mills that convert this timber into lumber, etc., a flouring mill located at Milton, a whisky distillery and a brandy distillery constitute the county's manufactories.

The labor is chiefly white, our colored population not being large. The largest portion of labor employed is farm labor, with the exception of that employed in preparing our fruits for market, which is really a species of farm labor. The amount paid hands in peach orchards for picking, packing, etc., ranges from fifty cents to one dollar, accord-

ing to the character of the work performed. The average price paid for farm hands is about \$13 per month. The price varies from fifty to seventy-five cents per day. For tobacco setting and harvesting, it sometimes reaches \$1.50 per day. Hands hire by the month at \$8 and \$10 with board, at \$15 to \$20 without board.

The "Short Line," a branch of the L. & N. railroad, runs for several miles near the extreme eastern boundary, but no railroad has ever been constructed within the borders of the county. Several have been proposed, and in some instances surveys were made. At one time work was begun in a neighboring county, but the work was abandoned, and has never been taken up again. The railroad question has been much discussed of late, and we have hopes that in the near future a steam railroad or an electric line will pass through our county. The Ohio Valley Traction Company has recently surveyed a line through Trimble, the terminus being at Cincinnati and Louisville. The survey was made along the Ohio, but if the road is built it is probable that a new survey will be made through the central portion of the county. This would be of untold advantage to the county. A telephone line, the property of the Home Company, connects Bedford and Milton, extending to Carrollton, Ky., and Madison, Ind. The Cumberland Telephone and Telegraph Company put in an exchange at Bedford in 1902, and extended its line to Milton. All of the principal points in the county are connected with Bedford by lines to this exchange. It is probable that an exchange will be put in at Milton in a short time. There are now about eighty miles of turnpike in the county, on thirty-two miles of which toll is collected. Most of the road on which toll is collected is good, some of it is excellent, while that on which no toll is collected, there being no taxation for the maintenance of it, is only fair. Other county roads are indifferent, though reasonably good for the greater portion of the year. We have no road commissioners, the old system of "warning out hands" being still in vogue. However, a road grader has been purchased, and from year to year decided improvements are being made.

There are no educational institutions in the county other than the public schools and usually a private school, for the higher branches, at Bedford. A graded school was established at Bedford in September, 1903. These schools are in good condition, a marked progress having been made in the educational line during the last ten years. A number of the districts supplement the public fund by subscription.

The bonded indebtedness of the county is about \$28,000, and the rate of taxation for county purposes, fifty cents on the one hundred dollars.

According to the census of 1900, the population was 7,232, a slight increase since the previous census. In Hunter's Bottom, embracing parts of Trimble and Carroll counties, is located what may be termed a foreign colony. The people are Germans and are thrifty, hard working people, making good citizens.

Bedford, situated near the center of the county, is the county seat, and, owing to its central location, is quite a business place for its size. According to the last census it had 307 inhabitants. Milton, situated on the Ohio, opposite Madison, Ind., has about the same number of inhabitants as Bedford.

The mail facilities at Bedford are probably as good as those of any inland town in the State. Two rural routes extend from Campbellsburg into the county; one from Pendleton, and two from Milton.

Trimble county is situated in the Sixth Congressional, Fifth Appellate, Twelfth Judicial, Twenty-first Senatorial, and Fifty-second Legislative Districts.