

The "Ultimate" J. P. H. S. Tour—1983

by
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The silver anniversary of Jackson Purchase Historical Society field trips was marked by the most ambitious tour to date when the forty-six member group departed on October 14, 1983, for a three-day excursion to Vicksburg and Monroe County, Mississippi. Following their twenty-five year tradition, Hunter and Christine Hancock had done a superlative job in preparing a most interesting and informative itinerary.

The first major stop after a pleasant lunch break at the Mississippi Welcome Center on Interstate 55 south of Memphis was at the Old State Capitol in Jackson, Mississippi. The restoration of the venerable old state house provides a facility to house the many artifacts that present a vivid portrait of the various periods in Mississippi's history.

Leaving Jackson, the group proceeded through the historic countryside to its destination, the Rivertown Inn in Vicksburg, which was to be "home" for two nights.

On Saturday, October 15, eager early-risers assembled on the bus for a detailed tour of the Vicksburg National Military Park, which was highlighted by two stops within the park. The first stop was at the monument erected to the memory of the Purchase's own General Lloyd Tilghman, a native of Paducah. General Tilghman was killed near Vicksburg during the preliminary action of the battle and siege of the city. The second long-awaited stop was at the site of the resurrection of the Civil War gunboat **Cairo**, which is still in the process of being restored.

Visits to the museum in the Old Courthouse, the McRaven House, and the Biedenhorn Candy Company Museum filled the afternoon hours. The McRaven House was a representation of three periods in the history of Vicksburg. The original cottage was constructed in 1825, and additions in 1836 and 1859 reflect the styles of those periods. Each section of the restored house is decorated with furnishings typical of its period. The Biedenhorn Museum, on the site of the establishment where Coca-Cola was bottled for the first time in 1894, contains an extensive collection of Coca Cola memorabilia. This is probably one of the last homes of the "nickel" Coke.

An early departure from Vicksburg was required on Sunday morning in order that the forty-six representatives of the Jackson Purchase Historical Society could journey, by way of the scenic and historic rustic beauty of the Natchez Trace, to Lake Monroe, near Aberdeen, Mississippi, for lunch. During the lunch break, Dr. Charles G. Hamilton, noted minister, historian, and scholar of Aberdeen, presented an inspirational devotion.

The Kentucky group met with President Ed Williams and Vice-president Charles Crawford, representing the West Tennessee Historical Soci-



Mr. Paul Sisk and President Ed Graves place a wreath on the monument near where the Treaty of 1818 was signed with the Chickasaw Nation.



Mrs. Alida Graves delivers an address for her husband, President Ed Graves, after he suffered an attack of laryngitis, October 16, 1983.

(Photographs courtesy of the *Aberdeen Examiner*, Aberdeen, Mississippi)

ety, and Vice-president Paul Sisk and members of the Monroe County Historical Society to mark the 165th anniversary of the signing of the Jackson Purchase Treaty. This commemoration ceremony was held at a point near the old "Council Tree" where the treaty was signed in 1818.

Addresses marking this anniversary were given by Mr. Ed Williams, Mr. Grant Gregory, and Mrs. Alida Graves, who delivered the message prepared by her husband, J.P.H.S. President Ed Graves, who had developed a severe case of laryngitis. (The texts of Mr. Gregory's and Mr. Graves' addresses follow this article. Unfortunately, Mr. Williams' extemporaneous remarks were not available for publication.) The program concluded with the singing of "God Bless America" by Little Miss America, Lori Baker, of Aberdeen.

At the close of the ceremonies, the Kentucky travelers boarded the bus for the journey back to their area of the Jackson Purchase. The evening meal stop was at the Old Country Store in the Casey Jones Village in Jackson, Tennessee. After a delicious dinner, the group continued on the last leg of the silver anniversary tour of the Jackson Purchase Historical Society.

It is with a great deal of regret and sorrow that it must be reported that this tour was the "swan song" of our incomparable tour leaders, Hunter and Christine Hancock. The Society owes these two faithful members a vote of eternal thanks for the countless hours and dollars which they have expended during the quarter of a century that they have planned and conducted those tours which have become the highlight of each year's activities. No organization has ever been so fortunate to have had twenty-five years of such flawlessly planned and executed tours. There has never been a major "catastrophe" and only a minimal number of "crises" during all of the years that Christine and Hunter have performed their "labor of love" for the Jackson Purchase Historical Society. They will be sorely missed after their move to Lexington, and as supporters of the organization and directors of its annual tours, they can only be succeeded—never replaced.