

## Editor's Remarks

The Jackson Purchase Historical Society was founded in 1958. During the last sixty years, it has played a crucial role in the life of the Jackson Purchase region. Much of the history of the region would have been lost if not for the diligent effort of the members of the historical society to explore and preserve the area's past. *The Journal of the Jackson Purchase Historical Society* continues to be the primary channel through which knowledge concerning the history of the Jackson Purchase has been disseminated. This year's *Journal* is the forty-fifth published by the members of the Society.

The year 2018 marks the two-hundredth anniversary of the creation of the Jackson Purchase through a treaty agreed to in 1818 by Chickasaw leaders and United States officials. The *Journal's* lead article, written by Kentucky's most eminent historian, Thomas D. Clark, and first published in the *Filson Club Historical Quarterly* in 1976, provides an excellent overview of the negotiations that culminated in the Chickasaw cession of a large tract of territory that became known as the Jackson Purchase. Andrew Jackson, of course, played a significant role in the negotiations. The bicentennial year of the Jackson Purchase is a fitting time to revisit Clark's exploration of the region's beginnings.

Two articles in this year's *Journal* address Civil War topics. Written by William H. Mulligan, Jr., an excellent scholar of the history of Ireland and the United States, the first one illuminates a neglected topic, the performance of African American soldiers serving in the Union Army in west Kentucky. The Blue Grass state served as a major center for African American recruitment, although racism among whites in Kentucky was widespread. Mulligan explains that in west Kentucky and in other areas, the contributions of black soldiers, who performed manual labor, guarded important sites, and skirmished with Confederate guerrillas, impressed their white officers and disproved the claim of blacks' unfitness for military service.

Written by Berry Craig and Dieter Ullrich, both of whom are well known for their scholarship on the Jackson Purchase, the second article dealing with the Civil War explores the guerrilla warfare that scarred west Kentucky. Craig and Ullrich focus on the exploits of Graves County native, Thomas Jones Gregory, a Unionist, who, with the Graves County Home Guard, sought to control Confederate guerilla activity in the area. This task was difficult, considering the strong Confederate sympathies that pervaded the Jackson Purchase. Gregory and his men nevertheless relentlessly pursued bands of guerrillas, thereby earning the appreciation of outnumbered and beleaguered Unionists citizens. Gregory's daring efforts eventually led to his death at the hands of rebel partisans. Unsurprisingly, Kentuckians, who had favored the rebel cause, heaped scorn on Gregory's memory after the war; Craig and Ullrich view their characterizations of Gregory as unduly harsh.

Tom Jones's article is taken directly from his *On A Burning Deck: An Oral History of the Great Migration*, a two-volume work published in 2017. A Kent State University graduate, Jones makes his home in New Braunfels, Texas. In his article, he points out that the Great Migration was not only a movement of blacks to the North; many whites also left the South to hunt for jobs in northern factories. Jones focuses on his grandparents, Haskell and Florence Jones, who left

west Kentucky and settled in Akron, Ohio prior to World War I. Whites flooded into Akron, seeking jobs in the city's thriving rubber industry. A steep economic decline in the United States following the war triggered a mass exodus of whites, including Jones's grandparents, from the city. Jones's interviews with his grandparents comprise a significant portion of his article and book.

Brian K. Clardy, associate professor of history at Murray State University, addresses a recent topic, Tennessee Congressman John Tanner's influence on United States foreign policy following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the later emergence of Russian leader Vladimir Putin. Tanner, Clardy explains, was a centrist Democrat, who managed to hold on to his seat for two decades as Tennessee became more Republican. Clardy portrays Tanner as an heir to the foreign policy legacy of southern senate stalwarts, such as William J. Fullbright and Richard B. Russell. Tanner's role as President of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization afforded him the opportunity to assess US-Russia relations at a critical moment for both countries. Clardy, in his article, inserts excerpts from his interview with Tanner, allowing the Congressman to speak for himself on issues of vital importance to United States foreign policy.

Seven book reviews appear in this year's *Journal*. Reviews of Tom Jones's *On A Burning Deck* and Richard Parker's *The Wild World of the Jackson Purchase* are two of them. The other book reviews deal with the Civil War in Kentucky, the significance of tariffs as a political and economic issue in antebellum America, the impact of the First World War on Kentuckians, and the history of Reelfoot Lake. These book reviews assist in illuminating the rich and varied history of the Jackson Purchase region.

This year's *Journal* is the second one that I have edited. William Mulligan's wise advice and unstinting support proved vital to me as I prepared the *Journal* for publication the past two years. Dr. Mulligan's leadership of the Jackson Purchase Historical Society and his accomplishments as a historian are both impressive. The scholars, who penned articles and book reviews for this year's *Journal*, also have my deepest appreciation. I learned a great deal from their work, and I hope they will continue to write for the *Journal* in the future. Ideas about possible articles and book reviews for future volumes are always welcome. Thanks also goes to my wife, Joy, who assisted with the computer formatting of the *Journal* when it was in manuscript form. Finally, society members, past and present, who faithfully attended meetings of the Society, contributed financially to the organization, and diligently carried out their own researches into the history of the Jackson Purchase, deserve the most credit, because they have formed the backbone of the organization for the last sixty years.

James S. Humphreys  
Editor