

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 due to the diligent efforts of its members to preserve the area's past. The *Journal of the Jackson Purchase Historical Society* continues to be the primary channel through which knowledge of the Jackson Purchase has been disseminated. This year's *Journal* is the forty-eighth published by the members of the Society. The 2019 *Journal* consists of four articles, two bibliographies, one short entry, and five book reviews.

The lead article, written by Dieter C. Ullrich, addresses the struggle during the Civil War for New Madrid, Missouri, and Island Number Ten in the Mississippi River. Both the town and the island were occupied by Confederate forces, who posed a significant obstacle to Union strategists' goal of seizing control of the upper portion of the river. Ullrich, drawing from meticulous research in primary sources, reconstructs the unfolding of Union troops' successful efforts to force a Confederates surrender of the two vital points. Ullrich's thoroughly researched and elegantly written article is a model of superb historical scholarship.

While Ullrich's lead article explores an important campaign involving two relatively large armies, the second and third articles in the *Journal* shed light on the profound impact of war on individual soldiers. David J. Wallace, a recent graduate of Murray State University, analyzes the attitudes of men, who fought in the First World War, from the Jackson Purchase area. His conclusions may surprise readers. The soldiers, Wallace points out, often vividly remembered non-combat events, and they sometimes expressed empathy for men in opposing armies. Not all soldiers, however, had the same experience in the army or expressed the same feelings about it. For example, resentment over the discrimination they faced from US officers lingered among black soldiers from the Jackson Purchase. Wallace's article provides a more nuanced examination of soldiers' reactions to their wartime experience than many other scholars have provided.

One soldier, Preston Whitfield Rushing, born in Decaturville, Tennessee, is the focus of Alice-Catherine Carls's article. Carls serves as the Tom Elam Distinguished Professor of History at the University of Tennessee at Martin. Private Rushing, as Carls explains, served in a Field Signal Battalion, responsible for maintaining Allied communications networks, during the final stages of the First World War. Carls, drawing from information Rushing recorded in his war-time diary, maintains that Rushing's brave efforts to carry out his duties as a telephone lineman in the heat of combat in several major battles, including the titanic struggle at the Somme River, deserve greater recognition. Private Rushing, she explains, survived the war and returned to Tennessee. Carls also sees the role of the Signal Corps in World War I as a topic in

need of more scholarly attention, her article proving why the corps should no longer be neglected.

The toll of warfare is not the only subject examined in this year's *Journal*. Richard Dwayne Parker, an educator for the U.S. Forest Service, explains the role that black slaves played in steamboat travel along the rivers of the Ohio Valley region. Steamboat companies, he writes, often used slaves as cooks, porters, deckhands, and other in other capacities. Slaves sometimes escaped, when the boats docked at river port towns, such as Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, and Louisville. Parker describes the manner in which they absconded, examines the efforts of pro-slavery whites to capture runaways, and throws light on the attempts of sympathetic whites to assist slaves in their stab at freedom. Thus he illuminates the significance of the forced participation of slaves in the steamboat industry, an importance, he insists, that merits greater scholarly scrutiny.

The final installment in the articles section is actually bibliographies of articles related to Jackson Purchase history published over the last sixty years in the *Filson Club Historical Quarterly* and the *Register of the Kentucky Historical Society*. Many of the articles address military or political topics, but a number of them also deal with religion and the environment. William H. Mulligan compiled the bibliographies, which offer readers and researchers a trove of sources about the history of the Jackson Purchase region.

A new section to the *Journal* has been added this year entitled "The Jackson Purchase: People and Places." Kevin Hogg, a teacher in Canada, provides an excellent overview of the life and career of Kenny Rollins, a high school, college, and professional basketball star, who attended high school in Wickliffe, Kentucky and later led the University of Kentucky Wildcats to the 1948 national championship. This new section hopefully will be expanded in future volumes of the *Journal*. The editor welcomes short pieces like Hogg's on individuals, who contributed significantly to Jackson Purchase history, and places of historical interest in the region.

The book review section comes at the end of the *Journal*. The books reviewed address the controversy over the burial place of Daniel Boone; the life of the Native American leader, Tecumseh; the history of West Tennessee; the life of the Civil Rights leader, T.R.M. Hunter; and the memory of a Calloway County woman, Lois Etoile Robinson Brewer. The well written reviews provide analysis that will intrigue readers.

The writings in the 2021 *Journal of the Jackson Purchase Historical Society* add substantially to the corpus of scholarship on the Jackson Purchase region. I feel a debt of gratitude to the historians, who have written for this year's *Journal*, and say thank you to all of them. The assiduous work William H. Mulligan has invested into the Society as its president has been instrumental in moving the organization forward. Dr. Mulligan has done an excellent job in leading the Society. Members of the Executive Committee--Richard Parker, Bruce Dobyns, Ann Uddberg, and Marvin Downing--deserve to be commended for their contributions to the

Society as do the nine members of the Editorial Board, whose names are listed in earlier in the *Journal*. The Jackson Purchase Historical Society and its *Journal* would be unable to thrive without such a dedicated group of members.

Please discuss with me your ideas about articles or book reviews for future volumes of the *Journal*. While traditional topics related to war, politics, and society are certainly welcome, I would also like to see the *Journal* focus on less examined subjects pertaining to race and gender, business and economics, and geography and the environment. The 2021 edition of the *Journal of the Jackson Purchase Historical Society* promises to enhance our knowledge of a region rich in history, much of which remains untold.

James S. Humphreys
Editor