

Editor's Remarks

This is the 49th issue of the *Journal of the Jackson Purchase Historical Society*. For a small, all-volunteer organization like JPHS I think that's quite an accomplishment. It brings to mind the hard work over many years of a number of editors. As we plan for next year's 50th issue, we hope to focus attention not only on new work being done on Jackson Purchase history, but also on the contributions of past authors and editors.

This issue contains the usual assortment of articles written by a range of historians. We have both familiar authors, who have published in the *Journal* before, and new faces whom we hope will become regular contributors in the future.

The first article by George G. Humphreys is a look at an important Kentucky politician with deep roots in the Jackson Purchase and a long career serving the people of this region as well as the Commonwealth. Henry Ward served in several elective and appointive offices and as Humphreys' article illustrates, was a key player during a pivotal period in the formation of modern Kentucky—especially the state park system. This article draws on a recent book Dr. Humphreys has published (reviewed in this issue of the *Journal*) on politics in Western Kentucky since World War II that, like this article, goes well beyond a narrow definition of politics to look at the social, economic, and cultural aspects of the time. Dr. Humphreys is the retired director of Madisonville Community College's Muhlenberg County campus and is actively engaged in research on western Kentucky. He is a graduate of Murray State University and did his PhD at the University of Oklahoma.

The second essay is on a familiar topic to those who study west Kentucky history, one of the iconic episodes in that history, but by a scholar who is at the beginning of his career. Jonathan Byrne is a young scholar who works on Native American history and culture primarily, but also has a background in both the history and archaeology of western Kentucky. His work on the Black Patch War particularly focuses on Callaway County. He brings together both the existing scholarship from a wide range of sources and a new reading of newspapers and other primary sources. He is a graduate of Murray State University and has his PhD from the University of Arizona. Dr. Byrn is Instructor of Ethnic Studies and American Indian & Indigenous Studies at Yakima Valley College in Yakima, Washington.

Our third article returns to modern Kentucky politics. David Ramey, through a very effective use of oral history, does a successful job in uncovering and explicating how a legislator from a rural area at the western edge of Kentucky—specifically Calloway County—became influential in key areas of state policy, particularly education at all levels. Curd served many years in the legislature beginning when longer tenures in office were becoming common. With the combination of long service and a low-key, personal approach to politics, he came to play a very important role. Ramey

was able not only to interview some of Curd's contemporaries, but to draw on a lengthy interview with Curd himself done by the oral history program at the University of Kentucky. The article is informed by Ramey's background in journalism and his long-time involvement with the Democratic Party in western Kentucky. He is a graduate of Murray State University.

Kentucky played an interesting role in the struggle to gain the right to vote for women and had very active suffrage organizations from early in that process. In her article Danielle Nielsen looks at a perhaps underappreciated aspect of the women's suffrage movement, the publication of cookbooks. Cookbooks might seem disconnected from campaigning for the right to vote, but as Nielsen develops, they were targeted at a criticism leveled at suffragists that the right to vote and involvement in politics would lead women to neglect their husbands and families leaving them to starve. Cookbooks were both a very clever and forceful way to refute that argument and link suffrage to the domestic sphere. Nielsen is professor of English at Murray State University. She is a graduate of Nebraska Wesleyan University and has her PhD from Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh.

Bobbie Smith Bryant will not be a stranger to readers of this journal or those who are interested in the history of West Kentucky, especially Calloway County. Her work has appeared in this *Journal* as well as in a monthly column in the *Murray Ledger & Times*. This article links activities in the Jackson Purchase and in Eastern Kentucky to combat illiteracy early in the 20th century. This, too, is an activity where women played a very significant role leading to fundamental change. The chief vehicle for this was the Moonlight School, held in the evenings when the day's work was done. The article has much to offer, about the moonlight schools and the spread of literacy in Western Kentucky. It also mentions a number of institutions that developed as part of that effort both specifically to eliminate illiteracy and were generally to promote education. Very little work has been done on the history of these institutions. Smith is a graduate of Murray State University and has had a career in economic and community development.

In the last issue we started a series of shorter essays we have titled, Purchase People and Places. Gregg Andrews contributes a brief biography of Josie M. Carman Black. Born on a shanty boat in the river near Wickliffe, she was raised in Fulton, Kentucky and after graduating she joined the Great Migration of African Americans to Chicago. In Chicago she trained as nurse and midwife, carrying on a family tradition. She returned to Fulton served a midwife to the African American community. She delivered some 900 babies during her career. Gregg Andrews is Distinguished Professor of History *Emeritus* at Texas State University in San Marcos.

We also include six books that are reviewed here that cover topics in Jackson Purchase history. These include books published by university presses, commercial publishing houses, and individuals. Each reflects and makes an important contribution to preserving the history of our area by recording it in an organized form. We would like to include more book reviews, especially for books that are less widely known and distributed, such as those published privately by individuals or by small presses. Such books should be sent to the *Journal* at PO Box 531, Murray,

KY 42071. Those interested in reviewing for the Journal should contact the editor at jhumphreys@murraystate.edu with an expression of areas they would be interested in covering.

Mentioning our editor who has been on leave this year due to a sabbatical and a very important and interesting research project on how Kentucky historians have written about the Civil War reminds me to both thank him for his work in the past and to offer him a hearty welcome back!

For the last few years, the Society has dealt with the COVID pandemic and its limitations. To a degree this issue has been delayed by many of these same issues. We regret the delays that have caused it to be so late.