

compliments of the Author.

Frankfort--



The Capital of
Kentucky.....

Founded by
General James Wilkinson
1786

Published by the
Kentucky State Historical Society

Revised and Corrected by
Mrs. Jennie C. Morton
1912

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The Corner Stone on Ann street, where Hancock Taylor placed his transit when he surveyed the land on which old Frankfort is situated, in 1773. It was given to Mrs. Morton in 1899 and restored to its place by her Oct. 6, 1899.



Kentucky's New State Capitol

Frankfort-- The Capital of Kentucky

“WHAT'S this dull town to me?” asks worldly Kentuckians. They have traveled perhaps in Europe--have seen the grand things of old empires--where nothing is new, and all is strange; or they have lived for awhile in London, New York, Paris or Edinburg, or in Cincinnati, Louisville or Lexington, Kentucky. Besides these prosperous and gay cities, our little Capital of Kentucky, Frankfort, seems dull, indeed. “No opera house, no theatres, no grand ball room or reception halls, how do the people live?” They ask with a sneer.

Listen! These same enquirers come here on invitations to visit friends in the city, and they are delighted with the people--so kind, polite and informal, and the dull town seems so fascinating in its freedom from the things that other cities have, they turn homeward with genuine regret.

The old world quiet of the place, the regular irregularities of the city, the general air of indifference to progress and fashion, and the things other cities deem so essential to the up-to-date metropolis--these make them wonder and laugh and then linger to enjoy its singularities. After awhile they say, “What a charming little town you have. It is so quaint, its charm so magnetic.” It is the paradise of politicians and the seat of law and home of distinguished men.

The restlessness and the wild desire of the age to ride the crest of the wave, “to dare and do” the remarkable things now startling the outside world--Frankfort simply reads about them, but prefers *terra firma*. She is content with such things as she has and she has her limitations. Now and then, years apart, she yields to the entreaties of outlying villages and annexes them to her borders. She rests on her fame as one of the most historic points South or West, renowned withal as the Capital of Kentucky.

To Enjoy Herself

She sits in her chair of state among her wonderful hills, perfectly undisturbed by criticisms and sneers at her old-fashioned ways. She is aware that her faults are not incurable; she has the advantage of the experience of a century and more of managing State affairs--hence her equilibrium is not disturbed by the views of this last generation of the ten she has ruled over.

All must come to her terms and to her judgment of their new plans for the betterment of her people and improvement of cities like Frankfort. She proposes to sit quietly and enjoy herself--those may run away that like other things better.

Today, as in many days before, all the big roads, the railroads and the automobiles, carriages, buggies and bicycles and boats and air ships, all, all lead to Frankfort. In her splendid new Capitol, she inaugurates for a second time her distinguished citizen--as Governor of Kentucky---James B. McCreary.

Times have changed since thirty-six years ago--Frankfort received him, a young man, with a welcome as warm as the September sun of that day, on which inaugurations were held in 1875, not only as Governor of the State, but as a citizen and friend. Time has dealt gently with both Governor and city since then. The glory of success and splendid achievements have crowned his life--but the weight of glory has not bowed his soldierly figure, nor has the gray dust of time silvered his hair. The goodness of God has followed him and blessed him as it did His favorites of old. As a ruler, Governor McCreary is at home--and Frankfort is proud that she has a marble Capitol now for him to dwell in, as Chief Magistrate of the State--and this Capitol makes the change in the Frankfort of today. Now begins the activities of a city uniting the old with the new, with great possibilities for the future.

A Village Then

Until about 1850, South Frankfort was a small village--- of comparatively little importance. About that time, its citizens began to urge annexation to old Frankfort---founded in 1786 and made the Capital of Kentucky in 1792. When South Frankfort must be used as a highway for the north-side, and an exit by roads from the Capital to adjacent counties and towns on the south, the little village grew tired of her position as such, and claimed the dignity of her name, South Frankfort, and the protection and privileges of the north-side city. She was annexed finally about 1850--and then began to macadamize her streets and pave her sidewalks, and otherwise improve. Houses began to be built of handsome proportions--and here and there business houses were erected. The old Hanna House on Second street was the grand residence of South Frankfort. It was built in 1817-1818, by John Hunt, of Lexington, and remained the finest house of the South Side until after the Civil War closed. The public school building was erected in 1886. The elegant bridge over the Kentucky river, uniting the two cities, was built in 1894. Then came the trolley cars. All this while there raged every two years, when the Legislature met, a contention about the seat of government. "Capitol removal" was continually agitated. This perplexed and depressed both cities, and prosperity went away to other cities. But the crisis came in affairs when Governor Beckham silenced "Capitol removal," by using his influence for a new Capitol in the time-honored Capital of Kentucky. The Legislature of 1904 voted one million dollars to build the new Capitol. In 1905 the Legislature decided to build the Capitol on the property in South Frankfort, purchased of Mr. Frank Chinn. Governor Beckham, after the long and arduous contention, in February, 1904, signed the bill appropriating \$1,000,000 to build the present Capitol on the most beautiful site in Kentucky. South Frankfort is now New or Greater Frankfort--growing in importance and wealth every day. The Capitol, one of the most beautiful in the entire Union, is visited by thousands of sight-seers from all parts of the World, this State and the Union.

The New Capitol

From the September Register of 1905, page 13, is taken the following description of the Capitol, written by the editor:

"Lest the Kentuckians should forget the event and the ceremonies of the laying of the corner-stone of the new Capitol, we place on this first page the published account of the proceedings of that day. The editor of the Register was requested to give the issue which contained a picture and sketch of Governor Isaac Shelby, the first Governor of Kentucky, to this shrine of the people's glory---(see May Register of 1903) ---the only published account and picture of Governor Shelby available, for the crypt in the corner-stone, was placed there--- a memento alike to the State Historical Society, that has done so much for the creditable history of the State and its people.

"The Capitol--the palace without memories--without heritage of honors or fame, stainless in splendor, perfect in art, and unrivaled in beauty, standing in the sunshine, shadowless and pure. Thanks to Governor Beckham and the Board of Capitol Commissioners of 1905 for the magnificent achievement for the State of Kentucky.

"It is a monument to these public servants of the State, who gave their talents and their time and their care, 'without money and without price,' we learn, to the direction and preliminary work--for the new Capitol. Mr. Frank M. Andrews, of Dayton, Ohio, was secured as the architect, and this insured the work to be as a Capitol, a work of enduring art alone.

The Building

"It is of the Italian renaissance architecture and is 402 feet and some inches from east to west and about 180 feet through from north to south. The three stories are finished with parapet walls, which support a fourth floor intended for storage.

"The exterior of the building is of Vermont granite; the rest of the exterior work, including the dome, is of Bedford stone. From foundation to top of dome is 210 feet. We read:

"The first story is of rusticated work laid up in huge blocks. Through the second and third floors run the 70 large monolithic columns which surround the entire building, the rear and end facades being treated the same as the front. The columns are ionic in design and the entablature above and the treatment

of other features of the building conform to them. The dome is treated in like manner except that the twenty-four encircling columns are in sections instead of being monolithic. In the manner of its monolithic columns this building stands alone among State Capitols, and the beauty of this feature can be appreciated when compared to the sectional columns of other buildings.

"The pediment is enriched with sculptural designs of surpassing artistic correctness in allegorical symbols. (See picture.)

"It is not our purpose to go into details of the various departments allowed State officials. The handsomest room in size in the building is the Hall of Fame on the first floor; adjoining this room are the rooms of the State Historical Society; on the second floor is the Court of Appeals rooms and State Library; and on the third floor are the rooms of the House and Senate of the Kentucky Legislature.

"The site of the Capitol is one of matchless beauty and elegance. (See Register 1905.) There is everything in the scenery to inspire a sentiment of reverence for beauty and sublimity. Below the Capitol grounds is an expanding city rushing out in the glens and climbing the hills on terraces. There is a beautiful river, the Kentucky, that winds around and through it, its flashing breast thronging with steamers and sail boats. Picturesque drives are seen like gray ribbons drawn about and through the hills and valleys; railways are running in every direction under and over the green hills. These views from the Capitol make the landscape one of charm that is beyond description. Let us hope Kentuckians in the future will appreciate their new Capitol of noble beauty and keep it unshadowed by guilt and unstained by crime. A Parthenon perfect in architecture, a temple fit to adorn the 20th century."

(Frankfort News-Journal, Dec. 12, 1911.)

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