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NUMBER 9. THE
POLITICAL CLUB, DANVILLE,
KENTUCKY, 1786-1790**

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Filson Club Publications. Number 9. The Political Club, Danville, Kentucky, 1786-1790 by Thomas Speed

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THOMAS SPEED

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FILSON CLUB PUBLICATIONS NUMBER 5.

THE POLITICAL CLUB

DANVILLE, KENTUCKY

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1786-1790

*BEING AN ACCOUNT OF AN EARLY KENTUCKY
SOCIETY FROM THE ORIGINAL PAPERS
RECENTLY FOUND.*

BY THOMAS SPEED,

Author of "The Wilderness Road."

LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY:
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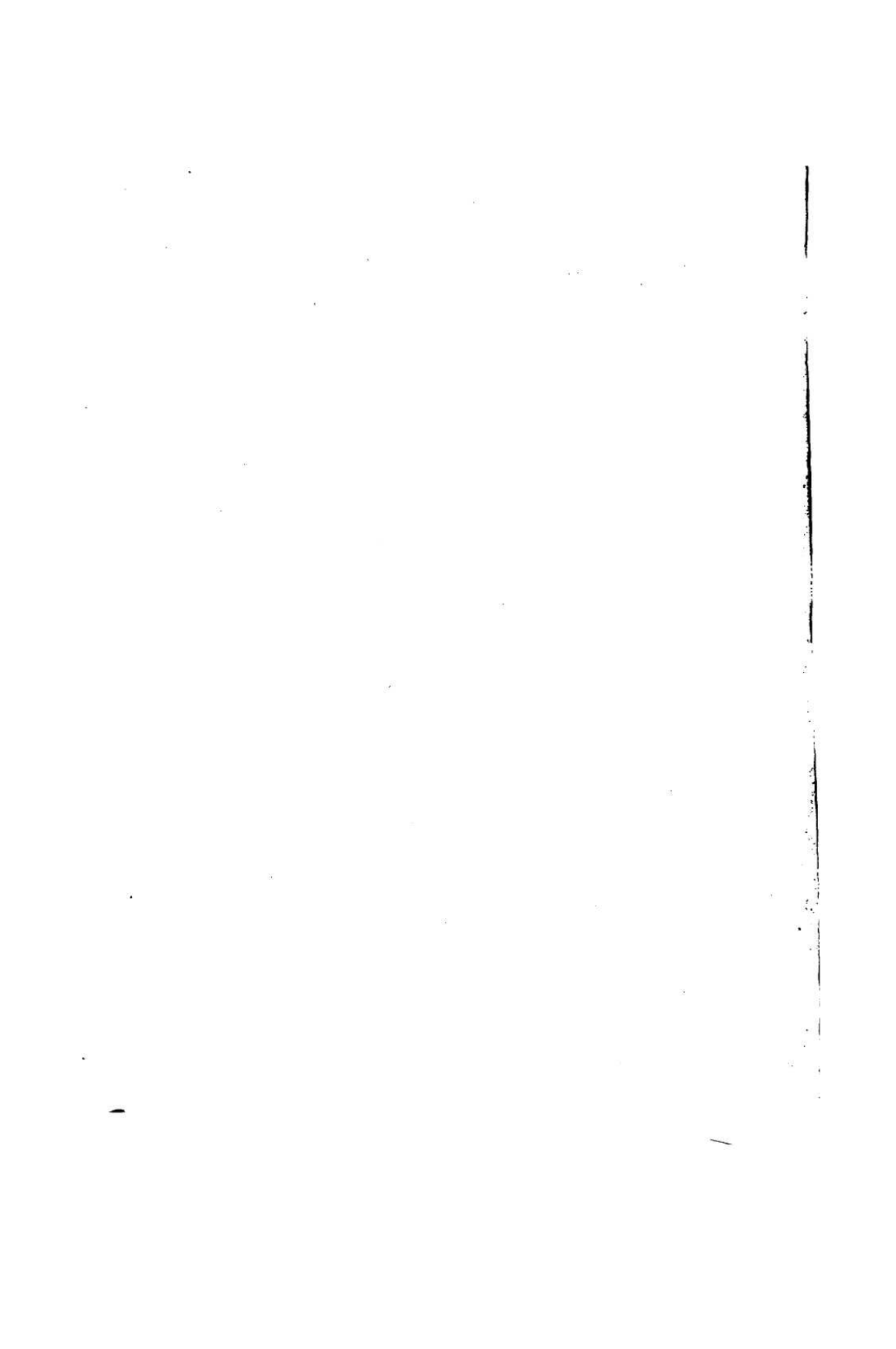
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1894

DEDICATION.

I dedicate these pages to Center College, which for seventy-five years has been an honor to the State of Kentucky and the pride of the town of Danville. It was my privilege to attend this institution as a student during the presidency of Dr. Lewis W. Green, whose father was a member of The Political Club, and my college days at Danville gave me a lasting attachment both for the school and the delightful place of its location.

THE AUTHOR.



PREFACE.

FIFTEEN years ago it was my fortune to discover among my grandfather's papers the records of "The Political Club," a society which had its existence at Danville, Kentucky, from 1786 until 1790. I have often been requested to publish these records, together with some account of the work of the club, but it has not been convenient for me to do so until now. To meet expectation on this subject I prepared this work and read it before the Filson Club.

I have felt that it is a duty I could not fail to perform. The existence of The Political Club is a chapter in Kentucky history worthy of even more detailed treatment than is here given. Nothing that has been recorded of the pioneers so well illustrates their character for intelligence. Professor Shaler, in his History of Kentucky, published in 1885, says: "The early records of Kentucky are too imperfect to afford

any clear insight into the condition of education or the intellectual motives of the pioneers. Recently, however, there has been disinterred a quantity of papers giving the record of a Political Club that existed at Danville from 1786 to 1790." . . . "The notes of this club give a very fair idea of the intellectual quality of its meetings. For several years, or until the changes of the shifting population removed its leaders far from their original abodes, this club industriously debated the questions of polity that concerned the settlements."

There is no historic mention of "The Political Club" prior to finding the records, nor was there any tradition of its existence; the old papers alone have preserved it from oblivion. Perhaps this is not strange under the circumstances. There was no newspaper to publish its meetings and discussions. Besides, what occurred at the meetings was not publicly known, as none were admitted except the members. When the club ceased to exist many of the members removed from Danville to other places in the State, and other interests superseded thought or memory of the club meetings.

The historian, Humphrey Marshall, knew of the club, though as he was not a member he could not have