

**THE CITY OF LOUISVILLE
AND A
GLIMPSE OF KENTUCKY**

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The City of Louisville and a Glimpse of Kentucky by Young Ewing Allison

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YOUNG EWING ALLISON

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LOUISVILLE

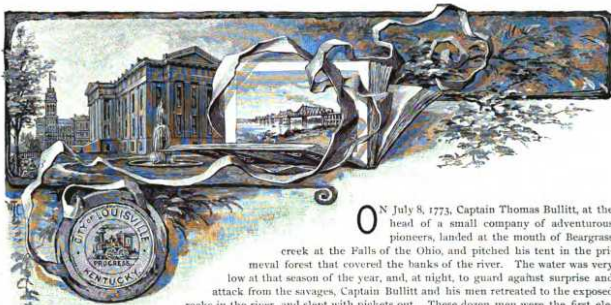
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PUBLISHED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE
COMMITTEE ON INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL IMPROVEMENT
OF THE LOUISVILLE BOARD OF TRADE.
1887.



ON July 8, 1773, Captain Thomas Bullitt, at the head of a small company of adventurous pioneers, landed at the mouth of Beargrass creek at the Falls of the Ohio, and pitched his tent in the primeval forest that covered the banks of the river. The water was very low at that season of the year, and, at night, to guard against surprise and attack from the savages, Captain Bullitt and his men retreated to the exposed rocks in the river, and slept with pickets out. These dozen men were the first elements of population upon the spot where to-day there is a city, with suburbs, containing 275,000 souls. Captain Bullitt was a land-surveyor, and came to Kentucky to survey, under the warrant of Lord Dunmore, certain lands which were included in what are now Jefferson and Bullitt counties. Before he completed his survey he laid out a town site comprising part of the present city of Louisville, which was called "Falls of the Ohio." It is curious to observe that from the very first beginnings of settlement in Louisville the unusual advantages of the location were seized upon with prophetic instinct. It was before the days of keel-boats even, but the first-comers recognized the importance of a location that was at the head of navigation, even though the growth of the town must wait upon the settlement of the country west of it and along the rivers.

From that day in July, 1773, when the feet of the Virginians first trod the forest on the spot where a great and beautiful city was destined to stand, the history of Louisville has grown to represent the characteristic courage, intelligence, and enterprise of the people who founded the city. When that history comes to be written by the student who can comprehend the many sides and the many causes of events, it will be found full of the romance of actual heroic achievements, not only in the adventures of the pioneers who settled it, but in the social and commercial enterprises of a people who struggled for seventy-five years under the oppression of a domestic institution that was well-calculated to repress, if not to destroy, all enterprise and practical progress. We shall see, also, that, when the weight of slavery was removed, Louisville, more rapidly than any other city in the slave-holding States, comprehended the new order of things, and, before half a generation was sped, had made such an organic change in the character of her interests as to place her upon equal terms with those cities that had been built up in the North by the intelligence, the thrift, and industry of free labor.

Although Captain Bullitt laid out a town site, and a house was built at the mouth of Beargrass the year following, yet the times were not propitious for settlement, and years passed before the town was to be inspired with life. These years were full of feeling on the part of the people against the Virginia government, which was accused of indifference towards the outlying county of Fincastle, which then comprised the present State of Kentucky. Finally Kentucky was created a sovereign State three years after the town of Louisville had been laid out and incorporated. The town was founded upon a tract of one thousand acres of land which had been owned by John Connelly who had forfeited it by being an active Tory during the war with England. Louisville was named for Louis XVI., the ill-fated victim of the French Revolution. There was already a nucleus of French settlers at the Falls corresponding with the movement of French generally through the North-west Territory. Gratitude to the French king for declaring against England in the War of the Revolution suggested the name. At this time the number of settlers was very small and there is no way of discovering the actual population. The number in 1800 has long been accepted as 359, but there are good reasons for believing this an underestimate, and it is probable that there were nearly a thousand inhabitants of Louisville, and the immediate vicinity, in 1800.

This slight nucleus, that existed in 1789, of the great city that was to be built on the spot, comprised men of quick intelligence and foresight. When the town was founded there is reason to believe that the enormous value of a canal around the Falls had been suggested. Certain it is that a map of the town, drawn in 1793, presented the projected canal virtually as it was built thirty-seven years later. It is interesting to know that one of the first agitators of the canal project was General James Wilkinson, who settled in Lexington in 1784, at the age of twenty-six, after having made a fine record in the Revolution. His restless, enterprising, and adventurous spirit, sustained by a manner and

address that were captivating before they were spoiled by dissipation and the turmoil of misconduct, was of great value to the young State. He was a leader in the agitation that—whatever the mistakes of the agitators, and whatever the unjust suspicions that were attached to them under the pressure of excitement attendant upon the discovery of what is usually called the "Spanish Conspiracy"—led to finally securing the Mississippi river as a commercial highway to the United States, and the opening of which built up the great pioneer commerce of the Western States. Up to the breaking out of the War of the Rebellion, and, indeed, for several years afterward, the internal commerce carried upon the Mississippi and the Ohio rivers was the greatest that any country in the world ever developed. General Wilkinson frequently visited Louisville, and the canal project was one that seems to have occupied his mind to a considerable extent. He gave it up with other commercial projects when he returned to the army and was made Commander-in-Chief, but returned to it temporarily, it seems, in 1805-6, when he invited Aaron Burr, then outlawed for the killing of Alexander Hamilton, to go into the project with him. Burr came to Louisville, examined the ground, and consulted with an engineer. He used that project afterward, or at least Wilkinson accused him of having done so, as a cloak for the greater and more hazardous enterprise of conquering an empire for himself in Mexico.

If a history of the genius of the people of Louisville were written, it would be found to comprise three periods, filled with intense energy. The first would be the pioneer period, occupied with the conquest of territory and the courageous scheme of developing a river commerce by establishing trade with the Spanish provinces, and by the building of the canal, through which passing commerce should pay toll to the enterprise of Louisville. This developed into realization in 1830.

The second period would follow the building of the canal, when the settling of the Western and Southern States provided a great population to be supplied by the activity of Louisville merchants. In this period Louisville was purely a commercial city, handling the manufactures of the East and the great agricultural products of Kentucky developed by slave labor. The city grew rapidly in wealth and importance, but it could not grow in an independent and courageous common population because the blot of slave-labor kept white mechanics of the best classes away. It was in this period that Louisville established her social and political power, and became the resort of the most cultivated classes of the South who were attracted by the temperate climate and healthfulness of the place. It was a period of great social brilliance, full of that charm of romantic interest which is so attractive to the student, and it came to an end with the Civil War.

The third and most important period would comprise that of the organic change after the war, when the building of railroads, the abolition of slavery, and the development of agriculture in the new North-west temporarily endangered the future of the city. Then it was that the heritage of courage, intelligence, and independence received from the pioneers of the first period asserted itself, for, notwithstanding Kentucky had been left with a great helpless population upon her hands by the emancipation of slaves, and there was danger that the slave-owners would prove quite as helpless without slave-labor, the people quickly grappled with the problem, and a few years of close application solved it. While Kentucky maintains her great agricultural importance her metropolis has developed into a rich manufacturing city.

It is with the results of this third period that this book is to deal. It is this period which has made the wonderful organic change of a people within twenty years, and has added to a purely commercial city wonderful manufacturing enterprises, and has, without any sort of jar, brought in a great mechanical population which is not alone one of the most thrifty and contented in the country, but which has the satisfaction of seeing great wealth evenly distributed instead of being locked in the chests of a few millionaires. There are no millionaires in Louisville, at least, practically none. There is no other city of its size in the United States where there are so many handsome and comfortable residences, but there are none here that have been built for the mere display of vast wealth. The first thing that strikes the eye of the visitor accustomed to observation is the absence of the soul-crushing tenement house, while the multiplied numbers of comfortable cottages, with yards and gardens that are occupied by the working people, astonish him. A very large proportion are owned by those who occupy them, and there is, indeed, no reason why every industrious mechanic who comes to Louisville should not own a home of his own. Land, offering little choice between a site for a palace or for a cottage, can be purchased more cheaply than in any other city of similar size in the country; building materials are cheap, and living is at the lowest cost. The street-car system, which is the wonder of all who see it, renders distance a nullity. For five cents one can ride all over the city, and the system of free transfers makes it possible for the householder to live in any section of the city he may choose.

Louisville occupies a position, calculated by all the favors of nature, to make her the metropolis of that richest region in America, the Mississippi valley, and the rapidity of growth which she has enjoyed for the past ten years indicates that the conditions are being prepared to realize that possibility. Taking the city as a center and projecting an imaginary circle upon the map of the West with a radius of 350 miles, the rim of the circle will pass near and include Jefferson City, Missouri; Burlington, Iowa; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Cleveland, Ohio; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Danville, Virginia; Charlotte, North Carolina; Atlanta, Georgia; Birmingham, Alabama; and Memphis, Tennessee. The area thus included contains a large percentage of fertile soil available for agriculture, with more favorable climate



FIRST SETTLEMENT AT LOUISVILLE.

conditions than any other area of like dimensions on the known globe. A circle of the same radius, with Chicago for a center, must include many thousand square miles of Lake surface and much land unavailable for agricultural purposes. Advantages of central location in a given area may be, in a measure, counterbalanced by railways, and Chicago has been made a great city because railway lines were forced to pass through that city to flank Lake Michigan. But at the rate at which the railway system of Louisville has been increasing during the past seven years she will soon possess every artificial advantage of that character, besides possessing communication with thirty-two navigable rivers and having the richest and most varied territory in America to furnish supplies and create demand. The perfecting of the railway system of the whole country will balance constructive advantages leaving those of nature to preponderate in favor of the cities possessing them.

Professor John R. Procter, for many years Director of the Geological Survey, and who has devoted years to attracting the attention of capitalists to the incalculable value of the iron ores in the field of which the Cranberry mines of North Carolina are the center, and to the almost limitless deposits of coking coal in south-eastern Kentucky, commenting upon the area described about Louisville, says:

"It already contains a larger population than any other circle of like area in the United States, and it is destined to contain the bulk of the population of the greatest empire that has yet existed in the world. The influence of physical features in population is well shown by the charts and tables prepared by the last United States census. These charts show temperature, rainfall, etc.; and in connection with the tables the following facts: That the greatest absolute gain in population during the last decade was made in the region having a mean annual temperature of from 50° to 55°, and that the circle described above is nearly all of this mean annual temperature. That over 12,000,000 people reside upon the area where the annual rainfall is from forty-five inches to fifty inches, or a larger population than on any of the divisions made according to rainfall, and that the above is the rainfall of the circle under consideration. The same favorable indications are shown on the charts of elevation above sea, minimum and maximum temperature, etc. Thus soil, climate, and all physical conditions point to a future dense population in the region of which Louisville is the center. The center of population of the United States has been moving westward each decade along the degree of latitude a little north of Louisville. The census of 1880 brought it nearer Louisville, and the great movement of population southward will keep it on the latitude of and near Louisville for many years. In 1880, almost one-half of the population of the United States resided in the region drained by the Mississippi river and its tributaries. And in 1890 probably more than one-half of the



LOUISVILLE BOARD OF TRADE BUILDING.

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population will reside in that region, and the proportion must increase yearly. So that a larger part of the population can be reached from Louisville by cheap transportation.

"These significant facts insure the merchant and manufacturer of Louisville ample markets for whatever they may have for sale. The South has hitherto been Louisville's best market, and the great industrial development of that region must greatly benefit the city. Louisville has it in her power to become the distributing point for manufactures, mainly of wood and iron, for a large area of the North and West. The iron used in the West must come mainly from south of the Ohio river. In bringing the pig-iron to Louisville, where it may be made into hardware, agricultural implements, etc., it is bringing it in the direction of the market. In manufacturing such articles a higher class and better-paid labor is employed than in the mere making of the pig-iron. And such a population will bring a more substantial prosperity. Already Louisville has cheap coal and iron, and in a few years roads now projected will add greatly to the facilities of obtaining these indispensable articles, and there will be in the city great industries based upon them. Louisville should not only become a great lumber distributing point, but a great manufacturing point for all articles requiring wood for their construction. Already the car shops, agricultural implement makers and builders in the States north of the Ohio river are looking southward for a supply of lumber, and this demand must yearly increase."

Professor Sargent, Special Expert on Forests for the Tenth Census, says in his report on "Forests of the United States:"

"The extinction of the forests of the Lake region may be expected to affect the growth of population in the central portion of the continent. * * * * *New centers of distribution must soon supplant Chicago as a lumber market, and new transportation routes take the place of those built to move the pine grown upon the shores of the great lakes.*

* * * * The pine that once covered New England and New York has already disappeared. Pennsylvania is nearly stripped of her pine, which once appeared inexhaustible. The great North-western pineries are not yet exhausted, and with newly-introduced methods, logs, once supposed inaccessible, are now profitably brought to the mills, and they may be expected to increase the volume of their annual product for a few years longer, in response to the growing demands of the great agricultural population fast covering the treeless mid-continental plateau. The area of pine forest, however, remaining in the great pine-producing States of Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota is dangerously small in proportion to the country's consumption of white-pine lumber, and the *entire exhaustion of these forests in a comparatively short time is certain.*"

Professor Sargent then refers to the long-leaf pine belt of the South Atlantic and Gulf States, of which he says: "The timber is unequalled for all purposes of construction," and adds with reference to the hardwood forests:

"The most important of these forests covers the region occupied by the Southern Alleghany Mountain system, embracing South-western Virginia, West Virginia, Western North Carolina and South Carolina, Eastern Kentucky and Tennessee. Here oak unequalled in quality abounds. Walnut is still not rare, although not found in any very large continuous bodies; and cherry, yellow poplar, and other woods of commercial importance are common."

In this connection the extension of the Cumberland Valley branch of the Louisville & Nashville railway to Pineville and beyond, and the extension of other projected lines into Eastern Kentucky, will have a most important bearing. In a communication to the *Courier-Journal*, some years since, was ventured the assertion that the extension of a railway through Eastern Kentucky and into South-west Virginia and Western North Carolina would do more to build up the industries of Louisville, than any one thousand miles of railway into the cotton States. Subsequent investigations confirm this belief. The abundance and excellence of the coals and timbers, the superiority of the coking coals, and the nearness of abundant ore deposits and vast stores of ore suited to the production of Bessemer steel, and the varied resources of that region are such that a phenomenal development must result.

Kentucky is the only State having within her borders parts of the two great coal fields. Louisville is situated midway between these, and she can so connect herself with the industries and commerce of this State as to have an enduring prosperity assured. The Kentucky river, with navigation secured to the coal, should be to Louisville what the Monongahela is to Pittsburgh and the cities below. In the valley of Green river are immense deposits of iron ores associated with coal and convenient to railway and river transportation. These ores are regularly stratified, ranging from two feet to five feet in thickness, and can be mined cheaply. These ores are thicker and equal in quality to those of the Hocking Valley, Ohio, where the ores form the basis of extensive iron industries. In the counties of Western Kentucky bordering on the Tennessee and Cumberland rivers are large deposits of rich Limonite or "Brown" iron ores, similar to the ones on which the prosperity of Decatur and Sheffield are predicated. Furnaces in these counties will have the local ores, and the advantage of having in addition the Tennessee and Alabama ores brought down stream in the direction of the markets, and furnaces in that region will be as near the coals of Western Kentucky as are the furnaces in the above named towns to the coals of Alabama and Tennessee. They will also be convenient to the Missouri ores carried up the river to the furnaces of the upper Ohio. While the coals of Western Kentucky may not produce a coke equal in quality to the cokes of South-eastern Kentucky, it is certain that a coke fully equal to those of Alabama and Tennessee can be made from them. With the completion of the Ohio Valley railway south-westward from Union county, there will be two railways connecting the coals with the Cumberland river ores, and the coal measure ores of the Green and Tradewater valleys.

These conditions offer an abundant unlimited opportunity for the development of Louisville into the greatest manufacturing and distributing center of the Mississippi Valley.

As a residence city for all classes Louisville enjoys many remarkable advantages, not the least of which is the taste which has been characteristic, from the first, in the beautifying and building of homes. The business quarter has always been plain—though the buildings have been equal to all the demands of an active commerce—while all who could build homes have made them as handsome as their means permitted. The great plain upon which the city was built, covering seventy square miles, and extending back six miles from the river to a group of picturesque "knobs" or hills, has afforded every facility for the economical gratification of taste. Ground being plentiful and level, distance was not difficult to overcome, and so, instead of being crowded into restricted limits set up by natural barriers, the city



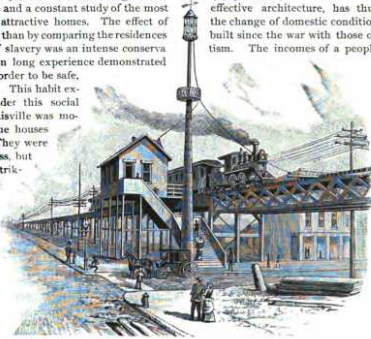
BROADWAY, LOOKING EAST FROM THIRD.

has spread at her own pleasure. The streets are broad, being from sixty to one hundred and twenty feet in width, all well drained, paved, and beautified with a profusion of fine shade trees. There are few cities in the world with such finely shaded streets as Louisville possesses, and none where the streets are wider. The residences are, as a rule, provided with spacious yards and gardens, and in the spring of the year a driver over the city past the miles of great yards, filled with flowers and shrubbery, and under the shade of trees, rich with foliage and blossoms, is like a trip in fairyland. The average number of residences to the hundred feet in Eastern cities is about five; in Louisville it is about two. The favorite residence quarter, for many years, was south from Broadway, which divides the city parallel with the river. South Fourth, Third, Second, First, and Brook streets are lined with lovely and costly homes in which the taste of the architect and the landscape gardener vie with each other for expression. Magnolia avenue, Kentucky, Oak, and St. Catherine streets, which intersect the others at right angles, running parallel with Broadway, are within this charming district and present the same lovely spectacle. South of Broadway, and practically within the district outlined above, there were 260 residences built in 1885 at a cost of \$1,600,000, or an average cost of \$6,150 each.

The pride of home, united with good taste and a constant study of the most effective architecture, has thus produced in Louisville a city of remarkably attractive homes. The effect of the change of domestic condition built since the war with those of the people is nowhere more distinctly shown than by comparing the residences anti-bellum times. One absolute necessity of slavery was an intense conservatism. The incomes of a people being dependent upon a class whose condition long experience demonstrated must be unchangeable and unprogressive in order to be safe, all change and innovation were discouraged. This habit extended insensibly in many directions. Under this social aspect, therefore, the architecture of old Louisville was monotonous and plain. The chief beauty of the houses of the old regime was merely suggestive. They were spacious and suggested great halls and airiness, but they were plain and angular in exterior. In striking contrast with these are the picturesque modern structures of Swiss and Queen Anne style that now render every street attractive and striking.

But the handsome residences are not alone confined to Broadway and the quarter south. They have extended east, and have beautified "The Highlands," made of Clifton a charming suburb, and are already building in large numbers in the West End and the residence suburb of Parkland. Of the many hundreds of fine residences no one, however, could be selected as being of extraordinary cost.

No other city of similar size in the world has half as many miles of street railway track as Louisville. To this must be added the steam suburban railway lines that connect the suburbs of New Albany and Jeffersonville, Ind., by way of the Louisville Bridge and the new Kentucky and Indiana Steel Cantilever Bridge. These steam lines also



DAISY ELEVATED RAILWAY STATION.

encircle the city and pass down the river front upon an elevated track some three miles in length. There are about one hundred and twenty-five miles of street car and suburban lines, running over the one hundred and forty-four miles of streets of the city. It will thus be seen that there is scarcely a block of ground in the twelve and a half square miles of territory covered by Louisville that is not readily accessible by car. All fares within the city are limited to five cents, and this includes transfer to and from all parts, so that it is possible to ride from six to ten miles in the city for a nickel. The suburban lines, which pierce the country to a distance of from three to four miles, and which reach every one of the residence additions, have a uniform fare of ten cents. Such an abundance of inter-city transportation has prevented the concentration of population within narrow limits, and thus prevented real estate from attaining excessively high values, like those that prevail in cities where no facilities exist. The system in Louisville has been fostered by the policy of imposing as few restrictions as possible upon the extension of lines and has had the effect of making ground for residence and manufacturing purposes cheaper than in any other city of equal size in the United States. The street car lines are all well equipped, accustomed to handling immense crowds without inconvenience or delay, make rapid time, and are justly celebrated for the comfort and service they render to patrons in return for the small fare demanded. Some showing of the mileage and business of the various lines in the city will be of interest:

ROADS.	MILES OF TRACK.	PASSENGERS CARRIED ANNUALLY.
Louisville City Railway	64.0	11,567,000
Central Passenger	30.0	7,000,000
Louisville and New Albany Daisy Line	5.8	250,000
Louisville, N. Albany, and Jeffersonville transfer, Daisy Belt Line (Building)	10.0	175,000
Belt Line (to be constructed)	6.0
Total	125.8	20,432,000

[†]Estimated.

The trans-river steam lines run trains every half hour between Louisville, New Albany, and Jeffersonville, at a uniform fare of ten cents. The large populations of these two Indiana cities are, for all practical purposes, part of the population of Louisville.

The population of Louisville in 1887 was estimated by several methods of computation to be about 200,000. The exact figures of the estimate are 195,910. The census of 1890 discovered only 123,758, which was probably under the actual number, although the rapid growth of manufactures and the large increase in railroad facilities since 1880, readily account for the enormous growth of population. The city directory, compiled by Mr. C. K. Caron, one of the most careful and conscientious statisticians in Kentucky, gives an interesting summary of the increase of names in that publication. The number of names in the directory in 1880 was 49,550; 1881, 52,401; 1882, 54,362; 1883, 56,845; 1884, 59,810; 1885, 62,110; 1886, 64,438; 1887, 66,900.

Estimates of population in cities where directories are published unite upon computing one producer to three persons, which would give three as the multiplier; this would make Louisville's population for 1887, according to the directory, 200,700. Since the abolition of slavery, the increase of working population has been rapid and great. The growth of the city since 1780 is given in the following table:

Population, 1780	30	Population, 1840	21,210
" 1790	200	" 1845	37,218
" 1800	359	" 1850	53,094
" 1810	1,357	" 1860	68,033
" 1820	4,513	" 1870	100,753
" 1827	7,463	" 1880	123,758
" 1830	10,341	" 1883	151,115
" 1835	17,967	" 1887	195,910

Thus it appears that the increase from 1880 to 1887 has been 36 per cent., which will compare favorably with the growth of Chicago, Cleveland, Milwaukee, and the other Northern cities, which under artificial stimulus, have, during the past ten years, enjoyed advantages not possessed by Southern cities. The rapid development of great manufacturing enterprises in Louisville, the possession of the cheapest and most abundant coal supplies in the world, the cheapness and proximity of great timber and iron supplies render it probable that the increase of population until 1890 will exceed the present rate, and that the census will demonstrate remarkable facts about the greatest of Southern cities.

The healthfulness of Louisville is remarkable, there being few cities in the United States which rank so high in that particular so important to persons seeking homes. The city is absolutely free from the epidemics characteristic of the far South, and the climate being equable and temperate it is free from the objections that beset both extremes of country. The cause of the healthfulness is to be found in abundance of pure water, broad streets, and pure air, perfect sewer drainage, and excellent sanitary regulations. These taken together enable her to occupy the lowest place in the table of mortality rates last published by the United States government in 1885:

ANNUAL DEATH-RATE PER 1,000 INHABITANTS.			
New Orleans	28.5	Boston	21.9
St. Louis	25.3	Milwaukee	21.9
New York	24.9	Hartford	21.7
Richmond, Va.	24.5	Lowell	20.6
Chattanooga	23.8	Chicago	19.2
Detroit	23.3	Pittsburgh	19.7
Cincinnati	23.3	Indianapolis	18.1
Philadelphia	23.3	Nashville (white)	14.6
Newark, N. J.	23.1	Nashville (colored)	26.8
Brooklyn	22.9	Louisville	17.4