LOCAL HISTORY IN KENTUCKY LITERATURE

By

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Dedicated

To My Friend

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Many American tourists, until recently, spent practically all their time in Europe or the Orient. But they are now beginning to realize that Nature was as grand and lavish in building the surface of this continent as she was in forming that of other countries, and that to "See America First" is to see many things that have no equal in the Old World.

Kentuckians are becoming more and more convinced, though slowly, that within the bounds of their own State are many sights worth seeing—some not duplicated in any other part of the Union. This increasing appreciation of things near home applies not only to Kentucky in general, but practically to every county in the State, notwithstanding nearly every community has its faultfinders.

The products of our people are becoming better known at home. Articles "From Paris, France" and "Made in Germany" are rapidly losing their attraction. Two years ago Louisville held its first "Made in Louisville" exposition; last year Owensboro showed its citizens the things that were "Made in Owensboro."

This spring the Kentucky Federation of Women's Clubs, in order to encourage painters, gave its

first State-wide Art Exhibit, in which forty Kentucky artists were represented by more than two hundred pictures. Never before were the citizens of the State so impressed with the fact that the work of some of our painters ranks with the best in the middle West. It is interesting to note that the first prize was awarded to J. Bernhard Alberts, of Louisville, not for a painting of a person or scene in some far-off place, but for a portrait of his sister, also a Kentuckian.

The stigma of a prophet being "not without honor save in his own country" has been partly removed by our local appreciation of the living. On April 25, 1913, some of the Louisville admirers of Madison Cawein placed a bronze bust of the poet in the Louisville Free Public Library; and an equestrian statue of General John B. Castleman was erected in November, 1913, by his fellow citizens, who befittingly placed it at the entrance of Cherokee Park, one of the Louisville public parks made possible through his foresight.

This increasing appreciation of our own country, our native state, our home town, and our fellow citizens is not confined to the realms of nature, commerce and art, but is extending also to history and literature.

Automobiles and good roads are making our historic places and old landmarks more easily available and better known. Many Kentuckians incident-

ally, or by mere chance, visit some of the historic spots along their route. The men and women who were indifferent about local or any other history before seeing some of these places become, thereafter, not only better informed regarding the State, but are more likely to take an interest in local and State history and literature, and, as a result, become more appreciative and more loyal Kentuckians.

Our fathers, in most instances, were versed in ancient and European history alone, because we had little history of our own, except, perhaps, in immediate current events. Until recently State and local history appealed to comparatively few. About twenty years ago the first School History of Kentucky was introduced into our schools. Last year Mrs. Fannie Casseday Duncan published "The Child's Story of the Making of Louisville," the first history of a town in Kentucky to be used locally in its schools.

The day is coming when every county in the State will awaken to the importance of its past as well as of its present and future, and each will have a County Museum devoted to its history, industries, and resources. Then the printed matter pertaining to the past and the many unwritten traditions will be more fully appreciated; and then, too, local history will find its merited place in Kentucky literature.

About a dozen histories of the State, twenty county histories, and some four histories of cities in Kentucky have been published in book form. These, with the proceedings of the State legislature, some newspaper files, a few old pamphlet records of noted controversies and criminal trials, the Filson Club publications, the Register of the Kentucky State Historical Society, biographies, books of travel and historical novels comprise the principal printed records of events that have taken place in Kentucky.

Many of the noted authors who traveled through the Western country when it was still new described the territory as they then found it, and thus wove into their books much interesting matter pertaining to the early days in Kentucky. The best and rarest of their writings were compiled, edited with notes, and indexed by Reuben Gold Thwaites, of Wisconsin, who, in 1906, published them in 32 volumes under the title of "Early Western Travels 1748-1846." They are filled with facts that will long supply writers of pioneer romance with good material.

In Collins' "History of Kentucky" (1874) are printed the titles of about 375 books referred to in the preparation of his work; in Smith's "History of Kentucky" (1886) 300 volumes bearing on the State are mentioned, and McElroy's "Kentucky in the Nation's History" (1909) contains a critical bibli-

ography of Kentucky history in which about 200 books and some old files of newspapers are noted.

A most valuable compilation for the student of Kentucky's literary history is "Kentucky in American Letters," by John Wilson Townsend, published in 1913. It contains biographical sketches of about 200 of Kentucky's writers, from John Filson down to the historians, poets, novelists and journalists of our day. By criticism and comment he shows the character and merit of the principal books written by men and women claimed by Kentucky.

Of the various biographies of Kentuckians Lucius Powhatan Little's "Ben Hardin: His Times and Contemporaries" (1887) is doubtless the most thorough ever published. It not only contains the eulogies, so characteristic of most biographies, but it also throws some side lights on the leading public men who were Hardin's contemporaries, and pictures many of the eventful happenings that go to make up the history of Kentucky from 1784 to 1852. For example, one thing in which the entire State was then interested and which became a factor in the life of Ben Hardin, was the killing of Meeks and Rothwell by the Wilkinsons in the Galt House in 1838. Judge Little's record of this famous trial is interspersed with extracts from the vivid accounts and strong speeches made by Ben Hardin, who represented the prosecution.

But perhaps the most unique and distinct book of a biographical nature ever published in the State is Champion Ingraham Hitchcock's "The Dead Men's Song" (1914). It is a sketch of the personality and work of Young Ewing Allison, including the full history of Mr. Allison's famous poem "The Derelict." This book is an artistic and notable contribution to Kentucky literature and will stand as a classic of its kind.

Not many Kentuckians have written autobiographies, and most of these are valuable only from the standpoint of local history; for, with rare exceptions, they are written by men whose fields were limited to their section of the country or were, as in the case of the "Autobiography of Peter Cartwright" (1856), practically confined to one topic.

Probably the best autobiography of a Kentuckian is "The Autobiography of Nathaniel Southgate Shaler, with a Supplementary Memoir by his Wife," published in 1909. Professor Shaler was born in Newport, this State, in 1841, and died in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1906. More than half his life was spent in Kentucky. As geologist, historian, scientist, and writer, he came in contact, not only with many men and women of Kentucky and participated in many events in the State, but also saw much of other people and places. His own story of his life and his comments on the people he met are presented

in such a delightful way that the book ranks among the best bearing on Kentucky history.

Autobiographies have a charm of their own, and bring the reader in closer and more intimate touch with the writer and his times than does any other form of literature.

No governor or senator of this State has given us a record of his experiences, opinions and observations as a public servant and private citizen. Had any done so, or had a number of professional persons, merchants, mechanics, farmers and pioneers written and published candid autobiographies they would have contributed much valuable material to local history, and doubtless would have shown that truth is stranger than fiction and much more fascinating.

Autobiographies, diaries and biographies are good subjects for the novice as well as for the more experienced writer. The same may be said of the abundant facts offered by local history and tradition as material for short stories. Every community in the State can supply a writer with facts that would make not only readable sketches, but also valuable contributions to literature bearing on the history of the State.

Among present day authors who have used Kentucky scenes and traditions for the background of short stories, none have surpassed, in subject matter or literary style, James Lane Allen's six

sketches that appear in his volume entitled "Flute and Violin and Other Kentucky Tales" (1891). A good short story on horse breeding in Kentucky is "How the Derby was Won" (1889), by Harrison Robertson. "The Belled Buzzard" (Saturday Evening Post, 1912), by Irvin S. Cobb, is a murder story of the Western Kentucky cypress swamps that is classed among the greatest American short stories.

Miss Abbie Carter Goodloe, in her "Darius and Alexander" (Scribner's Magazine, 1914), presents a love story of the early forties of the last century, mingling fiction and fact in a way in which the two can be readily distinguished. In this story she refers to the home of George Keats, on Walnut Street in Louisville--now the Elk's Home--and to a number of other once well-known residences that stood near it, which references, with the vivid picture of trade conditions and social conventions, add to the story special interest. "Getting a Start at Sixty" (Saturday Evening Post, 1911), by George Lee Burton, is a striking story based upon living conditions in Louisville, with a setting which reflects local scenes. Stories portraying local living conditions are always of interest to the student of local history.

Another short story, or rather a short story in dramatic form, is Bert Finck's forthcoming "The House of Tragedy," the scenes of which are laid in Bullitt County.

Two books of short stories based on traditions pertaining to pioneer days, published about the middle of the last century, should be mentioned. One is "The Hunter-Naturalist, or Wild Scenes and Wild Hunters," (1852), by Charles W. Weber, of Russellville. It contains sketches regarding Boone, Harrod and Audubon, and includes the well-known story of "The Darkie Fiddler and the Wolves," printed in early school readers all over the country, and also "Bill Smith, the Silent Hunter," the later life of an old Revolutionary soldier.

The second of these books of sketches is "Legends of the War of Independence and of the Earlier Settlements in the West", (1855), by T. Marshall Smith, of Louisville. One chapter of the volume recalls William Stuart, of Russellville, whose life is full of suggestions for romance and song. Among the old traditions given in detail by Smith is the story of the Harpes, two outlaws who had been Tories and who, about 1800, were the most infamous characters in western Kentucky. Their lives were filled with such brutality that no writer is likely to use their careers as a basis for a story or novel, except possibly some writer of fiction who wishes to depict cold-blooded murder in its worst form.

In ante-bellum days there were published many pamphlets describing villainy and murder. As newspapers became more numerous, pamphlets devoted to

current subjects of that nature lost their popularity, since readers who had a thirst for "blood and thunder" could have it quenched more quickly by the daily and weekly newspapers. These pamphlets, after having been read, were soon relegated to the woodbox or waste basket. Copies of most of them are very rare now. Regardless of their literary merit or lack of it, and regardless of any prejudice or impartiality their writers may have shown, these old pamphlets are a unique contribution to local history and literature. That some of them might furnish thrilling plots for scenario writers who are looking for the highly melodramatic can be inferred from their long and alluring titles. The following are among the best known of these old pamphlets:

"A Concise Statement of the Trial and Confession of William Clutter, who was Executed on Friday, the 8th June, 1810, at Boone Court-House, Kentucky, for the Murder of John Farmer; to which is prefixed a Short Sketch of his Life; 'The Wages of Sin is Death'" (1810).

"Narrative of the Circumstances which Led to the Trial and Execution of John C. Hamilton for the Murder of Dr. John P. Sanderson in 1817," (1818). This tragedy took place in what is now Metcalf county. Hamilton was convicted on circumstantial evidence; fifty years later it developed that he was not guilty.

"The Confession of Jereboam O. Beauchamp, who was Hanged at Frankfort, Kentucky, on the 7th day of July, 1826, for the Murder of Col. Solomon P. Sharp," (1826.)

"Vindication of the Character of the late Col. Solomon P. Sharp from the Calumnies published against him, since his Murder, by Patrick Darby and Jereboam O. Beauchamp," (1827), by L. J. Sharp.

"A History of the Feud between the Hill and Evans Parties of Garrard County, Kentucky, the most exciting tragedy ever enacted on the Bloody Grounds of Kentucky," (1854), by J. J. Thompson. This feud began in 1829 and continued about twenty-five years.

A pamphlet that is sometimes, but erroneously, referred to as one pertaining to Kentucky is "A History of the Detection, Conviction, Life and Designs of John A. Murel, the Great Western Land Pirate," (1835), by Augustus Q. Walton. Murrell was a Kentuckian; his field of action in this pamphlet, however, was not in this State, but in Tennessee, Arkansas and farther south, and his recorded villainy is but a small part of Kentucky's local history.

Most of the 400 or more publications listed by Collins, Smith and McElroy and the other books just referred to will continue to supply historians with good material, and will furnish other writers also with interesting matter for many Kentucky historical novels, sketches and poems. Up to the

present time few writers of fiction or poetry have availed themselves of this abundant supply.

No matter what subject in Kentucky history, previous to 1874, an author may be investigating, he will find among these many books two that are more than likely to contain a complete record of the desired facts or give a clue to them. These are the History of Kentucky, published in 1847 by Lewis Collins, and its amplification published in 1874 by his son, Richard Henry Collins.

These two works constitute a gazetteer of Kentucky history. They are mines of personal, political and general facts concerning the history of the State and every county, and will ever remain the starting point of any work bearing on local or state history. Kentuckians will owe an ever increasing debt of gratitude to the elder and younger Collins for the patient labor and patriotic devotion that animated them in preparing their histories.

Notwithstanding the fact that these and other writers have preserved much local history which, but for them, would have perished, there can be found in every county and every neighborhood many traditions of general interest that have not yet reached the ears of historian, novelist, or poet, and which would make valuable contributions to recorded history or serve as the basis of a good story or poem.

One need but visit any town or community, if in search for new and interesting material. By exercising a little tact and asking some of the oldest intelligent citizens what was the greatest tragedy or most interesting event that ever took place in the neighborhood, the investigator is more than likely to hear a good "story" that has never appeared in print. To the citizens of that locality many of these local stories have become familiar and commonplace, while to the outsider they are new and filled with the picturesque. However, if he be in search of unadulterated facts, let him beware of the "gossipy pioneer."

Much of what was gathered in the olden times and published, either in books, pamphlets or newspapers, has since perished. But in this day of many and fireproof libraries we are prepared to preserve books, newspapers and documents that otherwise would be exposed to destruction by fire or ruined through lack of care.

Local newspapers, with an occasional exception, are not long preserved no matter how much local history or literature they may contain. The few clippings that are cut from current papers are, as a rule, not marked to show when or where they were published; and, as a consequence, the information they contain does not fully serve its purpose. Fortunately, some of the large public libraries have long been filing the most important daily paper pub-

lished in the city which the library supplies. If the county and circuit clerks throughout the State were required by law to file copies of the local newspapers and to give them the same care they bestow upon the official records of the county, much local history and literature would be preserved for the present as well as future generations.

Sir Walter Scott was probably the first of the great English poets to refer to Kentucky. In his "Marmion," published in 1808, he sings of "Kentucky's wood-encumbered brake." Lord Byron, in "Don Juan," (1824), mentions "The General Boone, back-woodsman of Kentucky." Lord Tennyson, in "On Sublimity," (1827), longs for such scenes as are offered by Mammoth Cave, "Kentucky's chamber of eternal gloom."

Among American poets who early entered the Kentucky field we find Samuel Woodworth, of New York, the author of "The Old Oaken Bucket," who, shortly after the Battle of New Orleans, wrote "The Hunters of Kentucky." In 1846 Benjamin Russell Hanby, of Ohio, published the words and music of "Darling Nellie Gray," and the name of Kentucky has since been sung in every part of the world where songs in English are heard. In 1852 Stephen Collins Foster, of Pennsylvania, while visiting at "Federal Hill," near Bardstown, wrote and composed "My Old Kentucky Home."

Rev. Stephen T. Badin, who came to America from France in 1792, was one of the first Kentuckians to write a poem on a Kentucky hero. His "Epicedium," an elegy upon the death of Joseph Hamilton Daviess at the battle of Tippecanoe, was published in 1812 and has since been reprinted in many books.

About 1840 George Dennison Prentice, a native of New England, but one of the first of Kentucky's well-known poets, published his poem on "Mammoth Cave." In 1847 Theodore O'Hara, who was born in Danville, wrote one of America's greatest elegies. His "Bivouac of the Dead" was written to commemorate the reinterment at Frankfort of the Kentuckians who fell in the War with Mexico. O'Hara's poem on "The Old Pioneer," written in honor of Daniel Boone, appeared three years later.

Down through the years we find that now and then some of the Kentucky poets have been moved by an individual or an incident. The heroism of the women of Bryant's Station, who, on August 15, 1782, brought water into the besieged fort, is one of the few incidents in the State's history of which a number of poems have been written. Henry T. Stanton, Mrs. Jennie C. Morton, Ingram Crockett and Madison Cawein have each given us a poem on that thrilling event.

In 1892 Mrs. Fannie Porter Dickey published "Blades O' Blue Grass," a compilation of poems by Kentuckians, and Josiah Henry Combs now has in press "All That's Kentucky," a collection of poems bearing on Kentucky. But a perusal of these books and of Mr. Townsend's "Kentucky in American Letters," (1913), shows that our poets have availed themselves of very little of the material that goes to make up much of our State and local histories.

Madison Cawein, the great nature poet of America, seldom went beyond the bounds of Kentucky for inspiration. Faithful to his State, he entitled one of his books "Kentucky Poems," (1902). Although Cawein was strictly a nature poet, Kentucky's history became more and more irresistible to him, as can be seen by some of his more recent poems, such as "Kentucky," "Bryant's Station," "Feudists," "The Mound Builders," and "Moonshiners."

No Kentucky epic has yet been written. Cawein, shortly before his death, which occurred December 8, 1914, had decided to attempt a poem of that character. In the fall of 1914, in company with Young E. Allison and the writer of this paper, he visited Muhlenberg county to familiarize himself with its history and scenes, expecting to use that county as part of a background for a Kentucky epic.

Among prose writers Washington Irving was one of the first noted American authors, not a resident of the State, to write a short story describing some of the firstcomers in Kentucky. His "Early Experiences of Ralph Ringwood," published about 1835, in "The Crayon Papers," is a story of some of the pioneers of the Green River country and a law student in Bardstown.

The Beauchamp-Sharp tragedy, which occurred in 1825, was the first one event in the history of Kentucky to attract a number of well-known novelists, living outside the State. One of them was William Gilmore Simms, of South Carolina, whose novel, "Beauchamp," appeared in 1842. Harriet Beecher Stowe gathered much of her material in Kentucky for her "Uncle Tom's Cabin," which was first published in 1852, and soon thereafter became one of the best known books not only in America but in all the civilized world. Mary Jane Holmes, during the three years she lived in the State, 1848 to 1851, found in the Bluegrass Region characters for her "Tempest and Sunshine" (1854) and "Lena Rivers" (1855). These two so-called "Kentucky novels" ranked deservedly high in their day, among the best fiction, although they might now, in the estimation of many readers, be considered as out of date.

Among the recent writers, not Kentuckians, who have woven Kentucky history into their novels

is Winston Churchill, whose "The Crossing" (1904) is a historical novel and takes the reader back to the time of the Indians, Boone, and Clark, and the early days of Louisville.

Although Kentucky novelists have gone farther into the forest of local and state history than have her poets, they have, up to now, blazed only a few trails and have pictured only a few of the many romances and tragedies that can be found in this great wilderness of history and tradition.

Not until 1850 did a Kentuckian produce a Kentucky historical novel. In "Lonz Powers, or the Regulators," by James Weir (Sr.), of Owensboro, we have not only the first but also one of the longest novels by a citizen of the State. It is a story based on the actual operations of an organization of citizens known as Regulators, who felt themselves called upon to enforce the moral and civil laws which were constantly being violated by a number of outlaws led by Alonzo Pennington, who, in this novel, bears the name of Lonz Powers. The scenes are laid in western Kentucky from about 1830 to 1845, and are typical of many new countries.

During the course of the story the author discusses, at length and in a very interesting manner, the many subjects that are incidentally introduced. Among these subjects may be mentioned deer hunts, fox hunts and the old militia muster, a dissertation on the "bliss of a brandy cocktail,

and the roadworking age of old men and young boys; --all of which are not only highly entertaining, but reflect much of the life and opinion of those times.

Weir's two other novels are "Simon Kenton," (1852), and its sequel, "The Winter Lodge," (1854). Both bear on Kentucky history, but are much smaller volumes than his first book.

"Lonz Powers" was written about the time Scott's novels were widely read, and Weir, like many other American authors, attempted to follow Scott in his literary style and in the length of his stories, thus trying to follow the best model. Books in which the author leads his readers into many bypaths were popular during the middle of the last century, but most of them, like "Lonz Powers" are now considered old-fashioned. The novelist of to-day tells his story and presents his theme in a less divergent way, but, by evading the somewhat irrelevant matter he, possibly, robs his book of much that would make good reading.

In 1874 there appeared another Kentucky historical novel by a citizen of the State: "Lord of Himself," by Francis Henry Underwood, who, for a number of years, lived in Bowling Green. The author, changing with the taste of the times, avoided carrying his readers into many bypaths. The time of the story is about 1845, and the scenes are laid in what he designates as "Barry County, Kentucky," representing the actual counties of

Barren and Warren. The book is a portrayal of the days when slaveholders and emancipators, slaves and freed negroes, and "poor white trash" made up the life of the community. The story is based on facts; the author, as Arthur Howard, is one of the principal characters.

What is regarded by many critics as the most faithful Kentucky historical early period sketches is "Chronicles of a Kentucky Settlement," by William Courtney Watts, of Smithland, published in 1897. It is a story of courtships and lovers, into which some very good local history and a few well-known historical characters are introduced. The scenes are laid in western Kentucky in and near Salem and Smithland, about the year 1820.

Among other historical characters represented is James Wilson, the leader of the "Wilson Band," later known as "Ford's Ferry Band," a gang of notorious outlaws who, in the early days, robbed many of the boats that passed Cave-in-Rock as they floated down the Ohio. One of the facts incidentally woven into the story is that Mrs. Lucy Jefferson Lewis, sister of Thomas Jefferson, lived for three years in Livingston county, where she died and was buried in 1811. Her husband was Dr. Charles L. Lewis, brother of the noted Meriwether Lewis. They and their children appear under the name of Gowan.

In this, as in practically all other historical novels, fictitious names are used for real characters portrayed and, as a result, unless the reader has knowledge of the identity of the originals, the incidents lose much of their real interest. But in the case of "Chronicles of a Kentucky Settlement," as in the case of many other books of fiction bearing on history, an unpublished key, more or less complete, as revealed by the author and now handed down by tradition, may be had. An unpublished key is looked upon as private information and is regarded with keen interest.

During the past twenty years James Lane Allen has stood foremost among Kentucky novelists. The literary beauty of his stories embracing Kentucky history has not been equalled by any other writer hailing from the State. His "King Solomon of Kentucky," (1890), one of his first short stories, is an example of how a skilled writer can select a few incidents from local tradition and weave them into a most charming and beautiful tale. Allen's Kentucky novels are well known everywhere; they are highly imaginative, but they are invariably based on actual historic, social, and economic facts.

John Fox, Jr., has done for the mountains of Kentucky what Allen has done for the Bluegrass Region. Fox's "Bluegrass and Rhododendron," (1901), "The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come," (1903), and his other Kentucky novels contain much that is

drawn from local history. Charles Neville Buck's "The Call of the Cumberlands," (1914), and Miss Lucy Furman's "Mothering on Perilous," (1913), and "Sight to the Blind," (1914) are books picturing the life of the Kentucky mountaineers of today.

Miss Furman, in her first book, "Stories of a Sanctified Town," published in 1896, has preserved, with fine humor, some curious aspects of life in a western Kentucky village. Another book, written about a quarter of a century ago, is "Diana's Livery," (1891), by Eva Wilder Brodhead, a love story with the Shaker Settlement in Mercer county as a background. In 1899 Harrison Robertson published his "If I Were a Man," a story of love and politics, based on a senatorial contest of a few years before.

Within the past fifteen years Kentuckians have produced more novels based to a greater or less extent on local and State history than were written during the century preceding, and it is quite probable the number will continue to increase. This is doubtless due, not so much to the growing number of writers and readers, as to the fact that the material offered by our histories and traditions is older and, in consequence, is becoming more interesting and more highly appreciated. Current events, or rather immediate current events, seldom make a good background for romantic novels, and such novels are not likely to find a permanent place in

historical fiction unless they portray faithfully the manners of the day; then they contribute important material to later writers of history.

As a rule the best historical novels are the ones written long after the events described have taken place. Time heightens tragedies, and adds glamor to romance. Time, in most instances, must elapse before an unbiased picture can be presented and the significance of an event be fully appreciated.

Historical novels, with some exceptions, present the past in a more interesting manner than do the formal histories which are intended as chronicles of actual facts. It has been said, on the one hand, that "truth is stranger than fiction," and on the other, that "fiction is often more truthful than fact." Fiction is undoubtedly more truthful in the presentation of the manners and the social life of the period portrayed, than is formal history.

Historians chronicle facts pertaining to rulers, wars and other subjects which constitute the general history of a country, community or great event. It is, however, the writer of historical novels who, with real and imaginary characters and incidents, in writing a book of fiction, not only puts the reader in closer touch with the daily life of the people and the times he presents, but gives us a more vivid account of the historical facts which he has woven into his story. Allen's "The Choir Invisible"(1897) and "The Reign of Law" (1900)

are good examples of Kentucky novels in which facts and fiction are combined to make truthful pictures.

In addition to the writers already referred to as authors of Kentucky books published before the year 1900 a number of other Kentucky novelists have dipped into the past and have woven into their fiction some very interesting facts. Besides the works of Allen pertaining to the Bluegrass Region, and those of Fox, Buck and Miss Furman pertaining to the Kentucky mountains, about three dozen Kentucky books that have been published since the beginning of this century are worthy of special mention:

"Stringtown on the Pike," (1900), and "Warwick of the Knobs," (1901), by John Uri Lloyd, are novels filled with Kentucky folklore and local characters.

"Juletty," (1901), by Lucy Cleaver McElroy, is a tale in which "lovers and moonshiners, fox hunters and horse races, Morgan and his men, and a girl with 'whisky-colored eyes' make the motif." "The Silent Pioneer," (1902), by the same author, is a story with Daniel Boone for a hero.

"Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch," (1901), by Alice Hegan Rice, was for more than two years one of the "six best sellers"; its popularity emphasized the fact that much material for fiction can be found in Louisville, and that if properly handled it will appeal to a wide range of readers.

Her "Mr. Opp," (1909), is a story of an eccentric country newspaper publisher and his half-crazed sister, who are pictured with a Kentucky village as a background.

"Emmy Lou," (1902), by Mrs. George Madden Martin, is a picture of children and school life in Louisville a generation ago; her "Selina," (1914), presents a Louisville girl of the period before women took a place in the business world.

"Oldfield," (1902), by Nancy Houston Banks, is a description of village life just before the Civil War, and her "'Round Anvil Rock," (1903), is a romance of western Kentucky of about one hundred years ago, into which a number of historical events and personages are introduced.

"In Circling Camps," (1900), by Joseph Alexander Altsheler, is a romance of the Civil War, and has for its central character a Kentucky Union soldier. "Guthrie of the Times," (1904), is a newspaper story in which appears a scene based on the killing of William Goebel; and "The Young Trailers Series," (1907-1912), also by Altsheler, deals mainly with the adventures of two boys in the early days of the State.

"A Brother of Christ," (1905), by Ingram Crockett, is a story of the Christadelphians, a religious community that existed in southwestern Kentucky.

"A Kentucky Chronicle," (1906), by John Thompson Gray, is a story of the life and times of a pioneer and his children and contemporaries who lived in and near Louisville.

"The Belle of the Bluegrass Country," (1906), by Hanna Daviess Pittman, has for its background Harrodsburg, and High Bridge, and the Shaker Settlement at Pleasant Hill in Mercer county.

"Crestlands," (1907), by Mary Addams Bayne, is a centennial story of Cane Ridge meeting house, near Paris, and contains some history regarding Barton W. Stone and other religious leaders of a few generations ago.

"Aunt Jane of Kentucky," (1907), and "The Land of Long Ago," (1909), by Eliza Calvert Hall (Mrs. Lida Calvert Obenchain), are a series of short sketches that recall and repeople olden times in the rural districts of The Pennyroyal.

"The Night Riders, "(1908), by Henry Cleveland Wood, depicts the protest against the toll gate system that was in vogue for many years, and shows the character of the tobacco troubles of more recent times.

"The Tobacco Tiller," (1909), by Sarah Bell Hackley, is a story in which an effort is made to use the Kentucky tobacco fields of comparatively recent years for a background.

"Quaker Jim," (1909), by Richard Albert Kelty, is laid in Washington county and presents much of the quaint vernacular and humor typical of many rural districts in Kentucky.

"Back Home," (1912), by Irvin Shrewsbury Cobb, is a series of tales based on incidents that took place in and near Paducah a generation or two ago.

"Toby," (1912), by Credo Harris, has for its leading character a white man who was sold for vagrancy; the story of John Fitch, of Bardstown, who claimed to be the inventor of the steamboat, is introduced into one of the chapters.

"Nisi Prius," (1912), by John Caldwell Browder, is a story besprinkled with humor and based on the happenings at a term of the Muhlenberg circuit court held some twenty years ago.

"The Little Colonel Series," (1895-1912), by Annie Fellows Johnston, is composed of twelve volumes written for children. They show child-life in the Pewee Valley neighborhood, in what used to be an aristocratic old country, from whose fine old estates many of the ante-bellum customs and traditions have not yet departed.

Another factor in the history and literature of the State which, in recent years, has received the attention of writers is the English traditional ballad orally preserved in the Kentucky mountains.

Many of these ballads were originally brought to this country more than a century ago by the pioneers, and have here, as they have in the more remote districts of the British Isles, been handed down for a number of generations. Hubert Gibson Shearin, Eber Carle Perro, Josiah Henry Combs and Miss Josephine McGill are doing research work in this field. Miss McGill is now preparing for publication a volume entitled "The Ancient Scotch and English Ballad in Kentucky," in which she will give, in many instances, the music as well as the words of some of these old songs.

A work of importance to those who are making a study of the present and the past of the mountaineers of the State is Miss Ellen Churchill Semple's "Anglo-Saxons of the Kentucky Mountains, a Study in Anthropo-Geography," a bulletin published in 1910.

Although we have taken a somewhat rapid view of the part State and local history have played in Kentucky literature, we have, nevertheless, covered the field sufficiently to show that the number of poems and books of fiction based on history is very small as compared with the great abundance of available material extending from the days of the firstcomers down to our own times.

One of the episodes in the early history of the State that is awaiting the pen of a novelist is the Spanish Conspiracy. The secret agitation by

James Wilkinson and others to separate Kentucky from the Union and attach it to the Spanish government of Louisiana, forms one of the most remarkable incidents in the history of Kentucky, and offers a splendid background for books of romantic fiction.

And so on down, through a period covering more than a century, much important historic material has been left untouched by novelists and poets; the "Old Regime" before the Civil War, with the institution and conflicting sentiments of slavery and the splendid society it supported; the War of 1812, and the period of the Civil War itself, when brother was opposing brother and family ties were strained; the political idolatry and hatred of Henry Clay, with his connection with slavery, and the fearless and romantic figure of Cassius M. Clay always on the scene; some of the battles of the Civil War--Perryville, for instance; or the wonderful history of tobacco cultivation, its marketing, its tales of riches made and lost; --all these are inviting the pen of talent and genius. Here and there they have been touched upon ever so lightly, but the field is practically untrodden.

The present, with a glimpse of the past, could be portrayed along the Dixie Highway, and the rock roads and the dirt byways that lead into it. This new highway, passing through thriving towns and half-deserted villages, along up-to-date as

well as primitive farms, past modern houses and historic homes, through "dry" counties and "wet," offers a setting for a novel of our own times which, I dare say, would be not only of general interest to present and future generations of fiction readers, but would, like much that has already been written, stand as a valuable contribution to local history in Kentucky literature.

Otto A. Rothert.

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