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# Friends of Kentucky Public Archives

Volume IX Number 2

Summer 1993

## Thomas D. Clark Honored by Friends on 90th Birthday

Kentucky's Historian Laureate Dr. Thomas D. Clark was honored at a special reception at the Department for Libraries and Archives on July 14th. The event, sponsored by the Friends, was, in the words of Friends President Dr. William E. Ellis, an occasion to honor "a public career that has profoundly touched so many of us in the Commonwealth of Kentucky."

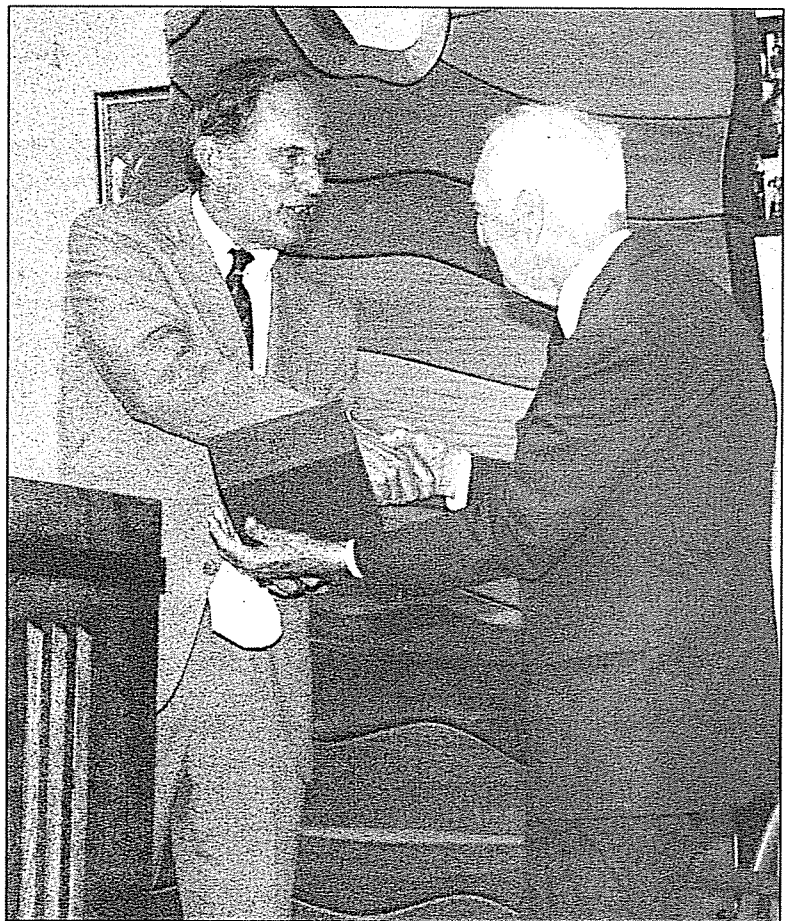
The program included remarks by Governor Brereton C. Jones, Legislative Research Commission Director Vic Hellard, and noted newspaper editor, publisher and political commentator Al Smith, host of KET's *Comment on Kentucky*, as well as by Dr. Clark. Elsewhere in this newsletter are excerpts from these remarks. Following the event, visitors enjoyed light refreshments and viewed a new exhibit on the department's main floor, which features photographs and documents related to Clark's many efforts on behalf of Kentucky's public records and archives.

### Clark "a real hero" for Kentuckians: Jones

Describing Clark as "a real hero" for Kentuckians, "in a time when we don't have as many heroes as we need," Governor Brereton C. Jones opened the program by issuing a proclamation declaring July 14, 1993, Thomas D. Clark Day, in recognition of his many contributions to preserving and protecting Kentucky's historical records and to writing the history of the state.

Jones thanked Clark for his commitment to Kentucky in so many ways and said that Clark has enjoyed "true success" in his work: he has succeeded "both in the academic world, but also in the hearts of Kentuckians." The governor said that it was very satisfying to know that the future was protected by what Dr. Clark had done to "make certain that our records are well kept, that they are preserved," and that it was very encouraging for all of us to know that the record of activities and events which have happened in this state from Isaac Shelby until today will be preserved for future generations. Jones noted that "there is no one in this Commonwealth who is more directly responsible for that single effort than Dr. Thomas Clark."

Governor Jones also presented Dr. Clark with a special hand bound edition of *The Ken-*



Governor Brereton C. Jones presents Clark with a special hand bound edition of *The Kentucky Encyclopedia*, as a gift from the Board of Directors of the Friends of Kentucky Public Archives, Inc.

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tucky Encyclopedia, as a gift from the Board of Directors of the Friends. The special binding was the work of Ms. Gabrielle Fox Butler, of Cincinnati, binder in residence at Transylvania University in Lexington, and contained a special appreciation of Dr. Clark and his work on the *Encyclopedia*, written especially for the occasion by Professor Raymond F. Betts, Director of the Gaines Center for the Humanities at the University of Kentucky. In accepting the presentations of the governor, Clark said that "it has been a wonderful experience to live in this state, to be associated with the people of this state. And when I stand here and look out and see people I have had in class...they are the treasures; they are the treasures that I truly value, they are the people who have helped make living in Kentucky worthwhile."



Greeting Clark are Ellen Hellard, left, former Director of Field Services at KDLA, Vic Hellard, Director of the Legislative Research Commission who served as one of the event's featured speakers, and noted journalist John Ed Pearce.

### Clark "Implanted the Seeds of Vision": Hellard

LRC Director Vic Hellard spoke at length about Dr. Clark's many contributions in the area of public policy and legislative action, notably in the enactment of legislation to manage and protect Kentucky's public records, in creating the State Archives and Records Commission, and in the construction of a modern state library and archives facility.

Hellard noted that not only has Clark preserved our past and recorded our history, but "he has forever, by giving us the tools and the knowedge to know ourselves, altered, in a very positive manner, our common future." He cited his work to create the Kentucky River Authority; his tireless efforts to reform the Kentucky Constitution; and his enlistment in the education reform process on several different occasions. "He has been a mighty voice of encouragement, of reason and strength," remarked Hellard, "throughout the years for education reform, before the legislature and before the people of this Commonwealth."

Noted for his portrayal of Gover-

nor Edmund Porch Morrow, Hellard said that were Morrow alive today, "I know he would agree that you [Clark] have already won a spot on that list of immortal Kentuckians...Kentucky's heart role of greatness.

"Forgiving understanding, compassionate, intelligent, and visionary...in these attributes, Edmund Porch Morrow and Thomas D. Clark are one. And in one other respect; neither will yield to any man or woman in his love for Kentucky and in his determination to be of maximum service to this Commonwealth and its people. A man who has implanted the seeds of vision in students numbering tens of thousands, students who have left the classroom now to become leaders in all fields of endeavor, but who have never ceased being students of Tom Clark, who have never ceased to wonder at his thoughts and to take advisement of his vision.

"In a democracy, no person contributes more than one who makes us record our common experiences and who helps us understand our common sense of self and our common

purpose. And I suggest to you that no person in the history of this Commonwealth has done more to record our passage, to make us preserve our heritage, and to provide us with the necessary tools for understanding our future through our past than has Dr. Tom Clark."

### Clark as Leader, "Conscience of Kentucky": Smith

Noted newspaper editor, publisher, and political commentator Al Smith, host of KET's *Comment on Kentucky*, noted that Clark, the author of the 1948 book, *The Southern Country Editor*, can "charm the average journalist out of his cynical shell and turn him or her into a born again idealist."

"In one meeting in 1965, Tom Clark convinced me that Kentucky should reform its public schools, grow the university to academic greatness, write a new constitution, and save its soils, streams, and forests. That was 1965, but I still believe it, and so do the editors of Kentucky's largest newspapers. Journalists in Kentucky have no more reli-

able and trusted mentor than Tom Clark. His influence on the progressive policies they have espoused has been enormous. Readers may disagree on the details, but the outline of the editorial page maps charting the direction that Kentucky ought to go was sketched for our times by Tom Clark. The books of history he has written, the works of history he has preserved, the classes he has taught in his long career, the institutions of scholarship and social change he has founded or led or supported have earned him unrivaled authority and prestige in the public arena. Some teachers are tyrants; they are respected perhaps, but also feared, because for their own security they must bluster at and dominate the uninformed. Intimidation is part of their persona.

"Dr. Clark wasn't that kind of teacher at all. Not all of his pupils would grow up to be governors, or judges, or social crusaders, although some did - Ned Breathitt, Harry Caudill, and Wendell Berry, for instance. But there were thousands of good Kentucky men and women who went through his classes in Kentucky history and never forgot him.

"In the years after, they might have mixed up or lost a few dates, but they always remembered this professor with affection. Of course, he told them that the sun did not always shine bright on our beautiful land. He told them that our Eden had been stained with dark and bloody deeds, but he also told them that we could be better than our past. And he told them that he believed that we could change. He took us into our past and then, because he loved us, he showed us our future. This is leadership, ladies and gentlemen.

"For 60 years, Thomas Clark has been on the right side of important emerging challenges to our state. With energy, intellect, and eloquence, he has cajoled us into trying to be better than many of us want to be. Now, with the Bicentennial behind us, we pause in amazement to realize that he has lived through nearly half of the years of our statehood, and still tells us with grace and wisdom what it all means. So we thank him for these gifts and for one more: for being with us today, for showing up, hale and hearty

on his 90th birthday, truly the conscience of Kentucky."

Dr. Clark said of his work in preserving the state's documentary legacy that "it has been a wonderful trip, a wonderful adventure."

Clark, in noting the efforts of so many people to assure the preservation of Kentucky's historical records, observed that "in this moment of the closing 20th century, I can think of no finer mission Kentucky can perform and has performed than keeping the record of that heritage intact, keeping it preserved, that precious record, so that our American civilization will have a solid rooting in the American great collection of documents."

"Since 1958, we have come light miles away from where we were in the collection, the preservation, and the making available of the public record. We have come light milies away in many respects in Kentucky's civilization itself. I think the thing that can be said about this closing century, through which nearly all I've lived, is that this is, has been our century, measured by almost any criteria you wish to use. This has been our century of real maturing. It has been our century for expressing and realizing our dreams. It has been our century for preparing and pointing our way to the future.

"We face, not only in this building, in this Commonwealth, the great challenge of preserving and making available to future generations a record of our past, a record of our daily functioning as an organized, political people. But we also face the problem of how to do that, how to manage this enormous volume of records that we create daily. I think this is not too extreme a statement to make, that we create within one year in this Commonwealth a volume of paper equal to that created the first 100 years of the existence of this state. And



Friends members Joy Bale Boone and George Street Boone of Elton were among the many well-wishers who came to Frankfort on July 14 to join in Clark's 90th birthday celebration at the Department for Libraries and Archives.

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## Friends Honor One of Their Own: Historian Thomas D. Clark

*Continued from page 3.*  
when you multiply that 50 times, plus that great monstrous body of the Federal government, you understand that archives management becomes a major challenge, a major challenge for which we have not yet the answers. But it is a challenge for which we must go on searching for answers.

"And we must find efficient, effective answers to this archival problem. We have absorbed large bodies of our land, we have absorbed large bodies of our resources, we have undergone fundamental changes in the very structure of our society. But basically when we come home, there is one place that the individual can associate himself to time and place and his individual function in society, and it's within the documentary record itself. We

have here, over our heads, a gold mine of records which will challenge several generations of young historians. The history of Kentucky is yet to be told; it is yet to be presented in its true context. But we have come a long way, and it is with great personal pride that I have had the distinct privilege of being associated with people who have been in this organization in previous years, who now function in this organization, as truly dedicated servants who have a very precious mission for the civilization of this Commonwealth.

"Having come up in the Methodist Church, I could not possibly sit down without giving testimony, in an experience meeting. I wouldn't have missed coming to Kentucky for all the other forty-nine states. This state can be all things to all people, and the challenge to the historian is to find out out which Kentuckian is the Kentuckian.

"Thank you. I cannot express in deeper humility than I do now, the eternal gratefulness on the part of my wife, my children, and myself, for the very kind hospitality, the very kind treatment that we have received almost the past 65 years as citizens of the Commonwealth of Kentucky. When Kentuckians asked me in the early years if I were a Kentuckian, I had to very shamed facedly say no, and then

later on they asked me, and I found an answer. I could say, no, but dammit, I'm a Southerner. Well, a Kentuckian doesn't quite know how to answer that. And now, when they ask me, I say, no, I'm not a Kentuckian in birth but I am in heart. I had the courage to come and stay, and you don't have the courage to leave. Thank you."



Governor Brereton C. Jones on Thomas D. Clark: "We all love you, we respect you, and you have given us a great deal to emulate."

### Recent Accessions

By Bill Richardson

As a result of an agreement with the University of Louisville's College of Urban and Public Affairs, KDLA will now maintain both an archival and reference copy of Kentucky State Data Center Publications. The Kentucky State Data Center is operated by the University's Urban Research Institute under the auspices of the Governor's Office for Policy and Management. The Center's publications cover a wide range of topics from demographic analyses and high technology to Kentucky's workforce.

By forwarding these reports to KDLA's State Publications Program, researchers are now in a position to use Data Center information with related agency records housed at the State Archives. New publications will be listed in the *Kentucky Checklist of State Publications* and may be accessed through State Library Services' Government Documents Section.

**Available now!**

**Guide to Kentucky  
Archival and Manuscript Collections, Volume Two**  
Call 502/875-7000 for information.

## Records Profiles

### *Penal Records Reflect Attitudes Toward Crime*

By Tim Tingle

Legislation establishing a penal system in Kentucky was passed in 1798 and, by 1800, the first State Penitentiary was constructed in Frankfort. In 1890 a "Branch Penitentiary" was opened in Eddyville. This facility became the State Penitentiary in 1912 and the Frankfort facility became the State Reformatory.

The records created by these penal institutions can be of particular interest to historians, social scientists and genealogists. Many original records from these institutions are stored at the State Archives and a number of penitentiary records from the 19th and early 20th centuries are available on microfilm.

The penitentiary records reflect prevailing attitudes toward crime and punishment in Kentucky, and can provide a unique perspective on the criminal justice system. Since most of the records include notations on the race of each convict, the researcher can learn more about the demographic characteristics of those incarcerated. Some of the earlier records also contain information about female prisoners, since women were incarcerated in a sepa-

rate unit on the grounds of the Frankfort facility for many years. In addition, an understanding of the prevalence of different types of criminal activities can be gained through a study of prisoner records.

Some of the more noteworthy penitentiary records are the Registers of Prisoners, the Prisoner Description Books, and the Hospital Registers. The Registers of Prisoners list all inmates incarcerated at a particular time and include names, crimes, and sentences, as well as personal information concerning each prisoner's marital status, education, and occupation. Prisoner Description Books record age, height, weight, eye color, and any marks and scars. The Hospital Registers describe the various illnesses suffered by the inmates, along with the prescribed medical treatment.

Although no personal inmate files are included, these penitentiary records do provide a valuable insight into an often overlooked aspect of Kentucky history. For further information on the availability and use of these records, contact the Archives Research Room staff.

### *Thank you, again! Colonels Give Grant*

In late May, the Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels once again presented a generous grant to the Friends of Kentucky Public Archives, Inc.

This most recent gift of \$7,218 is being used to purchase a Dukane MDP Microfilm Reader and three Russ Bassett microfilm cabinets for the Archives Research Room at the Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives.

The continued support of the Colonels has enabled the Friends to carry out one of the group's important goals — providing funds for the purchase of special equipment or additional research material. This type of support is particularly critical at the current time, according to State Archivist Richard Belding, because of increasing demands on available state resources.

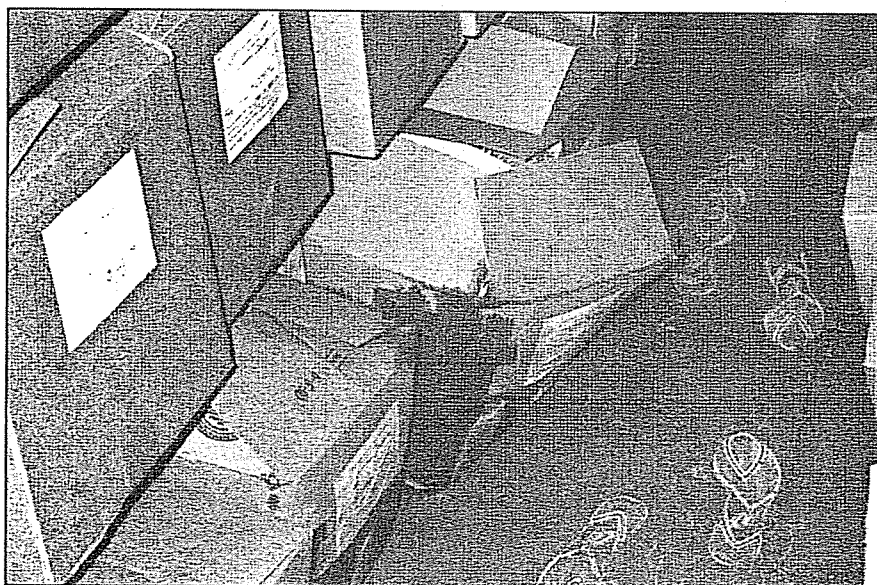
Once again, Colonels, thank you for being our good Friends!

### *Recent Contributions Add To Clark Endowment Fund*

Several generous contributions to the Thomas D. Clark Endowment have been received in recent weeks. Among the latest donors are:

Willada Dent, Prospect  
George Cunha, Lexington  
Alvin Cross, Frankfort  
James C. Powers, Ashland  
Brig. Gen. R.R. Van Stockum,  
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Philip Ardery, Louisville  
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William E. Ellis, Richmond  
Frank G. Rankin, Louisville

The Clark Interns of today and tomorrow thank each of you for your support of this unique program.



A substantial quantity of patient records stored in the basement of the Green River Health Department, Owensboro, sustained heavy water damage following a five-inch rainfall on June 9. KDLA's Local Records staff provided on-site disaster response assistance and counsel to local officials.

## Large Crowd Attends 9th Annual Kentucky Archives Institute



Walter Bowman of the Department of Military Affairs discusses research in military records.

The Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives' Research Room was filled to overflowing with attendees at the Friends' 1993 Kentucky Archives Institute conducted on July 9. The location of this year's meeting was moved downstairs from the department's Activity Room to accommodate a larger number of registrants.

Historical investigator Joe Nickell was the Institute's featured luncheon speaker, and he delighted the crowd with stories of his own investigations into a variety of matters.



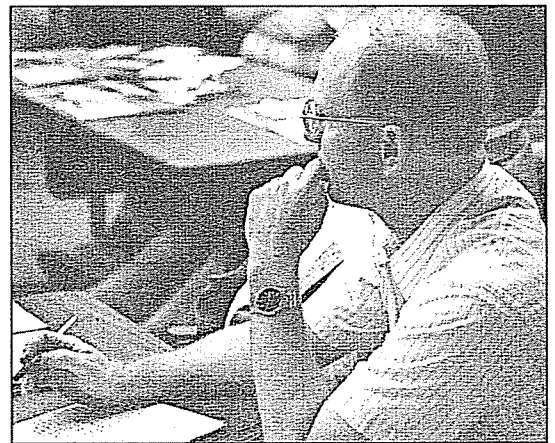
Luncheon speaker Joe Nickell, author and teacher at the University of Kentucky, enlightened and entertained attendees with his topic, "Historical Investigations." Nickell is the author of the recently published, *Mysterious Realms: Probing Paranormal, Historical, and Forensic Enigmas*, among several other works.



Participants talk about research during lunch.



Archivist Jane Julian presents session on federal census records.



An Institute participant listens attentively to a presentation on county clerk and local judicial records at the July 9 event. A record number of registrants — 57 — were on hand for the day-long program which highlighted the use of public records in genealogy and local history research.

## Short Takes:

### Research Trip to Virginia Proposed for Members

Would you like to be part of a convivial group of Friends who travel to Charlottesville and Richmond by motor coach to conduct research? Just such a plan has been proposed and will be further developed if enough members indicate a strong interest.

Tentative plans call for leaving Central Kentucky on a Saturday next spring, arriving in Charlottesville that evening. On Sunday morning, the group will tour Monticello and have lunch at Michie Tavern before departing for Richmond and a tour of that charming capital city. From Monday through Friday members will visit the Virginia State Archives and the Virginia Historical Society to pursue their individual research interests. The group will return to Kentucky on Saturday.

Space on the tour is limited to 15 individuals who are members of the Friends. If you are interested in participating in the proposed tour, call Connie Renfroe at the Public Records Division (875-7000/ext. 173) right away!

### Welcome, New Friends!

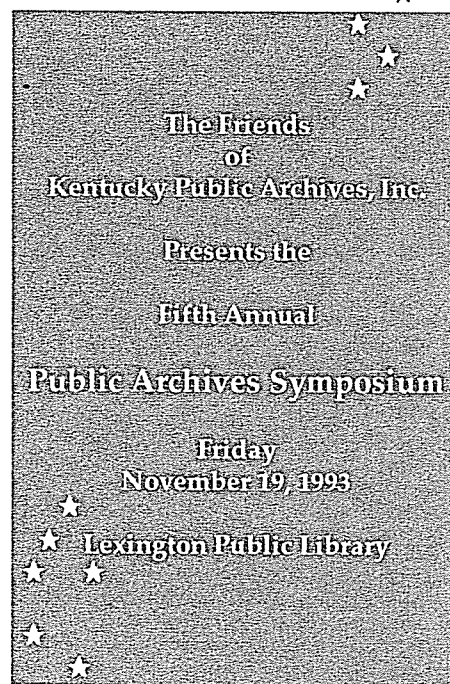
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To be continued in future issues. ★

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## Friends of Kentucky Public Archives, Inc., Membership Form

Box 4224, Frankfort, Kentucky 40604



My check for \_\_\_\_\_ made payable to the *Friends of Kentucky Public Archives, Inc.*, is enclosed. Benefits include a quarterly newsletter and invitations to workshops, special events, the Kentucky Archives Institute, the Public Archives Symposium and the annual meeting. Gifts to the Friends are tax deductible.

Individual	\$10	<input type="checkbox"/>
Family	\$15	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sustaining	\$50	<input type="checkbox"/>
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I would like to receive a membership pin. \_\_\_\_\_

Please clip and mail to a friend along with a note about our work.



*WPA Collection, State Archives*

## "Tobacco Curing"

A Kentucky farmer and the fruits of his labor are pictured in this photograph from the State Archives' WPA Photo Collection. The collection contains more than 850 images produced between 1926 and 1941 as part of the federal

project to document aspects of Kentucky life. A complete photocopy set of these pictures is available for the public to review. The archives will arrange for copies to be made of any print in the collection for a nominal processing fee.

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