

for the Record

Devoted to Kentucky's State Archives and the Historical Record

Winter 2000

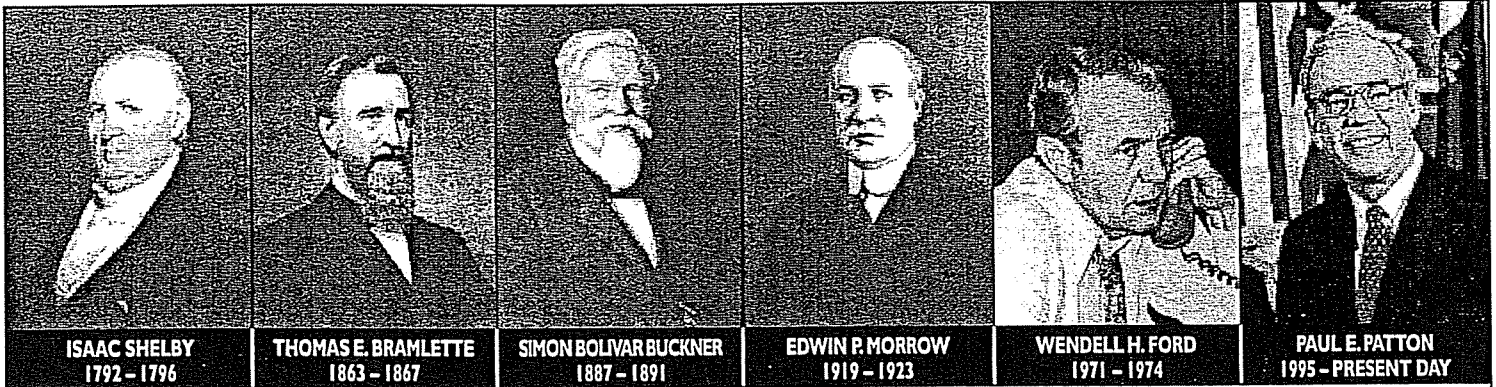
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ISAAC SHELBY
1792 - 1796

THOMAS E. BRAMLETTE
1863 - 1867

SIMON BOLIVAR BUCKNER
1887 - 1891

EDWIN P. MORROW
1919 - 1923

WENDELL H. FORD
1971 - 1974

PAUL E. PATTON
1995 - PRESENT DAY

From Shelby to Patton, Governors' Papers at State Archives A Rich Source for Kentucky History

More than two centuries of Kentucky history unfold in the official records of the Commonwealth's governors, and they are a prime source for scholars and a principal collection of the State Archives. The Public Records Division of the Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives is the official repository for these records, which begin with the first term of Isaac Shelby in 1792. Records of nearly all of Kentucky's fifty-nine governors are maintained at the State Archives, with holdings totaling approximately 2,000 cubic feet. Reflecting the growth of the state and its government over the past two hundred years, the collections range in size from one small box of records for Governor Shelby (1792-1796), to more than 300 cubic feet of records for a recent administration like that of Governor Brereton C. Jones (1991-1995).

On the frontier

Kentucky was still very much a part of the frontier, as the records from the first several governors' administrations illustrate. Much of the correspondence relates to the strength, organization, and structure of the state militia, which was of vital importance as the potential threat of local Native American populations was perceived as very real. Other letters ask for guidance on questions of local government, and request consideration for positions filled by executive appointment. Still others concern surveys and disputes over titles to land.

As the state gradually became more settled, the threat to physical safety diminished, and Kentucky entered a period of relative prosperity and national influence. The gover-

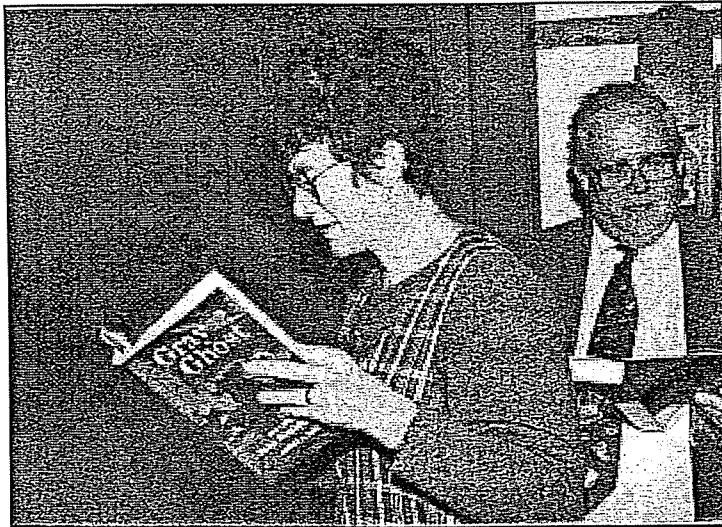
ners' papers reflect the public desire for passable roads, improved river navigation, and eventually the construction of railroads. Requests for appointments to civil offices continued to pour into the Governor's office, most of which understandably could

not be filled. As the mid-nineteenth century approached, the issue of slavery became increasingly divisive, with both pro- and anti-slavery advocates pressing their cases in letters to the chief executive.

(cont'd. on p.4)

Funding for Archives' Projects Included in Governor's Budget

Governor Paul E. Patton's 2000-2002 executive budget contains significant funding for two State Archives' related projects. Included is an appropriation of \$200,000 for an archival storage feasibility study, to address the critical need to meet archival storage requirements of state and local governments for the next 25 years. The study will focus on the best means to (1) expand capacity to manage, preserve, and make accessible archival collections, in all media, with a special focus on the construction and development of a digital archives; (2) increase space for imaging services and micrographics operations, to expanded digital conversion of paper records to electronic form; (3) enlarge public services and reference areas; and (4) dedicate space for KDLA's training activities with state and local agency personnel. The projected building addition would be an expansion to the existing Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives' (KDLA) facility. The study would be a major element of developing a statewide strategy for archiving electronic records created by state and local government. The need for such a strategy is signaled by the Commonwealth's commitment to "do business electronically;" the continuing need to maintain the State Archives as a vital element in governance; the critical need to rely less on paper recordkeeping; and the new opportunities created by the computerization of recordkeeping. *(cont'd. on p.4)*



Public Archives Symposium attendees Teresa McChesney and Gerald Thompson peruse their newly autographed copies of *Gray Ghost*, by Dr. James Ramage.

Newly Available at the State Archives

- Fayette County Settlements, 1800-1870
- Governor William S. Taylor papers (1899-1900)
- Sinking Fund Commission records, 1875-1930

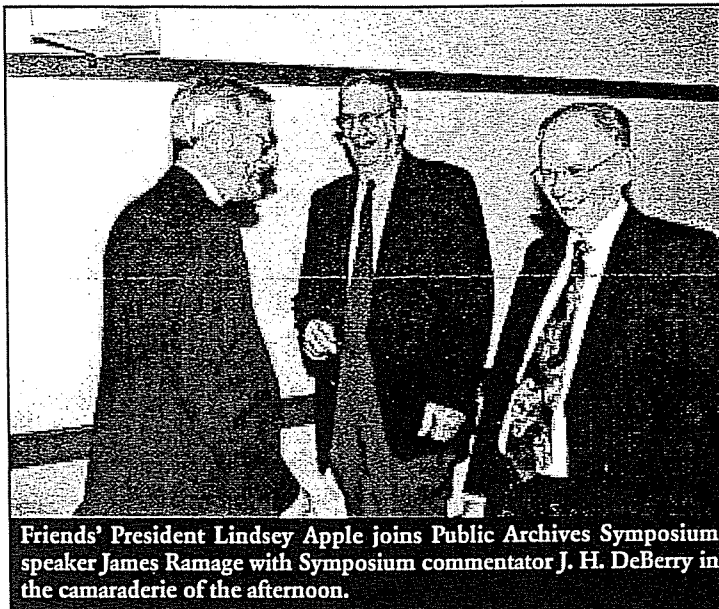
As part of a continuing program to enhance access to collections already accessioned into the State Archives, Public Records Division staff regularly carry out arrangement and description of records. This column announces these "newly available" holdings to encourage broader research use of the Archives' resources.

Work was recently completed on a large collection of settlement records from Fayette County, covering the years 1800-1870. Settlements are probate records and can contain valuable information for the researcher or genealogist, including names of relatives and lists of the deceased's property. These records have now been arranged by year and thereunder alphabetically, which will greatly enhance access to this important collection.

William S. Taylor, a Republican, won the election for governor against William Goebel in December 1899. Governor Taylor only served for two months, however, as Goebel and the Democrats contested the election. As the election was being reviewed, Goebel was

shot, and then inaugurated on his deathbed, officially ending Taylor's term. The records of Taylor's brief administration are sparse, but do help shed light upon a turbulent period in Kentucky history. The collection includes a number of petitions for pardon and requests for appointments. Of particular interest is the Governor's Executive Journal, which lists the official actions taken by Taylor on a daily basis. The Journal contains entries well beyond January 31, 1900, the date on which his administration supposedly ended, since Taylor initially refused to accept that he was out of office.

Among its many duties, the Sinking Fund Commission was responsible for supporting the operation of public buildings. The minutes of the Commission (1875-1930) provide several detailed accounts of funds allocated for the construction and upkeep of the Capitol Building, the Executive Mansion, the State Penitentiary, and other facilities maintained by the state during this period. An 1876 entry, for example, documents the issuance of a contract for the "ventilation of the cells" of the penitentiary. In 1912, the minutes detail the Commissioners' plans for the purchase of land and choice of architect for the construction of a new Governor's Mansion, next to the recently completed Capitol. Although the minutes are not indexed, an interested researcher can find many such interesting accounts of the funding of state projects.



Friends' President Lindsey Apple joins Public Archives Symposium speaker James Ramage with Symposium commentator J. H. DeBerry in the camaraderie of the afternoon.



Friends' member John Irwin has his copy of *Gray Ghost* signed by the author.



Symposium attendees Lindsey Apple, Teresa McChesney, Jim Prichard, and Lesley Conniff line up for author James Ramage's inscription.

Shaker Village is Site of Friends' Annual Meeting, Public Archives Symposium

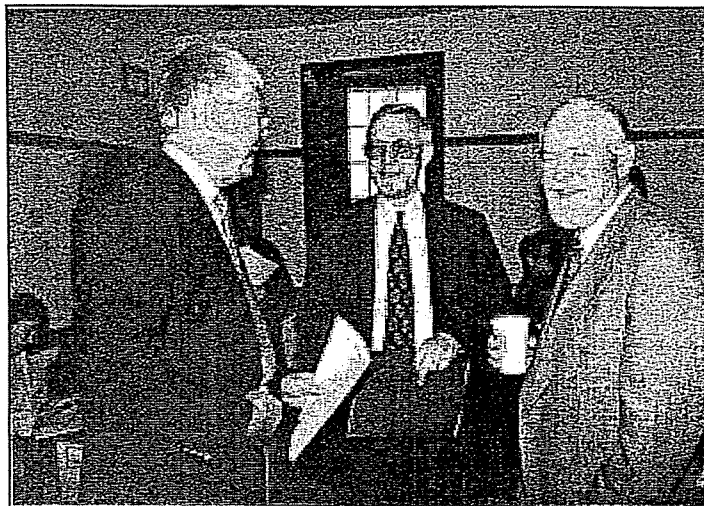
The annual meeting of the Friends of Kentucky Public Archives, Inc. convened at Shaker Village of Pleasant Hill, near Harrodsburg, on November 19, 1999. The business meeting was followed by a hearty lunch in the Trustees' Office. In the afternoon, attendees enjoyed the Friends'-sponsored Public Archives Symposium, held in the comfortable surroundings of the West Lot Dwelling.

At the annual business meeting, new officers and board members were elected. Elected as officers were Lindsey Apple, Georgetown, president; Paul Coates, Louisville, vice-president; Lesley Conniff, Louisville, secretary, and W. Grady Walter III, Lexington, treasurer. Joining the board of directors for a term expiring in 2001, replacing former board member John Duncan, was Ellie Caroland, Georgetown. Elected to terms expiring in 2002 were John Boh, Covington; Paul Coates, Louisville; Lesley Conniff, Louisville; Bramblett Elam, Frankfort; Peggy Galloway, Danville; Patricia Hodges, Bowling Green; and Jane-Rives Williams, Bardstown. President Lindsey Apple reviewed the year's events for the organization, and State Archivist Richard Belding provided an update on developments at the Public Records Division.

Dr. James Ramage of Northern Kentucky University was the featured speaker at the annual Public Archives Symposium in the afternoon. Dr. Ramage spoke about his research for *Gray Ghost: The Life of Colonel John Singleton Mosby*, his new book on this famous Confederate raider. Dr. J. H. DeBerry of Somerset Community College offered commentary, and Dr. Ramage stayed afterwards to autograph copies.

The annual Public Archives Symposium highlights recent scholarly work using original source materials in Kentucky repositories. It is an effort to bring the fruits of recent research to a wider audience and to make more visible the connection between the contribution of archives and archivists and the work of historians.

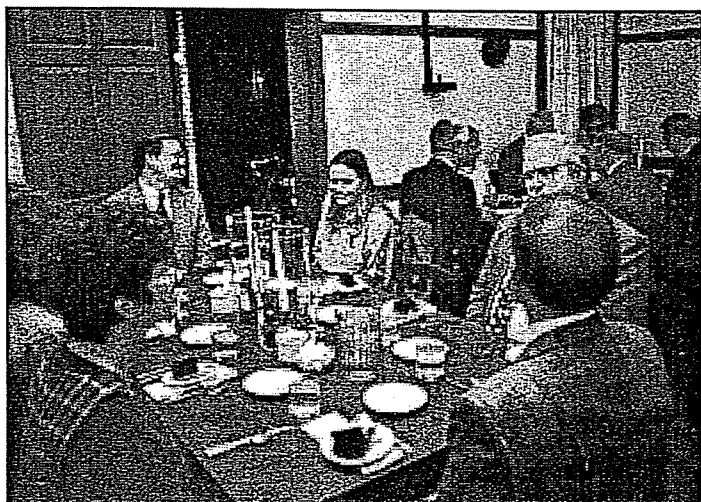
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Friends' vice president Paul Coates, president Lindsey Apple, and board member Paul Fuller enjoy a moment in the West Lot Dwelling at Shaker Village of Pleasant Hill, site of the annual meeting.



New Friends' board members Ellie Caroland and Jane-Rives Williams meet Friends' Award of Merit winner Randy Otey, of Paducah.



Good food and conversation with friends were the order of the day at the Shaker Village luncheon, just prior to the annual Public Archives Symposium.



Friends' board members Mary Doyle Johnson and Paul Fuller scan a review of Public Archives Symposium speaker James Ramage's new book, *Gray Ghost: The Life of Colonel John Singleton Mosby*.

From Shelby...

(cont'd. from p.1)

Pleas for pardon

The governors' papers of the late nineteenth century are notable for the volume of petitions for pardons. Each of Kentucky's constitutions has given the chief executive the power to issue pardons, so from the very beginning every governor has received pleas for clemency from or on behalf of prisoners. In the latter half of the 1800's, these requests grew to nearly unmanageable numbers, with hundreds of letters and petitions inundating the Governor's office. These records provide us with an invaluable resource in studying the social history of this fascinating era. Other correspondence from these years reflects the governors' attempts to control the sometimes rampant lawlessness of the "feuds."

A lingering legacy

With civil war imminent in 1861, Governor Beriah Magoffin found himself torn between loyalty to the Union and to his slaveholding state. His papers include telegrams he sent to governors of other states, attempting to find a basis of agreement to forestall hostilities. His plans for keeping Kentucky out of the war a failure, and faced with a pro-Union legislature that considered his hopes for neutrality as pro-Southern, Magoffin finally resigned. The entries in his Executive Journal for this period are moving accounts of a man overwhelmed by events beyond his control. The Civil War figures prominently in the papers of the next several governors as well, as they struggle to deal with its impact on the state and its lingering, often bitter legacy.

A capital murder

As the twentieth century dawned, Kentucky was beset by the very real danger of civil war within its borders, as a result of the election dispute between Republican William S. Taylor and Democrat William

Goebel, and Goebel's assassination. The papers of Taylor and of Goebel's successor, J.C.W. Beckham, reflect the dangerous partisanship of this juncture. With order restored, subsequent governors could turn their attentions to other issues, such as education, taxation, and prohibition. Many of the governors of this period were less than effective, partly as a result of a generally adversarial relationship with the legislature.

There are few official records at the State Archives for governors from 1927 through 1959, except for copies of executive orders accessioned from the Secretary of State's Office. The records of these administrations, if still extant, are maintained by other repositories. The papers of A. B. "Happy" Chandler, for example, are at the University of Kentucky. Some official correspondence from Governors Bert Combs (1959-1963) and Edward T. "Ned" Breathitt (1963-1967) are available, but the State Archives has limited holdings from the administrations of Louie Nunn (1967-1971) and Wendell H. Ford (1971-1974).

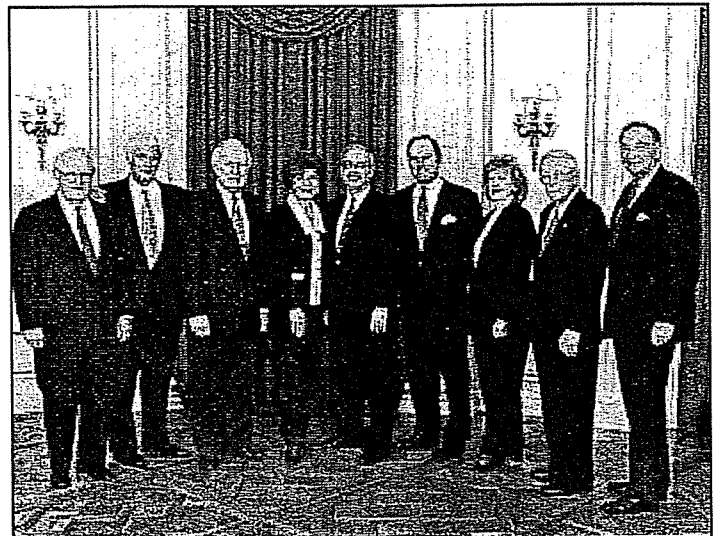
Preserving the record

Beginning with Governor Julian Carroll (1974-1979), all of the official papers of the succeeding governors are held by the State Archives, through Brereton Jones (1991-1995). Governor Jones' records are the first to have a readily accessible electronic index. The most recent governors' papers include letters written to the Governor on a wide variety of personal and public issues, and attachments showing how this correspondence was routed; copies of speeches given by the Governor; and the ever-present requests for pardons. As recordkeeping practices have evolved, so have the records used by Kentucky's governors. In addition to paper records and ledger-style volumes, the Archives' holdings of governors' papers also include electronic records, photographs, videotapes, and audiotapes. These special media records will present continuing preservation and management challenges to archivists in the future, as they work to assure continued access to these special records.

An invaluable resource

Researchers find the governors' papers to be an invaluable resource in helping to understand the people and events of Kentucky history. Genealogists may locate an

ancestor in the requests for appointments, or even in the petitions for pardons. Covering nearly the whole of the state's past, these records are among the most important holdings in the State Archives.



A Gathering of Governors

Guests of Governor Paul E. Patton and his wife at a 1999 Governor's Mansion dinner were a number of former governors including, from left, Edward T. "Ned" Breathitt, John Y. Brown, Jr., Julian Carroll, (Mrs. Patton and Governor Patton), Brereton C. Jones, Martha Layne Collins, Wendell H. Ford, and Louie Nunn.

Friends' Honor Local Officials

Since its inception in 1989, the Award of Merit, given annually by the Friends of Kentucky Public Archives, Inc., has recognized outstanding contributions by government officials to the management and preservation of public records in Kentucky. This past year's recipients were announced at the Friends' 1999 annual meeting in November at Shaker Village of Pleasant Hill. They are Judy Long Witt, Montgomery County Clerk, and Randy Otey, McCracken County Clerk. Their dedication and professionalism is a credit to them personally and an encouraging example for public officials at all levels of government. Congratulations!



Award of Merit winner and McCracken County Clerk Randy Otey receives his award from State Archivist Richard Belding at the Friends' Annual Meeting at Shaker Village in November.

How You Can Help!

The Archives Research Room at the State Archives always has equipment or supplemental resource needs for which state funds are not available, and private donations have long played an important role in permitting the State Archives to fill these important gaps. Many donors like to know exactly how their contribution will help, and in response to such requests, we're glad to make the list below available. Won't you be a Friend and contribute funds toward the purchase of one or more items? Gifts to the Friends are tax deductible. Please direct your support to the address on the Friends' membership form, below. Thanks for your help!

Microfilm

Freedmen's Bureau Records for Kentucky. Records of the Office of the Comptroller of Currency: Registers of Signatures of Depositions in Branches (Lexington & Louisville) of the Freedmen's Savings & Trust Banks. 1 roll, \$34.00.

Freedmen's Bureau Records for Kentucky American Freedmen's Inquiry Commission. 3 rolls, \$102.00.

CD-ROM

"Roll of Honor": Roster of 191,000 Union Soldiers Buried in 300 National Cemeteries. \$49.99.

Kentucky Marriages, 1851-1900. \$26.95.

1850 Kentucky Census Index. \$49.95.

Books

1890 Kentucky Veterans Census Index. \$33.00.

Compendium of the Confederate Armies: Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri, by Stewart Sifakis. \$27.50.

Early Louisville, Kentucky Newspaper Abstracts 1806-1828, Crowder. \$28.00.

1787 Census of Virginia, Schreiner-Yantis, 3 vols. \$200.00.

A Genealogical Collection of Kentucky Birth and Death Records, Vol. 1, S. K. Edlemon. 16.00.

Governor's Budget

(cont'd. from p.1)

The Governor also recommended \$1.188 million to create a Document Management Digitization System (DMDS), to expand KDLA's capacity to convert documents from paper to digital format. The DMDS would also permit KDLA to respond to growing enterprise, or state-government wide, demand for document image management services and to digitize incoming paper records in sufficient volume to limit the growth of paper collections. Of this amount, \$375,000 is projected for the specialized systems planning and development required to meet unique archival needs.



Montgomery County Clerk Judy Long Witt was honored with the Award of Merit of the Friends of Kentucky Public Archives, Inc., at the January meeting of the Montgomery County Fiscal Court.



Friends of Kentucky Public Archives, Inc.

The Friends of Kentucky Public Archives, Inc., is a not for profit membership organization of private citizens concerned with helping the Public Records Division of Kentucky's Department for Libraries and Archives fulfill its role as a vital information link between people and government. The Friends' organization supports the management, preservation, and use of Kentucky's historic public records and serves as an advocate for the Kentucky State Archives, which the division manages. For further information, contact the Friends at P. O. Box 4224, Frankfort, KY 40604.

Yes, I would like to renew my membership in / become a member of the **Friends of Kentucky Public Archives, Inc.**

My check for _____ made payable to the Friends of Kentucky Public Archives, Inc., is enclosed. Membership benefits include a quarterly newsletter, a membership pin, and invitations to workshops, special events, the Kentucky Archives Institute, the Public Archives Symposium and the annual meeting. Gifts to the Friends beyond the basic membership are tax deductible.

Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____ Telephone: _____ E-Mail Address: _____

Membership levels: _____ \$15 Individual / Family _____ \$25 Libraries, Genealogical and Historical Societies _____ \$250 Life
_____ \$50 Sustaining _____ \$1,000 Corporate

Please clip and mail to: Friends of Kentucky Public Archives, Inc., P.O. Box 4224, Frankfort, Kentucky 40604
We appreciate your support.



A packhorse librarian [ca. 1937-1939]

Library service was unknown in many parts of rural Kentucky until 1937, when the Works Projects Administration inaugurated the "Packhorse Library." These librarians (ninety-six women and eleven men) brought books and journals to eager readers in isolated areas, despite bad roads and inclement weather. *(This photograph is from the Works Projects Administration Collection, in the State Archives holdings of the Public Records Division, Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives.)*

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