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PIONEERS

In the Early Settlement of Kentucky Were Mostly From Ireland.

Amid Unequaled Privations They Blazed Way For Civilization.

For Over One Hundred Years Irishmen Have Led in This State.

SOMETHING WE CAN BE PROUD OF

St. Patrick's day is a fitting time to call attention in this paper, the only Irish American journal in Kentucky, to the pioneers and builders of this grand old Commonwealth—the explorers of its waters and its plains, the men who established our independence, the men and women who cleared the primeval forests, extending the outposts of civilization from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Without school or church they established Christian homes and amid unequalled privations they opened up for the country the great Middle West. The pioneers of Kentucky were of Irish birth or extraction to a large extent. We need the example of the pioneer to recall to us the nobler view of life, and to teach us the deeper lessons of right living. We can in no way better insure our future than by knowing and admiring the pioneers and in striving to excel them in the virtues which mark their lives. It is in no spirit of boastfulness that the Kentucky Irish American from time to time recalls the deeds of the early Irish in Kentucky, but rather that the rising generation may know something accurate about the early history of the State.

Dr. Hart and William Coomes were among the first Catholic settlers in Kentucky, locating in Harrodsburg in 1775. The doctor was the first medical practitioner in the Commonwealth, and Mrs. Coomes was the first school teacher. This credit is given them in Collins' History of Kentucky. The descendants of William Coomes still live here, and one of them, Martin F. Coomes, M. D., is a distinguished Louisville physician.

Among the fortified stations or forts built for protection against the Indians by the early settlers not a few bore names familiar to Irish ears, denoting the presence of many of the Irish race. Among them may be mentioned Bryan's Station, Doherty's Station, Drennan's Lick, Feagan's Station, Finn's Station, Fleming's Station, Hart's Station, Higgins' Block House, Irish Station, Lynch's Station, Logan's Ford, McAfee's Station, McFadden's Station, McGee's Station, McCormick's, Sullivan's, McKennan's, McConnell's, Kennedy's, Gilmore's and other stations having Irish names.

Kentucky counties bearing Irish names are Adair, Butler, Logan, Lyon, Hart, Montgomery, McCracken, Fleming, Boyle, Carroll, Rowan, Knox and Casey. John Carthy, the most successful merchant in Lexington in early times, was a son of John Carthy, a native of Ireland, who came early to Kentucky from New Jersey.

As late as 1840 there were sixty surviving veterans of the Revolutionary war resident in Kentucky bearing Irish names as follows:

James McElroy, Andrew Linan, James McElhaney, James Fitzpatrick, Michael Moore, William Brady, George Bryan, Edward McConnell, Michael Smith, Michael Freeman, John Hart, Jos. Dunn, William DeCoursey, David Driscoll, John Short, John Dehan, Richard Wade, Randall Haley, Cornelius Sullivan, Hugh Drennon, Patrick McCann, E. Madden, John Burke, David Kennedy, Timothy Logan, John Slavin, James Logan, John Martin, John Herron, Patrick Marvin, Michael Hargan, Daniel Bryan, John Carroll, John McGee, John Murphy, Joseph Casey, Richard Ballew, John Keen, Stephen Collins, William Lyons, Jacob Dooley, William Kelly, Chas. Hart, William Conner, Dan McCarthy, Robert Burke, John Reilly, John Mahon, Martin Hughes, Joseph Sweeney, Thomas Laughlin, John Adair, Patrick Coyle, Dennis Dalley, John McQuilly, William Devine, John Mitchell, Gen. Richard Butler, Major John Finley, Col. James Morrison.

An idea of Irish blood in Kentucky in early times can be formed from the study of the above names. Nearly all the great Irish family names are represented, and the absence of old Testament names, so common among those of the Presbyterian and Congregational denominations, indicate that they were of Catholic stock, at least when they or their fathers immigrated. The first settlers were from Virginia, North Carolina and Maryland. The latter were Catholics and settled

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near Bardstown. The settlement they made near Fairfield is still Catholic. James McBride "paddled his own canoe" up the Kentucky river as early as 1745. He was an Irishman. Col. George Croghan, an Irishman and Indian agent for the British, visited the State twenty years later. With Daniel Boone in 1769 came James Mooney, John Stewart, Joseph Holden, John Findlay and William Cool, all Irish except Boone, whose mother was Irish and of a Maryland family.

Among the first settlers of Harrodsburg were the families of McGarry and Hogan. Major McGarry was a brave but very impulsive man, and a great Indian fighter. In an attack at Bryan's Station in 1782 the savages were repulsed, but four women and children were killed. McGarry, putting spurs to his horse, cried out for all but the cowards to follow him, and galloped in the direction taken by the savage foe. Every man of the 160 in the fort followed him, but the result was disastrous. They fell into an ambush and sixty of the number were killed.

Irishmen have graced the bench, the bar and pulpit of Kentucky for 100 years. William T. Barry was Chief Justice of the Court of Appeals in 1825, and was also a Representative and Senator in Congress. John Adair had a high command in the war of 1812-15, and received the thanks of the Kentucky Legislature for gallantry at New Orleans, was Governor in 1820, and also served in Congress as Senator and Representative.

John Rowan, William Logan, Robert Ewing, William Casey and Matthew Lyon were other Irishmen who held high positions in the Commonwealth in the early days. Matthew Lyons was the first man to establish a newspaper in Kentucky. He served in Congress from Vermont, Kentucky and Arkansas. His career has been referred to heretofore in this paper in previous issues.

Mrs. Ann McGinty brought the first spinning wheel to Kentucky and made the first linen. She is also credited with making the first butter in the State.

The first Catholic priest in Kentucky was Father William Whalen, who visited Bardstown in 1787.

For all time the memory of Col. Theo. O'Hara will be remembered in Kentucky and in the nation. A great and magnanimous Government has had his verses, the "Bivouac of the Dead," cast in bronze and set up in appropriate places in the National cemeteries, though he was a Confederate soldier, the son of an Irish schoolmaster:

"The muffled drum's sad roll has beat
The soldiers' last tattoo!
No more in life's parade shall meet
That brave and fallen few;
On fame's eternal camping ground
Their silent tents are spread,
And glory guards with solemn mood
The bivouac of the dead."

On a previous occasion the Kentucky Irish American has called attention to the fact that 160 men who marched from Louisville to Vincennes to reduce the British post at that point in 1798 nearly one-half were of Irish birth or descent. These soldiers acquired for the United States the great States of Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, and part of Minnesota. Many of the descendants of these soldiers still live in Kentucky.

Irishmen can feel proud of the part their ancestors took in the early history and settlement of the State. It is well to think of these things on St. Patrick's day and refer to them with pride and satisfaction.

KILKENNY THE MARBLE CITY.

Attention is called to the fact that there is at least a town in Ireland whose buildings and streets are mostly marble; whose shops, houses and churches are adorned with it. The town is Kilkenny, which has gained the designation of the "Marble City," because so plentifully has the native black marble found in its vicinity been used for various purposes in the town that, as a matter of fact, the very streets are paved with it. Black marble is not the only kind found and used, however, in the town. There are some excellent examples of what Ireland can produce in marble to be seen in the Cathedral at Kilkenny. Green specimens are observed even finer than the black ones, and the reddest itself is an excellent instance of what Ireland can show in this way. The supports of the pulpit are solid pieces of this green marble, which is found not about Kilkenny so much as in the farther district of Connemara. But it is not the policy of England to help the industries of Ireland. She wants to stifle all Ireland's commercial progress, and how well she has succeeded every one knows.

FRANCE

Has Honored Memory of Ireland's Patron Saint For Centuries.

Flowering of the Blackthorn in Midwinter Near St. Martin's.

Phenomenon Which Scientists Have Been Unable to Explain.

BEAUTIFUL LEGEND OF ST. PATRICK

Ireland is not the only country which has traditions about St. Patrick. France also bears a remarkable testimony to St. Patrick in the mysterious "Fleurs de St. Patrice," and the venerable "Eglice de St. Patrice," situated in the diocese of Tours, on the banks of the Loire, a few leagues distant from the city of St. Martin. It is well known that St. Patrick was a disciple of St. Martin of Tours, with whom he spent four years after his escape from Ireland, and from whom he received the tonsure and was made a cleric.

The learned Jesuit, S. H. Frisbie, in a recent article entitled "The Flowers of St. Patrick," writes entertainingly of the legends and monuments which are bound up with St. Patrick in France. The article of the learned Jesuit is too long for publication in the Kentucky Irish American, and our readers will have to content with extracts from the paper.

What are the flowers of St. Patrick and their blossoming every year in midwinter for the past 1500 years? The answers is given by the President of the Archaeological Society of Tours, Monsignor Chevallier, writing in 1850. He says:

"On the banks of the Loire, a few leagues from Tours, a very remarkable phenomenon is repeated year by year and from time immemorial—one concerning which science as yet has given no satisfactory explanation. This phenomenon, too little known, consists in the blossoming in the midst of the rigors of winter of the black thorn, commonly called the sloe." Continuing, he says that thousands during the month of December in each year are eye-witnesses to its repetition, and he himself gathers these extraordinary flowers. The shrub is found on the slope of a hill at St. Patrice. The circulation of the sap, which should be suspended in winter, is plainly revealed by the moist state of the bark, which easily separates from the wood which it covers. The buds swell, the flowers expand as in the month of April and cover the boughs with odorous and snow-like flowers.

The inhabitants of St. Patrice record an ancient tradition, which is full of freshness and poetry. St. Patrick, it is said, being on the way from Ireland to join St. Martin in Gaul—attracted by the fame of that saint's sanctity and miracles—and having arrived at the banks of the Loire near the spot where the church now bearing his name has been built, rested under a shrub. It was Christmas time, when the cold was intense. In honor of the saint the shrub expanded its branches and, shaking off the snow which rested on them, by an unheard-of prodigy arrayed itself in flowers white as the snow itself. St. Patrick crossed the Loire on his cloak, and on reaching the opposite bank another blackthorn under which he rested at once burst out into flowers. Since that time, says the chronicler, the two shrubs have never ceased to blossom at Christmas in honor of St. Patrick.

This singular growth of flowers is almost unknown, although it has been repeated every year from time immemorial. The oldest inhabitant of St. Patrice has always seen it take place at a fixed period of the year, no matter how severe the season may be, and such has also been the ancient tradition of their forefathers. However, this phenomenon is limited to the locality and to the shrub in question. Cuttings transplanted elsewhere have only blossomed in the spring, and the hawthorns which grow amidst the sloes do not manifest any circulation of sap.

The village of St. Patrice has about 700 inhabitants. The whole neighborhood is redolent of St. Patrick. The railway station is called the Station of St. Patrice, the Commune is also named after the saint, while near the wonderful flowering blackthorn stands the ancient parish church dedicated to the apostle of Ireland. From the style of architecture it is clear that the church dates from the tenth or eleventh century, and in fact the church is referred to in the annals of 1035.

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