

History of Taylor Mill, Kentucky

By
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HISTORY OF TAYLOR MILL

INTRODUCTION

Taylor Mill is a city of the fourth class located south of old Latonia along Taylor Mill Road (KY Route 16) in Kenton County, Kentucky. It includes the former cities of Forest Hills and Winston Park, along the Banklick Creek, as well as Sunny Acres and several other subdivisions located on top of Taylor Mill hill and a recently annexed area along DeCoursey Pike on the Licking River.

As a city, Taylor Mill is relatively young, having been incorporated in 1957. However, the beginning of settlement here stretches back to the late eighteenth century just several years after Kentucky was admitted to the Union.

It began in 1795 when Jacob Foster and William Smith petitioned the Campbell County Court, which then included Kenton County, for authority to operate a saw and grist mill on Banklick Creek, about a quarter of a mile up from the mouth. Later, permission was granted to Jacob Foster. In 1810, James Taylor, the wealthy landowner from Newport, purchased the property and before long, the road leading from the area now known as Covington to the mill and going up to the hill south of the mill was known as "Taylor's Mill Road." From that time on, settlers moved into the area, felling trees for lumber and clearing land for farming. As the growing urban population moved south into this area, beginning in the early 1900's, subdivisions were developed leading to the incorporation

of the community into a city.

THE BEGINNING

The first English speaking explorers came to Kentucky in the mid-18th century.¹ In the Treaty of Fort Stanwick in 1768, the Six Nations of Indians and the Delaware, Shawnees and Mingoos of Ohio traded the land south of the Ohio and west of the Tennessee River to King George III. This was taken by many as an invitation to settle in Kentucky.² The first permanent white settlement was established by James Harrod in 1774. Daniel Boone built his settlement the following year.³ Virginia established Kentucky as a county in October 1776, with it's own separate county court, justices of the peace, sheriff, constables, coroner and military officers.⁴ On November 1, 1780, Kentucky county was divided into three counties of Lincoln, Jefferson and Fayette. The northeastern section was included in Fayette County.⁵

In August 1788, John Filson and Robert Patterson, of Lexington, and Mathias Denman of New Jersey, purchased a tract of land on the north side of the Ohio River, opposite the mouth of the Licking River. They arrived on this tract in December 1788, and laid out the town of Losantiville, later named Cincinnati.⁶

In 1789, Jacob Fowler built the first cabin on the southern bank of the Ohio, east of the mouth of the Licking. Francis Kennedy followed soon after on the west side of the Licking from where he operated the first ferry across the Ohio.⁸ Also that year, Major David Leitch built a block house with pickets and established

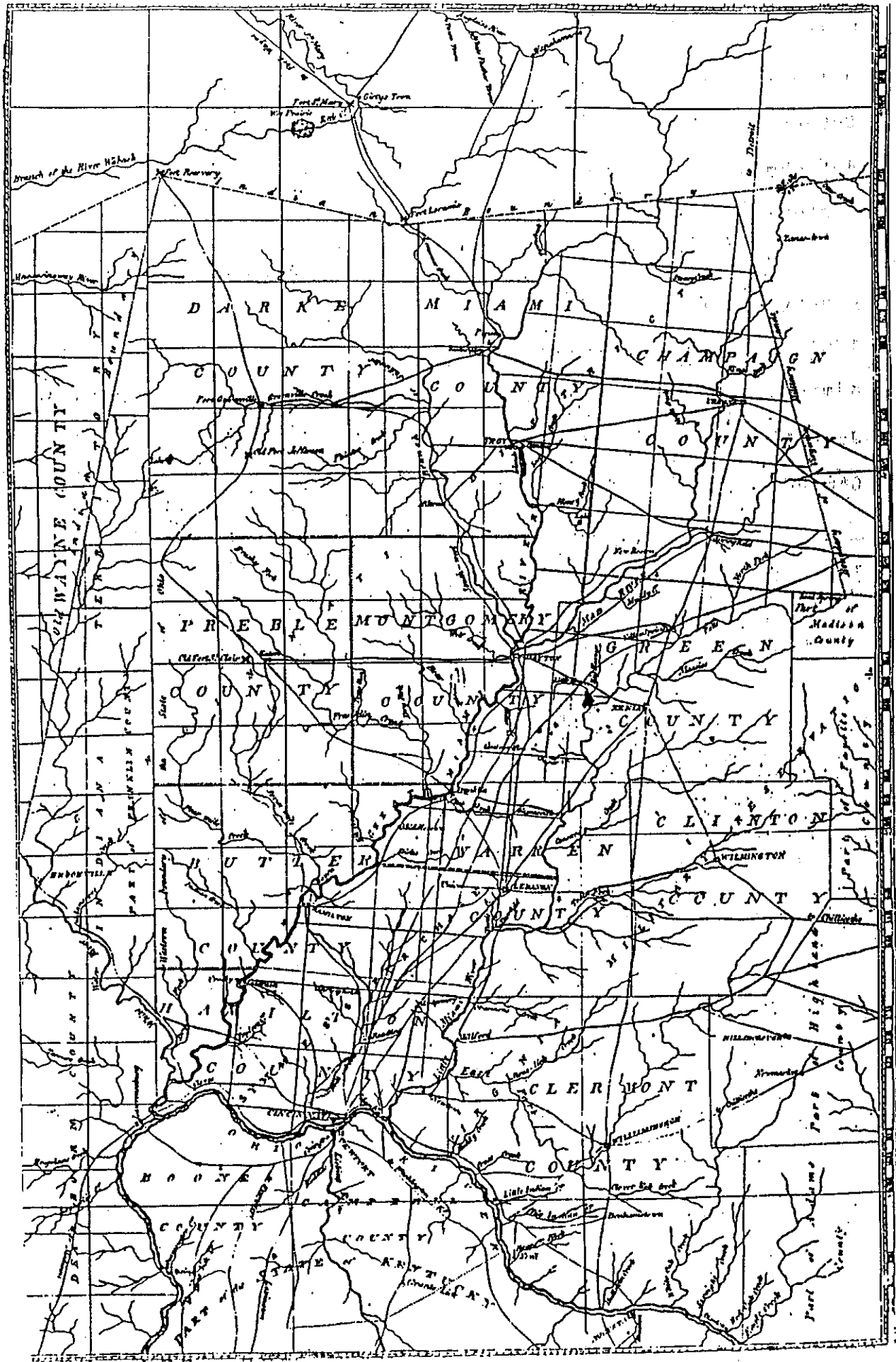
Leitch's Station* on the east side of the Licking River about six miles from the mouth and about a quarter of a mile north of the DeCoursey Creek.^{10**} Also that year Major John Dougherty, with a detachment of one hundred and forty soldiers established Ft. Washington.¹¹

Meanwhile, the settlements in the central part of Kentucky county continued to grow at a much faster rate and on February 4, 1791, President Washington signed legislation providing for the admission of the Commonwealth of Kentucky into the Union as of June 1, 1792.¹² Campbell County,^{***} which included present day Campbell, Kenton, Boone, Pendleton, Grant and Bracken counties was

* Major David Leitch was born in Glasgow, Scotland, on September 11, 1753. He served in the Revolutionary War and was rewarded with a land grant of 13,800 acres on the east side of the Licking River beginning about 5 miles from the mouth. He served in the first convention at Danville in 1784. He married Keturah Moss in 1790. He died November 7, 1794. His widow married James Taylor in 1795. Leitch's house still stands on Licking Pike at Port Hosea.⁹

** DeCoursey Creek is named for William DeCoursey, Sr., who was born May 24, 1756, at Baltimore, Maryland. He served in the Revolutionary War and afterwards purchased 200 acres from John Harris on the west side of the Licking near DeCoursey Creek, where he lived and established a Baptist Church. He died on October 23, 1841.

*** Campbell County was named after Col. John Campbell, a Revolutionary War soldier who fought the Indians in the Battle of Dayton, Kentucky (formerly called Roger's Defeat). He represented Kentucky in the Virginia Legislature and was a member of Kentucky Constitutions Committee in 1792 that wrote the first constitution. He also served as Speaker of the Kentucky Senate. He died in 1799.



formed on May 10, 1795. The first session of the county court was held in the town of Wilmington on the west side of the Licking River about 22 miles from the mouth and near the present town of Morningview. James Taylor was appointed the first clerk of the court.¹³

The county court had considerable authority over the lives of the early settlers including the building and maintenance of roads* and mill dams, both of which were important in the earliest days of settlement in the Taylor Mill area.¹⁴

THE FIRST ROADS

The earliest roads were buffalo or Indian trails or a combination of the two. The main buffalo trace went from Maysville to Blue Licks then to Big Bone on the Ohio.¹⁵ Smaller trails connected some of the various salt licks or springs to this main trace. There were salt springs located along the Bank Lick Creek near where present Highland Avenue intersects the 3-L Highway,** and these were likely connected to the buffalo trace. The Miami Indian Trail from the great Lakes through Ohio, Kentucky and Tennessee to the Tennessee River went along the Licking River valley.¹⁷

* The County Court was authorized to mark out and build roads, requiring all males over 16 years who were living along the roads to help build them. One could get out of the work by providing two male slaves over the age of 16.

** Originally known as a salt lick, this soon was the site of the Banklick salt works where water was pumped from the ground and boiled for the salt. By 1828, it had been converted to a spa, known as Latonia Springs. (The old Latonia Race Track received its name because of its proximity to the spa).¹⁶

This Licking River Indian trail was used by the British and Indians under the leadership of Captain Henry Bird in the raid on the central Kentucky settlements of Ruddle's and Martin's stations in 1780. In that year, Bird and approximately 850 men, traveled from Detroit to the Ohio River and then down the Licking. They stopped at the forks of the Licking (present Falmouth) and then followed the course of the South Fork to Ruddle's and Martin's stations, which with the use of cannons, were easily destroyed. Three hundred and fifty settlers were taken prisoner.^{18*}

In retaliation, Col. George Rogers Clark called on all available men to meet at the mouth of the Licking for an invasion of Indian settlements north of the Ohio. Of those responding to the call, was Benjamin Logan and his men from central Kentucky. They traveled the same road as Bird's forces to Falmouth where they spent the night.¹⁹ Then, travelling north along the river they went west along Cruises Creek and spent the next night about three quarters of a mile southwest of Wilmington (Morningview) and about five miles from the headwaters of Banklick Creek. The next day, they followed Banklick Creek to its mouth at the Licking River where they camped. From there they went on to the mouth of the Licking where they met up with George Rogers Clark and his men.²⁰

The northern part of Bird's War Road roughly corresponds with DeCoursey Pike and Logan's trail from the headwaters of the Banklick (near Independence) roughly corresponds with Madison Pike

* John Filson's map of Kentucky published in 1784, identifies a road leading from the forks of the Licking to its mouth as "Bird's War Road."

to where Grand Avenue would intersect if it went all of the way through.

In 1788, John Filson, as part of his establishment of Cincinnati, marked out a road from Lexington to the mouth of the Licking, which followed an old trace that went along the Dry Ridge separating the Licking River valley from the Kentucky River valley (roughly US 25 today).²¹ Going north from Florence, this road appears to have followed the route of the old Louisville, Cincinnati and Lexington (LC&L) Railroad (L&N RR- Short Line Division) to Latonia Springs, then following Madison Pike, then over the 26th Street hill then down along the old Banklick Road (west of Madison Avenue) to the river. In 1792, the Kentucky legislature took steps to establish a road from Frankfort to Cincinnati, which from Georgetown to Cincinnati was this same road.²² This road was referred to in early records from the Campbell County Court, as the Georgetown Road. The present city of Taylor Mill lies between this road and Bird's War Road (DeCoursey Pike).

TAYLOR'S MILL

The first known enterprise in the area known as Taylor Mill was the saw and grist mill that William Smith and Jacob Foster built on the Bank Lick Creek some time before September 7, 1795. On that date, the Campbell County Court ordered an investigation into the effects of their mill dam on the adjacent lands.²³ The records indicate that the Court took no further action on this petition, but on August 1, 1796, Jacob Foster, alone, petitioned

BANK LICK is a beautiful stream, emptying into the Licking river, five miles from its confluence with the Ohio, in Kenton county. This stream received its name from the early settlers, and its banks have, doubtless, been trodden by Boone and Kenton. The engraving represents a scene on this stream, about a mile above its junction with the Licking. The picture is by Frankenstein, a young artist of Cincinnati.



VIEW OF BANK LICK, KENTON CO., KY.

COLLINS HISTORY OF KENTUCKY, 1874

the Court for approval of his mill dam, claiming the land on both sides of Banklick Creek.²⁴ One month later, on September 5, 1796, approval for the mill was granted.²⁵ Foster stayed with the mill for about three or four years. He was listed on the 1798 Campbell County tax list and was taxed for six acres, however, there is no indication that he paid his tax and he is not listed on the 1800 or succeeding tax lists.

A man by the name of William Wilson lived at the mill from about 1799 for 10 or 12 years until James Taylor purchased the land. Wilson's deposition was taken in 1837 and in it, he stated that he lived on this property as a tenant and employee of Major John Crittenden.²⁶ Crittenden was given several large tracts of land along the Licking River, which were surveyed by John Harris. Together, these two men owned most of the land on the west side of the Licking River, from Falmouth to the north side of the Banklick Creek, including the area around the mill.²⁷

Also claiming title to property around the mill was Raleigh Colston, who claimed the 5,000 acres which today comprises most of Latonia south to the area of Forest Hills.²⁸ James Taylor obtained the property, including the mill around 1810, but it was 1831 before he resolved this conflict in the title.*

* James Taylor entered into a purchase agreement with Colston on May 20, 1810, to buy most of his property, including the mill. He took possession of the property at this time. On June 13, 1831, Colston's heirs deeded the property to Taylor, Crittenden's heirs sold their interest in the property to Taylor on November 22, 1825, leaving him with most of the land from the north of Latonia to the top of Taylor Mill hill.²⁹ It was very common for land boundaries of early land grants and deeds to overlap. Jacob Rubsamon owned 20,000 acres from the Ohio passing the Licking and into the area on top of Taylor Mill hill. His survey crossed the lands claimed by Crittenden and Harris.³⁰

Survey made by James Morris

~~James Taylor 27500~~

Scale 40 poles to the inch

Plat of Bank Lick area (Forest Hills & Winston Park) shown in Deed from Keturah L. Harris to Josephine Ward, dated July 15, 1856 & filed in Deed 28, p. 275, Kenton County Clerk's Office, Independence, Ky.

Taylor petitioned the County Court on August 26, 1811, for permission to operate Foster's mill.³¹ Permission was granted on December 23, 1811.³² The record indicates that the mill dam was eleven feet high. Taylor entered into a contract with George Perry in 1819 to operate the mill and manage the farm, which included the area right around the mill of about 300 acres. Perry was succeeded by James Foley in 1829, who managed the operations until around 1842. On March 19th of that year, Taylor placed an advertisement in the Licking Valley Register to

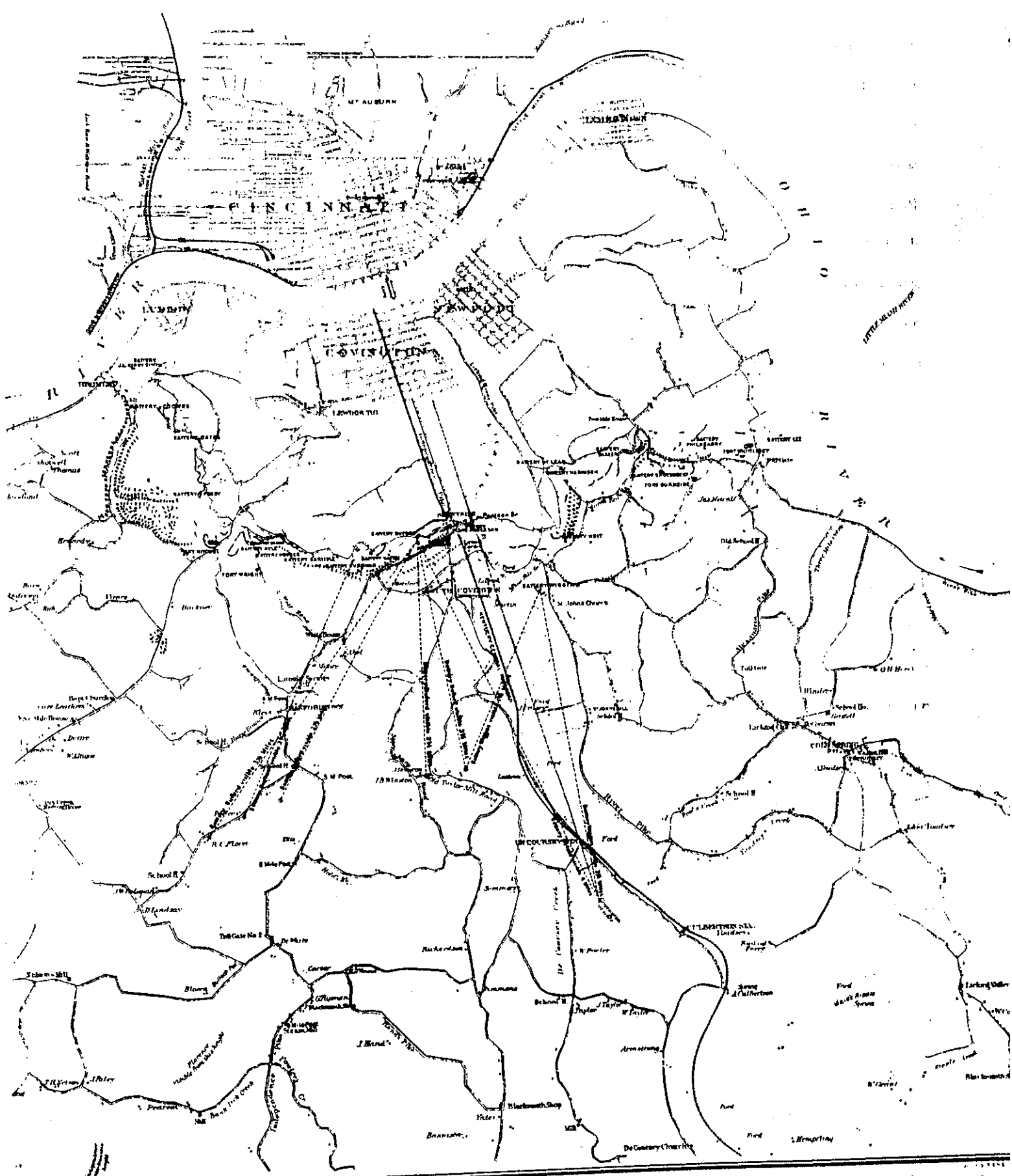
"rent my grist and saw mill on Bank Lick creek, 4 miles from Covington, and a quarter of a mile from Licking River; and also the farm adjoining same, embracing 300 acres of improved land, with very extensive meadows of timothy and clover. The Mills and Farm will be rented together or separately, if desired. This farm is one of the best in this section of Country."

The advertisement goes on to offer the sale of livestock and farm equipment. It further says that persons interested should contact William Duffy at the mill, who apparently succeeded Foley as manager.³³

In 1844, Taylor executed his Last Will and Testament, devising 1200 acres along Bank Lick Creek to his four children in equal shares.³⁴ *

In 1853, two of Taylor's daughters, Keturah L. Harris and Jane Williamson, challenged their brother, Col. James Taylor's interpretation of their father's will which the younger Taylor claimed

* Taylor also left his slave, Mingo, a life estate in five acres out of this land, but no evidence is found of his actually receiving the land or living on it.



Topographical Map Showing Defenses of Cincinnati, Covington and Newport,
1864

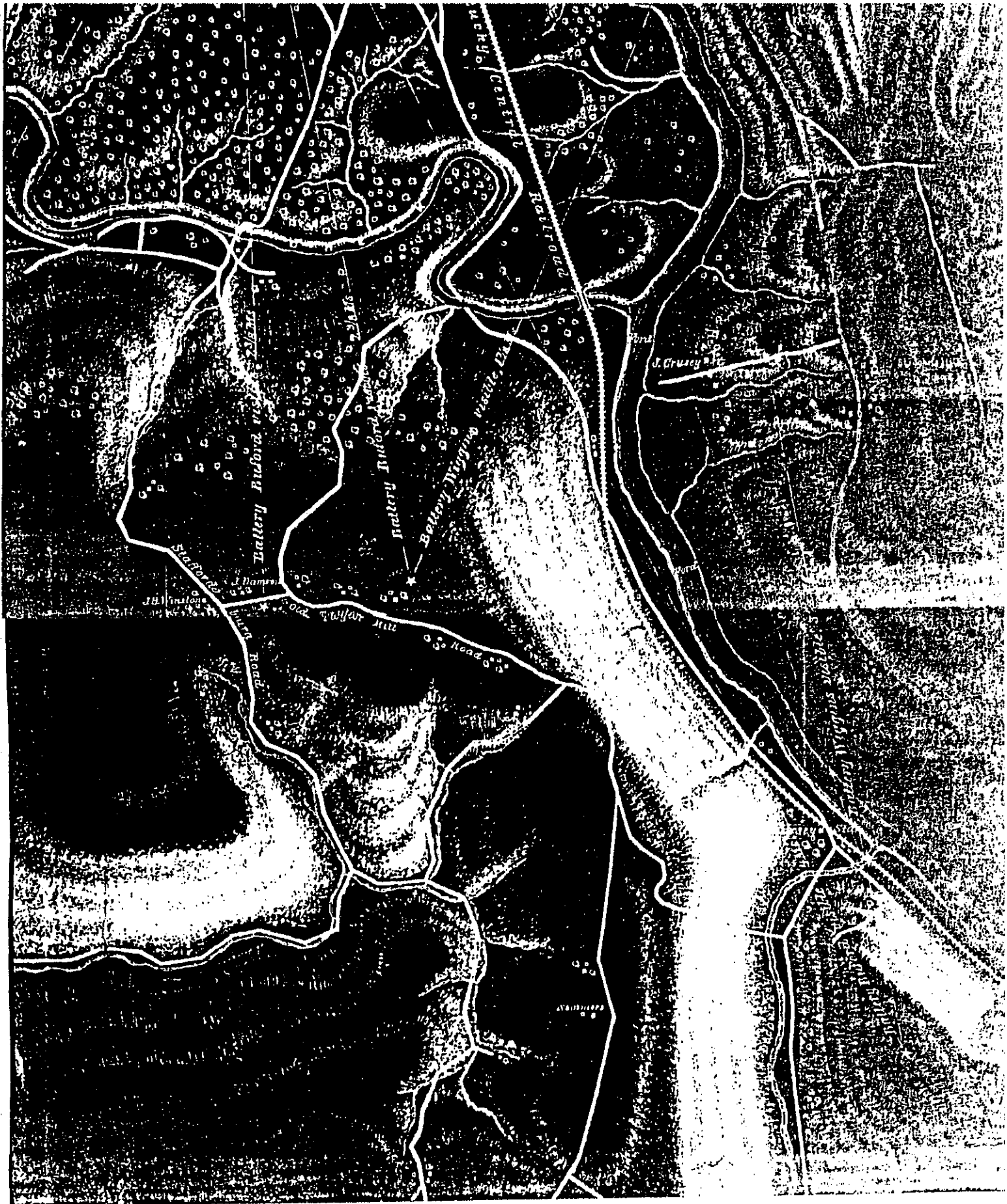
gave him the right to hold this property in trust rather than conveying it to them immediately. Court documents include a plat of the Bank Lick property which shows the location of the mill on the north side of the creek at about the place where Riedlin Road intersects Grand Avenue.³⁵

A Civil War map of 1864 of Northern Kentucky, however, does now show the mill, indicating that between 1853 and 1864 the operation of the mill was stopped.³⁶

TAYLOR'S MILL ROAD

The earliest access to the mill was by way of the Licking River or Bird's War Road along the river and also Logan's Trail along the Banklick Creek to the Georgetown Road, intersecting north of Latonia Springs. The earliest reference to a road from the mill is on July 9, 1798, when the Campbell County Court appointed Jacob Foster, William Wilson, Thomas Johnson, William Crane, Bartlett Graves and Charles McLaughlin, Sr. to mark out a road from Foster's mill to Phillip's Creek on the east side of the Licking, near Grant's Lick.³⁷ This must have followed Bird's Road (DeCoursey).

On April 13, 1801, the Campbell County Court ordered William Wilson, Jesse Bracking, Benjamin Maurs and William Anderson "to mark out the nearest and best way from Armstead Moorehead's crossing the Banklick at Crittenden's Mill thence along the old trace where the ground will admit to William Stevens on the dividing ridge of Banklick, Bowmans and Steep Creeks. From thence to inter-



Enlargement of 1864 Map

sect the Georgetown Road the most direct way to Archibold Reeds,"³⁸
The dividing ridge referred to must be near the present area of
Nicholson. The most direct road there from the mill would have
been Riedlin Road to Mason Road crossing where I-275 now runs
then across Ridge to Taylor Mill Road. From there it would have
followed the present Walton-Nicholson Pike to where the old
Georgetown Road would have intereseected near the present inter-
section of the CSX Railroad. (Short Line).

On September 25, 1815, the Campbell County Court ordered
Squire Grant, Joseph Robinson, Samuel Sayers, John Hume, Edward
Stevens, William Anderson, John Hessin and Oner R. Powell, to
view and mark out a road from Covington, passing Taylor's mill
on Banklick Creek, then to Samuel Sayers, then to the Pendleton
County line.³⁹ This early road partially followed the old George-
town route from Covington, then whether it followed DeCoursey or
Taylor Mill Road from the mill is not clear.

On January 22, 1821, at Taylor's request, the Court ordered
John Winston, Squire Grant, Larned Lamb, William ANDerson and Oner
R. Powell, to re-route Taylor's Bank Lick Road to leave the old
Georgetown Road between Mrs. Rittenhouse's and William Anderson's
and then to intersect Banklick Mill Road nearly opposite to Joseph
Martin's field.⁴⁰ Taylor was attempting to go around Anderson's
Hill at 26th Street, rather than over it as the old Georgetown
Road did.

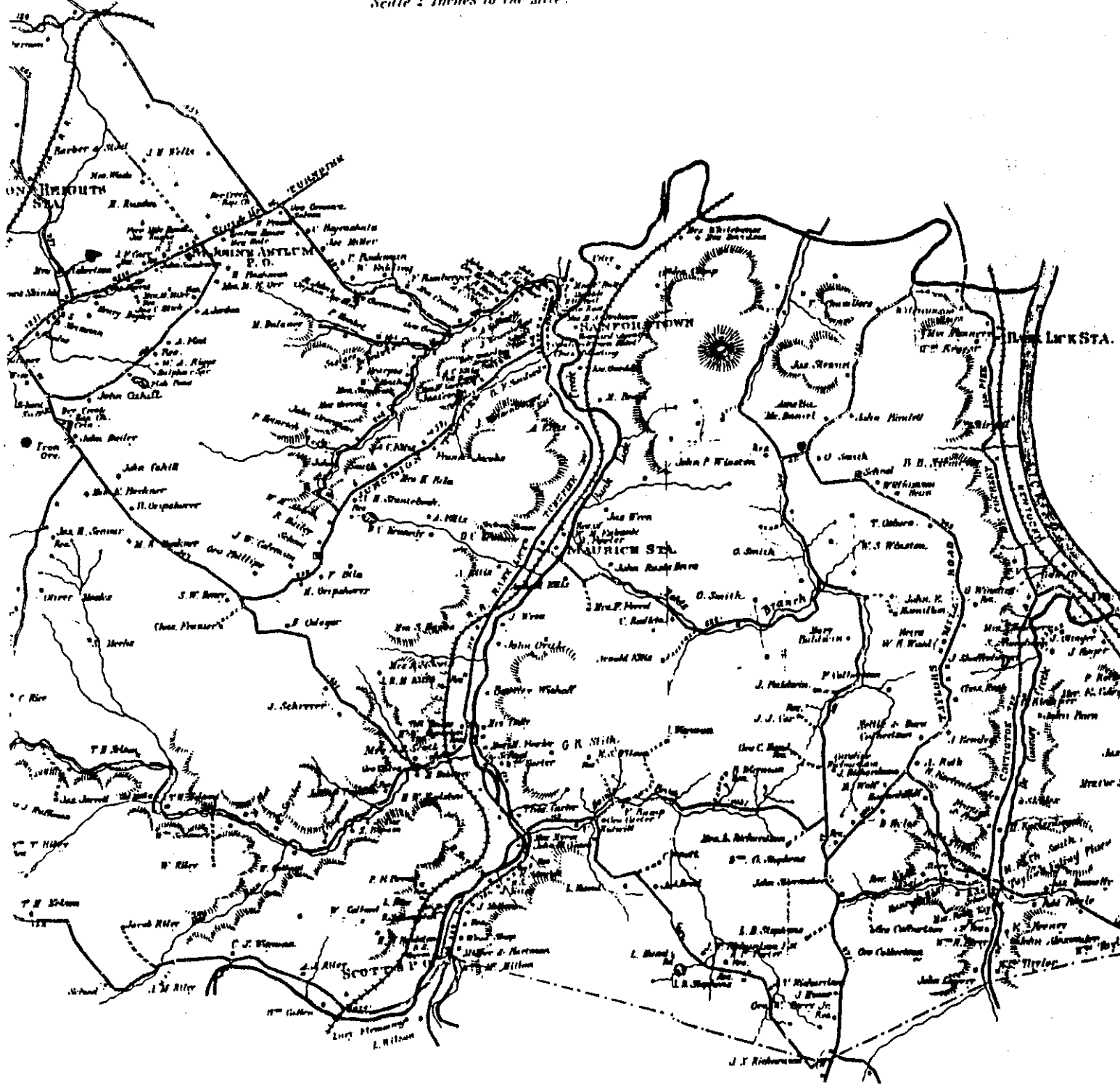
Taylor was still trying to get his road around this hill in
1835, when he again petitioned the Court to order the re-routing

MAGISTERIAL DIST. No. 2

SCOTT'S

KENTON CO.

Scale 2 Inches to the Mile.



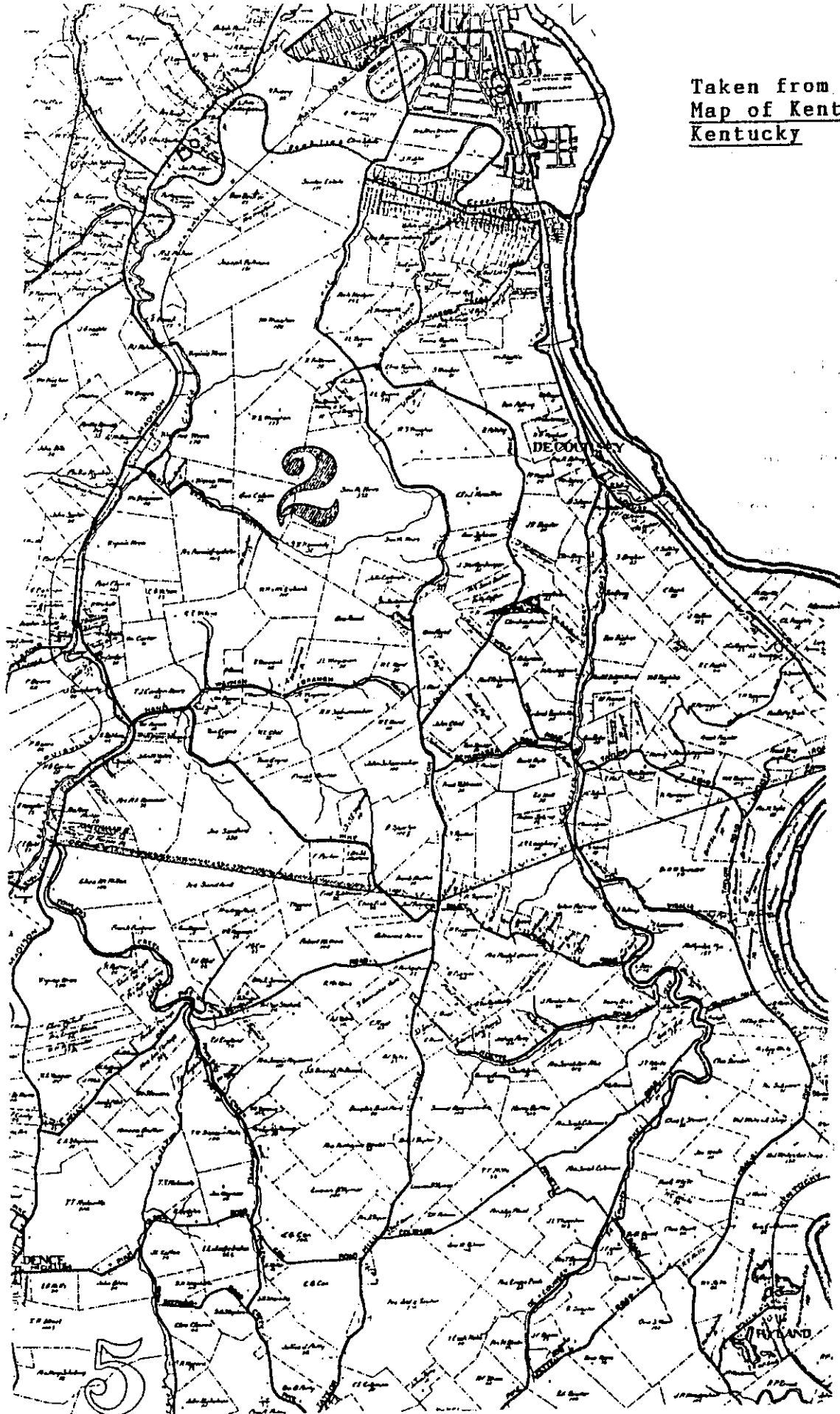
1883 Lake Atlas of Boone, Kenton & Campbell Counties, Kentucky

(Magisterial District No. 2)

of his road around the east side of the mill. Also at that time, the Court ordered the review of the road from Anderson's Hill to "strike the Mill Road at or near where the present road strikes the high bank of Bank Lick Creek also an amendment to said mill road to begin at or near the present ford, below the Mill, thence the nearest or best way to strike the present road at the most convenient point south of the top of the Bank Lick hill."⁴¹ This appears to be the present Taylor Mill Road, beginning at the intersection of the present DeCoursey Pike and Madison Pike through Latonia, south on Winston Avenue across the creek and up Taylor Mill Road to the top of the hill.

On February 18, 1848, the Covington and Taylor Mill Turnpike Road Company was incorporated. Initially it was planned to follow the former route and have a crushed stone (macadam) bed. However, in 1854, the Covington and Taylor Mill Turnpike Road Company was amended to provide for a new route to begin at the southern limits of Covington following Eastern Avenue along the river, straight through to the present 28th Street in Latonia, then south on the present DeCoursey Avenue to Winston Avenue across the Bank Lick up along the present Taylor Mill Road up to the top of the hill then south along the present Old Taylor Mill Road. Those who held stock in the company and who lived south of the creek and east of the old road were given the option of getting out of the company.⁴² Also in that year the Covington and DeCoursey Creek Turnpike Company was incorporated, following

Taken from O'Neill
Map of Kenton County
Kentucky



roughly the present location of DeCoursey Pike, except that it crossed the Banklick Creek at the mill then went over Grand Avenue, then on out DeCoursey Pike.⁴³

The Taylor Mill Turnpike Charter was revived in 1860 and in 1865 amended again to allow less than the required 9 inches of macadam.⁴⁴

In 1863, the bridge over the Banklick Creek along the Taylor Mill Road collapsed as reported in the following newspaper account:

COVINGTON NEWS

"FALL OF A BRIDGE— Yesterday morning, while a four horse team was crossing the long bridge over Bank Lick Creek, about three miles from the city on the Taylor Mill Road, about thirty-five feet of the structure fell down with a great crash, precipitating the horses, wagon and driver into the stream below, a distance of about 15 feet. Fortunately the driver and all the animals escaped without harm. The bridge will be repaired by Monday next."

Cincinnati Daily Enquirer
October 15, 1863, p. 3.

A new bridge was reportedly to have been built in 1865.⁴⁵ However, by then the new route went along the present Winston Avenue, so this bridge must have been near where the Taylor Mill Road now crosses the creek. Even with the bridge, the Turnpike was still not completed by 1871⁴⁶ and by 1880, the County had taken over the Turnpike and in that year had two new bridges built over the Banklick from the Taylor Mill and the DeCoursey Turnpikes.⁴⁷ In 1910, the county took bids for another new bridge for the Taylor Mill road.⁴⁸

By 1937, Taylor Mill Road had become a state road and re-routed nearly to its present location for a distance of seven miles. It was paved at a cost of \$152,000.00.⁴⁹ The old road from the top of the hill to near present Mafred Drive became known as the Old Taylor Mill Road. The northern end of the road became Mason Road and Riedlin Road.

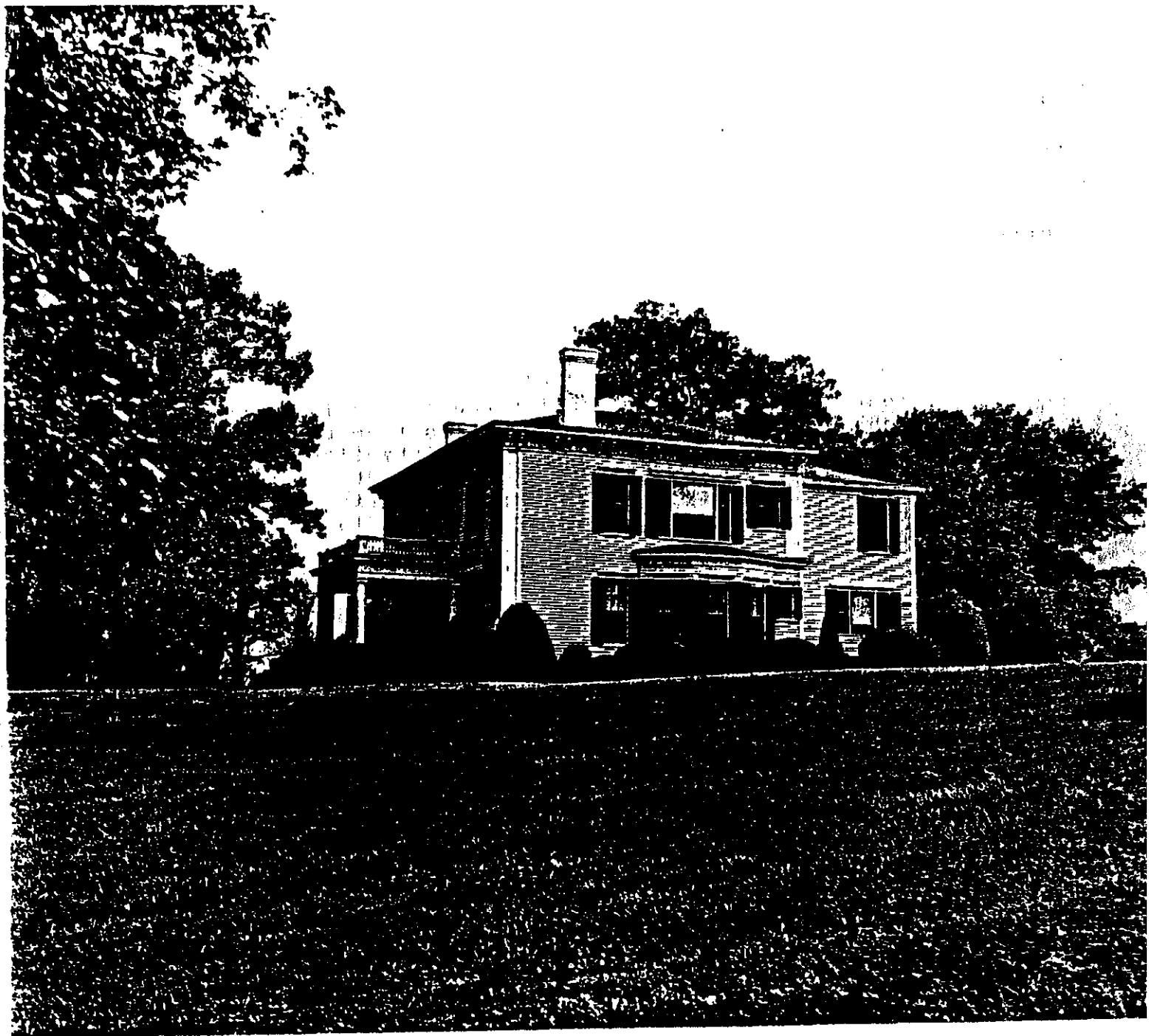
In the 1970's, Interstate 275 was built across the middle of Taylor Mill, going east and west. A section of Taylor Mill Road north of the interstate was moved to the east, Mason Road was cut in two.

THE CITY OF TAYLOR MILL

Settlement usually occurs along the most accessible or popular transportation routes. During the 19th century the Licking River, DeCoursey Pike and the Kentucky Central Railroad* on the east and the 3-L Highway and the Louisville, Cincinnati and Lexington Railroad** on the west were far more accessible than the wagon road called Taylor's Mill Road. Therefore, settlement was greater on either side of the Taylor Mill area.

* The Lexington and Covington Railroad Company was chartered in 1849. It became part of the Kentucky Central Railroad in 1871. In 1891, it merged with the L & N Railroad and became known as the KC Division; now it is part of the CSX.⁵⁰

** The Louisville, Cincinnati and Lexington Railroad was incorporated in 1869. It was built in 1877. In 1881, it became part of the L & N Railroad (Short Line); now it is part of the CSX.⁵¹



Masonic Home, Formerly home of Luther Feldman
(Built by John Winston, 1851)



View of Grand Avenue, looking east from Howard Avenue, about 1927.

Those settlers moving into the Taylor Mill area beginning with the Winston and Wayman families around 1800 were mostly farmers.* The area remained a farming community until the 1950's. The early maps identify some of the landowners, with successive maps showing increasingly more names.⁵² The real growth began in the early 1900s when subdivisions near Banklick Creek were developed.

Forest Hills was first developed in 1902 by Joseph D. Kennedy of the South Covington Land Company.⁵³ Although its plan included the entire area from Taylor Mill Road to DeCoursey, its main thrust took place east of Riedlin Road. In 1927 the Harmony Development Company which was owned by the Latonia Deposit Bank and Trust Company (Dr. R. Lee Bird was president) developed the subdivision. Two landowners, Henry Kollman and Charles J. Demmien were also partners. It was bounded by Taylor Mill Road on the west, Riedlin Road on the east, Banklick Creek on the north and Cleveland Avenue and Forest Lane on the south.⁵⁴ Forest Hills School and St. Anthony Roman Catholic Church and School were both built in 1928.

Advertisements and newspaper stories reported that the development included an eight acre park with tennis courts, playground equipment and a wading pool.⁵⁵

* John Winston began buying property in the area in 1804. Aaron, Harmon, Simeon and Solomon Wayman began buying property in 1802.

Winston Park (briefly known as Brookdale) was developed about the same time by the South End Realty Company, owned by Orville Noel and Clay Blackburn. It also boasted of a four acre park.

Although it included several streets to the north, most of the houses were first built along Church Street south of 43rd Street. Winston Park was incorporated as a city in 1929. For a time, there were efforts to connect Forest Hills and Winston Park with a bridge over Banklick Creek, near Saint Anthony's. This however, was never accomplished.⁵⁶

Sunny Acres was developed as the Keeney Subdivision in the early 1950's in the area on and around Winston Hill Drive. It was incorporated as a 6th class city on July 1, 1953. The first Trustees were John Spoonamore, Al Wood, Robert W. Wolf, Gil Jones, and Rev. Bert Barnes. George Ostendorf was the first town marshall and Lou France was the first city clerk. At that time there were 180 residents living there.⁵⁷

In 1957, the city of Taylor Mill was incorporated. It covered the area south of Sunny Acres. The two cities merged in 1959 in an attempt to improve their bond rating to borrow for water and other necessary improvements. The first Board of Trustees included, Roscoe Egger (Chairman), Jim Pierson, Cecil Lee, Russell Marshall and Dudley Martin.⁵⁸

In 1962, Covington and Winston Park began efforts to annex Forest Hills. Four years later in 1966, Winston Park was successful.⁵⁹ In 1972, the voters of Taylor Mill and Winston Park agreed

*Make Your
New Year's Resolution
Now!*

That You Will Buy a Lot and Build Your Future Home
in the

**WINSTON PARK
SUBDIVISION**

The air is pure . . . and the birdies warble sweetly of
"Home Sweet Home"

We have 2 homes nearly completed and are open for your
inspection at any time. Why not drive out Sunday?

Select the lot you have been thinking about. Why worry?
We have a home for you.

South End Realty Co.

17 W. Southern Ave.

Cov. 4148-5141

The Kentucky Post, Dec. 30., 1928, p.6.

to merge. The merger became effective December 24, 1972. When this happened, Taylor Mill became a fourth class city, and changed to a Commission form of government.⁶⁰

In the mid 1960's, Taylor Mill began looking south to annex approximately 2,400 acres in the Oakridge area south west of the city, bounded by DeCoursey Pike on the east, Madison Pike on the west, Senour Road and Fowler Creek on the south. Initially, the residents protested and discussion on the issue continued on and off again for several years, but when the city of Covington proposed annexation in 1972, the Oakridge residents agreed to let Taylor Mill annex them. The matter went to court and was not settled until 1976 when the Kentucky Supreme Court ruled in favor of Covington, on the grounds that it had taken official action on annexation before Taylor Mill had.

In 1988, Taylor Mill annexed the area on its eastern border along DeCoursey Pike, bounded as follows: the Licking River on the east, Banklick Creek on the north, and Porter Road on the south. This significantly increased the area of the city. The current population is estimated to be about 5,400, which in just a few years, should increase considerably as Taylor Mill is experiencing the largest residential development since the 1950's. Good land, water, sewers and wise planning have allowed for this to happen.⁶¹

pieces of the past



Gen. James Taylor



Keturah Moss Leitch Taylor

The Kentucky Post, Aug. 17, 1982, p. 4K.

GENERAL JAMES TAYLOR, SR.

James Taylor, Sr. was born on April 19, 1769, in Caroline County, Virginia, to Col. James Taylor (the Elder) and Ann Hubbard. In 1787, his father purchased 1,500 acres of land at the eastern side of the mouth of the Licking. In 1780, his older brother, Hubbard Taylor, surveyed the tract for their father. In 1790, Hubbard moved with his family and his sister, Lucy Eubank, and her family to central Kentucky. In 1791, he returned to his father's land, laid off several lots and named it "New Port."⁶²

In 1792, James and his slave, Adam, traveled down the Ohio to Limestone (Maysville). From there he went overland to visit Hubbard. He then went to Cincinnati by way of the Dry Ridge Trace, which he referred to as "a mean horse path." He stayed at Fort Washington for a while then went to visit Major David Leitch at his station on the Licking. Afterwards, he traveled the Dry Ridge Trace again to Campbell's Station, about 33 miles from the mouth of the Licking. He then went south again to visit his brother, and from there to Louisville. He returned home to Virginia later in the year.⁶³

On May 3, 1793, James returned to Newport, with his two slaves and Robert Christy and his family. Since there were only a few cabins in the village, he lived on his flatboat for two weeks while he cleared the land and built a cabin.⁶⁴

He immediately began speculating in land. He succeeded his brother, Hubbard, as attorney-in-fact for their father. He then secured permission to operate the only ferries to and from Newport

FOREST HILL

A Better Place to Live

St. Anthony's Church and School

Nearing Completion

Forest Hill Public School

Nearing Completion

Beautiful 8-Acre Park and Playground

Wading Pool -- Tennis Courts

Complete Playground Equipment for the
Kiddies.

(Now Under Construction)

No Assessments

No City Taxes

Water---Sewer---Concrete

Streets---Electric

---Paid For---

Large home sites NOW as low as \$21.00 per front foot.

Fully Restricted

Approved by City Planning Commission.

How to get there

Take Newdale car or drive to Blue's Corner, Latonia,
then south on Winston Avenue, just eight-tenths of a mile
to Grand Avenue.

Harmony
Development
Co.

802. Coppin Bldg., Covington

Latonia Deposit Bank & Trust Co., Owners

The Kentucky Post, Dec. 30, 1928, p. 6.

across the Ohio and across the Licking. After helping to get Campbell County created, he fought John Grant of Wilmington to have Newport named the county seat. He offered several town lots for the erection of public buildings. (The Campbell County Court-house in Newport stands on these lots). In August of 1795, he advertised the sale of town lots.⁶⁵

James added to his holdings in 1795, when he married Keturah Moss Leitch, widow of Major David Leitch. In 1802, he secured permission from the Campbell County Court to erect a two foot high mill dam on the east side of the Licking at Leitch's Station. In 1810, he purchased Foster's old mill on Banklick Creek.⁶⁶ He also owned a mill and a great deal of land in Clermont County, Ohio.

James was a leading citizen in Campbell County. In addition to being the first court clerk, he contributed to the costs of erecting the courthouse and jail. He also helped establish the first school in Newport. (This was also the first public school in the entire Cincinnati area). In 1803, he donated land immediately at the mouth of the Licking for a federal western arsenal and supervised its construction. (This replaced Ft. Washington). He served as paymaster and quartermaster general of the western army during the War of 1812.⁶⁷

Besides land speculation, he was an investor in many other enterprises including the Newport Manufacturing Co. which produced, among other things, "Kentucky Jeans." He helped establish the Newport Bank and Second United States Bank at Cincinnati and a branch at Lexington. He also invested in the Farmers and

Manufacturers Bank of Lexington and The Bank of Kentucky.⁶⁸

He built his home on a rise above the Ohio and named it "Bellvue." (His first home was a log cabin. The second was burned in the 1830's and the third is still standing and is now the Vonderhaar-Connell Funeral Home at 335 East Third Street). He died on November 14, 1848, after having been in declining health for about a year. One of his last acts was to cast his vote for his cousin Zachary Taylor, exclaiming "I have fired my last shot for my country." He was eulogized in the following account:

"Few men have been more widely-known in the West, been more actively or adventurously engaged in its early scenes, and none have been more eminently successful in his pursuits.

He was a remarkably agreeable companion, and having a retentive memory, he was a living record of the earliest and most interesting scenes of Pioneer History. We have known him from our boyhood, and ever found him a man of high personal honor, of hospitable feelings, of liberal sentiments, a kind friend and a patriotic citizen.

He sleeps now with that race of bold and successful pioneers, whose living names are nearly erased, but whose memory must long make the traditional memory of this land, and its early history."

Taylor left an estate valued at about Four Million Dollars, including property in 26 counties in Ohio and about 60,000 acres in Kentucky. His widow died on January 18, 1866, at the age of 93, at the home of her daughter, Keturah Harris, in Newport. Both are buried in Evergreen Cemetery in Southgate, Kentucky.⁶⁹

MILLS

When the settlers moved into Kentucky and picked a spot to build a new community, a good mill site on a stream was important. A mill itself was a necessity, not only for grinding corn into meal but for sawing trees into usable lumber.

A mill also served as a community center. The high point of the week for a family was the trip to the mill. There, one would meet their neighbors and catch up on news and gossip. A sharp-eared miller was full of juicy tidbits of information.

Many mills unfortunately were not very dependable. On a small creek like the Banklick, a mill could only operate when the creek was up. By the turn of the century, most water-powered mills were replaced by electric powered huge steel rollers.⁷⁰

FOOTNOTES

1. Richard Collins, History of Kentucky (Covington, Kentucky, 1874) Vol. 1, p. 247.
2. George Morgan Chinn, Kentucky: Settlement and Statehood 1750-1800 (Frankfort, Ky., 1975), pp. 28-30.
3. Ibid., pp. 81-103.
4. Collins, Vol. 1, pp. 249-250.
5. Ibid., p. 254.
6. Paul Tenkotte, Rival Cities to Suburbs: Covington and Newport, Kentucky, 1780-1880 (Doctoral Dissertation, 1988) pp. 13-14.
7. Mary Keturah Jones, History of Campbell County, Kentucky As Read at the Centennial Celebration of 4th of July, 1876 (Newport, Ky, 1876), p. 3.
8. Margaret Strebel Hartman, They Were Born 175 Years Ago—Campbell County and Newport, (Presented before the Christopher Gist Historical Society, (October 27, 1970), p. 13.
9. Ibid, p. 14.
10. Ibid. pp. 14-15.
11. Jones, p. 4.
12. Collins, p. 272.
13. Hartman, p. 1.
14. Robert M. Ireland, The County in Kentucky History (Lexington, Ky, 1976), pp. 4, 18-19.
15. Chinn, pp. 365-366.
16. Joseph F. Gastright, Gentlemen Farmers to City Folks: A Study of Wallace Woods, Covington, Kentucky (Cincinnati, OH, 1980), p. 13.
17. Sarah L. Sullivan, Indian Trails: A Reprint of Historical Articles (1925) p. 38.
18. Charles Gano Talbert, Benjamin Logan: Kentucky Frontiersman (Lexington, Ky, 1962), pp. 105-111.

FOOTNOTES (CONTINUED)

19. Ibid.
20. Deposition of Robert Todd, dated April 6, 1796, and filed with the Campbell County Court Clerk on December 6, 1797; Deed Book A, pp. 274-275.
21. Gastright, p. 8. See also Deposition of Archabold Campbell dated January 29, 1796, and filed with the Campbell County Court Clerk at the December 1798 session, Deed Book A, pp. 272-273.
22. Gastright, p. 8.
23. Campbell County Court Order Book A, pp. 14-15.
24. Ibid., p. 51.
25. Ibid., p. 62.
26. Deposition of William Wilson, dated October 10, 1837, filed in Campbell Circuit Court Action Styled: Wayman vs. Taylor, (Traverse), Drawer 141.
27. Willard Rouse Jillson, The Kentucky Land Grants: 1782-1924 (1925, Reprinted, Frankfort, Ky, 1971).
28. Ibid., p. 40.
29. Deed from Crittenden's Heirs to James Taylor, dated November 22, 1825, filed with the Campbell County Court Clerk in Deed Book G, pp. 201-203, (Refers also to purchase contract, dated May 20, 1810); See also Deed from Colston Heirs to James Taylor, dated June 13, 1831, filed with the Campbell County Court Clerk in Deed Book H, pp. 533-534.
30. Deed from John Cox to James Taylor, dated April 3, 1845, filed with the Kenton County Clerk in Independence, Ky, in Deed Book 4, p. 318.
31. Campbell County Court Order Book 1, p. 149.
32. Ibid., p. 157.
33. Margaret Strebel Hartman, Campbell County Kentucky, History and Genealogy (Supplement to The Falmouth Outlook, December 15, 1978) pp. 14-16.

FOOTNOTES (CONTINUED)

34. Last Will and Testament of James Taylor, and Two Codicils, filed in the Campbell County Clerk's Office at Alexandria, in Will Book C, pp. 115-137.
35. Brief for Appellees filed in Court of Appeals of Kentucky, December Term, 1853, in Action Styled, James Taylor vs. G.T. Williamson, et al. An Appeal from Kenton Circuit Court.
36. Topographical Map showing Defenses of Cincinnati, Covington, and Newport, filed in Office fo U.S. Engineers, Cincinnati, Ohio, September 7, 1864.
37. Campbell County court Order Book A, page 161.
38. Ibid., p. 259.
39. Ibid., Book 1, p. 234.
40. Ibid., Book 2, p. 210.
41. Ibid., Book 4, p. 134, dated November 23, 1835. See also: Notice of Public Meeting regarding re-routing Taylor-Miller road around Anderson Hill. The Free Press (Covington, Ky. Feb. 2, 1839), p. 2.
42. Laws of Kentucky, March 1, 1854; See also: Gastright, p. 12; C.B. Truesdell. Early Turnpikes Which Led To And From the Newport-Covington Area, presented before the Christopher Gist Society, Oct. 28, 1952, p. 42.
43. Laws of Kentucky, March 10, 1854.
44. Truesdell, p. 14.
45. Letter to the Editor, The Covington Journal, Feb. 4, 1871.
46. Cincinnati Daily Enquirer, May 24, 1866, p. 3.
47. The Daily Commonwealth, Nov. 23, 1880, p. 4; Dec. 21, 1880, p. 1.
48. The Kentucky Post, July 15, 1910, p. 9.
49. Ibid., July 14, 1937, p. 1; August 2, 1937, p. 1.
50. Maury Klein, History of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad (New York, 1972), pp. 296-297.

FOOTNOTES (CONTINUED)

51. Ibid., p. 181.
52. Besides the Civil War Map referred to in Note #36, see also The Lake Atlas of Boone, Kenton and Campbell Counties, Kentucky (1883) and O'Neill Map of Kenton County, Kentucky (1914).
53. Plat filed in Deed Book 111, pp. 1 and 3 of Kenton County Clerk's Office in Independence, Ky.
54. Ibid., in Plat Book 2, p. 4; Plat Book 3, pp. 22, 27, 31.
55. The Kentucky Post, April 26, 1928, p. 1; December 30, 1928, p. 7; May 26, 1929, p. 8 (includes list of first buyers of lots).
56. Ibid., Dec. 30, 1928, p. 7; Nov. 29, 1929, p. 12.
57. Ibid., July 1, 1953; July 30, 1953.
58. Interview with long time mayor, Afton Kordenbrock and his wife, Mary Lou Kordenbrock, the City Clerk, September 12, 1988.
59. The Kentucky Post, September 14, 1966.
60. Ibid., Nov. 8, 1972; The Cincinnati Enquirer, March 5, 1979.
61. Interview with Afton and Mary Lou Kordenbrock.
62. Allen Webb Smith, Beginning at the Point, A Dominated History of Northern Kentucky and Environs, The Town of Covington in Particular, 1751-1834, (Cov., 1977).
63. Tenkotte, pp. 22-28, See also Marie Dickore, ed., General James Taylor's Narrative, Manuscripts, Cincinnati Historical Society.
64. Ibid., pp. 28-29.
65. Ibid., pp. 30-37.
66. Ibid., pp. 36-37.
67. Ibid., pp. 37-43.
68. Ibid.
69. The Kentucky Post, August 17, 1982, p. 4K.
70. David Drake, M.D. Pioneer Life in Kentucky, 1785-1800, Emmet Fuld Horine, M.D., ed., (New York, 1948), p. 59. See also Old Mills in Checkerboard Service (publication of Ralston Purina, April-May, 1962). Note: This article is also the source of the picture of a mill on the front cover.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I have written this History of Taylor Mill at the request Gordon Johnson as part of the Taylor Mill Founders Day Celebration on September 17, 1988. Although I have spent a good deal of time on the history, it is not complete. There is more information to be gleaned from court records, letters, newspapers, etc. There is also a world of information available from some of our long time residents who remember the past and can share it by word and picture. It is my hope that others will take up the task and carry it forward. Knowing our history makes our present richer.

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Michael J. Hammons
September 17, 1988

