A brief history of Athens County, Ohio

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(Athens)
Martzolff
A Brief History
OF
ATHENS COUNTY
OHIO
BY
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FOREWORD

THERE are few counties in Ohio which have a more interesting history than Athens County. It is the purpose of this small book to tell the story of how white men found this county covered with a dense forest in which roamed many wild animals; how it has been changed until today it affords homes for many thousands of people; how there are good farms in our hills and in our valleys; how towns and villages have sprung up and grown; how mines have been opened; how factories have been built and how churches and school houses are found everywhere.

The compiler at the request of superintendents of schools, teachers, and others, who have long felt the need of a brief outline of the county's history has rapidly collected the facts given on the following pages. He claims but little credit in the way of original research for the material given. He has freely made use of the excellent History of Athens County, written by Charles Manning Walker in 1869, now out of print. Thinking the time had come for the new generation to get acquainted with the chief events of the county's history, the undersigned sends it forth in the hope it will find a place.

CLEMENT L. MARTZOLFF.

Athens, Ohio, December 13, 1915.
BISHOP DAVID HASTINGS MOORE.

A product of Athens County, Son of Pioneer parents, born on Margaret's Creek, educated at the Ohio University, a brave soldier, a great preacher, and a good man, honored and loved by all who ever knew him.
THE MAKING OF ATHENS COUNTY

LONG before white men came to live here some things happened which has made Athens County the kind of county it is. Geologists tell us that thousands and thousands of years ago what is now the state of Ohio lay beneath the ocean.

Finally the bottom of this sea was raised like a great ridge until the top of this ridge was lifted above the water. Then the rains wore out great valleys and the parts left are the hills of southern Ohio and the mountains of West Virginia.

Because of these valleys it is easier to get at the minerals buried in the hills. Besides, they afford locations of our most fertile farms.

Rocks:—Athens County lies in what is known as the carboniferous or coal region. It is so called because of the many veins of coal to be found in it.

Between the seams of coal are layers of limestone, sandstone, shale and clay. The limestone is used for making roads, the sandstone for building purposes, and the shale and clay for the manufacturing of brick.

Streams:—The county has many good sized streams, which afforded abundant water-power before the days of the steam engine. They also served to float the Indian canoe and the white man's raft, before there were good roads.

The Hock-hocking is the principal stream which runs for about fifty-four miles across the county. Its chief tributaries are Sunday Creek, Monday Creek, Margaret's Creek, and Federal Creek. Shade Creek in the southern part runs into the Ohio River. The Indians called the river "Hock-hocking," which is a word meaning "bottle-neck." It gets
that name from the shape of the rock cliffs at its source in Fairfield County.

Sunday and Monday Creeks were named by the Surveyors, who when surveying the land found themselves, on a Sunday at the mouth of the first named and the next day were at the second stream. Margaret's Creek was named for Margaret Snowden, the first white woman to live in its valley.

**Trees:**—If you go into the woods, you will find many different kinds of trees. These are the same varieties which grew here when the pioneers came to make their clearings. So much dense forest, so many deep valleys and such large rocks afforded splendid homes for wild animals.

**Animals:**—When the first settlers came they found the woods swarming with many kinds of game. They had no difficulty in getting all the fresh meat they needed. Turkeys were plentiful and to kill a bear was not unusual. A few buffalo were also here yet when the first settlers came.

The most dangerous animals were the wolf, the panther, or wild cat, and the rattle-snake. Many interesting stories are told of hunters and their experiences. Two men killed sixty-five bears in one season in the neighborhood of Hobbardsville. At another time, two hunters secured forty-six in six weeks. The skins were very valuable, bringing as high as five dollars each. One hunter killed thirty deer in two weeks. Venison was the main meat of the pioneers, together with wild turkey. The last buffalo, killed in the county, was near the site of the present Court House in Athens, in 1796. Three years later a buffalo calf was captured near Mineral and brought to the settlement where it was given to a cow to raise. Wolves and panthers were a great annoyance to everybody, especially those who raised sheep. Such a scourge were they that for many
years a bounty of from two to four dollars was paid for every wolf or panther scalp.

A doctor in traveling through Rome Township one night found himself followed by a pack of wolves. He was obliged to climb a tree for safety, where he spent the night. In the morning his hungry enemies left and the doctor went on his journey. He had not gone far till he found where they had killed a calf for their breakfast.

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THE HOME OF MAN

The first people to live in Athens County were the Mound Builders. There must have been many of them, since so great a number of their mounds are to be found. There are no less than seventy-seven mounds, fortifications, and village sites in the various townships.

The finest group is located on what is known as "The Plains," near Beaumont. There are two village sites, one near Hocking station and the other at Fisher. The greater number of these earthworks is to be found in Ames, Athens, and Alexander townships. Some of them have been opened and skeletons, arrow heads, stone hatchets, and knives were found in them.

The Forest Rovers:—The Indians were the next to make their homes here. With such an abundance of game it is readily seen why the valley of the Hock-hocking should be favorite hunting grounds for these children of the forest.

The Shawnees, a powerful tribe living on the Scioto, had the real possession of this region, although the Delawares on the Muskingum frequently made use of it, as did the Wyandots, who lived where Lancaster now is.

The salt springs at Beaumont also attracted the Indians to the valley. A man, named Smith, who was cap-
tured and who lived among the Delaware Indians for four years in 1753, tells how they went to the buffalo-lick on the Hock-hocking and made half a bushel of salt.

INDIAN VILLAGES AND TRAILS

There were two Indian towns in Athens County; one of them, Wanduchale's Town, in the northern part of Troy township. It was named for a Delaware chieftain by that name. The other one, Shawnee Town, was at Beaumont.

An Indian trail also went through the county. It passed by Wanduchale's Town in a southwesterly direction and cut through the south-eastern corner of Carthage township. Of course, there were other trails in the county, especially leading to the saltlick, but these followed the buffalo paths, made by these animals as they sought for the salty waters.

Some Indian Visitors:—The Indians never gave much trouble to the pioneers of Athens County. Few of them were seen after 1800. That year about forty came, one day to the home of Moses Hewitt who lived on Margaret's Creek. They had been taking too much fire-water and were very insulting. Mr. Hewitt ordered them off the place and when they refused, he went at them. One he knocked into the fire place and another he pushed out the door. A third caught Mr. Hewitt and they had quite a fight. Finally Mr. Hewitt got the Indian's thumb into his mouth and he soon had the fellow howling in great style. The Indians left in anger and it was feared they might return during that night. They watched for them but no red-skin appeared.

English Claim Athens County:—The first white people to claim what is now Athens County were the English. Because John Cabot discovered North America (1498), the English King believed he could do with the land as he pleased. So James I (1609) gave to Virginia all of the
region now in the Ohio Valley. But it was nearly a century and a half before the Virginians made any attempt to use the country.

The Lilies Of France:—Meanwhile the French sent a man, La Salle, (1669) to explore the territory. He was the first white man to see the Ohio River. Floating down that stream, past where Hocking-Port is, he claimed the whole region for France. That country at once sent its traders to deal with the Indians. While England claimed the land, the French actually possessed it. So at one time Athens County was under the French flag.

An Unjust Act:—In the French and Indian War (1763), England took the American possessions away from France. Virginia thought she would get all her territory back. Instead England took it from Virginia and gave it to Quebec. Athens County thus became a part of Canada. This annoyed the Virginians and they took it as a cause for the Revolutionary War. The granting of Independence to the colonies returned the county to Virginia and we were once more a part of that state. In 1784 Virginia gave it to the United States government to do with as it pleased.

The Pathfinders:—There is no doubt but the first white men to thread the woods of Athens County were the French trappers and traders, with perhaps an occasional Jesuit priest to teach religion to the Indians. For seventy-five years these French Pathfinders held undisputed sway here. But about the middle of the eighteenth century the English Pathfinder, in the person of the Scotch-Irish trader, from Pennsylvania, began to make his appearance. This brought on the clash between England and France for possession and resulted in the French and Indian War, with England as winner.

A Distinguished Visitor:—Among the first Americans to see Athens County was George Washington. In company with a friend, Colonel Crawford, he made a journey
to the Ohio Valley (1770). He came to spy out the land and if he liked it, would purchase some of it. He tells in his Journal how one evening as they floated down the Ohio they came to the mouth of the Great Hock-hocking and camped on the south side of the Ohio for the night. He must have liked the looks of the place for he selected the tract as his own and it has been known as Washington's Bottom ever since.

A Real Live English Lord:—Four years later (1774), Athens County saw many white men within her borders. The Indians on the Scioto had been very troublesome to the Virginia Colonists. The Governor, Lord Dunmore, concluded to punish them. He raised two armies to go into the Indian country. One of these he himself commanded, while the other was under the leadership of a brave Indian fighter, General Andrew Lewis. The armies went by different routes. Early in October, the army of Lewis found itself encamped where Point Pleasant, West Virginia, now is, while Lord Dunmore with 1200 men was at the mouth of the Hock-hocking.

A Fort in Athens County:—Here where Hocking-port now stands Dunmore cleared off several acres and built a fortification from the timber and called it Fort Gower. For many years the site of the fort could be distinctly seen. Early settlers in plowing frequently picked up bullets, broken swords, hatchets, etc., where the fort had stood.

After remaining here for a while, Lord Dunmore, leaving some of the men to guard the fort, proceeded up the north bank of the river. The first night they encamped at the mouth of Federal Creek and the second night at the mouth of Sunday Creek.

Upon making a treaty of peace with the Indians, Dunmore returned to Fort Gower after an absence of about three weeks.
A Dissatisfied Army:—While preparing to re-embark his army for the return home, a remarkable thing happened. Some of the men did not like the idea of making peace with the Indians. They thought Lord Dunmore should have punished them and the reason he didn't was to get their friendship for England. The men believed they had come on a "wild-goose chase" and the Governor had been guilty of double dealing.

A Declaration of Independence:—Accordingly on November 5, a meeting was called and after speeches had been made, a set of resolutions was drawn and signed. These resolutions went on to say, among other things, that they would be loyal subjects of King George Third just so long as he would reign over a free people, but their love for American liberty outweighed all things else and they would consider it their duty to defend their own country first. These were brave words to say in the presence of the King's governor but they were brave men who said them. What they declared here in Athens County might well be called a prelude to the Declaration of Independence.

A Border Experience:—Two years later (October 1776), Colonel Robert Patterson and six companions from Kentucky, pushing up the Ohio River, found themselves one evening encamped opposite Newbury Island in Troy township.

After they had eaten their supper, they lay down to sleep with their guns at their sides. During the night some Indians crept up and fired upon them and immediately rushed with their tomahawks to finish the job. Patterson had been shot, so he could not use his gun. A hand to hand fight took place, during which he was cut with a tomahawk. He managed to creep off into the bushes while his companions were still fighting.

Finally the Indians left and he could hear nothing but the groanings of his companions. When he reached them,
he found one dead, another missing and the rest all severely wounded. In the morning, they dressed each other's wounds as best they could and started to walk through the woods. Soon one of the men gave out and he begged them to leave him alone to die. They pushed on, but they had gone but a short distance till more of them gave out. Only one was able to walk. They concluded then to let him go to the nearest settlement and get help, while they would remain and make the best of it. On returning to their companion they found him dead. Not being able to bury him, they allowed him to remain for the wolves to eat. They managed to crawl up a ravine and found shelter under some rocks where the three wounded men lived on paw-paws. They suffered terribly from their wounds. After four days their companion returned with several men who took them to the nearest station in boats.

**THE HOME MAKERS.**

The Pioneers came next. They are the people who brought their families and expected to make this region their home. This meant that the land had to be cleared, houses built, roads cut through the woods, towns laid out, and crops raised.

The Founders:—Athens County happened to be settled in this way. After the Revolutionary War, some men in Massachusetts, of whom Rufus Putnam, Benjamin Tupper, Reverend Manasseh Cutler, and others as leaders, concluded to come to the Ohio Country and settle it. To do this they organized a company known as the Ohio Company of Associates. This company sent Manasseh Cutler, in his sulky, to New York, to buy the land of Congress. After a good deal of trouble he at last made a bargain which was a good one.

The Bargain:—He secured 1,500,000 acres in South-eastern Ohio at sixty-six and two-thirds cents an acre. For
extra measure, he influenced Congress to throw in two townships, seventy-two square miles, for a college, one section, six hundred and forty acres in each township for schools and another section for the churches. All of Athens County was included in this purchase.

In April 1788, forty-eight men, headed by Rufus Putnam landed at the mouth of the Muskingum and began to lay out Marietta, the oldest town in Ohio. In a few months General Arthur St. Clair arrived to be the Governor of the Northwest Territory, and the machinery of government was set in motion. The colony began to grow rapidly. Soon other settlements reached out into the surrounding country.

Troublesome Indians:—Unfortunately an Indian War broke out, and the settlers flocked to the Marietta blockhouse for protection. This prevented the location of the college townships, which were to be in the center of the purchase. Not until 1795-96 were these townships located and surveyed. Athens and Alexander townships being in the center of the purchase, were selected, and ever since they have been known as the university townships and their lands as university lands.

General Putnam who had supervision of the surveying was anxious to have these university lands settled as soon as possible, so money could be secured to start the college. As soon as the Indians were quieted, settlers began to arrive in great numbers.

Athens Settled:—Encouraged by General Putnam, some of them decided to locate on the college lands. In the early spring of 1797 a number, led by Alvan Bingham, in a large canoe, floated down the Ohio, and pushed up the Hock-hocking to where Athens now stands. Here they landed. Some of them staked out their claims on the site of the present city, while others went into the surrounding country. The next year more settlers came and the next year (1799) Athens was laid out regularly as a town.
Other Settlements:—The year after Athens was founded, (1798), Judge Ephraim Cutler, George Ewing, and Captain Brown began the settlement in Ames Township. George Ewing's family came first and the others a year later. The families and house-hold goods were loaded on flat boats, which were pushed with long poles up the Hocking and up Federal Creek.

Troy Township was settled the same year with Ames, near Frost, although the year previous Benajah Hoyt had built his cabin at Hocking-port.

The first settler in Trimble Township was Solomon Tuttle who located there in 1802.

Some had located in Rome Township in 1800.

Dover Township was settled first in 1799 by Daniel Wethee and Josiah True.

Carthage Township had its first settler in Asahel Cooley, who established his home there in 1799.

The first man to locate in Canaan Township, as well as the first in Athens County, was one Peter Boyles, who built his cabin on the "school section, between the grave yard and the river" in 1795. Here the same year, June 5, his son George Boyles was born. He is no doubt the first white child to be born in Athens County.

Athens County Formed:—During these years, what is now Athens County belonged to Washington County. The section was called the Middletown voting district because of its central location. There were now enough people to warrant the establishment of a new county. This was done by act of the legislature, February 20, 1805. The law went into effect on March 1, 1805, and Athens became the twentieth county in the state. Its area was 1053 square miles and it included five townships now belonging to Meigs County, two belonging to Morgan County, three belonging to Hocking County, seven belonging to Vinton County, and a strip about ten miles long and one mile wide which was later given back to Washington County. As other counties
were organized, parts were taken from Athens and in one instance a little added to it, until its present area is 484 square miles.

The Township Formed:—When the county was organized there were four townships, Athens, Ames, Alexander, and Troy. Athens Township included besides its present area, Canaan, Waterloo, and two townships now in Vinton County. Alexander had within its territory, Lee and Lodi, five townships now in Vinton and three in Meigs. Troy contained Rome and Carthage and two townships in Meigs County. Ames township comprised in addition to itself Trimble, York, Dover, and Bern townships, two townships of Morgan County, and three of Hocking County. The other townships were established as follows:

Rome, 1811; York, 1818; Canaan, 1819; Bern, 1825; Waterloo, 1826; Trimble, 1827; Lodi, 1829.

The Starting of the University:—While it was the intention from the beginning to establish a college, many things hindered its progress. Nothing could be done until enough of the college lands were sold to insure its success. This was not accomplished until 1804, when the legislature passed an act establishing the Ohio University in the town of Athens. The same year the Board of Trustees met, among them being the Governor of Ohio, Edward Tiffin, who had ridden horse back all the way from Chillicothe.

In 1807 a building, the first in Ohio for college purposes, was erected. The school did not open till 1809 when three young men appeared on the first day. The attendance did not grow very rapidly and the first class did not graduate till 1815. One of the graduates was Thomas Ewing from Ames township who later became distinguished as a great lawyer and served as United States Senator from Ohio and as a member of the President's Cabinet.

The college has had many ups and downs, but it has
survived them all and today, under President Alston Ellis, is more prosperous than ever. Many hundreds of Athens County boys and girls have been educated here and some of them have become noted. Among them, besides Ewing might be mentioned Bishops Ames, Moore and Cranston, of the Methodist Church and Ex-President Scott of the Ohio State University. Now more than 1100 students are attending this oldest college in Ohio.

**HOW OUR FATHERS LIVED.**

The pioneers who came to the woods of Athens County lived very simply. The homes were made of logs with mud daubed in the cracks. The roof was clapboards, held in place by long poles. The floors were logs hewed on one side. Greased paper served for windows. A big fire place in which huge logs could be rolled, took up one end of the house. The hearth consisted of flat stones. Here the cooking was done. The utensils usually consisted of a pot and skillet. The baking was done in what was called a "Dutch oven." It was a large skillet with a lid. Live coals were piled about it and above it and in this way bread, usually corn pone, was baked. The clothing worn by women and children was made of linen spun and woven from flax raised on the land. The men generally wore a shirt and trousers of buckskin. The cap was made of coon-skin and sometimes it had a fox's tail hanging down behind.

Their food was coarse and plain. Meat from the wild animals with cracked corn or hominy was the usual diet. Before mills were built, each family had a "hominy block." The corn was crushed with a wooden maul into meal.

People helped one another a great deal. There were log-rollings and house-raisings and corn-huskings. The pioneer knew very little besides labor. During the day mother and daughters often helped in the fields. In the evening, wool and flax were to be spun, stockings knitted, clothes made, brooms from hickory splints manufactured,
A PRETENTIOUS PIONEER HOME—BUILT IN 1800
harness mended, corn shelled, and dozens of other duties; then to go to bed and sleep during the long winter nights and awake in the morning, and find on the bed covers a thin layer of snow, which had sifted through the clapboard roof.

HOW ATHENS COUNTY PEOPLE MADE A LIVING

Agriculture:—In spite of its rough surface, Athens County has always been a good agricultural county. Its many streams have furnished rich bottom lands, on which good corn crops could be raised. This meant the fattening of many hogs and cattle. The limestone ridges produce an abundance of blue grass affording rich pasturage for

AN OLD TOBACCO HOUSE

cattle and sheep. This is especially true in Ames Township. It is well suited for dairying. At one time a large quantity of cheese was produced. The sheep industry was formerly quite extensive, there being more than a hundred thousand of these animals owned in the county. In an
earlier day considerable flax and a great quantity of tobacco were raised, but these crops are no longer planted. Much wheat is produced on the ridges. Formerly a great deal of maple syrup and sorgum molasses were produced, but many of the sugar trees have been cut down and people do not raise much sorgum and little of either are now manufactured.

Fruit:—While the county has always been a good fruit county, it has only been in later times that the raising of fruit, especially apples and peaches, has been conducted on a large scale. The soil is just suited to these fruits and with modern methods of pruning and spraying, Athens County could be made the best fruit county in the state. Some twenty years ago, she was the banner peach county in Ohio, but the San Jose scale got on the trees and many orchards were destroyed.

Manufacturing:—The article most needed and the scarcest for the pioneers was salt. Sometimes the fresh meat had to be preserved with hickory ashes. At first the price reached six dollars a bushel and the salt had to be carried on horse-back a great distance.

The nearest point it could be had was in Muskingum County on Salt Creek. Five men could make about 100 pounds every twenty-four hours. Later the salt-springs at Jackson were used.

Strange the white man did not use the ones near Beaumont or Salina, as it was formerly called. It was not until 1820 that wells were bored and preparation begun for the manufacture of, salt in that neighborhood. The town of Chauncey grew up about the salt-works and for a time it looked as if a thriving place would result. But Chauncey never grew much until the coal mining developed in more recent years.

It was named for Elihu Chauncey, a capitalist of Philadelphia, who was interested in the salt-works. His
partner was a celebrated banker, Nicholas Biddle, who was President of the United States Bank when President Jackson destroyed it.

The works at Salina lasted to more recent years. Some of the kettles in which the brine was boiled can yet be seen. One of them is used as a watering-trough along the road between Beaumont and Floodwood.

AN OLD SALT KETTLE

Salt was also produced about two miles below Athens at a place called Harmony. It was quite an industry about the time of the Civil War. For more than twenty years, about fifty thousand barrels were produced annually in the county.

Mining:—The coal industry for the past forty years has been by far the most important in the county. Ever since the Hocking Canal was dug in 1840, coal was shipped from the neighborhood of Nelsonville. When the railroads were built, especially the Hocking Valley and the Kanawha and Michigan, the growth was rapid. Nelsonville, Buchtel,
Glouster, Jacksonville, grew quickly because of the coal mining. It is estimated that since 1875, one hundred and fifty million tons of coal have gone from this county.

The Coal Seams:—The principal seam is known as the Great Number Six, or Nelsonville vein, which has a thickness of about six feet. All the coal seams as well as the other veins of rock slope toward the southeast on an average of about thirty feet to the mile. That is why in some places the mines open on the sides of the hill. This is called “drift mining” which we can see above Nelsonville. Again, farther to the east and south, along the sides of the valleys, as below Nelsonville, they reach the seam by a “slope” opening, cut beneath the hill. By the time Canaanville is reached it is necessary to sink a “shaft” about 400 feet before they find the coal. Horses are taken down into these shafts and kept there to haul the cars to the opening of the shaft.

Above the Number Six Vein is another one known as Number Seven. It is about four feet thick. This is worked in the Sunday Creek Valley. The mine at Millfield is in this seam.

In the Federal Creek Valley, as at Broadwell and Lathrop, still another vein is mined, known as Number Eight. It is about eight feet thick.

Iron:—Some iron was for a time manufactured in the county. There were once two furnaces in operation, at Buchtel and Floodwood. However, because of the thin veins and great cost of mining, it was not found to pay.

Grindstones:—In the neighborhood of Amesville a fine grit stone is found from which grindstones are made.

Brick:—The great deposits of shale and clay have produced a new industry, that of brick manufacturing. Athens County shale beds are almost inexhaustible. The great plants at Athens and Nelsonville make bricks by hundreds of thousands.
ROADS

It was not long until roads threaded every part of the county, connecting one village with another. About twenty years ago, the county began to build many miles of stone pikes. This could be easily done on account of the native limestone in our hills. Nelsonville, Amesville, Albany, Coolville, and Jerseyville, were all connected with good hard roads to the county-seat. They are now pretty well worn out. Miles of brick road are being constructed and soon Athens County will be well supplied with good roads everywhere.

Using the Streams:—At first the pioneers made good use of the streams, in traveling from one place to another. With woods everywhere, the streams always had an abundance of water in them. The pioneer could then push his canoe up many a small creek, where it would be impossible now. Many of them came to the county with their families, household goods, and sometimes pigs, sheep, and cows loaded on a raft made of small logs tied together with poles. These were pushed up the streams by means of long poles as oars.

Marketing:—When they had things to sell, as furs, corn, or pork, they would load these same rafts and float them down the river to the Ohio, where several men joining would build large rafts on which they would go all the way to New Orleans. The men would then walk back.

A Long Journey:—Some of the pioneers brought their spinning wheels with them. Those who did not had often a hard time to get any. Josiah True of Dover township carried a few bear and deer skins forty miles to Zanesville and returned with a spinning-wheel. He walked the entire distance and made the trip in two days.

The Hocking Canal:—It was a great thing for Athens County when the Hocking Canal from Carrol in Fairfield County was completed to Athens in 1840. It at once made
a great change in the prices people had to pay for their necessities as well as in what they had to sell. Before, farmers often could get no more than thirty cents a bushel for their wheat and they had to pay as high as $4.00 a pound for tea. After the canal came, the price of wheat rose to seventy-five cents, and the cost of tea was nearly cut in two.

It was a wonderful help to the coal and salt business. In 1843, 127,853 bushels of coal and 10,279 barrels of salt were carried from Athens County over the canal. The biggest year's business was in 1880 when nearly $20,000 in toll was paid. From 1840 till 1894, when it was abandoned, the canal earned nearly $300,000. Passengers paid five cents a mile to travel by the slow going canal boats drawn by a horse or a mule. The bed and the locks of the canal can yet be seen in many parts of the county.

**Ship Building:**—In 1811, Captain Caleb Barstow built a vessel to sail the sea, on the south bank of the Hocking River, about a mile below the mouth of Federal Creek, in Rome township. In the spring of 1812, the vessel was launched and it took a cargo all the way to New Orleans. Whether it ever went to sea or not is not known. The name given her was the "Enterprise."

**Ferries:**—Before bridges were built ferries had to be provided at the crossings of the streams. Where the water was shallow, travelers would ford their way. The ferry boats were scows which were poled or rowed along. It was pretty expensive traveling, since money was scarce. A man on foot paid three cents; for a man and horse, ten cents; for a loaded wagon, fifty cents. One of the first ferries over the Hocking River was a few rods below the south bridge in Athens. It was called Coate's Ferry.

**Bridges:**—The first bridge built in the county was one over Federal Creek near its mouth in 1808 by Elijah Hatch. It was a clumsy affair and did not last long. At first the
bridges were privately owned and people had to pay toll, to
cross on them.

Mills—The pioneers had difficulty in getting their corn-
meal ground. Many of them had their own "hominy-
blocks," but the meal was always coarse. To get it ground
right, they had to carry the corn on a horse or on their
own backs all the way to the Marietta settlements.

Soon a few got hand mills. The neighbors would flock
to get their corn ground. It was a slow process. One man
would grind a quart of meal, and then he would let the next
one grind a quart. Then they got larger mills to which a
horse was hitched. The first water-mill, a rude affair, was
built by John Hewitt (1800) on Margaret's Creek about a
mile above its mouth.

In 1805 a dam, the first to be built in Ohio, was put
across the Hocking a mile east of Athens. Here a good
mill was built, and for over a hundred years it and others
erected at the dam continued to exist. Mill and dam are
now both gone. Some of the early mills had carding fac-
tories, where wool and flax could be woven, as well as
meal ground.

The Military Record of Athens County:—Among the
first settlers of Athens County were many who had served
in the Revolutionary War. With the exception of Washing-
ton County, no county in the state had more of these Revo-
olutionary heroes than Athens. Scarcely a cemetery is
there which does not contain one or more graves of men
who helped the young nation in securing its independence.
Such men made the very best pioneers and our county was
fortunate in having them as its first citizens.

In the War of 1812, Athens County was asked to fur-
nish sixty men. There was no trouble in finding that num-
ber. Rome Township furnished more than any other one
in the county.

The Mexican War:—One company of seventy-eight
men under Captain Robert G. McLean, served in the Mexican War. York township furnished a large number of them. The company was gone about one year. It belonged to the command of General George W. Morgan.

A Fine Record:—It was in the great Civil War that Athens County showed her loyalty to the nation. Few counties in the United States have a better record. More than half of her men, able to bear arms, served in the armies of the north. In addition, nearly two thousand made up the militia to repel Morgan's raid, and nearly two hundred, the "squirrel hunters," as they were called went to protect Cincinnati. The best thing about it all is that none of these men had to be drafted. They were all

Athens County's Most Distinguished Citizen
GENERAL CHARLES H. GROSVENOR
(Courtesy of Athens Messenger)
volunteers. A fine monument to their honor and memory stands on the University Campus at Athens. The most distinguished of Athens County soldiers was General Charles H. Grosvenor, who still lives. He, under General Thomas, opened the battle of Nashville, one of the best planned battles ever fought on American soil. Later General Grosvenor became a prominent lawyer and represented Athens County in Congress for twenty years.

Spanish American War:—In this war Athens County again showed its willingness to do its full share. One company under Captain F. S. Lowry, was drafted into the service, but it never saw any fighting, for the war was over too soon. It got no farther on the way than Camp Meade in Virginia.

The Underground Railroad:—The "Underground Railroad" was like the guinea-pig; neither a pig nor a guinea; only called that. It is the name of the system used to help slaves, escaping across the Ohio, to their freedom in Canada. There were many well-defined routes of travel through Ohio, upon which people lived who were always ready to hide slaves for a time and then aid them on their way. Their stopping places were called stations, and the people conductors. Such a route ran through Athens County. It started on the Ohio River near Cheshire, Gallia County, crossed Meigs County by way of Harrisonville, and came into Athens County passing through Albany, Athens, and Amesville.

Hundreds of slaves from Virginia were thus helped to freedom by slavery-hating citizens of Athens County. The father of Bishop Moore was one of these conductors. The Bishop, when a boy had to curry the horse every evening. Often he noticed in the morning how covered with mud it was. He often wondered about it. When he became older, he understood that his father had taken the horse out at night, while David was asleep, to carry some run-away slave on his journey.
A Taste of War:—"Morgan is coming! Morgan is coming!" This was the cry which startled the citizens of Athens County about the middle of July, 1863, when a galloping horseman rode over the hills, and like Paul Revere, aroused the "country folk to be up and to arm." "Then there was hurrying to and fro," for the iron hoof of war was aproaching. The silver spoons and the silver watch and the gold ear-rings, heirlooms in the family, were hidden behind the soap jar in the dingiest corner of the smoke-house. Horses were quickly taken across ditches and through brier-patches to some remote ravine for safe hiding. Of all the things the dashing Confederate cavalry leader, General John Morgan, wanted worst of all were fresh horses to take the place of his worn-out ones. Militiamen had quickly gathered to head him off while a troop of Federal Cavalry were at his heels. They were making it pretty warm for him and he was anxious to get back across the Ohio river. He tried it in Meigs County and got only a part of his men over. With the remainder he struck across the state hoping to make a crossing farther up. It was on this race between himself and General Shackelford that he passed through the northwest corner of Athens County. Morgan reached Nelsonville about ten o'clock in the morning. He burned some canal boats, fired the river bridge and rested his men till about two o'clock in the afternoon. He went only two miles farther that day, encamping for the night in a wheat field where a part of the village of Büchtel is now located.

General Shackelford came into Nelsonville at four o'clock, six hours after the Raiders. His men and horses were dirty, tired, and hungry. Morgan as he went along had taken the best horses and Shackelford was obliged to take what was left. It was out of the question to try to capture Morgan that day. The next morning when Shackelford reached the top of the hill from where he had seen the enemy in camp, the evening before, he discovered that
the wily Morgan had slipped out during the night and had headed toward Perry County.

The people were greatly relieved when a few days later they learned that he and his men had been captured and the leader himself had been put into the Ohio Penitentiary for safe keeping.

He destroyed about $15,000 worth of property in Athens County. Many stories are told about his men as they made their way through southern Ohio. A farmer was hauling a load of hay along the road. His team was halted, the harness stripped from the horses and there the farmer sat upon his load of hay, an astonished individual. They passed a doctor and politely took him off his horse, handed his saddle-bags to him, and the doctor had to trudge home on foot.

SCHOOLS

The pioneers of Athens County were not slow in providing schools for their children. The first buildings were crude affairs. They were only pens of unhewed logs; the spaces between the logs being filled with "chink" and mud. One end of the building contained the big fireplace before which the children sat, and while their faces were roasting, their backs would be freezing.

The benches had no backs. There were low ones for the little fellows and high ones for the big boys. These benches were split from trees. The writing desks were along the walls of the building. A log had been left out above this place and when the opening was covered with greased paper they had a window.

Wooden pegs were driven into the logs upon which the caps were hung. The teacher sat upon a high chair before a high desk. Behind him within easy reach was an abundance of rods. The writing pens used by the pupils were made by the teacher from quills. The teacher often "boarded around" among the pupils.
The first school in the County was in Athens township, a few miles from Athens. The first building in the town itself was of brick (1806). In 1857 the different schools joined and the Union School was built. In Ames township, the first school (1802) was taught by Charles Cutler, a graduate of Harvard University. Thomas Ewing was one of his pupils. He was followed by another Harvard graduate. Ames township had very good schools from the beginning. In 1852 an academy was started there which did excellent work for many years. A log school house was built near the mouth of Federal Creek in 1804. Like all the other early schools, it was not free, as we know schools today. But they were subscription schools, since every pupil had to pay for the privilege of attending.

Two academies were started in Rome township which continued for a long time. One was called the Miller Academy and the other Savannah Academy. Sometimes more than a hundred students would attend. These academies were something like our high schools. Graduates of the Ohio University often served as the teachers. Trimble township had its first school in 1822. Among the early school teachers, were many women. The salaries paid to the teachers in those days was quite small. One teacher got only $1.50 a week.

Other academies in the county were located at various points. The Pleasant Valley Academy at Jerseyville was organized in 1857. There was also a good one at Coolville, while Albany had two. Atwood Institute at one time enrolled more than eighty pupils. There was, likewise, a school there for colored people, Enterprise Academy, which was largely attended. A successful academy once existed in Dover township near Jacksonville, called Wethee College. The opportunities for education have always been of the best in Athens County. Its common schools, its academies, and its college have produced many fine, strong men and women. Today the common schools
are better equipped, the high schools are everywhere, and the University is better prepared to give Athens County boys and girls a chance.

It is a strange contrast between the old log schools which your grandfathers attended and the splendid buildings in Buchtel, Nelsonville, Glouster, Jacksonville, Chauncey, Athens, and other towns where you are now pupils.

**CHURCHES.**

The organization of Churches came at the same time as the schools. It seems that the Methodists were the pioneers in building churches in Athens County. As early as 1799 the Reverend James Quinn, a traveling Methodist missionary traveled up the Hocking river and Federal creek to Amesville. From here he crossed to the site of Nelsonville. At the foot of a tree the good man knelt and prayed. He went on to Logan where he found three families to whom he preached. On his return he passed through Athens and on the first Sunday in January, 1800, he preached to the people there.

Another Methodist Missionary was Reverend Father Young. In 1804 he stopped at the home of Daniel Stewart in Rome township and preached to a few families and organized a congregation. The famous Bishop Asbury frequently passed through Athens County. On one of his journeys, in 1810, he held a very successful camp-meeting near Athens. The Methodists organized the first church in Athens in 1800; in Alexander township at Center Stake; in Ames township; in Carthage in 1812; in Lodi in 1820.

A Baptist Church was founded in Rome township in 1803. The Presbyterians founded their church in Athens in 1809, the Reverend Jacob Lindley, the first President of the University, being the pastor. At the end of the first fifty years (1850) there were but twenty-four churches in the county; two Baptists, twelve Methodist, eight Presbyter-
ian, one Catholic, and one Universalist. Ten years later, the number had increased to sixty-two.

All the churches are partially supported by the income from the lands in "Section 29." A section is each township was given by the United States government for the support of the churches. This is to continue forever. The same applies to the schools. "Section 16" of every township was given for education.

THE COON-SKIN LIBRARY.

In the same year Ohio became a state the people of Ames township met for the purpose of providing themselves roads. Before the meeting was over they discussed another matter. There were few books in the neighborhood and these had been read over and over until everybody knew them nearly by heart. So the idea of a library came into their minds. It would be cheaper for all the neighbors to go together and buy the books needed. The plan was a good one, but money was so very scarce and it took money to buy books. There was just one way by which it might be done and that is the way they did it.

The woods were full of game. The fur of these animals was very valuable. The men and boys were good hunters and it was not much of a trick to gather in a short time enough furs to buy a wagon-load of books. When they had collected what they thought was sufficient, they turned them over to a Mr. Brown who was going to Boston in a light spring wagon. He had no trouble in selling them. There was over seventy-five dollars worth and he took the money and bought fifty-one books with it. In due time he returned to Ames township. The people came to meet him and as the books were poured out on the floor of a log cabin, it was a glad sight to the men and women, and the boys and girls of the neighborhood who eagerly grasped for them. Now the people would have an abundance of read-
ing during the long winter eventnings. The library was known as the “Coon-skin Library,” and it lasted for a great many years. From time to time other books were added and hundreds of young people got a taste for good reading. A branch library was established in Dover township. Some of these old books can yet be seen in the Carnegie Library at the Ohio University.

SOME ATHENS COUNTY TOWNS

Nelsonville was laid out in June 1818. It was named after Daniel Nelson, who owned the land. For years it has been the center of the mining interests of the Hocking Valley.

The first settlers reached the present site of the town in 1814. The same year Daniel Nelson purchased a large tract of land and built his cabin. The mill was constructed the next year.

A wealthy Englishman, by the name of George Court-
auld laid out a town where the street car barns now are. His town was called Enlishtown and its form was that of a semi-circle. The people were to own all the property in common. However his plan was not carried out for he soon died and his friends went back to England.

The first bridge across the Hock-hocking was at Nel-
sonville (1827). This same year they established a town library.

The first coal taken from Nelsonville to Columbus, was in 1830. There were two wagon loads of it. The trip was so long and the roads so bad that it took six horses to draw the fifty-eight bushels, which was delivered in Colum-
bus for four cents a bushel.

The first church society organized in Nelsonville was the United Brethren.

The founder of the town donated the land where the Central School Building now stands.
Albany was laid out in 1832.

Buchtel was founded in 1876. It was named after its founder, John R. Buchtel, of Akron, Ohio, who built a furnace there.

GloUSTER was established about 1880.

BRIEF FACTS ABOUT ATHENS COUNTY

Because the town of Athens grew up around the University, it was named for the ancient city of Athens, Greece, the seat of ancient culture and learning.

The first newspaper in Athens County was the Athens Mirror and Literary Register, established in 1825.

The first post office was at Athens (1804).

The first Bank of Athens County was the Athens Branch of the State Bank (1848).

The first railroad was the Marietta & Cincinnati, to which the citizens of Athens paid $100,000 by taxation.

The first passenger train came to Athens in April 1856. The people welcomed its arrival with a big celebration.

As early as 1834, steps were taken to build a railroad down the Hocking valley. But not till June 1869, did it reach Nelsonville. Athens county also helped build this road.

The Kanawha & Michigan came about 1880.

A Distinguished Visitor:—In 1805, Aaron Burr, who had just quitted the office of Vice President of the United States was an Athens visitor. He remained here several days. It was on this journey, that he sounded out people trying to get them interested in his plans to start a new country in the south-west. Whether he found any sympathisers at Athens is not known. If he did they never made it known. Burr was arrested and tried for treason a few years later because of this scheme of his.

Near Mineral is a peculiar shaped rock, known as the Devil's Tea Table. It is about thirty feet high and is in
plain view of the village. Its summit can only be reached by a ladder.

At the present rate of mining it will take two hundred years to exhaust the coal of Athens county.

About 1882 more than 700 car loads of coal were shipped each day from the Nelsonville yards.

Coal was first discovered in Athens County by a man named Robbins.

The first person to be buried in the public cemetery at Athens was in 1802.

The first mail route to be established from the east was also in 1802.

The first lots in the town of Athens were bought at prices ranging from $10 to $132.

The first apple nursery in the county was planted by Josiah True in Dover township, 1806.

The first court house was erected in 1807.

The first large orchard to be planted in the county was in Rome township, 1810. It had over 3000 trees in it.

The second court house, a brick building, was built in 1817.

The population of Athens County by decades is here shown:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1810</td>
<td>2,787</td>
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<tr>
<td>1820</td>
<td>6,439</td>
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<td>1830</td>
<td>9,763</td>
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<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>38,730</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>47,998</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first Post Office in Ames township was in 1821.

The first Post Office at Nelsonville was known as Englishtown.

The Athens County Bible Society was founded in 1822. The first Agricultural Society was organized in 1828. A Temperance Society was organized in 1829. The first telegraph line reached Athens in 1824.
The reason the population of Athens County was less in 1850 than in 1840 was because some townships had been taken away to organize other counties.

The first Teachers' Institute was held in the Court House in 1853.

Mr. Henry Wells of Albany presented a public library to his town in 1860.

During the Civil War a military camp was maintained in the present limits of Athens. It was called Camp Wool. At one time 6000 men were encamped there.

When the Athens County soldiers returned from the Civil War, a big barbecue was given them on the college campus. Fully 15,000 people were present.

The first coal works to be opened in southeastern Ohio, was at Carbondale, 1867.

Nelsonville got her first newspaper in 1872. The first bank was organized in the following year.

Margaret Boyd was the first woman to graduate from the Ohio University, 1873.

The present Athens County Court House was erected in 1875.

The great miners' strike in the Hocking Valley occurred in the winter of 1884-85.

An earthquake shock was felt throughout the County on May 2, 1886.

The streets of Athens were first lighted by electricity in 1889.

The greatest peach crop Athens County ever produced was in 1901—1,500,000 baskets.

The Ohio University celebrated the one hundredth anniversary of its founding in 1904. In 1915 another celebration occurred, commemorating the graduation of the first class.

The electric railway connecting Athens and Nelsonville was completed in 1915.

The State Hospital for the Insane was begun in 1868.
Raccoon Creek, which empties into the Ohio River in Gallia County, drains the western side of Athens County.

The Hocking Valley has been visited by many destructive floods. The first one was in the spring of 1832. Fifteen years later there was another one. After a lapse of eleven more years another destructive deluge swept down the valley. In 1873 another disastrous flood visited the valley and two years afterward a greater one was experienced—the worst ever known.

Still a worse one came in 1884, when a flood stage was reached, ten inches higher than any previous records. There were no trains for ten days.

The most destructive flood occurred in March 1907, when much property and a good many lives were lost. In 1913 the great flood year of Ohio, when so many of Ohio's cities were almost swept away, Athens County fared much better. The Hocking river did not have its source far enough up-state to get the full force of the terrible rains which deluged northern and central Ohio for several days.

The highest point in Athens County "Mt. Nebo," is in the northern part of Ames township. It is 1055 feet above sea level. The lowest point in the county, of course, is at Hockingport, 593 feet. The altitude of the Court House at Athens is 723 feet; Albany, 773 feet; Fulton farm in Lodi township, 1024 feet.

What is said to be the largest fresh water spring in south-eastern Ohio is located on the Linscott farm in Canaan township. It has a capacity of two hundred thousand gallons each twenty-four hours.

Note—Many of these facts were gleaned from the Centennial Atlas and History of Athens County, published in 1905.
SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT ATHENS COUNTY

1. How many townships in Athens County?
2. With what kind of trees was Athens County entirely covered?
3. Why did General John Morgan burn the river bridge at Nelsonville?
4. How many disastrous floods have the people of Athens County experienced?
5. In pioneer days, how many bushels of wheat were required to purchase a pound of tea?
6. What was the probable reason for the naming of Federal Creek?
7. What other “preludes” were there to the Declaration of Independence besides the one in Athens County?
8. Manasseh Cutler is called the “Father of the Ohio University.” Why?
9. What “communistic” settlement was established in the county?
10. How much money does “Section 16” in your township yield to the schools?
11. Why is “Section 29” called the “Ministerial Lands?”
12. How many men are engaged in the mining of coal in Athens County?
13. Trace a drop of water falling on your school house, till it reaches the ocean.
14. What is the population of your home town or township?
15. Make a list of towns in Athens County.

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A PLAN FOR THE STUDY OF LOCAL HISTORY.

Name: Give present name of town or city—former name or names—origin or meaning of the present name—if named for persons, give sketch of that person.
Settlement: Date of first settlement—origin and circumstances of—names and character of first settlers—hardships and difficulties experienced—anecdotes and stories of. Describe early homes and home life, and give stories of.

Early growth of settlement: First school—date of establishing—character of—sketches of early teachers—character and experience of.

First church: Date of organization—denomination—first meeting-house—date of erection and description of—first settled minister—sketch of.

First mill or other manufactory: When, where and by whom built.

First road: When constructed—connecting what points—character of.

Incorporation: Dates of organization as town or city. Names of first assessors—first mayor—sketches of same. If originally part of another town, name of such towns, and date of separation.

Present area in square miles and acres. Greatest average length and width in miles.

Changes in population and valuation—tabulated by decades.

Changes in centers of population and business—describe.

First postoffice: Tell where and when established—present number and location of postoffices.

Important manufactures: Kind and location—when established—capital invested in—number of persons employed in—annual value of all farm products.

Other productive industries: Kind—location—number of—persons employed in—annual value of products.

Public schools: Number of graded and ungraded—high, location of—when established—average attendance—number of teachers—scope of instruction.
Number of persons of school age—annual average attendance in all public schools—annual expenditures made for public schools—amounts voted by town—received from state—derived from local funds.

State school lots, so called: Present condition of—if sold, for what sum—how invested—yearly income therefrom.

Other permanent school funds: Whence derived—how invested—income therefrom—amount of, and how used.

Private schools: Academies, seminaries, colleges: Names of—location of each—number and description of buildings occupied—scope of instruction—number of instructors—annual attendance of students.

Public libraries: Name and location of.

Military: Early conflicts with Indians—events.

Churches: Number of—location of; denomination of each—number of members in each—average attendance upon services in each.

Other facts of importance or interest as showing the present, individual, business, educational, moral and social condition of town.

War of 1812: Number of men furnished for—names of officers—number of men killed or dying in service—local events of importance or interest—hardships resulting from war—stories relating to.

Mexican War: Part taken by town—men entering service—officers from town—number killed or dying in service.

Civil War: Number of volunteers entering service or made by promotion during service—sketch of privates and officers who won distinction—number of men and officers killed or dying in service—number who suffered in Southern prisons—local incidents and stories.
Spanish War: Number entering service—number killed or dying in service—anecdotes and stories.

Other important or interesting facts relating to military or naval history of town.

Biographical: List of persons born in or at any time residents of the town who have attained distinction in literature, art, science, the legal, medical, clerical, or educational professions, business or any industrial pursuit.

Sketches of each, using so far as convenient the following outline:

Names of grandparents and parents—maiden name of grandmother and mother, and some idea of the quality and ability of each—account of boyhood and early training of person of whom sketch is given—success attained by him—work in which he engaged, giving length of time devoted to each kind—the field in which he gained distinction—value of his services—such incidents, anecdotes and stories as will give clear ideas of the person.

MISCELLANEOUS

Give extended sketches of great disasters and extra-ordinary events occurring in the town. Accounts of visits made to the town by persons of note, with statements of reasons for, and incidents of such visit.

Titles, with names of authors of all histories, pamphlets, articles, and other documents relating to the town, which have been issued.

Detailed outline of legends, traditions, stories and anecdotes connected with town and people who have lived in it.

Full sketch of odd, striking or noted characters who have lived in it.

Write brief statement to show how the geographical location and physical features of the town have affected its settlements, its industries, its general prosperity, its peculiar social and educational conditions; also how the same causes are likely to affect it in the future.