

President Monroe visits Chillicothe. Chillicotheana broadsheet no. 8 Chillicothe, Ohio [1942].

CHILLICOTHEANA BROADSHEET

No. 8 Chillicothe Ohio Five Cents

PRESIDENT MONROE VISITS CHILLICOTHE

Compliments David K. Webb, editor

One hundred and twenty-five years ago, Chillicothe received its first visit from a President of the United States. James Monroe, with an eye for the western defenses, paid a visit to the city on the 28th of August 1817.

The President left Washington, without public notice, on Saturday, May 31, 1817. He had hoped to avoid most of the formalities of a state tour and devote his energies to the necessary inspection of defense projects, but, when word of his coming preceded him, he was met at almost every crossroad, village and city by a delegation with a set speech of welcome, to which he responded in kind, and a little ceremony hospitality in which he participated.

The tardy, last minute, preparations for his reception in Chillicothe are recorded in a manuscript recently added to the collection of the Ross County Historical Society.

Tiffin Heads Committee

"At a meeting of the citizens of Chillicothe, held (in pursuance of previous notice) at the Court House, on Monday, the 25th of Augt. 1817, for the purpose of making the necessary arrangements to receive in this town, in a suitable manner, the President or the United States and his suite who are expected to arrive this day or tomorrow;—the Hon. Edward Tiffin was called to the chair, and Samuel Williams appointed Secretary.

"On motion of Mr. Brush, and seconded, it was—

RESOLVED, that the citizens of Chillicothe are highly delighted and gratified with the prospect of a visit from the President of the United States; that they make suitable arrangements to receive him according to his dignity; and, for the purpose, propose, that a detachment of the citizens, on horseback, proceed on the road to meet him; and this meeting nominate and appoint Messrs. Edward Tiffin, John McFarland. Robert G. Wilson, John Thompson and William McFarland, in

conjunction with Edward King and Duncan McArthur, the committee appointed by the corporation, to meet and conduct him to the place where he can be best accommodated.

RESOLVED FURTHER, that this meeting appoint Messrs. Samuel Finley, John McLandburgh, John Edmiston, Jer. McLene, William McDowell, John Carlisle, Jesse McKay, Plat Brush, Adam Hays and John Peoples, to unite with the corporation officers, to receive the President, on his arrival at Quarters;— and that Messrs. Henry Brush and James S. Swearingen be marshals of the day.

Whereupon the meeting adjourned.

(Signed) Edward Tiffin, Chairman.

Saml. Williams, Secr'y."

Distinguished Group

Few cities of Chillicothe's size could boast of such a distinguished reception committee. Edward Tiffin was the chairman of Ohio's first constitutional convention and the state's first governor. Rev. Robert G. Wilson was a distinguished educator. John Thompson rose to the presidency of the circuit court. William McFarland was one of Chillicothe's first bankers. Edward King was the son of Rufus King, minister to England and three times presidential candidate. He was a son-in-law of Governor Thomas Worthington, and had attained distinction locally. General Duncan McArthur had served with valor in the War of 1812 and was later to become governor of Ohio. Samuel Finley was a Justice of the Territorial Court and a member of the city's Select Council. McLandburgh was a pioneer merchant and Edmiston was one of Chillicothe's first druggists.

Jeremiah McLene was the first sheriff of Ross county, a major general of militia, and state secretary of Ohio for 23 years from 1808. McDowell was a doctor and John Carlisle was a pioneer merchant, member of the city's select council and the man for whom Carlisle Hill is named. Captain Henry Brush was a hero of the War of 1812; in later life was a member of congress and justice of the supreme court of Ohio. James Strode Swearingen, in 1803, had marched a company from Detroit to the west shore of Lake Michigan, there to provide for the erection of Fort Dearborn, now the city of Chicago. Samuel Williams, the committee's humble secretary, was a little known but truly great historian of Ohio.

Account Of Reception

A full account of Chillicothe's reception is included in the "Narrative of the President's Tour": "On Tuesday evening, the 26th, he (the President) reached the boundary line between the counties of

Franklin and Pickaway, and lodged at Holmes's tavern. At eight o'clock on the following morning, he was conducted to Circleville, the county town of Pickaway, by a deputation of citizens and a troop of horses, and thence to the boundary of the county of Ross. There he was met by a deputation from the corporation of Chillicothe, and a number of citizens on horseback, who escorted him to the residence of Governor Worthington at Prospect Hill, in whose mansion he lodged. On the 28th, he entered Chillicothe, preceded by the same escort, and followed by a train of citizens from the neighbouring counties. At Watson's hotel, the mayor and corporation presented him the address which follows, and received an appropriate but verbal reply.

'To the President of the United States.

Mayor Belt's Speech

'Sir—The citizens of Chillicothe have directed me to present you their most cordial welcome.

The progress of the arts and sciences has not reached the height in our state which they possess in some of our sister states; but our love of country, and devotedness to her welfare, is not surpassed by any. The plain reception of our chief magistrate is consonant, we hope, with his republican principles. We are convinced that nothing can add more to the strong cement of the union, than the presence and the recognition of its moving power. The interchange of citizens, and the exchange of civilities and attachments between the parts, and the whole connected in the person of the President, form a barrier to civil feuds, and a strong hold in times of adversity and foreign aggression.

In this country, which when a wilderness attracted your early and persevering attention, you may now trace the footpath of industry and the highway of enterprise; and in your passage through it, the expressions of public opinion are the guarantees of its ready compliance with any duties that may be required.

We can only reiterate the hope and confidence which we possess, that the splendid commencement of your presidential career will be exceeded only by the mild and beneficial influence it will produce on our political relations after your retirement.

Accept our wishes, that when you have completed your course, the evening of your life may be as serene and happy, as its morning was eventful.

Levin Belt, Mayor of Chillicothe, for the Corporation and Citizens.

Levin Belt, Chillicothe's first mayor, was at the height of his glory on this occasion. Contemporary writers rate him a handsome man who wore well-tailored knee breeches and silver-buckled shoes, and entertained lavishly.

Received By Ross

"When the ceremony of congratulating the President was over, he sat down, in company with governor Cass, generals Brown and M'Comb, and about one hundred gentlemen, to a dinner, at which governor Worthington presided. In the course of the afternoon, he took a survey of the town, and lodged that night at the hotel. From Chillicothe, he proceeded on the morning of Thursday, the 29th, towards Lancaster, the seat of justice Fairfield county. He was attended as far as Tartleton by the committee of arrangement, the escort, the governor, and the mayor and council."

One other entry in the "Narrative" is of local interest. At Pittsburg, President Monroe was received by James Ross, Esquire, for whom Ross county is named. Ross hero of the "Whiskey Rebellion", was the perennial President of the City Council of Pittsburg.

The text of this broadsheet is a reprint from the Aug.28,1942 Chillicothe Gazette. The linoleum cut of Edward Tiffin is by John F.Gall. Additional copies of broadsheet may be obtained at office of the Chillicotheana Broadsheet, 55 W. 2nd. St.