

Descriptions of Cincinnati and Hamilton County, Ohio

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Cincinnati, the seat of justice for Hamilton County is the largest commercial city in the west, and supposed to be the 7th in point of population in the United States, if indeed she may not aspire to even a higher rank. This city, now justly styled the queen of the west, stands where, less than half a century since, was little else than a wilderness; where then there was only an inconsiderable fort, designed to keep in bay the restless hordes of savages which roamed unmolested through the vast regions, to the west and north, now covered with a dense and thriving population. In 1789, the town was first laid out, but until the defeat of the Indians by Wayne in 1794, it did not extensively improve. In 1795 it was an inconsiderable village, containing only 500 inhabitants. In 1800, it contained 750 – and in 1813, the period of the last war, it had only about 4,000 souls. From this period it has increased rapidly. In 1820, it contained 10,000; in 1824, 12,016; in 1826, 16,230; in 1829, 25,000; in 1830, 29,000 and now it is estimated to contain from thirty seven to forty thousand inhabitants. So rapid and gigantic have been its strides, that many now live who can hardly realize that they reside in the same place which, since their majority, was a prospering country village.

Cincinnati is built upon an elevated and beautiful plain, on the north bank of the Ohio river, in latitude 39 deg. 6 min. 30 sec. From the junction of the Alleghany and Monongahela rivers, following the meanders of the Ohio, it is distant 455 miles, and from the union of the Ohio and Mississippi 504 miles. Over land it is distant from Columbus, the capital of the state, 112 miles, Sandusky City 200 miles, Cleveland 250 miles, Indianapolis 120 miles, Frankfort 85 miles, Nashville 270 miles, Natches 680 miles, New Orleans 860 miles, St. Louis 350 miles, Louisville 105 miles, Baltimore 518 miles, Philadelphia 617 miles, Washington city 500 miles, New York by way of lake Erie 900 miles, and from Charleston 600 miles. The valley in which Cincinnati and the towns on New Port and Covington, on the opposite side of the river, are built, is about 12 miles in circumference. The Ohio river enters this valley on the east, and passes out on the west side. The upper plain on which Cincinnati is built, is 540 feet above tide water at Albany, and 25 feet below the level of lake Erie. The shores of the Ohio at this point affords good landing for boats at all seasons of the year; the principal landing being paved to low water mark in a durable manner.

The city, except on the margin of the river, is laid out by streets and alleys intersecting each other at right angles, the streets running east and west, taking their names generally by number, as second, third, &c., and those running north and south bearing the names of several kinds of trees after the manner of Philadelphia. The streets are wide and generally well paved and cleanly. Main street runs north and south, and extends from the stem of the boat landing on the river to the northern limits of the city, in a direct line, intersecting the Ohio canal a short distance above the first lock, descending from the upper plain of the city to the river. On this street, not far from the canal, stands the court house and other county buildings. The courthouse is a spacious building 56 by 60 feet, and measures to the top of the dome 120 feet. The building erected and lately occupied by the branch of the United States bank, also stands on this street and is now occupied by the Commercial bank. There are also other public buildings, as follows: 4 market houses, bazaar in Third street, theater in Second street, college in Walnut street, atheneum in Sycamore street, medical college in Sixth street, mechanics institute in Walnut street, two museums, 1 in Main and the other in Fourth street, hospital in Plum street, lunatic asylum, high school, thirty churches, ten or twelve edifices for the use of common schools, all large, commodious and elegant, and a great number of private residences, which display a fine taste and mechanical and architectural skill which

would be a credit to any city in the union. In relation to a banking house just erected we extract the following from the Cincinnati Chronicle.

“The new edifice, for the accommodation of the Franklin and Lafayette banks of Cincinnati, has been completed. It stands on the north side of Third, between Main and Walnut streets, – a very suitable location for the business of the city but not the most eligible for the display of its magnificent portico, except when the observer is directly in front of the opposite side of the street. The architect is Mr. Henry Walter, to whose skill and cultivated taste, many public and private edifices of this city, bear high testimony.

The front of this building is seventy nine feet; the depth exclusive of the portico, is sixty nine. It is divided into two apartments, each of which has a vestibule, banking room, vault, and separate rooms for the cashier, presidents, and directors, the last being up-stairs. Each banking room is thirty six feet square, and lighted by the roof. The ceiling is a paneled dome, supported by four elliptical arches. The counter is built of mahogany. The ashler work in front, the portico, the steps, door-jambs and lintels are of free stone. The floors are flagged with the same. The roof is covered with copper.

The portico embraces the entire front of the building, having eight Grecian Doric columns, four feet and six inches in diameter. The ascent from the street to the portico is by a flight of nine steps. The proportions of the portico are taken from the temple of Minerva at Athens, called the Parthenon; the same model from which the bank of the United States at Philadelphia is copied. The columns, the entablature, and indeed the whole portico, are built of beautiful gray free stone, from the quarries on the banks of the Ohio, near the mouth of the Scioto.

To preserve the symmetry of the banking rooms, the doors leading into them from the front are so placed that each one is slightly cut by a column, a defect, only perceptible to the eye from a point immediately opposite each door. This, however, does not diminish the general effect of the portico, which is truly classic, beautiful and magnificent.

It may be remarked that the front of this edifice is only seven feet less than that of the bank of the United States, and has the same number of columns. It is pronounced by many persons to be quite as beautiful in appearance as that celebrated edifice.”

Many of the church edifices deserve to be also specially mentioned as correct and elegant specimens of architecture, but our limits will not permit it. The hotels are numerous, and some of them spacious and beautiful, among which the Pearl street house probably stands foremost. It is to be mentioned however, with regret, that there is no city hall, or other building belonging to the city which can answer the purpose of one. To a stranger it would seem that this “Queen of the west,” of whose fame we are all proud, is unmindful of what she owes herself, so long as she suffers this to be said of her.

The literary institutions of the city are numerous and respectable, a part of which deserve particular mention. The Cincinnati college was incorporated in 1819. The charter granted full powers to the institution to confer degrees in the several departments of science, theology excepted; and under its provisions, a college was organized and a building erected in Walnut street, where, for some years, the institution flourished. From some cause, however, it was then suffered to languish, and finally, to die, while the noble edifice erected for its use, was permitted to go fast to decay. In 1835, through the exertions of a few individuals, the institution was resuscitated; a new board of trustees were appointed, the college edifice repaired and embellished, and a complete reorganization was effected. It is now understood to be in a flourishing condition, having law, medical and academical departments, in full and successful operation.

The Medical College of Ohio, located in Sixth street, is now in a flourishing condition. The trustees are appointed by the Legislature every three years. The present board is composed of the following gentlemen: Morgan Neville, Esq. President; Judge Burke, Judge Este, Judge Wright, Col. N. G. Pendleton, Calvin Fletcher, William Stevenson, W. S. Hatch, and George Luckey, of Cincinnati, and Doct. John Cotton, of Marietta, and Doct. Joseph Carter, of Urbana, men of the highest respectability, and well competent to manage a college of this kind. Last year the class of matriculated students numbered 131, being a larger number than at any former period.

The College of Professional Teachers.— This institution was formed at the convention of teachers held in Cincinnati, in October, 1832. Its objectives are to *unite* the teachers throughout the western country in the cause in which they are engaged, and to elevate the character of professional teachers. Their meetings are held annually in this city, on the second Monday in October.

Mechanics Institute.— This institution, designed for the diffusion of scientific knowledge among the mechanics and citizens, by means of popular lectures and mutual instruction, has been in existence three or four years. There are a number of classes in constant attendance at the institute, containing in the whole about one hundred individuals. The number is steadily increasing; and as the institute has an extensive philosophical apparatus, a library of nine hundred volumes, and a respectable reading room, which is a place of general resort for young men in the evenings, it may be set down as an institution of very great public utility.

Cincinnati Lyceum.— The Lyceum was formed for the purpose of useful instruction and fashionable entertainment, by means of popular lectures and debates. Its operations are entirely suspended during the summer months. Its meetings have been generally well attended. It is supported by an annual subscription for membership, which subscription procures likewise free access to a good library, and a reading room. Its lectures are pleasing rather than solid.

The Atheneum.— This institution is under the patronage of the Roman Catholic church in Cincinnati. In it are competent professors of the classics, who speak fluently the French, Italian, Spanish, and German languages. There are also professors in the several departments of mathematics, natural philosophy, and chemistry. Their course of study is extensive. The number of students is at present seventy. The college edifice is a splendid and permanent building, of great capacity.

Woodward High School.— The fund of the Woodward High School yields an annual income of two thousand dollars. The building is sixty feet front, by forty feet deep; and the lot on which it stands contains more than an acre. The management of the institution is committed to five trustees, two of whom were appointed by the founder, (the late William Woodward of this city,) with power to appoint their successors, and three by the city council. The school is at present conducted by four professors, (including the president;) and has one hundred and twenty pupils, of whom sixty are educated on the funds of the institution.

Private Schools.— For males, nine schools, fourteen teachers, and five hundred and ten pupils. For females, nine schools, fifteen teachers, and five hundred pupils. For infants, six schools, nine teachers, and two hundred and twenty pupils. Total, 1,230 pupils.

Public School.— for males and females, twenty schools, thirty one teachers, and two thousand pupils.

It may be said of Cincinnati much to her credit, that no other city in the Union surpasses her attention to primary instruction, more especially to common schools. Her numerous and splendid edifices erected for this purpose, testify of this fact in language not to be misunderstood.

The manufacturing industry of Cincinnati it is difficult to estimate with satisfactory accuracy. In 1826, according to an accurate statistical examination, it amounted to 1,800,000 dollars in a population of 16,230 persons. At that time, there were not more than 15 steam engines employed in manufactures in the city. In 1835, there were upwards of 50 such engines in successful operation; and during that year 100 steam engines, 240 cotton gins, 20 sugar mills, and 22 steam boats, many of them of the largest size, were built or manufactured here. In 1836, we only know that the business generally greatly increased, and that 35 steam boats were built, the aggregate cost of which exceeded 85,000 dollars. From these dates, it is fair to estimate the productive industry of Cincinnati for the year 1836, at 5,500,000 dollars. This great and principal source of the prosperity of the city, is fortunately distributed among classes of the citizens, and exercises a healthful and invigorating influence upon the entire population. Cincinnati is in truth a great *manufacturing* as well as commercial city, and perhaps contains within herself more of the self creating and self sustaining principal than any other city of the union.

The commercial enterprise is unbounded; but the probable amount of imports and exports can only be arrived at by comparative reasoning. On this subject we quote from the Western Monthly as follows:

“At the close of the year 1826, the writer of this article, by a laborious examination, ascertained that the exports of that year were about 1,000,000 in value. A similar inquiry induced him to place the exports of 1832, at 4,000,000. For the year 1835, he feels no hesitation in placing them at 6,000,000, or upwards. This estimate is based upon the following facts and considerations.

The general growth and prosperity of the city and surrounding country for the last few years; the increasing amount of tolls on the Miami canal; the enlarged number and variety of manufacturing establishments in Cincinnati, Newport and Covington, within the last four years; the arrival in Cincinnati during the greater part of the year 1835, of fifty stages and sixty mails per week; the steam boat arrivals at our quay, for the last year, being 2,237; the receipt during the same period in this city of 90,000 barrels of flour, and 55,000 barrels of whiskey; and finally, from the fact that, in the winter of 1832-3, there were 85,000 hogs slaughtered in Cincinnati – in 1833-4, something rising 123,000 – while in 1834-5, (the whole of which, with those brought to this place in wagons and by the canal, went into the exports of the past year,) the number was 162,000. If from these we turn to the manufactures for the same period, embracing 22 steamboats, 100 steam engines, 20 sugar mills, 240 cotton gins, besides the varied products of our countless factories in iron, wood, cotton, leather, hemp, oil, lumber, furs, &c. &c., it is perfectly obvious that the exports from Cincinnati, Newport and Covington, for the year 1835, have been above, rather than below, 6,000,000 of dollars.

It is to be borne in mind, that Cincinnati, Newport and Covington having attained their present population, commerce and manufactures, without the aid of any work of internal improvement, but that of the Miami canal, and two Macadam turnpikes, one running sixteen miles towards Columbus, and the other twelve miles towards Lebanon. Let us now see what improvements of this kind are projected or actually in progress, the completion of which will directly and powerfully aid in their growth. 1. The extension of the Miami canal from Dayton to the Maumee bay, a part of which will be completed early in the ensuing summer. 2. A Macadam turnpike from Chillicothe to Cincinnati, a part of which is under contract. 3. The continuation of the Cincinnati, Columbus, and Wooster, and the Cincinnati, Lebanon and Springfield turnpikes, portions of which have already been constructed. 4. The Cincinnati and Harrison turnpike, leading to the boundary line between Ohio and Indiana, a distance of twenty miles, which will be completed early in the present year, and hereafter continued to Brookville, Indiana. 5. A Macadam turnpike from Covington to Georgetown and Lexington, which is now constructing. 6. A canal, the construction of which is already authorized, from the sources of White Water, to Lawrenceburg, crossings the line between Ohio and Indiana into the county of Hamilton, and thence branching to this city. 7. The rail road now making from Lawrenceburg, twenty miles west of Cincinnati, to Indianapolis, and the rail road already authorised, to connect Lawrenceburg with this city. 8. The extension of the Cumberland road through Ohio and Indiana, crossing the Miami canal, and the routes of several of the turnpikes already enumerated, as they diverge to the north from this city. 9. The rail road running from this place up the valley of the Little Miami, and branching at Todd’s Fork, one track passing on to Xenia, and connecting with the Mad river and Sandusky rail road, (now constructing) at Springfield, and the other stretching northeastwardly to Columbus, and thence to lake Erie, at Cleveland. And finally, the great rail road between this city and Charleston, the most magnificent and important public work that has yet been projected in our country. This road, stretching through the states of Kentucky, Tennessee and North Carolina in the south, and in the north sending a branch to Louisville, and another to Maysville, with the main track connecting at this point with the rail roads running from Cincinnati to Indianapolis, and from Cincinnati to Sandusky and Cleveland on the lake, and also with the Miami canal, must of itself exert a degree of influence on the future destiny of Cincinnati, that it is difficult to appreciate.

Finally, it may be said, that Cincinnati yields to no city in the union in the inducements which she presents to a residence within the noble amphitheater of hills that surrounds her. This is true in regard to the intelligence, and refinement of society, the necessaries, comforts, and luxuries of life; the moral and religious character of her population: it is true in regard to the field which she presents for industry and enterprise in commerce and manufactures: it is true in regard to the opportunities she presents to the capitalist, for safe and profitable investments in *real estate*. On these points investigation is challenged, especially the latter; for it is confidently asserted that *real estate*, at the present time, is lower in value in

Cincinnati, Newport and Covington, than any city of the union, whose population, business, and permanent local advantages, are of corresponding magnitude. This single fact proves incontestibly, that in the present prosperity of these places, there is nothing fictitious, but that it is the natural result of those numerous indestructible moral and physical causes, which, before the year 1850, will give to Cincinnati and her associate towns, 100,000 active, educated and enterprising citizens.”

Hamilton, a river county in the southwestern corner of the state, bounded on the north by Butler, east by Clermont county, south by the Ohio River, and west by the state of Indiana. It is 30 miles long from east to west, and 16 broad from north to south, containing hardly 400 square miles. Although it is small, or even smaller, than any other county in the state, yet it is by far the most populous. It contained, in 1830, 52,321 inhabitants, while the next highest amounted to but 35,508. It is divided into the fifteen following townships:– Anderson, Cincinnati, Colerian, Columbia, Crosby, Delhi, Fulton, Green, Miami, Mill creek, Sycamore, Symmes, Springfield, Storrs, and Whitewater. The following are the towns which appear on record, to wit: Reading, Mount Weller, Mount Hayden, Sharon, Lockland, and Montgomery, in Sycamore township; Mount pleasant, Springfield and Burlington, in Springfield township; New Haven, New Baltimore and Harrison, in Crosby township; Miamitown and Elizabethtown, in Whitewater township; Cleves, in Miami township; Cheviott, in Green township; Carthage, Mohawk, Georgetown, Mansfield, Prospect Hill, and Walnut Hill, in Mill creek township; and Fulton and Cincinnati, in townships of the same name. Several of these towns are, however, scarce deserving the name, if we associate with it an idea of a dense cluster of buildings. They are, however, all laid out and recorded as such, for the greater convenience of the proprietors. The post offices are, Bevis’ Tavern, Carthage, Cheviott, Cincinnati, Clark’s Store, Cleves, Columbia, Elizabethtown, Fulton, Harrison, Madisonville, Mear’s Farm, Miami, Montgomery, Mt. Healthy, Newton, Oury’s, Pleasant Ridge, Preston, Reading, Springdale, and Walnut Hill.

The land is peculiarly well calculated for farming, especially for raising wheat and other small grains, as well as for fruit of various kinds. It is watered by the Little and Big Miamies and Whitewater rivers, Mill and Deer creeks, and their numerous branches, beside several minor ones putting into the Ohio river, which skirts the whole southern borders of the county.

There has been an uncommonly rapid increase of emigrants from other states, into this county, during several years past; and the land being of a peculiarly good quality for the production of grain, and of the primary articles necessary for subsistence, this county has, therefore, become an important section of the state. The two Miamies run through this county into the Ohio river. The duplicate for 1836, shows that the taxable property in this county was assessed at a value of 9,701,387 dollars, and that the tax collected therefrom was as follows:

For state and canal purposes,	\$ 23,223,38
“ County, road, and jail purposes,	42,904,44
“ Union bridge - do.	5,0777,48
“ Township - do.	22,015,32
“ School - do.	28,769,76
Corporation - do.	37,271,52

Total	\$159,678,18

The number of voters at the census of 1835, was 10,601, and the number of votes given at the last Presidential election was 8,903.