

# Ringo Collection

The Ringo Collection was donated to the Paris-Bourbon County Public Library by Mr. David Leer Ringo, a retired executive from northern Kentucky. Housed in new, custom-built cabinets, the unique Ringo collection includes over 300 books, mostly on the Civil War and central Kentucky, which have been added to the library's permanent collection of non-circulating reference and genealogical resources. Union and Confederate

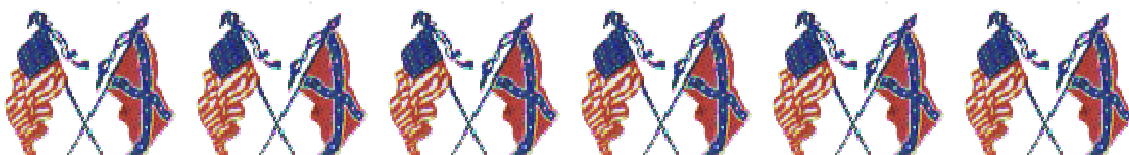
soldiers in full uniform – local Civil War enthusiasts Bill Nordan and David Trumble of the 4<sup>th</sup> Kentucky Cavalry – volunteered to “stand guard” over the collection during its dedication ceremony.

David Leer Ringo is well known among local genealogists; he has conducted extensive family and historical research and amassed a large and unique collection of reference books over many years. Now living in Florida in the twilight of his retirement years, he recently decided to break up the collection and send it back to his beloved Kentucky. He approached the Paris-Bourbon County Library in 2004 about the portion of the collection which is now being unveiled. Other items are expected to go to the University of Kentucky and the Filson Club, but Ringo wanted a small public library to tend certain books and keep them easily available to the public; library Director Mark Adler was only too happy to oblige the request!

Ringo spent part of his childhood in the Bluegrass and attended the University of Kentucky. In 1931 he started working for The Green Line, a public transit company in northern Kentucky; he worked his way up from the ranks and became a kind of local folk hero after calming a bitter strike in 1940. He rose to nationwide transit leadership through the advent and decline of streetcars and trolley-coaches to gas buses and plans for light rail. In 1957 he became CEO of the American Transportation Enterprises (ATE) conglomerate. In the 1960s Ringo and his team formed a public transit management agency, ATEMS; by 1980, they had contracts with no less than 45 public transit agencies around the country. As the company moved into the 80s Ringo was succeeded as ATEMS president by his son, Philip J. Ringo. David Lear Ringo was hailed for “his vision and outstanding leadership of ATE” during the 1999 American Public Transit Association convention in Orlando.

In 2007, the nonagenarian Ringo still enjoys friends and visitors who come to discuss and debate all the topics of the day. Library Director Mark Adler said, “It was an honor to meet Mr. Ringo and a pleasure to accept his generous gift to the citizens of Paris and Bourbon County. The library is delighted to provide a home for these materials. Although he is unable to attend the unveiling personally, I know Mr. Ringo joins me in extending an open public invitation to use and enjoy this truly unique and valuable collection.”

The Paris-Bourbon County Public Library is located at 701 High Street in downtown Paris. Call (859) 987-4419 or visit <http://www.bourbonlibrary.org> to learn more about the materials and activities available @ *Your Library!*





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