

In Memoriam

ROBERT EMMETT McDOWELL, SR.

Editor, The Filson Club

1971 - 1975

RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Robert Emmett McDowell, Sr., Editor of The Filson Club, died Saturday, March 29, 1975 in Louisville. His departure deeply affects The Filson Club and his many friends.

Born in Sentinel, Oklahoma, April 5, 1914, the son of Robert Chester McDowell and Alice Lucile Furnas McDowell, Mr. McDowell's roots lay deep in Kentucky. His great, great, great grandfather, John McDowell, was a pioneer settler of Bullitt County and married a daughter of John Burks, a settler at Floyd's Station in Jefferson County. Their son, John McDowell, Jr., married Matilda Standiford, and was the father of James Burks McDowell, who served in the 1st Kentucky Cavalry, C.S.A. This background, tied so closely to Kentucky's past, provided Bob McDowell with a natural interest in the pioneer and Civil War history of the Commonwealth.

Robert E. McDowell was educated at du Pont Manual High School and the University of Louisville. During World War II he served in the Merchant Marine, seeing much of Europe and North Africa in the process. It was at this time that he sold his first short story and upon completion of his military duty he became a free lance writer.

During the late 1940's and throughout the 1950's, he devoted himself to writing short stories and brief novels for national magazines. In the next decade he wrote many mystery novels, several of which were issued in foreign translations. In 1964, *Tidewater Sprig*, an historical novel set at the Bullitt's Lick Saltworks, appeared and proved popular. During the years 1963 through 1965 his outdoor drama *Home is the Hunter* was produced in Harrodsburg, stimulating much discussion on the life of Daniel Boone. Mr. McDowell's contributions to state history include *City of Conflict*, a history of Louisville in the Civil War, printed in 1962; *Rediscovering Kentucky*, a tour guide issued by the Kentucky Department of Parks in 1971; his excellent article on "Bullitt's Lick, The Related Saltworks and Settlements," in the July 1956 issue of *The Filson Club History Quarterly*, and his lead article in the 1974 Kentucky issue of *Antiques Magazine*. In addition, he was a frequent contributor to *The Courier-Journal Magazine* and to the *Louisville Magazine*.

Robert E. McDowell became an Annual member of The Filson Club in May 1956, and was transferred to Life membership in October 1964. He served on the Board of Directors of the Club from 1962 to 1964 and again from 1968 to 1970. In 1971 he was named Managing Editor of *The Filson Club History Quarterly*, becoming Editor of Publications in 1973. As Editor he carried out several improvements in the *Quarterly* and increased its scholarly standing.

Mr. McDowell was a member of the Authors Guild, a trustee of Shakertown at South Union, Kentucky, a board member of the Louisville Audubon Society and of Strategies for Environmental Control, Historian for Bernheim Forest, an honorary life member of the Louisville Civil War Round Table, a member of the advisory board of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, a member of the Jeffersontown Historical Society, the Kentucky Historical Society, the Organization of American Historians and many other historical and environmental groups. He was a member of the Arts Club and the Rotary Club.

Mr. McDowell is survived by his wife, Audrea Adams McDowell, and his son, Robert Emmett McDowell, III, of London, England.

His passing is a great loss to The Filson Club and to the scores of friends and historians who benefited from his wise counsel and deep knowledge of Kentucky's pioneer history.

Now Therefore: *Be It Resolved:* That the members of the Board of Directors of The Filson Club do hereby pay tribute to their friend and valued co-worker, Robert Emmett McDowell, and express their sorrow and profound debt of gratitude for his dedication to The Filson Club. And

Be It Further Resolved: That this resolution be spread upon the minutes of this Board and a copy thereof be presented and read at the next regular meeting of the Club. And

Be It Further Resolved: That as an expression of sympathy a copy of this resolution be sent by the Secretary to Mrs. McDowell and to Robert E. McDowell, III.

Adopted April 3, 1975.



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