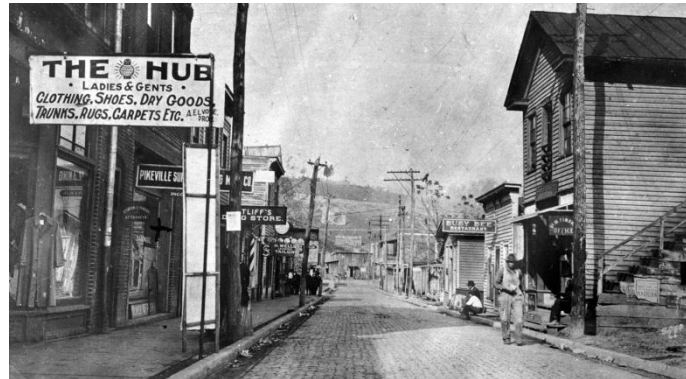


“The Man that Moved Mountains”

Dr. William Hambley is known as the man who envisioned and helped organized the Pikeville Cut-Through, a 15-year, multi-million dollar project that moved a mountain and relocated a river. Hambley, a



Pikeville native, was a medical doctor before becoming involved in politics. His desire to make Pikeville more accessible for travel and safer from rampant flooding prompted him to meet with lawmakers and even U.S. presidents to address these issues.

The goals of the cut-through project, which turned into one of the largest civil engineering projects in the western hemisphere, were to eliminate frequent flooding, relieve traffic congestion and alleviate the critical shortage of level land in the downtown area. The Levisa Fork was redirected from its circling path through the city into a half-mile long cut through Peach Orchard Mountain. Additionally, railroad tracks and streets were rerouted from the area. Dirt and rock from the cut-through filled the former river channel to create nearly 400 acres of new level land for commercial and institutional development. In sum, almost 18,000,000 cubic yards were moved for the project and the final cut-through is approximately 1,300 feet wide, 3,700 feet long and 523 feet deep.

Oral history interviews with Dr. William Hambley and other Pikeville residents can be found at <http://passtheword.ky.gov>. (Photo courtesy of University of Pikeville)

Pass the Word™ is a discovery tool for oral histories throughout the state of Kentucky. To learn more about this topic, visit <http://passtheword.ky.gov>.