CC4427 10.2.26 Friday

The meaning of Article VI, section 2 of the Ohio Constitution: “The General Assembly shall make such provisions, by taxation, or otherwise, as, with the income arising from the school trust fund, will secure a thorough and efficient system of common schools throughout the State; but, no religious or other sect, or sects, shall ever have any exclusive right to, or control of, any part of the school funds of this State.” Part 1

In the early days of Ohio, local citizens seemed to assume the responsibility to establish educational programs for youth.

The 1802 Constitution provided the legislature with limited guidance for education.

Article VIII, section 3 the last sentence thereof: “But religion, morality and knowledge, being essentially necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of instruction shall forever be encouraged by legislative provision, not inconsistent with the rights of conscience.”

And

Article VIII, section 25: “That no law shall be passed to prevent the poor in the several counties and townships within this sate from an equal participation in the schools, academies, colleges and universities within this state, which are endowed, in whole or in part, from the revenue arising from donations made by the United States, for the support of schools and colleges; and the doors of the said schools, academies and universities, shall be open for the reception of scholars, students and teachers, of every grade, without any distinction or preference whatever, contrary to the intent for which said donations were made.”

The 1802 Ohio Constitution did not include any reference to “common school”; however, in 1819 the legislature appointed a committee to study common schools. In 1824 the legislature enacted legislation to establish a system of common schools. It is noteworthy that the legislature established the common school with no reference to private education.

Part 2 of this series will refer to the slow development of the common school up to 1837 when the legislature engaged Samuel Lewis as the Superintendent of Common Schools.