

= James Turner Morehead ( Kentucky ) =

James Turner Morehead ( May 24 , 1797 ? December 28 , 1854 ) was a United States Senator and the 12th Governor of Kentucky . He was the first native @-@ born Kentuckian to hold the governorship of the state . A member of Henry Clay 's National Republican Party , Morehead entered politics just as his party was beginning to challenge the Democratic Party 's dominance in the state .

Morehead was nominated for lieutenant governor at his party 's nominating convention in Baltimore , Maryland in 1831 , and was elected on a split ticket with Democratic governor John Breathitt . He ascended to the governorship upon Breathitt 's death in 1834 . Saddled with a shortened term , Morehead was not able to formulate a significant legislative agenda , and stuck to the politically safe issue of internal improvements during his term . When his party changed its name to the Whig Party and wrested control of the General Assembly from the Democrats in the summer of 1834 , Morehead hosted the new party 's first nominating convention in Frankfort .

Following his term as governor , Morehead returned to the state legislature . An opponent of abolitionism , he accompanied John Speed Smith to Ohio to secure the return of slaves owned by Kentuckians . He was later appointed to the U.S. Senate , where he remained a close ally of Clay 's . In 1847 , he retired to Covington , Kentucky , practicing law until his death in 1854 . The city of Morehead , Kentucky is named in honor of Governor Morehead .

= = Early life and career = =

James Turner Morehead was born on May 24 , 1797 near Shepherdsville , Kentucky in Bullitt County . His parents , Armistead and Lucy ( Latham ) Morehead , moved to Russellville , Kentucky when he was very young , and he was educated at the public schools in that city . He attended Transylvania University in Lexington , Kentucky from 1813 to 1815 . He then returned to Russellville , where he studied law under circuit court judge H. P. Broadnax and John J. Crittenden . He was admitted to the bar in 1818 , and commenced practice in Bowling Green , Kentucky .

On May 1 , 1823 , Morehead married Susan A. Roberts ; the couple had two children . He was elected to the Kentucky House of Representatives representing Warren County from 1828 to 1831 . While there , he served on the Committee on Internal Improvements , and reported a bill for state subscription to the Maysville @-@ Lexington Turnpike Company in 1831 .

= = Governor of Kentucky = =

In 1831 , Morehead was also a delegate to the National Republican Party Convention in Baltimore , Maryland that nominated Henry Clay for president . During the convention , he was nominated for the office of lieutenant governor . Though his National Republican running mate , Richard A. Buckner , was defeated by Democrat John Breathitt , Morehead was elected the ninth Lieutenant Governor .

Governor Breathitt died of tuberculosis on February 21 , 1834 , and Morehead was sworn in as governor the following day . The replacement of a Democratic governor with one from the rival National Republican party caused a great deal of angst among Democrats , but the ascendancy of Democrat James Guthrie to president of the state senate and Morehead 's willingness to retain Breathitt 's secretary of state , Lewis Saunders , did much to allay their fears .

Later that year , the National Republican party began to re @-@ brand itself as the Whig Party , a name that first appeared in the Lexington Intelligencer on April 25 , 1834 . On July 4 , 1834 , Governor Morehead hosted the party 's first convention in Frankfort . Kentuckians flocked to the " new " party en masse , and the legislative elections of August 1834 saw the party garner majorities in both houses of the state legislature . Flexing their political muscles , the majority party ousted Guthrie from his post as president of the Senate and by a vote of 90 ? 40 , and sent John J. Crittenden instead of Guthrie to the U.S. Senate in 1835 .

In his first address to the legislature , Morehead recommended a plan of expanded internal

improvements , including improvements along the state 's rivers . The legislature responded by creating a state board of internal improvements , and named Morehead the ex @-@ officio president of the board . In this role , he authorized many surveys of Kentucky 's rivers and formulated several plans for improvements , but most of them were blocked by the Panic of 1837 . One improvement that did proceed was construction of the Lexington and Ohio Railroad , which was completed in 1835 . Though education was not a high priority for Governor Morehead , the Kentucky Common School Society and the Kentucky Association of Professional Teachers were formed during his term .

= = Later career = =

Following his service as governor , Morehead resumed his legal practice in Frankfort , Kentucky . In March 1837 , he was commissioned by Governor James Clark to act as an agent for the state , selling bonds to fund internal improvements . He returned to the state House from 1837 to 1838 , representing Franklin County . He was president of the Kentucky Board of Internal Improvements from 1838 to 1841 , and in 1839 , he and John Speed Smith were chosen as commissioners to the state of Ohio to secure the return of Kentucky @-@ owned slaves as property of their masters . They were successful in this endeavor .

Learned in Kentucky history , Morehead published An Address in Commemoration of the First Settlement of Kentucky , which contained original information regarding the early settlement of Boonesborough , Kentucky , in 1840 . In 1846 , he published another book , Practice in Civil Actions and Proceedings at Law .

In 1841 , Morehead was elected to the U.S. Senate and served from March 4 , 1841 to March 3 , 1847 . There he was chairman of the U.S. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs and the Committee on Retrenchment . During his service in the Senate , he defended a federal bank bill and opposed the annexation of Texas , though he supported the U.S.-Mexican War after it began . He was also a staunch supporter of fellow Kentuckian Henry Clay .

After his time in Congress , he continued the practice of law in Covington , Kentucky until his death . He was interred in the State lot of Frankfort Cemetery , Frankfort , Kentucky . The city of Morehead , Kentucky was named after him .