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EDITOR

Lee A. Dew

Ky. Wesleyan College
Owensboro, Ky.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Dr. Richard A. Weiss

Mrs. Henry Etta Schauburger

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The Editor's Page

It is fitting that we dedicate this issue of the Quarterly to the memory of the Confederate soldier—not only to those who gave their lives in the Southern cause from Daviess County, but also those who found their final rest far from their homes and families. And in dedicating this issue to the Confederates, we also honor all who suffered in America's most tragic war.

Daviess County's most famous Confederate soldier was Major Rice Graves, the subject of an article in Volume I of the Daviess County Historical Quarterly. The discovery of Lt. Chalaron's letter describing the death of Graves adds much to our knowledge of the career of this gallant soldier.

Atrocities are a part of any war, but the war in Daviess County seemed particularly harsh for many citizens who found themselves in sympathy with the Confederate cause but occupied by Union forces. When a dead Confederate prisoner was dumped contemptuously on the wharfboat by the crew of a Union gunboat, the spirit of Owensboro's citizens rose up in a community demonstration—not only against the foulness of the deed, but in an expression of kindness and sympathy for a fellow human being.

With every war comes eventual healing, and the commissioning of a Confederate monument for the County and its emotion-filled dedication served to symbolize the final end to suffering for many "ex-rebels" in Owensboro.



The Confederate Monument on the court house square stands today not only as a monument to those who fought for the Lost Cause but as an example of the work of a famous and dedicated sculptor—a work of art as well as a monument. Photo by Joseph Hix

MEMORIES OF MAJOR RICE E. GRAVES, C.S.A.

by Lt. Joseph A. Chalaron, formerly of the
Washington Artillery, C.S.A.

* * * *

Editor's Note: This account, by Lt. Chalaron of New Orleans, appeared in the *Messenger*, May 27, 1900. It is the only first-hand account of the life and exploits of Daviess County's greatest Confederate hero. For another look at Major Graves see "The Civil War Adventures of Rice E. Graves of Daviess County, and Graves' Battery, C.S.A.," by Mike Hudson, in Volume I, Number 2 of the *Daviess County Historical Quarterly*.

* * * *

My acquaintance and connection with Maj. Graves hardly ran the span of a year—from the battle of Murfreesboro to that of Chickamauga—yet in that short time no soldier that I met during the war so impressed me and so rapidly won my confidence and friendship. There was so much earnestness, so much energy, so much dash, so much devoted duty, such ability and resplendent courage about him that he immediately attracted and commanded admiration. His individuality asserted itself throughout Breckenridge's division, and his ardent spirit was felt in all its component parts. He was often spoken of as the soul of the division. How close he was to Gen. Breckenridge's heart was exemplified when he lay mortally wounded behind our battery at Chickamauga, and the emotion and tenderness of that great man and soldier can never be forgotten by those who witnessed him bending over the prostrate form of his gallant chief of artillery on that bloody field.

My first meeting with Graves was not an auspicious one. It was just previous to the battle of Murfreesboro. Adams' Louisiana Brigade, to which was attached the Fifth Company (Slocumb's battery) Washington artillery, of which I was a lieutenant, had been called in from Triune, where it had been on outpost duty for some time. Rosecrans had broken up our Christmas festivities by his forward movement towards Murfreesboro. Our brigade was ordered to report to Gen. Breckenridge to complete his division. Patton Anderson's, with which we had been, was to be dissolved. Delighted with the assignment, our thought naturally turned to the chief of artillery of that division, under whom we were to be placed. Graves' reputation as a soldier, artillery officer and disciplinarian had reached us despite his long imprisonment since Fort Donelson. At our outpost we had heard of the high discipline and

efficiency in which he had brought Cobb's Kentucky and Wright's Tennessee batteries, that, with ours, were to compose his battalion. Our battery, with an established record already, felt glad to come under the command of so fine an artillery officer, and along side of batteries of the standing of those he had then with him. On his side, he was no less pleased to obtain a battery of such reputation.

As we neared the position of Breckenridge's camp, Graves, restless and anxious, rode out to meet us. Coming from Triune, across country by neighborhood roads, in sleet and rain, upon sudden orders to move, the battery and its men were covered with mud and mire; its carriages loaded with all sorts of plunder, in which figured extensively the denizens of barnyards and henroosts; for our precipitate retreat had disturbed an elaborate preparation for Christmas enjoyment, and the boys had brought along their provisions and accessories to be consumed at the first camping ground. From our broken-down and abandoned single wagon, the men had been allowed to transfer their effects to the gun and ammunition carriages, a permission rarely granted, but the officers made an exception on this occasion in view of the short distance we had to travel, and the great deprivation that would have been inflicted upon the men otherwise, when no imperative duty demanded the sacrifice of their provisions. Thus transformed, the crack battery first met Graves' eyes. He rode past the leading sections, and when he reached mine, with disgust depicted on his countenance, in answer to my salute, he said to me: "Is this the way the Washington artillery travels?" There was something of a sneer in his tone that aroused my professional pride, but before I could answer, to my horror, a rooster, on one of the passing carriages, launched out into a most resonant and prolonged crowing fit, under the very nose of the major. I had to contain my amusement, and replied, assuring him that it was not customary with the battery to move that way, and explaining the reason for having allowed it on this occasion. This did not seem to have dispelled his disgust, and I felt that the first impression of our battery upon him had not been a favorable one. The men felt that way also, and we all determined to win him over to us in the coming battle.

This was on the 27th of December. I did not meet Graves again until midnight on the 30th. An order had come to our battery to have the rifle section report at that hour to Gen. Breckenridge's headquarters. The enemy had been pressing forward to cross Stone River in front of a hill on which Cobb's battery was posted, supported by an Alabama regiment. A brigade of the enemy had made a dash at this position about dark that day, and had nearly captured Cobb's guns. The position was a most important one, hence our guns and others were sent to reinforce it.

When I reached Gen. Breckenridge's headquarters I rapped at the

door lustily, and Major Graves, in person, answered the call, telling me to await the arrival of a section of rifle guns from Lumsden's battery, when orders should be given me. The announcement of two more rifles being sent along with mine aroused my hopes of thus coming in command of a battery, and I stated to the major my desire to command, if the senior officer, to which he replied that Lieut. Gibson of his staff would be in command. I then asked if he was my senior?— if he was not, I would claim the command if the sections acted together any time. All this conversation occurred in the densest darkness. Lumsden's section soon arrived, and Lieut. Gibson, whose features I did not distinguish until day broke, led us to the position Graves directed him to occupy with his guns. The position proved to be directly in rear of Cobb's guns that were on the crest of the hill, and when the enemy batteries opened on him at about 7 in the morning, we found ourselves the recipients of the shots intended for him. The exposure thus uselessly incurred was trying, and Lieut. Gibson asked me to send a sergeant to inform Graves of the situation, and ask permission to remove the battery to a less exposed position. I volunteered to carry the message, and started before he could reply. It was fully 250 yards to Cobb's guns, then in full play, the field between, an open one, swept from the front to the left by artillery and rifle projectiles and I had not gone fifty yards before I realized by small chances of getting up to Cobb or of returning. The infantry supports were hugging the ground behind Cobb, and I had to jump my horse over their crouching lines. I rode into the battery, where I could see Maj. Graves moving about erect among the belching guns, and saluting him, delivered the message. Had I dropped from the sky, he could not have shown more astonishment at seeing me. He sharply said, "Tell Gibson to bring his guns up and plant them on the crest to the right of Cobb's." As I turned my horse short round, to start back, he shouted to me, "Tell him to take them out of the line of fire. I'll send him further orders." As I dashed back, I felt satisfied that Graves' first meeting, under fire, with an officer of the Washington artillery, was not to the officer's discredit. When the enemy's fire upon Cobb was slackened, after a terrible engagement of half an hour, Graves sent word to Lieut. Gibson to bring up his guns and place them to the right of Cobb. For reasons which Gibson requested me to explain to Maj. Graves he turned over the command of the guns to me, and I moved them up as ordered. In taking position to the right of Cobb, my section was thrown outside of the earthwork behind which the other guns found protection. My rifles stood on the very highest point of the crest, and rose boldly against the sky, as seen by the enemy. Here they stood and fought most of the day, until their ammunition was completely exhausted. Here I came to know Graves, in those hours of death-dealing, better than if I had met him for years. How cool his courage! How

intense his energy! How alive his senses were to the fray around! At one moment, in the exasperation aroused by repeated failures of my friction primers, when it was all important to check an advancing line of the foe in my front, I rushed up to him where he stood close to my guns, saying: "See, Major, what d--d stuff is given us to fight with." Elevating his hand as in rebuke, he said to me, "Lieutenant, don't swear." At another moment, I stood calling his attention to some movement of the enemy. A cannon ball passed between us. Involuntarily, Graves stooped; it happened that I did not. As he straightened up, with an air slightly confused, he said to me: "Lieutenant, it is stronger than me." Again, a while after, a line of battle came approaching our front. Stepping to my nearest gun to him, he pointed the line to the gunner, asking him if he could hit it. "I'll try, sir," said the young soldier, and soon the shell had sped, and bursting in the color guard sent the flag flying in the air, and the foe around it prone upon the earth. The whole line immediately fell flat on their bellies—stopped by that one shot. At this splendid marksmanship, Maj. Graves stepped up to the gunner and asked him his name. He then told Corporal Smith that he would mention that shot in his report to Gen. Breckenridge. Never after, at inspections or reviews, did he tire of calling the acting officer's attention to the corporal, and citing the occurrence.

In this exposed position, where my two guns were fought under his eye without earthworks, where their carriages were stripped of implements and splintered by shot and shell, I felt proud of the approbation he bestowed up us, and realized from his looks that the Washington artillery had won the heart of the "bravest of the brave." Loath to quit him when my ammunition became exhausted and he expressed regret to part with my section, I suggested that, as the left of our line under Gen. Hardee had been driving the enemy, as we could plainly see from our elevated position, and surely had captured many batteries—that I be allowed to seek Gen. Bragg on the field and obtain permission to replace my useless rifles by two of the captured ones. The major joyously acquiesced and gave me a written word to that effect. The privilege I sought of Gen. Bragg was denied me. I returned to the major, and from that moment became separated from him in the fighting until Friday evening, Jan. 2, 1863, when preparations were being made on the extreme right of Bragg's line for the charge of Breckenridge's division. Our battery with its four Napoleons under command of Lieut. Vaught, I having charge of one of its sections, had followed Adam's brigade to the position where the division was forming for that ever-memorable event. As preliminary to it, Major Graves took our four guns forward, beyond the infantry line and close up to our skirmishers, and set us shelling the enemy's pickets. Under cover of this fire, our

skirmishers threw down the several rail fences that divided the fields over which we were to move down to Stone River, some 700 yards in front. As Graves led our guns through the ranks of the Kentucky brigade that formed our front line, a colonel of one of its regiments called to the major, "Graves, why are you taking that battery so far in front?" His reply was, "These boys will go anywhere." We all felt secure of his admiration after these words. His purpose accomplished, Graves sent us to our position in rear of Adam's brigade, then commanded by Col. Gibson, Gen. Adams having been wounded in the first day's battle. The brigade formed the second line of the division in its array for the charge, and stood immediately in rear of the Kentucky brigade then under Gen. Hanson. This brigade had Pillow's on its right, ours had Preston's. The batteries that were to follow the division were ours and Wright's, of Graves' battalion (Cobb's battery having kept in its first position on the hill where I had fought with it on the first day), and Moses' battery, with part of Semple's.

Those batteries, under Major Graves— their guns, carriages and men stripped for desperate action, formed some fifty yards behind the second line, that stood 200 yards from the first. Our battery was on the left next to Moses', then Wright's, and Semple's on the extreme right. The division thus formed was screened from the open fields in front and the enemy beyond on this side of the river and the height of the other bank by a skirt of open woods about 100 yards wide. The division presented a magnificent appearance. Gen. Breckenridge rode down its lines addressing the troops, telling them what was expected of them. The brigade commander then called their regimental and company officers around them in rear of their brigades, and gave them their final instructions, advising them of the signal that was momentarily expected for the charge. At 4 o'clock p.m., the appointed hour, the signal gun from the left broke the suspense of the chafing division and it sprang forward, its bugles sounding the charge, its infantry lines at a double quick, its line of artillery at a trot. Never during the war did I witness a grander and a more thrilling spectacle.

As our first line cleared the screen of woods and appeared in the open field, from the heights beyond the river fifty pieces of artillery opened up on it, besides the guns and infantry of the foe on this side of the river. Each of its steps in advance brought it under heavier infantry fire from the 15,000 or more of the enemy arrayed on the banks of Stone River. In the face of this terrific fire, canopied over with shot and shell, the division in splendid order advanced superbly, driving before it the enemy on this side of the river, capturing several hundred prisoners.

The batteries had orders to come into action on the first swell of ground in the field, and to draw the fire of the enemy's guns across the river from off our infantry. The Fifth Company soon reached the

desired position, and (the guns) sprang into play, maintaining a rapid fire until the ammunition of its limber chests had been exhausted. The caissons' limber chests were sent for, but some officer, unknown to us, had ordered them away from where we had placed them, and they could not be found. Momentarily expecting them, we stood by our inactive guns, impatient spectators of the terrible drama being enacted before us. Our lines could be seen in unbroken array, with well kept distances, steadily moving into the jaws of death, leaving the field behind dotted with killed and wounded. As the first line neared the woods that fringed the river, giving cover to the enemy on this side, it could be seen wavering like some huge anaconda as it met more or less fire along its front, which variably impeded, yet never checked, its advance or caused a break in its continuity. With maintained impetuosity the second line came on, and closed upon the first. The two, now combined, with a rush disappeared into the woods, from which soon came running towards us hundreds of federal prisoners, evidencing the rout of their forces.

Such was the spectacle presented to us on the left half of the division. A slight screen of woods separated us from other fields to our right, where Graves with Wright's and Semple's guns had pressed further forward than our position, as he followed behind Preston's and Pillow's brigades. In that direction the hidden conflict raged with fierceness too intense for our practiced ears not to judge that terrible results, one way or the other, were soon to follow. Soon increasing squads of our wounded and retiring men told us that our gallant division was being borne back by overwhelming numbers. More pressing became our calls for ammunition, and messenger after messenger was dispatched in search of our caissons. As the squads grew into fragments of regiments, it was plain the division was being driven back, cut to pieces. Our anxiety for orders grew intense, and we scanned the groups as they emerged from the woods in our front, seeking the welcome forms of Gen. Breckenridge or of Major Graves. I was the first to recognize Major Graves, in a group coming towards us, and I immediately dashed forward in his direction. We met about fifty yards from the woods, where he and the group had halted at my approach. I reported to him the position and condition of our battery, and asked for orders. Just then, from the woods he had emerged from, came a volley from the foe. Major Graves was struck in two places—the head and the knee—his kepi shot off, his horse wounded in the head and neck. Capt. Mastin had his horse killed, and so was mine. Major James Wilson and Capt. Semple, or Coleman, I forget which, who were the others in the group, escaped unscathed. Major Graves, finding himself seriously wounded and unable to remain upon the field, said to me: "Lieutenant, I appoint you chief of artillery of the division. Save Wright's guns." I demurred at the appointment, stating to him that being only a second lieutenant my

appointment by him would not be recognized by officers senior to me in the battalion and my orders would not be executed. He replied with a compliment to my capacities, and asked Major James Wilson whether he had authority or not to appoint me, Major Wilson stating that he had, and that he would report his action to Gen. Breckenridge. I assented to act until I could report or receive orders from Gen. Breckenridge. I immediately mounted the horse of one of my sergeants, who had ridden forward as soon as he had seen my horse fall, and I rushed to the field where Graves told me Wright's battery had stood. When I passed into it from the skirt of woods intervening, I saw the enemy around, and some clambering upon two guns, over which they were waving their flag. The rest of the battery had evidently escaped to the right of that field. No infantry of ours was in sight in the field, and the guns were hopelessly lost. My duty was to prepare to receive the further advance of the enemy, with all the artillery left us. I instructed Lieut. Vaught to plant our battery, that had now replenished its limbers, in the skirt of woods from which we had entered the field, and I called upon the retiring troops, especially the Louisianians, to rally in the strip of woods behind the battery. In this strip we found Robertson's battery, already in position—kept there in reserve to cover the division if it had to recoil. The fire of Robertson's and our battery was kept up into the darkness that soon fell upon the field, and the enemy did not advance to the skirts of woods thus held.

I reported to Gen. Breckenridge that night at Gen. Bragg's headquarters, in Murfreesboro. He thanked me, and informed me that Capt. Robertson had been appointed chief of artillery of the division. I sought the bivouac of the Fifth Company, and resumed the command of my section.

Upon Graves' recovery from his wounds, he rejoined the division at Tullahoma. His active spirit immediately kept us busy with schools of officers and non-commissioned officers, with frequent drills by company, by battalion, by regiment of artillery. He put us reconnoitering the country and mapping it off. He set us making plans of the defenses of Tullahoma. The one then made by our company appears today in the maps published in the "Records of the Rebellion" prepared by the U.S. government. When we were advanced to Wartrace and to Bellbuckle, he added to the schooling usage, finding, and target practice. The enemy's advance to Hoover's Gap interrupted this instruction, and our battery was sent with Cleburne's division to that point. Upon our return from this temporary assignment, we found that Breckenridge's division had been sent to Jackson, Miss., with its other two batteries, and that we were to be separated from our brigade and division. The chagrin of the company was great indeed and the officers were asked to appeal to Gen. Bragg to have the company sent along also. Capt. Slocumb and I

therefore went on this mission, and rode a whole night going and coming from Gen. Bragg's headquarters. We succeeded in obtaining his consent, but at the sacrifice of our battery and its horses of which we were very proud. Gen. Breckenridge, Gen. Adams, and Major Graves had wired us to sacrifice everything as they would see that we were fully fitted out upon reaching Jackson. And sure enough, through their care, and especially Major Graves, we were given a brand new battery of Napoleons and rifles, six guns and harness, together with fresh and splendid horses, impressed from the rich planters abounding in that section of the country. No battery in the Confederate service was more completely equipped, or presented a more splendid appearance, than the Fifth Company, W. A. after Major Graves was through with his endeavors to properly fit us out. On our way to Jackson, in passing through Mobile, we had filled our ranks to 200 men present for duty from among friends and relatives just out from New Orleans, and the company stood unsurpassed in every respect. Graves was proud of it, and its officers and men now felt bound to him by more ties than the administration that he had inspired them up to that time.

Breckenridge's division held the left of Joe Johnston's forward movement for the relief of Vicksburg and was prepared to force a passage across the Big Black south of it when Pemberton surrendered. The day before that event Major Graves, taking me along, had gone to the Big Black reconnoitering the passage over it. He was fired on by the enemy's pickets repeatedly during this operation, and he himself fired several rifle shots at them, exhibiting a hatred of the foe which struck me then, but that I was not aware how well he was founded in nursing it as he did. Aroused from our slumbers that night by the announcement of the fall of Vicksburg, we beat a hasty retreat before morning toward Jackson. In the siege of that place that followed Breckenridge's division held the left of Johnston's line, extending from the Illinois and Chicago railroad to Pearl River. On the 12th of July, Lauman's division of Sherman's army charged our position, mainly in front of our battery that was on the extreme right of the division, astride the railroad, with Cobb's battery next on our left and about the center of the division. We had six guns, Cobb had four. The attack lasted about half an hour, yet never in the annals of war was so great a slaughter of brave troops inflicted upon a foe in a jollier spirit, and in so short a time. Four stands of colors and 1,000 killed and wounded were left before the muzzles of Cobb's and our guns. In this affair Major Graves placed himself among our guns, most of the time standing on the parapet, encouraging and directing us, with word and gesture, in our deadly work.

At Forest, where we halted and camped after retreating from Jackson, Graves kept his battalion busy with diligent care of our stock, and perfected us in all the arts of practical utility to artilleryists, whose

supplies had too often to be of their own creation. Thus, when Breckenridge's division was sent back to Bragg's army, just previous to Chickamauga, his battalion's horses were ordered to make the march across country, from Forest to Rome, Ga., to report there in ten days. The horses of the other battalions were sent by railroad. His horses were there on time and his battalion moved with Breckenridge's division towards Lafayette, the distant booming of cannon among the mountains and valleys of that corner of Georgia quickening our steps as we hurried towards the field where was to be fought one of the greatest battles of the war. At Lafayette, a column of federal cavalry almost ran into our battery, and Graves wanted to follow it up with artillery alone, nothing to him seemed impossible of accomplishment with artillery. From Lafayette, we moved toward Lee and Gordon's Mill, under cover of Pigeon mountain, stopping at the different gaps, relieving other troops, and at time firing at the dust that rose above the forest that hid the enemy's moving columns in the valley between us and Lookout Mountain. The night of the 18th of September found us across Pigeon Mountain and in the Chickamauga Valley, at Glass' mills on the Chickamauga River. Early on the morning of the 19th Cobb's battery and ours, along with the Second Kentucky, crossed the Chickamauga River at Glass' mills, under the fire of some ten of the enemy's guns. At a trot it was accomplished and the formation into battery as we debouched from the woods close to the ford (and) threw our company into a field just the width of its front that opened into a large expanse of fields beyond. This terminated in elevations bordering the valley of the river, on that side, where the enemy had planted the batteries that opposed our crossing. Before we reached our field of action Lieut. Blair of our company and several of our men were killed. Graves followed our guns into the field and stood in our midst during the fierce artillery fight that ensued as soon as we could get into action. After twenty minutes of bloody work the enemy ceased firing, and we stood by our guns awaiting Graves' orders. This pause lasted quite a while, when observing the movement of horses at the enemy's position, I rode up to Major Graves and apprised him that the enemy were bringing in other guns. He replied sharply, "I see it," and gave us the order to move our guns forward by hand. Thus he advanced us fully one hundred yards when the enemy opened afresh upon us, with more guns than in the first engagement. From this second encounter, repeated orders from Gen. Breckenridge finally withdrew us, to follow the division that was again in the move for Alexander's bridge. Graves seemed loath to quit the field under the enemy's fire. His persistency probably cost us some men, for our company had one officer and six men killed and five wounded in this affair of Glass' mills. We buried our dead in one common pit, rolling each in his blanket, leaving a detail to cover them

up, and marched off as Wheeler's cavalry crossed over to continue the fighting at the ford.

Alexander's bridge was reached at 11 p.m. and we bivouaced in the fields beyond until 3 a.m. of the 20th when we moved forward to form line of battle for the attack that was ordered for 6 a.m. Breckenridge's division held the extreme right of Bragg's line of infantry, and Adams' brigade with our battery held the right of the division. Forest's cavalry was to the right of our brigade. On our left came Stovall, with McBane's battery, on Stovall's left came Helm with Cobb's battery. At 9 a.m. only came the order to move to the attack. In our forward movement the enemy was soon encountered. Helm struck the entrenchments, which he could not carry and he lost his life in the attempt. Stovall and Adams passed beyond the entrenchments, and drove their opponents across the Chattanooga road leading to Lee's and Gordon's mill. Graves had taken his post with our battery, and led us immediately in rear of our skirmish line. In glorious order he dashed across the road and into the McDonald field and orchard, ahead of our infantry line, bringing our battery into action some 150 yards beyond the road. We opened on the fleeing enemy in our front, then turned our guns to our right, whence came shots at us, dispersing the foe in that direction, then faced round to the rear, where the enemy now showed himself in force. We drove him into dense woods some 500 yards across the field in that direction. In the meantime Adam's brigade had entered the field behind us, and changing front to the left, its left resting on the Chattanooga road, pressed forward to charge the enemy in those woods. We ceased firing when the brigade reached our guns and passed forward through our intervals. Last moments of suspense followed, while we watched our brigade sweep over the field and disappear into the woods, where pandemonium seemed to rage after their entrance.

The enemy's batteries from in and beyond the woods still kept up their fire at us, to which no reply could be made on account of our troops between us. Their shrapnel was continually bursting over us. One of these exploded in our midst where Major Graves and Capt. Slocomb stood mounted, side by side. We saw them clasp each other, and totter in their saddles. The nearest men rushed up, arriving in time to catch them before they fell, for Slocomb's horse was sinking to the ground, mortally wounded, and Graves was leaning over on Slocomb from his horse that was untouched. Slocomb had escaped injury, but Graves was pierced by a shrapnel bullet from side to side through the bowels. He was borne to a hollow close in rear of our guns, and laid in the shade of its only tree by the spring that bubbled from under its roots. Officers and men crowded around. I opened his coat and cloth—a shrapnel bullet falling from them as they were raised. We all felt that our dear major was mortally wounded. Word had been sent to Gen.

Breckenridge, and he soon rode up at a gallop. He knelt by the side of Major Graves and showed emotion such as a father alone could feel for his child. From this touching scene our attention was called by evidences of disaster to Adams' brigade in our front. The crash of battle in the woods had been incessant, stirring the echoes of their recesses with deep reverberations that ominously struck our ears. Now, with hanging bridles and frantic strides, the riderless horses of Gen. Adams and his adjutant, Guilet, came tearing to the rear from out those woods, towards and past our guns. Gen. Breckenridge immediately ordered that Major Graves should be sent to the field hospital, for the battle was evidently going against us at this point. Bidding Graves a touching farewell the general rode off, after ordering Slocomb to hold the position at all costs until he could bring up Liddell's division. Officers and men immediately sought Major Graves' side to get a last look at him, to grasp his hand once more, to say a last farewell. With implements in hand, with faces blackened by powder and by smoke, with moistened eyes, and many with traces of tears on their besmeared cheeks, they came, each taking his hand. He gave to all, by word or by look, some sign of recognition. What a striking scene for an artist. How pathetic those eternal partings of heroic men from their gallant and beloved commander. The raging battle around, the limping wounded streaming past, the hurrying ambulances, the retreating squads from our overwhelmed brigade, the bursting shells and shrapnel rending heaven and earth, the hissing bullets, the crash of musketry rolling from the woods in front, rising into that grand roar of battle which, once heard, is never forgotten, made a spectacle and impression that haunts me still.

Four men of the company bore him off to the field hospital on the Reed bridge road, where they remained with him until he died on the 23rd of September. One of these men is still living in our city. He is Robert McMillin, Esq., chief of the bureau of grain inspectors of our board of trade. On the morning of the 21st of September, I rode to the log house on the Reed road, where he had been taken, and cast a last look at him. He was in a dying condition, apparently unconscious, and did not recognize me.

Such was the end of the gallant Graves. No finer soldier served the Confederacy, no braver soul ever offered himself up a sacrifice on any country's altar. His death was a personal affliction to every member of the Fifth company, as it was to those of the other companies of his battalion and to the majority of Breckenridge's division. To this day the survivors of the Fifth company keep his memory embalmed with that of its own officers—Slocomb, Vaught, Blair, Leverich and Johnston.

THE DEATH OF PRIVATE KYLE:
A CIVIL WAR ATROCITY AT OWENSBORO

by Lee A. Dew

In the old section of Elmwood Cemetery on a hilltop overlooking Old Hartford Road stands a granite monument honoring the memory and marking the grave of a Confederate soldier from Louisiana whose death and treatment at the hands of the Union Army rank as a major atrocity in a war marked by mistreatment of prisoners on both sides.

An inscription on the stone reads as follows:

This monument is affectionately dedicated by the citizens of Owensboro, Daviess Co., to the memory of A. Kyle, C.S.A., Co. C., 18th La. Vol. Regt. Who was taken prisoner at Shilo, April 17, 1862. He died on a Federal gun boat, and was put on shore at this City, where his remains were tenderly laid to rest by Southern Sympathizers. A slip of paper on which bore these words was found on his person: What more can a man do, than to die in defense of his Country.

No Owensboro newspapers exist to give a record of how Private Kyle came to be in Owensboro, but on January 27, 1889, a letter was published in *The Owensboro Messenger* giving details of the events which surrounded the death and burial of Private Kyle.

The article is as follows:

A recent publication about a confederate soldier buried in Dr. Tyler's lot at Elmwood was so erroneous I think it should be corrected. It was stated that the soldier was put off of a boat here in a wounded condition, and after tender nursing by the Sisters of St. Francis Academy, he died without ever telling his name, the only clue to it being an inscription on a ring which he wore, and that at the funeral Mrs. Dr. Tyler offered a burying place for him in her lot. This is all wrong. The soldier was dead before the boat bringing him reached Owensboro. His body was stuffed into a box much too short, and on the top of it marked in common box-marking ink was inscribed, "Dead Rebel." He has been stripped of all his clothing by the Yankees, who left him nothing except a red flannel shirt. This and the gold ring was all he had on. With the box, however, was left his name and address in Louisiana. Mr. Barbee, who first operated the gas works here, first interested himself in this dead soldier. He raised a fund by subscription to buy a decent suit of clothes and coffin for him. He was buried in Mrs. Dr. Prince's lot in the old graveyard on East Fifth street. This was in May, 1862. When the old grave-yard was abandoned, at Mrs. Dr. Tyler's request, Dr. Tyler had

the remains taken up and reinterred in his lot at Elmwood. This was in 1872, ten years later.

I append an article from the *Owensboro Monitor*, edited by Thos. S. Pettit, of May, 1862.

HONORS TO THE DEAD

A Confederate soldier who was wounded at the Battle of Pittsburg Landing and who was being conveyed to Louisville as a prisoner, died of his wounds between Evansville and Owensboro, and, after being stripped of his clothing, was thrown into an old wooden box which was about three inches to short for him, and left on the wharfboat to be buried by our citizens. A meeting was called by the Southern citizens of the town and preparations made for a suitable burial at 1 o'clock on Thursday. Long before the appointed time our streets were thronged with people from all sections of the county, who had come to witness the solemn ceremony. At 2 o'clock the remains were conveyed to the Methodist church, where an impressive and eloquent funeral oration was delivered by Rev. Dr. Nicholson. The number of spectators at the church was variously estimated at from 1,000 to 1,500. After the exercises at the church were concluded the procession repaired to the cemetery, where they deposited the remains of the brave but unfortunate soldier, who died while nobly battling in defense of *his* country and *his* country's cause.

It may be some consolation to the friends of the deceased to know—though buried among strangers in a strange land—that he was interred in a manner becoming *his* cause, and that thousands of sympathizing tears were shed over his grave for the loved ones at home, and many a fervent prayer offered up to God for his safe deliverance to that haven of rest where strife, dissensions (sic) and Abolitionism never enter, and where peace and harmony reign forever.

Soldier rest, thy warfare o'er,
Dream of fighting fields no more:
Sleep the sleep that knows no breaking,
Morn of toil, nor night of waking.

The name of the soldier was A. Kyle. It was stated that he belonged to Company C, 18th Regiment, Louisiana Volunteers. He was a dark complexion, had black hair and eyes, and was well formed. He was six feet three inches high.

* * * *

The Tyler family plot at Elmwood is the last resting place for Dr. Gustavus Brown Tyler, 1821-1896, an Owensboro physician and one of the first members of the American Medical Association from this area; his wife, Nina R. Tyler, 1837-1888; and their four children. But, in

addition to Kyle, there is another grave in the Tyler plot. Standing next to Private Kyle's marker is another stone, engraved "In memory of our faithful old Nurse, Aunt Sallie. Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter into the joys of the Lord. By Nina R. Tyler."

It is hard to imagine a more poignant monument to the "Lost Cause" than here on a hillside in Owensboro—the last resting places of a Confederate soldier and a beloved slave—with both of their stones facing southward.

* * * *

A solemn ceremony was held at Elmwood on July 11, 1891, when the monument to Owensboro's Confederate soldier was unveiled. The stone, bought by the Confederate Association, was dedicated during a program which featured speeches by Capt. C. N. Pendleton and Major Joe Haycraft. Following the speeches, Miss Heart Tyler and Miss Maggie Rudy drew the cords that let the veil covering the stone fall, exposing the "handsome monument" to view.

The Owensboro Messenger expressed the emotion of the time in its comment on the occasion:

The erection of this tribute to the memory of a stranger is a beautiful exemplification of the lofty feeling that fills the breast of the true soldier, and speaks more plainly than any studied oration the sentiment that fills the heart of every man who deems it an honor to fight and die for the cause his soul holds dear.



The monument to A. Kyle, C.S.A. in Elmwood Cemetery, which stands today as a symbol of the emotional outrage felt by Owensboroans toward the callous treatment of this dead soldier by Union forces. Photo by Joseph Hix.

OWENSBORO'S CONFEDERATE MONUMENT

by Lee A. Dew

The notes of Will Athy's bugle call rang loud and clear over the heads of the vast throng assembled on the corner of Third and Frederica streets. As the notes died away Miss Sarah S. Moorman pulled a silken cord which released the veil exposing for public view Daviess County's monument to its Confederate soldiers. Four little girls, Misses Sue Roberts Watkins, Edwina Rowe, Robin Brashear and Marie Ford, stood at the four corners of the monument, each holding a Confederate flag. As the veil dropped away from the statue a battery of cannon, under the command of John Carlisle, began to fire a salute. It was September 21, 1900, the thirty-seventh anniversary of the death of Daviess county's greatest Confederate hero, Major Rice E. Graves, on the battlefield of Chickamauga.

It was also the culmination of nearly eight years of effort on the part of the ex-Confederates of the county to raise funds to memorialize their fallen comrades. It was on December 10, 1892, that the Confederate Veterans Association voted to raise money to build a "suitable monument of marble or bronze, surmounted by a full-length figure of a Confederate soldier on guard," for mounting on the court house square. The veterans proposed a "course of lectures" for the coming winter as a means of raising money. "The movement is a commendable one, and deserves the support and co-operation of every citizens of the city and county," the Owensboro *Sunday Messenger* commented.

The veterans soon discovered that a lecture series, no matter how commendable, was not a sure-fire way of raising money, so they then turned to more traditional means. Barbecues proved to be the biggest money-raisers, such as the one held the following September which featured a speech by the former Confederate general Basil Duke of Louisville. Approximately \$200 was raised for the monument fund by this event, which, despite rain, attracted a crowd of "six or eight hundred people."

Not to be outdone by the men, the Daughters of the Confederacy also held money-raising events, the most successful of which was a program called "A Street in Cairo," held in July, 1894. This program featured a dinner, a dancing pavilion with orchestra, a battery of artillery, a contest for the "most popular young lady (won by Miss Rosa Todd who received the price of a "handsome silk dress"), and numerous decorated booths and stands. This gala evening added another \$300 to the fund.

The Daviess County Confederate Association was now well on its

way to making its dream of a monument a reality. The association, organized in 1889 with about forty members, had grown to the point that, ten years later, its membership was 107. By the spring of 1899 they had succeeded in raising \$1,400 in cash for the monument, and had an additional \$700 in pledges. In addition, the society paid funeral expenses for those members who left estates inadequate to provide for their burial, so that raising money for the proposed monument was not their only financial obligation.

There was also in the community another Confederate veterans organization, the Rice E. Graves camp of the United Confederate Veterans, to which many of the Daviess County Confederate Association also belonged. In May, 1899, an attempt to merge the two organizations was rejected overwhelmingly by the Daviess County Association, which did not want to become a part of a national organization and to be "swallowed up," as several members put it during the debate on the question. Another major factor in the rejection of the merger with the U.C.V. was stated by L. P. Vairin, who opposed the U.C.V. because "it affiliates occasionally with that other political organization known as the G.A.R., and he didn't want to get into an association where he would have to mix up so much with the G.A.R. people," the *Messenger* reported. (The G.A.R. was the Grand Army of the Republic, a nationwide organization of Union Army veterans.)

While this dispute was being argued, representatives of the veterans and the Daughters of the Confederacy were shopping for a sculptor to execute their statue. They finally settled upon a Hungarian immigrant, George Julian Zolnay, who was in the process of completing memorials to Mr. and Mrs. Jefferson Davis at Richmond, Va., and to the Confederate scout Sam Davis at Nashville, Tenn. Zolnay's model, designed to the specifications spelled out a decade earlier, was approved by the two groups, and the sculptor promised to have it completed and mounted in time for the September 21 ceremonies.

Zolnay, who was already being called "the sculptor of the Confederacy" for his many Southern commissions, was born in Pees, Hungary, in 1863. His father, who had fought against the Austrians under Louis Kossuth, was forced to flee Hungary when the Austrians took over, and moved to Rumania. Zolnay attended schools in Bucharest and was awarded a scholarship at the Royal Rumanian conservatory of Music, where he studied to be a violinist. His interest in art, however, caused him to transfer to the Royal Art Institute. A period of service in the Rumanian cavalry gave him an interest in modeling horses. He later studied sculpture in Paris and at the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna. In 1892 he came to America to do sculptural work at the world's fair of 1893, the Columbian Exposition in Chicago. He decided to remain in this country, and in 1897 became a United States citizen.

Zolnay's plan conceived of the statue mounted upon a block of granite, which had to be in place before the bronze statue could be mounted. A contract for this work was negotiated with the firm of Weony and Brown of Richmond, Va. The operators of this firm, the *Messenger* assured its readers, were "two old Confederate soldiers who have made an enviable reputation for themselves with the splendid stone work they have done for many years all over the South." The pedestal weighs 3,300 pounds, and was put in place in the spring of 1900. It is eight feet, six inches in height.

Since the total cost of the monument was \$3,500 and the sponsors did not have nearly that much money in hand, additional fund-raising efforts were hastily planned. Most successful was an "auction" of "handsome young ladies" held in conjunction with a dinner early in December, 1899. The *Messenger* gave the event valuable publicity:

Who wants to buy a handsome maiden? The opportunity will be given next Tuesday Evening at the city hall, where twenty-five handsome maidens will be sold at public outcry to the highest bidder.

This opportunity is one of a lifetime. Never again will such priceless bargains be offered. All new, bright, pretty and durable wares, the pick of the market, and cheap at any price. No last year's goods, no refused stock. Everything just as represented.

The bachelors and widowers are cordially invited. The sale is not restricted, so that a purchaser may buy one or as many as he desires.

While all in fun, the "auction" perhaps reminded a few of the newspaper's readers of similar auctions held in the city in the years before the end of the Civil War which were of a different type, as slaves continued to be sold at "public outcry" until the last few months of the war. Probably thoughts of the past were as far from the consciousness of the giggling "maidens" and the anxious bidders as ideas of what later would be called "women's liberation," a thought which would have no doubt shocked all of the participants in the gala evening.

Finally the long-awaited Dedication Day arrived, and a crowd estimated and between 5,000 and 7,000 people packed the court house square. Two thousands chairs had been provided, but they were filled long before 9 o'clock, the hour when the ceremony was scheduled to begin, and still the people crowded in. Windows and rooftops of downtown buildings facing the monument were also packed with spectators, despite dark clouds and the threat of rain.

The platform was decorated with the Confederate colors. The three flags of the Confederacy—the familiar battle flag, the review flag, and

the official flag—together with the flags of the Rice E. Graves Camp of the U.C.V. and the W. T. Aull Camp of the Sons of Confederate Veterans. Members of the John C. Breckenridge chapter of the United Daughters of the confederacy were seated to the right of the platform in a group.

The program began with Ringgold's band of Terre Haute, Ind., playing an "elaborate" program, featuring old Confederate war songs. As the last selection, "Dixie," was played, the audience "went wild with applause." An emotional high-point of the program was reached when Captain W. T. Ellis of Owensboro described the departure of Daviess County troops for the Confederate service while their "mothers, wives and sweethearts" sang "Cheer, Boys, Cheer." At that point a quartet composed of Mrs. William Sutherland, Miss Mamie Watson, I. N. Parrish and David Stuart arose and sang "Cheer, Boys, Cheer," to loud applause. At the conclusion of Ellis's speech, Mrs. Sutherland sang "Dixie" with the audience joining in the chorus. "Many of the old soldiers in gray wept throughout the entire unveiling ceremonies," the *Messenger* reported.

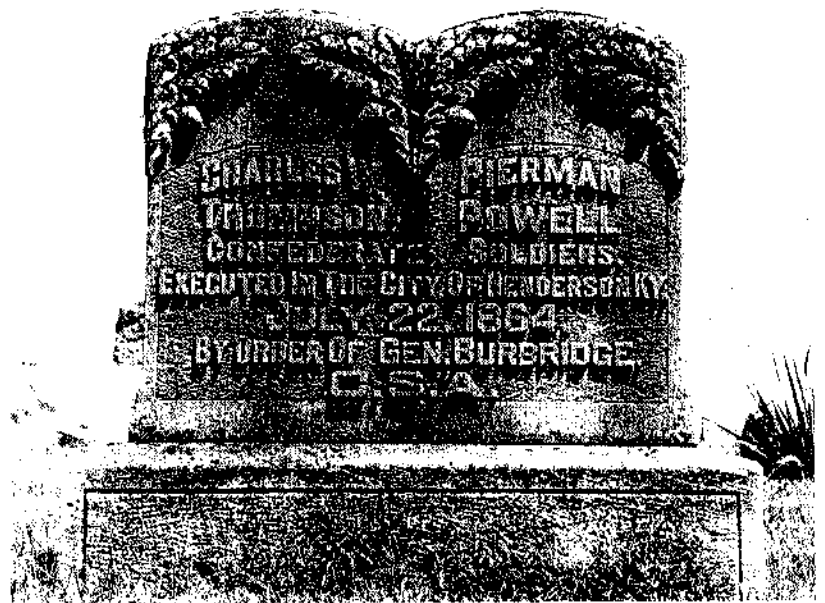
The newspaper was responsible for what was perhaps the best summary of the feelings of the community toward the Confederate veterans honored by the memorial and by the emotional outpouring of the crowd:

The old Confederate soldiers of Daviess County and their friends are to be congratulated upon the successful completion of the handsomest monument that has yet been erected to the memory of Confederate soldiers in the state of Kentucky. When it is remembered that the old Confederate soldiers, on their return from the war, found themselves penniless, all of their property having been absolutely swept away during the progress of the war, and when it is further remembered that without the aid of pensions and other governmental aid, that these men have founded and established homes, and not infrequently built up fortunes by their enterprise, industry and integrity, there is little room left to doubt that the old Confederate soldier of Kentucky is the highest type of our citizenship and that to him this and coming generations will owe a debt of gratitude which it can scarcely be hoped will ever be paid.

* * * *

Zolnay went on to produce a great number of famous works, including the frieze of the restored Parthenon and the Kiwanis World War Memorial, both in Nashville; the Pierre Laclède Memorial and the

Confederate Monument in St. Louis; the statue of the Cherokee leader Sequoyah in Statuary Hall in Washington, D.C.; and portrait statues and busts of "Stonewall" Jackson, Fitzhugh Lee, James Whitcomb Riley, and many noted composers. He founded the St. Louis Artists' Guild while a member of the faculty at Washington University, and was a founding member of the National Arts Club of New York. But he still retained a tie with Owensboro, for in 1902 he returned to the city to marry Abigail Rowan, the daughter of Dr. William F. Gillim. Thus the Confederate monument on the court house square stands today not only as a symbol of those who fought for the "Lost Cause," but also as a symbol of a love story involving a Kentucky belle and an internationally famous artist.



This monument at St. Alphonsus Cemetery at Mt. St. Joseph marks the burial site of two Daviess County Confederate soldiers murdered by order of General Stephen G. Burbridge on July 22, 1864. Photo by Josph Hix

THE EXECUTION OF POWELL AND THOMPSON

by Aloma Williams Dew

Editor's Note: The following is excerpted from "Owensboro, Kentucky, During the Civil War—A Woman's Perspective", an MA Thesis at Louisiana State University, pp. 98-100.

The execution of two young Confederates from Daviess County in July 1864, made contemptible the name of General Stephen Burbridge and brought sadness to the hearts of many in Daviess County. Pierman Powell, twenty-three, and Charles W. Thompson, eighteen, were regular Confederate soldiers who had become cut off from the rest of their regiment and were arrested. Powell and Thompson's regiment had been recruiting in Daviess County when they met Union soldiers and a skirmish ensued. The prisoners were taken to Henderson and ordered executed before a firing squad. Burbridge ordered the execution as an example in retaliation for the mortal wounding of one of Henderson's leading citizens and the looting of the town by guerrillas. It must be emphasized that these two men were regular Confederate troops, not guerrillas, and that they had nothing to do with the incident for which they were to be punished. Burbridge felt such an extreme measure would serve as an example and a deterrent. The people of Henderson petitioned that the execution be stopped but to no avail. Even Governor Thomas Bramlette sent a plea for delay, which Burbridge ignored.

"(Powell) bore up like a man of nerve, but the younger (Thompson) shed many tears over the near approach of death. . . ." The two young men were blindfolded with handkerchiefs and set in chairs lined against a fence. Powell stoically awaited the fatal volley as Thompson sobbed and pleaded for clemency. Their final wish was to receive a cross from the hands of their Catholic friend, Miss Mary Henderson. The request was granted; then within minutes two young men, in their prime, were dead. The townspeople were outraged at the execution. "Retaliation on innocent parties looks like barbarity—like vindictive cruelty. . . where is it to end?" wrote Edmund Starling of the senseless wasting of the two men. The legality of this incident is highly questionable and could bear further research.

Expressing the Cavalier attitude so often linked with the South, Confederate commander L. A. Sybert responded to the execution, "We have not made, nor will we make war on citizens. . . . We are in arms to meet and battle with soldiers not to tyrannize our citizens and frighten women and children."

The Daviess County sister of Charles Thompson was frightened and sad, and, no doubt, angry. Grieving over the death of her brother, Rose Ann Thompson wrote an elegic poem, "My Brother is No More":

Oh Kentucky, my country, one brave son has departed,
For tyrants and traitors have stabbed his heart's core;
Thy daughters have loved in the streams of affliction—
Thy patriots have fled, or lie stretched in their gore:
Ruthless ruffians now prowl thro' thy hamlets forsaken,
From pale, hungry orphans their last morsel have taken;
The screams of the females no pity awaken—
Alas! my poor country, my brother's no more!

Brave was his spirit, yet mild as an angel's
His heart wept in anguish the wrongs of the poor;
To relieve hard sufferings he braved every danger,
The vengeance of tyrants undauntedly bore;
E'en before him the proud titled villains in power,
Were seen, though in Ermine, in terror to cower,
But alas! he is gone, he has fallen; a young flower
They have murdered my Willie, my brother's no more!

THE DAVIESS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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The Daviess County Historical Society is open to all who have an interest in the history of Daviess County, the Green River Valley, or Kentucky. The Society meets on the Fourth Friday of each month from September through May. Most meetings are held at the Owensboro Area Museum on South Griffith Avenue.

Monthly programs of the Daviess County Historical Society are open to all, and non-members are encouraged to attend and participate.

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EDITOR

Lee A. Dew

Ky. Wesleyan College
Owensboro, Ky.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Dr. Richard A. Weiss

Mrs. Henry Etta Schauburger

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The Editor's Page

The steamboat—perhaps there is no more romantic symbol of America's history. From its first appearance, the steamboat worked magic wherever it appeared, and the cry "Steamboat a'comin' " guaranteed a crowded water front in towns from Albany to Sacramento. But it was on the great inland waterways, and particularly the Ohio-Mississippi system, that the steamboats flourished. For more than a century they were vital links in the economic life of towns such as Owensboro, carrying freight, passengers, consumer goods and luxury items and providing entertainment in the form of excursions and showboats to communities along the great rivers and their tributaries.

Our first article, by Paul Huff, a graduate of Kentucky Wesleyan College, profiles the importance of the steamboat trades of Owensboro in the decade when the railroad first appears as a competitor, challenging the monopoly which the boats had held at Owensboro.

A problem with steamboating was that it was dependent upon the forces of nature; a drought would close the river while a flood would make navigation hazardous. But the greatest impediment to navigation was ice, which would crush the fragile hulls. The article on the freeze of '99 chronicles the rivermen's response to a bad winter.

Next to the explosion of a boiler, fire was the most spectacular hazard of the steamboatmen, and in the Focus On section we look at the fire aboard the steamer *De Soto* at Owensboro, a fire which, fortunately, resulted in the apparent loss of only one life, but which caused much loss of property.

It is to the memory of all the steamboatmen of Owensboro that this issue is affectionately dedicated!



The Owensboro-Rockport ferry *Eagle*, photographed in August, 1934 by the late Otto McCamish of Maceo. His daughter, Mrs. Doris Cruickshank of Largo, Fla., writes that the picture was taken during her first trip to Kentucky as a child, her father's first trip home in 27 years from his new home in Long Island, N.Y.

The stern-wheeler *Eagle* is shown with two trucks on the foredeck—what appears to be a moving van lettered Greene, and a stake-bed truck, probably a stock truck. There is also a cloth-top touring car, and a man wearing a white cap. Back near the paddle wheel a man can be seen leaning on the rail. The houses of Rockport are in the background.

The old ferry landing can still be seen at the end of the Rockport-River Road in eastern Daviess County not far from Maceo.

THE STEAMBOAT TRADES OF OWENSBORO IN THE 1870's

by Paul Huff

The Ohio River was the umbilical cord that nurtured the settlement of Yellow Banks during its development into the city of Owensboro. With the advent of the railroad the river's importance declined and many forgot Owensboro's early riverfront history.

Waterways have always been a lure for settlement throughout the world's history. However, the combination of river and steamboat injected adrenalin into the internal colonizing of the United States. Owensboro, like the cities of Wheeling, Portsmouth, Evansville, Paducah, Alton, Cairo and Vicksburg, owed its boom to its riverport.

Many such as Mark Twain set the heyday of steamboat commerce in the 1850's, but Owensboro still depended on the floating palaces in the 1870's. While the Owensboro and Nashville railroad tottered between hope and bankruptcy the river ran strong. . . most of the time.

No greater indication of the steamboat's necessity existed as when the river became impassable. The *Owensboro Monitor* lamented in 1875: "The river being the principal avenue of travel to our city, the continuation of the ice blockade is injurious to the hotel business." Not only hotels suffered when the river dried or froze; the mail didn't come and freight piled on the wharf boat. A failing river cut communications with the outside world. Again the *Owensboro Monitor* quipped, "Evansville papers have been in demand here since the suspension of navigation. The down river mail now comes by rail, and as the route is rather circuitous, our exchanges are stale by the time they reach us."

Steamboat routes were defined as trades. A trade existed between any two ports where business could sustain one or more steamers. Common long distance trades included ones like the Louisville-New Orleans trade or the St. Louis-Ft. Benton trade. Shorter distance trades like the one between Louisville and Cincinnati could be just as profitable.

A good many boats from various trades collected shipments from Owensboro's wharf boat. However, Owensboro served mainly as an intermediate stop between Louisville and Evansville or Louisville and Henderson.

The Falls of the Ohio made Louisville an early stopping point for all river traffic. Before steamboats, flatboats unloaded there. In 1830, the Portland Canal, which bypassed the falls at Louisville, was completed. The new passage had little effect on Louisville's steamboat trade. By 1860, 904 packets ran through Louisville to St. Louis and New Orleans.

Evansville boasted itself as third only to Pittsburg and Cincinnati. Sixty-four steamboats were registered at Evansville's port (they were

either owned or controlled by Evansville interests or simply registered at the Maritime District of Evansville). In 1874, between 2,800 and 2,900 vessels moored at Evansville's two wharfboats. Evansville claimed seven home-based packets and two boats owned by residents.

Opposite the shores of Louisville, at New Albany and Jeffersonville, boat works sprung up. Between 1847 and 1867, the shipyards at New Albany placed 204 boats in the river. Jeffersonville's Howard Shipyards, established in 1824, produced 138 boats between 1862 and 1882.

Although the 1883 History of Daviess County claims Owensboro had two wharfboats in 1872, the "River News" columns mention only one between 1874 and 1878, that of Robert S. Triplett. The floating wharfboat was a natural invention for the fluctuating western rivers. Its advantage over fixed piers lay in the ability to stay with the varying levels of water. However, in the bigger ports, wharfboats would clog already scarce wharf space. Wharfboats received a small percentage of the freight bill (10 percent) or charged a fixed fee for space used. Although more advantageous, up to 1912, wharfboats numbered 76 compared with 169 paved and 148 unpaved wharves on the Ohio. By 1878 Owensboro claimed two.

The Triplett's reigned over most of Owensboro's river commerce throughout the 1870's. Robert S. Triplett, son of Judge George Triplett, owned the wharfboat. Keeping the business in the family, he later sold part of the boat's interest to his brother, Captain John H. Triplett, in 1872.

The Triplett's wharfboat channeled Owensboro's commerce for a number of years. *The Owensboro Examiner* bragged about the wharfboat saying:

At the average steamboat wharf, waiting for a boat is both tiresome and monotonous. But not so at our palatial wharfboat. In addition to an always well kept and comfortable office and sitting room, Capt. Williams has a beautiful art gallery on board, and as the pictures represent many of the first steamboats on the water, persons can annihilate the tediousness of waiting by viewing the handsome collection. Taking our wharfboat as a whole, it is without exception the handsomest and best kept craft between Cincinnati and New Orleans. Its storage capacity is almost beyond description. It is enough to say that it will take in the entire products of eight or ten counties, with room left to store the cargoes of fifty or sixty steamboats.

However the Triplett family's hold on the river was soon to be challenged. As early as 1874, there were rumors that Owensboro's city council was considering another wharfboat. In 1877 the *Owensboro Examiner* cited the lack of wharf space and advocated "more wharf

room." The newspaper claimed, "The wharf last Monday presented very much the appearance of a regular point of entry, there being no less than five steamboats at the wharf at one time."

In 1878, the Kentucky Legislature passed the "Articles of Incorporation for the People's Wharfboat and Transfer Company." The incorporators included John S. Woolfolk, Rowland S. Hughs and H. Alexander. They were authorized \$6,000 of capital stock, to be "divided into shares of \$50 each." The new wharfboat arrived June 18, 1878 and moored below Triplett, Bacon and Company.

Along with the news of the People's wharfboat, there appeared for the first time an advertisement for Triplett, Bacon and Company. Listing themselves as agents for ten steamboat and railroad lines, the owners of the "Old Reliable" wharfboat also claimed to be specialists in handling stock. They gave as their references "Every man, woman or child in the city of Owensboro, who have ever been our patrons and every steamboatman that has ever landed at our shores." The *Owensboro Examiner* reported in September of 1878 that despite its opposition the "Old Reliable" continued an immense business.

Owensboro's waterfront served much of Daviess County. One river news editor gave a perspective of that area while nagging the city government to clean up its levee. "In its present condition, it would be impossible for county wagons which come to the city in order to convey merchandise to the neighboring towns of Whitesville, Pleasant Ridge, West Louisville and etc."

Although the wharfboats controlled most products leaving the city, a number of individuals made their own landings. Whether boats honored private piers depended on the captain and the profit. One such landing was at Monarch's Distillery located outside the city. The distillery, situated close to the Ohio, had a wharf within a few hundred feet of the plant. Raw material to and whiskey from the plant was transported by a steam engine on an elevated track. During this decade the newspapers reported two attempts at home-based packets. The first time in 1874 was with a steamer call the *Sandy*.

After a trip to Evansville in 1874 the *Owensboro Monitor* river reporter wrote:

We taken there and brought back in that beautiful clipper, the *Sandy*, over whose mundane career, Captain Leif Elder and Phillip Brenham are the presiding geniuses. The *Sandy* as a matter of course does good business, but we regret to say that there is a little business that the *Sandy* should receive which is given over to other boats. The *Sandy* is an Owensboro institution, is owned and officered by the Owensboro gentlemen. She does and will do all she can do to advance this place. Let us stand by the *Sandy* and the equally clever Adams Brothers of the *Dick Johnson*.

Whether the *Sandy* "as a matter of course" did good business is debatable. One news comment announced that the *Sandy* and the *Dick Johnson* had compromised, agreeing to alternate port days between Cannelton and Evansville. Finally in February of 1875, the *Monitor* reported the *Sandy* had been sold by a U.S. Marshall for \$3,400 in Evansville.

The second attempt came with the Triplett brother's purchase of the *R. S. Triplett* in 1875. In the beginning, with J. S. Brown as master, it made regular trips between the Hilands landing, Cannelton and Evansville. For a while she worked as a ferry, carrying tobacco and towing barges. In 1877 the *R. S. Triplett* ran between Owensboro and Rockport, connecting people with the Owensboro and Nashville Railroad. The *Owensboro Examiner* exclaimed, "People can leave Rockport at 6:30 a.m. and get to Louisville by 8:30 p.m." In November of 1877, the wharf master, Bruce Trabue, renovated the boat.

According to the *Owensboro Examiner*:

When Bruce Trabue got through with her the other day, her most intimate friends failed to recognize her. She has been supplied with a new cabin, containing, besides several comfortable bunks, a clerk's office and bar. Neat carpets and oil clothes adorn her cabin floors, and with the liberal spread of paint upon her exterior and interior she has been made to look as pretty as a butterfly with variegated wings. A golden eagle with pinlogs spread, hovers like a thing of life from her cabin front while her smoke stacks loom up in red paint as if seven times heated and growing hotter every minute.

Captain John H. Triplett took the boat, freshly adorned, into the cotton trade between the upper St. Francis River from Wittsburg to Luster Landing, Arkansas for several months. Captain Triplett earlier in his life had commanded the *Lenora Steamer No. 2*, *Pioneer Packet* (1867), *Tahlequah* (1867-68), *Petrolia, No. 2* (1868-69), *Charmer* (1869-79), *Palestine* (1870-71), and between 1871 and 1872 he officered the *Morning Star*. After marrying Lotta Gerding on April 15, 1872 he later quit the river in July of that year. It was at this time he bought into the wharfboat and worked with his brother Robert Triplett. The *Owensboro Examiner* reports him on the river again with a regular Evansville and Owensboro Packet, the *Aggie* by 1875.

Captain Triplett remained in the cotton trade for only a short time. After running her on the St. Francis for seven months he brought the *R. S. Triplett* home and sold it. In bad health, he left for the mountains of Tennessee for recuperation. By 1883 he was back on the Ohio as part owner and master of the *J. M. Sweetser*.

The *Sandy* and the *R. S. Triplett* were the only two boats that existing newspapers elaborate on. Perhaps the failing efforts at establishing home packets reflected a growing interest in railroads.

STEAMBOATS AND STEAMBOAT LINES

Up to this decade, three types of steamboat operations had evolved. Until the 1850's, transient or tramp steamers were prominent. These steamers ran where the trade flourished and lacked regular rates, schedules or regulations. Profit was the Bible and the captain its preacher.

Packets and packet lines took the lead after the Civil War. A packet boat ran on established route, arriving at specified ports on a fairly regular schedule. A packet line employed a number of steamers on the route. Often lines were no more than loose coalitions of boats agreeing to run to certain places on certain days with fixed rates. By grouping, captains reduced competition among themselves and drove rival boats bankrupt. People tended to use familiar steamers and the captains built friendly relations with local merchants.

Rival packets which reached no compromise cut freight rates to the death. Two such boat were the *Fawn* and the *H. S. Turner*. both boats ran the Cincinnati and Evansville trade. The *Fawn*, with Lee Crane as master and Loyd Whitlow as clerk, left Cincinnati every Wednesday at 5 p. m. and returned from Evansville every Saturday at 10 a. m. The *H. S. Turner*, with W. C. Tichenor as master and William Shaw as clerk, operated with the exact same schedule.

In May of 1875, the *Owensboro Examiner* reported:

"The *Fawn* and the *Turner* are running opposition, and freights are getting cheap, and the officers will put themselves to any amount for their customers. The *Turner* dropped, from the wharf, down to the Daviess County Distillery the other day for two cattle.

The *Examiner* later in June announced:

"The *H. S. Turner*, which has been running the Cincinnati and Evansville trade, has tied up and quit. The Louisville and Henderson line's boat, the *Fawn*, will be down on time Friday. The *Turner* got tired working for glory and through up the sponge.

Such rivalries brought rejoicing to river customers. When Captain John Triplett began running the *Aggie* between Owensboro and Evansville, the *Examiner* forecasted, "The Louisville and Henderson have things very much their own way, and a live opposition would be likely to make freights and passage cheaper." Of course the L and H packets would never pass the opportunity to press a monopoly.

Again the *Examiner's* river reporter quipped, "The *Grey Eagle*, having no opposition boat to contend with on Monday evening, put the fare back to the old price, \$4.00 to Louisville. We suppose this is

legitimate, as the reduced price is only charged when circumstances require it."

The steamer *Dick Johnson* provides a good example of a regular single packet. She first appeared in 1875. It carried trade between Evansville, Newburg, Owensboro, Rockport and Cannelton. With John A. Adams as master and Robert Adams as clerk, she left Evansville every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 4 p.m. It departed from Cannelton every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday at 4 a.m.

After surviving a trade duel with Owensboro's homebased packet, the *Sandy*, the *Dick Johnson* provided dependable service in the Evansville-Cannelton trade for a number of years. The *Examiner* praised it saying, "It matters but little what the condition of the river may be, the *Dick Johnson* rushes right along, water or no water."

Of all the packet lines stopping in Owensboro, the Louisville and Henderson packet line performed best. It ran faithfully between 1870 and 1880. In a time when packet lines rose, fell and dried up like the river, it's amazing this line held together like it did.

Established in 1843, by the Lodwich brothers, it began with one sidewheeler, the *Gallant*, one hundred and fifty feet long with single engines. Through its history the company owned sidewheelers such as the *Morning Star*, *Tarascon*, *James Guthrie*, *Rainbow*, *City of New Albany* and *City of Owensboro*. Its sternwheelers included the *Fashion*, *Mattie Hays*, *Rose Hite*, *Carrie Hope*, *E. G. Ragon*, *Gold Dust*, *Tell City* and the last *Tarascon*.

The Louisville and Henderson packets shipped from Owensboro most everyday of the week. An 1875 *Owensboro Examiner* advertisement schedules the *Tarascon* down every Tuesday and Friday at 10 a.m. and up on the same days at 10:30 p.m. The *Gray Eagle* ran down every Wednesday and Saturday at 10 a.m. and up on the same days at 11 a.m. The *Morning Star* stopped every Thursday and Sunday at 10 a.m. going down and came up on Thursdays at 10 p.m. and on Mondays at 3 p.m. The advertisement boasted "Speed, Comfort and Safety" along with "No extra charge for Meals and Staterooms, Splendid accommodations for Stock."

The *Gray Eagle*, *Morning Star* and *Tarascon* were the regular Louisville and Henderson packets through most of the 1870's. The oldest of these boats was the *Tarascon*. Built in Jefferson in 1863 (250-38-6, wood hull) she ran until 1877. In her early life the *Tarascon* transported Union troops to Alabama during the Civil War.

Also built in Jeffersonville, the *Morning Star* plied the Ohio between 1864 and 1886 (265.3-35.6-6.2, wood hull). The *Morning Star* saw Civil War action of a different type.

According to steamboat historian, Frederick Way Jr.:

Returning up the river she was boarded by guerillas at

Lewisport (December 27, 1864) and these brigands robbed the safe and passengers of \$2,700, broke open the bar, drank whiskey and stole cigars, then commanded the crew to take them to Hawesville and on the way killed two sick soldiers on board.

By 1887, steamers like the *Fashion*, *Fawn* and *James Guthrie* start appearing in the Louisville and Henderson advertisements. Built in Jeffersonville, the *Fashion* was a big boat (220-36-5.5, wood hull) and is reputed to be the first double stage boat on the upper Ohio.

Louisville and Henderson packets received \$40,000 per year for carrying the U.S. Mail. On the whole, all mail packets failed. Freight and passengers paid best. Although the steamers offered quick delivery, they handled mail sloppily. Often non-U.S. mail boats provided delivery service free to boost customers.

In July of 1876, W. C. Hile was elected president, T. M. Shirley, vice-president and A. T. Gilmore, superintendent of the Louisville and Henderson line. They soon began negotiations with other lines to secure maximum profit through fixed rates.

The *Owensboro Examiner* announced in November:

The Cincinnati and Memphis, the Louisville and Henderson, and the Cumberland and Ohio River packet companies have succeeded in compromising on rates of transportation and have established tariff rates by which all boats in those same lines will be hereafter governed. This put an end to the 'cutting' business, and one man will pay no more than another on his goods or produce.

Advertisements in the *Louisville Courier Journal* bill the L and H boats as Adams Express Co. packets. The Adams Express Company and Southern Transportation Company concerned itself with shipping small freight, such as money packages, needing cautious and prompt service. Its first Evansville office was established in 1853. By 1874, its annual business exceeded \$100,000. The Owensboro office sat by the National Bank and was run by R. R. Hathaway.

In the New Orleans trade the stern wheelers *Paris C. Brown*, *U. P. Schenck* and *Golden Rule* and the sidewheelers *Charles Bodman*, *A. C. Donally*, *Robert Mitchell*, *Charles Morgan*, *Thompson Dean* and the *Thomas Sherlock* visited. These boats belonged to the "O" line, or Southern Transportation Co. They worked between Cincinnati and New Orleans from the 1870's to the mid-1880's.

O-line boats were big and beautiful. The *Golden Rule* (261-41-9, wood hull), which operated from 1877 to 1892, published a newspaper on board. The *U. P. Schenck* measured 251-42-6.5 feet, used three

boilers and was rated at 1,086.77 tons. They later lengthened her to 318 feet.

The Cincinnati Marine Railway and Dock Company built the *Charles Morgan*. It measured 302.2-43.4-7.6 feet and later took on some of the equipment salvaged from the *Natchez* including chandeliers, stained glass doors and forecastle signboards. She worked for a short while on the O-line but usually worked independently. Built in 1873, by January 31, 1878 she had made 38 round trips to New Orleans and rung up total passenger and freight receipts of \$100,874.49. While engaged in regular trade in 1874 and 1875 the *Charles Morgan* transported 2,763 cabin and 3,164 deck passengers in a total of eleven round trips.

The Evansville, Cairo and Memphis Steam Packet Co. advertised its boats, the *Idlewild*, *Arkansas Belle*, and *Pat Cleburne* in a 1876 *Owensboro Examiner*. The *Pat Cleburne* was built in Cincinnati, Ohio. Her machinery included four boilers, 24 feet long and 37 inches in diameter. Iron boilers, sheets three tenths of an inch thick, allowed up to 140 pounds of steam. She ran from 1870 till 1876 when she blew up on the shore opposite Weston, Kentucky, killing fourteen people including her captain.

The *Idlewild* operated between 1870 and 1881 (215-35.6-6.4, wood hull). One source asserted:

"She was a beautiful clipper of faultless proportions, proud and jaunty appearance, and as speedy as she was handsome. This boat paid for herself in just two years, and sold for what she had cost to build namely, sixty thousand dollars."

One of the *Idelwild's* first runs included taking a group of sightseers to the *Robert E. Lee* and the *Natchez* race.

In 1878 steamers of the Memphis and Ohio River Packet Company increased their shipments from Owensboro. The *Cons Millar*, *Jas. D. Parker*, *Andy Baum*, *Jas. W. Gaff* and the *Ben Franklin* became regulars.

SHIPMENTS

The steamers shipped anything and everything to and from Owensboro ranging from a barge of apples to a 7,400 lbs. stone slab. The river news columns reported what shipments left the city weekly.

One such column reported during good water:

The "Old Reliable" wharfboat has shipped during the past week 4 top buggies, 66 barrels whisky, 28 sacks stretchers, 5 bales hoops and 10 dozen chairs per *Fashion*; 80 hogs per *C. W. Anderson*; 31 barrels whisky, 5,214 feet walnut lumber,

six boxes shoes, 10 boxes seed, 94 bundles spokes, 9 cases wood-work and 39 hogs per *James Guthrie*; 26 dozen chairs per *Andy Baum*; 13,600 feet walnut lumber, 96 bags potatoes, 121 hogs, 14 head cattle per *Dick Johnson*; 50 barrels whisky, 75 hogs, 5,216 feet walnut lumber and 52 hogsheads tobacco per *Gray Eagle*; 15 barrels kraut, 18 bags peaches, 2 hogshead tobacco, 15 barrels whisky and 12 bales hoops per *Cons Millar*; 5 barrels whisky per *Virgie Lee* and 4 bales hoops and 88 bags peaches per *J. W. Gaff*.

This column reflects the major products produced by Owensboro and Daviess County, whisky, tobacco, cattle, hogs, furniture, lumber and various agricultural goods. Two items not mentioned are barrel staves and wagon wheels.

The 1883 History of Daviess County listed 16 different distilleries in the area. This industry shipped in corn by the barge load.

Items shipped into the city consisted mainly of manufactured items for the local merchants.

It's interesting to note that on occasion the boats brought more than was bargained for.

One issue of the *Owensboro Examiner* warned:

“‘Best safety lies in fear,’ and the city council can not be too circumspect. Two deaths from yellow fever in New Albany, Ind., and both deck hands of the *New Many Houston*. Let us establish quarantine at once.”

THE RAILROAD ENTERS

Owensboro, like all communities across the United States was bitten by the railroad bug. Although the Owensboro and Russellville Railroad provided big headaches, the push was still strong for the railroad, one clear to Nashville. Trains didn't come and go with the sun.

Winter presented the greatest problems to steamboat navigation and also its greatest dangers. Winter brought the strongest arguments for trains. While the snow laid seige to Owensboro during February of 1875, the newspaper snapped, “We have one more wharfboat now than we have any use for. . . .” “We would like to sell our interests in the Ohio River and invest in a first class railroad.” “The railroad is an expensive luxury but who would have gotten along without it for the last two months? We would not.”

If February of 1867, the Kentucky General Assembly passed the charter for the Owensboro and Russellville Railroad. The act allowed for the sale of one million dollars worth of stock to build the railroad. On May 3, 1869 construction on the railroad began. Although the spirit was willing the pocketbook was weak; bonds were issued in 1871 and

1872. Indiana investors bought up the bonds and chartered a new company in the state of Indiana, the Evansville, Owensboro and Nashville Railroad. These men brought little additional cash to the project and by July of 1875 it was officially bankrupt.

In 1877, J. J. Brown, James Wier, and John L. Barret, bought the company for \$63,000 and began the Owensboro and Nashville Railroad. Bonds were issued to raise money. Again, the railroad was secretly bought up, this time by Edwin W. Cole, President of the Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis Railroad. Through some corporate maneuvers the railroad fell into the tentacles of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad. It wasn't until 1883 that the railroad finally reached Russellville.

Trains would eventually erode the steamers hold, however the river's importance would not weaken completely for quite some time. During a railroad strike one supporter wrote, "Strikes may occur on railroads—travels may be rendered dangerous—freights may be detained and even destroyed—but with steamboats difficulties disturbing the country at this time can not occur. Who ever heard of strikes damming the river and stopping navigation?"

In a nation hysterical for progress the steamboat's fanfare dwindled. Unknowingly heralding the paddle wheel's doom, in 1875 the *Owensboro Monitor* reported:

The *Gray Eagle*, the first boat down from Louisville since the ice opened, arrived here Sunday night a long ways behind time, having been detained by the ice in the "narrows" above Cannelton. She had the crew of the *Morning Star* on board on their way to Green River to take charge of that steamer, but the *Eagle* having experienced such a tough time in getting through, discharged all her crew here, and all her officers except enough to take her to Green River, left by rail Monday morning for Louisville.

THE FREEZE-UP OF '99:
or,
THE PERILS OF STEAMBOATING ON THE OHIO RIVER
by Lee A. Dew

The Ohio river ran full and fresh throughout the summer of 1898. By the first of September there was still plenty of water in the entire channel from Pittsburg to the Mississippi, for adequate rainfall throughout the summer meant not only good crops for farmers but good boating for rivermen all along the as-yet-undammed Ohio river.

Wise river hands were worried, however, because signs pointed to a bad winter. Old rivermen contended that a wet late summer would bring a cold January, with ice on the river, making navigation hazardous, if not impossible. The reason was, they reasoned, that the rain would not last forever, and a dry fall would mean a low river, with lots of pooling behind natural dams and riffles. This would mean, *The Owensboro Messenger* declared, that with the first big freeze the river would "freeze up all along from Cairo to Pittsburg."

The early winter did not bring cold, however, but drizzly rain. Throughout December and January it was cloudy, dreary and wet. Not enough rain fell to keep the river high, and water levels dropped to the point that big boats had to navigate carefully, but they were still able to sail. And although Owensboro's streets were seas of mud, the city's vital river commerce was unimpeded.

The groundhog saw his shadow, however, on February 2, and the following day, under an article headlined "winter wraps," the newspaper warned its readers that they must look forward to "42 more days of winter."

As if on cue, the temperature began to drop, and winter set in with a vengeance, as if to make up for the time wasted during January. Ice began to appear, floating down from upstream, and steamboats began to seek shelter, afraid to risk the hazards of an ice-filled river. The fragile wooden hulls of the boats were particularly susceptible to damage from ice, which would injure the hull below the water line. Further, as the packet *J. C. Kerr* discovered, there were other hazards. The *Kerr* was disabled on February 7 during a passage from Evansville to Owensboro when her suction pipe froze, stopping the water flow to her boiler superheater. She was towed back to Evansville for repairs, then sent to the ice-free harbor at the mouth of the Green river where traditionally boats had waited out the ice on the Ohio.

The *J. C. Kerr*, captained by Jim Cox of Owensboro, was joined by the *Gertrude*, Josh Abshire of Owensboro, master; the *Rose Hite*; the

D. A. Nesbit; the *J. J. O'Connell*; and the big tow-boat *Defender*. On Thursday, February 9, the packet *Tell City* arrived from Louisville, reporting a rapid rise in the river south of Louisville, but little ice until a short distance above Owensboro. After discharging her passengers and cargo, the *Tell City* also headed for the ice harbor at Spottsville on the Green. While the *Tell City* was heading downstream toward Owensboro, the heavy packet *Tarascon* passed the city headed toward Louisville, but making slow time because of the fast current and the "bank to bank ice. The *Tarascon* reported "considerable trouble" between Evansville and Owensboro, and the paper reported that the likelihood of her reaching Louisville was "not probable." The little steamer *Fawn* was also reported in the Green river harbor.

The last boat from Louisville, the *Sunshine* of the Louisville-Memphis line, passed Owensboro on Friday, February 10, with a load of passengers headed for New Orleans on a Mardi Gras excursion. The *Sunshine* also stopped at the Green river, where the passengers were loaded onto trains of the Louisville, Henderson & St. Louis railroad at Spottsville and returned to Louisville. Even navigation on the Green river was restricted. The *Crescent City*, one of the boats in the Evansville-Bowling Green service, was ordered into the ice harbor, leaving only the *Park City* to continue running between Spottsville and Bowling Green. "Green river freights now go from Evansville to Spottsville by rail over the "Texas," and transferred to the Green river boats at Spottsville," the *Messenger* announced.

The river claimed its first victim when the towboat *F. J. O'Connell*, owned by the Kratz Brothers Towing Co. of Evansville was holed by a piece of floating ice and sunk at Evansville. Fortunately the *O'Connell* was in shallow water, with her boiler deck still above the surface, which meant that her machinery was not damaged. It was hoped that the *O'Connell* could be salvaged.

But the river also brought largesse in its icy waters. A small sail boat, frozen tightly into a large block of ice, was spotted floating past the city about noon on Saturday, the 11th, and John Hanks of Uniontown was later able to capture it by rowing through the ice-floes in a small rowboat and towing the boat and its ice-prison to shore.

By Sunday, February 12, navigation was completely suspended on the Ohio from Cairo up, with the Wabash reported completely frozen over from the mouth to headwaters. Navigation on the Mississippi north of Cairo was halted, with the Big Muddy reported completely frozen over at St. Louis. The only boat still running anywhere north or east of Cairo was the little *Park City* on the Green.

But the worst was yet to come. On Sunday the temperature dropped steadily, and by Monday morning stood at twenty-one degrees below zero in Owensboro according to the government thermograph. Unof-

ficial readings as low as twenty-nine below were reported, while some area towns claimed temperatures as low as forty below. A traveller from Central City reported the thermometer at the Sandusky hotel there recording 40 below, while a report from Beaver Dam claimed 42 below.

These temperatures guaranteed a dramatic buildup of ice on the river, which, because of its rapid current, did not freeze across. Huge floes of ice blocked the river from bank to bank, and along Owensboro's waterfront, located as it was on the outside of a great bend in the river, ice pushed shoreward by the current began building up along the bank. By Tuesday night the strain was so great on the massive chains holding the Owensboro wharfboat in place that the head-chain snapped, allowing the pack ice to push the wharfboat high up onto the river shore.

The heavy ice buildup also threatened the numerous shanty boats which were to be found along the length of the river. Countless families lived in these boats, many of which were in danger of being crushed or driven ashore by the ice. A report from Marion, Ky., told of a shanty boat being sunk on an island near there, and the two men occupying the boat were marooned on an island in the river. Rescuers were unable to reach the men because of the ice, and they were seen running up and down along the bank in an attempt to keep from freezing. The Illinois Central Railroad's transfer steamer *Bertram* was also pushed aground above Evansville, halting transfer of railroad cars across the river.

Fortunately by late Sunday afternoon the temperatures began to moderate rapidly, and within a few days the report of a general thaw all along the river gladdened the hearts of navigators, shippers and travellers. By the end of the week the ice still in the river was reported as being very soft, and no longer an impediment to navigation. The landings were another problem, however, with pack ice from three to six feet in thickness piled along all landings between Louisville and Evansville. This meant that, although boats could run, they could not land for freight or passengers or to take on fuel. Most boats prudently remained in the ice harbor, except for the *Fawn*, which made several trips from Spottsville to Bon Harbor, below Owensboro, for loads of corn. Workmen in Evansville were busy removing the machinery and salvagable furnishings from the wreck of the *F. J. O'Connell*, which broke in two with the pressures of the melting ice.

The first boat northbound was the *John Barrett*, which plowed its way northward through the slushy ice on Saturday morning, bound for Cincinnati, while telegraph reports indicated that the *Sunshine* would head up-river for Cincinnati on Monday and the *State of Kansas* could be expected on the same day bound downstream for New Orleans. The towboat *Defender*, with tow, came out of the ice harbor also, heading up-river.

Owensboro rivermen, watching as these boats tested the water, had cause to worry about the wharfboat, which was lodged on heavy ice floes on her outboard side. The ice was holding the wharfboat fairly level, but out of the water, and it was feared that if the ice melted faster at one point along the hull and put a strain on the boat, it might break in two. A slow, steady thaw which would let the wharfboat down gently was what everybody was hoping for.

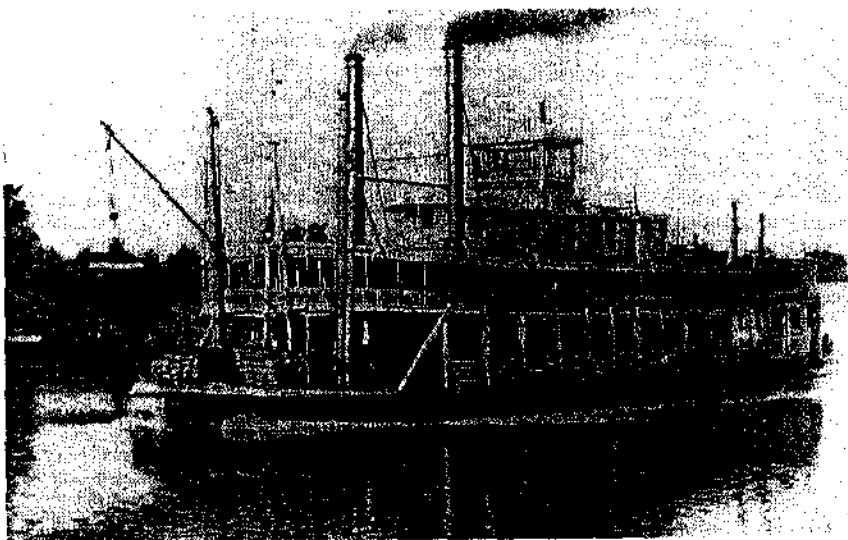
Mother Nature cooperated nicely, with moderate temperatures and gentle winds which, together with a slowly falling river meant a quick elimination of the ice in the channel and good melting conditions for the bank ice. On Tuesday, February 21, the *Messenger* reported a resumption of river activity: "The Louisville and Evansville mail company announced as follows for their boats. The *Tell City*, which is in the Green river ice harbor, will pass up for Louisville on Thursday. On Friday the *E. G. Ragon* will be down, followed by the *Tarascon* on Saturday. The *Rose Hite* will start today in the Evansville and Rockport trade." It was also reported that the *Gertrude* would leave the harbor for Cannelton.

Thus navigation was fully resumed after a period of nearly two weeks. Unlike earlier years before the railroads, Owensboro was not completely isolated from the "outside world" as the result of this freeze-up, but many towns which still depended upon the river, such as Curdsville or Delaware in Daviess county or Calhoun and Rumsey in McLean were completely cut off. Owensboro, with its 12 passenger or mixed trains daily, could still receive passengers, newspapers, mail, express and freight—even fresh oysters and luxury goods.

The big losers were the rivermen. Not only did they lose wages and suffer damage to their boats, but they also lost income as freight and passenger revenues were lost to the railroads. Already the packet boats were losing customers to the trains, as people opted for the faster trip by rail rather than the more leisurely journey by water, even though travel by steamboat was certainly more comfortable for long trips. Increasingly the boats were relegated to carrying freight and passengers to smaller towns and landings not served by railroads. By 1899 the steamboats were no longer the primary carriers of the Ohio valley, but still played an important role in the region's commerce. But problems like the big freeze of '99 slowly ate away at their business and escalated their costs, so that their business was in a slow but steady decline. Already some were predicting an end to the colorful era of steamboat navigation on the river as it had been known for three-quarters of a century. Delays caused by the freezes of winter or low water during dry spells was increasingly unacceptable to people who measured transportation by the 100-miles-per-hour record recently attained by a railroad locomotive, or who had gotten their first look at that new mechanical marvel just

beginning to appear on the streets of some cities—the motor car.

Within a few years most of the boats which sailed past Owensboro's waterfront in 1899 would be gone the way of the Conestoga wagon and the clipper ship, displaced by a new technology. Yet in the waning months of the old century, the whistle of the *John Barrett* plowing its way through the ice could still evoke a thrill among the watchers along the bank in Owensboro as the whistles of steamboats had been able to do since the first boats appeared when Owensboro, then still Yellow Banks, was just a collection of log cabins on a muddy bluff.



One of the most famous names on the rivers, the TARASCON was built in 1863, and, after the Civil War, ran in the Louisville-Memphis and Louisville-Evansville trades until her retirement in 1877. She was dismantled in Jeffersonville in 1879.

FOCUS ON - A RIVER DISASTER:
The Burning of the Steamboat *De Soto* at Owensboro

"The boat's on fire!" No words were more dreaded by the steamboatman who plied the inland waterways of the United States for more than a century. Steamboats, fired frequently by wood and constructed almost entirely of wood from the keel to the pilothouse, filled with waxed and oiled woodwork and polished floors and painted with oil-based paints, were especially vulnerable to conflagration.

Such was the fate of the Cincinnati and Memphis packet *De Soto*, Captain M. M. Deem, commander, on the night of January 27/28, 1890 at Owensboro. It was at 2 a.m. when the dreaded alarm was sounded by Second Clerk Frank Parker, who ran to each of the occupied staterooms rousing passengers. "Don't be excited, there's plenty of time to escape. All shall be saved," he assured the startled sleepers.

The fire was discovered in the cookroom just after the boat had pulled out from the shore at the Hanning distillery just below Owensboro, where the boat had stopped to discharge 241 empty barrels. As soon as the alarm was raised the boat was quickly run into the bank, about where the Owensboro riverport is now located, and the passengers and all the crew were able to escape the flames except possibly for one of the firemen, Brown Richardson, a black stoker, who was listed as missing.

"Many of the ladies on board were frightened almost out of their senses," *The Owensboro Messenger* reported, "and ran out with only their night clothes on." A few male passengers did likewise, the paper continued, although most of the men were at least partially dressed, and thus able to withstand a little better the cold, blustery weather. Two men coolly took the time to dress themselves fully before they abandoned the vessel, although by the time they reached the top of the bank the boat was completely engulfed in flames.

The *De Soto* was originally christened the *Golden Crown*, and was built in 1876. In 1885 she was rebuilt and renamed. She had been put in drydock and overhauled the summer before, having been back in the water for only three months. Valued at \$26,000, the boat carried only \$10,000 worth of insurance. There were "about forty" passengers on board, although a complete list was not available, and about 650 tons of freight, all of which was complete loss. A partial list of passengers was published in the newspaper, indicating passengers from New York; Philadelphia; Cincinnati; Louisville; Paducah; Murray; Athens, Ohio; Dodge City, Kansas; Gayoso, Mo.; Rutland, Ohio; Covington, Ky., and Armstrong County, Pa.

Included in the freight were several shipments from Owensboro,

where the vessel had stopped to take on freight at the wharfboat at the foot of Frederica Street. Owensboro shipments included the following:

Five barrels of whiskey from Thixton, Milet & Cu, for D. Smythe, Cairo, Ill.; 60 bundles rims from Owensboro Wheel Co. to George O. Hart & Sons, Paducah; 10 sets of wheels for J. W. Mast, Little Rock; two packages tobacco from Greenville Tobacco Works for R. L. Moseley, Memphis; also two packages from same to E. P. Noble, Memphis; one wagon from Owensboro Wagon Co. to R. G. Craig, Memphis; one wagon from same to Young & Waller, Uniontown; 202 barrels potatoes from A. Schoenbachler to Otto Schwill, Memphis.

"All these goods were lost with the rest of the cargo, of course," the *Messenger* noted. "The potatoes will be a heavy loss, being uninsured, as Mr. Schoenbachler is a poor and hard-working citizen of Owensboro."

A *Messenger* reporter interviewed Captain Deem about an hour after the fire as the Captain and other survivors were checking into the Rudd Hotel. The paper reported the Captain's account of the fire as follows:

We arrived at Owensboro from Cincinnati about 10 o'clock last night and laid here until 1 this morning, discharging and receiving freight. Then we dropped down to the Hanning distillery to put off some whisky barrels. When we had landed at the Hanning I went to bed leaving the mate in charge of the boat. I had undressed and gone to bed, but was not asleep when the boat pulled out in the river and was turning around, when the mate came to my room and said quietly: "You'd better get on the roof as quick as you can." He didn't say she was on fire, but I knew there was trouble and got into my clothes and was out pretty quick. The mate went below and got out the hose, but it was too late to do any good with water. The pilot ran her onto the bank hard, but it was a bad spot for a landing and she wouldn't stick. He kept the wheel going, however, and that held her in. There was a place where we could make her fast with a line, but we put out the gang plank and all the people got off without any trouble. That's about all there is to it.

Chief Clerk Harry Proctor saw the fire from the passenger cabins, where he worked to help Parker alert their sleeping guests:

I was in bed asleep when the second clerk came into my room and woke me, saying: "They say she's afire in the kitchen; guess you'd better get up." I told him to make the passengers get up and got out as quick as I could and went aft to the ladies' cabin to get the women out and keep them from

getting excited. I lost so much time with the passengers that I had no time to get out my books and money. I went to my cash drawer and got out some of the money, but had to leave it, the smoke and steam were suffocating me. As I was following the last passengers out one old man who got on at Cannelton came rushing back through the cabin bewildered and inquiring the way out. I turned him about face and told him to keep on in that direction; and then I ran to the office to try to save the money and books and while I was in there he broke in on me, still lost. I put him out of the side door on the guards, or I think he'd never have got out.

The two passengers who were last off the boat were Jo. J. McClosky, a queensware salesman and F. S. Higgins, a leathergoods salesman, both of Louisville. They were asleep in a room directly over the kitchen, where the fire started. McClosky recounted their adventures:

I could feel the heat and smell the smoke coming through the floor as I stooped down to put on my shoes. We got on a few clothes and carried the balance in our arms to the forward guard, where we stopped to dress, and everybody else got off ahead of us. When we got down stairs, the stage plank had been tilted up by those last passing over it, and we had to jump from the deck into the mud. We didn't complain at this, however. There was such a steep bluff at the bow of the boat we couldn't climb the hill, but had to go down a little piece. When we got on the hill the whole boat was in flames.

The story of the destruction of the *De Soto* is not only interesting from the perspective of a unique event, it is also important because the story of the *De Soto* contains a unique description of the continuing importance of steamboating to the economy of Daviess County in 1890.

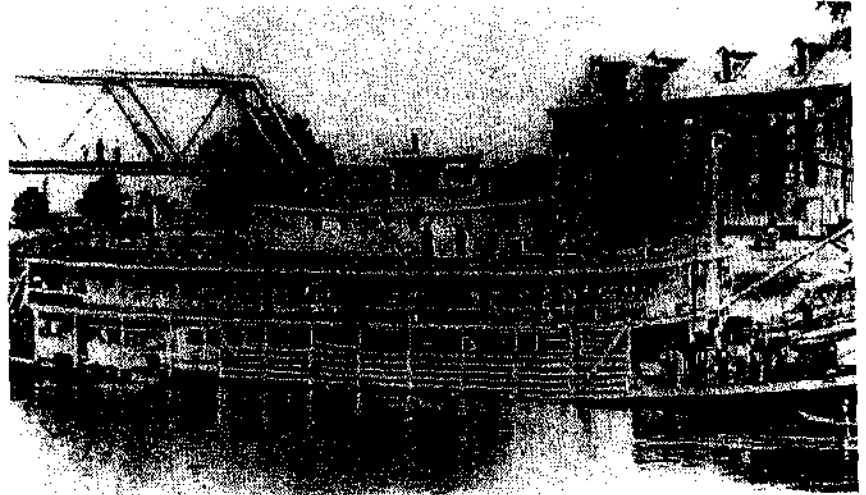
By this time Owensboro and Daviess County were tied in to the growing railroad network, with the Louisville, St. Louis & Texas Railroad giving direct connections to Louisville, and easy connections to Evansville, St. Louis and Chicago, while the Owensboro & Nashville connected with the Illinois Central's Louisville-Paducah line at Central City and the L & N's Louisville-Memphis line Russellville.

Still many people chose to travel by the packet boats which had several scheduled landings each week at Owensboro, and shippers still continued to use the waterways, even though the railroad offered faster service. Freight in less than carload lots could travel much more cheaply on a packet boat than by rail, while large shipments of goods,

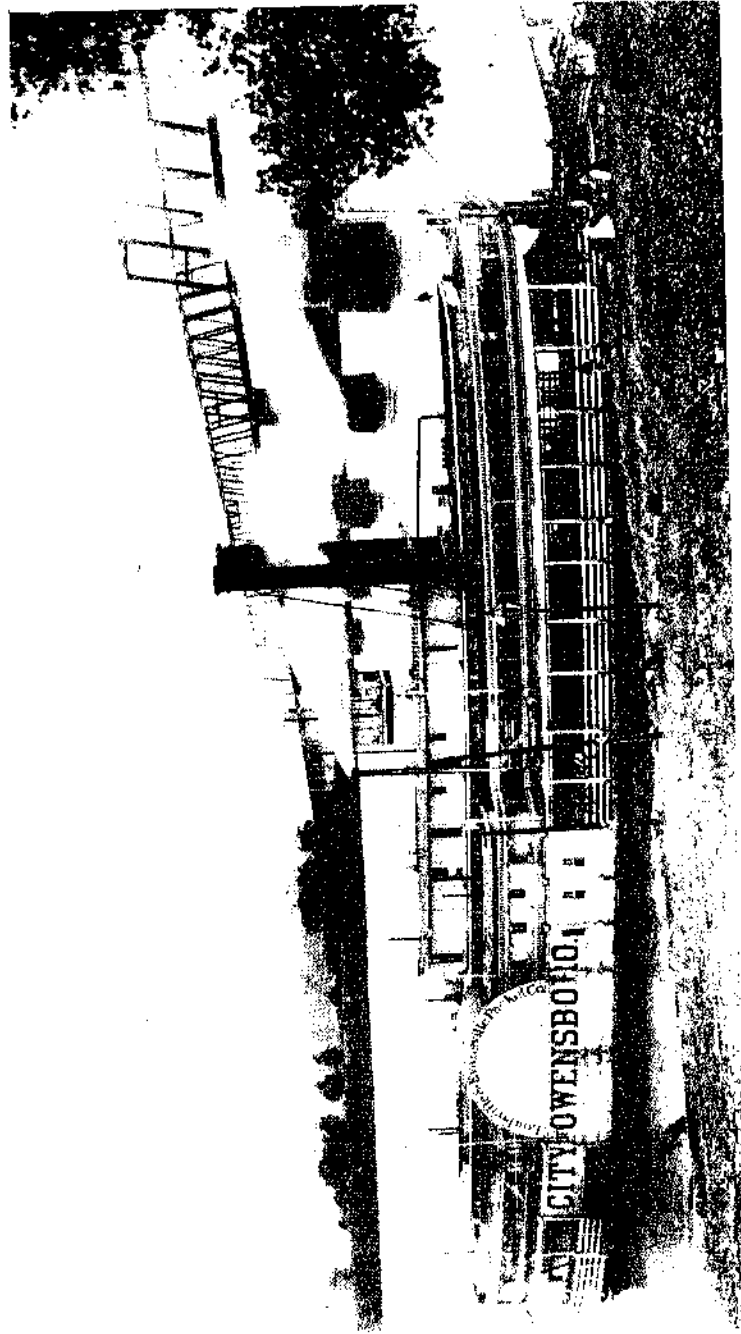
particularly bulk commodities, could be shipped by barges pushed by steam-powered towboats.

Thus, while many steamboat interests had opposed the building of the railroads, the evidence indicates that the packet boats competed successfully for both freight and passengers, even though they could no longer compete in the lucrative mail service to river towns.

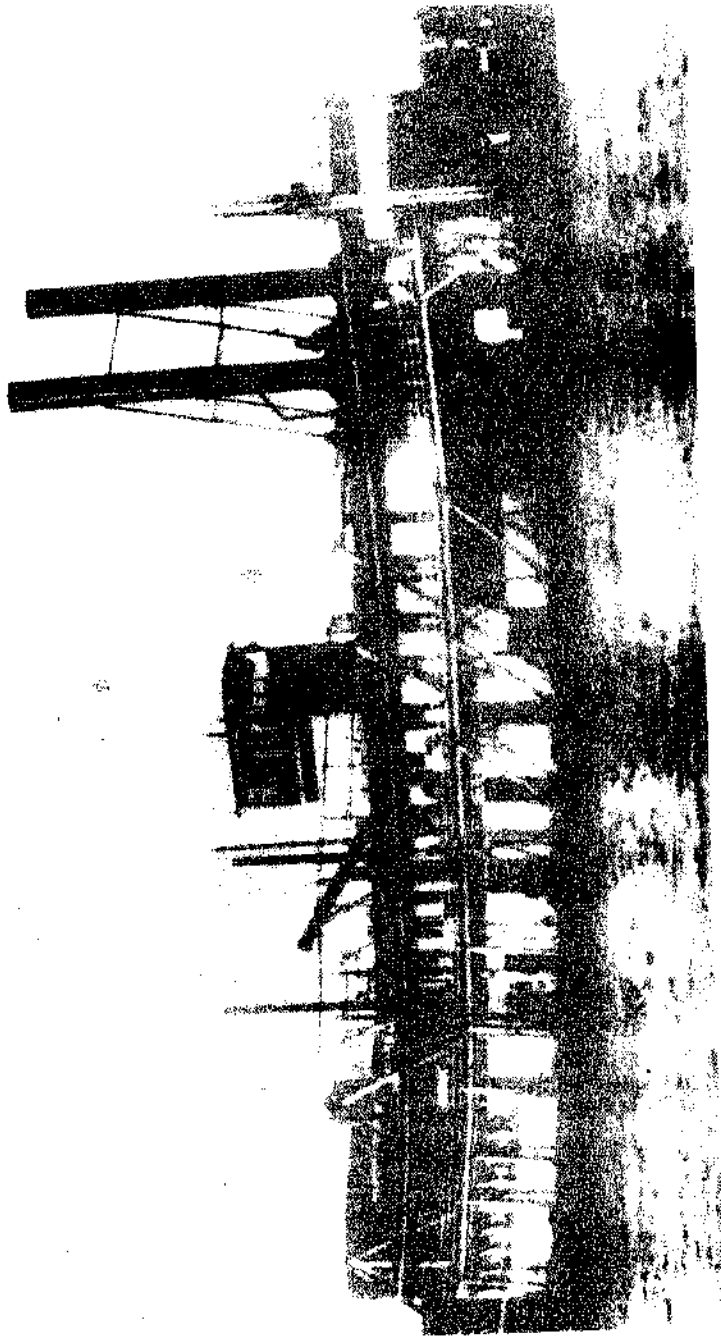
The story of the loss of the *De Soto*, then, furnishes an interesting glimpse at Owensboro's important water-borne commerce in the days when the coming of a steamboat still caused excitement along Owensboro's main street.



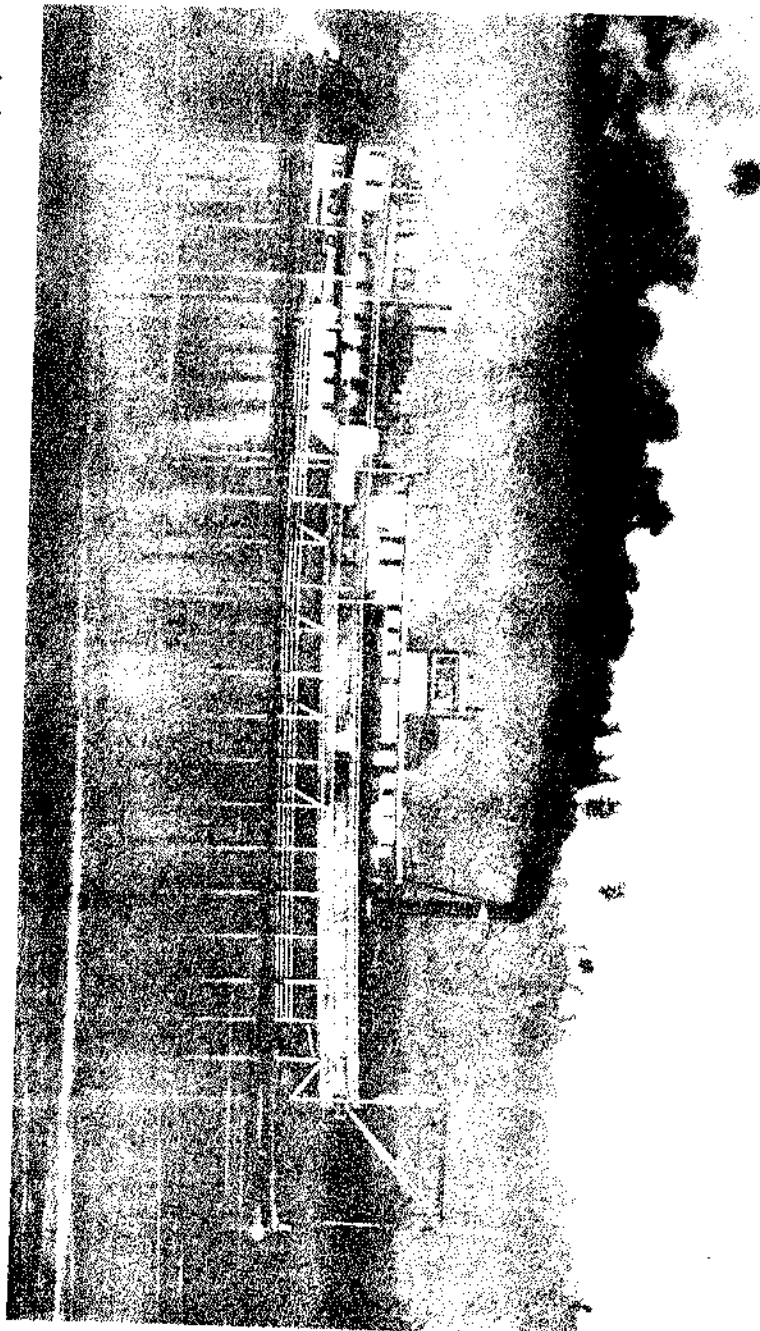
The J. C. KERR, shown here at the Livermore landing on the Green River, was built in Chambersburg, Ohio, in 1884. She entered the Evansville-Green River trade in 1892. She was later sold, renamed the CHAPERON, and later, in 1917, renamed the CHOCTAW and taken to Vicksburg, for the Yazoo River trades. She burned at Meirose Landing, Miss., in 1922.



The beautiful steamer CITY OF OWENSBORO is a classic example of late 19th Century steamboat engineering and design. Built at Jeffersonville, Ind., by the famous Howard Boatyard in 1885, she was owned by the Louisville and Evansville Packet Company. In 1895 she was sold to the Lee Line, renamed the CITY OF OSCEOLA, and sank in the Mississippi below Tiptonville, Tenn. She is pictured at Henderson.



If the graceful packet boats were the thoroughbreds of the river, the towboats, such as the DEFENDER, were the workhorses. Built not for beauty but for power, these massive boats pushed their tows of barges along the inland waterways until finally displaced by diesel towboats. Some still were to be found as late as the 1950's.



A superb photograph of the DE SOTO under full steam. Not many photographs exist of steamboats under way. Most are "posed" shots of boats at landings, but this unique example of the photographer's art shows the boat in full action, spray flying from her wheel, white bow-wave boiling—a picture of the grace and beauty of the well-designed and well-operated steamboat in the glory of the packets.

THE DAVIESS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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The Daviess County Historical Society is open to all who have an interest in the history of Daviess County, the Green River Valley, or Kentucky. The Society meets on the Fourth Friday of each month from September through May. Most meetings are held at the Owensboro Area Museum on South Griffith Avenue.

Monthly programs of the Daviess County Historical Society are open to all, and non-members are encouraged to attend and participate.

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EDITOR

Lee A. Dew

Ky. Wesleyan College
Owensboro, Ky.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Dr. Richard A. Weiss

Mrs. Henry Etta Schaubberger

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Correspondence concerning contributions and other editorial matters relating to the QUARTERLY should be addressed to the Editor. The editors and the Society assume no responsibility for statements made by contributors. Addresses of the authors will be supplied upon request to the Editor.

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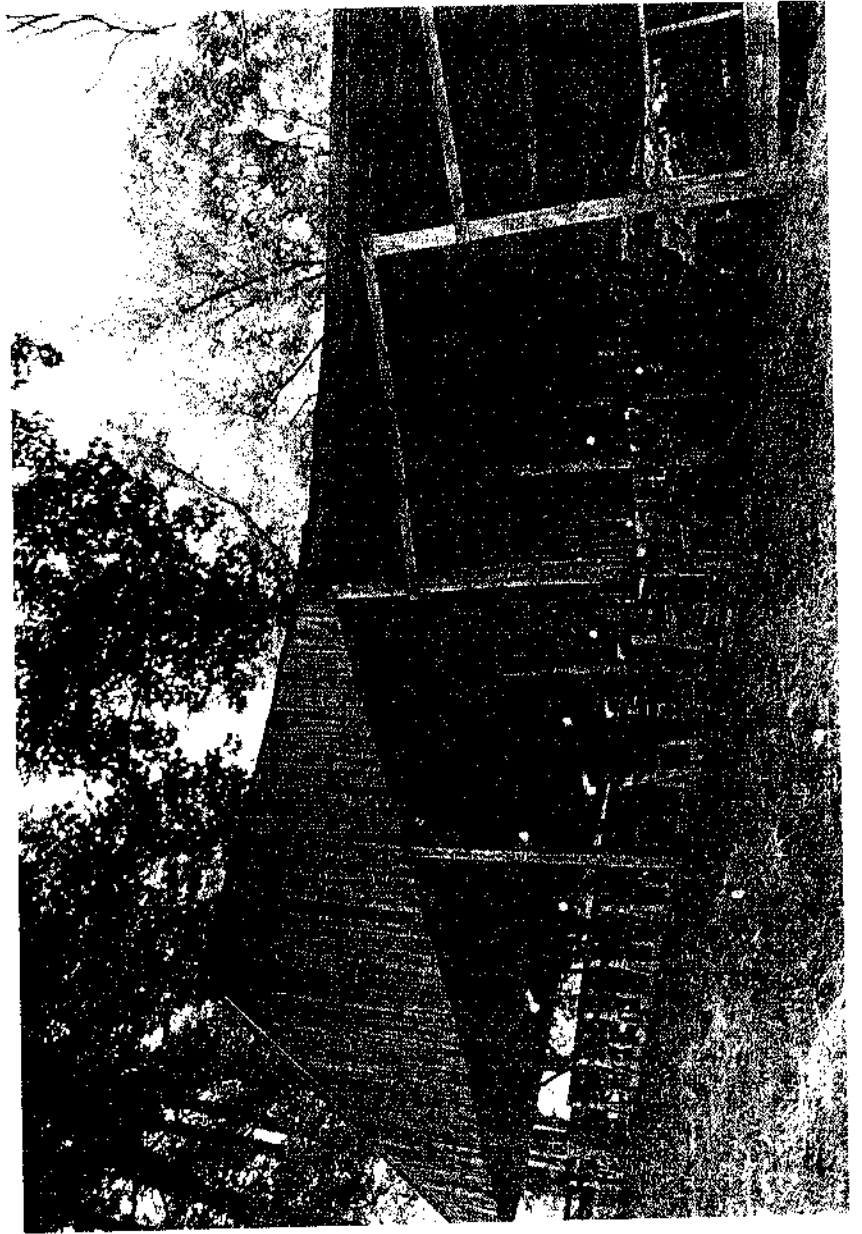
The Editor's Page

This issue of the *Quarterly* might well be called the KWC Alumni issue, as all three articles come to us from graduates of Kentucky Wesleyan College.

James Cockrum, who leads off this issue with a fine article on the Yelvington campground, is now a student at Indiana University Law School. He is the son of Dr. Bob Cockrum who presented the marvelous program on "Doc" Harris at our annual dinner meeting last year. Jim gives an informative and entertaining account of the Campground Association which as played an important role in the religious history of Daviess County for a century.

Most residents of Daviess County think of the county as a Democratic area, but in Michael Richeson's study of voting patterns we learn that in Presidential and Senatorial races Daviess County voters are just as likely to give their votes to the Republican candidate as to the Democrat. Mike graduated from KWC in 1984, and is currently employed in Owensboro. Next year he will be the cheerleader coach at KWC.

Douglas Tennant is making his second appearance in the pages of the *Daviess County Historical Quarterly*. His study of the Kennedy-Nixon election of 1960 appeared in Vol. II, No. 3. Doug graduated in May from KWC and will enroll this fall in the Law School of the University of Akron. His study of the Texas Gas Corporation chronicles the development of one of Owensboro's most important economic assets and its impact upon the community.



The tabernacle at the Yelvington Campground as it appears in 1985. Photograph by Joseph Hix.

THE YELVINGTON CAMPGROUND ASSOCIATION

by James Cockrum

The first worshippers arrived just after 6:00 p.m., well before the scheduled 7:30 p.m. starting time. A typical August rainstorm may have encouraged some to stay home, but by the time the service began well over 150 persons had gathered under the outdoor tabernacle at the Yelvington Campgrounds, located just off Highway 1389 some 8 miles east of Owensboro. They included one group of ladies from Hawesville who arrived in long dresses and bonnets to celebrate the "camp revival" dress of years ago. Once settled into seats on the rough-cut, hand-hewn log pews, they were welcomed by Rev. Garry Polston. Thus began the 109th Annual Yelvington Camp Meeting Revival sponsored by the Yelvington Campground Association on August 12, 1984. Perhaps the oldest annual event in Daviess County history was once again underway.

The origin of the Yelvington Camp Meeting can be accurately traced to 1897 when Mr. J. F. Smeathers deeded a 6 acre plot of ground to the "Daviess County Holiness Association", and an open-air tabernacle was built. This deed states that "Fletch" Smeathers, "in consideration for the love of Christ in his heart", conveyed the land to the association to use, "as long as said land shall be used by the association for the purpose of propagating the gospel of Christ." This land is the same property that Mr. Smeathers had purchased only 8 months before. It can probably be assumed that Mr. Smeathers bought the land for the sole purpose of its use for revivals, particularly in light of some local folklore which speculated on his aims.

Cecilia Laswell was a writer/reporter for the WPA in the Daviess County area from 1935 through 1939. Her work has been preserved in a collection of her reports in the Owensboro Public Library. One of her reports concerned the Yelvington area, based upon her interview of Mr. F. F. McIntyre. Mr. McIntyre reported that the Yelvington area was popular among horsemen from the surrounding counties who would meet to show and race their horses. According to Mr. McIntyre, Fletch Smeathers viewed the racing as "wicked and wrong", and responded by reserving the land for religious purposes. McIntyre believed these races occurred while Smeathers owned the land, but this is unlikely since Smeathers held the property for only 8 months. Furthermore, inspection of the land shows it to be heavily wooded and uneven—probably not suited to horse racing.

Laswell's report goes on to state that Smeathers was buried on campground property. This is at first confusing since the current camp contains no gravesites. However, an early history of Daviess County,

published in 1883, contains references to the "Bethlehem campgrounds". Mrs. Nanie Shadwick, longtime secretary of the Yelvington Campground Association, confirms that this site is directly behind the Bethlehem Methodist Church approximately ¼ mile west of the current campground, and the site of revivals which became the Yelvington Camp Meeting. This is also the site of Fletch Smeathers tombstone. the Bethlehem Methodist Church property is much smaller than the current campground. Although no records exist, Mrs. Shadwick states that the crowds at the early revivals often numbered into the thousands, with the largest said to exceed 5,000. It is possible that as the crowds at the summer meetings began to outgrow the Bethlehem grounds, Smeathers acted to insure the meetings continued as close to the original site as possible. This cannot be considered factual, but would explain the gravesite discrepancy and account for the revivals between 1873 and 1897, which are included in the 109 year history of the camp meetings.

There is further confirmation of the pre-1897 revivals in the diary of Rev. William H. Dawson. Rev. Dawson, a traveling Baptist minister, noted as early as 1877 preaching at Yelvington revivals which involved members from many local churches. Mrs. Shadwick confirms that local ministers were often required to handle the large crowds. When the congregation became too large for one minister to be heard the local preachers would take smaller groups to other parts of the camp for prayer meetings.

In March, 1901, six members of Bethlehem Methodist Church, Samuel J. Harris, George H. Baker, Fletch Smeathers, Francis M. Griffin, William H. Duncan, and William N. Duncan, officially formed the Daviess County Holiness Association. They had been informally operating since 1897 when Smeathers donated his property.

The articles of incorporation enabled them to buy or sell property, except what they received as gifts, and to erect on that property "a house or houses of worship and such other buildings as may be deemed necessary for holding meetings for religious services." These articles also included a clause which gave the association the power to appoint persons "to arrest and expel" those causing disturbances within 1 mile of the campground. Thus, in 1901, the association had been formed and was operating as it does today, with its sole purpose being the "propagation of the gospel" through its annual revival.

In 1905, the association purchased an additional 45 acres adjacent to the original camp. This period saw the association and revival at their peak. There simply was not enough room on the 6 acres to house the preachers and all who came for the meetings. This extra property became the camping grounds for families, while the original plot remained for the ministers and the prayer meetings. Also during this

period permanent dwellings were built to house the ministers, worshippers, and families. A large two-story "hotel" was constructed complete with a concession stand. As many as a dozen cabins were built by regular worshippers and used by the same families year after year.

Through the years the crowds at the Yelvington meetings apparently diminished rapidly. In 1918 the association sold the additional 45 acres, retaining only a small strip of this land allowing them use of a nearby spring. As the cabins fell into disrepair they were dismantled. The "hotel" burned and was never rebuilt. Eventually the grounds were restored to their original state with only the tabernacle and main residence for the minister. In 1961 the main residence was rebuilt as a concrete block building, furnished with indoor plumbing, a small kitchen, and air conditioning. The last remaining "family cabin" was demolished in 1983.

The association itself has always been a rather loosely defined organization. According to Mrs. Shadwick, the only "official" members have been those who sit on the board. These board members are simply asked if they would like to help and added to the membership. The board annually meets to plan the camp meetings and obtain financial pledges from the members. These pledges, plus contributions from those who attend the revivals, are the association's sole source of income. Mrs. Shadwick proudly states that the association rarely has financial troubles. There were a few years when a 10¢ entrance fee was charged but this was dropped when patrons complained.

The only major alteration the association has undergone throughout its history is the changing of its name. Mrs. Shadwick recalls that in the 1920's the Reverend Fred T. Carby, a Nazarene pastor from Owensboro, became involved with the Daviess County Holiness Association. Reverend Carby felt the decline in attendance was partially due to an inaccurate perception of the association. The "holiness" label may have discouraged some persons who might otherwise attend and become converts. The name was changed to the Yelvington Campground Association in hopes that the milder impression would draw the "lukewarm" Christians to the meetings. It is uncertain exactly when this change occurred. The Articles of Incorporation books at the county courthouse, which officially catalog such incorporations and changes, contain no references to the Yelvington Campground Association. The only official documents which refer to the current association are a tax exemption card and a deed giving Big River Rural Electric Corporation right-of-way easement along the property lines of the campground.

In 1937 the association considered donating a portion of the campground to Daviess County to build a school. Documents were drawn which deeded the property to the county and reserved the right to use the school building for the annual revival. However, the flood of

1937 made the entire area inaccessible and convinced the county to locate the school in Maceo. The documents were never officially recorded, but did refer to the Daviess County Holiness Association, while the tax exemption, filed in 1955, used the name Yelvington Campground Association.

The true history and tradition of the association and campgrounds lies not so much in the deeds, property lines, or articles but among the people who attended the revivals and the preachers who practiced their ministry there. It is these people who have enabled the campground meetings to endure 109 years.

Well known evangelists of their times to preach at Yelvington included "Uncle Bud" Robinson, J. E. L. Moore, and Custer Reynolds. It is generally agreed that the most famous was the Reverend Billy Sunday, the ex-major league baseball player. Since the association has kept no record of the preachers it is impossible to tell exactly when Reverend Sunday attended. It was probably before 1900, for by that time Reverend Sunday had attained national fame and his revivals were mainly in large cities. One documented visit was that of the Reverend J. B. Carradine of St. Louis, Missouri in 1900. Known as "the apostle of sanctification", Reverend Carradine advertised his message would "call not the righteous, but the sinner to repentance." Typical of the camp meetings, Reverend Carradine placed great importance on converting, rather than simply preaching to those already saved.

While the preaching drew people to the revival, it was perhaps the atmosphere of the campgrounds which kept them returning year after year. Cecilia Laswell wrote of the grounds as "a lovely spot which would make a fine camp for Boy Scouts". Nannie Shadwick remembers the spectacle of the camp at night with coal oil lamps hanging and bobbing from trees. Ray Carby, son of Reverend Fred Carby, recalls swinging on grapevines which hung in the woods behind the tabernacle. The camp meetings were more than simple religious services. They were almost "festival" in nature and offered more than would be obtained at Sunday morning services.

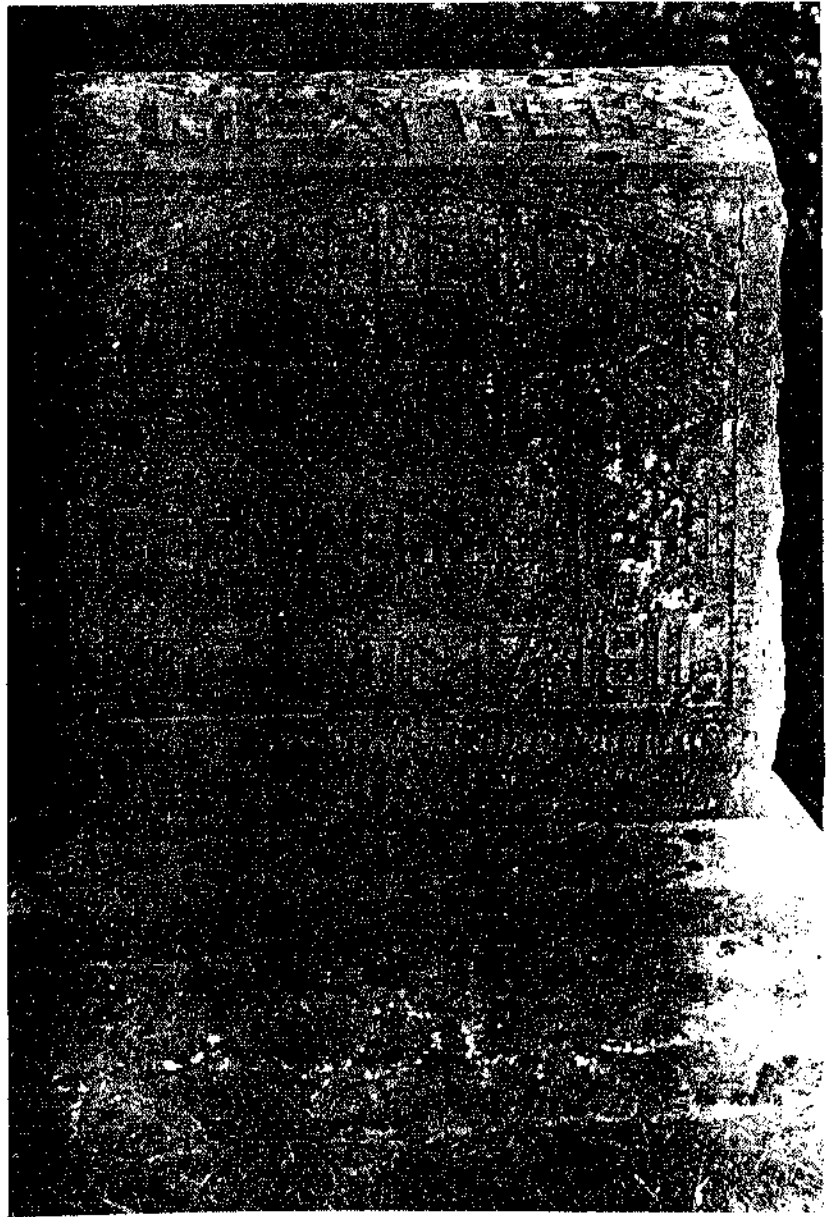
The unusual also would be found during the meetings. Mr. Edgar Boswell, brother of Mrs. Shadwick and one who has been in attendance for over 65 years, remembers that live chickens were brought by those who would spend the 10 days at the revival. The chickens were tied to trees, buggys, and stakes for "storage" until needed for meals. Horses also were in abundance on the grounds as the transportation of the day. The animals were commonplace at the time and presented no problems until one meeting which Mr. Boswell believes was 1925. During an evening service, more than 200 robed and hooded members of the Ku Klux Klan paraded single file through the campground. The noise from the chickens and horses, scared by the white uniforms, delayed the services for quite some time.

Another event which produced these same results occurred when the first automobile visited the meetings. Mr. Horace Temple found himself being told to leave the grounds when he arrived in the first car to be owned in Hancock County. Mr. Temple's son Horace, Jr., a current resident of Hawesville, jokes that many of the congregation also "spooked" with his father's arrival.

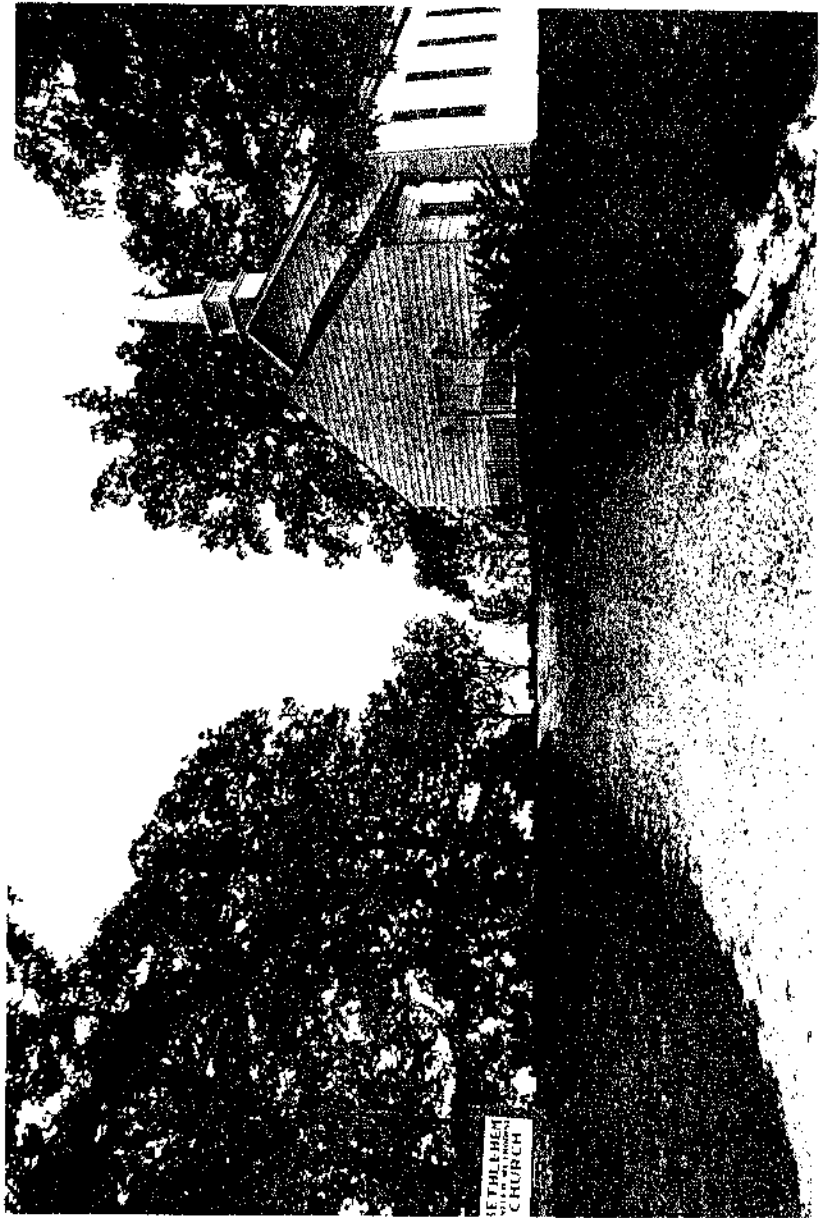
Oddly, it is the car which has done the most damage to the camp meeting's chance for continued success. The increased mobility which the car brought to society made it unnecessary to camp for the revivals, and a bit of the essence of the revivals died. No longer could meetings continue around the clock. Eventually the day programs ended, with only one evening service per day remaining.

Declining attendance also affected the ability of the meetings to attract the "well known" evangelists. The association relies mainly upon local churches for preachers. Often evangelists who preach in local churches during spring months agree to return for the Yelvington meetings. Reverend Cecil Williamson of Starkville, Mississippi, preached the 1981 meeting and is the only recent evangelist from outside the Western Kentucky region. Reverend Williamson was obtained through the efforts of the George Phillips Evangelistic Ministry, based in Owensboro. Reverend Phillips preached the 1978-80 meetings, and as president of the National Association of United Methodist Evangelists has provided a great deal of support for recent meetings.

Despite changes, Mrs. Shadwick sees the life of the Yelvington meetings enduring. The meetings remain "spirit-filled" and those who attended enjoy themselves as much as ever. There are young people on the association board equally committed to continuing. As Mrs. Shadwick says, "the devil will continue to take a licking in Yelvington."



The gravestone of J. F. "Fletch" Smeathers in the Bethlehem Methodist Church cemetery at Yelvington. The inscription reads "He has gone to his home in heaven And all his afflictions are o'er." Photograph by Joseph Hix.



The Bethlehem Methodist Church on Highway 1389 at Yelvington. The first organized church in Daviess County, founded in 1808, this was the site of the original campground meetings known as "Yelvington Camp Meeting" revivals. Photograph by Joseph Hix.

DAVIESS COUNTY: A REPUBLICAN STRONGHOLD(?), 1950-1980

by Michael W. Richeson

Voting in Kentucky has often puzzled political analysts. The state has a long history of political wars. Numerous figures and groups played dominant roles; the L & N Railroad, the *Courier-Journal* newspaper, A. B. "Happy" Chandler, Alben Barkley, newspaper editor Henry Waterson, and in Daviess County, V. J. Steele, and later J. R. Miller. Though their presence may not have openly affected outcomes, it certainly shaped many perspectives.

In Daviess County during the period from 1950 to 1980, a political paradox occurred. During that time, voter registration in Daviess County ran better than 2-to-1 Democrat over Republican. Yet, until 1968, Republican candidates won, and won big, in Daviess County. Though the reasons for this outcome may never be completely understood, a few factors are quite evident.

In the 1950 senatorial election, former Governor Earle Clements, the Democratic candidate, narrowly defeated the Republican candidate, former federal Judge Charles Dawson, by 38 votes in Daviess County. Clements carried the state by 55,881 votes, which reflected the strength of the Democratic candidate despite charges of "election buying" and "a slush fund" extorted from state employees and contractors.

Voter turn-out was heavy in 1952, a Presidential election year. That race pitted war-hero General Dwight D. Eisenhower against U. N. Ambassador Adlai Stevenson. Kentucky found itself evenly split between the two, with Stevenson winning by a margin of only 700 votes. In Daviess County, Eisenhower won a clear majority by 2,940 votes. Proportionately Daviess County was in line with the nation as a whole, Eisenhower having a plurality of better than 6 million votes.

In 1954, the Senate race was between former Democratic Vice-President Alben Barkley (who had been in the Senate during the War), and Senator John Sherman Cooper, who had won his seat in a special election to fill a vacancy two years earlier. Though Barkley was a favorite "native son," and very popular in the state, he lost in both Daviess County and in the state, by 201 and 77,161 votes respectively. Cooper's connection with the very popular Eisenhower, plus his tough stand against Communism, paid off.

The year 1956 would turn-out to be one of the few times the Republicans would retain control of the White House. President

Eisenhower would walk over Stevenson again, in Daviess County (4,817 votes), in the State (95,739 votes), and nationally (9,555,073 votes.) This trend would carry on to the Senate race that year also, with Republican Thurston Morton pulling a surprise victory over still-popular Earle Clements. The margin was small in the state (fewer than 7,000 votes), but Daviess County again went strongly Republican by a margin of 2,078 votes.

There were no Senate seats contested in 1958, but 1960 would be the election that would set the nation on its' turbulent course for the next decade. John F. Kennedy was the Democratic candidate who would narrowly defeat Eisenhower's chosen successor Richard Nixon. In Kentucky though, Kennedy would lose by over 80,000 votes. Nixon's margin in Daviess County would be over 3,500 votes. Senator John Sherman Cooper easily won his contest against Democratic challenger Keen Johnson by 5,457 votes in Daviess County and nearly 200,000 votes state-wide.

In 1962, Republican Senator Thurston Morton successfully defended his seat against challenger Wilson Wyatt in an off-year election that saw only 820,000 Kentuckians go to the polls. His margin was 1,564 votes in Daviess County, and 45,208 votes state-wide.

The Presidential election of 1964 is seen as an emotional tribute to John F. Kennedy. The Republicans nominated Senator Barry Goldwater of Arizona to run against Kennedy's Vice-President, Lyndon Johnson. Johnson's promise to carry out the Kennedy programs and to stay out of Vietnam were more than enough to persuade the voting public to avoid Goldwater and his "bomb 'em back to the stone-age" platform. Even in Daviess County Johnson had a plurality of 4,903 votes, to go with 296,682 votes in the State, and 15,948,746 votes nationally.

In 1966, despite the first "media blitz" by a Kentucky Senatorial candidate, John Sherman Cooper ran away from the "old man" of Kentucky politics John Young Brown Sr. Though he was big in the Democratic party, and despite a large T.V. advertising campaign, Brown lost by 3,275 votes in Daviess County and 217,726 votes state wide. (The "old man" title is allegedly attributed to the belief that Brown would be an old man before he'd win an important race.)

The 1968 Presidential election saw a very close race between Republican Richard Nixon and Democrat Hubert Humphrey. Nixon won by 510,645 votes in national plurality, but the victory has long been examined because of the split in the Democratic Party, the results of which were the third party candidacy of southern Democrat George Wallace. His "not a dime's worth of difference" and 9 million votes prevented a Democratic victory. Nixon barely carried Daviess County by 164 votes.

The year 1968 became the turning point in Daviess County in regard to the Democratic candidate for Senator. Katherine Peden ran strongly against Marlow Cook, losing to the Republican incumbent by only 35,300 votes. In Daviess County she actually won by a margin of 1,102 votes. Two important factors in this race was Cook's support for the war in Vietnam, and a strong Catholic voter turn-out for Peden.

Again, 1970 was an off-year in Kentucky and national politics, with nation-wide voter turn-out at a low.

The Presidential landslide of 1972 saw incumbent Richard Nixon completely crush his opponent, George McGovern, by nearly 18 million votes nationally, 305,287 votes in Kentucky, and in Daviess County by over 9,000 votes.

The Senate race was hotly contested. State Representative Walter Huddleston ran against former Governor Louie Nunn. Nunn's most serious problem was that during his term in Frankfort he raised the state sales taxes from 3 percent to 5 percent. Many believe this killed his political career. Another factor was the open and strenuous support from then-Governor Democrat Wendell Ford for Huddleston. This is an important factor when viewing the Daviess County vote. Though Huddleston carried the county by 2,663 vote, the heavy Republican turn-out for the national race netted Nunn 11,250 votes in Daviess County. Huddleston won the race by less than 35,000 votes across the state.

The 1974 Senate race pitted Republican incumbent Marlow Cook against then-Governor Wendell Ford. This election is one where the Kentucky weather cancelled many votes. Ford, a native Owensboroan, easily carried Daviess County by 6,355 votes. Bad weather caused light voter turn-out in Eastern Kentucky, a Cook stronghold. Just as Western Kentucky went for Ford, Eastern Kentucky would have gone for Cook, which would have made for a closer race, if not a Cook victory. As it was, Ford won by 70,424 votes.

The elections of 1976 were a backlash against the Republican Party on all levels. President Gerald Ford ran not only against Jimmy Carter, but against Nixon's ghost, Watergate, Vietnam, and a bad case of "clumsy." There was heavy voter turn-out nationally, with 81 million plus votes cast. Carter's image as a southern gentleman helped him carry the South, including Kentucky, which he won by 83,865 votes. Ford received 12,826 votes in Daviess County, a strong Republican showing, but was defeated by Carter's 14,114 total.

In 1978, Walter Huddleston successfully defended his seat against Louie Guenther Jr. Though his margin was 114,964 votes state-wide, his Daviess County margin was only 438 votes, another sign of strong local support for the Republican ticket.

The 1980 Presidential election saw another inexperienced national

candidate, Ronald Reagan, challenge Democrat Jimmy Carter. Both candidates ran strongly in Daviess County, with Carter edging Reagan by 259 votes. But Reagan swept the election nationally by 8 million votes (18,857 votes in Kentucky). Again the presence of a major third party candidate, John Anderson, hurt the Democratic Party.

Wendell Ford had an easy time against Republican Mary Louise Foust. Not widely known in the state, she was out-polled by 334,832 votes in the state, and by 16,604 votes in Daviess County.

The elections during that thirty year period reflect the paradox of the Kentucky polity. On the state level, the Democratic Party has long held a stranglehold on the vote in Kentucky. But as one observer said, "Most people think Democratic at the local level, and most times they vote their conviction at the national level." The victories of the Republican Party candidates in Daviess County demonstrate the basic conservatism of its residents, particularly on a national level.

It is the tendency in Kentucky for voters to register Democrat so they may vote in the Democratic primaries, which always prove to be at least as interesting, if not more, than the general elections. The party is a major factor on a local level, while personalities and issues have greater importance when national offices are involved. The same issues that influenced the national vote—Watergate, Vietnam, civil rights, the Russians, defense, and social programs—all matter more than party loyalty in Kentucky.

As the poet Judge Mulligan wrote:

The moonlight falls the softest in Kentucky
The summer days come oftest in Kentucky

* * * * *

The song birds are the sweetest in Kentucky
The Thoroughbreds are fleetest in Kentucky
Mountains tower proudest,
Thunder peals the loudest,
The landscape is the grandest—
And politics—the damnedest, in Kentucky.

CHART 1 - PRESIDENTIAL VOTING RESULTS

	DAVIESS COUNTY	STATE
1952		
* Dwight D. Eisenhower (R)	10,462	495,029
Adlai E. Stevenson (D)	7,522	495,729
1956		
* Dwight D. Eisenhower (R)	11,491	572,192
Adlai E. Stevenson (D)	6,674	475,453
1960		
* John F. Kennedy (D)	9,846	521,855
Richard M. Nixon (R)	13,385	602,607
1964		
* Lyndon B. Johnson (D)	15,253	669,659
Barry M. Goldwater (R)	8,350	372,977
1968		
* Richard M. Nixon (R)	10,111	462,411
Hubert H. Humphrey (D)	9,947	397,541
George C. Wallace (I)	5,015	193,098
1972		
* Richard M. Nixon (R)	17,234	676,446
George McGovern (D)	8,168	371,159
1976		
* Jimmy Carter (D)	14,114	615,717
Gerald R. Ford (R)	12,826	531,852
1980		
* Ronald Reagan (R)	14,643	635,274
Jimmy Carter (D)	14,902	617,417

* indicates election winner nationally

CHART 2 - SENATE VOTING RESULTS

	DAVIESS COUNTY	STATE
1950		
Earle C. Clements (D)	4,500	334,249
Charles L. Dawson (R)	4,462	278,368
1954		
John S. Cooper (R)	6,517	434,109
Alben W. Barkley (D)	6,316	362,948
1956		
Thurston B. Morton (R)	9,829	506,903
Earle C. Clements (D)	7,751	499,922
1960		
John S. Cooper (R)	13,988	644,087
Keen Johnson (D)	8,511	444,298
1962		
Thurston B. Morton (R)	8,972	432,648
Wilson W. Wyatt (D)	7,408	387,440
1966		
John S. Cooper (R)	10,152	483,805
John Young Brown (D)	6,877	266,079
1968		
Marlow W. Cook (R)	10,239	484,260
Katherine Peden (D)	11,341	448,960
1972		
Walter "Dee" Huddleston (D)	13,913	528,550
Louie B. Nunn (R)	11,250	494,337
1974		
Wendell H. Ford (D)	11,854	399,406
Marlow W. Cook (R)	5,499	328,982
1978		
Walter "Dee" Huddleston (D)	4,796	290,730
Louie Guenther, Jr. (R)	4,358	175,766
1980		
Wendell H. Ford (D)	22,527	720,861
Mary Louise Foust (R)	5,923	286,029

THE HISTORY OF TEXAS GAS

by Douglas Tennant

"There is not a native Owensboroan today who has not known gas as a servant of the people throughout his entire lifetime. Gas, then, is Owensboro's oldest utility service," exclaimed a reporter for the *Owensboro Messenger and Inquirer* in their Daviess County Sesqui-centennial Edition. Indeed, Owensboro, Daviess County, and the surrounding tri-state area played a major role in the emergence of the natural gas industry's formation and quickly helped lead the nation into the harnessing and exploitation of natural gas. Central to the Owensboro area development has been the Texas Gas Transmission Corporation. Leading this area into the modern era of utility service and remaining a leading contributor to the social and economic well-being of the Owensboro community, Texas Gas's history and growth have mirrored the emergence of Owensboro as a first-class Kentucky city with a first-class corporation inside its boundaries.

I should like to examine the history of the Texas Gas Transmission Corporation, focusing on the early history of the natural gas industry in the immediate area, the inevitable formation of Texas Gas, the company's growth and setbacks, and the corporation's effects on the Owensboro-Daviess County community. My report will concentrate on the organization's history prior to their movement of headquarters in 1962; covering a shorter period, hopefully producing a concise examination of Texas Gas prior to 1962 and its future outlook at that point. With these objectives in place, an inspection of this area's early history of the natural gas industry is required to lay the foundation for the emergence of the Texas Gas Transmission Corporation.

William Foster Hayes, explaining the determination and importance of the area's natural gas industry in his book, *Sixty Years of Owensboro: 1883-1943*, exclaimed that already by the third quarter of the 19th century natural gas had become as "an important financial and industrial element in the prosperity of the city and county" as any similar industrial pursuit of Owensboro's economic community. Indeed, Owensboro poured tremendous effort into developing the gaseous substances that were soon to be found quite efficient and profitable in their usage as an energy source. According to Dennis Newberry, retired president of Texas Gas and longtime "pipeliner," the Daviess County area was located in the "Illinois basin," a underground reserve of natural gas extending from southern Illinois into western Kentucky.

Without knowledge of an "Illinois basin," gas reserves were first discovered in the mid 1800's while exploring for salt water and crude oil in the fields of Rockhaven and Brandenburg. Quickly action was taken by the leading citizens of Owensboro in forming the first company, Owensboro Gas Light Company (1860), specifically designed to harness the artificial gas now produced and this new introduction, natural gas, according to the *Owensboro Messenger and Inquirer*. Not realizing the immense opportunity available to exploit this fuel of the future, W. L. Howard leased several "oil, coal, salt, and other minerals" grants to several private individuals in the Daviess County area, according to Hayes. Likewise, in the early years, the industry contented itself to developing and producing the oil from the wells, although natural gas collected in vast amounts in their drilling. So, the Owensboro area recognized the abundance of this new gaseous substance but was slow to exploit and market its features, just as the rest of the nation failed to capture this new found fuel and all its advantages.

According to Potter in his, *A History of Owensboro and Daviess County Kentucky*, the 1920's were the pivotal years in the developing and harnessing of natural gas in western Kentucky. Throughout the mid 1920's, small oil firms tapped into gas reserves, only to discard the gas as waste, but news of this atrocity made its way into Kansas City, home of the Missouri-Kansas Pipeline Company. By 1928, a substantial number of natural gas fields dotted the area's landscape, and with Missouri-Kansas developing a Kentucky division, exploitation was well on its way. Indeed, the Owensboro community and other interested companies appeared poised to enter the natural gas field. "Approximately half a million dollars will be expended by the two concerns in the bringing of natural gas to Owensboro," wrote a newspaper reporter in Owensboro in 1929.

Appropriately, demand for this new versatile energy source expanded, with the realization that natural gas could be harnessed efficiently and converted into energy quite cheaply. An Owensboro newspaper headline in 1929 read, "Demand Is Heavy for Natural Gas at Present Time," and people began using the gas more than ever. According to the *Owensboro Messenger and Inquirer's* sesquicentennial edition, the meter and regulator at the fairgrounds had to be changed twice in two weeks to accommodate the increasing demand. In correspondence with this growing demand, the Missouri-Kansas Company began extensive operations in western Kentucky. All signs pointed to Missouri-Kansas's deeper commitment to the fields of western Kentucky. Finally, in 1930, the Kentucky Natural Gas Company was formed as a subsidiary of Missouri-Kansas, replacing the old Kentucky division of the same company. Kentucky Natural soon laid a 12 mile, 8 inch pipeline from the fields south of Owensboro into Owensboro and

began delivering natural gas to the Daviess County community.

Important to all these events was a man named William J. Hinchey. According to Hayes, Hinchey arrived on the scene, from Kansas City, to manage the Kentucky Natural Gas Company, which later became a corporation. Hinchey introduced natural gas to the Owensboro consuming public, and soon the average Owensboro consumer had experienced a rate reduction of more than ten dollars due to this efficient, cheap, new fuel. Answering this increased demand, Kentucky Natural began to develop extensive expansion programs, and numbers like 200 employees, up from 40, and some 75,000 customers began to infiltrate the gas industry news bulletins. All in all, demand for this new fuel was so drastic and extensive that it appears Kentucky Natural Gas had to do all it could to meet consumer demand.

Problems arose, however, concerning the extent of reserves in this "Illinois basin." Dennis Newberry explained that the reserves in Western Kentucky were primarily shallow and not too extensive in volume, and the huge demands and extensive production and exploitation quickly drained the "basin" by the late 1930's and mid 1940's. With production ever decreasing, from oil and gas reserves of over one million barrels in 1940 to half a million in 1943, and demand increasing, 1300 customers in 1929 to over 4,000 customers in 1943, Kentucky Natural Gas Corporation was hard-pressed to develop alternative supplies to meet the constant demands of the Owensboro area. Developing also at this time was the Memphis Natural Gas Corporation, in Memphis, Tennessee. According to Potter, Memphis Natural had experienced similar growth patterns, and their ability to obtain natural gas from the rich fields of eastern Texas and southern and northern Louisiana influenced Kentucky Natural's decision to begin buying and transporting gas from similar fields. By the late 1930's Kentucky Natural had begun to purchase natural gas from the fields in the Texas panhandle, complimenting their reserves in western Kentucky.

The future appeared inevitable. Similar natural gas corporations, serving primarily private consumers and industrial sites along the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers, seemed destined to join forces to provide an ultimate utility service for this river region. It was only a matter of time before a growing, starving market, influencing Owensboro in such a way as to bring into "existence in Owensboro of half a dozen houses that deal in oil well equipment and supplies, 21 oil and gas producers and shippers, two concerns that do shooting of wells, and 4 that maintain pipelines," would necessitate the merger of these corporations.

"Merger of Gas Firms Approved," read the headlines in a small, *Owensboro Messenger* article on March 31, 1948. Indeed, Texas Gas

Transmission Corporation had been formed by the combination of the Kentucky Natural Gas Corporation and the Memphis Natural Gas Corporation. Yet, it had taken three years since the chartering of Texas Gas, a holding company at the time, to decide to merge these two corporations.

Texas Gas was incorporated on December 7, 1945 as a holding company, and not until March of 1948 had they decided to become an operating company. According to the *Owensboro Messenger and Inquirer*, the founders spent this time studying the geographical relationship of Kentucky Natural and Memphis Natural, determined to optimize the number of consumers that could be serviced with the cheapest available resources. Finally, by laying a large diameter pipeline from an abundant gas supply in Carthage, Texas and connecting the two company's existing pipeline systems, Texas Gas materialized into a natural gas corporation capable of supplying natural gas to consumers from Texas to Lebanon, Ohio, the "Big River Region."

According to the employees at the time, Robert Howell, project engineer, and Dennis Newberry, manager, the merger prompted different opinions and outlooks in Kentucky Natural in Owensboro, and Memphis Natural in Memphis. Robert Howell explained that the popular rumor at the time in Memphis was, "Memphis had the gas and Owensboro had the money." Mr. Newberry appeared to agree with that rumor, but in a different way. According to Newberry, the first president of Texas Gas, J. H. Hillman, had long desired the gas in the fields of the Texas panhandle. After a long, corporate fight with the McGuire interests in Memphis, the Hillman family added Memphis Natural to their holdings. With these two companies under his control, Hillman expanded the extent of his pipeline, and narrowly passed approval, by the Federal Power Commission, for Texas Gas's huge 26 inch pipeline from Carthage, that was to be the bread-and-butter pipeline for the corporation.

Furthermore, with the logistics and finances of the newly-founded corporation in place, Hillman set out to recruit officers from the two merged companies to come to Owensboro and begin to run the Texas Gas Transmission Corporation from the old Ames office building on the corner of Locust and West Third Street, downtown Owensboro, Kentucky. According to retired president Newberry, Hillman always admired the two highest officials of the merged companies. W. T. Stevenson, originally from Kentucky Natural, took over the presidency, while at the same time serving as president of another Owensboro firm, Western Kentucky Gas (involved with the distribution of gas to consumers). Stevenson guided the expanding Texas Gas, continually providing for the expansion of their ability to transport more and more

natural gas to distributors along the "Big River Region". When asked if he thought Stevenson may have taken advantage of his dual presidency, Newberry was quick to answer, "No." According to Newberry, Stevenson was an extremely honest, upright man and "frugal" to his very bones. Indeed, W. T. Stevenson led Texas Gas in a triumphant way in its forming years. According to an Owensboro newspaper article, Stevenson received an honorary dinner from some 350 businessmen in 1949, saluting his service to the community and his commitment to base Texas Gas and all its money in Owensboro.

In like manner, W. M. Elmer served admirably as Texas Gas president. According to Newberry, Hillman always "liked" Elmer, originally from Memphis Natural, and his aggressive, efficient manners. Likewise, Robert Howell pointed to the Elmer myth of aggressiveness and efficiency and expansion. Upon Stevenson's untimely death in 1957, Elmer recovered the reins of an expanding Texas Gas Transmission Corporation. By all indications, Texas Gas was poised to explode with growth and expansion to meet the increasing demands of the consuming public, craving this cheap, effective fuel.

Indeed, the national gas industry was expanding. In a *New York Times* article, the American Gas Association predicted that a two billion dollar growth in 1960. Doubting whether their competition would be left behind, Texas Gas and their new chief, W. M. Elmer, began expansion and diversification programs. According to Newberry, Elmer's aggressive, intimidating nature augmented the company's natural progression to expand. Beginning in 1949 and extending through 1970, Texas Gas expanded their operations every other year, one year-pipeline, next year-horsepower generation expansion at their compressor stations along the pipeline. Expansion seemed unlimited. According to the sesquicentennial *Messenger and Inquirer* article, the reserves from the Texas panhandle and Louisiana were so plentiful "that only the size of the pipe was the deciding factor of how much growth occurred in Texas Gas," and apparently, local production of natural gas had all but ceased to exist, turning Texas Gas into primarily a transmission company obtaining gas primarily from Texas and Louisiana.

Specifically, by 1964, the pipeline mileage had grown from 1500 miles to over 4800 miles and some 100,000 customers were being served. Likewise, an article appearing in the *New York Times*, outlined the corporation's receiving of approval, from the Federal Power Commission, for expansion efforts totalling \$40,000,000. New customers were being added daily, and new reserves appeared to be more than sufficient to meet incoming demands. Also, W. M. Elmer led an extensive diversification program, according to Dennis Newberry. Elmer served as the president of the Texas Gas Exploration Company,

a wholly owned subsidiary, that was set up to form an extraction plant in Eunice, Louisiana, capable of extracting valuable natural gases other than methane. Kentucky Electronics was acquired by Texas Gas in the early 1960's, as a wholly owned subsidiary, but was soon deemed unnecessary and dumped.

Indeed, the future looked bright for Texas Gas. Business was booming and consumers continued to seek more and more gas. But on the horizon, an ominous cloud hovered, growing larger and larger.

"In the end, the market place has to be the final decider," exclaimed Dennis Newberry, in reaction to the gloomy cloud of government regulation and intervention into the natural gas industry. Government intrusion had so "fouled up" the gas industry, and proven to be such a barrier that W. M. Elmer urged each stockholder at the 1964 board meeting to heed his words.

"The industry has been regulated since the Natural Gas Act was passed in 1938. . . . We are probably as closely regulated as any privately-owned industry today. We do not like regulation; It therefore behooves each and every one of us to do everything in his power to prevent government regulation from growing in scope and/or in intensity."

Elmer sounded the call but the F.P.C. didn't hear or listen. Texas Gas spent, from 1954 on, trying to expand and survive with the growing governmental entanglement.

Spawned by the Natural Gas Act of 1938, the Federal Power Commission was formed to control producers and "pipeliners" from taking advantage of the consumer. Newberry went on to explain that the 1954 Supreme Court decision of *Philips Petroleum Co. vs. Wisconsin* set the tone for future gas industry regulation. Simplified by a *New York Times* article, the Philips decision construed the transmission of natural gas to be interstate commerce, thus subject to the rules and regulations of the federal government. The Philips decision also set complicated rate hike proceedings for any company wishing to raise their rates, leaving gas companies unable to adjust their rates to quick changing service costs and gas prices. Caught in this entanglement, Texas Gas soon gained headlines attempting to raise their rates. In a *New York Times* article, the F.P.C. denied the Texas Gas Transmission Corporation's attempt to seek a rate increase, ruling that the increases "had not been shown to be justified." Also, in the *Owensboro Messenger and Inquirer*, Texas Gas sought to raise rates to offset higher costs of gas, only to have the F.P.C. say that their rate proceedings would take some 6 to 10 months to complete, and furthermore, a refund due to the customers might be the result if the corporation's present rates were too high.

Finally, the ultimate scare for Texas Gas came when a *New York Times* article reported that, although a rate increase was approved for Texas Gas by the F.P.C., with increasing regulatory pressures, the Wall Street investors appeared to be hesitant to commit investment dollars into Texas Gas, or any similar gas company for that matter. Addressing this problem W. M. Elmer spoke before the American Gas Association, and blamed the government regulations for the fact that "pipeline segments are beginning to suffer materially from a financial reputation standpoint." Indeed, it appeared that the gas companies were beginning to lose the battle with the government, at a time when demand and expansion could not have been greater.

Entering their second decade of existence Texas Gas, burdened by restrictive government regulations and rate proceedings that severely penalized the transmission companies, appeared to be in a paradoxical situation. As Dennis Newberry explained, the economics of the situation just weren't right. The F.P.C. was restricting price hikes, and at the same time, the demand for gas was still on the rise. The gas companies seemed sure to suffer, but with such great demand, the companies still reaped huge profits. The controversy continued. In 1962, Texas Gas was involved in two disputes, one concerning their unapproved attempts to expand, and a dispute with some Indiana landowners over a gas lease. No matter what form it took, government regulation was a part of life for the gas industry. Texas Gas hated it, but they soon learned that profits still could be made, and expansion could still continue.

Finally, perhaps the strongest historical impact of Texas Gas has been their influence and effects on the Owensboro community. Robert Howell spoke of a dirty, coal-dust-covered town, when he arrived in Owensboro in 1950. Twelve years later, Texas Gas had committed to and occupied a 3.5 million dollar headquarters just outside the residential section of Owensboro. Likewise, Dennis Newberry echoed similar beliefs in the opportunities Texas Gas brought Owensboro. Texas Gas asked that the city boundaries be moved to include their new headquarters, so that they may pay city taxes and be a responsible, corporate citizen. Until the actual ground breaking, Newberry said that many Owensboro politicians and businesses were convinced that Texas Gas was going to move to Houston Texas, closer to their essential gas supply. But with the occupation of the new building, Texas Gas and Elmer cemented their commitment to make Owensboro a first-class place to live. Likewise, Newberry spoke of the impact of Elmer, himself, upon the community. Always a strong, Christian man, Elmer was primarily responsible for the creation of a new Christian church and the success of Junior Achievement. Likewise, Texas Gas encouraged political and social involvement on the part of their employees, while at

the same time contributing heavily to Kentucky Wesleyan College, Brescia College, and the Owensboro Industrial Foundation.

Perhaps, the only contention against Texas Gas, according to Newberry, resided in their large importation of professionals from other areas, into Owensboro. Many resented the early hiring policy, which stressed hiring white-collar workers from primarily southern colleges, making a large group of ambitious, aggressive young people desiring change in Owensboro. But as Robert Howell, labelling himself as a "common guy" back in the 1950's and 1960's pointed out, many blue collar workers from the area were hired by Texas Gas, and the company was very good to them and their families, supplying tickets to ballgames, providing expense accounts for wives to visit their husbands when work duties took them from, etc.

All in all, the future of Texas Gas in 1962 looked bright. According to the *1963 Annual Report*, gross revenues were up and earnings per share were higher then ever. A new gas acquisition strengthened Texas Gas's reserves to the point where risky drillings and exploration were accepted. Also, there were no pending regulatory actions against the company and the growth of the "Big River Region" had exploded, producing new markets to exploit.

Finally, there was a distinct pride in the company's efficiency and profitability, leading to happy workers and satisfied consumers. Likewise, as Dennis Newberry said, the company's horizons were expanding. "Homemaker Holidays" and the "Gaslight Truck" pointed to new appliances and gas lights that featured this versatile and efficient energy tool. Indeed, with W. M. Elmer's revelation at the Board meeting in New York in 1963, Texas Gas seemed destined for a bright future;

"Recent authoritative studies by both government and industry indicate that natural gas industry markets will almost double over the next 20 years."

CORRESPONDENCE

A. W. Altstadt
447 N. Ardmore Ave.
Villa Park, Ill. 60181

To the Editor
Daviess County Historical Society
Owensboro, KY 42301

I have received my April issue of the Society's *Quarterly*, and want you to know this piece on steamboating is **ABSOLUTELY OUTSTANDING**, and I certainly am glad I'm a member of this group to get such **First Class** stories such as this and others just as good in the past.

I have a continuous interest in the original Owensboro and Russellville RR Co. The story portion beginning on p. 35 was most interesting and enlightening. Truly, a very good story. Thanks very much.

Sincerely,

A. W. Altstadt

* * * * *

Well, Mr. Altstadt, I just want you to know that this letter really made the Editor's day. It is really great to get letters such as this one, and I will pass it on the Paul Huff, the author of the steamboat article.

By the way, with your interest in the Owensboro and Russellville Railroad, you will want to look up the article entitled "Owensboro's Dream of Glory: A Railroad to Russellville" in *The Filson Club History Quarterly*, Vol. 52, No. 1, January, 1978, pages 26 to 45. If there is enough interest, we may re-run that article in a future issue of the DCHQ.

For you railroad fans, we are planning a railroad special for the January, 1986 issue, with articles on the building of the "Texas" line and the Owensboro & Fordsville, so be on the lookout.

For the rest of you, write us and tell us what's on your mind!

THE DAVIESS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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The Daviess County Historical Society is open to all who have an interest in the history of Daviess County, the Green River Valley, or Kentucky. The Society meets on the Fourth Friday of each month from September through May. Most meetings are held at the Owensboro Area Museum on South Griffith Avenue.

Monthly programs of the Daviess County Historical Society are open to all, and non-members are encouraged to attend and participate.

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EDITOR

Lee A. Dew

Ky. Wesleyan College
Owensboro, Ky.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Dr. Richard A. Weiss

Mrs. Henry Etta Schaubberger

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The Editor's Page

Since this year's Quarterly featured the Confederate monument on its cover, it is fitting that we end the year with a story about the men, or at least some of the men, it represents. Mike Hudson, a KWC graduate who earlier did the fine study of Major Rice Graves (*DCHQ*:I:2, 27-33) describes the adventures of the Daviess County soldiers who were members of the famous Orphan Brigade, three of whom are commemorated in the plaque on the court house lawn honoring their valor in winning the Confederate Medal of Honor.

On an entirely different note, Susan Newberry, also a KWC alum, describes Christmas as experienced in Owensboro at the turn-of-the-century in a delightful and appropriate essay. Susan is currently a student in the law school at Vanderbilt University.

On the best-known historical figures in the County's history is Josiah Henson, and this article, reprinted from the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch* by the *Owensboro Semi-Weekly Messenger* in 1884 gives us an interpretation of this famous character. It also gives us some interesting insights into the Riley family, important pioneers in the county, and an amusing look at journalistic style and practice of a century ago.

**"TO OUR CONFEDERATE HEROES...": OWENSBORO MEN
IN THE "ORPHAN BRIGADE," by Micheal Hudson**

In the courtyard square in Owensboro, Kentucky stand two monuments. One sports an obvious Confederate soldier, while the other bears words. Beneath the statue are engraved the words, to "Our Confederate Heroes". On the written plaque is a memorial to three recipients of the Confederate Medal of Honor. Nowhere in the square is there a similiar federal monument, unless you count the stars and stripes waving proudly over the building.

"Our Confederate Heroes..." the nature of heroism is ephemeral in all but a few cases. The William T. Shermans and the Albert Sidney Johnstons will certainly be remembered, but unfortunately not the men mentioned on these two monuments. Who were they? And why were they so remembered? This paper will attempt to answer this question and others associated with it by tracing the lives of one group of local Confederate "heroes" as they journeyed forth, many never to return.

The year is 1861, the month September, on the fifth day. Kentucky remains officially neutral, for one more day. Daviess County has already seen one militia group leave to join the fledgling Confederacy, and now another assembles, 70 strong, to march to the Tennessee border. Although most of their identities have been lost over the intervening century, the names and essential facts of 39 remain. 13 had already been officially enlisted in the Confederate army on the 4th, and the others eagerly awaited it. Fully five sixths of these men were from Anglo-Saxon or Irish extraction, more than two generations removed. From their traditional English names such as Rogers, Bradshaw, Adams, Norris, May and Watts, to their Virginia backgrounds, they were as American as they come. As in other volunteer units, there were the smattering of recent German immigrants with Anglicized names, such as George Faith and John Bowles.

As a rule these men were around twenty, the average age being 22. The eldest was David Osborne at 35, and the youngest at 16 was James Donaldson. These men were clustered in the middle and lower classes, with not one true member of the gentry among them. Of those found in the 1860 census, eight were farmers, twelve were either farmhands or common laborers, three were painters, two were merchants, and one each was a mechanic, plasterer, or carpenter's apprentice. One was even a self-styled "gentleman."

According to Professor N. S. Shaler, quoted in Ed Porter Thompson's *History of the Orphan Brigade*, Kentucky soldiers of the era were taller and more robust than those of any state save Tennessee. He also notes

their considerable health and resistance to disease compared with units from other states. These men and boys, hailing from Owensboro, Daviess County, Lewisport, Hawesville, and Hancock County, were tough individuals, country bred and hardy.

But for what reasons were these farmers and farmers' sons marching southward? They held little economic interest in the freeing of the slaves, although Daviess and Hancock Counties both boasted large slave populations. Unlikely also that they followed fiery southern leaders, for they dwelt far from the hotbeds of rebellious action. Far more important to these men was the fear of change, northern domination of Kentucky, and the competition which the poor black laborer must necessarily represent. Perhaps they felt a kindred spirit with their southern neighbors and sensed the deepness of the southern inferiority complex. Regardless, they did march, 70 strong, with no real objectives to gain, and everything to lose. Young men are ever eager to fight for that which they deem a worthy cause. In addition, few had anything to lose. Only three of the 39 polled were married and only three had any real property.

Perhaps one major cause of their march southward resides in their environment. Daviess County was firmly in the southern sphere. More than one third of its population were black slave workers, used to plant and harvest its vast crops of tobacco and corn. In the election of 1860, President Lincoln had received only 1,366 votes in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. In most districts of Daviess County he was lucky to poll more than one.

Less than three weeks after our group left Owensboro, when the first federal regiment marched into town to off-load arms and equipment from an Evansville steamer, the town's true colors were revealed. Rebel flags were draped from store fronts and homes and ladies taunted the federals with cheers for the Confederacy and Jefferson Davis. A Union officer who landed in Owensboro on September 25 reported that "A strong disunion sentiment is manifest in the place." He ordered the prevention of the display of "secession" flags, but was careful to avoid chastising the people.

Whatever their reasoning, our 39 men marched south to Tennessee, arriving on September 10 at Camp Boone, the mustering ground of the 2nd and 3rd Kentucky Regiments. (The First Kentucky was associated with the Army of Northern Virginia under Robert E. Lee. Two of its members would later join our group.) Here they were given their medical examination and oath of obligation, then promptly moved three miles away to construct their own camp, Camp Burnett. These two camps were near the Louisville and Nashville Railroad, roughly seven miles from Clarksville.

At Camp Burnett, the 70 men were used as a nucleus to create

Company K, 4th Kentucky Regiment. The Regiment was under the command of Colonel R. P. Trabue. Officially established on September 13th, they were allowed to elect their company officers. They elected the leader of the Owensboro contingent, Joseph H. Millet, captain, and his comrade David C. Hughes, First Lieutenant. These were the two most influential of the original 39, Millet owning a drygoods store, and Hughes a merchant in partnership with his father. One of the Second Lieutenants, George Rogers, the "gentleman" of our group, was also elected. The noncommissioned officers were then appointed by Millet. He did not forget his own townsmen in that selection. Albert Hathaway and James M. Thompson were made sergeants while George Faith was appointed a Corporal. Sixteen of the 39 eventually served the company in an official capacity.

Life in Camp Burnett, although not idyllic, certainly surpassed later, sterner conditions. According to Ed Porter Thompson: "Tents, clothing, and commissary supplies were plentiful. . . almost every man went into camp with a supply of trunks, valises, wearing apparel, books, and other adjuncts of traveling gentlemen." The boys of Company K were undoubtedly no different. One problem which did arise, however, was a shortage of arms and accoutrements. The 4th Kentucky found itself only partially supplied with Belgian rifles. Numbers carried rifled muskets, some of them flintlocks. Few cartridge boxes, cap boxes, belts, or bayonets were distributed. Some companies were without arms at all. When, in mid-September, the regiment was called to Bowling Green, some companies were sent instead to Nashville to procure arms.

Arriving by rail, the men of the 4th were expected to perform those duties for which they had joined, namely to hold Kentucky. Various patrols took them to the Green River and the Mud River and several elusive encounters with the enemy. A more substantial enemy that winter was disease, mostly dietary in cause. In late November men by the score fell prey to a variety of ailments. Sheet iron messpans and camp kettles proved inappropriate to prepare food. The bread seemed particularly poor, fried or boiled in grease, a "horrid compound of flour and hog's lard" eaten with bacon. Measles struck most often, and scores died before bewildered doctors' eyes, including our first casualty, Turner Griffith. Griffith must have been one of the first to contract disease, dying on October 20, 1861. Before early February 1862, when the plague lifted, the hospitals and private homes would be packed with the ill.

As the dead lay ready for burial and the sick recovered, a series of events occurred on the eastern and western ends of Kentucky which would result in the eventual nickname of the Kentuckians in Bowling Green—the Orphan Brigade. In the western end, Union General U. S. Grant occupied Paducah, advanced south, forced the withdrawal of

Confederate Leonidas Polk from Columbus, and threatened Fort Donelson. In the east, at the battles of Mill Springs and Fishing Creek in January, 1862, Confederate General Zollicoffer retired his forces through Cumberland Gap. Bowling Green became untenable, and on February 11th the withdrawal was ordered.

Disheartened, the men of Company K lined up to march south, out of their state, never to return until after the war. Appropriately, the retreat was marked by heavy rains and bad roads all the way to Nashville. On the 16th, amidst a slight snow and bitter cold, the troops learned of the fall of Fort Donelson. The last link in the proud Kentucky defense line had fallen. Rapidly incorporated into the Army of the Tennessee, the regiment moved to Murfreesboro and encamped on the 21st. Along with the 2nd, 3rd, 6th, and 9th Kentucky and an Alabama regiment, the 4th was placed under the command of fellow Kentuckian and ex-presidential candidate John C. Breckenridge. They travelled by rail to Burnsville, Mississippi, where they encamped on March 22 in preparation for the battle of Shiloh. The retreat from Kentucky was too much to handle for one of our 38, as James E. Handley, a third sergeant deserted on February 15, 1862. Later he returned and again deserted. The fortunes of war proved too harsh for some. Another Owensboro man, Edward Lambden, died of disease in late February, while on the march, further decreasing our sturdy group to 36. Many more soldiers died of disease than ever fell from enemy attack!

On April 3rd, the 4th was equipped with Enfield rifles, the preeminent arm in the Civil War. The following morning they moved out of Burnsville in the rain, camping that night near Monterey after a walk of 23 miles. Sluggishly moving over washed-out roads on the 5th, they arrived that night near the junction of the Burnsville and Corinth roads, four miles from the river and Pittsburg Landing. They slept that night on their weapons under a clear sky.

Advancing in brigade the following morning the regiment took part in the early capture of Union General Prentiss, then stopped to rest while the 5th and 6th Kentucky armed themselves with captured federal Enfields. Then they and an Alabama unit were drawn out of brigade and thrown at the regrouping federals who were arranged in the forest behind logs and bags of corn. The 4th advanced to within 100 yards, opened fire after 20 minutes, prepared to charge with bayonets. Reinforcements and heavy shelling from Union gunboats along the Tennessee River forced the 4th to withdraw, Company K losing John M. Mattingly dead, and Albert Hathaway, Green Cooper, John May, and William Bradshaw wounded. Although all would recover, May was so severely wounded that he was discharged for disability in November, 1862. Most commonly this would mean an amputated limb.

That night they withdrew to the rear under a heavy rainfall. The

captured camps being full of commissary supplies, "after a bountiful supper they slept, despite the rain." Here they stayed three days, removing the wounded, burying the dead, and exchanging random shots with the now-superior Union army. During this period they sustained two more wounded, Green Partridge and H. B. Hayden. Hayden lingered until July 10, 1862, when an infection finished what wounds could not. After discharging and cleaning rifles (necessary in the wet weather), the regiment formed up a slowly filed past the famous Shiloh Church, retreating toward Corinth.

The regiment stayed in Corinth, Mississippi until June, 1862. The "gentleman" Second Lieutenant George W. Rogers deserted during this time, as hopes of returning to Kentucky dimmed. The climate in these regions disagreed with most troops stationed there and disease claimed yet another Daviess County boy, William Lashbrooke, on June 5, 1862, in Baldwin, Mississippi on the way to Vicksburg.

Stationed in Vicksburg until early August, the 4th along with the entire "orphan brigade" was suddenly shipped east to Baton Rouge to defend Camp Moore from Union attack. Lack of proper rolling stock forbade the transfer of anything save troops and ammunition so the Kentucky troops were on the mercy of the inhospitable Louisiana countryside. General Breckenridge reported his men, including Company K, as "half being without coats, hundred without shoes, little transportation, indifferent food, and no shelter." Due to constant rains, his forces were only about 65% well.

The 4th attacked in brigade on August 5th. The colonel of the 4th having been shot by accident at 3 a.m., Captain Millet had assumed command of the regiment for the sole time in his career. Advancing through heavy smoke on the Confederate right, they temporarily took the Union camp, destroying "tents, quartermasters and commissary supplies and considerable quantities of new goods and general equipments." They then withdrew to await the arrival of the rebel gunboat *Arkansas* which was supposed to drive off the Union boats and allow a further advance. But under the fire of three enemy gunboats and several union batteries, lacking water, and with no sign of the *Arkansas*, Breckenridge withdrew, leaving his dead on the field, having no equipment with which to bury them.

Occupying nearby Port Hudson, a stronghold on the Mississippi, Breckenridge awaited further orders. For his part in the advance of his "ragged Kentuckians", as he calls them in his report, Millet received mention in General Breckenridge's report of the action. A new colonel, appointed from staff, soon replaced Millet in his temporary command.

Late 1862 boded well for the Confederate cause in Kentucky. After almost constant retreat for a full year, the Kentuckians received orders to move north to participate in General Braxton Bragg's invasion of

Kentucky. Each soldier dreamed of that final purpose which had drawn him into the conflict. Militarily, the situation seemed favorable. Union General Don Carlos Buell stumbled between two rebel armies; at one point Louisville seemed certain to fall. The Kentuckians marched hard and long, planning to thrust through Cumberland Gap in support of Confederate General E. Kirby Smith. In mid-October, 40 miles from Cumberland Gap and their home state, they encountered Bragg's retreating army, fresh from defeat at Perryville on October 8th. That none from Company K deserted here remains a mystery.

The regiment moved west to Murfreesboro, arriving on October 28th and moving into winter camp on the Shelbyville road. Here strict rules were adhered to, intended to prevent desertion. Officers encamped with their own commands, and no soldier was allowed to leave without authorization. Late in December, the forces quartered there prepared to defend against the approaching Buell. Suffice it to say that, still fresh after two days of harsh warfare, Breckenridge's brigade was hurled against the union right flank on January 2, 1863, into the teeth of massed Union artillery. The attack crumbled before a terrible onslaught of lead. Captain Millet was wounded, and three others from Daviess County captured: First Sergeant Joseph Jarboe, Private Green B. Cooper, and First Sergeant Albert Hathaway. Hathaway would later receive the Confederate Medal of Honor for his part in the advance.

Serving as a rear guard, the riddled brigade retreated to Tullahoma. Here, they lost Private John R. Partridge to disease. Following that, they moved to Manchester, and then to Beech Grove. They were then moved to Jackson, Mississippi, where they stayed until June 1, 1863. Hathaway, Cooper, and Jarboe rejoined them here, having been exchanged at Vicksburg after serving time in the prison pens at Camp Butler, Illinois. They then boarded trains to Vicksburg, but were recalled to Jackson after a Federal advance. They were positioned in the trenches there, but served a support role in the combat. Covering the Confederate retreat to Morton, Mississippi, they camped there for one month, before being shipped to Chattanooga in preparation for the battle of Chickamauga.

After the Confederacy was forced out of Chattanooga, Tennessee, in September of 1863, they retreated to Lafayette, Georgia and prepared to stage a counter-attack. The afternoon of September 18th found the 4th Kentucky on the right bank of the West Chickamauga River, near Glass' Mill. On the morning of the 19th they crossed the stream and waited as the brigade artillery engaged in a fierce duel with Union guns. Finding no weak spots, they withdrew across the river and moved up the Chattanooga road into the line of battle. Two hours after nightfall the regiment was one and a half miles beyond Alexander's bridge, where they bivouacked until 3 a.m. They were then awakened and

moved into the line of battle, ready to attack at 5:30 a. m. One company from each regiment passed forward to serve as skirmishers, small groups of men used to feel out the enemy's strength.

When the skirmishers encountered stout resistance, the 4th advanced to their support. Colonel Nuckols, commanding the 4th, fell severely wounded and was replaced by Major Thomas Thompson. Advancing through heavy fire, they encountered the enemy at a distance of 700 yards. They fixed bayonets and charged 100 yards across an open field. While other regiments struggled with log works and fortifications, the 4th passed free of these impediments and steadily drove the enemy back to within 100 yards of the Chattanooga Road, capturing one twelve-pound Napoleon cannon and twelve pound Parrot rifle in the process. They then changed their facing and retreated 200 yards to face the enemy, having outstripped their comrades in the 2nd and 9th. They then withdrew 300 yards to rest, in "good order and without confusion."

Late in the afternoon, the federals still firmly entrenched, the 4th was re-activated and moved a half mile to the left. They again fixed bayonets and charged 100 yards to the enemy works, driving them from their trenches toward the Chattanooga Road over an open field. Darkness being too imminent to pursue the enemy further, the brigade camped near the road. Although victorious, the final charge had been costly. In the confusion, Third Sergeant James Thompson had been captured; he would be detained in prison until just before the end of the war as prisoner exchanges became more and more rare. Second Corporal William C. Fletcher, our carpenter's apprentice, was severely wounded in the hand and side. First Sergeant E. E. Napier and Captain Joseph Millet were also wounded, Millet for the second time. Teamster James Forbes was permanently disabled and discharged, again a likely victim of amputation. Perhaps the worst casualty was Second Lieutenant John Bell, a native of Lewisport, who fell mortally wounded and died after that fatal last charge. He would later receive the Confederate Medal of Honor for his gallantry, as would Third Corporal Mathias Garrett of Owensboro.

Although there are records that the Confederacy had the ability to coin medals, namely at the mint in New Orleans, no such medal ever found its way to these three Kentuckians: Hathaway, Bell and Garrett. The list of medal winners was indeed published three times, but no tangible award was ever presented. Awarded by a vote of the enlisted men, perhaps that acclaim was its own reward.

After the Confederate victory at Chickamauga, the regiment encamped at Tyner's Station until November, 1863, when they moved to Missionary Ridge. Although partially engaged there, Company K sustained no casualties. Withdrawing in the face of William T. Sherman's advance, they covered Joe Johnston's retreat to Ringold, Georgia, and from

Dalton to Atlanta. After reviewing them at Dalton on January 30, 1864, Major General Hindman issued this report: "It is announced with gratification that the commanding General was much pleased with the appearance and bearing of the troops of this corps on review today. Without detracting from the praise due to all, the Major-General deems it but just to mention the Kentucky Brigade as especially entitled to commendation for soldierly appearance, steadiness of marching, and an almost perfect accuracy in every detail."

Going into the Atlanta Campaign every man in the regiment had a uniform weapon, and 40 rounds of ammunition—a full cartridge box. Our original group of 39 had been pared to 27; four months later, that strength would be 16. According to N. S. Shaler, the "orphan brigade" marched out of Dalton on May 7, 1864 with 1,140 men. On September 3rd, after sustaining 1,860 death or hospital wounds, 240 men remained. Less than 50 men had not been wounded and less than 10 deserted. The brigade had entered what is known as the "hundred days fight." Rocky Face Ridge, May 8-11, claimed Private George Disney. Then came Resaca on May 14th and 15th, followed by Adairsville on May 17, 1864. Next came the truly telling blow, Dallas, fought May 26-June 1.

As federal General Garrad advanced his 2nd Cavalry Division toward Pumpkin Vine Creek, he was attacked by the Kentucky Brigade, now under the command of General Bates. Garrad repulsed the brigade and drove it back toward Dallas on May 24th. On May 24th the rebels were driven back into their trenches with heavy losses, and light skirmishes marked the 26th and 27th before a federal advance on the 28th drove the Confederates from their rifle pits and wooded ravines. The cost to the Confederates and Company K was terrible.

Captain Joseph H. Millet, hero of so many battles, fell dead. Also killed were Second Corporal William Fletcher and Second Lieutenant Horace Watts. Privates Elisha Adams and Crawford McClary were wounded. James Donaldson, having grown up in Confederate service, and Green B. Partridge were also wounded and captured by Sherman while in the field hospital. When Sherman later abandoned his prisoners, Partridge was found by his friends in the field tent, where he had lain for three days untended. Insects had infested the wound and Partridge expired the following day. Miles C. Jenkins, an Indiana copperhead, was also captured and released after the war's end.

But the war continued, battle after battle. Kenesaw Mountain, a long struggle from June 10-July 3 where Corporal Warren O'Bannon and Enuck C. McKay were captured, Peach Tree Creek on July 20, and Utoy Creek on August 6 claimed no casualties, but Corporal Mathias Garrett and E. E. Napier were wounded in between. In Jonesboro, from August 31-September 1, 1864, in the last-gasp effort to defend Atlanta,

Green Cooper was captured, and William E. MacDonald fled the army, one of the few to desert.

Just before the disastrous campaign, the offer had circulated amongst the troops to transfer to the navy. One Hancock County native, David H. Osborne, took up the challenge and transferred on April 13, 1864. Later he was one of a small naval party under Commodore Hunter that boarded and captured the four-gun Union gunboat, *The Water Witch*, on June 3, 1863 at Ossabaw Sound, Georgia.

On September 20, 1864, the 4th Kentucky was mounted on mules and horses and converted into cavalry. On November 23rd their strength was listed at a paltry 80, less than even one of their companies at the beginning of the war. They were never officially listed as mounted and were more or less neglected as the Confederacy's administration broke down. When inspected in February 1865, however, they appeared to be in decent condition. According to the report, they carried uniform arms, nearly all serviceable, although dirty. Their accoutrements were in good shape although somewhat lacking. Ammunition was well preserved, though not evenly distributed. Their horses, mules and wagons were in excellent shape and their horse equipments were standard CSA issue. They had a sufficiency of clothing and blankets, yet needed spurs. They retained their military bearing, but with an indifferent appearance. Discipline was lax and the unit required instruction in cavalry tactics.

The unit acted in this capacity until the end of the war, harrying Sherman's supply lines and communications. With unit strength so low, First Lieutenant David Hughes was sent back to Kentucky with recruitment orders, where he remained until the end of the war. Private Albert Frazier was detailed with the provost guard in Savannah, where he was shot and wounded by deserters. He recovered after the war. According to the *Adjutant Generals' Report*, the 4th fired the last shots of the Confederacy when they attacked the rear of Potter's division on April 29th, 1865. They later discovered that Johnstons's army had surrendered on April 26th. They promptly surrendered and were paroled at Washington, Georgia on May 26th. The forces there being in charge of some Confederate gold from Richmond, it was divided among them, each man receiving \$3.50.

According to the 1870 census, of the 39 men who left Owensboro on September 5, 1861, only 10 returned. One more casualty remains to be reported, David Osborne, released from the navy and returning home to Hancock County, died of disease in Nashville. The march home was too long for some.

When they did arrive home, Owensboro was a changed place. Constantly threatened by unorthodox rebel guerillas and urged by a pro-Union *Owensboro Monitor*, the town had drifted into the Union camp. Our 10 drifted back into the mainstream and were promptly lost

by historians. Five went back into farming, one a painter, one a typesetter, one a city constable, and one a plasterer. Albert Hathaway, once a hero, now became a dry goods clerk. Seven of them married and brought up children.

These then were "Our Confederate Heroes". Ordinary men, from ordinary backgrounds, thrust into a war of patriotism for reasons most of them did not understand. Like all Americans, they were ever eager to fight for their freedom, and their sense of obligation.

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CHRISTMAS IN OWENSBORO IN THE EARLY 1900's
by Susan Newberry

"The Long Ago"

*We'll walk again the old-time paths;
the old-time friends we'll meet;
And to the old-time homes of youth
We'll trip with merry feet.
And hand in hand and heart to heart,
We'll tread youth's golden ways,
And live again the joyous hopes we
lived in other days.
The clock ticks on, its pendulum
swings slowly to and fro,
And ev'ry tick a mem'ry brings—
Christmas times of Long Ago. . .*

Christmas, that most joyous and festive occasion, which Christians celebrate as the birth date of the Christ child, today means many things to many people. This paper gives us glimpse of the interests and happenings of Christmasses in the Owensboro area in the early 1900's, when things were simpler and more emphasis was placed on family. The information in this paper was secured through a review of local newspapers and personal interviews with people who lived during that period in Owensboro. Christmas advertising, considered by many people today to be overused, was quite prevalent in newspaper and windows displays of that day.

Today's advertising, though more sophisticated, is based on the patterns set in the early 1900's. Each store suggested their particular items as the best in the city. One example of this kind of advertising was the advertisement of A. H. Kigel and Company, a clothing store. They claimed the largest and best selection of holiday neckwear in the city. Noe and Wall, a confectionary shop, claimed to be the headquarters for all Christmas sweets.

Many stores during the month of December featured reduced price sales as an incentive to attract shoppers. While by today's standards these prices to the reader may seem incredibly low, it must be realized that wages were also very low. Clothing stores most often used reduced prices to attract customers. The Louisville Store advertised women's

shoes, either dress or coarse, button or lace, regularly priced at \$1.25 per pair, on sale for 98¢. Men's wear was also put on sale to attract buyers. Wile Brothers listed their regularly-priced \$16.00 suits for \$12.00. Men's extra fine overcoats at Wile's, a leading men's clothing store, which regularly sold for \$18.00, were on sale for \$15.00. The jewelry stores also used reduced prices as a method for bringing in customers. At Frank Pardon's "genuine solid sterling silver thimbles" that were regularly 50¢ were being sold for 25¢. Nick T. Arnold Jewelers offered to engrave anything purchased there for free.

Santa Claus and jingles were used in advertising by the various stores in Owensboro. Santa Claus requested the Phillips Co. to mark down prices on their clocks, suits, and other goods. Santa Claus also appeared to Gant's Book Store, where he left an endless variety of toys for all boys and girls.

A. B. Pike advertised that since Santa like good things to eat, the wise buyer would shop at their store. The Parrish in Owensboro was fond of using jingles to promote their items. Two most often used were as follows:

"Early buyer, don't you see
Aren't you glad that you knew me?"

and

"The Parrish's the place wise people go
to buy their holiday gifts, Ho Ho."

It would appear that the art of jingle writing has not improved in 80 years.

Merchants also used window displays to sell their wares. The newspaper often commented editorially on the merchants' window displays. The store who received the accolade of presenting the best window display in 1901 was Levy's. Their display consisted, according to the *Owensboro Messenger*, of only gold, pearl, and silver mounted umbrellas. "This, under the electric light at night, is a scene of beauty that will be long remembered."

Some stores appealed to the practical shopper. Even dentists used Christmas advertising to their advantage. The dentists Emory and Phillips suggested giving yourself a Christmas present, perhaps a crown or bridge. Guenther and Sons', a hardware establishment, in the advertising claimed they carried only useful and novel presents, not useless toys and trinkets. Walter J. Kerns, a furniture dealer, promoted stand lamps and chandeliers as useful gifts.

The *Messenger*, along with the Owensboro merchants, claimed

responsibility for stirring up the Christmas spirit by devoting so many columns and pages for advertising. In one instance the *Messenger* should have edited one of their advertisements. Mamens, a five and ten store, advertised they were "the only cheap store in the city."

Selecting the right gift presented a problem in the early 1900's as it does now. According to an article in the 1900 *Messenger*, the methodical buyer wasn't any better off than the buyer who rambled about absentmindedly pulling anything from the shelves in front of him. The article suggested that the buyer could try to question the gift recipient as to what they would like, but remarked that it was highly possible that the person would modestly ask for less than what he thought he would receive. The Christmas shopper was and still is doomed to wander about with no light to guide him in his selections.

The stores in Owensboro tried to ease the predicament of the Christmas shopper. They touted gifts tailored to the gift recipient. If the recipient was considered forgetful, a memorandum board was suggested. For the practical woman, kid gloves or handkerchiefs took precedence as the best gifts. Perhaps a not-so-sensible gift was an ermine fur set on sale for \$69.85 at Levy's. For men, a walking stick or book was considered a safe gift. Various gifts for men could be made, such as book covers, house shoes or match scratchers. The match scratcher consisted of tinted water color paper stretched over cardboard, with the saying "matches are not all made in heaven." When the buyer really was up against the wall, the newspaper suggested buying a sofa pillow. The only consolation, then as now, is that at Christmas it is obligatory upon any recipient of a gift to declare it just the one object of his fondest desire.

Certain gifts received more emphasis than others during certain years. In 1901 expensive jewelry did particularly well, in 1903 pianos, and from 1906 on chafing dishes were considered a must for any woman. In 1906 a new craze, which started in New York, reached Owensboro. It was the "Teddy" bear. According to reports they were "really big" and "cute," the adjective most often applied to them.

All through the decade of the 1900's umbrellas were doing well, but in 1905 they hit their peak. They were usually made of black silk and lined with a brighter color, such as red. The ends of the umbrella were sharpened to a point or squared and capped with gilded metal. The tips of the ribs, protruding beyond the silk covering, ended in gilded knobs. The greatest amount of effort was spent on the handle. The head of a cow, carved from ebony with golden horns and a golden cord around its neck with a small bell, was a popular style of handle. Another handle style much in demand was an egg-shaped piece of clear glass anchored in a gilded crown setting. By looking down at the top of the crystal egg and slowly spinning it, a number of kaleidoscopic colors and forms

were brought to view. It was stated that the gifts mentioned above were considered to be the most desired gifts in Owensboro.

Decorations played as an important role in the early 1900's as they do now. The Christmas decorations were usually in place a week before Christmas in the homes. The Christmas tree was firmly entrenched in traditional decorations by this time. According to the newspapers of 1905, businessmen considered it a gamble to deal in Christmas trees because there was no way of knowing how many trees would be available. Christmas trees were scarce in 1903, and the prices soared. Glass ornaments and tinsel were used to decorate the tree and could be purchased at various stores around Owensboro. Many decorations were made instead of purchased. Christmas designs cut from crepe paper, and popcorn, dyed and strung, were two such homemade decorations. Most of the decorating took place indoors. Children hung stockings which Santa usually filled with candy, nuts, and fruits.

The newspaper carried decorating hints for housewives. For table decorations a miniature evergreen tree was suggested, or perhaps a small log to represent the yule log. Another tip was given suggesting the indoor use of greenery. Instead of buying expensive hothouse plants, the paper suggested searching the woods for small ferns and various mosses. The moss and fern were to be placed into a glass fishbowl and covered. A large red bow was tied around it and it was hung from a chandelier or doorway to make an attractive Christmas decoration.

Outside decorating was not as extensive as it is today. Most usually a holly wreath, available at George and Otis Parrish's store, or evergreen wreathing around the doors was used. In 1903 people began decorating with greenery more often. By 1907 the newspaper claimed decorating with evergreen and other greenery a tradition.

Then as now, food played an important role in the holiday season with turkey being the main course. In 1902, due to a claimed shortage, the price of turkeys rose to 14¢ a pound. In 1907 turkeys were so plentiful, the price dropped by 2¢ a pound from the year before. Scalloped oysters, fresh asparagus, waldorf salad, plum pudding and fruit cake, according to Miss Ann Teresa Berry, an Owensboro native, were added to the turkey for the Christmas meal. In some households ham replaced turkey as the main course.

Preparations for the Christmas dinner started far in advance of Christmas. Fruitcakes and plum puddings were prepared in mid-November. The special fruit required for fruitcakes could be purchased at Reinhardt's, and they advertised a special selection of fruits just for such cakes. If any item for the dinner was found to be missing on Christmas Day, all was not lost. Several of the grocery stores stayed open until noon on Christmas.

If the lady of the house was in a quandry as to what to prepare for the Christmas dinner, suggestions were readily available through the newspaper. One such article carried suggestions for three full Christmas dinners. All were quite elaborate meals, but one particularly so. The meal began with raw oysters, consomme, celery, olives, salted nuts, salmon patties, and potato balls. The main course consisted of roast turkey, cranberry sauce, mashed potatoes, peas, and candied sweet potatoes. Roast duck, with plum jelly, could be substituted for the turkey. Mince pie, plum pudding, fruits, raisins, bon bons, and nuts were suggested as desserts. Other articles presented a choice of dessert recipes touted as childrens' or family favorites.

If Christmas preparations became too hectic for the lady of the house, she could buy a fruitcake or plum pudding from various bakeries in the city. Nagel's bakery advertised they were ready to offer assistance to the ladies with their fine assortment of cakes and candies. The Rudd House made it even easier for the ladies; they served an elaborate Christmas dinner at 6 p.m. every Christmas during the early 1900's.

Owensboro never forgot its indigent residents. Often the paper remarked that the destitute people were well remembered by the people of Owensboro. Various groups, such as the Women's Christian Association, Elks, and Salvation Army provided baskets of food and clothing to the poor families of Owensboro. The Elks were one of the earliest organized groups to give aid to the needy and provided dinners for many of the poor in Owensboro. The Women's Christian Association (WCA) received donations of candies, clothes, toys, and groceries in order to prepare baskets to distribute to poor families of Owensboro. Occasionally, the WCA worked with the Queen's Daughters Institute, which was a poorhouse, and one year they provided baskets to 120 families. The WCA sometimes provided a dinner for the residents of the Mary Kendall Home as well as giving out baskets.

The Salvation Army made a plea for donations in order to provide a Christmas dinner for destitute families, and a Christmas tree for underprivileged children. In 1905 the Salvation Army fed nearly 250 people. The prisoners in Owensboro jails also received a special Christmas dinner every year.

Charitable organizations were not the only ones looking out for the poor. The Mayor of Owensboro in 1901 sent fuel to poor families during a particularly long and bitter cold snap. The President of the National Deposit Bank, James Weir, made a donation of food and clothing to the Queen's Daughters. There was usually an article published in the newspaper reminding people to remember the needy. There were also calls to reform Christmas by returning to the simple Christmases of past years, and giving money that was to be spent on gifts to the poor.

As to be expected, business in Owensboro picked up considerably during the Christmas season. Every year businesses did well in Owensboro. That doesn't mean there weren't a few shaky years in the business world. In 1903 business increased, but not as much as expected because the tobacco hadn't been sold. Owensboro's business depended greatly on the kind of year the farmers had. In 1906, there was labor trouble in Kentucky, and businessmen in Owensboro were afraid it would affect the Christmas trade, but it did not. As a matter of fact business increased tremendously from the year before. In 1907 Christmas business began slowly, but picked up a week before Christmas. The fear of scarcity of ready money slowed the trade, but the fear was soon dispatched and stores were crowded as usual.

The Christmas rush for merchants began approximately two weeks before Christmas. All stores during the rush, including grocery stores, did well. When a reporter tried to interview an owner of a store, the owner replied that he was so busy he didn't have time to talk to the reporter. He did say that he had to hire extra clerks, as did many other merchants.

Each year during the Christmas rush the newspapers would publish reports on business in Owensboro. Each year there was an increase in the volume of business over the year before. "The trading today has been phenomenal" was one way the newspaper described the Christmas business of Owensboro. Every year there were record-breaking crowds shopping on Christmas Eve. People of every class crowded the stores to capacity. The farming community usually came into town on Saturdays, and store owners urged city residents to shop during the week so the country people could shop more easily.

During the Christmas season the post office and express office employees worked harder than any other employees in any other business. A mail carrier, on an ordinary day, stopped only at about one-third of the houses on his route. But during the Christmas season, he stopped at each one with a pile of letters and bundles. The increase of mail was so great in 1902 that each mail carrier was compelled to employ an extra man to help pull mail carts for two days before and after Christmas. In 1910 the post office resorted to placing as many as three men on each route during Christmas. For the two express offices, Adams and American, the terrific increase of incoming and outgoing business began in 1901. At this point they started hiring extra men during the Christmas season for at least the next nine years. The year 1904 was a good year for both the post office and express offices. The receipts in the post office increased by 25 percent, and the express offices experienced a 50 percent increase in their business from the year before.

Along with being swamped with mail, the post office officials were hit by a barrage of questions, such as, "Sure it will be there Christmas morning?" "How many stamps?" and "Take good care and see it doesn't get lost." Faced with such questions and admonitions, the post office offered advice through the newspapers. They advised the sender to pay 8¢ extra and have the package registered, wrap packages securely, and weigh them accurately. They also advised senders to write their own name and address on the upper left hand corner and write the person's name and address of where the package was going on the same side in ink.

There was a wide variety of activities going on in Owensboro around Christmas, most of which centered on the family. Most Protestant churches held Christmas services or programs. Catholic churches performed several Christmas programs, and on Christmas Day they held several masses. The Sunday School classes usually presented the program for the whole church. A typical program, like one held at the Walnut Street Baptist Church, consisted mainly of music. Various choruses within the church performed along with solos, duets, and recitations. At the end of this particular program, Santa Claus appeared and distributed gifts. The grade schools in Owensboro also put on Christmas productions and invited people to come see them. One eighth-grade class in the city system invited Superintendent Rhoades to their Christmas program. Christmas vacation in the schools began around the 23rd of December.

Setting off fireworks for Christmas, which was strictly a Southern tradition, used to be one of the activities youngsters participated in during the Christmas season. In the years 1900, 1904 and 1907, the Mayors of those years restricted the use of fireworks in the city. The years 1901 and 1907 saw an abundance of fireworks. A newspaper commented in 1907 that a great deal of money had been spent on fireworks in Owensboro.

During the holidays, at least one theater troupe performed, and if the weather was good, the performances were well attended. In 1905 the play "Town Topics" was to appear at the Temple Theatre for Christmas night entertainment. The play was reported to be a "farce comedy which enjoys the reputation of having made thousands laugh. . ." The Frank Dudley Stock Co. in 1910 celebrated Christmas, even though they were not at home, in Mr. and Mrs. Frank Dudley's room at the Planter's Hotel. The Dudleys had placed a large Christmas tree laden with many presents in the middle of the room. Each member of the troupe, as well as visitors, received gifts.

According to Miss Berry, activities filled Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. On Christmas Eve carolers would come by and after singing, were presented with cakes and candies. A community orchestra

usually held a Christmas concert on Christmas Eve. Christmas Day began early for Miss Berry and her family. First, she and the rest of her family attended morning Mass at 5 a.m. This was before the Midnight Mass was instigated in the Catholic Church. After Mass, they returned home to open gifts and empty their stockings. Preparations then began for an elaborate Christmas dinner. During the afternoon a tea dance was held at a local club. The ladies were expected to wear a ballet-length dress for this occasion. That night a dance was held in town, usually at one of the warehouses or at the Rudd Hotel. Formal was the proper attire for this dance. According to Miss Berry, a girl wasn't considered popular unless, during the course of the dance, at least three different men didn't break in during a set and dance with her.

For Mrs. Ozetta Lee Brown, who lived outside Owensboro, most Christmas events took place in the schoolhouse. The school children decorated the Christmas tree with figures cut from crepe paper and strings of popcorn. A Christmas program was presented on Christmas Eve and consisted of singing and recitations by the school children. The teacher would give each child a Christmas treat which consisted of a small sack filled with candy and nuts. During the week before Christmas each of the surrounding neighbors of Mrs. Brown held a party at each of their homes. Mrs. Brown was particularly fond of this custom because there was a party every night. On Christmas Day neighbors, as well as family, would come and visit. For both Miss Berry and Mrs. Brown it appeared to be a festive occasion shared with family and friends.

The Owensboro *Messenger* during the Christmas season was full of advice and observations, much of which is applicable today. These two observations, which were found in a column titled "Have you noticed. . ." were particularly appropriate-

"The minute you bought something, you find something you like better?"

"How rapidly the allotted sum set aside for Christmas gifts disappears?"

Some advice was aimed directly at men, such as;

"It is the wise man who betrays no surprise when his wife jumps and hides something when he enters the door these days."

Ladies were also given advice. They were cautioned not to send any gift, not even a card, to a man they had known for only a short time. If such gifts were sent, true gentlemen thought it cheapened the lady.

Some observations of the season were a little more cynical. The observations quoted below are good examples:

"Have you noticed that the largest people always move the most slowly and block traffic in a narrow aisle with perfect equanimity?"

and

"Even the janitor is polite around Christmas."

The best advice given was an article entitled "Advice to Owensboro Shoppers," and it listed several key points for shopping. Those that were of most value are as follows:

"(1) Slow buyers, buy early, (2) Leave your babies at home, also the baby buggies, (3) Pay cash for holiday presents, (4) Avoid giggling when buying a lover's present, (5) Tell your jokes and troubles to the police as we have others to wait on."

As the *Messenger* was inclined to include much Christmas poetry, it is fitting to end this paper with a sample of such:

All morns may be like Christmas morn
To him who looks for them.
And daily is the Christ Child born
In some new Bethlehem.

Who walks with faith and quiet will
through unknown ways and dim,
Who keeps his heart a child's heart still
The Christ Child dwells with him.

For him the heavens are made anew
Lit by a guiding star
With singing angels surging through
From hierarchs afar.

A new earth at his feet shall spring,
With love and life astir,
With shepherds and wise kings who bring
Gold, frankincense and myrrh.

His ears shall hear, his eyes shall see
The angels and the kings,
If but his heart a manger be,
Where love her best-born brings.

Robert Gilbert Welsh

UNCLE TOM. SI HENSON, THE ORIGINAL OF MRS. STOWE'S GREAT NOVEL

Editor's Note: The following is a reprint of an article from the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*, as carried in the *Owensboro Semi-Weekly Messenger*, September 5, 1884.

"No, sir, it isn't every one who has enjoyed the distinction of being talked about in the most exalted circles of the English nobility—by royalty itself, for that matter. Yet that is what has happened in my time, and no fault of mine, either."

The speaker was Judge Amos Riley, of New Madrid, Mo., who is sojourning in the city for a few days with his nephew, Mr. A. R. Taylor, the attorney. In response to a suggestion that he explain himself, the judge continued:

"It is some eight or ten years ago that I received by mail a copy of the *London Times* containing an elaborate story of a negro named Josiah Henson who was the ruling sensation in the metropolis, and had been received by Lord Palmerston, and even the Queen, as an object of the highest interest. The secret of his attractiveness lay in the fact that he was the original of Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe's world-famous "Uncle Tom." Henson was talking pretty fluently to every one and every one was listening with the greatest interest to what he said. The *Times* had a long interview with him made up largely of what purports to be the story of his early life. It told of his rearing in Maryland; of his removal to Kentucky, and of a trip down the river to New Orleans, which formed the nucleus of the famous journey with St. Clair and Little Eva in "Uncle Tom." The Story was told in full detail and made rather a spirited narrative, but you will guess the extent of my interest when I tell

you that I at once recognized in Henson a negro who belonged to my uncle, and whom I, myself, had known intimately for years. There could be no possible doubt about it, for my uncle's name and my own were given in the article and a number of anecdotes with which I was familiar were told with the greatest particularity. In short, the identification was complete. I will tell you about it:

The Judge's hearers drew up their chairs in anticipation of a good story.

"My uncle, Isaac Riley, and his fathers before him for generations, lived in Montgomery County, Maryland. His brother Amos, my father, came West in early life and settled in Daviess County, Kentucky, near Owensboro, or, as it was then called,

YELLOW BANKS,

on the banks of the Ohio. He sent back to his family accounts of his new home so glowing that Isaac was fired with the idea of going West himself. Accordingly, in 1826 or '27, he got together a lot of his slaves and sent them ahead by way of the river, intending to follow with his family after a while. He put the negroes in nominal charge of a young friend named Middleton, but the party was really under the command of Josiah, or, as he was better known, 'Si Henson, then a strapping fellow of 28 or 30, with a wife and two or three children. 'Si had been my uncle's body-servant for years, and being a shrewd, trusty fellow, enjoyed his master's full confidence. The party arrived at Owensboro safely and 'Si and his family went to work on my father's farm. 'Si proved himself fully deserving of the character my uncle had given him and soon came to be trusted and indulged as a favorite servant. He was a large, well-built man, who would tip the beam and 175 or so, and was remarkably powerful, especially in the arms and shoulders. Many is the time I have worked with him in the wheat field. I was about 20 years old at the time and pretty stout myself, but when I tried to keep up with, 'Si with a cradle, I invariably got left behind. By reason of his great strength he was able to use a cradle with a blade about a foot longer than mine. He would start out with this and by cutting an enormously wide swath, walk away from me in a way that I despised. "Come 'long, boss," he used to shout back at me, "nevah do fo' you to git lef' behin'." After 'Si had been with us for a year or more (my uncle still postponing his removal to Kentucky) my father came to me one day and said: 'If you and 'Si want to take this cargo of hogs down to New Orleans, I'll give you all you can get for them over \$400.' We both jumped at the proposition, and, loading the hogs into a flatboat, were under way as soon as possible. The trip was a long one and almost without incident. I remember we got off at Memphis, and 'Si, in prowling around the town, got into a trouble with the police, out of which he extricated himself by giving leg bail, escaping with no further loss than that of a big white beaver hat of which he was very proud.

What did New Orleans look like in 1828? Oh, I couldn't begin to tell you. I remember one thing, though. All along the levee there was a row of frame shanties covered in front with a sort of canvas booths. This was the home of 'the tiger' in those days. Here the gamblers most did congregate to lay for the unwary 'up-river' man. I was walking along there one day with the proceeds of the sale of the hogs in my pocket (which, by the way, didn't pan out so as to net my father anything to speak of), intending to deposit the money in bank. But it was after banking hours, and I had to take my money back in my pocket. As I was passing in front of one of these booths, a fellow rushed out of the door, grasped my hand and expressed himself as delighted to see me. I was pretty green, but when he asked me to walk in and hold the stakes on a bet which he and a friend had made, I suspected that there was something wrong. I found the 'friend' seated at a little table manipulating an apparatus consisting chiefly of three cups and a little ball. I have since heard the game described as 'thimble-rigging.' My friend kept betting and losing a dollar at a time and all the while he was urging me to go in with him to the extent of \$5 or \$10. I kept clear of it, however, and finally bolted out of the door on an urgent call to meet an imaginary friend. Before I got away, though, I am free to say that one of the fellows got me to change a \$10 bill for him, which afterwards proved to be counterfeit.

'SI AND I WENT BACK

home and resumed our duties on the farm. Before long, however, there came a message from Maryland from my uncle, who had finally concluded not to come to Kentucky. He wanted all his negroes sold except 'Si and his family, from whom he was unwilling to part. So my father gave 'Si the money necessary for the trip and packed him off to Maryland with his family, which by this time was swelled by the accession of two or three more woolly heads to five or six. Some months afterwards we got another letter from my uncle, asking why 'Si didn't come. This question remained unanswered for a long time. It came to our ears though, after many years, that when 'Si got as far as Cincinnati and found himself on the upper side of the Ohio river, the idea struck him that Canada was a mighty pleasant place to live in, and, having a sum of money in hand, he concluded to make the trip. We made inquiry, but neither I nor any member of the family ever saw the fugitive again. Nor would we ever have heard from him, perhaps, except for the article in the London *Times*."

"When did Mrs. Stowe meet him?" asked one of the audience.

"I can only conjecture as to that. As I have said, 'Si was a keen, sharp fellow, and I don't imagine he stayed in Canada very long. He had a considerable gift of speech, and was much given to exhorting among the negroes. There was very little, as you have seen, in his real history upon

which to base Mrs. Stowe's conception of Uncle Tom, but he was sharp enough to tell a story that would sound well, and I don't believe he would scruple to do so. I know that the yarn he told the *Times* reporter was full of inaccuracies, to say the least. Thus, he said that his master, meaning my uncle, was a wild, passionate man, given to sprees, and that he ('Si) often had to tide the old gentleman over the difficulties incident to a debauch. This was pure fiction. He said, also, that my uncle sold him away, which, of course, was not so, because, if for no other reason, 'Si didn't give him a chance to do so. I think it likely that he met Mrs. Stowe somewhere in the States, probably in Ohio, while she was getting material for her book, and told her just about such a story as she needed for her leading character. He was equal to it."

"What was he doing in England?"

"Well, as nearly as I can make out, he went over there to lecture and 'star' the country with the very laudable purpose of making a living. He knew, doubtless, of the popularity of Mrs. Stowe's book in England, and that the nature of association with its history would be enough to bring him into prominence."

"Where is he now?" was asked.

"I don't know positively," the Judge answered, "but I have been told that he died in Ohio some years ago."

HE WOULD BE VERY OLD

if he were alive now—early ninety, I should imagine."

The judge pushed back his chair at this point and insisted that his story was over.

Judge Riley, aside from his association with the historic Henson, is himself a character of no ordinary interest. He is a well-preserved man of 75, sharp-featured, gray-bearded and keen-eyed. He talks with fluency and has an unbounded fund of anecdotes covering more than a half century of varied experience. He passed through St. Louis in 1837, and after roaming over the State for some years, took up his abode in New Madrid county, where he has lived ever since. The war swept away his slave property and the greater part of a large estate. He is still the owner of 1,500 good acres, the cultivation of which he superintends in person. He sat for one term as Judge of the New Madrid county court.

Of his family, which once numbered thirteen, six still live. Of them, four sons are at home on the farm. One, H. C. Riley, was chairman of the Congressional convention in the Fourteenth district, which distinguished itself by balloting 479 times without a choice. Camden Riley, another son, was killed at Mt. Dallas in Northern Georgia, while serving as colonel of the First Missouri—the famous Bowen's—regiment.

THE DAVIESS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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The Daviess County Historical Society is open to all who have an interest in the history of Daviess County, the Green River Valley, or Kentucky. The Society meets on the Fourth Friday of each month from September through May. Most meetings are held at the Owensboro Area Museum on South Griffith Avenue.

Monthly programs of the Daviess County Historical Society are open to all, and non-members are encouraged to attend and participate.

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