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The Editor's Page

We start the tenth year of publication of the *Daviess County Historical Quarterly* with three articles reflecting various aspects of the county's economic and political development. Francie Yates wrote her study of the 1972 presidential election while a student at KWC. Her paper summarizes what was one of the most divisive and controversial elections in the county's history since the Civil War, and puts into focus some of the political forces which have shaped politics throughout Kentucky.

Today Stanley is a small suburban community, but at the turn of the century it was a microcosm of the economic life of the county, combining agriculture and industry with retailing and passenger travel. The vital role of the railroad in creating and sustaining, and ultimately weakening, towns like Stanley makes an important statement about the changing economic life of the United States in the twentieth century.

Finally we include a description of the Ames Buggy Company as it existed in 1905. This plant, the largest privately-owned buggy and carriage manufacturing establishment in the United States, produced some 40 styles of passenger vehicles. The recent acquisition of an Ames Buggy Co. product by the Owensboro Area Museum is a real cause for celebration.

Two Democratic Parties:
The Election of 1972 in Daviess County
by Francie Yates

A characteristic distinguishing the American from other party systems is the failure of our two major parties to adopt ideological or programatic statements of belief.¹

Weak party organizations and loose ideological or programatic commitments lead to widespread ticket splitting in the United States. American voters are increasingly making voting choices that disregard party affiliation, relying instead on personal appeals, candidate programs, and responses to campaign tactics. The increase in ticket splitting may merely reflect what some believe to be a traditional streak of antipartyism in the American people. Even though many citizens express a preference for one or the other of the parties their actual behavior in polling booths suggests a degree of fickleness unmatched in most other life experiences.²

In 1972 the ideological divisions were indeed the cause of the dynamic split in the Democratic Party. This was shown on the national level as well as the local level in Daviess County. The Republican Presidential incumbent, Richard M. Nixon, won one of the largest landslide victories in history over his Democratic contender, Senator George McGovern. One of the main factors behind the overwhelming victory was the internal division of the Democratic Party. This all began during the nomination process.

Since Senator George McGovern was looked at as such a liberal candidate he did not have the party support he needed to win the election. In general, the McGovern supporters or McGovernites, as they were called, were not the usual party leaders. McGovern's astonishingly effective grass-roots organization won him the Democratic nomination but challenged the traditional Democratic powerbase of big labor and big state politicians. The party split was nurtured by the party's traditional and liberal wings.

Although there were many issues facing the voters in 1972, it was McGovern's plan of immediate withdrawal of United States troops in Vietnam that won him the greatest support. There were some that supported him on such issues as his reform of the tax system and his proposed cuts in Pentagon spending, but the candidate's support in Daviess County was aimed at his efforts to end the war in Vietnam.

A Peace Committee had already been formed in Daviess County in response to the "Harrisburg Eight" trial.

The Harrisburg incident involved an organization called the "East Coast Company to Save Lives." The group, which was led by Philip and Daniel Berrigan, had allegedly planned to blow up the heating systems in the Federal Building in Washington, D.C. and to kidnap Henry Kissinger in protest to the United States involvement in Vietnam. On January 1, 1971 an indictment was handed down against six members on charges of conspiracy. A later indictment was handed down on February 2, 1972. This indictment contained eight more charges which included conspiring to destroy files and property of the Federal Government and the Selective Service System and to possess illegal explosives.³

There were two brothers from Owensboro that attended the jury selection in Harrisburg and upon their return home, Clark and Philip Field began forming their own Peace Committee in protest of the war. The committee, known as the 40 Day Peace Committee, stated in their by-laws that their purpose was, "to use all available resources in furthering the cause of peace on every level of society, local, national and international."⁴

The Committee held marches where they marched for peace, prayer vigils where they prayed for peace and some members even fasted in order to gain attention to their cause. The Committee which was led by the Field brothers, who were both Catholic priests at the time, decided that the best way to get peace and to stop the war was to beat Richard Nixon and to have a government in power that was in favor of peace. This government they felt could be led by George McGovern.⁵

This is when the Peace Committee began their active campaigning for McGovern. Aloma Dew, an avid McGovern campaigner, since recalls, "the group did everything that they could. This included going from door to door handing out literature, making numerous phone calls and actually marching and picketing."⁶

It was not long before McGovern's primary support in Owensboro was the 40 Day Peace Committee. Soon after the primary two factions emerged in the Daviess County Democratic Party: Huddleston vs. McGovern.⁷

1972 was also a senatorial election year in the state of Kentucky. A highly contested race developed between the Democratic candidate, Walter "Dee" Huddleston and Republican Louis Nunn. This election seemed to attract more support from the local Democratic Party than did the presidential race. More of the "party regulars" in Daviess County devoted their time to campaign for Huddleston rather than giving their support to the Democratic presidential candidate. This philosophy of supporting a candidate in which the hierarchy of the party felt was more likely to win was apparent in Daviess County. This was a reflection of the national Democratic Party.

Historically, the national party organizations have not been able to exercise control over those party units located at the sub-national levels. Since responsibility and authority were not readily placed, the state and local party units have often gone their own separate way, paying little heed to the wishes of national party leaders or groups.⁸

In a strenuous party primary between two or more candidates seeking the party's nomination the scars that result can be lasting and devastating. A primary is, after all, a family fight and can leave wounds that are difficult to heal and bitterness that is impossible to assuage.⁹

Daviess County is generally regarded as a Democratic County with Democrats outranking Republicans 4-1 in registration.¹⁰

It is tendency in Kentucky for voters to register Democrat so they can 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 the local level, while personalities and issues have greater importance when national officers are involved. The issues all matter more than party loyalty in Kentucky.¹¹

These statements were a fact in the national election in 1972. The Democratic Party in Daviess County seemed to be a split party. One faction was in support of the Presidential candidate and the other faction was more involved in the senatorial campaign. This could be viewed as a response to the split in the National Democratic Party on behalf of the party's candidate, George McGovern. McGovern did not have the powerful party politicians behind his efforts in seeking election.

J.R. Miller, who was the State Party Chairman in Kentucky, said, "The McGovern people, who were a minority in Kentucky, resented the fact that the hierarchy of the Democratic Party were going to support someone else rather than McGovern. This is why they did not involve themselves within the structure of the party organization."¹²

It was evident in the local newspaper advertisements of the split in the local party. During the week prior to the election, there were several more Huddleston ads than McGovern ads. There was seldom ever a McGovern ad next to a Huddleston ad. This was probably done in order to separate the two even more. Even the Republican senatorial candidate, Louis Nunn, played upon the split in the party by stating in one of his ads, "a vote for Huddleston is also a vote for McGovern". One could generalize from this statement that Nunn was using McGovern to try to tarnish Huddleston's image. There were probably many votes for Nixon that were only cast as votes against McGovern. There was another advertisement that read, "Teachers for McGovern". This ad listed several area teachers and many Kentucky Wesleyan College professors as supporters of McGovern. The ad specifically mentioned drug abuse by teenagers and McGovern's drug abuse program. This

seemed to be an example of the type of McGovern supporters; those people who were idealistic and always fighting for a cause. Another ad during the pre-election week showed Governor Wendell Ford giving his support to Huddleston, who in turn previously supported Ford in his race for governor. There was never an ad in support for McGovern endorsed by any of the local politicians. The advertisements that McGovern did receive were usually quite smaller than the Huddleston advertisements. This may have been due to the fact that the McGovern supporters lacked the funds the Huddleston supporters had.

The conflict then began to rise within the local party. At the Democratic headquarters, located on 118 Allen Street, it seemed that the people for McGovern and the Huddleston people were actually there for two entirely different reasons. The McGovern organizers ran their campaign and the Huddleston supporters ran their campaign independently upon one another.

Clark Field stated, "I believe we embarrassed the other party members. We were a younger more politically naive group who were much more ideological in our views. We were for McGovern and what he stood for. We were much more into issues and personalities. The other party members didn't take us seriously and looked down upon us."¹³

J.R. Miller said, "Senator McGovern did not really ask for support in Kentucky. It was not that Huddleston or any other member of the Democratic Party turned their back on McGovern but they did not really embrace the candidate either. Nor did McGovern embrace Huddleston. It was more the idea of the McGovern people at the national level telling the State Party that if we need you we will call you and they never did. This is why we devoted our efforts to strengthening the Democratic Party by trying to elect a Democrat to the United States Senate."¹⁴

When asked if Huddleston did not want to be affiliated with McGovern because it may hurt his own campaign, Miller replied, "No, that was not the reason at all." But he did feel that the McGovern campaign was a "losing thing" from the beginning.¹⁵

Clark Field stated that, "J.R. Miller was the State Democratic Chairman and should have supported the Democratic candidate whether he had been asked or not. It was his job to support the candidate of the people. The people had spoken in nominating George McGovern and it was their responsibility to carry that support into the election."¹⁶

Philip Field stated, "The 'old guard' politicians made sure that they called the headquarters the 'Democratic Headquarters' rather than the McGovern Headquarters. When they could, they did not publically mention McGovern's name."¹⁷

The idea that there were many mistakes involved in the McGovern campaign from the beginning led the party regulars away from the candidate. Many Democrats looked at McGovern as being a strong liberal who did not fit the National Party image or what the party stood for. One major incident that made a negative impact on the candidate was the Eagleton affair.

In choosing his first running mate, McGovern chose Senator Thomas F. Eagleton. It was later discovered that Eagleton was treated for psychiatric problems. This led to widespread scandal which in turn led to Eagleton's decline of the offer. It was this affair that left McGovern scarred early in the campaign. Many people felt that there should have been a closer check into Eagleton's past history before McGovern offered him the position on the ticket. This harmed McGovern in many of the voter's eyes.

It was also McGovern's view on the war people were unhappy about. There was the opinion held by many that the war, right or wrong, we should still back America. Some people felt that McGovern was not a powerful man who was able to lead the nation in good or bad times.

J.R. Miller said, "McGovern was not a qualified individual to run the country. He was not a man to take a stand and stick with it. He did not have the depth or understanding of the international or domestic problems of the nation."¹⁸

With the opposing views on the candidate the Democratic Party in Daviess County remained split. It was quite evident at the headquarters and other party events that there were two separate factions of the organization.

Philip Field recalls, "At the county convention there were many more McGovern supporters than the 'old guard' politicians and their supporters. When the starting time of the convention approached the door of the court room was left open instead of being shut like it was supposed to have been. This was due to the fact that the 'old guard' politicians were trying to bring in more of their people. We (the McGovern supporters) kept telling Wendell Ford, who was running the convention, that this was unfair. He ignored us and the convention was delayed about half an hour. During this time they did get many more of their group to show up."¹⁹

It was events like this that added to the conflict between the party. Richard "Smitty" Taylor, who was then campaign manager for Huddleston in Daviess County, recalled finding mock ballots at the Democratic Headquarters. These ballots were printed on posterboard and in big letters they read: Nixon and Huddleston. He said he immediately tore them up but this was the general idea down at the headquarters.²⁰

During public campaigning Huddleston stated that he was hacking McGovern. During a visit to Kentucky Wesleyan College, before the election, Huddleston said, "I have endorsed Senator McGovern since the night he was nominated and I have said so publicly since then. I do not make any bones about Senator McGovern. I support him, but I do not agree with every proposal he has made."²¹

Huddleston admitted that he had not actually campaigned for McGovern adding that, "there is no sense in losing a Senate race to campaign for someone else."²²

This statement leads one to believe that Huddleston and his supporters did not want to be associated with the candidate because they felt it would lower their chances of victory.

The Saturday before election day the Daviess County McGovern-Shriver Campaign sponsored a "Bandwagon Express" motorcade which visited eight communities in the area and concluded with a rally at the Daviess County High School that evening.

At the rally, J.R. Miller delivered what seemed to be a conciliatory speech. Miller admitted that he was not for McGovern in the state primary but he was doing more for McGovern in his own way than anyone else in Kentucky. He went on to add that each Democrat would have a "campaign of their own" when they went to the polls. He then stated that he believed that they would "bite the bullet and pull the Democratic lever" which included a vote for McGovern.²³

This speech seemed to be a contradiction to what J.R. Miller earlier started but he was the State Party Chairman and spoke upon their behalf.

On November 7, 1972 the voters went to the polls. Nationwide McGovern lost by nearly 18 million votes. He carried only Maine and the District of Columbia. Statewide he lost by approximately 300,000 votes and in Daviess County by over 9,000 votes.²⁴

This loss was one that was largely projected especially by the Huddleston supporters, who in turn won the race over Louis Nunn. Huddleston carried the county by 2,500 votes and over 35,000 votes statewide.²⁵

Even on the night of the election a split could still be seen between the two party factions. Of course there was both joy and sadness at the Democratic Headquarters that night. Joy from the fact that there shall be a new Democratic Senator from Kentucky and sadness because we would not have a Democratic President over the next four years.

Clark Field recalls, "Many of the younger ideological supporters really cried hard that night. There was just an overwhelming feeling of defeat. Everyone had worked so hard to have it all over so fast."²⁶

Although there were victory parties for the Huddleston team none of the McGovernites were in attendance. Down to the last few minutes of the election the party remained divided. The election held no great surprises for anyone but it did shatter that last bit of hope for the McGovernites in ever getting their candidate in office.

In the year 1972 one saw a split in the Democratic Party in Daviess County as well on the national level. There are many answers as to why this split occurred. Mostly it was a combination of elements.

The voters in this area, regardless of party affiliation, cast their votes on the conservative level. The election of 1972 may have turned out differently if the party split had not been so great. Even though there is such a greater number of registered Democrats in the county, one can rest assured that the vote in a national election will be in favor of the more conservative candidate. This was exactly the situation in 1972. Party affiliation really had little to do with the final results.

ENDNOTES

1. Robert J. Huckshorn, *Political Parties in America*, (Monterey, California: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company 1984), p. 14.
2. *Ibid.*
3. Ruthe Pfisterer Holmberg, "Picket By Day, Pray By Night: The Story of the 40 Day Peace Committee", *Daviess County Historical Quarterly* (July 1983); p. 64-5.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 65.
5. Interview with Clark Field, November 22, 1985.
6. Interview with Aloma Dew, November 21, 1985.
7. Holmberg, p. 68.
8. Huckshorn, p. 87.
9. Huckshorn, p. 106.
10. Owensboro Messenger Inquirer, November 5, 1972.
11. Michael W. Richeson, "Daviess County, a Republican Stronghold?", *Daviess County Historical Quarterly*; p. 61.
12. Interview with J.R. Miller, November 21, 1985.
13. Interview with Clark Field.
14. Interview with J.R. Miller.
15. Interview with J.R. Miller.
16. Interview with Clark Field.
17. Interview with Philip Field, November 22, 1985.
18. Interview with J.R. Miller.
19. Interview with Philip Field.
20. Interview with Richard S. Taylor.

21. Owensboro Messenger Inquirer, November 3, 1972. Section B, p. 1.
22. *Ibid.*
23. Art Kaul, "Miller, Bendel Stump City To Urge McGovern Election", Messenger Inquirer, November 5, 1972.
24. Richeson, p. 61.
25. *Ibid.*
26. Interview with Clark Field.

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The Stanley Freight-Rate Cases
by Lee A. Dew

Northwestern Daviess County was the area of the county which was settled slowly, as people moved into the region in the years before the Civil War. The area was low and swampy, with many ponds and was heavily forested, which made the region a great hunting ground but which discouraged settlement. Pioneers preferred the cooler, better drained hilly areas to the east and south of Owensboro to the mosquito-infested lowlands.

The Henderson road ran through the region, providing some transportation, but the main avenues of commerce were the rivers. The Ohio bounded the region on the north, while the Green, running from Delaware to the Henderson County line, formed the western boundary.

By the time of the publication of the *History of Daviess County* . . . in 1883 this region had become sufficiently settled to be designated as a voting precinct, called Oakford Precinct from a village on the banks of the Ohio. Settlement in the region was still sparse, but growing. In 1864 the precinct counted only 52 votes in the presidential election of that year, three for Abraham Lincoln and 49 for his opponent, George B. McClellan. By 1876 the population had increased substantially, and the election of that year attracted 218 voters who supported the Democratic candidate Samuel J. Tilden over the Republican Rutherford B. Hayes by a vote of 162 to 56.

Considerable drainage work was begun to open the land for agriculture, and the *History* noted that there were "several fine farms" along the Green and Ohio rivers. Much of the population, however, was congregated along the banks of the Ohio in the area called Buzzard's Roost from the many birds of that species which nested there. "Most of the people along the Ohio were rough and indolent," the *History* observed, adding that "Most of their time was spent in hunting, and chopping cord-wood to supply steamboats traversing the Ohio. A great share of their money was spent for whiskey." Other hindrances to settlement in this region, the book noted, were the many wild cattle and hogs in the region, and the prevalence of milk-sickness, a disease caused by drinking milk from cattle who had grazed on snake-root, a weed found in abundance in forested areas.

Two towns were found in Oakford Precinct by 1883. The first was Birk City, founded by Joseph A. Birk in 1857. By 1883 Birk City boasted three stores, a blacksmith shop, a tobacco factory, the Eagle Distillery and bonded warehouse, a post office (established in 1861) and a population of 200. Grissom's Landing, located on the Ohio River some nine miles below Owensboro, was founded by Alfred Grissom, who settled in the region in 1856. Grissom's Landing later became the

site from the Eagle Distillery, moved there by T.J. Monarch, and developed into a rather prosperous little town, which, by 1883, consisted of two stores, a hotel, post office and U.S. Express Company agency.

The first churches in the area included a union church, built in 1856 by the Methodists and Presbyterians in the Oakford neighborhood, who in 1882 erected a new building to serve their growing congregation. A Baptist church was organized in 1876 at Birk City by the Rev. D.E. Yeiser. A Methodist circuit included Birk City, and occasionally a Methodist minister would also preach to this congregation. St. Peter's Catholic Church was built in 1873 at a cost of "about \$4,000" at a place called Bernard Hill, and in 1883 served a congregation of "about sixty families."

But it was whiskey that determined much of the settlement of the Oakford neighborhood. T.J. Monarch, the patriarch of the extensive Monarch clan of distillers in Daviess County, built his first distiller in 1859 at Oakford, which was located on the banks of the Ohio River in extreme Western Daviess County near the French Islands. There he began making what he advertised as "pure old-fashioned fire copper whiskey." He then opened a distillery in Birk City, called Eagle Distillery, and later built another, much more elaborate facility at Grissom's Landing. He produced the "Old Tom Monarch" brand, which, it was claimed became "the synonym for the purest and most inspiring liquor."

By 1880 the Eagle Distillery at Grissom's was showplace. It was a three-story brick building located some 200 yards from the river, with a cupola on top which not only furnished a decoration for the roof but served as a ventilator for the entire structure. There was also an observatory in the cupola, and on top of the structure was a statue representing a giant golden eagle with wings extended. Beside this building was a 70-foot-tall brick smokestack.

On the front of the building was a triangular window which represented three barrel heads. On the top were the words "T.J. Monarch old fashion hand-made sour mash fire copper whiskey." The left barrel said "Eagle Distilling Co., registered distillery No. 8," and the right barrel, "Imperial hand-made sour mash whiskey." Each corner of the building was crowned with a large iron whiskey barrel surmounted by a jug. It was probably the most distinctive distillery ever built in Daviess County, and in 1890 it was sold to Richard Monarch for the then-unheard of sum of \$110,000.

But even as T.J. Monarch was completing his elaborate operation at Grissom's, with its traditional orientation toward the River and the steamboat lines which served as Monarch's outlet for his product, other

forces are at work to change the transportation picture of Daviess County and to open up Oakford Precinct as never before to exploitation and trade. The railroad was coming to northwestern Daviess.

The first proposals for a railroad linking Louisville and Evansville through Owensboro were made public in 1879, but it was not until 1886 that construction was completed on the stretch between Owensboro and Louisville, and trains began to operate. West of Owensboro the line stretched nearly arrow-straight after rounding the Bon Harbor Hills at Mattingly, heading for the bridge over the Green River at Spottsville. There were delays in completing the bridge, and it was not until March of 1889 that the line was fully operational, but trains were run as early as January, with a ferry service across the Green at Spottsville.

Even before the first scheduled trains were putting a shine on the new rails, farsighted people were planning to take advantage of the opportunities the railroad promised. A little notice appeared in the *Owensboro Messenger & Examiner* on December 6, 1888, buried in a column of local-interest items:

Mr. Nat Stanley is laying off a town at his place on the L., St. L. and T. railroad. Several houses are going up, and stores from Oakford and Grissom's will be moved to the new place. Mr. Stanley has hopes of considerable village as soon as the road gets into operation.

Soon a post office was established at Stanley Station, as the new settlement was popularly known, thus assuring that it would be a gathering-place for farmers who, in the days before rural free delivery of mail, had to come to the post office to pick up their letters and newspapers. Stores selling everything that the farmer and his wife might need on a day-to-day basis attracted shoppers, and merchants built residences along the dusty streets.

Fortunately Nat Stanley's farm had been located close to St. Peter's church, and this, too served as an attraction to settlers. By 1904, when the *Daviess County Souvenir* was published, Stanley Station boasted a public school, headed by Fleming Bowlds, principal and Clarence Bowlds, assistant. Fifty eight students were pictured in the *Souvenir*, smiling nervously for the photographer - many, probably, having their photograph taken for the first time.

The Stanley depot saw the arrival and departure of eight passenger trains daily in the years right before World War I, with three "through" trains daily in each direction between Louisville and Evansville, two of which went on to St. Louis, and a "local," which ran between Clover-

port and Henderson. True, the "varnish" trains did not always stop at Stanley, but the local and the Louisville-Evansville trains did, so that Stanley was connected by means of the shining rails to not only Louisville and Evansville, but to Owensboro and Henderson, and the other rail lines that served these towns and connected them with the rest of the nation.

The Stanley depot was the busiest place in town at "train time," with passengers arriving to board, relatives in buggies or wagons coming to meet arriving passengers, the "mail hack" bringing outgoing mail and picking up incoming letters and packages, the express wagon to pick up and deliver express shipments, and the town loafers and small boys, always attracted to the noise and excitement of the depot at arrival time. With the appearance of the train businessmen would check their watches to make sure it was "on time," and housewives might peer from their curtained windows to "check on" who might be boarding or getting off.

But if the passenger trains provided excitement for the people of Stanley, it was the freights that provided the vital link which tied the town's economy to the rest of the nation. The Stanley siding was the place where agricultural products would be loaded for shipment to market. Cars of wheat, corn, and hay would be shipped from Stanley, picked up by the "peddler" freights that passed through every day and collected cars from the small sidings along the line. Occasional cars of livestock, lowing cattle or squealing hogs on their way to slaughterhouses in Louisville or Evansville, would also be shipped from Stanley, as well as the products of the Eagle Distillery, still in business at Grissom's. And while the Eagle still shipped much of its whiskey in barrels by steamboat, some products were shipped by rail, carried to Stanley by horse teams and wagons. Incoming cars unloaded farm machinery, groceries, dry goods, and other supplies for the businessmen and farmers of the area, which in the years before World War I was now cleared and drained, and turned into the most prosperous and fertile agricultural region of the county. Cases of sardines, bags of coffee and barrels of sugar would be unloaded for the grocery store, shipped from wholesalers in Owensboro or Evansville, while the hardware merchant would send his wagon to the depot to pick up kegs of nails, lanterns, canning supplies, tinware, stoves, and other manufactured goods from the factories of Cincinnati or Pittsburgh.

But for the merchants and farmers who shipped goods into and out of Stanley, there was one major handicap - the freight rate system which was put into operation by the Louisville, St. Louis & Texas Railroad, and its successor, the Louisville, Henderson & St. Louis. Like many other small towns in America at the turn of the century, Stanley was a

one-railroad town, which meant that carrier had a monopoly of the rail traffic. This led to the contraction of freight rates which generally were higher than for other nearby towns that were served by competing lines.

The Interstate Commerce Commission had been established in 1887 with authority to regulate freight rates, and one of the main complaints heard before its courts involved discrimination against towns such as Stanley where shippers were charged more than in competitive towns which might involve a greater distance for the shipment. This long-haul/short-haul differential was illustrated in 1910, when the Dewey Brothers Company of Akron, Ohio, shipped a load of 40,000 pounds of distiller's dried grain from Stanley to Akron.

In a complaint filed on October 18, 1911, the company contended that the freight rate charged on this shipment was "unreasonable and unjustly discriminatory," and asked the Interstate Commerce Commission for appropriate reparation. The cost of the shipment was \$84, based upon a rate of 21 cents per 100 pounds, made up of the local rate of 4 cents from Stanley to Owensboro, and the sixth-class rate of 17 cents from Owensboro to Akron.

In the case of *Dewey Brothers Company v. Louisville, Henderson & St. Louis Railway Company et al.*, (25 I.C.C. 700), J.S. Dewey, representing his company, argued that not only was the rate between Stanley and Owensboro excessive, but that the rate from Owensboro to Akron of 17 cents per pound compared unfavorable with the rates between Henderson and Owensboro and Buffalo, New York, a greater distance, of only 15 cents per pound for the same class of commodities. Further, Dewey argued, the rate from Stanley to Philadelphia, a much greater distance, is 21½ cents, only one-half cent higher than the rate charged to Akron.

The Interstate Commerce Commission handed down its decision on January 7, 1913:

Upon consideration of all the facts and circumstances we are of the opinion and find that the rate of 21 cents charged on this shipment from Stanley to Akron was unreasonable and unjustly discriminatory to the extent that it exceeded 15 cents, which will be prescribed as a reasonable maximum rate for the future.

The Commission further ordered that the difference between what the Dewey Brothers Company paid and what the new rate would have charged, a total of \$24, be awarded as a reparation in the case, together

with interest from April 1, 1910. While this seems like an insignificant figure, hardly worth the involvement in a major action before the Interstate Commerce Commission, the impact of this case could be compounded by calculating the number of shipments of distiller's grain and other similar commodities which might be affected. Further, it was a major victory for the shippers of Stanley, who daily faced the costs of unfair freight-rate differentials.

This problem was addressed later in 1913 in the case of *Alton Board of Trade v. Chicago & Alton Railroad Company et al.* (28 I. C. C. 589). The Alton Board of Trade, a manufacturers and shippers organization complained to the Interstate Commerce Commission about rates levied on shipments of goods to Henderson and Owensboro, and intermediate stations west of Owensboro such as Stanley and Reed, in comparison to similar rates for shipments from competing firms in East St. Louis. It was "unduly prejudicial and discriminatory" to Alton businesses, the petition claimed "to grant East St. Louis a lower scale of rates." They also opposed the practice of granting lower rates for shipments to Louisville than to Henderson/Owensboro and vicinity, even though the distance to Louisville was greater.

The primary trade between Alton and Owensboro/Henderson was bottles, most of which were shipped to the various distilleries in Owensboro, and to the Eagle Distillery at Stanley. For many years the rates from East St. Louis and Alton to this territory were the same, but were raised in 1909 so that the rates from Alton increased by one cent per hundredweight. Freight between Alton and Owensboro to Stanley moved by the Chicago & Alton Railroad to East St. Louis, then by the L & N to Evansville, and by the Louisville, Henderson & St. Louis to Stanley or Owensboro.

The Commission, in considering this question, contended that since Alton was a greater distance from Owensboro than was East St. Louis, and since a haul from Alton required an additional railroad and thus additional switching charges, that the additional one-cent rate was justified. But then the Commission opened a new question, this one involving the differential in the rate to Henderson/St Stanley/Owensboro as compared to the rate to Louisville. This was what was known as a fourth-section question, involving the fourth section of the Interstate Commerce Law which prohibited the charging of more for a short haul than for a longer haul.

In its ruling the Commission denied the petition by the Alton Board of Trade to lower the rate from Alton to Henderson/Owensboro, but stated the rule that the rates to the two Kentucky points should not exceed the rates applicable to Louisville from Alton. This meant that while the rates were not lowered, at least a "ceiling" was put on the rate for whiskey and other bottles so that the distillers of the Owensboro area

would be put on a par with their competitors in the Louisville area when it came to the prices they had to pay for bottles shipped from Alton.

These were major victories for distillery interests of Daviess County because, over the long run, it meant that they would be put in a more competitive position regarding the costs of doing business, since a significant part of their overhead involved expenses for freight, both in the importation of the products necessary to do business and the exportation of their various products and by-products.

The Dewey Brothers case and the Alton case also encouraged the filing of yet another complaint which would result in a decision of major importance, not only to the distillery industry in Western Kentucky, but to industrial and manufacturing firms in general in the small towns - the one-railroad towns - of America.

The Eagle Distillery, Inc., of Stanley, was a major consumer of the many items necessary to produce whiskey, including barrels, hottles, corks, labels, bungs, glass stoppers, packing materials, nails, and hags. They shipped whiskey in hottles and in barrels and also distiller's dried grain. They were by far the main customer of the L H & St. L railroad's freight sidings at Stanley. On June 11, 1914, the Eagle Distillery filed a complaint with the Interstate Commerce Commission challenging "rates on numerous commodities used in the distilling business from various points to Stanley, and the rates on its products from Stanley to practically all points in the United States." The company sought, the complaint contended, "the same basis in shipping east as is given Henderson, and on western shipments the same as is accorded Owensboro."

The distillery noted that it had Owensboro rates on some products, such as malt and grain from Minneapolis, Chicago, Indianapolis and other points, and an Owensboro rate on bottles from Olney, Ill., "from which point . . . complainant received a considerable portion of its bottles." While rail rates on imported commodities from most points, such as barrels and glassware, were bigger to Stanley, the Commission noted, the distillery received "a substantial portion of its material" by steamboat rather than by rail."

The primary issue in the case of *Eagle Distillery, Incorporated, v. Louisville, Henderson & St. Louis Railway Company et al.* (82 I. C. C. 195), became the company's contention that its outbound rates were discriminatory and put it in an unfavorable position when competing with other distilleries. These rates showed a substantial difference in costs. To Boston, for example, the Owensboro rate for whiskey in barrels was 45-½ cents per hundredweight, while from Stanley the rate was 48 cents. Dried grain to Chillicothe, Ohio, was 16 cents from Owensboro and 17 from Stanley. These rates were calculated by adding

an "arbitrary rate" of 2-½ cents per 100 pounds on carload lots of whiskey and one cent per 100 pounds on grain to the Owensboro rate. The fundamental issue, as stated by the Commission, was the question of "whether higher rates on whiskey and distiller's dried grain from Stanley than from Owensboro and Henderson constitute unlawful discrimination against Stanley."

In its decision the Commission cited an earlier case, *Commercial Club of Omaha v. C. & N. W. Ry. Co.*, 71 I. C. C. 386, 404, in which they held that "not every inequality in rates constitutes a violation of the law." Preferences and prejudices in rate-making, this case held "is forbidden only when it is unjust." The Commission then noted the distillery's proximity to the Ohio River and its use of the river to carry its products. They also cited the "lower labor costs and taxes" which the Stanley location afforded the company as compared to its competitors in more urban areas.

The conclusion was foregone. The decision reiterated the contention that a claim of discrimination "must show that the circumstances and conditions with respect to transportation at the respective points are substantially the same," and noted that in this case the record failed to establish that the Stanley rates were "unduly prejudicial." The complaint was dismissed.

The Eagle Distillery had failed to prove that its business was being injured by the rates, and, in fact, the record showed that the distillery's business increased during the period immediately preceding the filing of the complaint. But other forces were at work which would have a much greater impact on the Eagle Distillery. The prohibition movement had gone beyond the "saloon-smashing" of Carrie Nation and was becoming a major political force which would be successful, five years later, in securing the passage of the nineteenth amendment and the accompanying Volstead Act, which spelled doom for distilleries throughout the United States.

But there were broader implications to the Eagle Distillery case. Most disturbing to scholars of the work of the Interstate Commerce Commission during this period is the apparent subjectivity of the process. Rates could be made equitable with Owensboro on grains and malt, but not a whiskey or distiller's grains. The Commission noted that of the commodities shipped by Eagle, "79 percent went to places having the Owensboro rate," but they would not agree to make this rate "official."

The Commission seemed to be saying that to be competitive, an industry would be better off to be located in an urban area with more than one railroad or route alternative, while industries in little towns like

Stanley were, by their very location, put into a less competitive position.

Several extrapolations are possible from this decision. The most obvious one is the belief which the Commission seemed to legislate in this case that industries should concentrate in urban centers. The second is a result of the first, that decisions such as the Eagle Distillery case were an ingredient in the decline of "small-town" industries, with the resultant deterioration of the economies of small towns at the expense of larger cities. A further result would then be the deterioration of the farm economy, as supporting businesses, dependent on the trade of the industrial workers, would decline, making the small towns and farmers of the neighborhood more dependent on nearby cities for their retail needs. All of these processes were at work in Daviess County, as the economy of the area became increasingly dominated by Owensboro during the 1910-1930 period with the result that many of the small towns of the county became "bedroom" communities, with little retail activity.

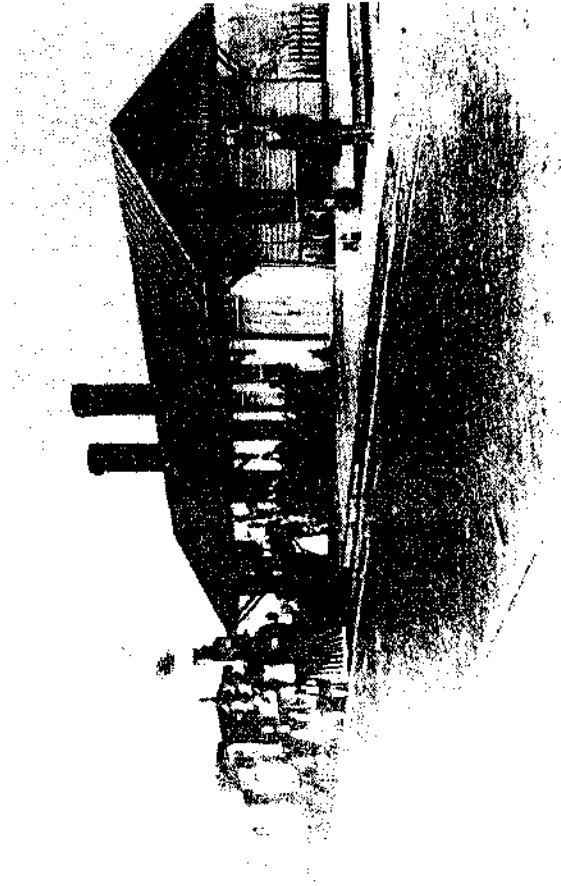
On a broader scale the Eagle Distillery case was another in a series of decisions by the I.C.C. which pointed toward the growing concentration of railroad freight business into the more profitable areas and away from those stations which loaded fewer cars per year. This was the first step in a process of retrenchment which left smaller communities with little or no freight service.

With the end of passenger service in the 1950's the railroads were then able to abandon the small-town depots, and concentrate freight agents and switch-engine services in the larger yards along the line. Thus the Eagle Distillery case, in a very small way, was prophetic in its implication that railroad services should be concentrated in cities and with the resultant decline of railroad services to rural and small town America and to towns on branch lines.

Further the Eagle Distillery case is an example of the essentially arbitrary and capricious nature of the federal regulatory process. So long as regulatory bodies such as the Interstate Commerce Commission could subjectively determine what was "unjust" discrimination or "undue" prejudice in freight-rate cases, the ultimate determination of the rate-making process was the whim of the commissioners - hardly a comforting precedent for a future in which the regulatory powers of government, both federal and state, would be expanded far beyond the wildest imagination of the men who sat on the Interstate Commerce Commission in the years before World War I.

Thus the Stanley freight cases become more than just obscure footnotes to the workings of the Interstate Commerce Commission, but become a paradigm for the study of the role of the government as regulator of the economic system and as an active force in shaping the

urban industrial economy which has marked the economic history of the United States in the twentieth century. In this new economic world, born of the industrial revolution and soon to be immensely expanded with the coming of the Great War, little towns like Stanley and little industries such as the Eagle Distillery were already obsolete, representatives of the economic world of the nineteenth century, rather than the twentieth.



Passenger trains like this one served to link Stanley to the outside world at the turn of the century, while bringing in mail, express and small freight shipments.

Editor's note: The following appeared in a 1905 issue of *The Owensboro Messenger*, and reflects the pride which the entire city felt in one of its premier industries. The fame of the Ames Buggy spread beyond the boundaries of the United States, and this factory was responsible for a substantial share of the economic prosperity which Owensboroans enjoyed in the early years of the first decade of the twentieth century. Today an Ames Buggy occupies a place of honor at the Owensboro Area Museum, a tribute to the men and women who played such a vital part in this important industry.

"NO LUCK IN SUCCESS," A Look At The Ames Buggy Co.

**What the Largest Buggy
Manufacturer in the Country Says.**

**Distinctive Features of the Big Establishment of
F. A. Ames & Co. and How It Has
Grown in Fourteen Years.**

A time-honored saying of world-wide application is that one half the world knows not how the other half lives. If the act of "living" be understood to embrace the very important part of it called work, it is not less true. The city people study but superficially the life and work of the farmer, and very seldom does the farmer concern himself about the daily labors of his city brother, unless as his imagination may tell him of the more comfortable homes, the neater surroundings, better clothing, etc. Great mills, mines, factories and stores are passed by with only a casual glance and the hasty passer-by hurries on in partial or entire ignorance of the many lessons of varied kinds that a careful study of any one of those great hives of industry would afford.

These truths were recently impressed upon a *Messenger* representative, when visiting several of Owensboro's great plants of various kinds, and the resolution to dispel at least a part of this indifference, if not ignorance, by presenting a few of the interesting features connected with local enterprises, was formed.

One of the greatest manufacturing plants in Owensboro is the carriage factory of F. A. Ames & Co.; at Third and St. Elizabeth streets. With the buildings recently erected the plant now covers more than half the block on which it stands. The floor space is equivalent to a flat 400 feet square or about 150,000 square feet. The buildings are four stories high and below the first floor is a basement room covering large space.

It was on this lot that Mr. Ames opened his first carriage shop. He came to Owensboro from Pittsburg, where he had received his training in carriage building. He thought at first only of supplying the local trade, but very soon his buggies were in demand in the neighboring counties and the business grew until now, only fourteen years after the start, he sends his vehicles regularly to several points in Germany, South Africa, the West Indies, all the Southern states and occasionally to South America.

Various traveling agents are constantly on the road making sales, and each of these have their definite territory. The chief of these are the following with their territory: J. B. Foley, Kentucky; H. A. Atwater, Georgia and Alabama; H. H. Prince, Virginia and the two Carolinas; E. W. McMannon, Tennessee and part of Alabama; C. W. Roberts, Missouri and Kansas, and W. A. Underhill, Illinois. In addition to the headquarters which each of these agents maintains in the principal city of his territory, Mr. Ames has branch houses at Dallas, Kansas City and Havana. In regard to the latter house it is interesting to note that the ink was scarcely dry on the Spanish-American treaty before the Ames vehicles were pushed into Cuba and a branch house established at Havana in charge of the enterprising American managers, J. H. Piercy & Co.

Fads in Buggies.

The easiest way to distinguish the products of this mammoth plant is to speak of them as "pleasure vehicles." It would be confusing to give a specific name for each of the different kinds, of which there are forty. In fact the styles and makes are so numerous that the nomenclature of the makers has been exhausted and only numbers are now used to designate many of the different styles.

Fashion rules in vehicles as in matters of dress and the alert manufacturer is quick to gratify it, even though sometimes it be whimsical. This leads to a great variety of sizes and shapes of vehicles and shades of varnish and stripe colors. One of the latest finishes is in aluminum, put on in powdered aluminum. Another, and more expensive finish, is in silver. Even unalloyed gold is used for the striping of certain high class work. These latter grades are often sold and such finishes are popular for exhibitions.

The latest fad in vehicles is known as a "covert wagon." It is a high, narrow, single-seated rig, finished in dainty colors. On all fancy work rubber tires are now demanded.

Few, even of those who purchase and use these fine vehicles, know the amount of painting and rubbing to which they are treated. Not less than twelve coats of paint and varnish are put on many of these. They are treated to several rubbings done by specialists who use the natural lava

stone first and later a finer-fibered rubbing stone made from the volcano's discharge, ground and reformed. The last of these rubbings is done chiefly to remove the irregularities caused by the finest paint brushes used. These little ridges on the surface of the wood are invisible to or unperceived by the ordinary eye, but the man who does this delicate work has both sight and feeling so trained that he quickly detects them.

It is no exaggeration to say that of the 125 buggies turned out daily every one is worked upon to some extent by each of the 250 employees; so it may be truthfully said that it takes 250 men to make a buggy. The picturesqueness of this statement is somewhat enhanced by the fact that every vehicle has about it certain parts which pass through a stitching or sewing room in which only good-looking young ladies are employed.

No Labor Troubles.

It would hardly be surmised that in institution of this magnitude could be run by other than well-paid and contented employees. This reasonable conclusion is correct, but it is correct with special emphasis in this, that the factory has not shut down, except three or four times to take an inventory, in the fourteen years of its history, nor has there ever been a strike or any "labor troubles" of any kind in all this time.

The highest wages is paid to men who do what is known as "piece work." Here skill and speed count and their possessor is often rewarded with \$35 per week. The lowest wages is paid to mere beginners, who are usually boys or youths, but the average pay for the whole force is close to \$12. Payment is made every two weeks and the average pay roll is \$3,000.

The office force consists of six men and two ladies. Gale B. Smith, who is in charge of the bookkeeping and credit and financial department, came here four years ago from Utica, N. Y. O. H. Brooks, formerly of Fort Wayne, Ind., has been in charge of shipping and entering orders for four years; W. H. Beaty came from Nashville, Tenn., and has had charge of the business correspondence for five years. The chiefs of the various departments, with time of service, are: Ferdinand Wagner, blacksmith shop, ten years; Chas. Drager, wood-workers, four years; C. E. Horn, painting, four years; Frank Horstman, trimming, four years; Henry Gress, burnishing, eight years; Charles Nicholas, Inspector of finished vehicles, ten years; C. H. Wilkie, in charge of assembling department, seven years; R. L. Puckett, crating, eight years; Wm. Gonder, rough-stuff and varnish-rubbing, seven years. J. E. Cruse has charge of local collections.

The ever-watchful and always present head of the whole concern is Mr. F. A. Ames, who is the sole proprietor of the business conducted under the title of F. A. Ames & Co. He "knows his men" whenever he meets them and is always pleased when they can be advanced in their various departments. He offers inducements to his men to be inventive and ingenious and has been benefited by suggestions and inventions of his workmen that tended to economize time and labor.

Welfare of Employees.

A notable feature in the history of this great industry in the fact that no adult worker in it has died during its fourteen years of successful operation. This does not apply to deaths by violence only, but also to deaths resulting from normal illness. It is even affirmed by those familiar with the facts that the ingredients of some of the paints and varnishes, especially the latter have a salutary effect upon the lungs and the system generally, as they consist of various gums and wholesome vegetable substances.

Closely connected with this sanitary phase of the workmen's life is the fact, of which Mr. Ames is quite proud, that his men are invariably sober. Not one has lost his place owing to drunkenness. This, too, is a condition not the result of any coercion or organized effort, but seems to be spontaneous. However, it is well known to all that drunkenness would not be tolerated any more than other vicious habits. Mr. Horstman, the foreman of the trimming department, has exerted a strong influence in this direction. He recently summed up his practice in this sententious sentence: "No, sir, we have no cigarette smoking or other ruinous foolishness around here."

A strong moral influence is also exerted in behalf of education. Boys are not encouraged to quit school for a "job." In emphasizing this Mr. Ames declared that a course through the grammar grades of a good school made a youth handle even rough lumber with greater skill and efficiency.

In the whole factory from 200 to 250 men are constantly employed. Many of these men have been with Mr. Ames for ten years and very few have been with him less than four years, except about fifty who were engaged when the plant was recently enlarged. Nearly all of them have their permanent homes in Owensboro and practically all of them, except the expert foremen, were born and reared in Owensboro, or in Daviess or adjoining counties. Many of them are married men of families. It will then be seen at once the importance of this vast business to the business and social interests of this section of the state.

The Making of a Buggy.

At present a vehicle's different parts are made up of elm, oak, ash, poplar and hickory. Formerly the hub was made of locust, then of oak, and now elm is used almost exclusively. This change was brought about because of the great scarcity of locust and suitable oak. In former days the hub was almost entirely of wood and that wood had to be of the best. Now, however, the hub is so banded and sheathed with iron that the elm hub is stronger and more durable than was the locust one. Large amounts of elm are used also for crating for shipment. The yearly amount for this purpose alone is not less than 300,000 feet.

Nearly all the lumber is bought from the local mill men and farmers and from \$75,000 to \$100,000 is paid out annually for this yield of the Kentucky forests. The only part of the vehicles not manufactured under the same roof is the wheels. These are bought of the Owensboro Wheel company.

A great elevator is safely operated in the center of the plant. Every department is easily accessible to this and transfers of rough parts and material from one department to another are made quickly and inexpensively. This matter of cheap transfer of material has been figured down to even the half-cent. A good illustration of this is seen in the alterations that are continually being made. One change now being made is the building of a track into the "drying room" so that the loaded car may be run into the drying room and left until this process is finished and then easily run to the planing department, thus saving the carrying that was formerly done, very laboriously, by hand.

"No Luck About Success."

It seems almost incredible to the uninitiated that a great plant like this, with every detail attended to so carefully, should be operated to make a buggy for as little as \$2 profit. However, as explained by Mr. Ames, what he is after is not the \$2 profit on one buggy, but the \$30,000 on the yearly output of 15,000 buggies.

This story might be prolonged indefinitely with interesting details about the various ingredients and fabrics used in the ornamentation and making comfortable of the vehicles. Their source and history are full of interest, but a conclusion can best be made here in the words of Mr. Ames, the sole proprietor of the largest carriage factory in the world owned by an individual. He said of his enterprise: "Only thoughtless people talk of luck. Luck suggests lack of law. Law rules everything. There is a reason for every result, a cause for every effect. Management and merit bring success in business. One is the fulcrum, the other is the lever. There is no luck about success. I have had good workers. They have used care, conscience and skill. That is all."

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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 Third Tuesday 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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William Northcutt Sweeney
(1831-1895)
by Jerry Long

One of the most prominent and influential lawyers and political figures in Western Kentucky during the last half of the 19th century was William N. Sweeney of Owensboro, Ky. William Northcutt Sweeney was born at Liberty, in Casey County, Ky., on 5 May 1832.¹ Of the fourth generation of his family in Kentucky, he was the son of Inel Sweeney & Obedience Edwards, a grandson of Charles Sweeney & Frances Shackelford and a great grandson of Moses Sweeney & Elizabeth Johnson. Moses Sweeney (c1734-1813), a native of Ireland, migrated from Amherst County, Va. to Lincoln County, Ky. about 1787. Charles Sweeney (1766-1853) was one of the first judges and sheriffs of Casey County, Ky. Joel Sweeney (1794-1869) for over 40 years served as the clerk of the county & circuit courts of Casey County, Ky.²

William N. Sweeney was reared in Liberty, Ky. and acquired his early education in the common schools there. He received further studies at Bethany College, in what is now West Virginia. At the age of 17 he began to study law with his father, Joel Sweeney. While in his father's office he served as deputy clerk of Casey County. He completed his legal studies under his brother-in-law, McDowell Fogle, of the Liberty bar;³ Fogle had married Emily Jane Sweeney in 1841.⁴ According to the *Biographical Directory of the American Congress 1774-1949* William N. Sweeney was admitted to the bar in 1853 at Liberty, Ky. and began his practice there.⁵

On 4 May 1853, one day before his 21st birthday, W. N. Sweeney first arrived in Owensboro. He came in the company of his mentor, McDowell Fogle (1815-1907).⁶ McDowell Fogle's father, Robert H. Fogle since 1849 had resided in Daviess County, just outside Owens-

boro, on the farm where Elmwood Cemetery is now located.⁷ Sweeney & Fogle had embarked on the trip merely for the sake of a visit, however, after arriving they decided to stay.⁸ In a biography of William N. Sweeney in the 1876 *Historical Atlas May of Daviess County, Ky.* it was written that "Owensboro...impressed him as a favorable point for starting out in his profession, and he afterward concluded to remain permanently."⁹

W.N. Sweeney on 31 May 1853 took the oaths required by law and was admitted to practice as a counselor of the law at the Daviess County bar.¹⁰ McDowell Fogle four months later, on 7 Sept. 1853, was admitted to the Daviess County bar.¹¹ For several months after this Sweeney & Fogle practiced jointly under the firm name of "Fogle & Sweeney".¹² McDowell Fogle's stay in Owensboro was brief, within the year he had returned to Liberty, Ky., where his practice established him as one of the foremost lawyers in his region. He was for several terms county attorney of Casey County and served two terms in the Kentucky Legislature (1855-57 & 1859-61) representing Casey & Russell Counties.¹³

At the Daviess County elections held on Monday, 7 Aug. 1854, William N. Sweeney was elected County Attorney. In the balloting he soundly outdistanced his opponent, Mitchell Calhoun.¹⁴ On the following Monday he took his oath of office and performed the duties of Daviess County Attorney through August 1858.¹⁵

His successful run for the office of county attorney followed only 15 months after his arrival in Daviess County. His early professional success was referred to in an article in the newspaper, *Owensboro Examiner*, on 22 Feb. 1878, in which the following was said: At the time of his arrival "the Owensboro bar was full, and amongst its members were some of the ablest lawyers in Kentucky. It would have been natural to suppose that one so young and inexperienced as Mr. Sweeney then was, would be unable to cope with such lawyers, and that he would be destined to the long and tedious waiting common with young lawyers at such a bar. But his very earliest efforts demonstrated that he was possessed of a fund of legal learning far in advance of his years, and aptitude and skill in the use of it which made him a formidable competitor, even of the ablest and most experienced members of the bar. These qualities and acquirements to which were added indomitable energy, and an unequaled skill and rapidity in the mechanical part of his profession, immediately attracted the attention of the people; and business flowed in upon him so rapidly, that in as many years as it ordinarily takes a young lawyer to get a fair start, Mr. Sweeney had a full and lucrative practice, and was regarded as among the ablest lawyers at the bar."¹⁶

In politics W. N. Sweeney was a lifelong Democrat. In 1860 he was chosen as a presidential elector from the 2nd Kentucky District. In the

election of 6 Nov. 1860 he cast his vote for Kentucky's own John C. Breckenridge, who had been chosen by the southern faction of the Democratic party.¹⁷ The final electoral vote stood at: Abraham Lincoln, Republican, 180; Breckenridge, Democrat, 72; John Bell, Constitutional Union Party, 39; & Stephen A. Douglas, Democrat, 12.

During the Civil War W. N. Sweeney was one of the leaders of southern sentiment in Daviess County.¹⁸ He believed the issue of states rights was more crucial than the question of slavery. He was not himself a slave owner but had been contracted as a trustee for half a dozen slaves owned by his mother-in-law, Margaret C. Rogers.¹⁹ In 1862 under the orders of Gen. Jeremiah T. Boyle, Kentucky Adjutant General, many citizens, who were suspected of being Southern sympathizers, were arrested. Generally they were removed to Louisville, Boyle's headquarters, detained for awhile and soon released.²⁰ Among those in Owensboro who were arrested during that year were: Joshua G. Ford, newspaper editor; George H. Yeaman, Daviess County Judge; & William N. Sweeney. In December 1862 Union troops were occupying Owensboro and in retribution for losses at the hands of the guerillas assessments were levied against so-called Confederates.²¹ The sum of \$500 was assessed against William N. Sweeney. He refused to pay and was arrested and removed to Louisville as a prisoner. Gen. Boyle had been an acquaintance of Sweeney since youth and when arraigned before him, Sweeney was permitted to plead his own cause and that of his neighbors, who had also been arrested. Charges were promptly dismissed and they were released.²² On 11 Dec. 1862 Gen. Boyle issued an order that the levies against the citizens of Owensboro be removed and what had been collected returned. On the following day the federal regiment in Owensboro departed.²³

At the second meeting of the Owensboro city council on 12 April 1866, two months after the town had received its city charter, W. N. Sweeney was chosen to serve as city attorney.²⁴ His name was submitted as a Democratic candidate for U. S. Congressman from the 2nd Kentucky District on 29 Dec. 1866.²⁵ At the Democratic convention, held at Calhoun, Ky. on 1 Feb. 1867 Sweeney lost the nomination by one vote to John Young Brown, of Henderson, Ky., the vote was 56 to 55.²⁶ In the following May elections Brown was elected.

In the next congressional race W. N. Sweeney's name was resubmitted. He received his party's nomination over Henry D. McHenry of Ohio County.²⁷ At the general election of 3 Nov. 1868 he was elected to represent the 2nd Kentucky District in the U.S. Congress. The vote in Daviess County was Sweeney, 2360 and Samuel Langley of Henderson County, Republican, 174.²⁸ In the 41st U.S. Congress W. N. Sweeney

on 4 March 1869 took his seat in the House of Representatives, seat #106 east.²⁹ His term ended on 3 March 1871. Owensboro at this time had two citizens in Congress, Thomas C. McCreery was serving in the Senate.

One of the highpoints of W. N. Sweeney's term in Congress was when on 14 Jan. 1870 he delivered in the House an impassioned address, pleading for the readmittance of Virginia to Congressional representation and in opposition to a bill proposed by the Reconstruction committee. He denounced the Reconstructionist policies saying in part: "If we had had just and equable laws instead of persecution and proscription the now gaping and smarting wounds of the war, which have been constantly probed and lacerated by your measures, would have been effectually cured up...I will not, I cannot consent to vote for the bill reported by the Reconstruction Committee. I cannot consent to put the great shame of these degrading conditions upon her, and I will not violate the Constitution of my country."³⁰ Twelve days following his address an act restoring Virginia to representation was passed by Congress on January 26 and shortly afterwards her senators & representatives took their seats at Washington.³¹

In the 1870 Congressional race W. N. Sweeney was renominated but declined to accept the nomination.³² Returning to his law practice in Owensboro, he did not reenter the political arena again until 14 Feb. 1878, when he began canvassing the district as a candidate for the judgeship of the 4th Kentucky Appellate District.³³ Numerous candidates in Western Kentucky announced their campaign for the judgeship, one of 4 on the Kentucky Court of Appeals. Of the Daviess County bar, George W. William's name was also entered into the race. W. N. Sweeney on 15 April 1878 retired from the race. In his announcement reported in the *Owensboro Examiner* he made no statement on the reasons for his withdrawal.³⁴ His decision may have been due to a growing groundswell of support for Judge Thomas Henry Hines, of Bowling Green, Ky. The Confederate ranks in the region had united solidly behind Hines. Immediately preceding Sweeney's withdrawal several of the districts 29 counties had in local conventions voted their support to Hines. At the election of 5 Aug. 1878 T. H. Hines was elected.³⁵

In January 1884 only days before the Democratic convention, in Frankfort, W. N. Sweeney was entered as a candidate for U. S. Senator from Kentucky.³⁶ For several months John S. Williams, the incumbent, and Joseph C. S. Blackburn had been in the campaign. The convention, a long & heated contest, was deadlocked for over two weeks. Ballot after ballot no candidate was selected. On January 28th Sweeney submitted a proposition for ending the deadlock. He proposed that a ballot be taken between Williams & Blackburn and then the stronger of the two be

placed on a ballot against himself. When the proposition was defeated and the nominations of new candidates had been allowed, he determined that his chances had been greatly diminished and he withdrew from the race.³⁷ Thereafter Blackburn was nominated, won the general election and served the next 12 years as Kentucky's Senator. W. N. Sweeney after returning to Owensboro told a reporter of the *Owensboro Messenger & Examiner*: "I was finally slaughtered by the chairman of the caucus in two or three of his rulings, but, of course, I can see that the briefness of my candidature was the real cause of my failure to secure the nomination for Senator. I have been assured, and I confidently believe it, that if I had announced myself a month before the Legislature convened I would have been elected."³⁸ It was believed by many that without Sweeney's entrance into the race Williams would have readily been nominated, and his entrance resulted in the nomination of Blackburn. In the *Louisville Courier-Journal* it was alleged that Sweeney's candidacy had not been an authentic bid for himself but had been a last minute maneuver to throw the election to Blackburn. The Louisville newspaper wrote: "Clearly, Sweeney's candidacy was induced by the Blackburn men to attract from Williams his support in Western Kentucky."³⁹

It was in the practice of his legal profession that W. N. Sweeney achieved his eminence. He won many notable victories at the law and he was accorded the leading practitioner of this section by members of his profession. In the *History of Daviess County, Kentucky* it was said that "Mr. Sweeney is celebrated among the members of the bar for the rapidity and accuracy displayed in his drawing up of legal documents. He is a close reasoner, a logical speaker, convincing by argument and reasoning rather than winning by rhetoric and eloquence."⁴⁰ In Judge Charles Kerr's *History of Kentucky* it was written that William N. Sweeney "for years was retained on one side or the other in nearly all the important cases, both civil and criminal, in the courts of his district."⁴¹ And in *The Lawyers and Lawmakers of Kentucky* it was stated that "Judged by any fair standard, he was more than a successful lawyer, he was a great lawyer."⁴²

For many years in the latter part of his career W. N. Sweeney selected only the cases where he would act as counsel for the defense.⁴³ His career was most distinguished and involved by civil practice, he, however, was employed in many of Daviess County's most celebrated criminal cases. One in particular gained him much celebrity. Sweeney & his law partner, James Stuart, were lawyers for the defense in the case of the Commonwealth of Ky. vs. Peyton Kincheloe, Thomas W. Kincheloe & George Luckett for the murder of Aris Throckmorton.⁴⁴ Throck-

morton was killed on a road just west of Owensboro, allegedly by Peyton Kincheloe and his two accomplices.⁴⁵ The indictment was returned on 20 Feb. 1871 and the case was in the courts for almost two years.⁴⁶ The trial, which began in February 1872,⁴⁷ had great notoriety, largely due to the high regard in the community for both the Throckmorton & Kincheloe families. Throckmorton, a young man in his 20th year, was a son of Colin S. Throckmorton, a retired naval officer and wealthy land owner, who lived where the community of Thruston is today. The young man's grandfather was the late Aris Throckmorton, who for years was proprietor of the celebrated Galt House in Louisville, Ky.⁴⁸ Peyton Kincheloe (1845-1929) had relatives on both sides of his family who were honored public officials; he was related to the McFarland family, one of the most prestigious and accomplished families in Daviess County.⁴⁹

The Throckmorton-Kincheloe case was recalled by an unnamed Owensboro lawyer in an article, "Some Noted Prosecutions Tried in Daviess County", published in the *Owensboro Inquirer*, on 3 April 1910. The lawyer reported: "One of the most interested cases I remember took place nearly 40 years ago when Phil Lea (sic), of Louisville, one of the most noted commonwealth attorneys in Kentucky, was employed to assist in the prosecution...Lea was dramatic and pathetic...Mr. Sweeney was the chief counsel for the defendant, and in presenting the defendant's case, made a clean cut and convincing argument. Mr. Sweeney's great success in his practice was his thorough knowledge of the law and the facts in the case, never dodging an issue, but meeting squarely and fairly every statement of the prosecution. His earned partner, Judge Stuart, was an old time orator...After the case had been on trial for several days, it resulted in a mistrial, not, however, until most of the argument on both sides had been completed. One of the jurors was taken ill, the jury was discharged.⁵⁰" In the retrial the defendants were readily acquitted on the plea of self-defense, the verdict was returned on 7 Jan. 1873.⁵¹ In the *History of Daviess County, Kentucky* it was said that Mr. Sweeney's "speech on giving the case to the jury was regarded as a remarkably fine effort."⁵² Lee did not appear in the retrial but in speaking of the case remarked that: "he had met lawyers in Daviess county that were the peers of attorneys anywhere."⁵³

During W. N. Sweeney's 41 years at the Owensboro bar he was affiliated in six law partnerships. In the fall & winter of 1853 he practiced with McDowell Fogel, in the law firm of "Fogel & Sweeney". Richard Hawes Taylor (1835-1900) upon his graduation from law school in 1857 entered into a partnership with W. N. Sweeney, which continued 6 or 7 years.⁵⁴ In 1863 Sweeney and John Pope, an officer in the Southern army, formed a joint practice and it continued until Major Pope's death on 29 Oct. 1866.⁵⁵ In 1867 Circuit Court Judge James Stuart

(1820-1891), of Hardinsburg, Ky., moved his residence to Owensboro. After arriving in Owensboro he resigned his judgeship on 9 March 1867 and became a partner of W. N. Sweeney.⁵⁶ An advertisement for the law firm of "Sweeney & Stuart" was first published in the *Owensboro Monitor* on 1 May 1867.⁵⁷ James Stuart was reelected Circuit Court Judge on 12 Aug. 1874; "Sweeney & Stuart" was dissolved between 1875-77. In 1877 upon James Joel Sweeney's admittance to the bar he began to practice with his father, under the style of "W. N. Sweeney & Son".⁵⁸ Shortly afterwards the company became "W. N. Sweeney & Sons" with the addition of William Cavot Sweeney.⁵⁹ In the mid 1880's W. C. Sweeney withdrew from the firm to pursue a real estate career. In 1887 W. N. & J. J. Sweeney formed a partnership with William Thomas Ellis (1845-1925). A captain in the Civil War in the celebrated Orphan Brigade of the Confederate Army, W. T. Ellis, between 1889-1895 served three terms in the House of the U.S. Congress. With two U.S. Congressmen, "Sweeney, Ellis & Sweeney" was one of the area's most prestigious law firms and its practice established it as possibly Owensboro's ablest and most successful. After W. N. Sweeney's death in 1895 the firm's name was continued by the joint practice of J. J. Sweeney & W. T. Ellis, until the partnership was dissolved in 1913.⁶⁰

Judge Charles Kerr wrote of W. N. Sweeney: "It is said of him that he was the young man's friend, and to the younger members of the bar he was always noticeably kind and considerate."⁶¹ W. N. Sweeney fostered the careers of several junior members of the Owensboro bar, who earned for themselves recognition. Among those who began their careers in the law office of W. N. Sweeney were: J. B. Karn, J. D. Atchison & T. F. Birkhead. Jasper Bristow Karn came to Owensboro in August 1869 and commenced the study of the law in the office of W. N. Sweeney. He was admitted to the bar in March 1870 and continued to work in the firm of Sweeney & Stuart until the fall of 1870. J. B. Karn in 1890-1898 served as County Judge of Daviess County.⁶² John Dorsey Atchison arrived in Owensboro in June 1876 and entered the law office of W. N. Sweeney, where he remained 4 years. In 1877 he was admitted to the bar and in 1883-1890 served as County Judge of Daviess County.⁶³ In honor of his mentor he named one of his sons, Hermon Sweeney Atchison. Thomas Foreman Birkhead took up the study of law under the preceptorship of W. N. Sweeney in 1880. T. F. Birkhead was admitted to the bar in 1882 and in 1904-1915 was Circuit Court Judge of Daviess County.⁶⁴ W. N. Sweeney also fostered the career of Jesse Edwin Fogle, a leader of the bar at Hartford, Ohio County, Ky. A nephew, Fogle was a son of Hon. McDowell Fogle. J. E. Fogle on 4 Sep. 1872, under the urging and assistance of his uncle, moved from Liberty, Ky. to Hartford. For years his law practice was closely associated with his uncle's in Owensboro. His son, McDowell A. Fogle, of Hartford, was a well known newspaper man.⁶⁵

The law office of W. N. Sweeney for almost the entirety of his practice in Owensboro was at the same location, on the north side of Main Street (W. 2nd St.), opposite the courthouse.⁶⁶ Situated in the center of the block, it was on the second floor; after the renumbering of streets ca 1890 the address was 215½ W. Main. He was first deeded property in the block in 1860. He was, however, located there before that as indicated by his entry in the 1859 *Kentucky State Gazetteer and Business Directory*: "W. N. Sweeney, attorney & insurance agent, Second, opposite Court House."⁶⁷

W. N. Sweeney acquired ownership of all the property on the north of Main Street between Frederica & St. Ann; ½ of the block bounded by 1st, Frederica, 2nd & St. Ann and from 2nd back to the alley between Frederica & St. Ann. The block was known as "Sweeney's Block" and the buildings & offices there were rented out.⁶⁸ In an 1865 issue of the *Owensboro Monitor* an ad for the clothing store of Mendel & Cohn listed it as being in "Sweeney's Model Block, next door to Bransford's store, opposite Court House, north side."⁶⁹ In an 1871-1872 Owensboro directory the location of the law firm of Sweeney & Stuart was listed as: "Sweeney's block, Frederica & Main". In the same directory the following were also listed as being located in Sweeney's Block: dentists - John H. Taylor, Junius B. Alexander; tailor - William W. Chambers; attorneys - W. T. Ellis, Samuel H. Haynes; newspaper office of the *Owensboro Monitor*, editors, Thomas S. Pettit & A. L. Ashby; & the Deposit Bank of Owensboro, at N.E. corner of Frederica & Main⁷⁰ (later located on the opposite corner at 200 Frederica St., by 1886).

In addition to his legal & political career W. N. Sweeney played a critical role in the business, commercial & land development of Owensboro. He was one of the incorporators of the Deposit Bank of Owensboro, when it was established on 1 Oct. 1860, and served as one of its directors until his death. It was Owensboro's first home owned bank. During the time W. N. Sweeney was associated with the Deposit Bank it grew to be one of Owensboro's most prosperous financial institutions.⁷¹

Soon after arriving in Owensboro W. N. Sweeney began to deal in real estate. Starting in 1856 he bought and sold numerous lots in Owensboro & tracts in Daviess County, both on his own and in partnership with others. In 1860 his real estate holdings were evaluated at \$15,000.⁷² By 1875 he had in excess of \$40,000 in real estate.⁷³ In the *Owensboro Daily Messenger* on 23 April 1895, it was written that: "Mr. Sweeney built up a large fortune as the fruits of his law practice and fortunate investments in Owensboro real estate. He was the largest individual taxpayer in the city; and his estate is estimated to be worth about \$200,000."⁷⁴

In February 1866 W. N. Sweeney entered a partnership with Daniel

M. Griffith, when they jointly purchased a 100 acre tract along the southern edge of Owensboro; 70 acres of which lay outside the city.⁷⁵ Daniel M. Griffith's (1826-1893) occupation in the *History of Daviess County, Kentucky* was given as dealing in real estate. Griffith had extensive land holdings in the city & county and in 1853-55 he had served a term in the Kentucky Legislature representing Daviess County. Griffith & Sweeney paid James L. & Harriet Johnson, \$20,000 for the 100 acres, which Mrs. Johnson had received in the division of the estate of her father, Phillip Triplett.⁷⁶ They purchased the land with the intentions of selling it off in lots as the city grew southward. In their purchase agreement it was stipulated that Griffith, having previously invested in the land with James L. Johnson, would own a $\frac{3}{4}$ interest & Sweeney $\frac{1}{4}$ interest.⁷⁷

Soon after purchasing the 100 acre tract Griffith & Sweeney subdivided it into lots & streets & began selling the lots. They named the two north-south streets in the subdivision, Sweeney & Moseley Sts., which now extend from 9th to 18th Sts. Sweeney St. was named for William N. Sweeney and the latter for D. M. Griffith's maternal family, his middle name was Mosley & his mother, Aria, was a daughter of Thomas Moseley, one of the first residents of Owensboro. The east-west streets bore the names of McFarland (now 9th, named for John H. McFarland), Virginia (now 11th, probably named for D. M. Griffith's wife, Virginia), Maryland (now 12th, the Griffiths came to Kentucky from Maryland), Kentucky (now 14th), Johnson (now 16th, named for the land's previous owners), & Griffith (now 17th, named for D. M. Griffith). By 1876 the subdivision had been incorporated into the city of Owensboro as "Griffith & Sweeney's Addition".⁷⁸ It extended west from Triplett St. to J. R. Miller Boulevard (formerly Lewis St.) and south from 7th (formerly Harriet St.) out to about half way between what is now 16 & 17th sts.⁷⁹ An 1881 pictorial souvenir map of Owensboro shows the area as yet still sparsely settled.⁸⁰ However, by the turn of the century it had become a prime development area in Owensboro. Following the deaths of both Griffith & Sweeney a division of the lots in Griffith & Sweeney's Addition, not yet sold, was made in 1896 among their heirs.⁸¹ A plat map of "Griffith & Sweeney's Addition" to the city of Owensboro was recorded on 22 March 1898.⁸²

W. N. Sweeney owned several lots on Main Street in Owensboro's prime commercial district. In addition to "Sweeney's Block", on the north side of Main between Frederica & St. Ann, he and D. M. Griffith jointly owned 6 buildings, in the next block, on the north side of Main between St. Ann & Allen. On Saturday, 12 Dec. 1874 a fire struck this block. Griffith & Sweeney were heavy losers, three of their buildings there were destroyed.⁸³ They made an agreement dividing their 6 business houses in this block on 1 June 1890.⁸⁴ The three lots received by Sweeney were included in a division of his estate on 25 July 1896.⁸⁵

W. N. Sweeney, also, had a role in the development of another pivotal and historic lot on Main St. in downtown Owensboro - that of the lot at the s.w. corner of Main & Daviess Sts., on which S. W. Anderson's Department Store is located at 122 E. Main St. James M. Rogers (1790-1864), W. N. Sweeney's father-in-law, in 1840 built a home for his family on the lot, lot #38 on the original plat map of Owensboro. He lived there until his death on Christmas day 1864.⁸⁶ His son, George W. Rogers, was living there in 1871⁸⁷ and during the latter part of the 1870's the house was rented out.⁸⁸ The Rogers house was still standing at the site in 1881 when a Historical Souvenir Map of Owensboro was drawn.⁸⁹ On 16 Sep. 1887, the heirs of James M. & Margaret C. Rogers deeded the lot to James J. Sweeney, son of W. N. Sweeney.⁹⁰

In 1888 a company composed of W. N. Sweeney, J. J. Sweeney, W. T. Ellis & John Gilmour was formed to build a theatre on the lot at the s.w. corner of Main & Daviess Sts.⁹¹ It was named the Temple Theatre and it was opened on the 8th of October of that year.⁹² The property & construction had cost the company \$38,000.⁹³ Three years later, on 10 Oct. 1891, a fire destroyed the theatre and the company lost over $\frac{2}{3}$ of its investment.⁹⁴ Reconstruction was soon underway and the Temple Theatre reopened on 17 Sep. 1892.⁹⁵ In the years preceding the turn of the century the theatre was one of the most popular entertainment and social meccas in all of Western Kentucky. Numerous events were booked there, including dramas, operas, musicals, vaudeville acts, minstrel shows, political rallies, speakers and many notable entertainers appeared there, including George M. Cohan.⁹⁶ The theatre was managed by Allan Gilmour Sweeney, a son of W. N. During the late 1890's W. T. Ellis, John Gilmour & the heirs of W. N. Sweeney transferred their interests in the Temple Theatre to James J. Sweeney and by 1899 he was the sole owner.⁹⁷

With the opening of other theatres in Owensboro and the popularity of the Chautauquas the patronage of the Temple Theatre declined in the early 1900's. In October 1907 the theatre was closed.⁹⁸ At that time S. W. Anderson purchased $\frac{1}{2}$ interest in the property and remodeled the building for his department store.⁹⁹ The "Anderson's Daylight Store" was opened on 24 Sep. 1908,¹⁰⁰ the name was later changed to S. W. Anderson's Department Store and continued at the location as one of Western Kentucky's leading deparment stores, until its doors were closed on 20 Jan. 1990.¹⁰¹ James J. Sweeney at his death in 1921 owned a $\frac{1}{4}$ interest in the lot and building at the s.w. corner of 2nd & Daviess Sts. His heirs continued to own an interest in the property until 1953.¹⁰²

William N. Sweeney & Elizabeth Jane Rogers were married in Owensboro on 3 Jan. 1854. A native of Owensboro, she was born on 28 Jan. 1833 to the union of James M. Rogers & Margaret C. Muir. The

Rogers were a noted and early pioneer family of Kentucky and Owensboro. "Lizzie" Rogers' greatgrandparents, James & Martha Blackburn Rogers, in 1780 built Rogers Station, one of the first settlements in Nelson County, Ky. Her grandparents, Matthew & Eleanor Carter Rogers, about 1807 settled at the Yellow Banks, which later became the town of Owensboro. Both her grandfather & greatgrandfather were Baptists ministers. A first cousin of her grandfather was William Casey, for whom Casey County, Ky. was named and whose greatgrandson was the famous writer, Samuel Langhorne Clemens, alias Mark Twain. A second cousin of Mrs. Sweeney was the Hon. Ben Johnson of Bardstown, one of Kentucky's great politicians. William Muir, Mrs. Sweeney's maternal grandfather, was a popular doctor of Nelson County, Ky.¹⁰³

In an article, "Scraps of Local History", published in the *Owensboro Examiner*, in 1875 the following was said of Mrs. Sweeney's parents, Mr. & Mrs. James M. Rogers: "Mr. Rogers...never seemed happier than in the entertainment of strangers and friends...Mrs. Rogers was hospitality itself."¹⁰⁴ James M. Rogers (1790-1864) was an early merchant, postmaster & trustee of the town of Owensboro.¹⁰⁵ As early as 1823 "a doggery", where whiskey & groceries were sold, was kept by James M. Rogers & his brother, Stephen V. Rogers, in Owensboro, the town then consisting only of 6 or 8 log cabins.¹⁰⁶ During the 1830's J. M. Rogers & his son-in-law, James Harvey Blair, conducted a general store at the s.e. corner of 1st & Frederica Sts.¹⁰⁷ Mr. Rogers was one of the first in the county to engage in the tobacco business, cultivating it on his large farm on Panther Creek.¹⁰⁸ The first tobacco warehouse in Owensboro was built by him about 1837.¹⁰⁹ Owensboro subsequently became a hub of the tobacco business, which became the town's leading industry. The daughters of J. H. Blair & Susan A. Rogers, nieces of W. N. & Lizzie Sweeney, married leading businessmen of Owensboro. Margaret Blair married Thomas S. Pettit, editor of the newspaper, *The Owensboro Monitor*, and a political & industrial leader; the community of Pettit, just south of Owensboro was named in his honor. Susan Blair married Allan Gilmour, a wealthy tobacconist, and Mary Blair married William H. Woodford, a hardware merchant & insurance agent. The streets near the residences of the latter two gentlemen, on the west side of Owensboro, were named Gilmour Ct. & Woodford Ave.

W. N. Sweeney for 37 years resided in the house which still stands at the s.w. corner of 4th & Daviess Sts. in Owensboro. In a short history of the house given in the *Owensboro Daily Messenger* on 17 April 1904 it was written: "It was erected in what was then a corn field, in the year 1857. Barney Trimble was the contractor who guarded the destinies of the construction"; he was also the builder of the third Daviess County Courthouse in 1866-68. The residence is of brick and when it was built,

the article stated, there was no brickyard here and the material, at great expense, had to be brought from a distance. The original house, almost square in ground plan, contained 14 rooms and was adorned by a large porch, extending across about one-half of the front.^{109a}

The property on which the Sweeney House was built was part of what was known as "Triplett's Addition" to the town of Owensboro.¹¹⁰ The land was part of lot #2 as designated on Ross & May's plat of lands surrounding Owensboro, recorded on 8 Nov. 1824 in Daviess County Deed Book B, p. 100; same lot is shown on a map of Owensboro in the 1876 *Historical Atlas Map of Daviess County, Ky.* (p. 81). The lot was part of lands received by Philip Triplett from the estate of David Ross & John May; Triplett had come to Owensboro about 1824 as an agent for the heirs of Ross & May, who possessed extensive land titles in Daviess County. Philip Triplett deeded lot #2 to his daughter & her husband, James L. & Harriet Johnson, on 28 Sept. 1851. In the deed it was recorded that the lot was south of the present residence of said P. Triplett, from which it is separated by 4th Street; a part at the southern end of the lot was reserved for the addition of a street.¹¹¹ In January 1853, a few months after Philip Triplett's death, a division of his lands bordering Owensboro on the south was made between Harriet, wife of James Leeper Johnson, & Illa Triplett, the two heirs of Philip Triplett, dec'd. The 2 acre lot at the s.w. corner of 4th & Daviess was drawn on a plat of the division, recorded Daviess County Deed Book K, p. 574; it however, was not involved in the division since it had been previously transferred. The division included most of the land between the present streets of Frederica, 4th, Triplett & 18th. Harriet Johnson became the sole owner of this land following the death of her sister in 1862; including the land which became "Griffith & Sweeney's Addition" to Owensboro.

James L. & Harriet Johnson on 25 Oct. 1859 sold the 2 acre lot (lot #2), which she had received from her father in 1851, to Samuel D. Kennady, Daniel Kennady & W. N. Sweeney for \$2100.¹¹² No subsequent deed partitioning the lot was recorded by the grantees. They instead made a verbal division and sealed the agreement by a handshake. In a deed of 11 May 1881, whereby the heirs of Daniel Kennady, one of the purchasers of the lot in 1859, sold their interest in same, it was recorded that "W. N. Sweeney, S. D. Kennady & Daniel Kennady... made a verbal division of said 2 acres of land among them. Sweeney taking his interest on the eastern side, bordering on Daviess Street and S. D. Kennady taking his interest on the western side bordering on Allen Street and the said Daniel Kennady taking the center or middle piece fronting on 4th Street on the north and 5th Street on the south."¹¹³ The 2 acre lot acquired by Sweeney & the Kennadys encompassed the entire block that is now bounded by 4th, Daviess, 5th & Allen Streets. The

actual transfer of the lot preceded the date of 25 Oct. 1859 when a deed was recorded for it; in an earlier deed dated 19 March 1859 Charles N. S. Taylor purchased a 5 acre lot from the Johnsons and in the deed it was described as being immediately south of a 2 acre lot sold to S. D. & D. Kennady & W. N. Sweeney.¹¹⁴

The households C. N. S. Taylor and S. D. Kennady were enumerated near W. N. Sweeney in the 1860 Federal Census of Daviess County, Ky. Sweeney's residence in an 1871-1872 Directory of Owensboro was listed as "Fourth & Daviess".¹¹⁵ In the 1876 *Historical Atlas Map of Daviess County, Ky.* his residence was reported as at "the corner of 4th & Daviess Sts."¹¹⁶ The Sweeney house was drawn on an 1881 pictorial souvenir map of Owensboro.¹¹⁷ In the *Owensboro City Directory of 1886* the address of W. N. Sweeney was 20 E. 4th St.¹¹⁸ The house number became 120 E. 4th St. about 1890, when street numbers below 100 were dropped and others were thus increased by an increment of 100.¹¹⁹

An 1876 map of Owensboro shows that 5th Street had not yet been extended between Daviess & Frederica Sts.¹²⁰ However, within the same year 5th St. was constructed at the southern end of W. N. Sweeney's lot. On 14 March 1876 George W. Williams, who had bought the lot immediately south of W. N. Sweeney from C. N. S. Taylor, sold right of way to the City of Owensboro, at the northern end of his tract, for an extension of 5th St. between Daviess & Allen Sts.¹²¹

In the last half of the 19th century the neighborhood along East Fourth Street was possibly Owensboro's most elegant residential area, some of the county's most influential political figures & wealthiest citizens resided there. W. N. Sweeney's neighbor on the north side of 4th St. was Thomas Clay McCreery, a U.S. Senator. McCreery in 1864 purchased from James L. & Harriet Johnson the lot, on which was located the former home of Philip Triplett, & bounded by 3rd, Allen, 4th & Daviess Sts.¹²² He resided there until his home was destroyed by fire in 1876 and then divided the block between four of his children and removed to a residence on Griffith Ave. McCreery's daughter, Sally Matthews, lived in the house directly across 4th St. from the Sweeney's, until her death in 1930.¹²³ Mrs. Adele Hawes, widow of former U.S. Congressman, Albert Gallatin Hawes, during the 1860-70-80's lived directly east of the Sweeney's, in the house at the s.e. corner of 4th & Daviess, now 208 E. 4th St.¹²⁴ On the opposite corner from the Sweeney's, at the n.e. corner of 4th & Daviess, the Settle Memorial Methodist Church was constructed in 1880-1881.

Camden & Ellen Riley (Sr.) on 11 May 1881 purchased the lot immediately west of W. N. Sweeney from the heirs of Daniel Kennady (1825-1870), who in his verbal agreement with his brother, S. D. Kennady, & W. N. Sweeney, had received the center lot in the block of 4th-Daviess-5th-Allen.¹²⁵ In 1881-1882 Riley had built on the lot the

house which still stands at 112 E. 4th St. and which until recently had been the residence of Mrs. Lucy Glenn Taylor. Camden Riley was an attorney & member of the Ky. Legislature; he lived at the residence until his death in 1897. Samuel Dyson Kennady (1823-1899), a merchant & mayor of Owensboro, from about 1859, when he received the western $\frac{1}{2}$ on the 2 acre lot purchased by him and Daniel Kennady & W. N. Sweeney, resided at the s.e. corner of 4th & Allen Sts. In 1898 he sold the corner lot to Mary S. Mitchell, in the deed it was stated that it had been occupied by S. D. Kennady for many years as a homestead.¹²⁶ Located on the site, 104 E. 4th St., in recent years was Glenn's Funeral Home.

Members of the Sweeney family resided at 120 E. 4th St. for 86 years. On 25 July 1896, several months after the death of W. N. Sweeney, a deed dividing the lands of his estate was made by his four surviving children. In the partition the Sweeney house at 120 E. 4th St. became the property of Allan G. Sweeney,¹²⁷ who continued to live there until his death in 1906. In April 1904 A. G. Sweeney had the house divided into two separate buildings. The Sweeney family continued to live in the eastern half, while the western half was rented out. The two buildings presently at 118 & 120 E. 4th St. comprised the original Sweeney mansion. Until the reconstruction in April 1904 the only change to the original building had been the addition of modern sanitation. An article reporting on the remodeling of the Sweeney homestead was published in 17 April 1904 issue of the *Owensboro Daily Messenger*. It reported that the old fashioned square porch of the Sweeney house had been recently torn away to make way for the remodeling, leaving the house bare and grim. In the article it was written that

When the changes now undergoing are completed the old building will be made into two residences. It is divided through the center by a spacious hall, another evidence of the age in which it was built. This hallway will be removed, and the side walls of the respective buildings that are to succeed the old structure. (127a)

In 1918 the western half, 118 E. 4th St., was sold by the heirs of A.G. Sweeney to E. K. Short.¹²⁸ The same was successively transferred to W. E. Davis in 1919,¹²⁹ to R. R. Holbrook in 1920,¹³⁰ to Charles B. Nantz in 1920,¹³¹ to L. T. Brown in 1922,¹³² to C. H. Girvin in 1930,¹³³ and in 1934 to Mrs. Ruth Wilson, who continued to make her home there for the next 43 years.^{133a}

Allan G. Sweeney's widow, Mrs. Forrest Sweeney, lived at 120 E. 4th St. until 1943, when she sold it to Mrs. Ruth Wilson, her neighbor at 118 E. 4th St.¹³⁴ Then 120 E. 4th became a rental apartment building, with 4 apartments. Mrs. Ruth Wilson in 1978 transferred both 118 & 120 E. 4th St. to her son, George William Wilson, Jr., D.D.M., the

present owner of both buildings. Since 1967 G. W. Wilson has conducted his dental practice on the first floor of 120 E. 4th St.¹³⁵

The Old Sweeney house at 120 E. 4th St. is registered with the Kentucky Heritage Council as National Register Potential, it has not previously been added to the National Register of Historic Places due to the extensive exterior and interior alterations to the original building. In an article about some of Owensboro's beautiful and historic homes, published in the *Owensboro Messenger & Inquirer* in 1942, the Sweeney house was noted. In the article it was stated that "The W. N. Sweeney home at Fourth and Daviess was the scene of many lovely social events."¹³⁶ In its 133 years the property has truly witnessed a great deal of Owensboro's history. In the *Owensboro Daily Messenger* on 17 April 1904 it was written:

There is little of the frills of modern architecture about the place, but it was a notable and handsome residence in the days of its building...During its life the house has been visited by nearly all the Kentucky congressmen and others of state fame. Lawyers of great ability have eaten beneath the hospitable roof, and some of the brightest intellects of the country have been guests of the original owner. (136a)

The W. N. Sweeney house was home to a large extended family. In addition to Mr. & Mrs. Sweeney and their children, several relatives also lived there at various times. Following the death of her husband in 1864, Mrs. James M. Rogers, Mrs. Sweeney's mother, came to live there. With the death of Lizzie Rogers Sweeney, at the early age of 41 on 7 Feb. 1874, Mrs. Rogers assumed the responsibility of managing the household matters of her son-in-law, W. N. Sweeney.¹³⁷ Her death occurred at the Sweeney house on 26 Sept. 1885. James M. Rogers, Jr., a bachelor & Mrs. Sweeney's brother, roomed at the house for over 20 years. Mrs. Sweeney's niece, Maggie Blair, lived there for several years prior to her marriage to T. S. Pettit, a gala event celebrated in the Sweeney house on 22 Dec. 1870.¹³⁸

Seven children were born to the marriage of William N. Sweeney & Elizabeth Jane Rogers. They were: James Joel (1855-1921), named after his grandfathers. William Cavot (1857-1914), named for an uncle, Dr. William Muir Rogers & his wife, Mary E. Cavot. Clinton D. Rogers (1859-1868), named for a first cousin of Mrs. Sweeney, Clint drowned at the age of 8. Illa Triplett (1863-1864), named for a popular daughter of Philip Triplett, who had died at the age of 19 the year before; Illa Sweeney died at the age of 8 months. Allan Gilmour (1865-1906), named for a husband of Mrs. Sweeney's niece, Susan Blair. A baby died at birth in 1868. And Jessie Wallace (1870-1925), named in part for an uncle, George Wallace Rogers.

William C. Rogers was never married. He was a member of the first

graduating class of Owensboro High School in 1875. Before turning to a real estate career he had practiced in the law firm of "W. N. Sweeney & Sons"; on 5 Dec. 1878 he received an appointment as Daviess County Examiner.¹³⁹ Jessie W. Sweeney married Edward Clay Erwin, who was a great-grandson of Kentucky's great statesman, Henry Clay.¹⁴⁰ In 1890 her family removed to Kansas City, Mo., her only child was Thomas Sweeney Erwin.¹⁴¹

Allan G. Sweeney for several years was manager of the Temple Theatre. Later he was a bookkeeper. He was associated with the National Deposit Bank & the Green River Distilling Company, of Owensboro. He married Forrest Saunders Lee, a daughter of Jo Lee, who had served as mayor of Owensboro for 3 terms (1884-1890). Mr. & Mrs. A. G. Sweeney & her father died at the old Sweeney homestead at 120 E. 4th St. They were the parents of five children, viz: William Lee, died at age of one month; Joseph Lee, married Fanny Schoenfield, they operated the Master Recording Co., in New York City, which reported meetings, including those as large as national political conventions; Allan Gilmour; Charlotte Lee, the wife of Wilburn J. Simpson, and Elizabeth Rogers, the wife of Henry Overstreet Booth.

James Joel Sweeney began the practice of law in Owensboro in 1877 and for many years practiced in the law firms of "W. N. Sweeney & Son" & "Sweeney, Ellis & Sweeney". He was connected with many business enterprises in Owensboro. He had been one of the original owners of the newspaper, *Owensboro Inquirer*, and of the Temple Theatre of Owensboro. He served as president of the Owensboro Water Works Company and as vice-president of the U.S. National Bank of Owensboro. For many years he was a member of Owensboro's Board of Education and was selected to serve as its president for two terms. His death occurred while at work in the county clerk's office of the Daviess County Courthouse in 1921.¹⁴²

In 1876 James J. Sweeney married Nettie B. Singleton, a daughter of William Singleton, a doctor, and Mary Lillian Benjamin, for many years a teacher in the Owensboro schools. Mrs. J. J. Sweeney's great-grandmother, Sarah Singleton, was a member of the Allen family, who were truly one of the "Historic Families of Kentucky" (see Thomas Marshall Green's book of this title). Sarah Allen Singleton was a sister of Joe Allen, for over 40 years county clerk of Breckinridge County, Ky., and of John Allen, one of Kentucky's heroes who gave his life in the War of 1812 and for whom Allen County, Ky. was named in honor of; she lies beside her second husband, Andrew Rowan, in the Rowan family cemetery, on the grounds of "My Old Kentucky Home", at Bardstown, Ky.¹⁴³ Nettie Sweeney's father was a 2nd cousin of Kentucky Governor John Young Brown (1835-1904).

Mrs. James J. Sweeney suffered with tuberculosis and for her health, during most of the five years preceding her death in 1903, resided in the West, at Las Vegas, Sante Fe & Denver. While residing at Sante Fe, New Mexico Territory, Mr. & Mrs. Sweeney became friends of Gen'l & Mrs. Lew Wallace, he had served as Territorial Governor of New Mexico and was a novelist, best remembered for the highly popular novel *Ben-Hur: A Tale of the Christ*.¹⁴⁴ J. J. Sweeney married second Louella (Nell) Rardin of Fort Thomas, Ky. James J. & Nettie Singleton Sweeney were the parents of four children: William Northcutt, a bachelor, who worked as an insurance agent. Edmund Buckner was a doctor in Philadelphia, Pa. and married Beatrice F. Brown, they had no issue. James Joel, Jr. resided on a ranch in New Mexico and later in Nevada; he married Ina H. Hood and they had no issue. And Singleton Young operated a hardware store, Boyd-Sweeney Company, in Roanoke, Va. for several years. S. Y. Sweeney married Jean Thruston Todd, a daughter of Robert Stuart Todd, an Owensboro attorney, & Curran Pope Thruston. Jean Todd Sweeney's grandfather, Dr. David Fayette Todd, was a 1st cousin of Mary Todd Lincoln; the community of Thruston, in Daviess County, Ky., was named in honor of her maternal grandfather, Algernon S. Thruston, a member of Gov. Sam Huston's cabinet in the "Lone Star" state. Mrs. S. Y. Sweeney was a descendant of William Brewster, who sailed to the New World on the Mayflower; among her relations were: John M. Thruston & Patrick Henry Herndon, who were among those who died at the Alamo, in Texas' war for independence; Henry M. Rector, a governor of Arkansas; Thruston B. Morton, a U.S. Congressman from Ky.; and R. C. Ballard Thruston, a noted Kentucky historian.¹⁴⁵ Mr. & Mrs. S. Y. Sweeney had two children: Robert Todd, a former Owensboro attorney, & Nettie Singleton, wife of Allan R. Rhodes of Paducah, Ky.; a grandson Dr. Robert Todd Sweeney, Jr. & his wife, Patty Bellew of Owensboro, on 18 Jan. 1986 were killed in a plane crash in Guatemala, which was reported in national headlines.¹⁴⁶

James J. Sweeney, son of W. N. & Elizabeth Rogers Sweeney, in 1893 had a home built for his family at 121 E. 5th St. in Owensboro, on the southern half of his father's homestead lot. For the first 14 years of their marriage, Mr. & Mrs. J. J. Sweeney had resided with his father at 120 E. 4th St. and during the three years prior to moving to 121 E. 5th St. they had lived at 611 Daviess & 429 Bolivar.¹⁴⁷ Construction of J. J. Sweeney's home at 121 E. 5th St. started in April of 1893 and by December of the same year his family had moved into one of the town's most elegant residences. In the 15 April 1893 issue of the *Owensboro Daily Messenger* it was written that: "J. J. Sweeney is having plans made for a handsome new house. He is considering a proposition to build it of stone, which is almost as cheap as brick." And in the 2 Dec.

1893 issue of the *Messenger* it was reported that: "Commonwealth's Attorney Rowe is moving into the house lately occupied by Mr. J. J. Sweeney, Fifth and Bolivar. Mr. Sweeney will occupy his elegant new house at Fifth and Daviess."

The J. J. Sweeney house, at 121 E. 5th St., was constructed by the Louisville architectural firm of Drach and Thomas. The building embodies the basic elements of the Queen Anne style, displaying a polygonal tower and projecting bays. Details included stained and beveled glass, parquet floors, colored tiles, and elaborate interior woodwork.¹⁴⁸ One of the outstanding features of the three floor structure is its numerous and large ornate windows. They were added due to Mrs. Sweeney's illness, who as part of her treatment needed lots of sunshine. The windows were leaded, beveled and contained a jewel effect because the patient dearly loved jewelry.¹⁴⁹

In the division of the estate of W. N. Sweeney, dec'd, his heirs on 25 July 1896 deeded the lot at the n.w. corner of 5th & Daviess Sts. to James J. Sweeney, on which his residence at 121 E. 5th St. was located.¹⁵⁰ James J. Sweeney resided at 121 E. 5th St. until his death in 1921, on 8th February of the following year his heirs sold the house to William R. Jagoe for \$15,000.¹⁵¹ The family of W. R. Jagoe, Pres. of the Daviess County Planing Mill Co., lived there, until his heirs sold it to Thomas F. Birkhead on 1 July 1940.¹⁵² T. F. Birkhead, a Daviess County Circuit Court Judge & former law student of W. N. Sweeney, died at the residence in 1945, on 2 Aug. 1940 he had deeded the house to his daughters, Misses Flora Lee & Eva Belle Birkhead.¹⁵³ The Birkhead sisters continued to live there, Eva Belle died in 1958 and Flora Lee, for many years a music teacher, on 20 May 1976 sold the house & lot at 5th & Daviess to Robert E. Watson & Joe Iracane.¹⁵⁴ The residence for the next two years was converted into the "Old House Restaurant". Watson, Iracane & others on 11 Jan. 1980 sold the property for \$80,000 to Dr. David & Sandra Young, who continued to make their home there.¹⁵⁵ Upon a nomination submitted by Mr. & Mrs. Young the old James J. Sweeney House at 121 E. 5th St. was added to the National Register of Historic Places on 11 Aug. 1980.¹⁵⁶

William Northcutt Sweeney died at the age of 62 years on 21 April 1895. His death occurred at his home, 120 E. 4th St., in Owensboro. He, his wife, and 6 of their 7 children are buried in the Sweeney family lot of Owensboro's Elmwood Cemetery; W. N. Sweeney was one of a company of 18 who had established the cemetery in 1868.¹⁵⁷ Upon his death he received numerous accolades and tributes. In its Resolutions of Respect the Owensboro Bar Association said "that in the death of Hon. W. N. Sweeney our state has lost one of its foremost citizens, the bar of this section of Kentucky its ablest member, and the local bar its senior and most successful advocate."¹⁵⁸ Shortly after his death the following was said of W. N. Sweeney in the book *The Lawyers and*

Lawmakers of Kentucky: "It is doubtful if any lawyer in Kentucky ever won more victories before juries than he did...It is entirely within the limits of truth to say that, all round, he was among the very best practitioners who have adorned the bar of the state...He lived a noble and useful life, and when he died he left a name around which will continue to cluster the honors he so bravely and fairly won."¹⁵⁹

A fellow bar member, William Foster Hayes, in his history, *Sixty Years of Owensboro 1883-1943*, wrote that: "One of the strongest of Owensboro's legal firms at the time of which I am speaking was Sweeney, Ellis & Sweeney; and if any one lawyer could be called the leader of the able bar of that day, it was doubtless the senior member of that firm, Mr. William N. Sweeney...Aside from his personal appearance I remember chiefly his energetic and striking individual manner of speaking...In 1904, Capt. W. T. Ellis introduced to a Chautauqua audience (at Seven Hills, in Owensboro, on Aug. 17th) General Z. T. Sweeney, a lecturer of that year and a relative of Mr. William N. Sweeney, Captain Ellis's longtime partner. He said in part: 'if you were to ask me who was the most erudite lawyer that has practiced at the Owensboro bar in the last third of a century, I would say without hesitation, W. N. Sweeney. If you were to ask me who could most effectually and completely influence the juries of this county by the irresistible force of his prosy logic, I would say W. N. Sweeney'"¹⁶⁰

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William Northcutt Sweeney's imposing portrait was designed to demonstrate his importance in late nineteenth century Daviess County. (Photo courtesy Jerry Long.)

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The Editor's Page

We dedicate this issue of *The Daviess County Historical Quarterly* to the women of Daviess County who, in their many ways, have played such an important role in shaping the history of Owensboro and the Daviess County area.

Shelia Brown Heflin's study of the famous Mulberry Street redlight district discusses the darker side of "women's work" in the nineteenth century and the role that prostitution played as a social and economic reality in Owensboro. This paper was originally done as a senior seminar paper by Shelia when she was a student at KWC.

The second paper takes the role of women beyond the very limited options of the Mulberry Street houses to the other economic roles which women were permitted to play in the years immediately after the Civil War, and then takes them a generation beyond to the new industrial Owensboro which emerged by the turn of the century.

The final paper takes a look at one facet of "women's work" in the booming, industrialized Owensboro of the early years of the twentieth century when women were taking their places in the factory and on the assembly line as contributing members of the work force and as participants in the "high-tech" economy of the day.

LIFE ON MULBERRY STREET

by Shelia Brown Heflin

How did life on Mulberry Street differ from life on any other Owensboro, Kentucky street? The professions and activities of Mulberry Street residents created an insurmountable divide between themselves and the other Owensboro citizens. Prostitution reigned as the profession of the women on Mulberry Street. Mulberry Street -- a two block area which lay between Second Street and the Ohio River became Owensboro's most famous or infamous red light district. Action shifted from other sections of the city to Mulberry Street in 1896 and the area continued to be a vice problem until 1939 when the city rezoned the land for commercial use.¹

To reach the notorious immoral resorts, a gentlemen caller crossed the wooden bridge behind the tobacco house at Second and Mulberry. Immoral resorts lined both sides of the street.² The largest and most handsome of the houses stood at 105 Mulberry on the river bank. People referred to it as the Mansion or the Yellow Brick house.³ Its facade included huge pillars and an extra long porch with many windows and doors leading inside. Well kept grounds surrounded the Mansion.⁴

It outclassed all the smaller houses along the street with its ornately decorated interior. Red velvet drapes hung at all the windows to hide the girls from non-paying voyeurs.⁵ Countless times the girls led panting men over the inlaid hardwood floors, up the staircase with the beautiful carved wood banister and into one of the ten rooms, completely neglecting to appreciate the beauty surrounding them.⁶

Dave King owned most of the Mulberry Street resorts.⁷ He hired competent madames to run the houses and care for the girls. Each madame handled all the business transactions concerning her house and its inmates. She collected fees, paid bills and made sure the girls never lacked for the necessities of the trade.⁸ Visitors preferred to call their favorite house by the madame's first name rather than the street address -- Mabel's place, Edith's place or Minnie's place.⁹

Although the good men and women of Owensboro claimed they never laid eyes on Mulberry Street they always knew about the activities occurring therein and enjoyed gossiping about them with the neighbors.¹⁰ They seldom referred to the houses as whorehouses before innocent little children. Women substituted the words "Nanny House,"¹¹ while men preferred the term "Sporting House."¹² Regardless of what parents called the palaces of ill repute, they repeatedly warned their children to stay away from North Mulberry Street. The children received instructions to run, not walk, whenever passing the street became unavoidable.¹³

Teenage girls needed no warnings from their parents. They feared being kidnapped, forced to work as a prostitute and dying without anyone knowing what happened to them. Therefore, they stayed far, far away from Mulberry Street.¹⁴

Probably irritated with the snickering whenever they gave their address as Mulberry Street, the families living south of Second decided the street required a new name. In July 1913, the thoroughly outraged citizens presented a petition to the City Council. The petition, signed by nearly every South Mulberry Street resident, demanded a new street name. Every Councilman present attempted to be the first to move that Mulberry be renamed. The totally sympathetic Council passed the motion unanimously.¹⁵

The city ordinance changing the street name received final approval on August 19, 1913. Section 1 of the ordinance changed Mulberry Street south of Second to the city limits to Cedar Street. The area north of Second remained Mulberry Street.¹⁶

M. pointed out that the hypocrisy of fathers, businessmen, police and other respectable citizens. They passed laws against prostitution and warned their children about the evils lurking in Mulberry Street, yet many of these pillars of society frequented the immoral resorts as much as any unscrupulous character.¹⁷ They slipped down back streets after dark to preserve their shell of respectability.¹⁸

Cab drivers discreetly delivered potential customers to Mulberry Street resorts. They received one-third of the girls one to two dollar take for their efforts at hustling.¹⁹

Boats docking along the Owensboro bank of the Ohio River meant a very lucrative evening for the immoral resorts. After their womanless journey, the men welcomed an opportunity for a few good times. Wine, women and song -- or rather hard liquor, nickelodeon music and paid-for women satisfied the men during their shore leave.²⁰

Naturally, the girls expected business to be excellent during the yearly tobacco market. Each year, the county farmers brought wagons filled with good Kentucky tobacco to Owensboro for sale at auction. Faced with the choices of sleeping in the wagon, going to a hotel alone or going to Mulberry Street, many chose Mulberry Street. The farmers seeking a soft bed with a warm companion hurried down to Mulberry Street, paid the price and spent a night or two or three.²¹

Names and faces changed as the years passed, but major activities of Mulberry Street inmates remained the same. Each girl acquired a nickname, which probably described one of her special characteristics. The girls' nicknames included Little Bit, Big Mary, Leapin' Lena, Teddy Bear and Step-and-a-half.²²

Methods of procuring girls today remains much the same as

methods at the turn of the century. Country girls coming to the big city searching for glamor and excitement headed straight for Mulberry Street.²³ The "Big Man" added girls of all ages and types to his houses. A forlorn looking youngster, without a penny to her name, was very easy prey. She could easily be persuaded to join the ranks with a promise of good clothes, food and a place to live.²⁴

During daylight hours the girls dressed very fashionably. They wore high heeled, button up shoes with baby doll toes and lots of furs and jewelry. B. compared their general appearance to Miss Kitty on "Gunsmoke." Many wore a black beauty spot on the face to look sexy and alluring. Their gorgeous taffeta dresses, sewn in a variety of colors, had full skirts, long sleeves with lace around the wrists and lace decorating the neckline.²⁵ Prior to World War I the girls wore their hair long or in a fancy braid.²⁶ Short hair styles gained in popularity during World War I. The marcel style appealed to many of the girls. This style consisted of very short hair with regular waves covering the head. At times the girls added a few spit curls to enhance their beauty.²⁷

Surely some of the good women folk of Owensboro envied the girls' beauty and magnificent clothing. According to B. the girls were strikingly beautiful and varied in size from slender to heavy.²⁸ Their age ranged from eighteen to thirty. They seldom worked after age thirty, their enticing features began to fade rapidly at that age.²⁹

At dusk, alluring finery replaced the fashionable day clothing. Each dress revealed a physical aspect which enhanced the girl's charms. Low cut backs, plunging necklines and slinky material clinging to every voluptuous curve were a few methods used to attract a customer.³⁰ One Mulberry Street girl had her dress constructed to reveal her extremely large breasts. Of course, the material snugly fitted her curves, but she added, maybe I should say subtracted, something from her evening gown. She removed the front panel which covered her breasts and substituted a thin veil. Dressed in this manner, she enticed the men by giving them a peck at the merchandise before they doled out cold, hard cash for her services.³¹

Primarily the girls conserved all their strength and energy for their evening activities. However, after recuperating from a night of hard labor they might go shopping or driving. Since the townspeople abhorred the idea of mixing with prostitutes the girls shopped in Owensboro only when absolutely necessary. On those occasions, all the girls, under the madame's supervision, traveled downtown to purchase the items which could not be delivered. The girls, plus their madame, always patronized McAtee's shoe department where they received prompt and courteous service.³²

The madame ordered just about everything else, including groceries

and drugs delivered to the house. She acted as mother to the girls providing all food, clothing and whenever necessary health care. She also made sure the black maids kept the girls' rooms, clothing and the rest of the house neat and orderly.³³

The girls worked only at night. Their daylight tasks consisted of simply lounging around looking pretty. When the girls tired of sitting on the front porch the chauffeur took them for an afternoon drive in the Hudson. These trips served a twofold purpose -- the girls immensely enjoyed the change of scenery while the madame enjoyed the free advertising.³⁴ Surely, any man catching a quick glance at an intriguing face would follow up on the sneak preview to take a gander at the rest of her charming body.

At the turn of the century Mulberry Street visitors adapted an old railroad song as the streets theme song. It accurately described the beginning of a typical evening at a Mulberry Street resort.

First you ring the bell and then you ask for
Anna . . .

Down the line
Anna comes down in a pink komona (sic)
Down the line . . .

All dolled up in powder and cologne
Down the line . . .

First you spend the dollar for a couple of
rounds of beer
Down the line . . .

Then a dime for music that you want to hear
Down the line . . .

Then a couple of dollars for a couple of
weeks of beer
Down the line . . .

An evening of fun and entertainment began with the madame scrutinizing each potential customer before they entered her house. She rejected those too young, the moneyless or the troublemakers.³⁶ Once

inside, the madame escorted the caller into the parlor where they engaged the girls in social chit-chat.³⁷ They purchased drinks for their favorites and kept dance music flowing through the room by feeding nickels to the nickelodeon.³⁸

After a caller selected his companion for the evening he approached the madame to pay for his forthcoming entertainment. She acquired of each gentleman, "French or Regular?" Upon their answer she charged appropriately-- one dollar for regular, two dollars for French or three to four dollars for an all night visit.³⁹ With the business transaction completed the couple retired to the girl's upstairs room.

The big boss forbade the girls to roll any man. A girl caught rolling her John received a beating. A girl learned very quickly not to steal from the customers.⁴⁰

Many customers formed special attachments for a girl. An ironic example of this involved the lover who berated his paid date for smoking because it was unhealthy. Evidently, the gentlemen thought prostitution the lesser of the two evils.⁴¹

Most girls dream about finding Mr. Right and settling down. Prostitutes were no exception. In many cases a girl worked several years, fell in love with a customer, answered yes to his marriage proposal and lived happily and normally everafter. According to C. several girls married millionaires and are worth a small fortune today.⁴²

However, happiness flitted just out of reach like a butterfly for other girls. An unhappy experience prompted Grace Foster, an inmate of a Mulberry Street house, to attempt suicide. Her evening passed quite joyfully until she and her male friend retired to her room. Soon after retiring they quarreled. Depressed over her lover's departure and vow of never returning, Grace decided to commit suicide. She swallowed a large quantity of laudanum, desiring death, rather than a life without her lover. Fortunately, the other girls discovered the semiconscious Grace and called a doctor, who successfully administered an antidote.⁴³

Harry, a salesman for a Louisville, Kentucky clothing house enjoyed the Mulberry Street entertainments until the money ran out -- the company money. During his Owensboro business trip he spent the evenings with a fast set of young men. On Sunday evening they visited a Mulberry Street dive, where Harry insisted that they enjoy themselves at his expense. Big time spender Harry grew despondent as he realized he had spent all the company money and attempted to slit his own throat with a pocketknife. His friends foiled the suicide attempt and collected enough money among themselves to repay a portion of the amount he had spent on them.⁴⁴

A male bouncer or the stout madame usually handled any problem arising with boisterous customers. All the women attempted to keep

trouble to a minimum within the houses. No trouble meant less problems with police and other city officials.⁴⁵

City policemen knew every Mulberry Street inmate by name. Being assigned to Mulberry Street entailed walking through the houses every two hours checking for disturbances, breaking up fights and handling any situation too difficult for the inmates to handle themselves.⁴⁶

Policemen visited Mulberry Street officially and unofficially. They were not adverse to creating a little ruckus themselves during an unofficial visit. M. related a story concerning a huge policeman who enjoyed sitting and talking with the girls. One evening a girl retorted very smartly to the officer. In retaliation for her rudeness, he picked the girl up by the heels, spread her legs and used her "bread and butter" as a spittoon for his wad of chewing tobacco.⁴⁷ Needless to say, the girl resented this action, but I bet she never crossed the man again.

Policeman also acquired the duty of arresting girls who failed to appear for their weekly check up. A doctor appointed by the city examined each girl for venereal disease and filed a report on her condition. Failure to keep an appointment led to immediate police arrest and a few days in jail. If the doctor discovered any venereal disease the girl remained in jail for the public's safety.⁴⁸

The doctor issued each healthy girl a card stating she did not have a venereal disease and the date of her examination. The girls were required to place the cards on their dresser.⁴⁹ Any disease-conscious patron clearly saw the card and knew the odds for contracting a venereal disease was very slim. His relief allowed him to enjoy his date and return home without worrying about spreading a social disease.

Although an 1898 city ordinance declared prostitution and houses of ill repute unlawful,⁵⁰ the sex business flourished in Owensboro. The police turned a blind eye on their activities until the girls stepped way out of line or the townspeople demanded action against the unlawful establishments. In May 1905 police arrested Marion Wilson, Minnie Aldridge and Daisy Ross, all three keepers of immoral resorts, for selling beer without a city license. It was the first time a case of this type ever came to trial in police court.⁵¹ However, since the madames pleaded guilty to running immoral houses the judge filed away the charge and fined them fifty dollars each.⁵²

In January 1907 Mayor O'Bryan ordered Chief of Police Meishenheimer to instruct his men to notify the girls that remaining in Owensboro meant weekly raids. The order resulted from a grand jury recommendation that the houses be raided weekly. If the officers refused to comply with the recommendation, the grand jury suggested returning indictments against the men for neglecting their duties. City authorities preferred a total closing of the houses to instituting weekly

raids or being indicted by the grand jury.⁵³ The girls departed in droves. Both Saturday evening trains departed Owensboro filled with prostitutes. Quiet reigned for the first time in many years at the Mulberry Street houses.⁵⁴

As the situation cooled down Mulberry Street returned to its normal activities. M. recalled 1912-1919 as Mulberry Streets most prosperous years. M. stated that Police Chief Ollie O. Haynes successfully closed the houses and chased all the girls out of town.⁵⁵ Haynes declared war and began cracking down on immoral resorts shortly after taking office on January 1, 1918. His co-worker, Judge Pinkston supported his efforts by levying stiff fines against those convicted of running immoral resorts.⁵⁶

By January 19, 1918 the grand jury had indicted ten women for maintaining a nuisance. The five who resided in Mulberry Street -- Minnie Aldridge, Jessie Westerfield, Mabel Carr, Edna Bell and Cora LaVarde -- were placed under bond and held over to the May court term.⁵⁷ In May each madame pleaded guilty and received a fine ranging between seventy-five and one hundred dollars.⁵⁸

In September Minnie, Edna, Jessie and Mabel appeared before the grand jury again, charged with three counts -- nuisance, selling liquor without a license and selling liquor to minors.⁵⁹ During police court in November Jessie, Edna and Mabel received twenty-five dollar fines for conducting immoral houses.⁶⁰ Minnie, back in the news on Christmas Day, received a twenty-five dollar plus court cost fine for operating an immoral resort.⁶¹ Throughout 1918 Haynes kept the girls in court almost as much as their customers kept them in bed.

Little did the girls know that on January 7, 1919 in Daviess Circuit Court they would put themselves right out of business. On that day Minnie, Edna, Mabel, Cora and Jessie entered pleas of guilty to the usual indictment which read in part:

... she did knowingly procure, suffer and permit divers and sundry lewd persons both men and women of evil name and fame to assemble and congregate who remained in said house drinking, tippling, cursing, whoring and indulging in other vulgar and disorderly conduct unknown to the grand jury, and have sexual intercourse one with another, said persons not being married one to the other, to the common nuisance of all the good citizens of the Commonwealth of Kentucky...

Each madame paid her fifty dollar fine and returned to work.⁶²

Chapter Sixty-one of the *1918 Acts of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky* required the County Attorney or the commonwealth's Attorney to institute injunction proceedings against anyone pleading guilty to operating an immoral resort.⁶³ Saturday, February 1, 1919 Claude Smith and Herman Birkhead, Commonwealth and County Attorneys respectively, filed injunctions asking for an order of abatement against Mabel Carr, Minnie Aldridge, Edna Bell, Dave and Edith King, Jessie Westerfield and Cora LaVarde.⁶⁴

Following the filing of the injunctions Mulberry Street residents arranged to dispose of all their furniture, musical instruments and household goods.⁶⁵ Abatement proceedings required the above mentioned items be sold by the state to pay court costs and that the houses remain closed for one year.⁶⁶ The girls kept city transfer wagons busy until very late, moving furniture and personal belongings. The Samuel-Bittel Music store quickly reclaimed the sixteen electric pianos on which they held mortgages. The threat of abatement proceedings and Mayor Calhoun's instructions for police to make sure all the girls left town prompted much of the hurried disposal of goods and departures.⁶⁷

The *Owensboro Daily Messenger* lamented the loss of revenue for the city with the end of immoral houses;

The operation of immoral houses in Owensboro has been a source of considerable revenue to several agencies. In addition to paying fines two or three times a year, the greater portion of which went to the prosecuting attorneys, the women have been very liberal customers at the stores and shops of Owensboro. Nice profits were realized by the three taxi-cab companies in Owensboro, and the current furnished by the city amounted to no little sum.⁶⁸

Judge Slack granted temporary injunctions in the abatement cases against Edna, Mabel, Cora and Minnie.⁶⁹ They could gain the release of their property from the order of abatement by posting the required bond, receiving approval by the court and proclaiming the property would not be used for immoral purposes.⁷⁰ Evidently Minnie Aldridge complied with the terms and retained her home at 104 Mulberry Street. Her name never appeared in the criminal courts after the January 1919 case.⁷¹ She continued to reside at her Mulberry Street home until 1926.⁷² In 1926 her name disappeared from the city directory and another person was listed as the owner of 104 Mulberry.⁷³

Beginning with the *1920 Owensboro City Directory* people with

printable professions were listed as home owners of the famous Mulberry Street immoral resorts.⁷⁴ Throughout the 1920's the houses changed hands continuously. Many were rented as apartment houses and during the Depression even the coal sheds were rented to homeless families.⁷⁵

Although Mulberry Street houses were used for lawful purposes after 1919 the street still retained its bad reputation. Street walkers and drugs became the problems on Mulberry Street between 1920 and 1939. Street walkers blatantly grabbed men by the elbow and invited them to join them, for a price.⁷⁶ Many girls simply begged for twenty-five cents to help support their drug habit. Girls from prominent families moved into the area, hoping to earn enough money as street walkers to purchase drugs.⁷⁷ Prior to and during World War I white mule and home brew were the problems, not drugs.⁷⁸

The town slop dump stood in the middle of the intersection of First and Mulberry Streets. Above the slop dump hung a solitary lightbulb which came on at dusk. As evening fell girls attired in their finest dresses gathered at the slop dump. Eventually seven to twelve girls presented themselves under the light at the slop dump. Everyone knew about the slop dump whores so potential customers arrived quickly. The girl's price attracted many customers -- two bits -- one quarter for a fun filled evening. Their price earned them the nickname of two bit whores and the reputation of being the cheapest thrill in town. Police ignored their activities until ten o'clock. Anyone caught soliciting after ten received a trip to jail and a fine.⁷⁹

According to the late Police Chief Vernie Bidwell, venereal disease and drugs were the downfall of Mulberry Street. Police drove the drug traffic from the area and prostitutes followed soon after.⁸⁰ By 1939 Mulberry Street was only a memory -- all the houses and girls had vanished.

Were the Mulberry Street resorts really so bad when compared to the street walkers? No! The madame in the houses of ill repute supervised her girls, took care of them and made sure they visited the doctor regularly. However, street walkers carried venereal disease and drug habits whenever they went. Weighing all the advantages and disadvantages tips the scale in favor of organized prostitution. C.O.Y.O.T.E., P.O.N.Y. and A.S.P.**, all flourishing prostitutes unions, may not be such a bad idea after all.⁸¹

**Acronyms for Call Off Your Old Tired Ethics, Prostitutes of New York and Associated Seattle Prostitutes.

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Seamstresses, Strumpets and Servants:
Women's Work in Owensboro in the 1870's
by Lee A. Dew

In the 1870's "women's work" had changed little from the time of the Old Testament. For farm women their lives were ones of unremitting toil dictated by families, crops and seasons. For urban women there were the basic economic roles which had existed since time began. The economic role of urban women was dictated by social class and race, and limited by tradition, culture and religion. There were few occupations which were open to women - occupations which would have been familiar to Tutankhamon or Moses or Hammurabi - and these occupations were further limited by class consciousness and social acceptability.

An analysis of the census records of Owensboro, KY for the Census of 1870 shows that "women's work" fell into three distinct categories. For white women the main acceptable occupation was that of seamstress, with minor fields such as milliner included in this category. There were fifty-one women listed as seamstresses in Owensboro in 1870, out of a total population of 3,437. While the census did not break down the city population into white and black, the numbers for Daviess County were 17,111 white and 3,603 black. Presuming the same relative proportion, which is probably fairly accurate, the city's black population was about 700, but it was probably somewhat higher. With a white population of about 2,700 it can be extrapolated that there were perhaps 1,500 children in this total, leaving 1,200 adults, somewhat more than half of which were female, for a total white female adult population of somewhere in the neighborhood of 650 adult white women in Owensboro. That this number of potential customers could furnish employment for 51 seamstresses indicates the generally low income level of this group of women, and the pre-industrial nature of the times. Clothing was made by hand. Industrialization provided good quality piece goods, offered for sale by several Owensboro merchants, but ready-made clothing had not yet made its appearance in the marketplace. With 650 white women, this is an average of only 12 adult female customers per seamstress. Of course, these women did most of their sewing for children, as well as making men's shirts and undergarments, but this small total population base indicates that most seamstresses lived at the poverty level. The census shows few of them with any listed property, either real or personal.

Black working women were much worse off. One hundred fifty black women were listed as servants in the census. Out of a total adult black population of less than 500, this meant that the majority of black women

were employed as servants. A total of 203 black women had occupations listed in the census, which indicates that the overwhelming majority of black women worked to support themselves and their families. Many black families were single-parent households headed by women, and, when both husband and wife were included in the family, it was not uncommon for both to be employed as servants and listed with their employers family in the census, thus indicating that they lived at the same address.

Other black female occupations also fit into the "servant" class but were listed separately. Then young black females were listed as "nurses," meaning nursemaids. Two of these were nine years old, and all of the others were teenagers. Most were live-in servants in white households, but a few lived at home and worked by the day. Twenty black women gave their occupation as "cook." Most of these were listed with white households, but some cooked professionally in restaurants and hotels.

Other black women maintained independent businesses. There were eighteen black women who worked as washer-women, a full-time occupation in the days before the laundromat and the washing machine. White families who could afford this service send their laundry "out" to be done, while bachelors usually had neither the time nor facilities to perform such complex operations as boiling starch, preparing bluing, heating irons to just the right temperature, and similar arcane skills that were the stock in trade of the washer-woman.

Other traditional employment was open to black women. There was one black house of ill repute in Owensboro, and three women were listed as residents. The "madam" was a sixty-year old, who boasted of \$100 in personal property. Her "girls" were aged 26 and 20. No children were listed as residents of this address. Unmarried black men might also have taken advantage of the services offered by another black female entrepreneur, listed as operating a boarding house.

Black schools were just being established in Owensboro at this time, and one black woman was listed as a schoolteacher. Thus, except for the teacher and the boarding-house keeper, the black women of Owensboro, five years after Emancipation, were employed in the same tasks which they performed during slavery, and, among these women, it is ironic that, except for the Madam, few had any personal property or real estate of any kind. They were totally dependent upon their wages for their survival, and many went to work full-time at a very early age. Adolescence was an unknown luxury for most black women in the 1870's.

White working women fared little better. While the seamstresses, eaking out their meager but socially acceptable livings, constituted

some 40 percent of the 135 employed white women, other occupations were also represented. Thirty-nine white women worked as servants in Owensboro in 1870, and, while most of this economic group would have been foreign-born in many areas of the nation, in Owensboro they were overwhelmingly native-born. Only seven white servants were born in other countries; one each were from Scotland, France, Hesse-Darmstadt and Wurtemberg, while three were from Ireland, including one who listed her occupation as "housekeeper" for a convent of Nuns.

Schoolteachers constituted the next group of white working women. Eighteen women gave this as their occupation, although seven of this group were nuns who operated a school. This left eleven white women employed as schoolteachers, compared to a total of fourteen men who listed this as their occupation.

The next-largest occupation for white women was that of prostitute. Six white houses of prostitution were identified in the census, each operated by a madam whose occupation was unflatteringly listed as "keeping whore house." Without exception these were women of property. One woman, a 38-year-old, was shown as possessing real estate worth \$2,000 and personal property of \$100, the second richest woman in her own right in Owensboro in 1870. Another madam boasted personal property worth \$500, while another had property worth \$300, and employed an 18-year-old black girl as a servant. Other madams included a 24-year-old Irish girl with property worth \$200, and native-born women with property valued at \$250 and \$100. Clearly there was money to be made in prostitution, since no other occupation listed in the census so consistently showed their practitioners to be women of property.

For the girls who worked in the houses, life was harder. None were listed as property-owners, and most were very young. Of the sixteen white women listed in the census as "strumpet" one was 15 years of age, two were 16, and three were 18 years old. The oldest working prostitute was 24, and several listed children as dependents, living at the same address as the mother and madam.

Other white women had more respectable occupations. Two women worked as weavers, but whether they did hand weaving at home or worked at the Owensboro Woolen Mill Company is not clear. One white woman was listed as a waitress, an English girl, but whether this was in a restaurant or saloon was not listed. Probably she worked in a saloon, since restaurants used black male waiters.

The richest woman in Owensboro was a white hotel-keeper, who had property worth \$20,000 in real estate, and other \$3,000 worth of personal property. This was twenty years before the Kentucky General

Assembly passed a law permitting women to own property in their own right, so this was a most unusual case. Probably this woman had inherited her hotel and personal property from her husband, and was able, through social position, to maintain it free of guardianship as would be expected in such cases.

Of the approximately 650 white women in Owensboro, 135 were employed, slightly more than 20 percent, while of the black women, the preponderant majority were dependent upon their labor for their survival. While the vast majority of white women listed "homemaker" as their occupation, few black women could afford the luxury. While most white children were under the direct care of their mothers, most black children were not, since even though the child might live in the same household as the other and her white employers, the mother's primary responsibility was to her job, not her children.

Thus the parent-child relationships established under slavery continued after emancipation for black families, while white families were much more able to maintain what white society considered to be the "traditional" family unit, although this was determined by one's economic position. Poor white mothers found themselves in the same position as did poor black women. Their children had to take second place to the imperatives of economic necessity. Poverty, as always, made children suffer.

There is always a problem with using statistics such as the census for a study of this sort, since large numbers of people "fall through the cracks." The census failed to take into consideration any part-time work performed by women of either race, although there were probably many women of both races who performed such labor as part-time maids, needleworkers or whores. Among prostitutes, for example, it was only the inmates of the houses who were listed as "strumpet." The census made no mention of those individuals who did not work in the recognized houses of the red-light district.

Although they did not know it at the time, the women, black and white, respectable and "fallen," who were employed in the traditions of "women's work" in the 1870's were among the last to be so restricted. The industrial revolution, which would transform so much of American life after 1870, transformed the economic role of women in Owensboro as well. By the turn of the century women were engaged in a wide variety of occupations undreamed of by their mothers thirty years earlier. And, although their economic status hardly improved and they were consistently paid substantially less than men, their credibility as vital contributors to the economic well-being of the community increased drastically. Once men began to take women seriously as contributors to the vibrant economic life of the community, they also had to take them

seriously when they began to demand changes in their social and political position as well.

By 1910 Owensboro was a quite different place than it had been in 1870. Its population had soared to 16,011, a whopping increase of 466 percent over 1870. This placed Owensboro sixth among the cities of the Commonwealth, up from tenth in 1870. The years between 1870 and 1910 were years of great growth for Owensboro, growth based largely on the emergence of the city as a major manufacturing and industrial center.

As an identifiable group, women benefited more by this growth than any other group. Blacks generally benefited least, although black males found jobs as laborers, teamsters, and tobacco workers. Black women, on the other hand, had few additional opportunities. White women found all sorts of new doors opening to them, with growing responsibilities in the worlds of industry, business and communications.

Education was the first growth industry for women, with the spread of public schools and with the development of high schools. Whereas most educators, except for parochial schools, were males in 1870, most of the faculty of the Owensboro public schools were female by the 1900's. Teaching remained the sole occupation for educated women, and women were being educated by 1900. Kentucky Wesleyan College, for example, admitted its first "young ladies" in 1892. The establishment of the Owensboro City Hospital furnished employment for nurses - not the nursemaids of 1870 but trained care-givers, complete with uniforms and with a status which the emerging profession treasured.

Although countless sermons were preached against the practice, women were also assuming greater roles in offices, working alongside men. The invention of the typewriter created a new female occupation, while other women studied the new-fangled writing called shorthand, and became stenographers. A few were also employed as clerks, responsible for filing the growing mass of paperwork, and as book-keepers, usually superintended by males. Most offices, especially in the traditionally male-oriented industries such as distilling and wagon-making, employed no females, but other pioneering employers recognized that the changing technology of the business world was creating a unique role best filled by the female typist rather than the male clerk.

Another technology was, by 1900, the exclusive preserve of women. The telephone business was a major employer of females as operators and supervisors. Owensboro had two telephone companies, the Cumberland and the Home, both of whom employed women in their main switchboards in Owensboro and in auxiliary switchboard facilities in the small communities around the county.

While the "telephone girls" were familiar to most people, at least those who picked up the receiver, turned the crank, and heard the feminine voice inquiring "Number, please," it was the female factory workers who were the greatest economic pioneers of the day. Many industries refused to employ women at all, either because of the nature of the work, as in wagon factories, or because of sociological implications, religious constraints, or the inherent conservatism of many employers. But for those employers who utilized women as production workers there were the rewards of efficient and conscientious service at a fraction of the pay scales men demanded.

The Kentucky Electric Company was the largest single employer of women in Owensboro in factory production. Thirty women worked on the Kentucky Electric assembly line assembling light bulbs, such as those furnished by the company to illuminate the Pan American Exposition at Buffalo, N.Y. in 1901. The women were paid on a piece-work basis, a common practice for the day, and received wages which varied from \$4.50 per week to \$9.00 per week, according to their efficiency. This compares to a standard wage for men in factory work of between \$1.25 and \$2.50 per day in similar industries in Owensboro.

The other large industrial employer of women was the Ames Buggy Company, the largest privately-owned buggy manufacturing plant in the country. Ames exported buggies to Cuba, Central America and the West Indies as well as to a large domestic market. Ames employed women as upholsterers and stitchers, making seats and tops for his many lines of passenger vehicles. The company bragged that it employed only "good-looking young ladies" in this department.

While the number of women engaged in manufacturing was small, it was significant none the less. By 1914 the census reported that Owensboro had 62 manufacturing plants of all types. These plants employed 112 male and 41 female clerks, and 899 male and 64 female production workers, including five females under the age of 16. Thus by 1914 women comprised more than one-third of the office force and seven percent of the production labor in Owensboro's manufacturing plants. This compares to Kentucky as a whole, where women held 21.8 percent of the office jobs and 14.9 percent of the manufacturing jobs. It must be noted that the largest category of women in manufacturing, however, was in the garment industry, which was not represented in Owensboro. Statewide 32.3 percent of the factory workers in 1914 were under the age of 16, while this number in Owensboro was insignificant.

By the early years of the twentieth century the women of Owensboro were on the march - not only to the factory gate and the office door, but to the political rally as well. With their changing economic role came increasing activism and agitation, as women vowed to bring changes to

their community and to themselves.

Women came into their own constitutionally with the passage of the nineteenth amendment. Their existance was finally recognized by the supreme law of the land. Some of the working girls of 1870 lived to vote in 1920, living witnesses to a greater period of change in the status of their sex than in all the ages of mankind which preceeded it. Women's credibility as human beings was predicated, I would suggest, on their changing economic role. Working women, in the new jobs which industrilization provided, made female activism not only possible, but imperative. And once begun, the struggle for women's equality would not soon be abandoned.

Editor's Note: This article is one of a series published by *The Messenger* in 1901. This story was published on May 19.

Few Owensboro people realize what a treasure the city has in the Kentucky Electrical company's factory. All are now familiar with electricity in some of its varied uses, and it is difficult to realize that even twenty years ago there was but one such in the whole world, and that was inferior to the Owensboro concern. Now there are twenty in the United States.

The company was organized two years ago by Mr. A. H. Kreidler, the present secretary and manager. When asked how he happened to come to Owensboro he replied that he "just heard it was a good place and came." The company is incorporated, the following being the directors: E. T. Franks, J. G. Delker, Chas. Werner, Jas. H. Parrish, A. H. Kreidler and A. L. Parrish.

The following are the officers: E. T. Franks, president J. G. Delker, vice-president; A. H. Kreidler, secretary and manager, and A. L. Parrish, treasurer.

Miss Jennie Weldon is the efficient stenographer and book-keeper.

A description of the process of making the useful incandescent electric globes will be interesting.

The initial work done in the globe department is to cut the glass tubes, which are four feet long and three-eighths of an inch in diameter, into lengths corresponding to the inside of the incandescent lamp and to put a seven-eighths fringe on this shorter section of glass tube. The next step is to fasten a copper wire tipped with platinum into this fringed cylinder. Three girls are employed at this delicate work.

The fourth division of labor is the most delicate of all. In this there is a carbon or filament mount in which a critical search is made for spots or flaws in the wire. When these are found they are filled by the application of an infinitesimally small amount of purest carbon paste. In this search the delicate wires are handled with a small pair of metal tweezers, and the operator, in handling them, reminds one of the watchmaker, except that glasses are not needed.

The next process involves the punching of a hole in the bottom of the bulb for the purpose of attaching the fringed tube or "tubulating the

bulb," as it is called. This is very simple after one knows that heated glass can easily be punctured. The old method required the drilling of a hole with a metal punch, but now the air confined in the bulb expands and punctures, quite as accurately and more scientifically, the glass at the point of greatest heat, and this is easily caused to be just where it should be. These are the two methods of "tubulating." Following this the excess at the end of the bulb is "blown" off. This is done with a speed and accuracy that is the most perfect illustration of "glass blowing" proper in the whole factory.

Miss Jessie Barnes is the head of this department and does much of the blowing herself. After four months' experience she is able to "blow" 2,000 in a day, which is an unusual record.

The next process is the "sealing." One girl can handle about 1,200 in this way daily. Then comes the testing for "leaks" or defective work. This is done with a monometer, which is a machine that utilizes sulphuric acid and mercury. The mercury is used somewhat as in a thermometer to secure a perfect vacuum and the acid to rob the air of any moisture as it passes through.

In the pump room there are two girls sealing and one testing. The process of extracting the air is so efficient that though the contents of the globe is thirty cubic inches, twenty-nine and nine hundred-one-thousandths of it is free from air. In this testing the strain is at the rate of twenty-five candle-power for a globe that is to give sixteen-candle service.

The next operation is in a room in which the test is as in "life of a lamp." Here three dozen lamps are subjected to an intense electric heat for five minutes. Two girls are the operators here. The next test is by means of an induction coil to determine whether or not the vacuum in the globe is sufficiently true or not. This room is screened off so as to be almost dark. When there is any air whatsoever in the globe a purplish or blackish tint is given to the glass. It is at once set aside to be returned to the "sealing" room for better work.

One of the most interesting of the many tests is that for candle power, voltage and current consumption. This is made by a machine known as a photometer. Two girls operate this. It is about eight feet long. At one end is a "standard" bulb and at the other the globe that is to be tested. Eighty are "read" per minute and as they are read they are also marked, two numbers being used on each, written with a line between in fractional form. While the lamp is being tested it revolves slowly, so that every part of its surface may be of the requisite proof. After this trying test, which is final, the brass base is fitted on the globe with great nicety. A simple plaster-paris paste is used for this purpose and four girls apply it. These bases are purchased at a factory in Providence, R. I.

In all of the heating and melting operations, a gas jet is directed by a blast of air in any desired direction. Artificial gas is used in preference to natural gas, as it can be better regulated by air currents. This is why the newly developed natural gas regions, as in Northern Indiana, though they have furnished profitable sites for the manufacture of rougher glass wares, have furnished practically none for the finer work such as is done in the Owensboro factory.

Of the globes there are six sizes made here, known as 4, 6, 8, 16, 32 and 50 candle-power. The largest is five inches in length and the smallest two and a half inches. The usual life of a globe is 600 hours, but many of the Owensboro globes have been tried severely for 6,000 hours. Each globe goes through forty-seven distinct operations before it is finished, though the same person performs more than one of these. After it is finished it is carefully wrapped in tissue paper, packed in barrels and sells for about sixteen cents in barrel lots, 300 in a barrel. Orders for 8,000 have been received the past week.

The glass bulbs are made at Toledo, Ohio, by the Libby Glass company, who had the remarkably pretty and extensive exhibit at the World's fair. The material used is the very best, being the same as cut glass, when originally prepared, only one-third is fit for use in manufacturing the electric globes. The remainder is not wasted, but it is used in making inferior glass.

The girls who work in the factory, and there are thirty of them, are all paid by the piece. Their wages vary according to speed, the slowest or the most inexperienced being paid \$4.50 a week and the most skillful and the speediest receive \$9 per week. All these are Owensboro girls. In this department only two employees are engaged whose homes were not originally in Owensboro and who were not trained in the factory here. They are men and experts.

Mr. W. R. Armstrong, an expert glass blower from Cleveland, O., is superintendent of the glass department. He spent five years, from 1885 to 1890, in learning his business. He has a wife and two children and has made his home in Owensboro since coming here soon after the plant was started. He is a jovial, genial gentleman and those who think him incapable of joking with even more subtlety than he turns out his glassy product should get on such terms with him that he will resent one of his "favorite mementoes" which he, quite needlessly, tells you not to mention.

The product of the Owensboro factory is shipped in no special direction. The most notable shipments, however, have been to Buffalo, N. Y., where the globes are used for lighting the Pan-American exposition. For the electrical machinery the demand is not so great, but the mill is being worked to its full capacity at present. The greatest call for

this type of machinery comes from cotton mills, chiefly in the South, where so many new ones are being erected. Last week dynamos were furnished to boats at Pittsburg, Cincinnati and Evansville.

The machine shop is on the first floor and is in charge of Mr. A. W. Stuntz, who does all the designing and draughting. This department was established as an addition to the globe factory just one year ago, Mr. Stuntz being in charge ever since. He came here from Indianapolis where he had a position with the Jenny Electric company, but had experience before that with the Triumph company of Cincinnati and with other companies at other places.

The real work done here is the making of complete dynamos, which generate the electricity, and of motors, which apply it. The weighty iron frames which surround their more delicate parts are cast at the Southern Iron works here in Owensboro, but all the other parts are made in this shop.

These electric machines vary in size from a one-half to a fifteen horse-power. The largest are used in mills and factories and some of them on boats. A one-horse-power machine sells for about \$70 and each duplicate of this power costs a little less.

The business of this department is growing very rapidly. The shop is now cramped for space and only five workmen can be employed to advantage. Two of these, Mr. W. B. Ward, who came here from Richmond, Ind., and Mr. Arch Shingleton, who came from Cincinnati, are expert electricians and machinists. Charles Smith and Frank Walsh, machinists, and Taylor Lashbrooks, an apprentice, are Owensboro young men. Mr. J. B. Abel, also of Owensboro, is the engineer who oversees the boilers and furnaces and furnishes the power for the whole plant.

The reflection that Owensboro owes the existence here of the Kentucky Electrical company and its splendid plant to the fact that Mr. Kreidler, who came here and started it, "just heard it was a good town" should stimulate every man, woman and child who has Owensboro's and, therefore, their own welfare at heart, to talk up and even write up their home city's great advantages as a place for homes as well as for manufacturing sites. It should also stimulate the business men's organization to renewed activity. The tendency of capital and of organizing ability as well as of mechanical skill is southward. Owensboro is properly situated with advantages surpassed by none and equalled by few other cities. There may be other Kreidlers - those having all of his merits and good qualities socially and industrially - but there may be many such and they are out looking for inviting locations in a congenial clime. By all means let them "just hear of Owensboro."

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 Third Tuesday 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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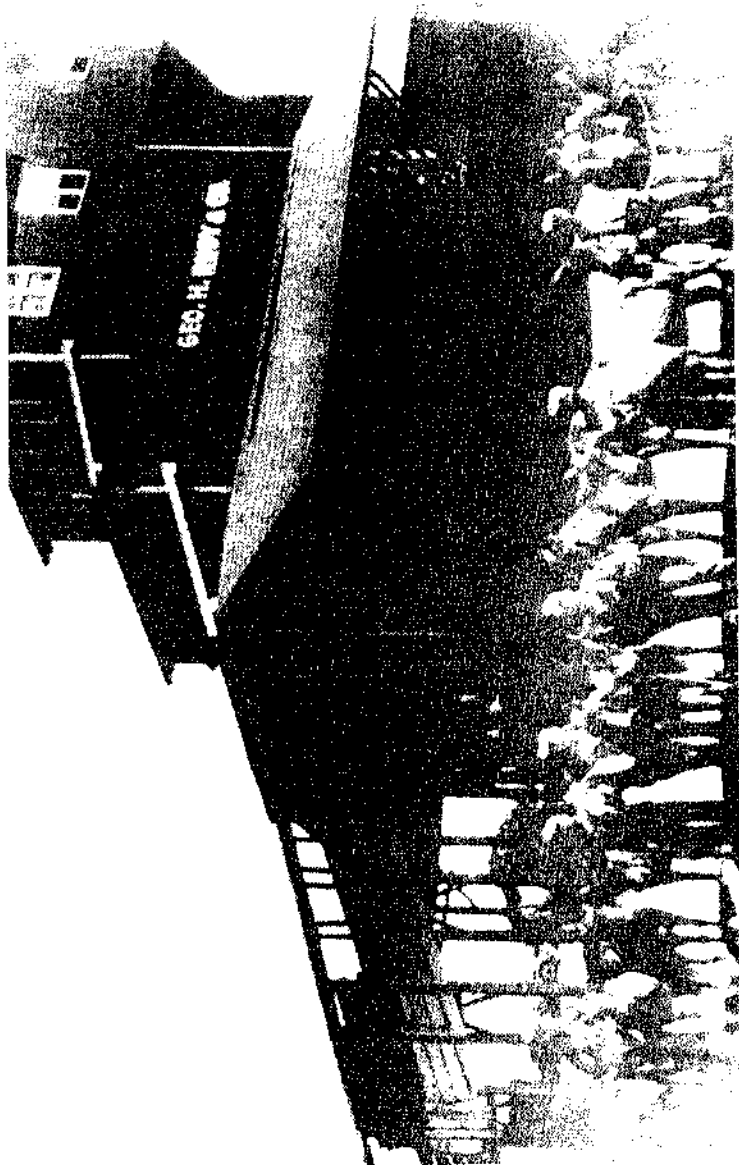
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The Editor's Page

This issue marks the end of a decade of publication for *The Daviess County Historical Quarterly*. That translates to a total of 960 pages of the history of our county, written by more than 60 authors, ranging from high school and college students to professional historians and dedicated local researchers. The essays cover subjects ranging from the geology of Daviess County to events in the 1970's and beyond, and cover the spectrum of categories from political and economic history to medical, social and women's studies. Everyone connected with the publication of *The Daviess County Historical Quarterly* can take pride in this accomplishment, and in the amount of local history which has been preserved and publicized.

An old friend of the Society leads off this issue. M. David Orrahood is one of the founding members, and we welcome this contribution. Grady Ebelhar's study of a coal mine tragedy is an illustration of how a single event can have significance as a part of a larger historical pattern—in this case the danger confronting underground miners in this area. Julie McPherson's essay, written when she was a student at KWC, illustrates how the everyday functions of government become subject for the historian's pen and need to be recorded and preserved even as they happen.

The article on the telephone systems of Daviess County is a part of the continuing practice of publishing interesting articles from old newspapers which illustrate conditions in the past in a cogent and readable way.



Miners, mules and ponies line up for the photographer at the George H. Rudy & Co. coal mine at Bon Harbor Hills. The date is not known. Can anyone help on this?

HUBERT MEREDITH: A Kentucky Lawyer

by

M. David Orrahood, M.D.

General Hubert Meredith was our remarkable Attorney General (1937-42), whose high pitched voice and piercing blue eyes are remembered and saluted as dearly today as when he died over 15 years ago. Here is a compilation of the facts, newspaper articles and stories which are told in Western Kentucky today.

"The old fire horse" was born in the Riverside Section of Richardville community, 20 miles north of Bowling Green. At this site along the Barren River, over 2000 neighbors in 1939 paid homage to the Attorney General of Kentucky who was the Democratic candidate for attorney general and sought election to the office which he then held.

The controversial advocate obtained his early education at the Bowling Green Public School and the Morgantown High School. He studied law at the Western State Normal School under the late H.H. Cherry and was admitted to the bar in May 1904.

Mr. Meredith hung out his first shingle in Paintsville, Kentucky and prosecuted two criminals. When the hoodlums threatened to shoot him on their release, he involuntarily withdrew from Muhlenberg County in 1905 informing the courthouse retinue that he had contracted the dread disease of "altiphobia". When asked to explain this derangement, he told the dumbfounded that it was "just another form of insanity I have".

"I don't need law books so much in Greenville as a meat cleaver" the young man told his disbelieving colleagues including R.Y. (Bob) Thomas, a fire-eater in his own right.

Young attorneys always found him impatient and a vigorous malefactor.

"I am just trying to pay back a lot I owe the old lawyers of my day", he trebled to a dismayed associate.

Mr. Meredith could stand four square on any cause, regardless of friendship. Once a long-time enemy in trouble sought his services through an intermediary.

Mr. Meredith asked "Why didn't he come himself?"

The messenger said, "he was afraid you wouldn't represent him."

Then Mr. Meredith answered, "If necessary arrangements can be made about the fee, I will handle it. Now you tell him this, that I practice for one thing only - fees - and I don't give a damn who pays them."

An astute critic once said of him, "Meredith would sacrifice a life-long friend, if it would help him win a case or prove a point."

Dr. L. P. Moore, Jr. of Owensboro knew the General from these early days and admired his scathing wit and ability to coin words.

A family by the name of Boggess was known to be wavering and maneuvering" Dr. Moore told me, "and the General would often cry out at such circumlocutions by others with the epitaph, 'Let's sign this contract; don't Boggess around!'"

Such pugnacious behavior often placed him in great personal danger. In spite of his young age, he rapidly gained the reputation of being able to win cases; a master at the art of defense in the criminal trial court. Now, the middle aged attorney was to turn the other side of the coin to appear as a vigorous prosecutor.

On November 8, 1921, Meredith was elected Commonwealth Attorney for the 7th Judicial District, comprising the counties of Muhlenberg, Simpson, Todd and Logan. Judge Doyle Willis, a former partner and classmate at law school, presided over the court. Later Meredith lived just across the street. Mr. Meredith let his hedge grow so tall he would not be bothered with sight of Judge Willis except in the court room.

During this period he gained wide publicity and fame by attacking and dissolving a powerful band of outlaws known as the "Possum Hunters". Many of its members were sent to the penitentiary while others fled from the state to avoid prosecution.

This fame caused other attorneys to call for the services of the "Lawyer's lawyer". He brilliantly defended the Garr Brothers in 1937 for the assassination of General H. H. Denhardt of Bowling Green when there was no hope of ever winning the case. Likewise he was equally resourceful in the case of three men accused of the Drakesboro Bank robbery and the Crick crowbar murder case.

Residents recall the "Water Filter Case" in which Fentress, a taxpayer, sued the government of Central City for failure to furnish pure drinking water to irrigate his peach orchard. Meredith won the case, the first in a series of cases against entrenched power.

Meredith could be vindictive; he had been arguing with the Mayor of Greenville, L. B. Knight, and receiving no satisfaction. Finding that the Mayor had rented trucks to the City and improperly filled out the vouchers, he sued charging malfeasance in office. Meredith won the case. You see, Knight had joined with another old enemy, Judge Doyle Willis, to cast the votes which denied him the democratic nomination for the U. S. Congress. Meredith did not forget.

Clyde Watson tells me the story of the silent court room. A young woman had charged rape. The plaintiff attorney spent the morning painting the tragedy to the tears and groans of a full court room. The case appeared lost.

Mr. Meredith watching the grimaces of the jurors took the offensive before the noon hour. Approaching the bench, but speaking so his voice would carry all around, he advised that he was going to talk "plainly".

The court room emitted a long gasp, became a sea of plumed hats and rustling skirts, and then a silent tomb.

That afternoon, Mr. Meredith spoke to a more reasonable jury who was informed by a long parade of the General's witnesses that the girl had been their playmate of the decade. Further, the young man was noble and not at fault. A verdict of "not guilty" came back before sundown.

No one escaped his rapier, not even our own Kentucky Court of Appeal. Here are two instances.

In the famous alienation of affection case, a pretty plaintiff testified before the jury in a low cut dress and slit skirt. The masterful performance neither escaped the jury nor the General. Meredith wrote in his appeal that the case was not lost on its merits so much as by an implied promise of the plaintiff that each juror would be paid in turn on the rendering of that favorable verdict.

The other appeal deals with a case which the General lost in the court of Judge Willis. At the same time, another Willis, no relation to the Judge, was on the Court of Appeal. In an appeal which almost resulted in his being held in contempt of court Mr. Meredith wrote, "the trouble with the courts of Kentucky is that there are too many Willis' on them".

In the election of 1935, Meredith campaigned vigorously for Happy Chandler in his first fight against Thomas S. Rhea of Russelville. Among many interests of the Rhea family were the Southern Bank of Kentucky, a successor to the bank allegedly robbed by Jesse James in March 1868.

"The Bank of Russelville", Mr. Meredith said in the campaign, "has been robbed two times; once in 1868 by Jesse James, and again in 1930 by Thomas S. Rhea, when he became president.

Chandler won that election and later mused, "how could I lose, with Beckham building me up and Meredith tearing down my opposition."

In 1937 when Beverly Vincent resigned from his elected position as Attorney General for the State of Kentucky to become Congressman for the 2nd Congressional District, Chandler appointed Meredith to the position. L. B. Knight cast the vote in favor of the nomination of Vincent. Meredith accepted, filled out the year's term, and won re-election in 1938 by a vote of 80,000, a resounding victory. Records show, however, that he lost Muhlenberg by 800 votes.

On going to Frankfort, the General called his old enemy, Judge Doyle Willis, stating that he had 24 hours to get out of town or forfeit his judicial circuit. The next day the district was divided and Judge Willis had moved, in the middle of the night, to Russelville to keep his circuit. In this manner, Meredith got his revenge.

During this period, he had been characterized as a "loner" and "a

man who handled all cases by himself. He began attacks on Chandler who he characterized as a "political accident". These remarks did not rest easy on Mrs. Chandler who was an invective partisan when the interests of her husband were at stake.

One day she confronted the General in his office and gave him a severe dressing down but the battle was a rout. "Now, 'Momma,' the General told Mrs. Chandler as she was known, "you must calm yourself down. Then, my dear, you must get yourself to hell out of my office. If you are not out of this office by the time this sentence is through, I am going to throw your 'can' out of here."

This affront to Momma and the powerful Chandler was just beginning. Meredith started a string of suits which filled the newspapers and titillated readers for the next four years of the Keen Johnson administration. There has not been before or since, a more suit-minded Attorney General in the State of Kentucky.

Mr. Meredith busied himself with suing various members of the Johnson Administration for what he charged were illegal expenditures of the public fund; Victor Spalding, Uniontown editor, for drawing twenty-two months pay without, the Attorney General said, performing any services; Mr. Talbott for \$40,000 spent for "illegal out-of-state travel"; employees of Back Tax Collector Smith for making side contracts with various counties. The General was a close-in fighter.

When the pension case was being argued, one of the Special Court asked:

"Don't you think the Legislation might reward the courage of a Judge as well as the courage of a soldier on a battlefield?"

Mr. Meredith shot back:

"They might if they could find it. That is the sort of courage I am looking for in this court in the trial of this case." "I wager, Johnson in 1940 told Meredith on entering the mansion, "100 to 1 that all rumors against the department would be lies if investigated."

"I am not a gambler," Meredith replied and struck out again.

The cases were submitted by agreement to arbitration. Near the end of his term, the decision came back and Meredith lost. But the General was vindicated because the Republicans, under Simeon Willis, took control of the Governor's mansion.

Meredith came to Owensboro after leaving Frankfort and stayed until 1953 upon retirement. In 1945, he associated himself with two of his former assistants, Arthur T. Iler of Central City and Frank Logan of Greenville, in a firm known as Meredith, Iler and Logan. This firm was dissolved after about four years, when Mr. Logan joined a firm in Louisville. His fame had garnered a wide following and many cases, particularly coal disputes and distressed individuals who needed the right man. Rudolph Kramer, an Owensboro Attorney, associated himself with the

General on many of these cases. "Meredith preferred to handle all matters of defense or prosecution," Kramer told me, "he did not work well with others."

The log of cases of the United States District Court at Owensboro shows the General as attorney of record in 13 of a docket of 140 cases during this period. Mrs. Knox Loeffler, secretary of the court, informed me that this was more than any other man, excluding firms, and a heavy sizeable load of important cases.

Sidney Neal recalls that the General was asked to defend a man who had killed another at a local bar. "I don't know whether you killed this man or not but go home and find a suit of clothes with a knife tear and we'll plead self defense."

During the fall of 1955, the General's health fell precipitously and Amos Stone, editor of the *Messenger*, wrote his famous tribute appearing in the spring issue. On December 31, 1956, the General died at Muhlenberg Community Hospital. Records show that he was a victim of cardiovascular disease, an old myocardial infarct and complicating diabetes. Degenerative joint disease had lowered the commanding stature, (the General was actually a short man), and there was considerable weight loss. Blood pressure had been elevated 200/100, a mild form of hypertension.

Throughout his life, the General had been an active farmer with interests in large farms in McLean, Ohio, and Butler counties. His will left these properties to his sisters, one brother, and in-laws. The late Waldemar Bratcher, his executor, disposed of his meager library and personal belongings which had been greatly depleted by his many moves. His wife preceded him in death, of a stroke. He left no children.

Ernest Woodward, the Ohio County Historian and prominent Louisville attorney, wrote these words to friends of Mr. Meredith in the early 1950's.

"Your judgment on Mr. Meredith is sound and just; he really is a great man; one who never feared to punish the mob, when such action was unpopular, and with a knowledge of the law, and a brilliancy of advocacy that would have made him nationally famous if he had lived in New York, Chicago or Los Angeles. But Kentucky is a better state because he lived here."

Growing Old: A Celebration of Life
by Julie McPherson

Aging — a process that inevitably we approach. We cannot postpone it. We cannot stop it! It overcomes some of us slowly — others quickly. How we deal with this aging process depends on a lot of variables. What type of social class do we come from? Do we have family and friends to help us? Where do we live? The area of the country plays a large part in our aging process.

According to Marvin Koller, aging is truly synonymous with life. Americans have promoted and financed elaborate programs for the elderly. Koller added that youth long for longevity; however, we do not want to age. We all have a great deal of respect for the dignity and worth of human beings. We need to make that respect even higher for the elderly.

The State of Kentucky developed a Commission on Aging to establish state priorities concerning our elderly. The commission developed many statutes requiring districts to offer and promote services for the elderly. Among those that are outlined in Volume 9, Chapters 194 - 216B of the Kentucky Revised Statutes, range from Adult Protection to Statewide Discount programs for Senior Citizens. These statutes gave State and Local governments the responsibility that, in the past, the federal government had to be in charge of. The formation of Area Development Districts has helped State and Local governments deal with the challenge of providing services in an efficient and effective manner.

A lot of people might ask what an Area Development District is. An ADD, according to the League of Women Voters, is "a regional public agency, administered by local government officials and their nominees. An ADD is supported by public tax money, and is a development and a planning agency."

Green River Area Development District, whose central office is located in Owensboro, Kentucky, serves seven counties across Western Kentucky. The residents of Daviess, Hancock, Henderson, McLean, Ohio, Union, and Webster counties receive various services and aide from Green River Area Development District and their agencies. Organized in 1968, Green River Area Development District is a non-profit corporation chartered under Kentucky law. GRADD is supported by federal, state, and local funds. Green River Area Development is primarily the source from which various agencies receive funds. During 1986, GRADD, through its Area Agency on Aging, administered an estimated \$1,292,908 program for older adults in the seven-county area.

The primary agency, The Green River Aging Service, is sponsored by GRADD, and offers many activities and "help" for the elderly in the GRADD area. The Green River Aging Services works together with GRADD and the State government. The Kentucky Revised Statutes outlines the services that all communities must offer their elderly. In Kentucky, the KRS defines several statutes on care for the aged.

Adult Protection

The purpose of this statute is to provide care and protection of adults who may be suffering from abuse or neglect. This statute also requires that "those who know of such cases, shall report them to the cabinet; therefore, causing the protective services of the state to be brought to bear in an effort to protect the health and welfare of these adults."

Senior Citizen's Discount Program

This statute defines a Senior Citizen as "someone over 65 years of age." This statute establishes a discount program to provide Senior Citizens discounts on retail goods and services from merchants throughout the state.

Public Assistance

This statute consists of two separate issues which define services for those unable to manage their homes and themselves.

1. Chore Services - "Performance of heavy-house cleaning, minor household repairs, yard tasks, and other active needs to assist in the maintenance of a functionally impaired elderly person in his own home."
2. Core Services - "those services including, but not limited to client assessment and case management, designed to identify a functionally impaired elderly persons needs, develop a plan of care, arrange for services, monitor provision of services, and reassess person's needs on a regular basis. These services include home-delivered meals, home health services, and home-maker services."

Other statutes exist. However, I only outlined those that correlate with the services offered by Green River Area Development District and the Green River Aging Services.

Green River Aging Services, in an effort to comply with the provisions outlined by the Kentucky Revised Statutes, developed a great deal

of varying forms of programs and services for the elderly in the GRADD area. These programs are divided into three sections. They are Home Care, Meals Program, and Title Three.

Home Care

Home Care services are primarily geared toward Senior Citizens who are homebound because of disabilities, handicaps, or other causes. These services are available to help them continue living independently. Home Care services consist of ten categories. Chore services take care of minor home repairs, heavy house-cleaning, and yard tasks. Escort services offer someone (a volunteer) to accompany persons with disabilities to and from physicians, dentists, and other necessary trips. Friendly visiting promotes regular visits from a professional or volunteer to persons who are socially or geographically isolated. Home delivered meals are delivered on specific days to homebound persons and their spouses. The meals are nutritionally balanced. Regular visits from medical professionals offer needed medical services under the Home Health plan. Help in maintaining and safeguarding the functions of a person in their own home come under the Personal Care Section. Homemaker services offer assistance with general household activities, cooking, shopping, and personal care. Home repair services offer assistance in repairing and renovating minor problems in an older person's owned home. Telephone Reassurance is made through regular phone calls to people who live alone, or are temporarily alone, to make sure they are safe and well. The last category is Respite Care. This is the caring for an older person for a specific period of time to relieve those who normally provide the care.

The programs under the Home Care Section are available to Senior Citizens who legally qualify. The "legality" is based on their income and degree of disability. If the senior citizen's income is high enough, they are charged for the services they receive.

Meals Program

There are two categories in the Meals program in the GRADD area. The first is Congregate Meals. These meals are served at a Senior Citizen's Center in the different counties. There is at least one Senior Citizen's Center in every county. The congregate meals are nutritionally balanced meals served at lunchtime. These meals are usually served five days a week. All Senior Citizens in the area are welcome. The meals are free; however, a donation of one dollar per meal is suggested.

Although the meals are primarily to feed the Senior citizens, they

offer a lot more than fulfilling hunger. The "congregate" allows the elderly to come together and socialize. This opportunity to be with other people helps them avoid isolation. I talked to a few elderly people at the Elizabeth Munday Senior Center during the serving of the lunchtime meal. There were four particular ones with whom I spoke. They were involved in a game of rummy, and were having a wonderful time. One of the women told me that she cared less about the food. It was the chance to be with other people that drew her to the center at mealtime. She added that it gets awfully lonely when you're old and alone. Another couple that was at the center that day were celebrating their forty-eighth wedding anniversary. A few months before, they were preparing to get divorced. The trips to the Elizabeth Munday Senior Citizens Center got them away from their house and with other people.

In addition to providing the meals, the centers deliver workshops on proper diet and exercise.

The second category in the Meals Program is the Home-delivered meals. The delivering of these meals are on a donation basis, and offer a nutritionally balanced meal daily to those elderly exhibiting the need. The people who deliver the meals usually sit with the elderly person or persons while they eat and offer companionship and assistance.

Title Three

In 1984, Aging services to the elderly were expanded in several areas. Title three, or the "Older American's Act," developed various services that Green River Area Development District and Green River Aging Services together incorporated into our district. The services under Title Three are primarily geared towards assistance and education to Senior Citizens who are still able to function. However, they are lonely and isolated. Transportation services offer vehicles and drivers to help older persons go where they need to go — shopping, doctor visits, and Senior Citizen's Centers. Counseling services help the elderly cope with personal, social, and physical problems. Educational workshops have been developed to "train and inform older people about a variety of concerns, including health care, consumerism, and financial management."

Information about academic and vocational studies in the community are also made available to the elderly. To help individuals identify health needs, assistance with understanding procedures for private insurance, medicare, medicaid, and other programs, health screening services are offered. Local doctors and nurses volunteer time to give blood tests, physicals, and give information of possible diseases and health risks.

Information and Referral services give current information to

Senior Citizens on groups or persons who can help "older Kentuckians meet their needs and reach their goals." Recreation for the elderly offers various activities at local Senior Citizen's Centers. In Owensboro, the Elizabeth Munday Senior Center has a craft shop, which is completely run by Senior Citizens. They make and sell all the crafts. They hold dances and plan trips for the Senior Citizens in the community. One new activity sponsored by Green River Aging Services is Aquasize for the elderly. Green River Area Development received a \$75,000 grant awarded by the United States Administration on Aging. This money was used to establish the aquasize program.

Aquasize is exercise that is done in the water. The aquasize offers Senior Citizens the opportunity to socialize, reduces stress and depression, improves cardiovascular fitness, aids flexibility, and helps arthritis. According to Martha Hall, focal point director at Green River Aging Services, over two-hundred Senior Citizens have enrolled and participated in the Aquasize program.

One last service to the elderly assisted by Green River Aging Services and GRADD is the Older Kentuckian Discount Program. Under this program, participating store merchants offer discounts to Senior Citizens who possess discount cards. Senior Citizens are allowed to participate in the Discount program if they have a valid driver's license, or they must purchase a photo I.D. from the Senior Citizen Center. The participants in the discount program by merchants is on a completely volunteer basis.

The services offered by Green River Area Development District, along with Green River Aging Services are, as evident, guided in their development by the State of Kentucky Revised Statutes. The elderly citizens of Kentucky are obviously well taken care of and cared about. According to the directors of the Green River Aging Services,

Old age is a time for quiet growth. The aged can avoid the emotional pain of growing old by meeting the challenge head-on. The coming of old age brings some challenges and problems that are not thought of in youth. Depression, isolation, and loneliness are not natural companions of old age. Growing old can be a celebration of life!

Disaster Near Sorgho
by Grady Ebelhar

On January 24, 1906, tragedy met two miners at the Bellwood Coal Mine near Sorgho. William Burnett and Herbert Walden were both crushed by falling slate. Edward Pierce and Cash Trice were fatally injured at the Oldham and Burnett mine on Bellwood Hill.

Burnett and Walden were instantly killed. They were removed from the mine an hour after the accident and there was no sign of life in either of them.

Physicians at the bedside of Pierce and Trice stated to the Messenger that there was little hope for either of them.

The *Messenger* claimed that no accident of this kind had ever happened in the Sorgho area and that the neighborhood was greatly excited. About two hundred people crowded near the shaft of the mine after news was known about the falling slate. For some time it was not known who was in the mine at the time of the accident. There were many pathetic scenes among those related to the unfortunate men.

A "shot" was fired in the mine about noon and after 2 o'clock. Walden and Pierce left their homes at Sorgho and walked to the mine. They were allowed to go down into the mine with purpose of inspecting it.

Mr. Burnett, who was a half-owner in the mine, and Trice were standing and talking to two of the young men in one of the rooms. Without the slightest warning the roof of the room, which was slate, caved in and buried the four men under many tons of the slate. The section of the slate that fell was about twenty feet long and ten feet in width. As it fell it broke in two pieces.

The sound of the slate falling greatly frightened George Rocker, a black miner who was in the other room of the mine.

William Robertson, a coal miner, was going down in the mine at the time of the cave in. When he heard the crash he became frightened and climbed up to the entrance of the shaft. He met James Burnett, a son of the man in the mine, and said "Something had happened down there".

It was necessary for the engineer to get someone to run the engine for him while he went to the assistance of the man in the mine. In a few short minutes the news of the accident had reached Sorgho and several people raced to the mine to help.

All of the men had been removed from the mine within an hour after the slate fell. The injured men were removed to their homes and the Sorgho physicians and several from Owensboro were summoned.

Mr. Burnett was a well known resident of the Sorgho neighborhood.

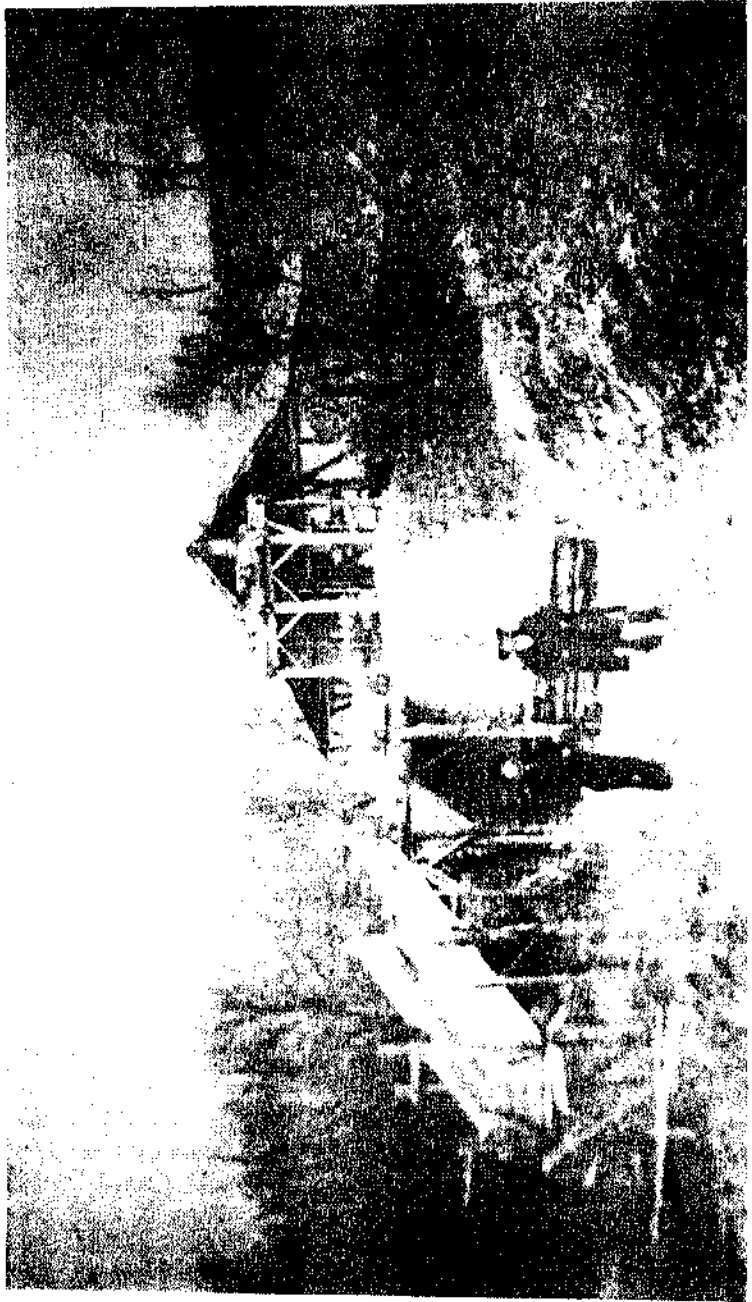
He had been connected with the mine since the mine opened. Herbert Walden was a well know citizen to Sorgho as well as a merchant there. Ed Pierce was a student at the school.

The mine was known as the old Bellwood mine and was owned jointly by Dr. Oldham and William Burnett. It had been in operation about six months before the accident. It was considered a good vein of coal where about forty bushels of coal a day were taken from the mine. The shaft was around 110 feet long with two rooms in it.

The next day Edward Pierce died at his home. He became the third victim of the accident. Cash Trice was reported in the *Messenger* that there was very little chance of surviving. He did manage to survive and lived a long life. He owned a farm and lived there near the mine for many years. It was the first time he had ever been in a mine and this was the experience of Walden and Pierce as well. Cash Trice lived to be 89 years old and died on February 29, 1968.

Walden, twenty years old, and Pierce, seventeen years old, had been best friends from early childhood and always seem to be together. Bellwood hill had been their playground for many years as youngsters. The remains of the two boys were buried side by side in the Sorgho cemetery near to where the mine was located.

The mine is all but forgotten these days. The mound of dirt and slate dug out of the mine is still visible today. Kenneth and Maurice Ebelhar own the farm today where the mine is located on French Island Road about one mile from Sorgho.



The Oldham and Burnett coal mine on Bellwood hill near Sorgho. This mine was typical of the coal-digging operations in Daviess County at the turn of the century. (Photo courtesy Grady Ebelhar.)

The Telephone Systems of Daviess County, 1903

Editor's Note: For the average citizen of Daviess County there was probably no more important invention at the turn of the century than the telephone. While few had even seen an automobile by 1903, and many had never ridden on a railroad train, most people were not only familiar with the telephone, but were seeing their life styles altered by it. Housewives were able to break out of the isolation of their homes, were able to talk to friends and neighbors, could order groceries or dry goods delivered by the numerous "bundle boys" with their ubiquitous bicycles, and keep up with neighborhood gossip. Young couples took advantage of what it's inventor first called the "lover's telegraph." Businessmen were quick to realize the importance of the instrument, and every business had its telephones, installed by the two competing companies, the Home Telephone Company and the Cumberland Telephone Company. On November 1, 1903, the *Owensboro Daily Messenger* described the rapid growth of the telephone industry in the county in the following article.

The development of the telephone and the phenomenal increase in the number of persons using it within the past few years has conferred many striking benefits upon communities and individuals, but none more remarkable than giving almost every farmer in the land an opportunity to rig up a telephone and thus put himself in direct touch with the outer world. Over and above all the agents which have brought about the recent change in rural and agricultural life, the telephone is proving the instrumentality of what is, as a matter of fact, a new civilization.

Only those who have gone of late into the homes of the country population of Daviess County can have the remotest idea of how the telephone is operating to increase the material wealth and solid substance of the county, as well as contributing an invaluable increment to the social life of the country family. Finding the telephone available and cheap, the farmer has seized upon it with avidity and connected himself with the county town by the metallic circuit and now, with a bolder effort, keeps himself thoroughly posted on conditions of trade and combines a knowledge of markets with his possession of the raw material. The economic outcome, even at this early day, is so wide-reaching that it is hard to determine where the effects will stop.

The farmer finds that with the telephone he can keep in touch with the market, selling his produce or livestock when quotations are the most favorable. By sparing himself and his help useless trips back and

forth for the purpose of delivering his products or of ascertaining the status of the market, he now saves a vast amount of time in the course of a year. When he is assured by information over the telephone that he can sell to advantage, he loads up his wagon, and not til then.

It is now a common practice for the country doctor to give directions by telephone for caring for the patients, both diagnosing and prescribing. Being in speaking distance of his neighbor, not only does the farmer feel a sense of personal security, but he knows that his belongings are safer from molestation than they ever were before.

An illustration of how the farmer utilizes the possibilities of his telephone occurred at the *Messenger* office last week. A farmer of the West Louisville neighborhood was preparing to bring a load of produce to town. It was of such a nature that a rain would have ruined it. He called up the *Messenger* office and learned that the government weather forecast predicted rain. Consequently the load of produce remained under a shed and the farmer prevented a possible loss of \$30 or \$40.

The women and children come in for their share of the benefits of the telephone. During the dreary winter nights they can gossip with their neighbors, and they can no longer live in dread when the men are away. The tramp is chary of performing his professional stunts where he finds a telephone wire running into the house, for he realizes that if necessary the whole neighborhood can be called in for a few minutes. The advantage of the telephone in this respect, however, is perhaps not as great in this section as in other parts of the country. On the great prairies, where the terrible monotony drives people mad, it is a matter of actual figures that the percent of insanity has materially decreased since the introduction of the telephone in the country districts.

The telephone has, to a large extent, solved one of the most vexing questions that confronts a farmer in the bringing up of his family, how to keep the boys at home. With a telephone in the house so that he can keep up with the movements of his chums and occasionally exchange a few words with his sweetheart, there is not the same desire to gad about.

Few counties in the country, and not more than one in the state, has better telephone facilities than has Daviess. Two great companies operate here, the Cumberland Telephone and Telegraph company and the Kentucky and Indiana Telephone and Telegraph company, the latter more familiarly known as the Home Telephone company. The Cumberland company, with headquarters in Nashville, Tenn., operates in nine states, covering the country from the Gulf of Mexico to Lake Michigan. The Home company is a member of the Independent Telephone association and covers a very large territory.

There are, radiating hither and yon about the county with Owensboro as a center, 5,930 miles of telephone wires, and so thoroughly do the two systems cover the county that there is hardly a farm that would not easily

be connected with one or the other of them. Within the city limits it is a fact that a higher percent of the homes and business houses are supplied with telephones than any other city in the South.

The Cumberland company has 2,430 miles of wire in Daviess County. Within the city the company has the best construction that money can procure. Along many of the streets one may find long pine poles which have been creosoted and shipped here from the far South. On other streets the poles are red cedar of the best quality. In the business part of town and over the principal streets their business is carried through cables. This work has been so laid out and planned that it enables the company to install telephones in any part of the city on twelve hours notice.

The following is a synopsis of what the company has in the country districts. Starting out the Livermore road, a line leads to Utica, Livermore and Central City. On this route is a metallic toll line. On the Veach road a line connects local subscribers with the Owensboro exchange. A line runs to Hartford and another to Leitchfield, connecting Fordsville, Philpot and Short Station. One of the big lines runs out the Hardinsburg road, connecting a large number of farmers of that part of the county, and connecting with Cloverport, Hawesville, Yelvington, Powers and Rockport, Ind. Branching from Thruston is a side line to Knottsville and Pellville. Another big pole route leads out of the city, by way of the Henderson road, and carries the Henderson and Evansville coppers. Beech Grove, Sorgho, Curdsville and West Louisville are also connected by this line. Other lines parallel the River, Main street and Fifth street roads. Branching off the Henderson road is a route leading to Calhoun, by way of the Panther branch exchange. Lines branch off the main lines to nearly every part of the county.

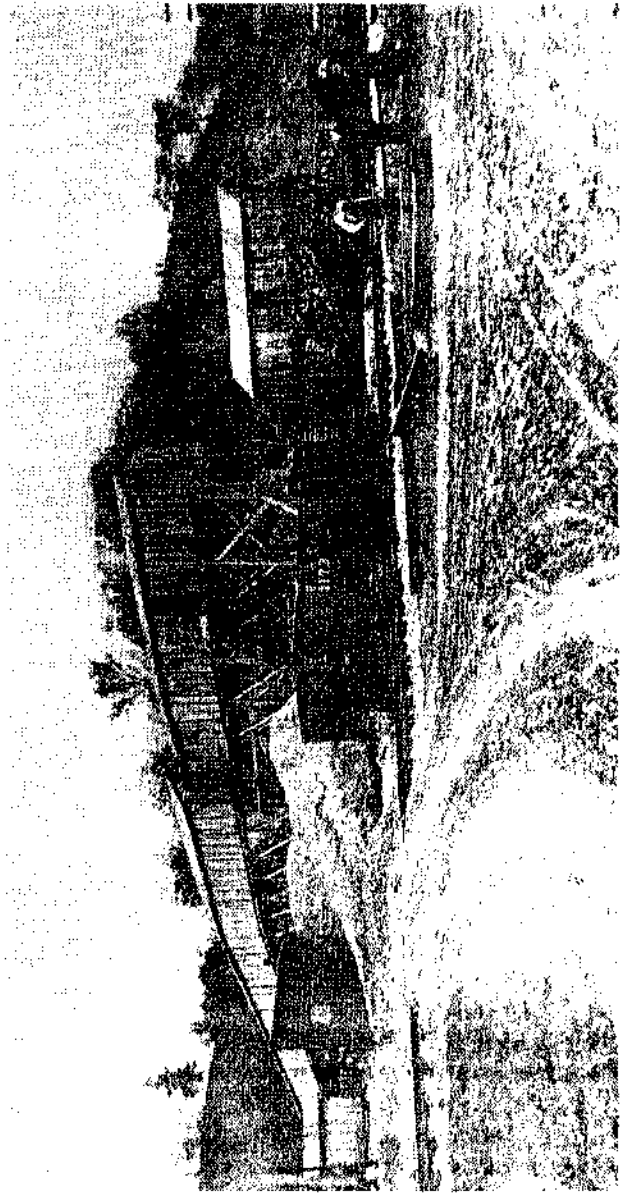
The Cumberland people have recently constructed three branch exchanges in Daviess County, one at West Louisville, one at Utica, and one at Panther, each connecting between forty and fifty subscribers to which the subscribers in Daviess County have free service. They have toll lines reaching to almost every point in the state, and connections reaching all the principal towns and cities in the United States.

The Owensboro Home Telephone company is distinctively what its name implies. It is owned by home people, and it has been its settled policy to employ only home folks, those living here and having families here. This company owns and operates 2,500 miles of wire, covering the city thoroughly and as well as the greater part of the county. At present the most important work the company has in hand is the building of a copper metallic line to Rockport, Ky. A large force is now at work and the connection will be made inside of thirty days. This will give direct long distance connection to Indianapolis, Terre Haute, and before spring St. Louis, and nearly every town in the state north of us. At

present the Indianapolis long distance line covers all of Central and Eastern Kentucky with a copper line service.

This company has recently installed automatic exchanges at West Louisville, Ensor, Stanley and Sorgho, and these are feathers of their system. Others are under promotion, and it is the policy of the company to cover every part of the county. The automatic system requires no operator. The various wires are connected at a central station, but they connect and disconnect themselves, and there is never the possibility of getting the wrong number. On each telephone there is a dial with numbers running from one to the number of instruments connected with the system. When the subscriber wishes to ring his neighbor, he places the indicator on the number of his neighbor's phone, then presses the button. That is all he has to do. The two wires get themselves together at the central station and the other fellow's phone rings. When the receiver is placed on the hook the two instruments automatically disconnect and the exchange is in normal condition again.

The automatic system does not operate merely as a neighborhood affair in the four exchanges of the Home Telephone company, one number on the dial indicates the Owensboro exchange. The subscriber rings that and calls for any number or any other city he wants.



A mine scene at Bon Harbor, probably about 1910. Note the cars of the Louisville, Henderson & St. Louis Railroad being loaded and the elaborately-dressed couple on the right.

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