
Bits and Pieces

of Hardin County History

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MARY JO JONES, EDITOR

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GRAND DUKE ALEXIS OF RUSSIA VISITS ELIZABETHTOWN

Most Hardin Countians are aware that General George Armstrong Custer and his wife Libbie resided in Elizabethtown for two years. However, the fact that Russian Grand Duke Alexis of the House of Romanov came to visit them is little known.

The young Grand Duke, third son of Tsar Alexander II, knowing he was unlikely to succeed to the throne, spent a great deal of time traveling. He came to the United States for an extended visit, arriving in New York on November 20, 1871, aboard the Russian Navy frigate Svetlana. He traveled to Washington in a few days, where he was entertained by President Grant. At a dinner at the White House, Alexis met General Philip Sheridan, who invited him to go on a buffalo hunt in the West. The prince, who had done some shooting in Europe, was anxious to go.

It was agreed that Alexis should continue with his tour of the United States, detouring to the hunting area when he came to the Midwest early in January, 1872. His special train arrived in North Platte, Nebraska, on January 13th.

General Sheridan had made elaborate preparations to entertain the royal guest. Sixteen wagons, including six military ambulances, met the train. Two wagons were exclusively for ice and wine!

There were several Russians among the Duke's entourage. Some army officers, including George Armstrong Custer, accompanied Sheridan. Buffalo Bill Cody was to be the guide, and he met the train, dressed in a buckskin suit, with his long hair flowing.

Custer was assigned the duty of initiating the Duke into the art of buffalo hunting, and he apparently carried this out very well. Details of the hunt are best reserved for relating at another time and place. Suffice it to say that the Grand Duke and General Custer became fast friends--Alexis apparently took quite a liking to him.

Following the hunt Custer returned to Elizabethtown, and Alexis resumed his tour of the United States. The two would meet again.

The Duke's special train arrived in Louisville on January 31st. Custer was part of the welcoming committee. After a tour of the city, an elaborate dinner and ball were held at the Galt House in the Duke's honor. The social and political elite of the state were in attendance, including General and Mrs. Custer.

The Grand Duke apparently found Libbie Custer equally as charming as he had her husband. He danced with her a number of times throughout the evening. He invited the Custers to accompany his royal party on the tour from Louisville to New Orleans, including stops at Mammoth Cave and Memphis. This was exactly the style of life to which the Custers aspired!

The Duke's train, en route south, stopped in Elizabethtown. The town dignitaries, and probably most of the townspeople, were there to greet him. The mayor was on hand to make a speech. However, Alexis spied Custer's fine horses and his packs of hounds and ignored the local folks and the speech-making, and went to inspect the animals.

Undoubtedly, the Grand Duke Alexis of Russia has, even to this day, been the highest ranking foreign dignitary ever to visit Elizabethtown.

M. J. J.

BREW FLOWED IN THE EARLY DAYS

In the early days of Elizabethtown, and other places as well, taverns were called "ordinaries," commonly pronounced "ornaries," and a local wit is known to have remarked, "It is highly likely the pronunciation hit the nail on the head more appropriately than the spelling,." Whatever they were called, it is known there were enough out-of-town lawyers and others in Elizabethtown after it was established to assure the success of more than one tavern.

The first tavern in Elizabethtown was built by James Crutcher. It was built of hewed logs and located on Main Cross Street, now W. Dixie Avenue, between the public square and Mulberry Street. It was afterwards sold to Asa Coombs. Major Crutcher then built another tavern about 1798 at the corner of North Main and the public square. He placed a sign of a lion rampant on each side of his board. Samuel Haycraft wrote in his history that as a boy he was scared of the lions on the sign and always walked on the other side of the street for he said no matter where he stood, the savage beasts always seemed to be staring right at him.

This tavern, at the sign of the lion, was afterwards owned and occupied by Daniel Waide who built a brick addition. His wife was a noted cook, thereby insuring the success of the business. After the death of Waide and his wife, the hotel passed through several hands, notably those of Hugh Mulholland, son-in-law of Major Crutcher. Mulholland removed the

wooden structure and erected in its place a three-story brick and thereafter kept the hotel in fine style. In 1846 it had become known as the Eagle House and was operated by Judge LaRue in partnership with John L. Helm. Others who ran the hotel through the years were Thomas B. Munford, Joseph Tarpley, Esq., and James E. Talbot.

The Showers House was located at the south corner of the public square and South Main Street and was originally an old log house. The owner, William Showers, familiarly known as "Big" Showers, made extensive improvements, including stables and accommodations and a bountiful table.

James Perceful, who built the first brick court house in Elizabethtown, operated a tavern on Main Cross Street, and it was large enough to provide excellent public entertainments. Samuel Stevenson owned a tavern directly across the street.

William C. "Bud" Hawkins acquired the brick tavern on the site of the Perceful tavern. He, with assistance from his wife and daughters, ran a popular hotel and the family lived in back of the building. He had a good custom and with his congenial disposition, wit and store of comic stories, made a lot of friends as well as a lot of money.

(From an old newspaper clipping)

LESSER MEN PLAYED PART IN TOWN DEVELOPMENT

(From The News-Enterprise, June 28, 1979)

Among the great and near great, those whose names are chronicled in the history of Elizabethtown, it should not be overlooked that lesser men too played their part in the growth and development of the town. One such man was James S. Smallwood, whose education and training as a lawyer could have started him on the road to fame and fortune as it did for many others. He chose another field, just as important although not heralded.

He was born July 27, 1812, to pioneers Hezekiah and Frankie Owens Smallwood, who had come from Virginia to Elizabethtown about 1800 and settled on Buffalo creek near the site of the old Haycraft fort, where he began making bricks. Smallwood attended the Hardin Academy, acquired a liberal education and read law. He was admitted to the bar and began to practice law, but not for long. He abandoned his practice and became in turn a merchant, brick maker, and house builder. But finding the buying and selling of livestock and farm products more to his liking he became a trader.

It was a harder vocation, but he persevered and spent the rest of his life in this field. It was a great service he did for the farmers in the widely scattered farms in the county. The early settlers realized the importance of an outlet to the outside world for their farm products,

but such roads as were built were suitable only to crude methods of travel. Cattle and hogs were driven on foot over long and badly kept roads. Practically all streams were forded or ferried as bridges were non-existent. Other farm products were hauled by wagon or sent by boat to market.

Smallwood rode horseback in all kinds of weather, carrying his saddlebags and umbrella. However, sometimes he walked, buying cattle, horses, hogs, sheep, poultry, and almost anything the farmer had to sell in quantity. He knew the market price and had the reputation of paying honest and often liberal prices on the spot. He drove his livestock purchases on foot, and over the railroads after they came. Thus he brought a market to the farm gate and did much to encourage home and farm industry at a time when such industry was handicapped.

Smallwood married Rachel Irwin in 1846 and she with their two daughters and three sons survived him when he was accidentally killed in 1866 while loading his cattle at night.

Smallwood was not great; he was not rich; he was not famous; but he added materially to the life of his day. Haycraft wrote of him, "He was one of the most indefatigably industrious men I ever knew... he was a great benefactor to the farmers of this county."

TOBACCO FACTORY

(The Elizabethtown News, Nov. 2, 1891)

The Elizabethtown Tobacco Factory began operations this week, and in a few days more will be in full blast. At present the factory is only making natural leaf smoking tobacco, but when everything is gotten in shape chewing tobacco and cigars will be manufactured in large quantities. The gentlemen at the head of this enterprise have had years of experience at the business and we look for them to make a success here.

CANNING FACTORY

(The Elizabethtown News, June 14, 1889)

The Canning Factory is in full blast this week putting up June peas, and everybody seems to be satisfied. Notwithstanding the drought which seriously damaged the early peas the farmers are realizing from 100 to 120 bushels to the acre, which is paying on the average of fifty dollars. This is better than wheat or corn and the trouble next year will be to keep the farmers from raising too much. The directors and the stockholders are well satisfied as to the character of goods being put up are such as to bring the top of the market. We are not going to have much trouble in placing our goods from information now on hand and we feel confident in predicting that the Canning Factory will be a success.



THE JAIL OF 1894

(The Elizabethtown News, Nov. 16, 1894)

The contract for a new jail for Hardin county was let by the jail committee last Thursday to the Pawly Jail Building Co. of St. Louis, for \$9,000 and if the weather permits the work is to be begun this fall and pushed to an early completion. The committee bought the lot of Jas. Montgomery on North Main Street just above Cresap's store for \$900 and sold the old jail lot to Joe Sweets for \$600. The jail is to be a handsome two-story brick building built entirely of pressed brick with the Jailer's residence in the front part and the prison in the rear.

The residence part is to have four rooms, two below and two above, 15 x 16 feet, a hall, an office and a kitchen. The

principal prison is to be in the second story of the rear of the building and the cells are all to be built of case hardened steel with corridors between the cells and a corridor all around the outside. Prison cells are also to be built on the lower floor for those committed for misdemeanors and other minor offences. The prison is to be built with all the latest improvements for safety and will be one of the best in the State.

(ED. NOTE: This building was located at 118 N. Main St. Actually, the jailer's residential quarters were enlarged to include a one-room addition on the north side.)

COUNTY COURT ORDER BOOK A
HARDIN COUNTY, KENTUCKY, continued

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MAY TERM, 1803

At a County Court begun and held for Hardin County on Monday the 16th day of May 1803.

Present Isom Enlows, William Weathers (Withers) & David Morrison esquires.

Ordered that Nicholas Miller, George Bell & Jacob Enlow being first sworn before a magistrate of this county, do settle with Hannah Frakes her administration of the estate of Henry Frakes deceased and make report thereof to the next Court.

Ordered that James McCarty be and he is hereby appointed constable in this County, in the following bounds to begin at the mouth of Salt River, and to run down the Ohio to the mouth of Otter Creek and up the same to Enlows path, with it to Mill Creek down Mill Creek to the mouth, and down Salt river to the beginning. The said James McCarty having given bond with William Weathers his security according to law.

On the motion of Samuel Givens and with the consent of David Carr on behalf of the heirs of John Carr deceased, It is ordered that Benjamin

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Shacklett, Jonathan Simmons & John Essery be and they are hereby appointed commissioners for the purpose of joining such of the heirs of John Carr decd as are of age in conveying a certain tract of land sold by John Carr in his lifetime to the said Givens for the conveyance of seven hundred & eight acres of land in the Bee Grove, the bond dated the 5th day of October 1799, agreeably to an act of assembly passed the 1st day of March 1797.

Ordered that Williamson Bruce be and he is hereby discharged from being surveyor of the road leading from Hardin Courthouse to Hodgen's new Mill, and that Philip Jenkins be and he is appointed Surveyor of the said road and that all the hands which assisted the said Bruce assist the said Jenkins in keeping the same in repair.

On the motion of Samuel Haycraft, It is ordered that Stephen Rawlings, Christopher Bush & Robt. C. Slaughter being first sworn before a magistrate of this County do review the road leading from Elizabeth Town to Hodgen's new mill as far along sd. Road as to the long hollow and make report thereof to the next Court.

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Ordered that the order appointing Philip Jenkins Surveyor of the road leading from Hardin Courthouse to Hodgen's mill be and the same is hereby rescinded.

Ordered that the Petition of Armistead Churchill for a review of the road leading from Hardin Courthouse to Jacob Vanmeter's Mill, and the report thereof be quashed & rejected.

Present William Weathers (Withers) & Jacob Larue esquire.

The persons appointed to view a road leading from Elizabeth Town to Amos' Ferry this day made their report in the following words, to wit, "After being first sworn agreeable to an order of the County Court of Hardin passed at the last May Term and to us directed we have proceeded to view the nearest and best way for a road to be laid off from Elizabeth Town to Amos's ferry on Green river and find the following direction to be nearest & best way. Beginning at Elizabeth Town and keeping the

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road leading from said Town to Middle creek about 1 ½ miles to a path leading from said road to Thomas Gillilands, thence with sd path to a Black & white Oak Bushes marked on said Path at the head of a hollow about ¾ of a mile from Rudes Creek, thence with the marked trees leaving the mouth on the left hand to Rudes Creek, crossing the same about a quarter of a mile below Thos. Davises thence with the marked trees to Nolinn Creek crossing the same about one hundred yards below a fish pool on said creek between the plantations of Saml & Adin Coombes leaving sd plantations on the left hand, thence with sd marked trees crossing Cox's run about fifty yards below the forks thereof thence with said marked trees to the head of the long hollow, leaving the hickory grove on the right hand, thence with a ridge leading to Lucus's Grove, leaving the plantation of William Lucus on the right hand, thence to Jesse Kerby's, leaving sd plantation on the left hand and Jacob's Knob on the right, thence along

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said long hollow to the Cumberland road about five miles from Bacon Creek, thence with sd. Road to Amos's Ferry on Green river. Given under our hands this 16th day of May 1803. Adin Coombes, Benjamin Wright, Thomas Gilliland" passing through the land of Thomas Davis, Samuel Coombes & Adin Coombes, Wm. Lucus & Cornelius. On consideration whereof It is ordered that the sd. Report be received & recorded and that summons issue to the several persons through whose lands the sd. road as viewed will lead, to cause them to appear at the next court to show cause if any why the sd. Road should not be established.

On the motion of Isaac Linder who made oath according to law, administration of the estate of Robert Richardson is granted him, he giving bond with Asa Coombes & Nicholas Miller his securities in the penalty of two hundred dollars, conditioned as the law directs.

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Ordered that Philip Rogers, Peter Bodine & John Forguson & David Morrison or any three of them being first sworn before a magistrate of this County do appraise in current money the personal property of Robert Richardson Decd. And make report thereof to the next Court.

Ordered that Court be adjourned till Court in Course.

/s/ Wm. Withers

JUNE TERM 1803

At a County Court begun & held for Hardin County at the Courthouse in Elizabeth Town on Monday the 20th day of June 1803.

Present William Withers, David Morrison & Jacob Larue Esquires.

For reasons appearing to the Court, It is ordered that Richard Spurrier be and he is hereby exempted from the payment of County levies in future.

Stephen Chenault having produced a license & the oath required by law being administered to him, he was therefore admitted to practice as an attorney at law in this Court.

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On the motion of James Brownfield who made Oath according to law, administration of the estate of Jacob Pirtle decd. Is granted him, he having given bond with Adin Coombes his security in the Penalty of L200, conditioned as the law directs.

Ordered that William Brownfield, Thomas Williams Senr. & Jacob Larue junr. Being first sworn before a magistrate of this County do appraise in current money the personal estate of Jacob Pirtle deceased & make report thereof to the next Court.

Ordered that the Sheriff of this County pay unto James Crutcher the sum of L23.17.7 out of the depositum which may remain in his hands, after paying the several County creditors their claims for the year 1803.

Present Ada Coombes & William Ewin esqrs

On the motion of Joseph Smith who produced Credentials of his ordination & of his being in regular communion with the Methodist Society & took the Oath of Allegiance to the Commonwealth, license is granted him to celebrate the rights of Matrimony between any persons to him legally applying within this Commonwealth,

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he having entered into bond with John Stovall & Thomas Clemons his securities in the penalty of \$500 conditioned as the law directs.

Charles Helm, Deputy Sheriff for Philip Read, Sheriff of this County, in behalf of said Read came into Court & protested against the sufficiency of the Jail of this County.

Ordered that George Bell & Asa Coombes be and they are hereby appointed to settle with Elizabeth McGoveran & John Kennedy Admx & Admr of Charles McGoveran deceased & make report thereof to the next Court.

On the motion of Sarah Kimberlin who made oath according to law, administration of the estate of Jacob Kimberlin decd. Is granted, she having given bond with James Marcus her security in the penalty of L400 conditioned as the law directs.

Ordered that James Young, John Jenkins & Thomson Overall be and they are hereby appointed, they being first sworn before a magistrate of this County do appraise in current money the Slaves if any & personal estate of Jacob Kimberlin decd. & make a return thereof

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to the next court.

The Court doth appoint Daniel Kennedy Guardian of Edward McGoveran infant orphan of Charles McGoveran decd. Whereupon the sd. Daniel Kennedy with George Bell his security entered into and acknowledged their bond in the penalty of \$200 conditioned as the law directs.

On motion, It is ordered by the Court that Pegg Redman one of the adms of Thomas Redman decd be credited by the sum of one hundred & forty pounds out of the estate she hath in her hands to be administered, it being the amount allowed her by the Court for keeping several poor Children of the said Thomas Redman decd. From the Death of the sd. Thomas Redman untill this time.

On the motion of Thomas Helm, It is ordered that it be certified to the Auditor of Public accounts that he has proven agreeably to the act of Assembly in such cases provided, that he has not received pay for a certificate given by Richard Taylor & James McDowell comrs, for the sum of eight pounds six shillings

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& six pence, for Rashans (rations) furnished the Guard on the Frontiers of Nelson County & that he is entitled to an allowance therefor.

Ordered that Edward Husk, John David & Isom Enlows being first sworn before a magistrate of this County, do view the nearest & best way for a road to be opened from Robert Hodgen's old mill to intersect the Bairds town road about three quarters of a mile above Joseph Kirkpatrick's & make report thereof to the next Court.

Ordered that Jacob Vanmeter Senr. Daniel Linder & Jacob Vanmeter junr. Being first sworn before a magistrate of this County do view the nearest & best way for a road to be opened from Jacob Vanmeters Mill to the mouth of the Valley Creek and make report thereof to the next Court.

Ordered that Philip Rogers, Peter Bodine, Jacob Linder & Asa Coombes being first sworn before a magistrate of this County do appraise in current money the personal estate of Robert & Mary Richardson, decd. And make report thereof to the next Court.

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The Court doth appoint William Withers & Isom Enlows as Judges to superintend the ensuing election as Judges, & Samuel Haycraft as Clerk.

Morefield vs. Bush as prosecutor for the Commonwealth, for profane swearing, fined L2.5, cost 2/9. On the motion of the Atty for the commonwealth, it is the opinion of the court that they have no jurisdiction in this cause & it was thereupon ordered by the Court the same be dismissed but that no costs shall be recovered herein.

Present Stephen Rawlings.

A settlement of the estate of Charles McGoveran decd. was returned into Court & ordered to be recorded.

Samuel Coombes, Adin Coombes & Cornelius Lucus & William Lucus being summoned to appear agreeably to an order of this Court to shew cause why a road should not be opened from Hardin Courthouse to Amos's ferry on Green river

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the said Adin Coombes & Cornelius Lucus appeared & Adin Coombes made no objection to the road being opened through his land as viewed. Cornelius Lucus objected and moved the Court for a writ of Adquod damnum to be directed to the Sheriff of this County, to cause him to appear on the road leading from said Courthouse to Amos's Ferry where the same passes through the said Lucus's land to assess what Damages he may sustain by occasion thereof, whereupon the same was granted returnable to the next Court.

The persons appointed to view the road leading from Jacob Vanmeter's Mill to the mouth of the Valley Creek this day made their report in the following words, To wit "Agreeable to an order of the Court to us directed to view a road from Jacob Vanmeter's Mill to the mouth of the Valley Creek, being duly sworn, have viewed the same, passing from said mill to the upper north corner of Jacob Linder's land, from thence the next way

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way to the mouth of the Creek, it appearing to be of no ill conveniences to person whatsoever. Given under our hands, Jacob Vanmeter Senr. Jacob Vanmeter junr. Daniel Linder." Whereupon it was ordered by the Court that the same be received and the road established & that Philip Rogers be and he is hereby appointed survey of the same and it is further ordered that all the hands below Mr. Daniel Kennedys, within one mile of the Creek to the mouth thereof do assist him in opening & keeping the same in repair.

Ordered that Christopher Bush, Thomas Helm, Stephen Rawlings & James Williams or any three of them being first sworn before a magistrate of this County do view the nearest & best way for a road to be opened from Elizabeth Town to intersect the road leading from said Town to NoLinn, to intersect the same at or near the Long Hollow & make report thereof to the next Court. (On motion of Samuel Haycraft)

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On the motion of Stephen Rawlings, Samuel Bush, Peter Bodine & Archabald McDaniel, It is ordered by the Court that Robert Huston be summoned to appear at the next Court to shew cause if any he can why Christian Miller a poor Child who was bound to him as an apprentice, should not be discharged & bound to some other person who will cloath & educate & learn a trade to the said Christian Miller.

On the motions of Stephen Rawlings, Samuel Bush, Peter Bodine & Archabald McDonald, It is ordered by the Court that Summons issue to the Sheriff of this County to cause him to summon James Percefull, Jacob Bruner, Mrs. Bowling, John Crutcher, Richard May, James Crutcher, Lettice Farley, Elizabeth Kennedy & Asa Coombes to appear at the next Court to give testimony in behalf of Stephen Rawlings, Samuel Bush, Peter Bodine & Archabald McDonald in behalf of Christian Miller a poor child, who is bound to Robert Huston as an

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apprentice to the Joiners trade.

Ordered that Court be adjourned till Court in course.

/s/ Step. Rawlings

(TO BE CONTINUED IN THE NEXT ISSUE)

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

In Kentucky and particularly in Hardin County, we are blessed with an abundance of intriguing history. We are involved with history in the making every day, and we are proud of what we do and what those who have gone before have done. When the University of Kentucky Wildcats won national basketball honors again for the seventh time on March 30th, it filled us with pride and admiration for that team and our state. But time marches on and things always change, hopefully for the better.

Hardin County is changing and growing and so is our Historical Society. When we meet this month on April 27th, I am asking each member of our society to fill out a flyer listing your areas of interest within the Society and your areas of concern for our future. We must plan together to maximize our Society's benefit for all our members and our community.

God bless you all, and I look forward to seeing you on April 27th.

JAMES HARRISON WEISE

QUERY

THOMAS, BROWN, WHITLOW, HOWELL. Seeking info on JOHN M. THOMAS, b. 13 Apr 1819, Hardin Co, Ky, M. (1) 10 Oct 1849, Hardin Co., Mary J. (Or F.) BROWN, b. ca 1834, KY, d. 15 June 1848, Hardin Co; m. (2) Persilla WHITLOW, b. July 1833, Green Co, KY (dau of James Othello Whitlow and Temperance Howell). John died 25 Apr 1902, CA, buried Green Co, KY, Holly Grove Baptist Church Cem. **Jeffrey G. Jewell, 7925 Barbour Manor Drive, Louisville, KY 40241-1550,**

DUES FOR 1998 OF \$8.00 ARE NOW PAYABLE. IF YOU HAVE NOT ALREADY DONE SO, PLEASE MAIL YOUR CHECK TO P. O. BOX 381, ELIZABETHTOWN, KY 42701, AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING

The Hardin County Historical Society will meet Monday, April 27, 1998, at the Brown-Pusey House, 128 N. Main Street, Elizabethtown. Dinner will be served at 6:30 PM, followed by the program at 7:30 PM. If you do not wish to come for dinner, you may come for the program only.

The speaker of the evening will be Dr. Mark V. Wetherington, Director of the Filson Club Historical Society of Louisville. His subject will be "How the South Won the War after the Shooting Stopped." During the Civil War, Kentucky sent many more soldiers into the Union Army than into the Confederate Army. But after the shooting stopped, the predominance of Union sympathies ended, too. Come and hear Dr. Wetherington's ideas as to the reasons for this change. This program is funded in part by the Kentucky Humanities Council and the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Dinner will be catered by the Stone Hearth Restaurant.
MENU: Crusted Baked Chicken Breast, Au Gratin Potatoes, Green Beans, Fresh Fruit Salad, Rolls, Butter, Coffee, Tea.

Call Jack Kunnecke (737-5756) by April 25th for dinner reservations. Please call early, as the capacity of the room has been limited to 65 by the Fire Marshal, and only that number can be accommodated, whether you come for dinner or just for the program.

Hardin County Historical Society
P.O. Box 381
Elizabethtown, Kentucky 42702