

HARDIN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

BULLETIN

Elizabethtown, Ky

January 1962

Volume 1 Number 1

NEW VENTURE

With Volume 1 Number 1 of our Bulletin we introduce a new venture for our society. Each year a number of reports, talks, notices and the like come to us, and a vehicle of dissemination is needed. A number of people are willing to write articles and reports who do not feel like addressing a crowd. This will give them a means of expression. A number of manuscripts are available to be included.

We need your help. Let us know what you think of the BULLETIN and how it may be improved.

This month we bring you a report on our annual meeting, introduction to the new officers and the text of two addresses which all too few of us were present to hear: (1) Mr. Blackburn's talk on Hardin Countians in the Orphan Brigade, and (2) Mrs. E. I. Richerson's talk on the life of Samuel Haycraft, Jr.

P.S. A big thanks to Mary Jo Jones who did the typing for this issue. We need typists for future issues.

FEBRUARY MEETING

Thursday, February 1, 1962, 7:30 P.M., Kentucky Utilities Building

ANNUAL MEETING

Our annual meeting, held the evening of January 4, 1962, at the Joplin Hotel Dining Room, was a huge success. John W. Blackburn of Fordsville spoke on Hardin Countians in the Orphan Brigade (text begins Page 3). Mr. Blackburn represents Mutual of Omaha in several counties, is a lay minister, and a dyed-in-the-wool Civil War Buff. Mrs. Blackburn, who accompanied him, certainly added to the pleasure of the evening.

INTRODUCING OUR NEW OFFICERS

John P. Behen, Asst. Vice President, First-Hardin National Bank, Elizabethtown, was chosen to be the president of our society for the next two years.

Mr. Behen is a native of Cloverport, Breckenridge County, and has been with 'The First-Hardin' since November, 1952.

Dolores, who will give the main talk in February, a son John (13) and a daughter Emily (10) round out the family.

Forrest Davis, Vine Grove, is our new second vice president. Among us he is known as a historian and Civil War Buff; at work he is Warehouse Foreman, Commissary Storage Section, Fort Knox. He has served Vine Grove as a councilman and is active in Masonic circles. He has a wife Nora Belle and a daughter Mrs. Mary Margaret Eckerle.

NEW MEMBERS

We are glad to welcome these new members: Mr. & Mrs. R. C. Hawkins, Vine Grove; Mrs. Leonard Slusher, Mrs. H. P. Richards, and J. R. Layman, Elizabethtown.

DUES

If you have not joined for 1962, PLEASE SEND YOUR CHECK, \$1.00

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

M I D E J U S

- I would like to make my first official statement one of thanks. Thanks to you members for your expression of confidence in choosing me to guide the work of the Hardin County Historical Society for the next two years.

Also, a great big thanks to Burton Cowley for the big job he has done during the past three years. During his term the accomplishments of the Society have been significant. Meetings were resumed, first on a quarterly basis; and since September, 1959, except for vacation time, monthly meetings have been held. The Thomas Lincoln - Sarah Bush Johnston wedding was reenacted; and the Bersheba Lincoln cemetery program was an occasion many of us will long remember. Haycraft's History of Elizabethtown was reissued and the General Custer marker was placed on the Brown-Pusey House.

We are all glad he has the new job as County Attorney, but sorry it occupies so much of his time he can no longer lead the society.

During the course of the next two years I would like for us to give serious thought to these projects:

1. Establishment of The Bulletin as a regular monthly publication of the Society. A wealth of information comes into our hands that I believe will be of interest to the entire membership. It is true all of this may not deal exclusively with Hardin County as now constituted and some even will extend beyond the limits of Hardin as it was originally organized but all would be selected with an eye toward improving the picture we have of pioneer and early life in our region.

The approximate cost of The Bulletin will be \$12.50 per month. Any ideas on financing will be appreciated.

2. Who Was Who In Hardin County needs to be brought down to more recent days. This excellent work was completed in the early forties and should be extended.

3. Our Marker Program must be pushed forward with renewed vigor. The job which a number of other states is doing should make us feel ashamed. Gov. Combs stated the other day, in discussing the movement of Daniel Boone's grave, "We can do a lot for Daniel, and Daniel can do a lot for us." I believe we can do better by our sites, and our historic sites can do much for us.

4. This December marks the Centennial date of the major Civil War activity in the county. It is none too early to begin planning for this anniversary.

We seem to get better crowds out to our meetings when we eat. I would like to see us increase our dinner meetings to more than the one per year.

HARDIN COUNTIANS OF THE ORPHAN BRIGADE

John W. Blackburn

This is in no way intended to be a discourse on the Civil War itself. It does not intend to relate the history of the First Kentucky Brigade, so often called the Orphan Brigade, of the Southern Army. I do not suggest that it will throw new light on the great struggle at Shiloh--or at Chickamauga--or at Stones River or any other of the battles in which the Orphan Brigade took part.

My purpose is simply to pass on to those who may find an interest some information about many of the Hardin County boys who went to the South when our nation was divided by a war a hundred years ago.

I have refrained from including battle and campaign details as well as information about the many commanders because I believe this to be another story.

To avoid constant interruptions for credit for information, may I extend this at this point: Most of what is said about the boys as individuals is recorded in Ed Porter Thompson's History of the First Kentucky Brigade published in 1866 by the Caxton Publishing House of Cincinnati. Other facts about the boys were gathered from the journal of John W. Green, Sgt. Major of the 9th Regiment of the Orphan Brigade. This journal was edited by A. D. Kirwan, Dean of the Graduate School of the University of Kentucky, and published in 1956 by the University of Kentucky Press under the title Johnny Green of the Orphan Brigade. I am also indebted to Mr. Earl S. Reid, Principal of the Fordsville, Ky., High School. Mr. Reid has been very generous for several years in sharing with me his vast knowledge of the Civil War and he aided me much in the preparation of this paper. I regret that the many other books I have read and the many people I have consulted in my search for information about the Orphans cannot be mentioned in a paper of this type.

I am not certain that I have the names of all the boys from Hardin County who were in the Orphan Brigade and will welcome any information about any of the boys.

We speak of these soldiers as boys and they were certainly that! Most people of our time think of the Civil War soldiers as being old men because that is the way we saw them. We watched them in their ever thinning ranks as they marched proudly to the cemeteries for the services on Memorial Day. We watched them become ever more stooped and we saw their footsteps become ever more faltering as the great conflict receded into history.

All of them are gone now but I like to think that somewhere out there, as they are tenting on the old camp ground, they are

watching us. I like to believe that they know we remember them and that they are grateful. I like to believe that they find much joy because in such as we--we who have what some call the 'Civil War bug'--their experiences will live on and on. I like to let my fancies go free and watch again as these boys storm the 'Hornet's Nest' and the 'Crater.' Watch them as they once again rush out, with the Rebel Yell ringing out above the roar of the cannon, across that million miles of open space with Pickett at Gettysburg. And even too as they rush for the shelter of the cliffs at Pittsburg Landing.

Yes, these were boys. They were boys who became men before their time because the battlefield is no place to remain a boy. Many of them became men even as they took the last breath of life.

I can picture them right here in their home county before they made the big decision. I can hear their discussions with their friends and families and with each other as they had to decide whether the path must lead to old Abe Lincoln or that other son of Kentucky, Jeff Davis. I can hear their farewells to loved ones and friends as they started out on the great venture. So many of them were never to set foot in their native county again.

Let us follow along with those who went with the Orphan Brigade. Let us join them as they retreat from Bowling Green into Tennessee. Let us fight with them from one end of Tennessee to the other, through the burning hot sands of Mississippi and Louisiana, over the rough foothill and mountains of north Alabama and Georgia to the sea and in the dying months of the war through the swamps of the Carolinas. Let us go with L. P. JENKINS to Shiloh and with LUKE CHENAULT to Kennesaw Mountain. Let us visit with THOMAS BUFORD as he lies dying in the Federal Army prison at Indianapolis.

I am confident that we shall find that the Hardin County boys of the Orphan Brigade represent almost every experience of the soldiers of the Civil War.

Most of the boys from Hardin County who fought with the Orphan Brigade were members of Companies 'B' and 'H' of the 5th Regiment but there were some in Co. 'C' of the 2nd Regiment. There was also one in Co. 'K' of the 2nd Regiment.

R. C. WINTERSMITH was with the Hdqtrs staff for a time as a 2nd Lt., then as a Capt., and then was transferred to the Staff of General Buckner where he was promoted to Major.

R. S. FORD of Elizabethtown was a 1st Lt., but he resigned before the unit saw action.

First Lt. CHARLES H. THOMAS was killed in battle at Harts-ville, Tenn

Another Elizabethtown boy, THOMAS BUFORD, was among those captured at Donelson, and he died in prison

FREELAND CULLEY was color corporal. He took part in all the battles of his unit and was wounded at Jonesboro, Ga.

A. L. LYLE was killed at Donelson

JACK HAYS served with Morgan while the 2nd Regiment was in prison but was discharged because of disability by disease.

JACK M. ENGLISH and ED BROWN also were with this company and fought in many of its battles.

The member of Co 'K' that was mentioned was J. B. JOHNSON. He escaped capture at Donelson and afterwards returned to his old company where he remained until the end of the war.

The Orphan Brigade was organized on October 26, 1861, at Bowling Green and there were minor skirmishes in the following weeks. In early February of 1862 the 2nd Regiment was sent to Fort Donelson where it was captured almost in its entirety. The remainder of the Brigade retreated through Nashville to near Corinth, Mississippi.

Illness took several men out of the war even before the Orphan Brigade went into a major battle.

J. M. ENGLISH, ANDREW HARRIS and J. MILES all died of disease in the early weeks and R. H. SCIFERS was accidentally shot and has to be discharged. We find that HENRY O. BROWN and C. A. BUFORD were both sent home because of disability by disease. A. CHENAULT lasted out the winter but he died just two days before his regiment entered the great battle of Shiloh.

The first action that can be called a 'Battle' in which the Orphans took part was at Pittsburg Landing, on the Tennessee River, near Corinth. We know it better as the Battle of Shiloh.

It has been said that this great struggle between Americans changed the history of our country and of the world. Certainly it changed the fortunes of many Hardin County families.

Killed at Shiloh was WILLIAM GLASGOW as was also JOHN CRAWFORD. A remark by a comrade concerning Crawford was this: 'A boy in years, but a man in action'. The Company Commander of Co. 'H', Capt. WILLIAM LEE HARNED, was mortally wounded here and died a week later at Burnsville, Miss. L. P. JENKINS also received a mortal wound here and died in Holmes County, Miss., shortly after the battle.

Not only must we leave these boys in the South forever but we find that there were others wounded. M. S. BENNETT was one of these and he had to be discharged from service. Capt. FRANK D. MOFFITT (he was a 1st Lt. during this battle but was promoted to Capt. three weeks later) was shot in the neck and shoulder but lived to fight again. Moffitt was an Elizabethtown boy. WILLIAM McCULLOM recovered from a wound he received in this battle.

but he did not survive illness that struck him thirteen months later. GEORGE PATE was wounded so severely that he was never again fit for strenuous duty. He served the remainder of the war as a pioneer. The 'Pioneer' of the Civil War was one who cleared roads, built bridges, etc. In our modern armies we call them 'Engineers.'

We find that A. W. STITH was captured at Shiloh and died while in prison

One of the officers, 2nd Lt. WILLIAM H. MILLER, resigned immediately after the battle of Shiloh.

Our Hardin County boys were among those in the attacking force through the famous 'Peach Orchard' at Shiloh. It is said that the bullets clipped off the April peach blossoms so rapidly that it seemed that a snowstorm was raging. How strange it is that such impressions as this are made upon the minds of men even during the noise, the confusion and the danger of battle! We might wonder too how many of our Hardin County boys crawled, possibly wounded and dying, to get a drink from the 'Bloody Pond.' Perhaps even their blood helped stain to a redness this water that was so precious to so many

I stood for a long time in silence looking down at the 'Confederate Burial Trench' at Shiloh. I tried to imagine who is buried there in those stacks of Johnny Rebs. What their dreams and ambitions had been and what might have been their fate if the course of history had been different. Perhaps of Don Carlos Buell had been just a few hours later in appearing across the river. If I stand at that spot again I shall wonder if any of our Hardin County boys lie buried there.

Immediately after the battle at Shiloh the Orphan Brigade retired to Corinth, Miss., to reform their ranks and to get much needed supplies and equipment. It was during the stay here that Colonel BEN HARDIN HELM was notified that he had been promoted to Brig. General. We shall hear more of Helm later. It was during the time at Corinth also that JEBEDIAH BRANCH died of disease.

In the latter part of June of 1862 the boys began a move to Vicksburg to try to help General Van Dorn in the defense of that important city. While they were at Vicksburg the Orphans were not engaged in any great or important fights but did picket duty and patrol work. Let us remember too that they were not at Vicksburg when the city was surrendered to Grant, as that happened almost a year later.

During the time that the Orphan Brigade was at Vicksburg, many soldiers, both North and South, were stricken by malaria and the disease took a great toll. JAMES BOHANNON died at Vicksburg and two others, JOHN S. GRAHAM and E. BRISTOL, died very soon after the Brigade left there. D. T. BISHOP was discharged, before the boys left Vicksburg, because of disability by disease and soon after the departure it was necessary to send two others home for the same reason. These were J. O. READ and JOE HARBOLT. Joe had been in poor health for a long time and had been serving as a teamster.

JOHN HOSKINS died about this time.

The siege of Vicksburg by the Union Army was for the time being a failure and the Orphan Brigade was needed elsewhere. The Union forces were in possession of Baton Rouge, the Capital City of Louisiana, as well as of New Orleans. General Van Dorn recognized the great importance of regaining these cities and he issued orders to General Breckinridge to move toward that end. The Orphans left Vicksburg on July 27, 1862 enroute to Baton Rouge.

We have to leave only one of our Hardin County boys buried at Baton Rouge. This was JOHN CLARK who had been in all engagements up to this time. Others suffered wounds though 2nd Lt. O. J. HALL and WILLIAM HIBBS were wounded slightly but M. D. SCIFERS was very severely hurt. JOHN VIERS lost a leg in the action at Baton Rouge.

It was also at Baton Rouge that General BEN HARDIN HELM was injured when his horse fell in the darkness.

After the operations around Baton Rouge our boys moved to Jackson, Miss. By this time the men were almost without clothing. A great many had no shoes and their clothes were in tatters. The boys remarked to civilians who stared in amazement that they liked this kind of uniform. It was light and wool, they said.

There was a tragic lack of material comforts for the men but morale was at its highest! They were going home to Kentucky. They were to join General Bragg in their home state. How sad it is to have to remember that they were bitterly disappointed at Cumberland Gap because of the news that Bragg was in retreat.

In late August those who had been captured with the 2nd Regiment at Donelson were exchanged and the Orphan heroes of Donelson, along with the heroes of Shiloh, were to become together the heroes of Chickamauga and Stones River and Jonesboro.

After the plans for going into Kentucky had to be changed the Orphans came toward Hartsville, Tenn., where the Union forces held the city.

It was about this time that we must take leave of Lt. JAMES CLAY HAYS who resigned because poor health prevented him from fully performing his duties. We also find that in these last weeks we have lost JOHN DILLARD and J. W. APPEGATE who have been discharged because of illness and that J. M. SCIFERS, SENIOR died of wounds he had received at Baton Rouge. It is of interest to note that Scifers, who after being wounded had been left at Clinton, La., was part of a father-son team in the Orphan Brigade. J. M. JR. fought in all the battles even to the end of the war. There were six boys named Scifers among the Hardin County members of the Orphan Brigade.

In every war there are those who must learn anew that fighting wars is the business of the young men. WILLIAM CARLISLE had

JOHN HERRON died about this time. The story of Vicksburg by the Union Army was for the time being a failure and the Orphan Brigade was ordered to be transferred to Morgan's Cavalry.

At this point also we must take leave of ALBERT HERRON who transferred to Morgan's Cavalry.

The boys of Hardin County who fought with the Orphan Brigade at Hartsville were in the 2nd Regiment and we have already discussed what happened to them. It is worthy to mention though that in reaching Hartsville they marched about fifty miles through snow and ice, crossing the Cumberland River several times, and many of the soldiers had no shoes of any kind. In spite of this they conducted themselves in the usual excellent way.

On December 8, 1862, the Orphans again took quarters at Murfreesboro and spent almost the entire month in routine camp affairs. On December 13 President Jefferson Davis of the Confederate States of America visited and reviewed the troops in this area. It was perhaps the only opportunity for many of the boys from far away Hardin County to see this great fellow Kentuckian.

The Orphan Brigade was very much in the terrific fight at Stones River but I have knowledge of only one Hardin County casualty-- that of JOHN TABB who gave his life here in the cause that was to be lost. My stork though is about the individuals, more than with units as a whole, so may we go on with the boys to other experiences and other battles.

Before we leave Stones River it is well to relate the event that many insist was the reason the Brigade is known as the "Orphan Brigade." Lt. L. D. Young of the First Kentucky Brigade says that as the men were receiving a terrible shelling from Union forces during the Battle of Stones River, General Breckinridge was wringing his hands in anguish and despair and crying out, "My poor Orphans. My poor Orphans."

The Orphans stayed in Tennessee until Spring and then were moved back to Jackson, Miss. While here they made a forced march in an effort to relieve the garrison at Vicksburg while it was being so hard pressed by General Grant. They turned back though when news came that the city had surrendered. Some patrol skirmishes took place during the summer and our boys were subjected to a mid-July siege by the Union troops but no casualties were suffered by our boys from Hardin County.

Before we go with our boys into the great struggle at Chickamauga, Ga., and the other battles in the surrounding areas we must again take leave of some of them. We find that during the period between the trip to Jackson and the Battle of Chickamauga that Lt. JAMES HARGAN has resigned his commission and left the Army and that JAMES CRUTCHER has transferred to Forrest's Cavalry.

Hardin County has given much to the cause of the Confederacy, but it is still to give much more.

The Orphans found themselves on September 18, 1863 in bivouac near the Chickamauga River and were to have a part in making this name immortal. The part the Orphan Brigade played in this great battle would make a great story in itself but here we are still concerned with the soldiers as individuals

Brig. General BEN HARDIN HELM, whose name will live as long as there are Kentuckians and Nelson Countians and as long surely as there are Kentuckians, fell in this fight. Helm here was in command of the Second, Fourth, Sixth, and Ninth Kentucky Regiments; as well as the Forty-First Alabama and Cobb's Battery. General Beatty of the Federals was here supported by the 15th Ky of the Union Army and we find Kentuckian fighting Kentuckian. In fact it was a Kentucky bullet that took the life of 32-year Helm, a brother-in-law to Abraham Lincoln. William Wallace Herr, who after the war married Mary Todd Lincoln's half sister, helped carry Helm off the field. General Helm first was buried in Atlanta but 21 years later was removed to Elizabethtown. So much can be told of this brilliant young man and one cannot help wondering what a long life for him might have meant to Kentucky and the nation.

First Sgt. S. H. BUSH of Elizabethtown was dangerously wounded at Chickamauga but remained with the regiment until the end of the war. We remember that Capt. FRANK MOFFITT was wounded at Shiloh, and again at Stones River. At Chickamauga he was badly wounded and took no further part in the activities of the Orphan Brigade.

HORACE B. CULLEY was wounded at Chickamauga also. Horace had been with the 10th Miss. and was in the First Battle of Bull Run. He was to be wounded still later and then transfer to Wheeler's Corps.

HERCULES HAYS was wounded here too but recovered to fight again. Also among those who received wounds here were J. H. READ and J. B. READ.

Many names came to be associated with the Orphan Brigade. Names like Resaca, Rocky Face, Intrenchment, Utoy and Dalton, but let us go with them into their last important battle--that of Jonesboro, near Atlanta, Georgia.

Yet before we go with them there we must still part with some of them. We find that along the way CLABE W. SCIFERS has been discharged and that Sgt. A. J. MOREMAN has died. HEZEKIAH H. STOVALL was wounded at Kennesaw Mountain and did not see further service. J. W. SCIFERS was hurt but managed to stay with his company. Also wounded at Kennesaw were F. M. THOMAS and LUKE CHENAULT.

An Elizabethtown boy, EDWIN J. FREEMAN, was killed in the fight at Dallas. Edwin had been promoted to Capt. but at his own request remained a 2nd Lt. VIRGIL HEWITT, also of Elizabethtown, was the adjutant of the 6th Regiment. He was wounded at

Dallas and again at Intrenchment and after that took no more part in the fortunes and misfortunes of the Orphan Brigade.

We have noted that 2nd Lt. O. J. HALL was wounded at Baton Rouge. At Intrenchment he was again hurt but fought in the last engagements of his Company.

PETER THOMAS was wounded and captured at Intrenchment. Also hurt was JOHN T. CECIL. John had been among those captured at Donelson but was later exchanged.

We find along the way too that G. W. KELLEY was wounded twice and that A. M. STITH was captured. Stith remained in prison during the remainder of the war.

In the fight at Jonesboro Cpl. CY W. BRANHAM gave his life for the dying Confederacy and WILLIAM VAN METER died later from wounds he received here. LUKE KENNADY was wounded at Jonesboro and took no further part in the war.

We have mentioned most of the Hardin County boys who fought with the famous Orphan Brigade but there were others.

When the Brigade fought in the Battle of Shiloh Major THOMAS H. HAYS was along but after that he spent most of his time in office work in Richmond and with various units of the Confederate Army.

One would like to relate much about Colonel M. H. COFER who was elected Lt. Col. commanding the 6th Regiment. Cofer was a school teacher in his early years in Hardin County but studied law in his spare time. He lived in Illinois three years where he was admitted to the bar but came back to Elizabethtown to practice. Col. Cofer was in many of the engagements of the Orphan Brigade. He was promoted to full Colonel and became provost marshal general of the Army of the Tennessee where he was of great service because of his remarkable administrative abilities.

Sgt. G. L. GLASGOW, Corp. L. BOGARD and DAVID P. TATE fought in many of the battles, as did E. W. READ and WILLIAM HUBBS.

After the Atlanta Campaign the Orphan Brigade became mounted infantry and for the next several months did picket and patrol work in Georgia and in the Carolinas.

After it was ascertained that Gen. Lee and Gen. Johnston had surrendered their troops the other Confederate commanders had no choice but to do the same. The necessary arrangements were made and the arms of the Orphan Brigade were laid aside at Washington, Ga., on May 6, 1865. The Orphan Brigade as a fighting unit was no more but it would live on in the annals of those who study the battlefields of the world and in the hearts of those who love to learn of the deeds of brave men.

The Civil War was of course fought by Americans and the heroic deeds were numerous on both sides. I cannot say that the Johnny Rebs were braver than the Billy Yanks and I do not think that the

Billy Yanks were more devoted to their flag than were the Johnnies to theirs; yet the human heart is inclined to let a preference slip in. A bit of a prejudice perhaps. I am guilty I fear because I lean toward the 'Orphans.' They were a great fighting unit. It is worthy of note that all of the 72 Medal of Honor winners from Kentucky in the Southern Army were members of the Orphan Brigade. The medal itself was never struck and never issued but the Confederate Congress recommended that the commanders in the field have a vote among the men to decide who, if any, were to receive this award. Perhaps you may wonder why no Hardin County boy is included in this Honor Roll. It is simply because no vote was held in the companies in which our boys fought. They contended that they could not choose the few from the many to receive a distinctive award.

Yes, I lean toward the Orphans. They were not military giants from some fairy land or distant shore. They were of Kentucky. They were BEN HARDIN HELM of Elizabethtown and Bardstown. They were PETER DANIEL of Hardinsburg and LUKE COLLINS of Hartford. They were WALKER NASH of Grayson County and they were the SCIFERS, father and son, of Hardin County.

Curg Reid, an Orphan from Rockport in my home county, wrote long after the war:

I teach my children to honor the men of the Orphan Brigade above all others. I point them out as we meet them as men on whom the country can depend in time of need.

Yes, the Orphans were of that type that went with Pickett at Gettysburg and with Sherman to the sea. They were of that type that died with Custer at the Little Big Horn. Later we find them with Teddy Roosevelt at San Juan Hill and going over the top in the Argonne forests of France. We find them later storming the beaches of the South Pacific and in the snows of Korea.

Like Curg Reid I think truly that they were the kind of men on whom the country can depend in time of need.

I am sure that most, if not all, of the Hardin County boys who survived the war came back to their home county.

How thrilling it must have been for all within earshot when these old soldiers got together to talk of the days of Baton Rouge and Kennesaw Mountain and of Jonesboro. How heartbreaking too it must have been when they talked of comrades they had left on the battlefields of the South.

And now that the reunion of the Orphan Brigade is complete over on the other side I wonder what BEN HARDIN HELM might be saying to EDWIN J. FREEMAN. I wonder if perhaps that little group over there is the SCIFERS crowd talking with the READ boys and the HAYS boys about the old days in Elizabethtown and Hardin County. I wonder if that is CY BRANHAM there giving WILLIAM CARLISLE a ribbing (all in fun of course) because William was too old to keep up with the youngsters in the business of fighting battles.

PERHAPS WE WILL COME TO KNOW.

SAMUEL HAYCRAFT, JR.

Margaret S. Richerson

To anyone who has read The History of Elizabethtown, Ky. and its Surroundings or Who was Who in Hardin County, Samuel Haycraft, Jr. can be no stranger. He was the son of Samuel Haycraft and his wife Margaret Van Meter Haycraft, a daughter of Jacob Van Meter, Sr. The elder Haycraft had built a fort near the site of Elizabethtown in the early days, about the time VanMeter, Helm and Hynes built their forts. Haycraft's Fort was located in the northeastern section of what is now Elizabethtown on Cave Spring Hill. Later Mr. Haycraft built a large round double log cabin near where the L & N tracks were laid, approximately where the residence of the late Dr. F. P. Strickler formerly stood. Nearby, somewhere near the place where the railroad bridge now crosses Valley Creek, Samuel Haycraft, Sr. built and operated a mill.

On August 14, 1795, Samuel, Jr. was born in the log cabin. He attended local schools under teachers he mentions in his History and did odd jobs about town. In October, 1809 he began to do writing in the office of the Clerk of the County and Circuit Courts of Hardin County. In March, 1811 he was appointed a deputy clerk under Ben Helm. From that early day he served the public in official capacities with integrity and marked efficiency, a citizen of the highest moral order and splendid intellectual attainments, unselfishly devoting himself to public interests and the betterment of town and county for nearly seventy years.

From 1816 until 1857 he served as clerk of both the circuit and county courts, then retired to practice law but was elected to the State Senate where he was a distinguished figure and a great supporter of the Union. His friendship with the Lincoln family and his correspondence with Abraham Lincoln are discussed in several chapters in a book entitled A Series of Monographs concerning the Lincolns and Hardin County by Dr. R. Gerald McMurtry.

Samuel Haycraft, Jr. was married to Sarah Brown Helm, a daughter of Judge John Helm of Breckinridge County and a granddaughter of Capt. Thomas Helm, one of the original settlers in the Valley who arrived about 1780. Of his marriage, which took place on October 29, 1818, Haycraft said, "I regard the transaction as the most fortunate move of my life, temporally speaking." This couple lived together for sixty years and were blessed with eight children: Edgar Helm who married Susan G. VanMeter, a daughter of Joseph Harrison VanMeter, and who later removed to DeSoto, Iowa; Sarah Maria who married Stephen McMurtry; Louisa Ann who married William Dix of Breckinridge County; Margaret John who married Col. C. D. Poston, once a representative in Congress from Arizona; Elizabeth Jane who was never married; and two daughters and a son who died young. The Haycrafts lived in a fine square colonial home which stood on the northeast corner of Main and Poplar streets. This home had been erected by Major Benjamin Helm and was the first brick house built in Elizabethtown. It was destroyed by fire in 1882.

Mrs. Haycraft seems to have been as interesting as her husband. Mrs. Emma Middleton Wells, who wrote a paper for the Hardin County Historical Society in 1933, gives this account of her: 'I remember well when a child that 'Aunt Sallie' Haycraft, riding around the town in her carriage, distributed lamp lighters which she had made out of newspapers, tied in little bundles. She would send them into the homes by her coachman. Matches were not plentiful then. Every Sunday morning she could be seen dressed in her best black dress and her black dress bonnet. In cold weather she wore a large gray shawl, folded with a point reaching to her skirt in the back, walking from her home to the Baptist Church, behind her walked her old man servant, who had probably been one of her slaves. On his arm he carried a large willow basket filled with sweet cakes. When Sunday School was dismissed, 'Aunt Sallie' stood in the entry and as the children passed out of the Church she gave each of them one of the cakes.'

For more than forty years Haycraft was a member of, and a faithful worker in, the Severn's Valley Baptist Church. He died December 22, 1878, Mrs. Haycraft having died on August 14, just four months prior. They are buried in the Elizabethtown City Cemetery. In 1937 a marker was erected to the memory of Haycraft by the Hardin County Historical Society, the Woman's Club, Gustavus Pope, Benjamin Helm Pope and Julius E. Haycraft. According to the minutes of the Historical Society, it contributed \$25 for the erection of this marker and \$20 came from the other sources. This stands near a corner of the City Cemetery and bears this inscription:

Samuel Haycraft, Jr. 1795-1878. Interred in this cemetery are the remains of Samuel Haycraft, Jr. who was born in a double round log cabin in Elizabethtown during the pioneer period. His father, Samuel Haycraft, Sr., a Revolutionary soldier and pioneer miller, was the donor of the adjacent cemetery acres. Samuel Haycraft, Jr. served as clerk of both the Hardin County Court and the Hardin Circuit Court. He was a member of the Elizabethtown Bar, State Senator, supporter of the Union, sponsor of the state monument to Daniel Boone, an acquaintance of Thomas Lincoln, a correspondent of Abraham Lincoln and author of A HISTORY OF ELIZABETHTOWN, KY AND ITS SURROUNDINGS.

By arrangement with the owners and publishers of The Elizabethtown News, Will F. Bell, editor and J. W. Matthis, assistant editor, Haycraft was allotted a certain space in each issue of the paper for his History of Elizabethtown, Ky. and its Surroundings. The first installment appeared on August 19, 1869, in the second issue of the new paper. Both the News and the History were favorably received from the very beginning. In the issue for August 26, 1869, appeared the following unsigned letter headed HISTORY OF ELIZABETHTOWN--A Suggestion:

Messers Matthis and Bell:

Gentlemen:

I see in your last issue the commencement of the history of our town. Together with a large number of our citizens I was gratified to learn that Cap't Samuel Haycraft has undertaken to furnish it. He, perhaps, is the only man now alive who can furnish a reliable history of our growing town, and it certainly ought to be preserved by printing it in pamphlet or book form. I am sure there is not a citizen who has the interest of the town at heart but would like to have one or more copies of the history. But as this would not be enough to justify you publishing the history in pamphlet or book form, it seems to me that the Trustees ought to appropriate a sum, which, together with the subscription, would enable you to publish it in such form as to insure its preservation.

Yours,

(Signed only) ***

Later, on November 4, 1869 the same paper carried this paragraph in an article written by an unnamed correspondent from Howell's Springs, Ky, a place in Hardin County north of Nall's Valley:

Among the many contributions to your columns none impresses more forcibly than that of the History of Elizabethtown, by your esteemed fellow citizen, Honorable Samuel Haycraft. In our judgment there is none other within the limits of our county or state who is so eminently qualified to write the history of Elizabethtown as your venerable, but humorous fellow townsman. Having been born and reared within its present corporate limits, his knowledge of the city is co-extensive with its history as a tenanted place. Numerous are the inquiries made in regard to it--all seem to be extremely anxious to read it, and, it is well that they are, for it is itself worth more than the subscription price of the News for one year.

It was not until 1921 that the History appeared in book form, when it was published by the Woman's Club of Elizabethtown with financial aid being loaned by the late Dr. and Mrs. W. A. Pusey. No attempt was made to edit or correct the history; however, the errors in spelling should not be attributed to the author alone since others, such as copyists and typesetters, have probably been partly responsible. The last installment by Haycraft appeared in the News for May 11, 1871 and ends abruptly: "As I have now run my limit for the paper, I must defer any further notice of Mr. Hardin for the next number." Haycraft had been writing about Ben Hardin of Bardstown. Why the History was never continued is unknown.

In the above-mentioned paper for May 19, 1870, there is an interesting article concerning a trip taken by a group of Elizabethtown men down the Elizabethtown and Paducah Railroad. The writer takes note of the fact that Capt. Samuel Haycraft was among them. The trip was halted at Big Clifty station, or Brunk's precinct, where the party was to get dinner. The "eating place" did not appear very promising from the outside and the prospects for a good meal seemed rather slim; and in answer to a remark on this subject by one of his fellow travelers, Haycraft, with a twinkle in his eye, said, "Yes, appearances are ag'in us. I wish I had brought some along in my pocket-- in a bottle." However, a couple of men shortly produced, from a nearby store, an abundance of Capt. Haycraft's kind of dinner, which was followed by an elegant dinner of ham and turkey with vegetables and pie and all the trimmings.

It is indeed fortunate that The History of Elizabethtown and its Surroundings was written by Samuel Haycraft, Jr. for it represents an invaluable link between past and present. It is an exceedingly interesting document containing vivid word pictures of pioneer life, the three early forts comprising the first settlement in Severn's Valley, and minute descriptions of the countryside. He discussed the growth of government and religion in the infant community and gave a very interesting appraisal of the town:

For who can tell what Elizabethtown will be with her delightful and healthful location, with her fine water and her surroundings of intelligent and gentlemanly farmers, the best fruit country in the world and her future manufactories that must spring up. And when it becomes a large city it will be well to look back upon her starting point.

This Samuel Haycraft, Jr. has made possible for us to do by writing The History of Elizabethtown, Ky. and its Surroundings.