

A Quarterly Publication
of the Hardin County
Historical Society,
a Non-Profit Organization.

Originated in 1931

First Quarter 2026

Bits and Pieces

OF HARDIN COUNTY HISTORY

www.hardinkyhistoricalsociety.org

Sherrill Williams, Researcher

Michael L. Bell, Compiler

mike@glendalecc.org

This article is in our publication of WHO WAS WHO IN HARDIN COUNTY

It was written by Mellie C. Upton and appeared in the Hardin County Enterprise on March 4, 1941. The Enterprise published a biography each week written by a member of the Historical Society. It was compiled and printed in 1946 and reprinted in 2005 containing sketches of 177 early residents. You can purchase the collection from the society for \$15.00

The UPTON FAMILY

Two of his sons, Edward and Daniel Upton, emigrated to Green County, Kentucky, about 1790. They married sisters by the name of Black. Edward was born in 1774. After the death of his first wife, who the mother of four children. two sons and two daughters, he married Miss Jane Taner, of Green County Kentucky, who was born in Virginia. To this marriage were born six children: Thomas Upton; Green Upton, John Upton, William Upton, George W. Upton and Mary Upton. Edward Upton came from Green county, Kentucky, to Hardin county, Kentucky, about 1812 and bought a large body of land, a part of it where Upton now stands, and where he lived until his death in 1852. He built the first schoolhouse in this section of the county, near Big Spring, one-fourth mile from Upton.

The first teacher was a Mr. Morgan, who was buried in the Upton burying ground near the Big Spring, a plat of ground deeded by Edward Upton for a burying ground for the Upton Family. Edward Upton's children by his last wife, married as follows:

1. Thomas Upton first married a Shepard, and settled in the State of Ohio, when young. After the death of his first wife he married a Rider.
2. Green Upton married a Rider
3. George W. Upton married Elizabeth Flanders.

4. William Upton married Amelia Vertres

To the marriage of George W. Upton, who married Elizabeth Flanders, were born three children: Asbury Upton, Paralee Upton (Brashear), and Esler Upton (King) all deceased. George W. Upton owned two hundred acres of ground in and around Upton. He encouraged home building by giving one acre of land to anyone who would build. He donated the land on which the Upton Baptist church stands. He built the depot at Upton about 1857 or 1858, to be sure to have a station there. The L & N Railroad Co. bought it. The town of Upton (first known as Uptonville) was named for him.



UPTON DEPOT Bob Watkins posted on Old Pictures of Hardin County

William Upton married Amelia Vertrees October 18, 1830. Amelia Vertrees was a daughter of John Vertrees, who moved to Illinois about the year 1830. She was a niece of Samuel Haycraft of Elizabethtown. The children of William Upton were Andrew Jackson, Edward, Solon (who was one of Morgan's men in the War Between the states but was stricken ill and died before going into active service), Thomas Benton and Nancy Jane Upton (Handley).

Andrew Jackson Upton married Mary Tinker, November 14, 1858. She was the daughter of Houghton H. Tinker and Letha Watkins Tinker. Houghton was the son of Dr. Ralph Tinker, who came to Kentucky from Vermont and settled a short distance north of Upton. He was one of the first physicians in this part of the state. After living here for a few years, he moved to Bowling Green, Mo. Andrew Jackson Upton was a merchant at Upton for 40 years. He was also a farmer and lumber dealer. He was instrumental in building the first schoolhouse and Masonic Hall in Upton in 1871. He was a Baptist and a Mason. And a much-loved citizen. He was born November 26, 1831, and died October 31, 1896. Andrew Jackson Upton and Mary Tinke Upton were the parents of 8 children, four whom are living.

Daniel Upton, a son of Edward Upton by his first marriage, married Sarah Burks. They were the parents of 13 children, one of whom was T. J. Upton, a

merchant in Upton for several years. Daniel Upton, Sr., who came from North Carolina, was the father of Sarah Elizabeth Upton who married Daniel Brackett and lived near Upton.



An interesting tidbit in [The News-Enterprise](#) • **Friday, May 18, 1906**

Origin of The Expression "Let's Take a Horn". Mr. M. P. Skaggs of Upton brings in for exhibition at the Homecoming a unique old relic in the shape of a horn cup nearly 200 years of age. The cup is the property of Mr. Skaggs' wife, whose great grandfather, Edward Upton, brought it from England over a century and a quarter ago, and it has come down through several generations to Mrs. Skaggs, whose maiden name was Upton. Edward Upton joined the American Army as soon as he landed, and he and the old cup went through the Revolutionary War together. It is made of common cow's horn, finely polished, with horn bottom and will hold about half a pint. Mr. Skaggs informs us that whisky was formerly drunk from these horn cups before the days of glasses, and hence the common expression, "Let's take a horn together".



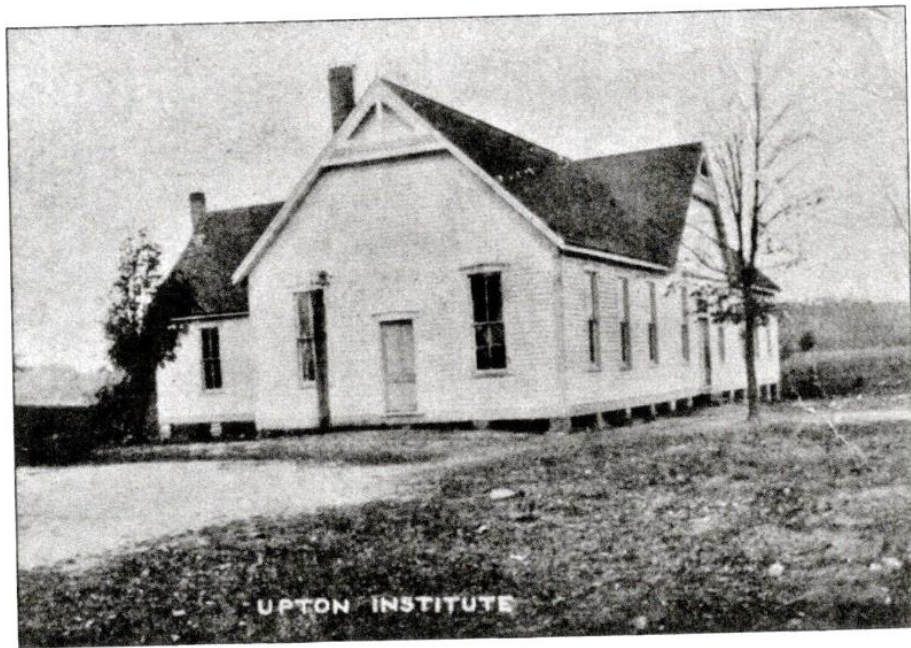
Special thanks to **Bobby Humes** for providing information about Upton. Bobby shared a copy of “**A brief look at the History of Upton**” by Edna Mae Cruse, Pansy Jones, and Debbie Lloyd. Following are some excerpts from their history.

UPTON AND THE CIVIL WAR...History reports that General John H. Morgan, after defeating the Union's Second Michigan Calvary at Glasgow, celebrated Christmas on the evening of December 25, 1862 just five miles south of the town of Upton. Early on the morning of the 26th, continuing a drive toward Louisville along the L & N Railroad, the Federal Garrison in Upton was taken completely by surprise and captured. Then, taking possession of the telegraph offices, Morgan and a young quick-witted telegraph operator, “Lightning,” proceeded to send misleading information as to Morgan's whereabouts and strength to the Union's General Boyle in Louisville. It was reported that several miles of railroad were also destroyed.

Records also report that during the War Between the States, several of Upton's home were seized and converted into hospitals and the Lee Upton building (later the telephone office) was used as a fort.

POST OFFICE Upton postal system was originally established as Leesville Post Office in Hart County, January 1, 1841, with Silas Lee serving as the first postmaster. It became the Uptonville Post Office April 8, 1856 with G. W. Upton as postmaster. Around 1860 it was moved to Larue County and in about 1874 to Hardin County. In 1882, the Upton Post Office was establish (in the building currently adjoining the Upton Consignment Store). The post office moved to its current location on Walnut Street in 1968. Brenda Carroll has served as postmaster since 1988.

SCHOOLS Education has always been central to the Upton community. In



Upton Institute

the early 1900's, the Upton Institute of Normal School became well known teachers college, a training school for higher education teachers. Local residents offered room and board to the students. Professor J. A. Howard served as principal and Mrs.

Stella Keith was assistant principal.

For the local youth, an Upton Independent School for grades 1-10 was established and supported by the community. In 1899, it was recorded that the Upton School, under principal, D. E. McClure, enrolled 95 students. In 1918, the school became a 1-12 grade school under the leadership of J. M. F. Hays. It graduated its first students that year (Jesse Rider and Ada Bows). To accommodate the growing enrollment, the building was demolished in the 20's to build a larger two story school (Mr. Roscoe Murray, who has been the only

Hardin Countian to advance to the rank of Major General, and later became State Adjutant General, served as principal for sever years during the 30's). A new gymnasium was added to the school in 1941 but in 1942 this school tragically burned. That same year, a new school building was built for grades 1-12 and in 1946 , the school graduated it last Senior class. It was then, due to consolidation, the Upton independent School became part of the Hardin County School District, and the facility became an elementary school housing first through fifth grades. Through redistricting in 1986, the school took its current kindergarten through firth grade status. Mr. Gary L. Coffey has been principal of the school since 1971. *(Bobby Humes noted that in 2005, Upton and Sonora consolidated to form Creekside at Sonora. Laura Price moved from principal of Upton to the first principal of Creekside).*

The Upton community spirit and support for its local school was again quite evident as the town rallied int the fall of 1990 to raise money to build a new playground for the campus. With matching funds from Modern Woodmen of America Life Insurance Co, and support of the Hardin County School Board, more than \$6,700.00 was collected and a fine playground facility was installed.

Mr. Humes provided much information on the Upton School:

- Miss Willie Avery, daughter of MM L. T. Avery won the County Spelling Bee in 1929. Miss Ludia Ray Vance, an 11 year-old daughter of MM Harvey Vance won the 1935 County Spelling Bee. Mr. Avery and Mr. Vance were business partners having a Ford Auto and Standard Oil Business
- In 1938, Governor Happy Chandler was the commencement speaker for the largest graduating class of 24 students.
- In 1940, without a gym to practice, Upton won the 23rd District Basketball Championship. They defeated Elizabethtown 21 to 20 with Damon Ray, who was later principal and school superintendent, scoring 14 of the 21 points. Claude Brackett was the coach with Hubert Fults and Damon Ray making All District team.
- In 1941, a new gym was added to the school. It was finished just before Christmas that year, but in February 1942 the school building and gym burned completely. Mr. E. E. McMullin was principal
- In 1942, a mew brick building was constructed to replace the old wooden

structure. This served as a 1-12 grad school until 1946. There were 13 graduates in 1946 with Damon Ray being the last high school principal.

- During the 40's and 50's, Mr. Leonard Richardson was principal for many years
- In 1959, Bobby L. Humes, a former Upton student, became the principal and Mrs. Aubry Jaggers Ward, who was a long-time Upton teacher retired
- In 1962 Carl Henry Ford became principal. Mr. Ford then moved to Sonora School to replace Dellard Moor who also was an Upton school graduate. Mr. Gary L. Coffey became principal in 1971 and served for 23 years, longer than any other principal. In 1994, Liz Tabb became principal
- In 1972, Mrs. Pansy ones was selected as one the outstanding elementary teach of America. After 36 years of teaching Mrs. Jones retired in May 1972, many of those years in one room schools
- In 1980, Mrs. Gertrude Copelin retired from Upton.

UPTON RURITAN CLUB was organized in 1973 with Ralph Jones serving as the first president for the purpose of promoting community pride and citizenship.

UPTON MASONIC LODGE NO. 749 was chartered on October 21, 1903, under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky, Free and Accepted Masons. Mr. Daniel E. McClure represented the Lodge as the first master in 1902. The first Masonic Hall was on the second floor of a two-story frame building west of the railroad (presently the parking lot of Rider's Bestway). This building burned in 1906 and for the next forty years several local facilities housed the lodge (above the drug store, Patterson Funeral Home, Dr. C. T. Rigg's office) until present Hall was constructed in 1950. Today, the Lodge has approximately 159 members and meets at the Lodge Hall on the first and third Saturday nights of each month. As well as local community projects and efforts o promote charity and self-discipline among its members, the men support the Masonic Widows and Orphan's Home in Louisville and the Old Masons' Home of Kentucky in Shelbyville. Greg Riggs currently serves as Lodge Master.

The **UPTON CHAPTER OF THE ORDER OF EASTERN STAR**, a masonic affiliation for wives, daughters, widows and sisters of Master Masons, was organized as the 74th chapter in the state in 1907. Mrs. Fannie Riggs presides as the first Worthy Matron. Currently Clara Mae Druen serves as Worthy Matron.



This concludes the excerpts from the Upton pamphlet which contains much more community history. Thanks again to Bobby Humes for making it available.

April 27, 2026 Meeting will have as special DANIEL BOONE. Mark your calendar for this special program.

Dues of \$25.00 are January to December, and may be mailed to

Sam Davis
P O Box 284
Elizabethtown KY 42702

IF YOU RECEIVED THIS BY MAIL, RIGHT NOW EMAIL mike@glendalecc.org your email address. It cost approximately \$2.00 each to print and mail the Bits and Pieces. This would be a tremendous savings to the society.

SHERRILL WILLIAMS is the speaker for the meeting. He will give some insight on the **BOONE BOYS.**

Sherrill was born and raised in Hodgenville, KY. He graduated from Larue Co. High School in 1965. He continued his education at the University of Kentucky where he earned a B.A. degree in 1969. He then went on to earn a M.A. degree from Western Kentucky University in 1972. His teaching career spanned 27 years at North Hardin High School where he taught History. The years since his retirement in 1997 have been devoted to painting, music and writing. He lives with his wife Joan in Vine Grove, Kentucky. *(Heather that takes your reservation is his daughter)*

Note from the President

Happy New Year and Happy 250th Birthday America! I look forward to working with all of you in 2026 as we have many opportunities to share the stories of our ancestors. We can educate our children so they can carry their heritage into the next 250 years.

I am excited about our partnership with the History Museum as we work together to bring the community the best **HERITAGE DAY** EVER in October! Food, games, music, character impersonators from the early days when we were a new country in 1776 and a new state in 1792! Several of you have already volunteered to help with Heritage Day. I encourage you to sign up as we also need HCHS representatives at the Lincoln Heritage House on the first weekend of the month, either Sat or Sun from 1-4pm. Everything you need for the open house will be provided. Just show up and enjoy three hours at the lake.

Check out our menu from **The 16th Restaurant**, a gourmet salad, assorted soups, corn bread, and finish that off with one of Joe's fabulous desserts! Coffee, tea and water included. Meal \$20 in advance, \$25 at door.

Make your reservations with Heather by Friday, January 23rd. 270-369-7874.

Twylane Van Lahr

Hardin County Historical Society

P O Box 35

Glendale, KY 42740

January 26, 2026, 6:30 at Brown Pusey House

PROGRAM: Brown Pusey History

PROGRAM: Begins around 7

RSVP (270) 369-7874 by January 22 or

***Email mike@glendalecc.org to make
your reservation.***