

# Bits and Pieces of Hardin County History

Published by the Hardin County Historical Society

Vol. VIII No. 3

Robert Beimdick, Editor

Summer 1986

A STUDY IN HANDWRITING  
LINCOLN-HAYCRAFT CORRESPONDENCE  
BY R. GERALD McMURTRY

will oblige yours A. Asa Coombes  
Sept 25<sup>th</sup> 1877 -  
Mr James Haycraft Esq

August 26<sup>th</sup> 1798 Rec. of Edward Sawyers  
the Sheriff of Hardin County £ 8<sup>00</sup> 16<sup>00</sup> 10 the  
full amount of an Execution. Philips vs  
Executors vs Jacob Vanmeter — which  
money was to paid to me by an endorsement  
on the execution —  
Ben Helms

hereunto set our hands & seals  
this 28<sup>th</sup> day of April 1819  
Jo. Allen (Seal)  
Jacob Thomas (Seal)

That Mr. Thomas may make in reference to  
the matter will be satisfactory to me and shall be  
strictly confidential with.  
Yours very respectfully  
Wm. H. Smith

Examples of the handwritings of the four Clerks. From the collection of the Helm-Haycraft papers now housed in the Louis A. Warren Lincoln Library and Museum, Fort Wayne, Indiana. (Article on page 26)

A STUDY IN HANDWRITING  
 LINCOLN-HAYCRAFT CORRESPONDENCE  
 by R. GERALD McMURTRY

During the presidential election year of 1860, Abraham Lincoln wrote five letters to Samuel Haycraft Jr., the former Hardin County Circuit Court Clerk at Elizabethtown. In fact, Haycraft wrote Lincoln six letters and Lincoln replied five times.(1) Haycraft initiated the correspondence in May, 1860; however, his first letter to which Lincoln replied is not extant. The earliest letter extant from Haycraft to Lincoln is dated May 31, 1860. The last of the five letters Haycraft received from Lincoln is dated November 13, 1860.

Lincoln knew Haycraft by reputation and the newly elected sixteenth President undoubtedly had seen many of his father's legal papers in the handwriting of the early court clerks. Samuel Haycraft had served in the County and Circuit Court offices from 1809 until 1857. In the year of his retirement, he was elected to the Kentucky State Senate and held that position for four years. He was again elected Clerk of the Circuit Court in 1862 and retired in 1868 at the age of seventy-three.(2)

On May 28, 1860, Lincoln answered Haycraft's first letter. Among other subjects he wrote "I do not think I ever saw you, though I very well know who you are-so well that I recognized your handwriting, on opening your letter, before I saw the signature. My recollection is that Ben Helm was first Clerk, that you succeeded him, that Jack Thomas and William Farleigh graduated to the same office and that your handwritings were all very similar. Am I right?"

The Louis A. Warren Lincoln Library and Museum of Fort Wayne, Indiana, is especially rich in early original Hardin County and neighboring counties manuscripts dating back to 1780 and examples of the four clerk's handwritings are available for comparison.(3) There is a similiarity because they likely used quill pens, walnut hull ink and wrote with a flourish giving a kind of decorative appearance to capital letters and dates with the result that the average reader is sometimes confused with such elaborations.

My opinion is that the handwritings of the Court Clerks were similiar.(4)

Footnotes

- (1) R. Gerald McMurtry, BITS & PIECES, Vol. 2, No. 2, Spring, 1884; pages 13-18 to 22.
- (2) Samuel Haycraft, A HISTORY OF ELIZABETHTOWN, KENTUCKY AND ITS SURROUNDINGS, Hardin County Historical Society, 1960, pages 1-2.
- (3) LINCOLN LORE, Number 1587, May, 1970. Lincoln National Life Insurance Co., "The Helm-Haycraft Collection of Kentucky Manuscripts," pages 1-3.
- (4) Samuel Haycraft, A HISTORY OF ELIZABETHTOWN...For information on Ben Helm see pages 109-110, Jack Thomas, pages 55-57, and William Farleigh, page 66.

DUES, DUES, DUES Dues for 1987 are now being accepted. Society membership is \$8.00 per member per year. Please remit the same to Mrs. June Thornberry, 128 N. Main St., Elizabethtown, KY 42701

## COURT ORDER BOOK, HARDIN COUNTY, KY 1797 (5 Sept.)

At a Court held for Hardin County Tuesday the 5th day of September 1797 Present Bladin Ashby Stephen Rawlings and Robert Mosley Gent Justices

James Miller nominated Deputy Surveyor ordered that James Nourse & Moses Pigg do examine him and make report of the same to Court

A deed from Robert Bard to Jefse Cravins proved by the Oath of Robert Mosley ordered to Lay over for further proof

Ann Bards Acknowledgement of her right of dower before Robert Mosley & Stephen Cleaver Justices to Jefse Cravins ordered to be recorded

A deed from Gabriel Madison to Jefse Cravins proved by the Oath of Robert Mosley ordered to lay over for further proof

A deed from John Slover to Harrison Taylor proved by the Oath of Robert Mosley & John Smith Ordered to record

A deed from Robert Mosley to Ignatius Pigman Acknowledged in Court and ordered to Record

A deed from Robert Mosley to Lodowick Ambrose acknowledged in Court & ordered to Record

A deed from Gabriel Madison to Harrison Taylor proved by the Oath of Robert Mosley & Jefse Cravins ordered to Record

A deed from Gabriel Madison to the Commifioners of Joseph Barnets Decd Estate proved by the Oath of Robert Mosley & Jefse Cravins ordered to Lay over for further proof

A deed from John Keith to Robert Mosley proved by the Oath of Jefse Cravins ordered to Lay over for further proof

A report from James Nourse and Moses Pigg saith that James Miller is qualified for a Deputy Surveyor proceed to take the oath prescribed by Law

On the application of Michael Myers It is ordered that the Clerk of this Court do Ifsue his Warrant to George Berry Henry Ewing & Samuel Haycraft Gentlemen appointed Commifioners agreeable to an Act of Afsembly intituled an act to Afscertain the boundaries of Land & for other purposes Commanding them or any two of them to attend said Michael Myers to an Entry of 550 acres upon a Treasury warrant No. 4238 Beginning on an East fork of Otter Creek at a Spanish & White Oak marked T.F.M.C. near a Spring about 3 miles from John May's Entry of two Thousand acres to Extend out to the Barrens on Each side of the Creek and down for quantity then and there to take on Oath the Depositions of such persons as may be brought forward to prove any Special Calls in said Entry and do such other things as may be deemed necefsary agreeable to said Act

An Inventory & appraisement of the Estate of Joseph Barnet Decd and Inventory of bonds produced in Court by the Comifioners of sd Estate ordered to Record

Ordered that Samuel Watkins James (?) Logsdon Jacob Vanmatre & Daniel Linder or any three of them being first Sworn do view and mark out a Road from Elizabeth Town Crofsing Bacon Creek within two Miles of the mouth and then the nearest and best way to Green River and make return thereof to Court

A deed from Reuben Kemp & wife to Joseph Inlow acknowledged in Court and ordered to Record

Upon the application of Henry Feite owns the land on both sides of big Sinking Creek he being desirous of building a water grist Mill thereon prays that one acre of Land on said Creek for the abutments of his mill Dam & may be condemned It is ordered that the Commonwealths Writ of Adquoddammum Ifsue to the Sheriff of this County Commanding him to summon twelve good and Lawful men to meet on the Land petitioned on the day next then and there to inquire agreeable to an Act of Afsembly in that Case made and provided and such inquisition so made shall return under their hands and seals of the Jurors to the next Court

Also that the same be ordered for the same on Clear Creek

A return of the Examination of Moses Pigg for a Deputy Surveyor by James Nourse and James Miller saith that he is qualified for said office proceed to take the oath required by law

On the motion John Smith who together with his security Jefse Cravens entered into and acknowledged their bond ordered that Licence be granted him to keep an ordinary in his house in Town of Hartford for the Term of one year next insuing

Ordered that Jonathan Bozarth be appointed overseer of the Road from the big lick upon Short to the top of the hill on this side little Clifty and all the land within Eight miles of said Road to Subject to the same

A delinquent list produced in Court by Samuel Haycraft Sheriff & adjusted

On the motion of John Smith who together with Jefse Cravens & James Kerle his Security having entered and acknowledged their bond as the Law directs Administration is granted to sd Smith upon the Estate of Joseph Guarver Decd took the Oath prescribed by Law Ordered that Alexander Barnet Harrison Taylor William Barnet & Aquilla Fields or any three of them being first sworn do appraise said Guarver Estate and make return thereof to Court

On the application of Samuel Haycraft Sheriff James Haycraft took the oath prescribed by Law for a Deputy Sheriff

Ordered that Samuel Haycraft be allowed for three days attending an Election

Ordered that Stephen Rawlings be allowed for three days Superintending an Election

Ordered that Charles Helm & George Berry be appointed Commifioners for the division of Lands in Hardin County agreeably to an act of Afsembly for that purpose

The Court proceed to Lay & afsefs the County Levy which is as follows

|   | £ S D   |
|---|---------|
| To James Nourse States Attorney   | 15"0"0  |
| To Sheriff Extra Services   | 6"0"0   |
| To Clerk for D <sup>a</sup>   | 5"0"0   |
| To Sheriff attending Election three days  | 018"0   |
| To Clerk D <sup>o</sup>   | 018"0   |
| To Judges D <sup>o</sup>  | 016"0   |
| To Stephen Rawlings for building Stocks Whipping post<br>pillory and repairing Courthouse | 24"0"0  |
| To D <sup>o</sup> for building jail   | 130"0"0 |
| To Thomas Redman for keeping Michael Miller   | 26"0"0  |
| To depositurn & Sheriffs pr Ct  | 40"0"0  |

Cs C Hardin 600 Tithables

Ordered that the Sheriff collect nine Shillings from each Tithable and pay the above creditors and account with the Court for the Balance

Ordered that Joshua Haycraft keep the Stray and that Charles Helm deliver him the Lock & key thereof

Ordered that George Helm be allowed one dollar for Covering the Courthouse

Ordered that James Redman be allowed fifty shillings per month for keeping Michael Miller for seven Months from the first of October 1796

Ordered that Thomas Redman be allowed forty shillings pr Month for keeping Michael Miller from the first of May until this day

A deed signed & acknowledged by James Nourse & Samuel Haycraft Commifsioners for the division of Lands was produced in Court by the Commifsioners Conveying to William Orr an Interest in two ninth parts of ninety Eight thousand acres of Land and Ordered to record

Likewise another deed to William Orr by said Commifsioners for two ninth thirty three thousand acres acknowledged and ordered to record together with the Agreement between the said & the legal Claimants which the Commifsioners Acted and ordered likewise to record

Ordered that the Court Adjourn till Court in Course

Bladin Ashby

#### ELIZABETHTOWN CITY COUNCIL MINUTES 1820

At a meeting of the board of Trustees of Elizabeth Town on Monday the 14th day of August 1820 Present Samuel Martin Robert Bleakley John Morris William Parcels and James Park

The Board having been sworn to execute the duties of their office faithfully & impartially by Jacob Enlow Esquire a Justice of peace in and for Hardin County proceeded to appoint Samuel Martin Esquire president of the Board

Ordered that the Board adjourn  
Saml Martin prest  
Attest Sam Haycraft Jr Clk

At a meeting of the board of Trustees for Elizabeth Town at the house of Samuel Martin Esquire in said Town on Monday the 21st day of August 1820 Present Samuel Martin Esquire President William Parcels Robert Bleakley John Morris and James Park Gentlemen Trustees

On motion made and seconded, Resolved that this board will let to the lowest bidder the building of a Market house in this Town on the first Monday in September at the Court house door and that the board or a majority of them being present take of the undertaker bond with approved security in the penalty of One thousand dollars to build and complete the same in a workman like manner on or before the 25th day of December next according to the plan and at the place that may be agreed on by the Trustees before the day of letting out the same the plan to be shown at the time and the Undertaker to take for his pay the subscription that is now & may hereafter be made up for that purpose or so much thereof as he may under take to do it for

Ordered that George L. Rogers be appointed Overseer of the streets of this Town in the place of John Haywood resigned

Resolved by the Board That the laws concerning horse racing, shooting and shewing stud horses in the streets or limits of this Town will be strictly put in force & that the Clerk of this board set up a copy of this order at three places in this Town annexing the penalties presented by law to each of those offices

Ordered that the Board adjourn S Martin Prs  
Attest Sam Haycraft Clk

A VAN METER LETTER

Long Grove, Ky.

Jan. 23, 1891

To Mrs. Mary Jane Wale  
Jasper, Mo.

My dear friend and relative as it is raining this day I thought I would write you a few lines. We are not well, Margaret is right poorly. We would be very glad to see you. You have asked many questions. Some I could answer if I could see you, but many of them I couldn't.

My grandfather I think came with your great grandfather. There was several families in the move. I don't know who they were. The man Henton that was drowned is the only name that I remember. My grandfather Jacob Van Meter 1752, died April 12, 1838, aged 86 years, brought his wife with him. She was a Cohenoer. I think their children was all born in Ky.

My half uncles and aunts: Abraham, Wm., Jacob, Geo. Wash, Henry, John, Hannah, Rebecca, Ruth, last wives children, Nancy Letica, Mahala, and Edward Rawlings Van Meter who was my father.

I don't know Abrahams wife was. Henry's wife was Easter. Abe and Henry moved to Ill's in an early day. If there is any descendants living I don't know. Jake married a Spurrier. John married a Watson. Both of their families lived and died in Hardin Co. Ky. Washington married Ellen Carson they was my first wife's father and mother. Hannah married Ebenezer Richardson moved to Ind. in an early day. Rebecca married Jesse Morrison, lived and died in Hardin Co. Ruth's first husband was Davis. Second husband Chambers. Her Davis daughter married John Tabb. Their children live in Hardin Co. Her son Henry Van Meter Chambers lives in Hancock Co., Ky. My own Aunts Nancy married Joseph Van Meter. Letitia married John Watson. Their children are scattered over several states, none in this county. Mahala married Wm. Prather first, last Geo. Milburn. She has two Prather Children and two Milburn children in Mead and Breckenridge Co's. I don't know the P.O.

Edward Rawlings Van Meter married Mary Bird. My grandfather's children are all dead. I don't know what my great grandfathers name was but I am of the opinion that it was . I received two letters from D.S. Van Meter with blanks to fill out which I have filled out and returned I write this for you. We will never live to see Van Meter's book.

I never heard of John Van Meter getting killed horse racing. There are Kellers in this Co. but I don't know who they are related to Dr. Sams mother or not.

Miles Hart's Fort was 3 miles east of Elizabethtown and just moved into it, just had hung the door, and was standing looking out and was shot. Aunt Betsy ran and one Indian ran after her but was out running him. He threw his tomahawk and hit her back of

the head and knocked her down. They killed all the children but Joe and Miles but Miles had a sore foot and they was afraid the white men would catch them and they killed him on the road. She had one child after the Indians got her but it died. Joe Hart never married. Aunt Betsy has grandchildren living. Aunt Betsey married Gunterman that Jackson in the News said she married Price. He was mistaken. Sam Price married one of her Gunterman girls. Bailey Tabb married the other one. Bailey Tabb and John Tabb was brothers lived a half mile apart until the families were raised. John Tabb married Aunt Ruth Davis daughter. Thos. Tabb and John Tabb was their sons and both married Sam Price's daughters. Henry V. Chambers Aunt Ruth's son by Chambers married another one of them. Chambers lives in Hancock Co., Ky. Thos. and John Tabb post office is Elizabethtown. Tom's wife is dead. John's is living. Tom is the oldest and can tell more about Aunt Betsy than any other person. Aunt Betsey lived for many years at Bailey Tabbs and died there and John and Tom was raised all most with Aunt Betsey. I worked for Bailey Tabb the summer before Aunt Betsey died used to go in her room and hear her talk about her treatment by the Indians. She was confined to her bed with rheumatism and suffered greatly at times.

Bailey Tabb has one daughter living in Davies Co. I don't know her P.O. The widow Betsy Miller she was grown when Aunt Betsey died and waited on her several years. I am no akin to the Harts only by marriage. Uncle Wash married Ellen. Nellie she was always called. Col. Aaron Hart last wife was Polly Carson. Old Grayson Isaac Van Meter last wife was Jennie Carson. Old Uncle Aaron Hart was a twin brother of Miles Hart that was killed by the Indians. Uncle Aaron named four of Uncle Washington's children Hart. Moses H, Aaron H, Miles H, Hannah H.

You learned from my brother Wm. P. Van Meter that our forefathers came down the Ohio River to Louisville on a raft that is correct. My hand is so tired I shall have to stop my hands is so crippled with rheumatism that I can hardly write. I would like to see all the neighbors out there once more. Give my love and respects to all there I wish I could see you and talk to you one week straight out. I remain your true friend. John Henton Van Meter

Ed's Note: In the next issue, I will give line by line notes on the information in this letter. The notes will help identify some of the people listed and straighten out their relationships.

TIDBIT ELIZABETHTOWN NEWS 30 Dec. 1941 Mr. and Mrs. John W. Goodin celebrate their 50th anniversary today. Mrs. Goodin was Ella Brownfield, daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. D.M. Brownfield. The Goodin's children are A.B. Goodin, Mrs. Frank Hagan, and Mrs. Will T. Matthis.

ELIZABETHTOWN NEWS 28 Nov. 1941 Clay Wright of Howe valley is to marry Manola Day of Elizabethtown in Owensboro. The groom is the son of H.H. Wright and the bride is the daughter of Mrs. W.A. Day.

ELIZABETHTOWN NEWS 25 Aug. 1916 Col. Jack Quiggins aged 87 died last PM at the Confederate Home in Pewee Valley. He served under Gen. Robert E. Lee.

## STEPHEN RAWLINGS (Cont'd from Spring 1986)

Stephen Rawlings was a trustee for an Academy established in Hardin County at Elizabethtown by Kentucky Legislature, Dec. 22, 1798. The board met April 23, 1799 at the home of James Crutcher in Elizabethtown with trustees Stephen Rawlings, Sr., John Vertrees, Sr., Thomas Helm, James Crutcher, Benjamin Helm, Robert Hodgen, Jacob LaRue, and Samuel Haycraft present.

The minutes of the board of the academy in May 26, 1806 states Stephen Rawlings and Thomas Helm resigned after Stephen Rawlings had served eight years as a trustee of the academy.

In Book A, Hardin County, page 71, Jan. 1796, Stephen Rawlings was appointed with others to settle a dispute over land on Clear Creek on south side of the Rolling Fork of Salt River. On page 11 he was appointed to lay off a Lot for building Court House, and on page 13 he, Samuel Haycraft, Thomas Helm and John Vertrees were ordered to lay out the nearest and best way to Francis Pairpont's Mill.

On page 66, May 23, 1795, Stephen Rawlings and wife Abigail to give deeds to land between Severns Valley Creek and Green River to convey to his sons, Aaron Rawlings, Stephen Rawlings, Jr., and Wilson L. Rawlings. Then in 1800 he gives more land to these sons but Abigail does not sign so she had died in 1800 or was not able to get to the Court House.

In November, 1803, on page 431 of the Hardin Court it was ordered that Stephen Rawlings and Thomas McIntire be hereby recommended to the Governor as fit persons to fill the office of Sheriff for this County, they being the two senior Magistrates of Hardin County and a majority of all Justices being present and concurring in this recommendation. On pages 492 and 493, August Term of Court 1804, Stephen Rawlings, Esquire, produced in court a commission from Governor Garrard appointing him Sheriff of Hardin County whereupon he served Oath with Nicholas Miller and Benjamin Wright his deputies and Nicholas Miller, Benjamin Wright, Francis Pairpont, Sr., William Brownfield, Asa Kellams, Joseph Kirkpatrick, John Lucas, Solomon Brandenburgh, William Burton, and Samuel Miller his Sureties. Found in Hardin County Court Order Book A, page 58 and Book I, page 153, 492-493.

Hardin County Tax Assessments for Stephen Rawlings, Sr., gives him paying taxes on 200 acres on Valley Creek, also 400 acres and 850 acres and 1450 acres (perhaps more). He had already given land to his sons, Aaron, Stephen Jr. and Wilson L., and we presume he had given dower lands to his daughters when they married, as was the custom then.

Stephen Rawlings, Sr. swears for Pension of Samuel Haycraft (Pension Record W. 8904 Virginia Hardin County Pension Record) "I was personally acquainted with Samuel Haycraft of said county for over 40 years and have since that time not lived more than  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile apart (from him), we in company with Van Meter descended down the Ohio River in the spring of 1780 to the Falls of the Ohio and to my certain knowledge the said Haycraft has never been to the Eastward States since he first came to Kentucky." This located both these men.

The Methodist Church of Elizabethtown was organized in the home of Stephen Rawlings.

Redford's Methodism in Kentucky Vol. 3, pages 432-433 says previous to 1815 there was circuit preaching at the house of Stephen Rollins (Rawlings his spelling) he signed his name Rawlings but Redford spelled it Rollins) about 3/4 mile from the Court House in Elizabethtown where there was a good society of which Stephen Rawlings and two brothers by the name of Swank were members.

The Rawlings home was constructed before 1790 and was one of the first brick houses in Elizabethtown. It is located at 811 N. Main St., and is now (was) occupied by Mrs. R. L. Parks. The historical status of this building was acknowledged by the Kentucky Historical Commission in 1971.

When Stephen Rawlins's wife died the Methodist Bishop came from Cincinnati to hold her funeral service in this house. (Ref: Redford's Methodism in Kentucky, Vol. 3, page 432.)

The eight children of Stephen Rawlings were Edward b. 1745, d. 1796 m. Rebecca Van Meter b. Sept. 1746, d. 182\_; Abigail b. 1748, d. ?; Stephen, Jr. b. 1755, m. Margaret Laughlin in 1755; Aaron b. 1741; Wilson L. b. ?, m. Cenith Gilleland; Elizabeth b. ?, m. 1st. Leonard Miller, Mar. 20, 1800, 2nd. William Walker, Dec. 20, 1802; Nancy b. ?, m. James Mendong, Aug. 22, 1799 and Ruth b. ?, M. Thomas Swan.

Stephen Rawlings Revolutionary Services were served under Capt. John Swann Company of Militia under command of Col. William Sinn 1790 all under Gen George Rogers Clark.

Rawlings served in Jefferson Militia of Virginia on Expedition vs Indians 1780 and 1782 under Gen. George Rogers Clark. Rawlings was in Expedition for conquest of Northwest Territory (IPD 51 and D 131 entered Oct 21, 1782, 15 days in service paid £1, S4 Illinois papers D 131.) Note: he was 61 years of age and they waded the swamps in water above the waist filled with ice and captured Vincennes, etc.

Stephen Rawlings received grants to lands in Jefferson County, Virginia, now Kentucky, in 1781 for his Revolutionary Service under George Rogers Clark. (Ref.: Soldiers of Virginia, Vol. 8, page 367, also H. J. Eckernrode 8th Annual Report of Library Board of Virginia, Illinois Papers D51 and D 131 Auditing Acct XXX 246 April 11, 1786 also Jillsons Kentucky Land Grants Old Virginia Grants, page 113.)

As we look over Stephen Rawlings record of service to Elizabethtown and Hardin County, we see him helping to establish a permanent settlement in the Valley at Elizabethtown and one of those who selected the site of Elizabethtown as the County Seat of Hardin County and selecting the site for the Court House building, planning the city of Elizabethtown by helping to lay out the plat for homes and business houses, serving as one of the first trustees of the City of Elizabethtown. Stephen is also remembered for serving as a Commissioner Gentleman Justice over 25 years for Hardin County, acting as a trustee of the first Academy in Elizabethtown eight years, conducting elections, settling disputes in Court over boundaries, settling estates, standing as Surety for sheriffs, serving as Sheriff, helping establish roads in Hardin County which at that time went down to the Green River and organizing the Methodist Society in Elizabethtown.

He helped to do all the things necessary to establish a fine community for himself, his family and all who would settle in

Elizabethtown and Hardin County to make their homes.

I am proud to be one of his descendants (Stephen Rawlings, Sr. was my great-great-great grandfather) who reaped these benefits, and hope those who are now benefitting from his labors will pay proper respect to his memory. Surely he belongs in Who Was Who In Hardin County.

#### CLAYSVILLE (Cont'd from Spring 1986)

Not surprisingly, after the toll gate was established, a well worn "shun" road developed to avoid payment of the \$.05 toll charge. There may have been others, but the best known "shun" pike started on the south side of Freeman Creek near the ford and going a short distance to the east crossed a small stream that ran into Freeman Creek from the southeast, then went northeast across the large field now covered by the shopping center. The "shun" pike crossed Freeman Creek in back of Helm Place then turned north, passing in front of the Hardin Thomas house, now the Lincoln Heritage House. Continuing north, it passed by the Hardin Thomas family cemetery then ran for some little distance and joined the Louisville and Nashville turnpike.

There are people now who can remember the many changes made on the turnpike at Claysville. Much earlier some sort of bridge was built over the ford at Freeman Creek for this was the stage route. The Louisville and Nashville Turnpike Company was formed in 1829 with James Young of West Point, one of the incorporators. Samuel Beale Thomas, his son-in-law, was a later owner and operator of the line. The stage coach line became obsolete with the completion of the L and N Railroad in 1859.

It is not known when the old "iron" bridge was erected over Freeman Creek at Claysville but after the coming of automobile traffic it was found to be inadequate. About 1920, George Hodges, who was county road engineer at the time (and father of Henry Hodges, the auctioneer) had moved to a farm in Nall's Valley and he was instrumental in securing the iron bridge for Pawley Creek in the Rineyville area. It was replaced (sic.) by the present bridge spanning Freeman Creek which was erected a short distance to the east of the old location as the road was again widened in about 1922 or 1923. The course of Freeman Creek was altered because of the change in the location of the new bridge. Another important change in the highway was made in 1941, when the road left Ehret Avenue at the spot where the toll house stood and was constructed slightly to the east to pass around Helmwood hill. The four-lane highway, the last major change in the highway in the Claysville area, was opened in 1962.

That Claysville, at one time, was almost a separate entity can be attested by the number of business places thriving there through the years. Samuel Haycraft, Jr., the historian, mentions a tannery that was started by Washington Whitaker who was a step son of Major Ben Helm. The tannery was a large one and was housed in a brick building that stood where the Greyhound bus station is at present. The tannery was carried on in Whitaker's name (he was also a merchant in Elizabethtown) until his death in 1833. Whitaker who was unmarried left his tannery to Thomas D. Brown and Elisha Brown.

They sold or leased it to Howard and Thomas who conducted the business for several years. Later the building was turned into a brewery for Lager beer. Storage for the brewery was across the road in a stone constructed building with a cave-like opening in the side of the hill. Ruins of the tannery and cave buildings could still be seen in the early 1900's. Hays Burnett built the first swimming pool in Elizabethtown in the early 1930's, near the Burnett hotel, between the present Gulf Station and bus depot.

In back of the tannery on the edge of Freeman Creek was an old mill and the creek in front of the mill was the town swimming hole. The family of James Sweets lived in the mill while their large two story brick residence was under construction. Later the Sweets house was the home of George Patterson and his family and still later the Hays Burnett family occupied it for some time. South of this house was a large frame dwelling set back in a field not far from a large sink hole. This was the home of Joseph Mobley, the first Ford dealer in Elizabethtown, and later Henry Hodges's parents lived in the house. Both of these houses have since been torn down to make room for business places.

Between the tannery and the ford at Freeman Creek there was an open space where occasionally gypsies camped. At one time a road cut across the area and crosses the creek in a northwestwardly direction. This may have been another less used "shun" road.

Crossing the ford going north, a road ran westward that was known as Fontainebleau Road. It may have received this name from Governor John L. Helm who, in his will, left his "Fontainebleau" land, which was presumably out this road, to one of his children. It is now the St. John Road. In the 1930's there was a Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Camp and a golf course in the area west of the turnpike.

On the west side of the turnpike between the St. John Road and the stage coach rest station, Charlie Ehret, a native of Germany, operated a blacksmith shop for about 64 years. He was also a master builder of very fine buggies and conducted this business in a building next to the blacksmith shop. At one time a broom factory was located in the rear of the stage coach rest station.

The Citizens Bank now stands where the home and front part of the Glasscock family was formerly located. In 1900 the farm was just within the city limits. Going north at the corner of the present Mantle Avenue and West Dixie Avenue was a two story frame house that was occupied by the Routt family and later by the Nichols family. The E'town Carpet Center stands on the spot at this date. Next was another two story, frame house built by Judge H.B. (Bernie) Fife in 1918. The A.C. Corbett family owned it later. McDonald's Restaurant is located there now.

The private road that separated the Fife home and the Annie Wathen place led to a brick furnace which supplied bricks for the many brick houses built in the neighborhood. That road is now Sycamore Street. Also in back of the Wathen place was the Duncan family cemetery which is still there. The John Wortham house also known as the Hart house was the next house north on the Dixie. Between it and the present Sunset Road was a large sink hole.

The next road is now Sunset Road and it ran back to a bluff overlooking a small stream. It separated the Wortham house and the large two story brick house which was on the hill facing the pike.

(To be concluded in next issue.)

BOOKS FOR SALE BY THE SOCIETY

TWO CENTURIES IN ELIZABETHTOWN AND HARDIN COUNTY, KY 1776-1976, by Daniel E. McClure, Jr. Hardcover, illus. 850pp. \$31.25ppd.

HISTORY OF ELIZABETHTOWN by Samuel Haycraft, Jr. Written in 1869 by the County Clerk, it is interesting and informative. Hardcover, 256pp. \$12.95ppd.

WHO WAS WHO IN HARDIN COUNTY This is a compilation of 170 biographical sketches written by descendants of the subjects. Great genealogical source! Soft bound \$12.95ppd.

CHRONICLES OF HARDIN COUNTY by Mrs. T.D. Winstead. Chronological listing of noteworthy dates and events in Hardin County 1776-1974. Hard bound \$5.00ppd.

36

HARDIN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
BITS & PIECES  
128 NORTH MAIN STREET  
ELIZABETHTOWN, KENTUCKY 42701



Mrs. Martha McFadden  
Rt. 7, Box 185  
City 42701