

## More Than Likely There is a Country Store You Remember

From the mid 1950s through the mid 1970s, Edward A. Nall and his wife, Minnie, operated the Nall's Grocery and Farm Supply located on Shepherdsville Road to the northeast of Elizabethtown.

"Momma and dad started the business out mostly as a hardware store, selling nails and such," recalls their youngest daughter, Kimberley Chappell who spent her early years sleeping and playing house with her dolly in a large Charmin bathroom tissue pasteboard box behind the counter while her mother kept the store.

"Momma always had a big lunch crowd everyday," explains Chappell who claims her mother made a mean bologna sandwich.

Stores like the Nall's were dotted across Hardin County. Gravel and dirt roads in the rather large county were traveled into Elizabethtown less frequently than today. Country stores were developed anywhere there were enough people to buy a profitable quantity of goods. Smaller purchases, like a handful of nails for a farmer to mend a bad fence or a loaf of bread or another staple to hold a family over to grocery day in town were made in these community havens.

Country stores were crucial to the rural people of Hardin County. They provided household and farming necessities as well as being the center of every sort of neighborhood activity.

One activity that many area residents may remember associated with the Nall's place of business if they were lucky enough to live nearby was the local school bus stopping to allow kids to disembark and purchase a coke, candy bar or bag of chips.



*Photo Courtesy of Kim Chappell*  
Edward and Minnie Nall pose in front of their business.

News also came to the community through the store. Local gossip to political stumping was heard in many a country store. Voting took place there as well as checking in game during hunting season.

The local country grocery was a convenience that has now been replaced by giant chains like Wal-Mart that carry everything a consumer needs.

Many like Nall's Grocery and Farm Supply have been boarded up and finally plowed down removing a way of life from rural communities that is only now a bit of nostalgia as we remember what once was.

### Did you know that the country store was an outgrowth of the plantation system?

The plantation owner would have a commissary from which food and clothing could be distributed to the slave population. After the Civil War, the supply system remained, but the newly freed slave had to pay for their supplies. Many owners extended credit to his customers with the balance of the bill to be paid after harvest making the store also a bank for its customers.

## DESTRUCTIVE FIRE AT SHOWERS HOUSE.

### Hotel Ruined by Flames Sunday Morning; Loss Over \$10,000.

The most destructive fire of a decade in Elizabethtown occurred early Sunday morning when the Showers House was practically destroyed.

Only the exterior walls of the building are left standing, and it is believed that they will be condemned. An insurance of \$13,000 on the building and contents was carried, and it is estimated by the owners, Mrs. Lizzie Larue and Miss Lou Showers, that this falls short several thousand dollars of covering the loss. Little of the household goods was saved.

The blaze originated between the second story ceiling and the roof, and was discovered about three o'clock in the morning. Before the alarm was sounded the roof over one of the rooms had fallen in, and the flames were spreading rapidly to all parts of the structure.

Two big streams were soon brought to play on the burning building, but it was an hour before the fire was under control, and fully two hours until it was finally extinguished. In the earlier stages great fear was felt for the safety of some of the adjacent buildings, and the stillness of the air, coupled with the fact of splendid water pressure, was responsible for the damage being confined to the single building.

Three soldiers were the only guests in the hotel for the night, and they escaped without injury. The night previous twenty-eight persons were quartered in the hotel.

## Brothers' Story Cut From Same Fabric

By Susan McCrobie, Hardin County History Museum Promotions Chair

When John Hunt Morgan came calling in December of 1862, the Showers House, with its grand size rising two stories tall on the southwest corner of the Public Square, was situated in a direct line of fire from Rebel cannons atop cemetery hill. Its neighbor, the Leedom House, was damaged, however; the Showers House survived that Battle only to lose another against flames on Sunday, May 26, 1918 when the country was once again at war.

Samuel Haycraft, Jr., in his *"History of Elizabethtown,"* wrote about the Showers House and its owners.

"On the old Chalfin stand, at the southwest corner of the public square, the old log house has been changed into a large and convenient hotel and is kept by William Showers, more familiarly known as 'Big' Showers. He has made extensive improvements in stables, etc., keeps a livery stable, has a strong run of custom, provides good accommodations and a bountiful table. He is aided by an excellent wife as landlady, and well she plays her part."

When Morgan made his way through the town, 'Big' Showers, a tailor by trade, had just purchased the hostelry from Dr. James W. Smith. Smith had turned the Chalfin House/Tavern into a fine hotel.

Showers' brother, Henry Martin Showers, another local tailor by trade, was not residing in town when Morgan arrived. Henry Showers had removed himself from Kentucky and was in the service of the Confederacy. Listed as a 'teamster' in the roles of those serving the southern army from Hardin County, Henry Showers drove a team of horses that conveyed supply wagons to the troops as well as applying his trade skills stitching uniforms for officers in Grey. He worked at a number of points across the Deep South, including the cities of Murfreesboro, Knoxville and Atlanta, sewing needed garments as reported back to Elizabethtown in letters to his wife, Mary Elizabeth Phillips Showers.

In 1864, while set up in business at Atlanta, Union troops under Major General William Tecumseh Sherman burned the heart of the city causing a complete loss of Showers' livelihood from which he never financially recovered. Henry Showers returned to Elizabethtown broke and defeated to live. He eventually succumbed to his own personal demons and took his life on August 9, 1877.

Ironically, 'Big' Showers' life also reportedly ended in suicide five years earlier in October 1872.

Just one month before the death of 'Big' Showers, the *New York Times* had reported in their September 15th issue about a different ending for Showers. The bold headline read: **SUPPOSED MURDER OF A KENTUCKY MERCHANT**. The story followed: *CINCINNATI, Ohio, Sept. 14 - William Showers, of Elizabethtown, Ky., came to this city to visit the Exposition, and has been missing from the Gibson House since Monday last. He had between \$9,000 and \$10,000 on his person, and it is supposed that he has been murdered for his money.*

On October 3, 1872, the Elizabethtown News ran an eight line paragraph on the bottom of page two about the tale.

*Mr. William Showers, of this place, died at Covington, Ky., in route home from a visit to a relative in Martinsburg, Va., Tuesday night. His wife was with him at the time of his death. His remains reached here last night and he will be buried today...*

Showers was buried in the Elizabethtown City Cemetery. His tombstone lists the date of his death as October 17, 1872, further adding mystery to the final days of the life of 'Big.'

Readers today can only speculate as to the business and personal dealings what lead the two brothers to end their lives so tragically.

Left: Elizabethtown News, Tuesday, May 28, 1918 front page story announces details of the Showers House demise to fire.

## *The next generation....*

Two of 'Big' Showers' sons were headline news with untimely deaths that both shocked and saddened the citizens of Elizabethtown.

*Nelson County Record* of January 8, 1891 reported the following Hardin County news...*Charlie Showers, son of Mrs. Josephine Showers, of Elizabethtown, committed suicide in Louisville on the morning of January 1st. He arrived in the city the day before without money. He sold his valise and clothes for \$4.00, which he spent for liquor with some acquaintances. He did not become intoxicated, but seemed to be despondent and said he was determined to do something desperate. The next morning he was found dead in his bed, with a morphine bottle on a table near the bed. Deceased is a brother to Wm. Showers, who was tried during the past year for the alleged murder of his wife.*

*Showers' father and uncle also committed suicide some years ago.*

And then there was the two-part story of John William Showers, Jr. that first began its lengthy saga with a Thursday, June 6, 1889 announcement that Mrs. William Showers, formerly Lena Moore, of Elizabethtown, met her death in a room at the Showers' House last Friday as a result of a pistol shot which was judged to be self-inflicted. She has married Mr. Showers only last February. Burial in Elizabethtown City Cemetery on Monday.

Charles Moore, the brother-in-law of widower Showers, was instrumental in causing the prosecution of Showers in charges related to the questionable death. While eventually acquitted of the charge, Showers and Moore were never on good terms again.

A real family feud was unleashed to bitter proportions between Moore and Showers. The ugly battle ensued for two years.

*The New York Times* published the outcome of the ugly rift between the two men on April 28, 1891 as seen to the right.



*Photo Courtesy of Mary Jo Jones*

This old photograph shows a portion of the Showers House on the right. The Showers House extended across the whole southwest corner of the Public Square with frontage on both the square and South Main Street. The Leedom House, another hotel serving the town and its visitors during the time of the Civil War is seen to the left of the larger Showers House. The Leedom House burned in a 1893 fire.

### **SHOT BY HIS BROTHER-IN-LAW.**

### **A TRAGEDY ENDS A FAMILY FEUD AT ELIZABETHTOWN.**

**ELIZABETHTOWN, Ky., April 27.**—William Showers was shot and instantly killed this morning by his brother-in-law, Charles Moore. The trouble between the two men began two years ago, when Mrs. Showers, Moore's sister, was found one morning dead with a bullet hole in her head. Showers at once said that his wife had committed suicide.

There were those who charged her death to William Showers, her husband. Moore was especially active in the prosecution of Showers, and a trial resulted that furnished Elizabethtown with a great sensation. Showers was acquitted, and since then deadly enmity has existed between the men. Showers never forgave Moore for the part he took in the affair, but ever after abused and bounded him as far as he could. He expressed his determination to get Moore into serious trouble before he was done with him, and did everything in his power to injure Moore in Elizabethtown. Finally the latter left the city and went to Texas. Then Showers accused him of forgery. Moore was brought back to Kentucky for trial, and his case is still pending.

Showers had been drinking heavily of late, and for several days had been threatening Moore. The men met to-day. Showers was armed with a pistol, and followed Moore into the Court House, where the latter had left a shotgun. Seizing the gun, Moore fired at Showers, blowing his brains out. Moore gave himself up.

**The New York Times**

Published: April 28, 1891

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# Knights and Ladies of Honor

## MUTUAL BENEFIT SOCIETY GIVES PROTECTION TO ORDER MEMBERS

The important business of life insurance is ably represented in the last will and testament of Mary Elizabeth Phillips Showers, a resident of Elizabethtown who departed this life on May 7, 1909 at age 82. Showers will is recorded in the Hardin County Clerk's records in Will Book G, Page 408.

Life insurance was practically undeveloped at the time of the civil war; its employment as a means of indemnifying the dependents of war heroes was probably not even considered.

Today life insurance methods displace war pension methods in early American history.

Mrs. Showers' husband served during the Civil War but neither he nor she drew a pension for that service. They however had the foresight to purchase insurance.

Life insurance, as commercially conducted in the late 1800s, when Showers' policy was purchased, failed to meet the needs of the masses. Only the prosperous minority could afford to indulge in such an expensive luxury.

Business men organized relief associations that bound members together in a fraternal union for the purposes of protection. Life insurance was provided at the lowest possible cost for many through this alliance.

Showers owned a policy of insurance in the Knights and Ladies of Honor for the sum of \$1,000.00. This insurance group

was a splinter group from the Knights of Honor founded in Kentucky.

The Knights of Honor, was founded by James A. Demaree at Louisville, KY in 1873. It began by assessing all members a uniform sum to pay a death benefit before changing to a grading of assessments and later and increasing assessment according to age rate.

In 1875, the Supreme Lodge of the Knights of Honor established a side or auxiliary degree entitled the degree of protection, to which Knights of Honor, their wives, mothers, unmarried daughters and sisters, eighteen or more years of age were eligible to secure coverage. This order of protection carried the name of Knights and Ladies of Honor and grew rapidly before the 1878 yellow fever epidemic caused the first of serious revenue drains with \$385,000 paid out for the loss of 193 covered members.

By 1916, the Knights and Ladies of Honor was bankrupt. Policy holders who had been paying dues for up to forty years found their policies worth only the paper it was written on and several states launched investigations that did nothing to protect the equity of the insured.

Luckily enough, Henry Hugh Showers, collected on his mother's Knights and Ladies of Honor policy before the company was without assets to make good on claims for benefits.

### HENRY HUGH SHOWERS

The beneficiary of Mary E. Showers' life insurance was her son, Henry Hugh Showers. Henry, called Hugh by all those who knew him, is perhaps the Showers that readers of this article will recognize as the most prominent Showers in Elizabethtown history.

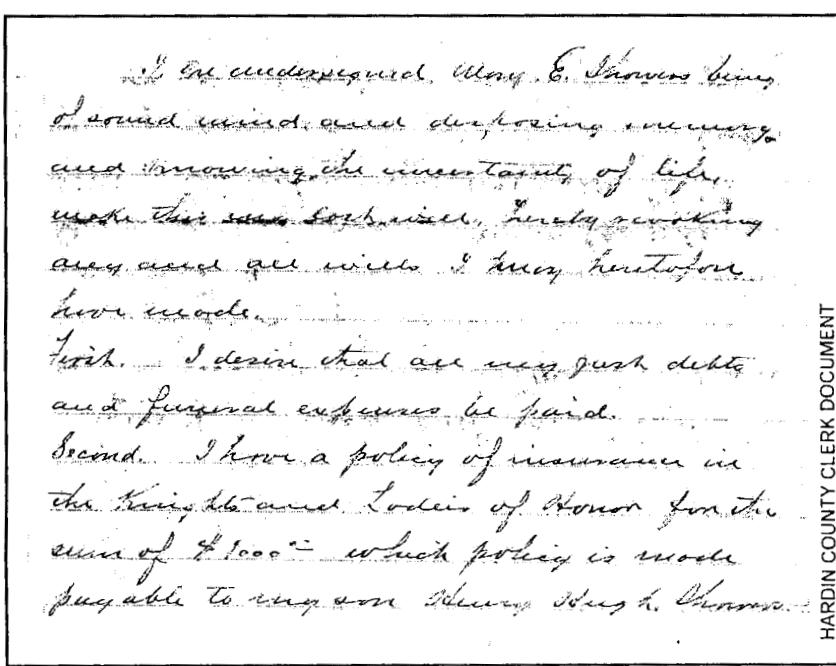
Hugh Showers' earliest employment was working for Green Brothers who operated a drug store. The Green Brothers operated their business until the fire of 1893 destroyed the building.

Showers and Horace Hays purchased the remnants of the stock in the fire damaged operation and shortly began their own business known as Showers and Hays Drugs.

Horace Hays sold his share in the business to James Sweets, who had been a clerk at the T. A. Orr Drug Store. The business then operated under the name of Showers and Sweets for a time.

Following Hugh Showers' unexpected death in 1947, Tommy Rogers purchased interest in the business and operated it as Showers and Hays Drugs until its closure upon his retirement.

Some of the early druggist implements and tonics from the Showers and Hays establishment are a part of a fine permanent display at the Hardin County History Museum on a locally run business that was a cornerstone of the community for a number of years.



HARDIN COUNTY CLERK DOCUMENT





After the end of the Civil War, men in the local area formed social associations for armies of both the Blue and the Gray.

The Grand Army of The Republic (G.A.R.) and the Old Confederates known as United Confederate Veterans used these meetings to assist their brothers-in-arms apply for compensation for their military serve, and generally support the history and welfare of those who had served.

#### THE OLD VETS OF HARDIN COUNTY FORM AN ASSOCIATION

The Vets met in the Circuit Court Room and organized by electing officers as follows: James W. Smith, President; Luke Kennedy, Secretary and S.H. Bush, Treasurer. Committee on Organizations consisted of H.C. Branham, S.H. Bush, H.C. Hays, James Montgomery, J.S. Gray and J.W. Smith.

The Roll of Members—  
James W. Smith, Co. D, 1st Kentucky Cavalry

James Montgomery, Co. E, Kentucky Cavalry, Morgan

S.H. Bush, Co. B, 6th Kentucky Infantry (Orphan Brigade)

Luke Kennedy, Co. H, 6th Kentucky Infantry (Orphan Brigade)

James E. Brian, Co. B, 6th Kentucky Infantry (Orphan Brigade)

John J. Edlin, Co. B, 6th Kentucky Infantry (Orphan Brigade)

Mike Bennett, Co. B, 6th Kentucky Infantry (Orphan Brigade)

Horace C. Branham, Co. E, Woodyard's Cavalry

James F. Branham, Co. E, Woodyard's Cavalry

Joseph S. Gray, Co. E, 9th Kentucky Cavalry, Morgan

William E. Fullilove, Co. E, 2nd Kentucky Cavalry, Morgan

Archy Woods, Co. K, 54th Virginia Infantry

Emmerson Tillery, Co. B, First Battalion, Morgan

William H. Warren, Co. H, 6th Kentucky Infantry (Orphan Brigade)

James W.M. Mason, Co. L, 2nd Morgan Regiment

Phil B. Coleman, Lyon's Cavalry Morgan Brigade

James D. Bennett, Co. A, 8th Kentucky Infantry

Jesse D. Shacklette, Co. A, 1st Kentucky Cavalry

Cincinnatus Williams, Co. E, Dalton Guards

Achilles M. Stich, Co. B, 6th Kentucky Infantry (Orphan Brigade)

J.D. Lane, A.A.G., Owley's Regiment, Morgan Brigade

Henry C. Hays, Co. G, Morgan Regiment

F.M. Joplin, Co. A, 2nd Virginia Cavalry

James Reynolds, Co. H, 4th Kentucky Infantry

- Elizabethtown News,  
FEBRUARY 28, 1891

## PENSIONS

### Allowed Confederates in Hardin County Since July 10.

Several Confederate pensions have been allowed to Hardin county residents since July 10. The fortunate pensioners are: F. M. Klinglesmith, Mrs. Abe Carlton, Mrs. Laura Bethel, F. P. Klinglesmith and Mrs. Isaac Carlton. There are now twenty odd pensioners in Hardin county drawing Confederate pensions. Quite a number of applicants from the county are on file in the pension office at Frankfort that have never been acted upon, and many of the applicants will perhaps draw no pensions whatever, on account of a lack of proof and other considerations, as all applicants must be in indigent circumstances and unable to gain a livelihood on account of physical disabilities.

- The Mirror, JULY 23, 1914

### The Orphans Brigade to Meet Here.

The Orphans Brigade will probably hold its next annual meeting in Elizabethtown in September. The meeting will probably be held on the Helm Place. The Daughters of the Confederacy will have charge of the meeting.

- The Mirror, JULY 23, 1914

## C. S. A.

### The Re-union of the Orphans' Brigade Being Held in this City.

The Re-union of the Orphans' Brigade is being held in this city to-day under the management of the Ben Hardin Helm Chapter of the Daughters of Confederacy. About 103 survivors of the Brigade are present.

The program arranged for the day is about as follows:

The march from the depot to the Masonic Temple headed by Major John H. Leathers, of Louisville; Marshal Horace Hays. The call to order—Sam H. Buchanan, of Louisville. Invocation by Rev. L. O. Spencer. Greetings by Mayor R. B. Park. Response by E. Polk Johnson, of Louisville.

After the exercises at the Masonic Temple the Brigade will march to the Helm Place under the command of Major John H. Leathers, who was assigned to the duty by Major Sam H. Buchanan, Commander of the Brigade, Mr. Horace Hays acting as Major Leathers' aid. Luncheon served at the Helm Place by the United Daughters of the Confederacy. Music at the Helm Place by the Louisville Industrial Band.

At the conclusion of the luncheon the usual reminiscences will be returned and perhaps several addresses will be made by members of the Brigade or visiting veterans.

Business session at 4 p. m.

Reception at the City Hall from 8 to 10 o'clock p. m.

The reception committee at the Hall will be composed of Mesdames R. B. Park, S. H. Bush, Taylor Watkins, M. C. Marion, Emma Eskridge and Elizabeth Hays Mantle.

Music by the City Orchestra.

- The Mirror, SEPT. 24, 1914

# LOCAL TREASURE LOST HERITAGE OF GREAT SIGNIFICANCE

A Special Interview By Kenny Tabb  
Hardin County Historical Society Member

Susan Figg comes from hearty pioneer stock. She is a direct descendant of Christopher Miller, 1768 – 1828, who was captured by the Shawnee and Delaware Indians when he was 15 and held captive for 11 years before being released. Miller later returned to Indian Territory to serve the army and General 'Mad Anthony' Wayne as an interpreter, in negotiations with Indian Chiefs for peace in the form of the Treaty of Greenville thus opening the state of Ohio to white settlers. He eventually settled in Elizabethtown, raised a large family and served as local sheriff and a member of the Kentucky legislature with great distinction.

While attending a dedication ceremony of the Miller-Thomas Cemetery at Freeman Lake, the final resting place of Christopher Miller and Hardin Thomas, Figg's own record of service along with her family's connection caused Guy Winstead, an early member of the Lincoln Heritage House board of trustee, to invite Figg to join their efforts to preserve and operate for the public use a historical home built by Abraham Lincoln's ancestor. Figg embraced the challenge to do all things incident to and necessary for said preservation, operation and maintenance of the Lincoln Heritage House. Figg firmly believed then and even more so today that if we don't preserve that house we will lose our Lincoln past.

Figg reminisces that the group she actively worked with in long hours of labor and fundraising was lead by Reba May Terry and aided by the efforts of Guy Windstead, Margaret S. Richerson, Margaret Noblin, Louise Patterson, Margaret Patterson and Augusta Goodman. The ladies met at the Brown-Pusey House once a month and worked to raise the funds to purchase furnishings for the Hardin Thomas house that was known as the Lincoln Heritage House. She is the sole surviving member of that group of civic-minded women who loved the heritage of this community enough to sacrifice their resources and dreams to preserve the area's Lincoln Heritage and create a festival tradition for future residents to enjoy.

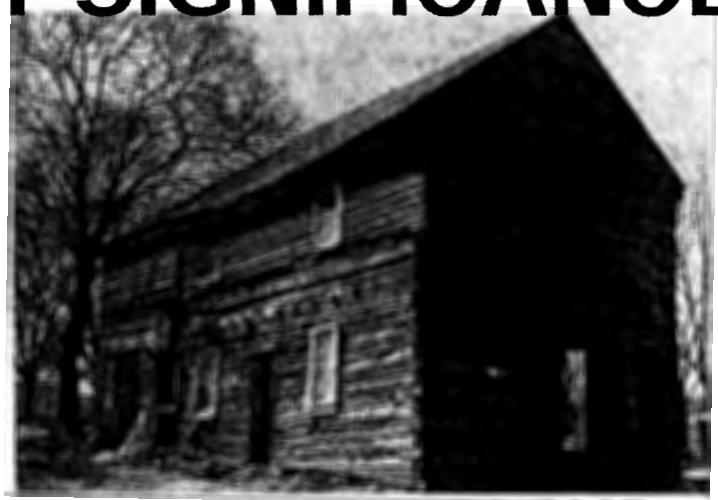
Figg confesses that when a friend called her early Friday, May 29th and told her that fire trucks were at the Lincoln Heritage House and it was ablaze her first response was, "you've got to be kidding."

She was so devastated by the reality of the loss that it took her a few days to look at the charred mess and she said she simply cried. She had outlived the other members of the Lincoln Heritage House board; she never contemplated living to see the demise of the house she labored on for years.

Today she shared some of the history of the hard work that went into the making of the community's old log home and festival upon the lake.

"The Hardin County Historical Society and the Elizabethtown Women's Club worked together to obtain the house," said Figg.

She remembers that Robert and Minnie Slinker, grandparents of historical society member Harry Lee, were the last family to



*Photo Courtesy of R. R. "Babe" Thomas*

Thomas Hardin home before being dismantled and moved by the Hardin County Historical Society for restoration in the late 1960s.

lived in the old house just before it was dismantled to treat the logs and move them closer to the lake for reassembly.

It seemed that the house's history was rediscovered in 1967 when the city began clearing a 40-acre tract of land for its Freeman Lake Reservoir, a recreation and flood control project. When clapboards were removed from the two-story, 18-by-42 foot farmhouse, two log buildings joined together by a dog-trot were found beneath. A hidden treasure with a lost heritage of great significance.

Four or five years prior to the removal of the white clapboards from the old deserted farmhouse that exposed forgotten log cabins, the house had been the center of a hunt to untangle a bit of Lincoln Lore. A mantle that was removed from that house several decades earlier had been the topic of discussion in correspondence between former Elizabethtown citizen Gerald McMurtry, an authority on Lincoln who was the director of the Lincoln National Life Foundation in Fort Wayne, Indiana and Lt. Col. R. H. McCleary for the U.S. Armor Center at Fort Knox, Kentucky. McCleary referred to a 1934 attempt for the U.S. Government to reclaim the Thomas Lincoln mantle they originally purchased from that house in 1919. The mantle had been installed on post only to be removed by a lady from Tip Top and relocated it to the Kentucky Memorial Association at Harrodsburg, Kentucky without federal government knowledge.

Looking back, Mrs. J.F. (Nellie) Albert, who was the great granddaughter of Hardin and Hetty Thomas had originally told a Major Radcliffe, Constructing Quartermaster for the government about the house, the mantle and its Thomas Lincoln history. Radcliffe obtained the mantle on the government's behalf.

When the Hardin Thomas cabins were being restored in the late 60s as the Lincoln Heritage House, Dr. David T. Lewis of Elizabethtown had Karl L. Wise, a cabinetmaker, construct an

exact copy of the original mantel and present it to the Lincoln Heritage House. However when the living room fireplace was rebuilt it was made a little larger and the mantel reproduction could not be used. It was however attached to the wall in the room on the second floor over the fireplace.

Figg said that the new mantle room was installed at the top of the famous Lincoln staircase in the home. Thomas Lincoln did the finish carpentry in the house that included the staircase and the original mantle. Gone are Lincoln's handiwork and period furnishings on the second floor room that included a cannon ball bed with rope springs, trundle bed for children, 19th century cradle and tier table, handmade quilts/coverlets, cane bottom rockers, late 19th century table belonging to the Thomas family.

The furnishings lost to the fire in the lower level of the house were more numerous, including furniture brought by the Thomas family from Virginia and the family bible. Priceless heirlooms, treasures from the past that are now only memories for Figg and others who put their hearts into making a showcase historical house museum for the residents of Elizabethtown.

Figg fondly shares a glimpse into her past efforts to bring Lincoln history alive. People like Dr. Robert T. Clagett, Sissy Hite, Lib Faurest, David Marsee, Maria Simmons, Nona Atkinson, Fay Becker, Joan Hornback and Emma McCrackon pulled their talents to draw pencil sketches of local historic sites in order to produce a series of calendars to sell as one of many fundraisers for the restoration and operation of the house.

There were two flea market auctions that raised funds along with solicitations through letter writing and telephone calls. The City of Elizabethtown applied and received in the way of federal grant funding from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development some \$26,600.00 for historical preservation of the log home.

There were even yard sales held on the park grounds. People rented spots for booths and gave a percentage of their sales to the Lincoln Heritage House restoration fund. These yearly fall events, known as the Lincoln Heritage Festival, was the forerunner to the Heartland Festival at the Lake.

After many hours of work, on June 24, 1973 at two o'clock in the afternoon a dedication of the restored home complete with tours from period dressed guides launched a new chapter in the history of the finest historical possession that Elizabethtown and

# Bicentennial Edition

## LINCOLN HERITAGE

### HOUSE

### CALENDAR



LINCOLN HERITAGE HOUSE

Photo Courtesy of Hardin County History Museum

One of four calendars printed and sold as a fund raiser to help with the cost of the restoration of the Hardin Thomas home along side Freeman Lake.

Hardin County can lay claim to - 'house made by the father of Abraham Lincoln.'

There is an epilogue to the restoration story of the Lincoln Heritage House if Figg has anything to do with current events. She would like to see the home taken apart once again, treated, stacked, re-chinked, re-furnished and re-dedicated to the citizens of the county.

"We have to labor to save our Lincoln past or Elizabethtown will have lost such a historical marker," adds Figg who knows the value of work in saving our local heritage from a thing or two she picked up through the years.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Editor's note:** Susan Figg pointed out her family heritage as being her connection to the Lincoln Heritage House project that included the preservation and dedication of the Miller - Thomas Cemetery also located in the Freeman Lake Park.

While readers may quickly remember that Thomas Lincoln, the joiner responsible for the interior woodworking of the two-story log home of Hardin Thomas, was the father of Abraham Lincoln, they will not as quickly recall that Hardin Thomas' mother was a Hardin. In fact, she was the daughter of John Hardin. Our county is named for John Hardin, a Colonel in the Continental Army during the American Revolutionary War and a member of the George Rogers Clark campaign against the Wabash Indians.

Hardin Thomas' wife, Hetty, was the daughter of the first Baptist preacher of a church in Kentucky, John Gerrard. Gerrard's congregation numbered eighteen and was organized under a green sugar tree on June 18, 1781. His church was known as Severn's Valley Church.

While the Hardin Thomas house is the finest historical possession that Elizabethtown and Hardin County can lay claim to, the family who called this place home was of the highest order in leaders and pioneer settlers of the county.

## Looking Back...

- August 23, 1967, R.R. Thomas, Margaret Richerson, Reba M. Terry and Graham Egerton filed articles of incorporation for the Lincoln Heritage House.
- November 3, 1969, Leonard T. Bean, Mayor of Elizabethtown, was authorized by a resolution passed during a regular meeting of the City Council to apply for federal funds to restore and maintain the Lincoln Heritage House.
- March 26, 1973, Robert Utley, Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation approved an application prepared by Mrs. E.I. Richerson a member of the Hardin County Historical Society and representative of the Kentucky Heritage Commission to place the Lincoln Heritage House (Hardin Thomas Home) located at Freeman Lake in Elizabethtown on the National Register of Historic Places.
- June 24, 1973, Lincoln Heritage House dedicated and opened to the public after restoration of the historic house is completed.

# Earlier Representative Lee Leaves His Mark on Kentucky State Government

By Susan McCrobie, Hardin County History Museum Promotions Chair

In his later years of life, Miles Everett Lee, state custodian of public buildings and grounds at Frankfort, was known as one of the capable and reliable men of Kentucky, one who won his appointment through merit and who gave universal satisfaction because of the efficient manner in which he discharged his duties.

Lee was born near Elizabethtown, Hardin County, Kentucky, May 12, 1880, a son of Silas Lee, and grandson of Miles Lee, who died near Belmont, Bullitt County, Kentucky, before the birth of his grandson. For many years he was very active as a farmer and became a successful man.

Miles Everett Lee attended the Hardin County country schools, the Hardin Collegiate Institute and Center College at Danville, Kentucky, but left the latter in 1903, at the close of his freshman year.

Beginning in 1904 and for a total of eight years he taught school in Hardin County, and was also local editor of one of the Elizabethtown newspapers. For one term he served as county assessor, then entered a general insurance business, with which he was occupied until he was elected to the State Assembly in 1915 from Hardin County, and was re-elected in 1917, on the democratic ticket. He served in the session of 1916, the special session of 1917 and the session of 1918, and in the latter year was a member of the rules committee, and was on a number of important committees during the time he was a member of the Legislature.

Representative Lee was author of

the local option law making the second conviction for bootlegging a felony, and this bill passed. He was joint author, with Senator Jay Harlan, of the Budget Bill, passed in the session of 1918, putting all state departments on a budget system. On July 1, 1918, Lee was made custodian by the Board of Sinking Fund Commissioners to fill an unexpired term expiring March 1, 1922. His jurisdiction included the new state capitol, the old state capitol, the executive mansion now occupied by the governor, and the old mansion, as well as the grounds surrounding all of these.

Lee was a member of the Baptist Church. He belonged to Morrison Lodge No. 76, A. F. and A. M., of Elizabethtown; Elizabethtown Chapter No. 34, R. A. M.; Elizabethtown Chapter, O. E. S.; and Elizabethtown Commandery No. 37, K. T.

During the late war he was one of the zealous workers in behalf of the Hardin County war activities, was secretary of the Red Cross drive in 1918, assisted in all of the drives, and bought bonds and War Savings Stamps and contributed generously to all of the organizations.

On June 26, 1907 Lee was married near Elizabethtown, Kentucky, to Miss Ethel K. Purcell, a daughter of Leven and Catherine (Stader) Purcell. The Lees had two children, Carl Purcell, who was born November 5, 1909; and Almeda Catherine, who was born May 16, 1914.

Lee was a man who had a steadily risen, never failing to justify the confidence reposed in him. His fellow

**AN UGLY FIRE**

**Miles Lee Loses His Barn R and Thirteen Head of Stock by Fire.**

Mr Miles Lee, of Rolling Fork, residing on the Hardin and Nelson county line, suffered the misfortune Tuesday night of losing his large stock barn and all its contents by fire. Nine head of heavy work mules, two buggy horses and two milk cows perished in the flames. All his provender consisting of hay and corn, several buggies and M. wagons and all his farming machinery also went up in smoke and ashes. The origin of the fire is unknown. A man was smoking a pipe in the barn the day previous, but as the barn burned about 9 o'clock at night, the fire was attributed to some other cause, either a careless tramp or to is an incendiary.

The loss was in the neighborhood of \$5,000 with an insurance of \$300.

-- *The Mirror, Elizabethtown, KY*  
April 11, 1915

## MORE ABOUT THE EARLIER LEES

Miles Lee married Sarah Cundiff, who also died in Bullitt County. The Lee family was established in Virginia during the Colonial epoch of this country, when its representatives came from England.

Miles Lee, the grandfather of Representative Miles Everett Lee, married Miss Sarah Cundiff Lee.

Silas Lee was born near Belmont, Bullitt County, Kentucky, in 1845, and was there reared, but moved to Hardin County after reaching his majority. He was a farmer and an active supporter and liberal contributor of the Baptist Church. Silas Lee was married to the daughter of his uncle, Atkison Hill Lee and wife

Laura Susan Morgan. Silas Lee's wife, Almeda Lee, was born near Elizabethtown, Kentucky, in 1844, and died in Hardin County in the spring of 1883, having borne her husband two children: Miles Everett and his sister Lizzie, who married Alonzo Pate, a Hardin County farmer in the vicinity of Vine Grove.

## Rep. M. Everett Lee on Several Committees

Representative M. E. Lee, of Hardin county has been appointed upon a number of important committees for the present session of the Legislature. Besides being appointed upon the rules committee as heretofore mentioned, he has been made a member of other committees as follows: Fire and Marine Insurance, Life and Accident Insurance, Public Highways, Legislative Redistricting and Forestry. It is safe to say that he will make good on all these committees as he is well posted along the lines of business and will always be safe and sound upon all bills before the Legislature.

-- *Newspaper Clippings Courtesy of the Hardin County History Museum Archives*

Local Elizabethtown newspapers reported favorably on Representative Lee's work in the legislature. During this time period the papers also carried stories about the war raging in Europe.

citizens long ago recognized the fact that in him they had a dependable and conscientious representative. today we look back at his contributions to the county and commonwealth and pause to reflect on such men as he that add prestige to the state and set an example those who come on the scene of action in subsequent years will do well to follow.

Ann Pate Stanchina of Williamstown, KY remembers well the night her grandmother, Lizzie Lee Pate received a telephone call from Shelby County and word of her brother's death.

"It was November 2, 1957, I was twelve years old and lost my own father just two years later," recalls Stanchina who says her grandmother was visibly shaken with news of death in the family during her frequent overnight visit.

"They were close even though their own father [Silas Lee] remarried soon after the death of their mother while Lizzie was an infant and taken in and raised by the Walter's family," adds Stanchina who explains the brother and sister did not grow up in the same household.

"I remember meeting Uncle Everett's children, Percell and Almeda while growing up," says Stanchina.

She says she also knew her grandmother was quite proud of her brother's accomplishments in life.

A listing of Miles Everett Lee's public service and private life can be found in *History of Kentucky - 1922* by Charles Kerr, William Elsey Connelley and Ellis Merton Coulter.

## Bills Introduced by Sen. Carter and Rep. Lee

Senator Haynes Carter of this city, has introduced in the Senate a two-cent passenger fare bill, a bill prohibiting the extension of time for filing of bills of exception in civil cases beyond thirty days, unless the Judge of the trial court is convinced the record cannot be prepared in that time, an act providing that all persons summoned to appear as jurors be paid \$2 a day for each day they serve, even though not accepted for jury service, and another measure providing for a separate confinement of the criminal insane. He also introduced a bill designed to abolish the fellow-servant rule and modify the law of contributory negligence between master and servant in actions arising between common carriers and their employes in this State. The bill points out the fact that the employe may have been guilty of contributory negligence shall not bar a recovery, but the damage shall be diminished by the jury to the amount of negligence attributed to the employe.

Representative M. E. Lee has introduced a measure amending the provision of the code of practice relative to the time for filing bills of exceptions. Mr. Lee also introduced a bill appropriating \$25,000 for the use of the Kentucky Illiteracy Commission. He introduced another bill changing the time of holding the Circuit Court in this the Ninth Judicial district.

# Uncovering Scarce Clues to the Local Bounty of War

By Meranda Caswell, Treasurer  
Hardin County Historical Society

The following settlers, Samuel Pearman, Michael Hargan and William Elliott had little to no significant archival information about their residence in Hardin County. Military warrants and Hardin County tax records held most of the following information for these Revolutionary War soldiers and others like them living here.

Samuel Pearman had inherited from his father Thomas a Jefferson County military warrant on Salt River, Wilson Creek and Froman's Creek. Samuel appears on 1787 to 1800 Nelson County records. He sold 25 acres on Froman's Creek to Randolph Pearman. The name Samuel Pearman, also phonetically spelled as Pierman, appeared multiple times in the early county records prior to 1830. Only one had a Hardin County Will and Testament in 1824. Samuel had married Nancy Shelton, who was buried next to Bersheba Lincoln. Samuel Pearman had land in the West Point section of Hardin County. John May had a grant of acreage on which the present town of West Point is located. May sold this acreage to Richard Bibb who then sold it to James Young for \$750.00. Samuel Pearman as well as James Young claimed the West Point acreage. The land dispute was settled in the Hardin Circuit Court in 1816 in favor of James Young, who became known as the Father of West Point.

Randolph Pearman appeared in the Nelson County tax and deed records from 1791 to 1800. He bought and sold 25 acres on Froman's Creek during this time. Froman's Creek is located in Nelson County near the present towns of Samuels, Lenore, and Cox Creek. Randolph appeared on the militia roll of McLeans' in 1810 and then on Hastings' in 1812. Randolph appeared on Hardin County tax records from 1814 to 1827 with a scattered tax on 50 acres on Rough Creek. However he had no deed record to the property. The 50 acres of land was entered and surveyed by Pearman. Randolph's son Ceber appeared on Hardin County tax records from 1814 to 1827. He was listed on the Hardin County roll commanded by Captain Edward Rawlings of the War of 1812 as being in the service in 1813. Randolph and Ceber disappeared from Hardin County and the nearby county records after 1827.

Michael Hargan had land on Cedar Creek and Clear Creek waters of Rolling Fork of Salt River. He died about 1840. His wife was Elizabeth Wallingford. In 1819 he mortgaged 400 acres that included the plantation that he lived on at the time along with horses, cattle, pigs, household and kitchen furniture to Joseph, Benjamin, and Daniel Hargan, his sons. Michael Hargan was a Revolutionary War soldier. He had a land lawsuit over 500 acres on Rolling Fork. The legal description in Hardin County, KY Deed Book E Page 160 dated April 5, 1813 from Michael Hargan to James Carlisle of Pennsylvania sold 300 acres out of a 400 acre tract patented in the name of Michael Hargan on 20 April 1786 on the dividing ridge between Cedar Creek and Clear Creek waters of Rolling Fork of Salt River. Michael Hargan had several pieces of land surveyed and patented in his name. All deeded land transactions in Hardin County is where Michael sold or mortgaged land. There are no land transactions as Michael as the grantee/buyer.

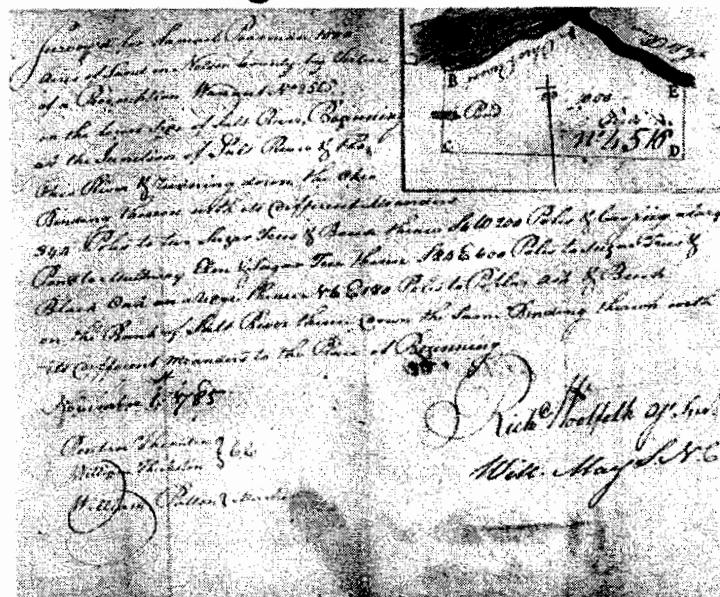


Photo Courtesy of The Kentucky Secretary of State

Hand drawn surveys along with Land Warrants filed with the Commonwealth of Virginia and later moved to Kentucky after Statehood possess valuable clues of original ownership of land for some early settlers with Revolutionary War service records.

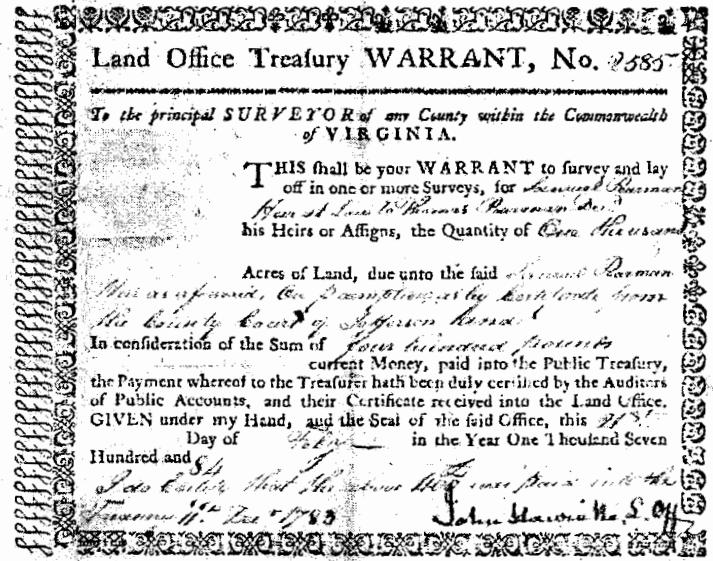


Photo Courtesy of The Kentucky Secretary of State

William Elliott had received a Revolutionary land warrant for services with Gen. Arthur St. Clair in 1791. The land he lived on near the waterway Nolin is located in Larue County, KY today. There are no Hardin County, KY deed records to or from William Elliott. There are no Nelson County, KY deed records to or from William Elliott. William Elliott was a neighbor of Thomas Lincoln when Abraham was born, according to the Mather papers. William Elliott married Susanna Brunk in Hardin County on 26 February 1797. She, age 80, is listed on Larue County, KY 1850 Census with George W. and Mary Elliott.



# Message From The President

"I thought Louisville to Cincinnati to Washington was bad enough—but now we have Louisville to Cincinnati to New York to Washington"

J. Lanz (2009)

Regardless, I am writing this quarterly President's Message from 39,000 feet on my way to a very historic place indeed—our nation's capitol of Washington, D.C. On my way for work, but with a couple of days for site-seeing, my adventures will start with honoring the dead at Arlington National Cemetery, examining the country's most important historical documents at the National Archives, and visiting a librarian's dream at the Library of Congress.

But one need not venture out of our county to explore great history. In this vein, we will be honoring our first recipients of the Hardin County Historical Society's Annual Scholarships, Ms. Casey Goodson and Ms. Mary Walsh. Hearty congratulations to both of them!

In addition, we will be able to sit a spell, take our shoes off (not really) and re-visit a more genteel era of "Country Stores: Our Wonderful Heritage", as is reminisced fittingly by our speaker, Diane Coon. Ms. Coon will take us back to gossip and political debates, Nehi and checkers—I look forward to you joining us and feel free to bring a friend!

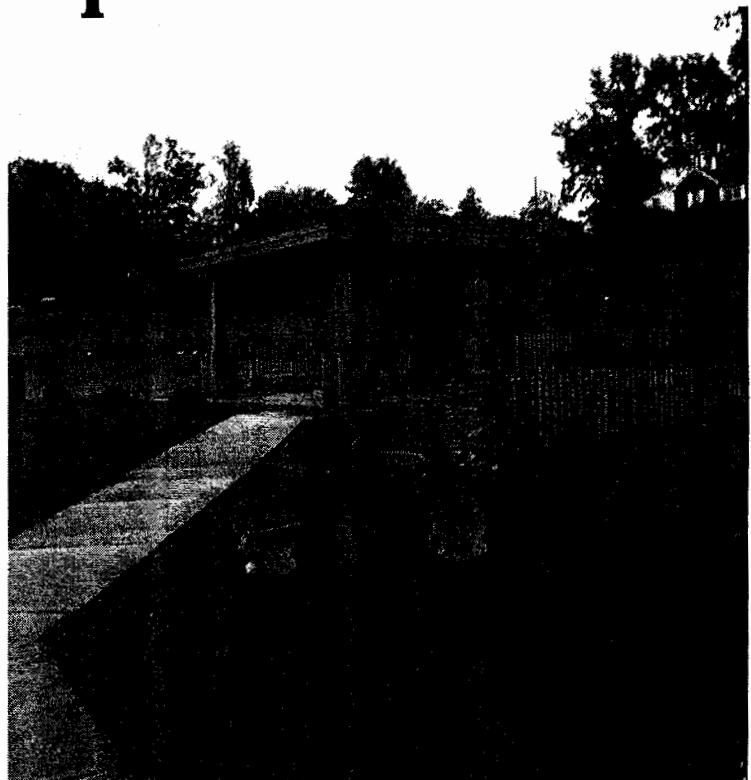
-- Jeff Lanz

## Announcement of Special Dedication

Joey Oller, spokesman for General Ben Hardin Helm Sons of Confederate Veterans Camp, says Saturday, August 1, 2009 at 10:00 AM the local camp will hold a ribbon cutting and public ceremony at the Elizabethtown City Cemetery for three informational markers commemorating the December 1862 Battle of Elizabethtown.

GBHH SCV plans to hold a second dedication on Saturday, September 19, 2009 at the Helm Family Cemetery for informational markers erected at that site. This special date is the anniversary of General Helm's mortal wounding at Chickamauga and it marks the date in 1884 when his body was returned home for burial from Atlanta.

The Hardin County Historical Society hold the title to the Helm Family Cemetery and acts official caretaker of the grounds guaranteeing it is maintained in a dignified manner befitting the family who helped establish and build this area into the fine community it is today.



Newly installed data base for the Elizabethtown City Cemetery.

# Historical Society announces next meeting



Diane P. Coon

The Hardin County Historical Society will meet Monday evening, July 27, 2009, at the STATE THEATER GALLERY, 209 West Dixie Avenue, in downtown Elizabethtown. The buffet dinner, catered by BACK HOME, will be served at 6:30 PM. The price is \$8.50 per person. Call Regina Lancaster at 765-6700 by **Friday, July 24th**, for **dinner reservations**; later reservations for the meal cannot be guaranteed.

The dinner is followed by a program, *Country Stores: Our Wonderful Heritage* at 7:00 PM by Special Guest Speaker, independent scholar and writer Diane P. Coon. From frontier days, the country store was at the center of rural life in Kentucky. This is where people gathered to exchange news and gossip, debate politics, rehash the sports scores, and sometimes fight and feud. While the old played checkers, the young courted over Nehi sodas and ice cream. It was life in the slow lane, and Coon has many photos and stories showing just how sweet it was.

ELIZABETHTOWN, KY 42702  
POST OFFICE BOX 381  
HARDIN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY