

Version 10d follow-up to the Grant County Historical Society 10b emailed on June 10, 2024

Part 1. William Arnold History

EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW – (most source documentation begins on page 4, in the main “Detail” portion of the report)

William Arnold, the namesake-founder of Williamstown was born about 1759. According to his sworn petition for a military pension, his birthplace was “East Jersey” (eastern New Jersey). When about 16 he moved to Virginia and immediately enlisted alongside thousands of other American patriots in service to his country as a Continental Army soldier. He was likely present on July 9, 1776 in Manhattan when General George Washington had the just-received Declaration of Independence read out to more than 10,000 soldiers. During the long War for Independence from Great Britain, young William reenlisted twice and eventually rose to the rank of Captain.

At the pivotal October 1781 Battle of Yorktown—against Cornwallis’s nearly 8,000 British and Hessian soldiers—George Washington’s troops were victorious, but the 22-year-old William Arnold suffered a severe wound.¹ In time he recovered and his service in the Continental Army ended. After the conclusion of the Revolutionary War, he made his way across the Allegheny Mountains to Virginia’s massive Fayette County, a danger-ridden frontier.

At the time, Fayette County was sparsely populated and comprised the eastern one-third of the wilderness territory now known as Kentucky. The region was a rich hunting ground that had been vital to Indians on both sides of the Ohio River for hundreds of years. Now being quickly populated by many thousands of settlers, conflict was inevitable. Arnold began serving as a Lieutenant in the militia and was heavily involved in efforts to secure Kentucky, Ohio, Indiana and beyond for settlement. In 1790, during the Maumee Uprising in the Northwest Territory, Arnold was again injured—this

¹ “The History of Grant County, State of Kentucky, as Compiled by Robert H. Elliston, and Read by Him on the Fourth Day of July, 1876.” Printed at the [Williamstown] Sentinel office in 1876. p.17. (An incomplete version was reprinted by Grant County News in 1951.) The complete 1876 version is at https://www.google.com/books/edition/The_History_of_Grant_County_State_of_Ken/GiJEAQAAMAAJ?q=William+Arnold+Esq+williamstown+ky&gbpv=1#f=false

time suffering a wound that would make normal labor impossible to a large degree for the remainder of his life.

Although exact dates are elusive, William Arnold married Lucy Pryor in Virginia. Together they ultimately had 6 children,² farmed or developed over 1,000 acres, established various businesses in and around what would become Williamstown, benefitted from the labor of several of Grant County's hundreds of enslaved people,³ served in various official capacities (including tavern/lodging proprietor, hardgoods store owner, first Sherriff, an original school trustee at the Grant Seminary, "possessioner," and more).

A significant Grant County historical record from July 4, 1876, (*"The History of Grant County, State of Kentucky, as Compiled by Robert H. Elliston, and Read by Him on the Fourth Day of July, 1876"*) notes that William Arnold was an associate of the tremendously popular Revolutionary War hero, General Marquis de Lafayette and hosted the eminent Frenchman and his distinguished entourage for a meal at Arnold's house when Lafayette passed through Williamstown in the spring of 1824.⁴ The account of Lafayette's visit and the extremely deep emotional connection he and Arnold shared that day was recounted in detail to the thousands of Centennial celebrants. The record clearly states that there were a number of witnesses still living who had cheered Lafayette as his carriage proceeded north on its way from Lexington to Cincinnati. "The General greeted the people, who thronged to meet him along the road, with much cordiality and friendship. This is remembered by our oldest people as one of the proudest and happiest incidents in the history of our county."⁵

William Arnold's Last Will & Testament, written the day before his death in 1836, when he was 77, provided for the eventual freedom (emancipation) of

² The 6 children of William & Lucy Arnold were; John, William, James, Sarah ("Sallie"), Polly, and Cassandra.

³ In the 1840 US census there were 348 enslaved people in Grant County, listed as "negros" and "slaves." This included both blacks and mulattos. There were also a small number of free blacks and mulattos. By the 1860 census the overall population of the county had doubled, and so had the enslaved. In 1860 there were 698 slaves (321 male, 377 female) listed as the property of 188 owners. There were 30 free blacks as well. See also; "Slavery in Grant County," by John Conrad, from the Grant County Historical Newsletter, Winter 2003/2004 available online at <https://tinyurl.com/5n6e2xpu>

⁴ "The History of Grant County, State of Kentucky, as Compiled by Robert H. Elliston, and Read by Him on the Fourth Day of July, 1876." Printed at the [Williamstown] Sentinel office in 1876. p.17. (An incomplete version was reprinted by Grant County News in 1951.) The complete 1876 version is at https://www.google.com/books/edition/The_History_of_Grant_County_State_of_Ken/GiJEAQAAMAAJ?q=William+Arnold+Esq+williamstown+ky&gbpv=1#f=false

⁵ Ibid, p.17

some but not all of the enslaved in his care. Those not freed became the legal responsibility of his family.⁶

It is clear that in 1799, William Arnold owned a 2-story log house/tavern (a wayside inn with lodging and food). It was located on the Dry Ridge Trace at Williamstown long before Williamstown existed (at what is now the northwest corner of Main & High Streets, across from today's Williamstown Baptist Church). It is also clear that the log house that has been moved to 224 S. Main Street (next to Heritage Bank) was built 49 years *later* in 1848. It was never owned or occupied by William Arnold (or his wife, Lucy). It was built more than a decade after Arnold's death by his son-in-law, Dr. Wesley Tully, a respected dentist and town leader in his own right. Tully was husband to William & Lucy's youngest daughter, Cassandra.⁷

The log home now at 224 S. Main can rightly be viewed as the home of one of William Arnold's family members, Cassandra (Arnold) Tully. As such, it can be designated as a memorial honoring William and family. However, it would be both false and disingenuous, based upon the conclusive results of the thorough dendrochronology study conducted by University of Louisville Prof. Maegen Rochner PhD, to continue to refer to that 1848 structure as the home of William Arnold. There is much that can and should be positively taught about what is known and can be further derived from the historical record.

For instance, massive pre- and post-Civil War transformations—technological, cultural, and spiritual—impacted the community of Williamstown and Grant County as they grew near what was then the literal center of the United States of America. Owing to such influences as the Second Great Awakening, the Industrial Revolution, and the “Missouri

⁶ Based upon William Arnold's 1836 will, he had at least 1 enslaved person by 1795, and at least 9 upon his death in 1836—at least 5 of whom were to be freed no later than five years after his death and the remainder transferred to the care of his heirs. (Note that the following statement appears in the front section of “The William Arnold Genealogy and History” 3-ring binder by Virgil Chandler & John B. Conrad, 1995; “At the time of his death, he was the master of fourteen black slaves. Being the compassionate man as he was, he willed that all but four be emancipated and land be given them for their faithful service. At the death of his wife, Lucy, (which occurred in 1839) her two servants were emancipated and the others were willed to his daughter-in law and his grandchildren. (Grant County Will Book B, pages 141, 143.)” The will itself does not note the number of people in each enslaved family. It may be that both “at least 9” and “fourteen” are correct.

⁷ Per a family tree by Mrs. Evelyn Cary (Louisville), which includes a version of the family record of Cassandra Arnold (youngest daughter of Capt. William Arnold), Cassandra Arnold was born 1803 and died 1860. Her only husband, Dr. John Wesley Tully was born in Bourbon County, and died in 1871.

Compromise” of 1820, small town values were challenged and either reaffirmed or reshaped.

Based upon the research and findings, we the 2023/2024 “William Arnold Research Committee” of the Grant County Historical Society (J. Colton Simpson, David R. Linden, Linda Conrad, and Dale T. Mason) recommend that the name of the 1848 structure be changed to the **WILLIAM ARNOLD MEMORIAL LOG HOUSE**, and that all written descriptions about same be updated.

DETAIL – William Arnold (WA) was likely born in 1759, according to calculations from the 1820 and 1830 Grant County Censuses. In an application for a government pension in 1816, in a sworn statement he listed his place of birth as “East Jersey” (the eastern portion of New Jersey); however, that is not the only claim as to his birthplace. One other account by his granddaughter, Mary Polly Ann (Tully) Merrell (1823-1893), who gave the information to historian C.P. Shields in an interview in 1869,⁸ said her grandfather had come from England to the U. S. with his father as a small boy.⁹ Mary Polly Ann was 13 years old when WA died, so she at least had the opportunity to learn this information from him first-hand. However, for purposes of this report the Committee finds it more in keeping with normal legal standards to accept William Arnold’s personal/sworn statement of 1816 as authoritative over the statement of a granddaughter several decades later.

A transcribed copy of William Arnold’s “Last Will and Testament”¹⁰ exists but as of this writing there is no known birth certificate and WA’s cemetery headstone has been lost.

⁸ Entitled “A Short Genealogy of William Arnold by his Granddaughter Mary (Polly) Ann Tully Merrell as dictated by her to C.P. Shields in 1869” (dated at bottom of same as Dec. 24th 1869).

⁹ Someone has referred to Scotland as WA’s country of origin. Perhaps his parents lived in the UK (not London) and traveled to London and departed from there?

¹⁰ “The Last Will and Testament of William Arnold, November 17th 1836” Per Virgil Chandler Sr., October 25, 19__[sic], Chandler and John B. Conrad state in their transcription of William Arnold’s will (which is part of a black 3-ring binder titled “The William Arnold Genealogy and History”) on page “- 12 -“, that “This Last Will and Testament of William Arnold has been copied and reproduced as close as possible to the original. The original is located in Will Book “B” pages 141 through 143, in the Clerks Office at the Grant County Courthouse, Williamstown, Kentucky.”

At about age of 16 (circa 1775), WA moved to Virginia and immediately volunteered for the Virginia Line to serve in the Revolutionary War.¹¹ Six years later he was with Marquis de Lafayette at the pivotal siege and Battle of Yorktown on October 9, 1781, when British General Cornwallis surrendered. Arnold was about 22 years old at this time and had risen to the rank of Captain. (In addition to leading men in war tactics, captains in the Continental Army were officers with numerous important recording and fiscal responsibilities.) A history of Grant County read to thousands attending a centennial Independence Day celebration picnic north of Williamstown on July 4, 1876, notes that WA was severely wounded during this battle. The nature of the injury is not clear, but Yorktown would have been during his last tour of duty in the Continental Army.

Virginia awarded all Revolutionary War veterans a pension, and officers additionally received land grants.¹² Arnold received a land grant of 800 acres on the North Fork of the Licking River in Mason County, Virginia¹³ (now Robertson County, Kentucky), which he held until 1801. However, there is no evidence that he ever lived within the borders of Mason County.¹⁴ His pension petition of 1816 states that a few months after the “Seige[sic] of York” he moved to the “state of Kentucky, settling on the frontier” (which was then part of Virginia), to Bourbon County, Virginia. He married Lucy Pryor in Virginia, but the year of matrimony has not been documented.

His next military commitment was apparently with the Kentucky Militia fighting the Indian Wars in Ohio for the next seven years.¹⁵ His first two children, John¹⁶ and Sarah, were born to William and Lucy (Pryor) Arnold about 1788 and 1790, respectively. He was again wounded in October,

¹¹ William Arnold’s “Sworn Statement Dated Oct, 24, 1816” which includes the attestation, “,,, petitioner states on oath that he was born in East Jersey. When about the age of sixteen years, moved to the state of Virginia and immediately commenced in the service of his country, in the old Revolutionary War, serving three tours and returned home after the Seige[sic] of York. After a few months, moved to the state of Kentucky [which was known as a region of Virginia at the time], settling on the Frontier. Was kept busily engaged to drive our savage foe...”

¹² source needed

¹³ Treasury Warrant # 3693, survey entered on May 22, 1790

¹⁴ The boundaries of Mason County—established in May 1789—never encompassed what became Williamstown, and in fact the closest border of Mason County was never less than about 12 miles from Williamstown. <https://digital.newberry.org/ahcb/map/map.html#VA>

¹⁵ Per William Arnold’s “Sworn Statement Dated Oct. 24, 1816” (petition) for military pension.

¹⁶ per the “Short Genealogy of William Arnold by his Grandaughter Mary (Polly) Ann Tully Merrell...” dated December 24, 1869, “Capt. William Arnold had a son, John Arnold who was an officer in the U.S. Army and was in some of the wars.”

1790,¹⁷ in a battle against the Maumee Indians. Per his sworn statement of 1816, this wound rendered him unable to work at labor for the rest of his life. (The military pension he was eventually awarded was based on a 50% disability.)

Prior to 1781, Virginia claimed territory which included Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Missouri, part of Minnesota, and Kentucky. Virginia offered its territories, except Kentucky, to Congress in 1781, and a deed of transfer was executed in 1784, leaving Virginia with the district now known as Kentucky. However, Virginia tended to leave Kentucky, with its Indian problems, to its own devices. From 1783(?) to 1790, roughly 1,500 settlers were killed, 2,000 horses stolen, homes were burned, and crops were destroyed by Indians.¹⁸

When Kentucky was threatened by invasion of the Chickamauga Tribe in 1784¹⁹ there was no one in the whole district of Kentucky with the authority to call the militia into service. The seat of government in Richmond was too far away for timely action. This situation led to a decision in December of 1784 by representatives of the Kentucky militia for Kentucky to become independent of Virginia with its then four counties: Fayette, Lincoln, Jefferson, and Nelson. Beginning in 1784, nine conventions were held for Kentucky to get relief from the Indian conflict through the government, or at least to secure the legal right to protect itself. In January, 1786, the Virginia assembly passed an act favoring the request to become independent of Virginia by the now seven counties of Kentucky. The Constitution of the United States was not adopted until September 17, 1787, and then it still had to be ratified by at least nine states. George Washington was elected president on March 4, 1789 (and inaugurated on April 30). Finally, at the 10th convention, Kentucky became an independent State of the Union in April, 1792.

The 1790 census located William Arnold in what was then known as Bourbon County, Virginia, which appears to be the first location to which he moved after recovering from his Yorktown injury.²⁰ Jillson (Pioneer Kentucky, p.91) states that Arnold had arrived (on the Dry Ridge?) in 1795.²¹ In 1796, he was named as one of three appraisers for the estate of Joel Hume, deceased.

¹⁷ Per William Arnold's "Sworn Statement Dated Oct. 24, 1816" (petition) for military pension.

¹⁸ Ackman, unpublished manuscript at the Grant County Public Library, p. 122

¹⁹ Ackman, unpublished manuscript at the Grant County Public Library, p. 120

²⁰ The northwestern area of Bourbon County (of 1792) was only about 15 miles east of modern-day Williamstown.

²¹ In 1795, modern-day Williamstown did not exist but it's geographical footprint was within Campbell County (which gave birth to Pendleton County in May 1799, and Pendleton to Grant County in 1820).

(Campbell County Court Order Book A, p.45). Bourbon County, Kentucky was two counties away from Campbell County, where Hume lived at that time (which was possibly near present-day Hume's Ridge Rd in Williamstown).²² It therefore seems likely that Arnold would have been living on the Dry Ridge, in order to make it practical to take on the contract as appraiser for someone who had lived there. One of the other appraisers named was Thomas Clark, who owned Clark's Station, a tavern about 2.4 miles south of where Arnold's tavern came to be built (at the modern-day NW corner of High Street and SR25/Dixie Highway). Both locations were on the Dry Ridge.²³ This was the same year that Thomas Clark arrived from Bourbon County and established Clark's Station (in Hardscrabble/Hilltop, now known as Cherry Grove).

On May 10, 1799, Pendleton County was established from parts of Campbell and Bracken Counties.²⁴ On June 4, 1799, Arnold was chosen as Possessioner and Justice of the Peace for the third district, now Grant County (Pendleton Order book A, p.243), and was already favorably located to perform duties of the future county of Grant.²⁵

In the same year, 1799, Arnold and Clark were named as appraisers (Pendleton Order Book A, p.115), for the estate of George F. Wheeler of Eagle Creek, on the west side of the Dry Ridge, further affirming the likelihood of Arnold's Dry Ridge proximity.

²² Hume lived in Campbell County in 1796, when William Arnold was 1 of 3 appraisers for Hume's property.

²³ Arnold owed money to Clark from early on in their experience on the Dry Ridge (Conrad, 1992), which may have been due to a loan to build his own tavern. They were friends, both from Bourbon County, and for some reason went into the same business within only two or three miles of each other.

²⁴ <https://digital.newberry.org/ahcb/map/map.html#KY>

²⁵ Grant County established March 31, 1820 - <https://digital.newberry.org/ahcb/map/map.html#KY>

Also in 1799, Arnold listed his location as “below” Bullock Pen Creek, which would be just north and west of Crittenden, KY (Campbell County Order Book A). Since this was the year that he began operating his lodging-tavern, that structure was apparently built, or completed, in that year. (In those days, taverns were residences, lived in and operated as wayside inns by their owners.) At that time, he would have been about 40 years old with a wife, four children, and at least one enslaved person.²⁶ His tavern business, which would have been a mainstay for his finances, he operated for the rest of his life. The structure was of logs, two stories high²⁷ and relatively large compared to other taverns in neighboring areas. It was built on what was to become Lot 101 in Williamstown facing east, at approximately the northwest corner of what is now High Street and Main (Fig. 1). William Arnold’s original log structure was replaced by a brick structure in 1820²⁸ when he was about 60. It was of similar design. High Street did not exist until it was added to access the “Tully Addition” and points west in 1848, the same year our log house (the log house that is now on display as a museum at 224 S. Main Street in Williamstown) was built by Wesley Tully.

²⁶ WA’s Last Will & Testament of 17 November 1836 notes that his “woman slave Fan” had faithfully served him “for above forty years.” This means that at least Fan, but possibly others as well, was with the Arnold family when they began operating their tavern in 1799, and had already been with them since at least 1796. (Further down in WA’s will he states, “My slave Jerry and his wife Fanny, I leave to my dear wife during her lifetime, and at her death, I direct that they be set from in consideration of their faithful service to me.” Fanny was likely the same person as Fan.)

²⁷ source needed

²⁸ source needed

For perspective regarding the culture of the time, note that it was during the 1820s that something of the early religious history of the county and of Williamstown in particular took place. It is recorded in Elliston's 1876 *"History of Grant County"* that, "About the year 1827 one Barton Stone, of the sect then denominated New Lights, came down from Bourbon county several times and preached in the Court House²⁹ at Williamstown.³⁰ He was soon after followed by Elders John T. Johnson, a brother of Vice President R.M. Johnson, and John Smith... The sect [denomination] for which they preached is now known as Christians, or Reformers."³¹ In the 1820s, Barton Stone's evangelistic revival meetings and sermons included strong anti-slavery (pro-abolitionist) teaching to inspire listeners of the need to help enslaved people to receive lasting freedom. So, it is likely that with the spiritual wave of Christian revival that was sweeping the country during the fervor of the Second Great Awakening³² of that time—of which Barton Stone³³ was a leader—the multiple sermons here in the Grant County courthouse had an impact in the hearts and lives of locals. Within months of that series of sermons, Williamstown's first church was established when the members of a church body previously located in Dry Ridge reorganized as Williamstown Primitive Baptist Church.³⁴ This resulted in a meeting house (church building) at the intersection of Mill and Falmouth Streets, only about a quarter-mile from William Arnold's home. (That original location of the Baptist church/meeting house was eventually overtaken by expansion of the Williamstown Cemetery).

Arnold's steam mill, built prior to 1830, would have been accessed only by Main Cross Street/Eagle Creek Road at first, and then in 1848 by Tully Street

²⁹ The first Grant County courthouse "...was built by William Arnold for the sum of \$2,199..." in 1821. "It was a brick building, two stories high, thirty four feet long by thirty feet wide. The first floor twelve feet high, and the second eight feet. The bar was elevated eighteen inches above the lobby or audience floor, and the 'Judges Bench' as it was called, two feet higher than this. The lobby floor was made of brick, closely laid and cemented together. ...an ample and commodious building—the sanctum over which the goddess of Justice was to preside and inspire..." from, "The History of Grant County, State of Kentucky, as Compiled by Robert H. Elliston, and Read by Him on the Fourth Day of July, 1876." Printed at the [Williamstown] Sentinel office in 1876. p.10. (An incomplete version was reprinted by Grant County News in 1951.)
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³⁰ Barton W. Stone was a revival-evangelist during America's "Second Great Awakening" (circa 1795-1835). The 1801 Cane Ridge Revival organized by him was a week-long rural "camp meeting" held in the frontier wilderness of Bourbon County, Kentucky about 50 miles SE of Williamstown. The significant meeting was the largest celebration of communion in American history, attracting around 20,000 people via horse and wagon mainly from up to about 100 miles away. Surprisingly, it resulted in a significant number of spiritual manifestations with controversial crying, jerking, and falling to the ground. See also,
<https://tennesseencyclopedia.net/entries/barton-warren-stone/> and
<https://christianhistoryinstitute.org/magazine/article/return-of-the-spirit-second-great-awakening>

(now High Street) as well. The chief purpose for the creation of Tully Street seems to have been to provide access to Tully's Addition, the little subdivision of four lots, two of which he sold to his sons-in-law in 1848. However, Tully Street also provided access to Arnold's steam mill; hence, Tully Street/High Street also became known as New Mill Road as it approached the steam mill.

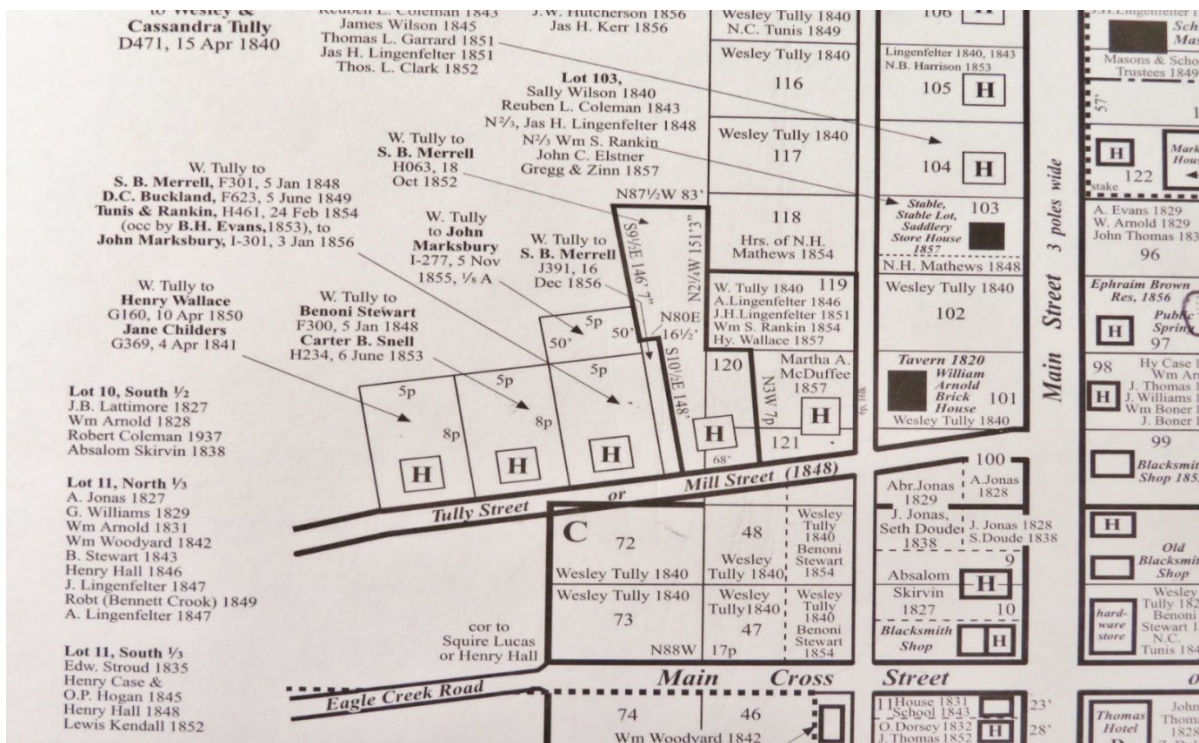


Fig. 1. The location of William Arnold's tavern in 1820 is shown on Lot 101 on Main Street, Williamstown. (Tom Hutzelman, *Atlas of Grant County, 1858*.) Tully Street, or Mill Street, shows that the street was built in 1848, the same year that the 2022 dendrochronology report indicates our log house was built by Tully at what is now 105 High Street. This lot (105 High St) was sold to Tully's son-in-law, S. B. Merrell, in 1852.

³¹ "The History of Grant County, State of Kentucky, as Compiled by Robert H. Elliston, and Read by Him on the Fourth Day of July, 1876." Printed at the Sentinel office in 1876. p.14-15. (An incomplete version was reprinted by Grant County News in 1951.)

³² https://www.google.com/books/edition/The_History_of_Grant_County_State_of_Ken/GiJEAQAAMAAJ?q=William+Arnold+Esq+williamstown+ky&gbpv=1#f=false

³³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Great_Awakening

³⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barton_W._Stone

³⁵ "The Williamstown Primitive Baptist Church was organized in 1827."

<http://www.dryridgepresbyterian.org/history.html>

Two other contiguous lots were sold by Tully in 1848, one to each of two sons-in-law, Sinclair B. Merrell and Benoni Stewart. and the fourth one of the "Tully Addition" had previously been sold to Jane Childers in 1841. As noted, the Childers lot pre-dates the Tully Addition, but was after Arnold's death. There must have been a lane/driveway to Childers house, and possibly as far as the steam mill beyond it that may have been the precursor to Tully Street. Wesley Tully and his wife Cassandra Arnold Tully inherited this land and much more from the estate of William Arnold. Even though William Arnold died in 1836, the provisions of his will concerning the final disposition of his property to his children were not carried out until after his wife's death in 1839. (Therefore, his will was not fully probated until 1840.)

The only lots of those laid out for the town that were not sold by 1848 were lots 101 and 102. The locations of these lots match the location on the survey labeled, "William Arnold's Brick House" (Tom Hutzelman, Pers. Comm.) Main Street coincides at that point with the Dry Ridge Trace, putting Arnold's home/tavern directly adjacent to the Dry Ridge Trace/Covington-Lexington Turnpike (now known as Main Street, as well as SR25/Dixie Highway).

As to William Arnold's land acquisition which included the acreage that became Williamstown, it was on January 6, 1801, that the 800 acres which Arnold owned in Mason County was transferred to Lewis Craig of Pendleton County. (Note that Grant County was birthed from Pendleton County, but not until 1820.) Land acquisition by William Arnold on the South Licking River watershed (on the eastern slope of the Dry Ridge) is indicated in the tax records: Pendleton County tax records of 1799 reveal that he was paying taxes on 250 acres. By 1801, he was paying taxes on 500 acres. Considering the timing, this *may* have been the result of a land swap involving his 800 acres in Mason County. Additionally, in May 1811, the Pendleton County Court ordered the division of the Cavens and Craig Land Patent (survey) of 7,412 acres for the heirs of Absolom Craig. William Arnold and others received a total of 1,137 acres of this patent, *possibly* to pay off debts of the deceased. It is upon a portion of this acreage that present day Williamstown now stands (Pendleton Order Book B, p. 320). Much of the land surrounding Williamstown is also included in Arnold's holdings.

Prior to the official establishment of Williamstown, William Arnold is listed in the Pendleton County tax records in 1816 as also having a wholesale and retail store.

Grant County was formed out of Pendleton County on April 10, 1820. William Arnold was appointed its first Sheriff and served for two years (Grant Order Book A, p.1), after which he resigned (Grant Order Book). Being born about 1759, his service as Sheriff began at or near age 61.

Also in 1820, Arnold donated 1.5 acres of his Williamstown land for public buildings (the brick courthouse and hewed log jail), plus a “stray pen” also on the public property.³⁵ At his request, 25 acres of surrounding land was condemned to lay out lots for the town. One Richard Southgate held a mortgage on 600 acres which included this property, which had to be paid off by Arnold before the property could be released. Arnold promptly paid the man \$300. Ninety-nine quarter-acre lots and streets were surveyed (by William Littell) for the town.

Further evidence supports the 2022 dendrochronology report that the “William Arnold Log House” originally located at present-day 105 High Street was built in its entirety (possibly including the rear portion, or kitchen, as Chambers refers to it) by Wesley Tully in or about 1848. An unpublished handwritten manuscript by Jacob Ackman, currently being transferred to digital text by the Grant County Public Library, notes that by 1820 when the Grant County seat was established yet before the courthouse and jail were built in 1821, there were only three houses in the area. These included William Arnold’s home (his tavern on Main Street) and two other log houses owned by farmers (Ackman, p. 10). A clue as to who the owners of the other two houses were can be found in Conrad, (1992): “William Arnold had one of three locally owned four-wheeled carriages in 1820. James Masterson and Griffin P. Theobald were the other two.”

Family history expressed by Grant County Deputy Judge-Executive J. Colton Simpson to this writer in June 2024 stated that, by his understanding his 6x removed grandfather Samuel Simpson also lived and operated a tavern in the area, beginning in or before 1817. The “locally owned” carriages would most likely have been owned by farmers with land and houses.

³⁵ “The History of Grant County, State of Kentucky, as Compiled by Robert H. Elliston, and Read by Him on the Fourth Day of July, 1876.” Printed at the [Williamstown] Sentinel office in 1876. p.9-10. (An incomplete version was reprinted by Grant County News in 1951.)
https://www.google.com/books/edition/The_History_of_Grant_County_State_of_Ken/GiJEAQAAMAAJ?q=William+Arnold+Esq+williamstown+ky&gbpv=1#f=false

CONCLUSION - No evidence points to the possibility that William Arnold built or lived in the structure formerly at 105 High Street which now sits on Main Street and is currently called by his name. Data provided by the scientific application of dendrochronology to the logs used for constructing the building pinpoints the harvesting of the timbers to the winter of 1847/1848. The statistical probability (shown in the report) is that this dating is accurate and leaves no reasonable doubt as to those conclusions. The study, conducted by Prof. Maegen Rochner, PhD of the University of Louisville, locks in the earliest possible date that the house was built, making it impossible that William Arnold was the builder. Neither William Arnold or his wife ever owned or set foot in the structure, since it was built years after the death of each. Its construction was organized and/or funded by relatives of William Arnold—those being his youngest daughter Cassandra Arnold Tully and her husband (the respected Williamstown dentist and merchant), Dr. Wesley Tully.

Recommendations of the Committee –

1. Alter the official/published name of the log house from “William Arnold Log House” to “**William Arnold Memorial Log House**”
2. Establish a new committee to continue research and discovery of information related to the actual original owners (the Tully’s) and their bloodline and marital connections to the city founder and county leader, William Arnold.
3. Focus on the strategic location and “pioneer” -era significance of Williamstown by using actual history and documentation to better tell about the people of the town, the county, and the state. Zero in on our region’s positive role in the growth and changes that impacted post-Revolutionary War, and both pre- and post-Civil War America (geographically, numerically, culturally, and spiritually). Possibly emphasize the “middle of America” location of Williamstown and Grant County when they were both officially founded in 1820. Williamstown was at the epicenter of the cultural divide brought on by the Missouri Compromise of the same year (1820) and the long road to the terrible Civil War (ended 1865). During this period the Dry Ridge Trace became a primary north/south “highway” as steam powered riverboats and trains grew the United States in every direction. The racial/social challenges experienced in Kentucky’s Grant County in the mid-1800s likely offer an

abundance of historical perspective that we in the 2000s dare not overlook as our country needs a truly satisfying road forward.

4. Locate, acquire, and display artifacts that can be utilized to generate interest and excitement from a significant portion of the roughly one-million adults and children who visit the Williamstown-based Ark Encounter attraction each year. (Develop or assist in developing a plan to establish a portion of Grant County as the; “Kentucky Pioneer Village” or “Historic Williamstown Pioneer Village” or “American Crossroads Village” etc. Begin with such buildings and exhibits as: a replica one-room schoolhouse, a replica early church, a livery/blacksmith stable, railroad depot with static steam train engine and caboose (1877), general store, post office, Grant County Sentinel newspaper office (1876), farm implements, buggies, farm wagons... all circa 1870s. To capitalize on the Christian and history-focused demographic of Ark Encounter visitors, position the pioneer village to feed travelers into Williamstown’s shops and restaurants by use of the same I-75 exit at which the AE attraction is situated.
--general idea, <https://historicwhitepinevillage.org/>
--see also “Vision Statement” by Dale T. Mason (former VP of the Ark Encounter’s founding ministry, Answers in Genesis / current Grant County Historical Society member)
5. Then, deploy marketing materials and social media ads that draw people to the city for the exciting educational and spiritual value of this new destination site.
6. etc.

Part 2. Log Home Modifications

Following the discovery of the log home at 105 High Street, Williamstown, KY, in 1986, and based on the erroneous belief that it was William Arnold's home from the early 1800's (1799-1811), the Grant County Historical Society (GCHS) decided to make some changes to the structure. Local historian Virgil Chandler, Sr. is credited with the research and documentation associated with the discovery of the structure. There is no known documentation of why these changes were made, but presumably they were made to bring the structure more in line with their idea of an early 1800's cabin, as well as make it more suitable for a GCHS headquarters, a function that it served after re-opening in 1993.

Since that early discovery, it has recently been determined by dendrochronology (Appendix A) that the structure was built in 1848. It is unfortunate that modifications were made to this historic structure; however, we are fortunate that Chandler left us pictorial evidence of what the original structure looked like as they were tearing it down. Analysis of these pictures can guide the restoration that this structure deserves, or at least lead to a better understanding and interpretation of the original structure. Before the building was disassembled for moving, the logs were marked in preparation for re-assembly, which the movers accomplished very well, with a few changes of their own making. I present here the principal changes that were made with the hope that the log home may be restored to its original form insomuch as possible, and it may properly represent the frontier home of a prominent member of the 1848 Williamstown community.

Several changes that were made were necessary to maintain the building. These include adding a new roof structure from the top plates up and raising the foundation to provide a crawl space and air circulation under the building. These changes were arguably appropriate. Other changes were at the discretion of the City of Williamstown and the Historical Society and should be considered for restoration. Such changes are as follows:

1. The front door was originally at the right-front of the building (Fig. 1). This doorway was relocated during the re-model, replacing the window near the center of the front wall, and the window was

relocated to the former front doorway, which opened into the hall (Fig. 2).

2. The window presently at the back end of the hall was originally a door (Figs. 4 and 8).



Fig. 1. This is the house at 105 High Street as it was being torn down in 1986. The front door was on the right and it opened into the hallway. The two floor-length windows on the left went to the living room.

Changing the windows to doors and vice versa alters how they were able to control temperatures in the house. Raising the bottom of the windows in the front and back of the living room and the rear windows would have cut back on the potential to take advantage of air flowing through the house in the summer time. Having a door to the outside only in the hallway with an access door to the living room as well as the upstairs sleeping quarters conserved heat from the fireplace in the winter time. The hallway would

have functioned as a kind of airlock system instead of the wind blowing into the room in the winter every time someone went in or out.



Fig. 2. This is the front view of the house before dismantling, showing the two window openings on the lower left and the taller door opening on the lower right. Notice that all interior wall surfaces have been whitewashed. (This is important evidence of construction timing later in this report.)



Fig. 3. This photo shows the log home after it was re-assembled behind the Williamstown Baptist Church. The front door is now near the center of the front wall and opens into the living room. (Note that the original doorway opening on the right is slightly higher than either of the two window openings. This is true of the window/door openings on the back wall also.)

3. An obvious change is that the first-floor windows were raised at the bottom by using replacement logs (Fig. 3.). The current back door was originally a floor-length window looking out to the “dogtrot” space (Fig. 4).



Fig. 4. This is a rear view of the log home before it was disassembled in 1986. The doorway on the left had been re-framed at some time in the past, but the height of the rough opening indicates that it was originally cut for a door. The bottom was filled in two logs higher during re-modeling, making it a window. The opening on the lower right, which is relatively lower at the top, is now used for a door, but its height indicates it was originally a window.

4. All windows which were originally floor-length (two front windows on the first floor, two second floor windows and one first floor window on the back) were raised by the height of one or two logs (Fig. 7).
5. All windows of this era were small-pane rather than large-pane. If windows are redesigned and replaced, it should be with small pane designs such as 6-over-6 or 9-over-9.
6. The modern-looking staircase was removed (Fig. 5), no doubt thinking it did not fit in with an early 1800's style of construction. It was replaced with a rough-sawn pine stairway and an added wall separating it from the hallway. Neither the rough pine material nor the wall belong to this house.



Fig. 5. This is the staircase as it was being removed with a crane. With hardwood steps, a railing, balusters, and turned Newell posts, it was much more modern than the rough-sawn pine which was put in its place.

Not only did they remove the original staircase, the design was changed as well. The replacement stairs are steeper than the original stairs and have a landing at the top. The original stairs had a 90-degree spiral left turn at the top to conserve floor space. There are mortises in the wall and in a ceiling joist of the log home (Figs. 6 and 7), which indicate the positions of the original stairwell header, runner, and railing. There is also a photograph of the stairwell framing (Fig. 11).



Fig. 6. A mortise in the wall indicates the position of the original railing at the stairwell opening. There is another mortise for the header directly below. The new railing position (right) takes away floor space on the second level.

Photo DRL

(An indication of original construction is provided by whitewash evidence. The log home was built by Dr. Wesley Tully, beginning construction in 1848. He sold it to his son-in-law, Sinclair B. Merrill in 1852. According to a dated newspaper found in the wall by Chandler, lath and plaster were added to the walls in 1853 by its new owner (Merrill). However, prior to the walls being plumbed with furring strips to receive the lath and plaster, it was whitewashed on the inside of each wall, probably as a finishing touch. Where the walls were chipped away to plumb the furring strips in 1853, the whitewash was removed with the chips) (Fig.8.).



Fig. 7. The stairwell header frame is shown attached to the ceiling joists on the left. An existing mortise in the joists today marks the location.



Fig. 8. This view shows several important features, such as the 90 degree spiral turn of the stairs at the top, as well as some excellent details of the Newell post. Another is the opening to the area under the stairs. The rough opening for the back door and the reduction framing is clearly visible. An example of the evidence that whitewash provides is shown above the stairs. The whitewash was probably applied as a finish to construction in 1848 or later, but before remodeling in 1853. When the walls were covered for the re-model, they were chipped where necessary to plumb the furring strips for the attachment of lath. So where the walls are bare, they were either covered when the whitewash was applied, or the whitewash was removed later, as in this case.

A whitewash boundary line is also present indicating where the original staircase was fastened to the wall (Fig. 9.). The lack of whitewash where the staircase was attached to the wall indicates that the staircase was original to the structure. It had a less steep angle than the replacement staircase and had an angle change near the top where the 90-degree spiral turn was made. It also had a different footprint, starting farther from the front than the present staircase, providing more room in the entryway.



Fig. 9. Under the staircase, faint, but discernable, whitewash boundaries. a mortise, and nail holes indicate where the stairway was originally attached to the wall. It is positioned further from the front than the present staircase and is slightly less steep. Photo DRL

7. The original fireplaces and chimneys (three of them) were made of brick (Figs. 10 and 11). The only remaining fireplace and chimney is in the front room, and instead of being replaced with brick has been replaced with stone(donated from the old poorhouse in Williamstown and a local farm.
8. When the structure was disassembled for removal, the back section was demolished. The entire section beyond the breezeway Chandler refers to as the “kitchen”. This is more likely to have been living quarters, except for the kitchen in the very back room.



Fig. 10. The house at 105 High Street as it appeared in 1986 showing three chimneys, all of them made of brick. Only the front chimney remains after two site changes, and the brick has been replaced by stone.



Fig. 11. A city worker removes debris from the back section of the house on High Street, which was completely demolished. The chimney and fireplace, which were centrally located between two rooms in that section, were obviously made of brick.

Part 3. Dendrochronology Report (Summary)

In 2021, Dr. Maegen Rochner of the University of Louisville conducted a study of the timbers used to build what is presently called the William Arnold Log Home. Dr. Rochner has worked in this field of study for years and has completed similar studies for many structures in the past. Her work and findings are well-accepted in the scientific community.

In her report in 2022, Dr. Rochner concludes that” the timbers used to construct the William Arnold Cabin were harvested during the dormant season 1847-1848, or between Fall 1847 and Spring 1848.”

It is important that we understand and appreciate the veracity of this report, which is attached (Attachment 1.). It is a scientific paper, providing methods used, results, statistical analysis, conclusions, and references. The tree ring measurements (which were made using a microscope with a mechanical stage equipped with vernier scales for making minute linear measurements) are perfectly matched to reference samples of known age.

The question of the suitability of poplar wood for aging by dendrochronology has been raised on several occasions. This is apparently based on attempts to age historical paintings in Europe that were done on wood panels made of poplar. The results were considered unreliable because of the irregularity of the growth rings in that species of wood. However, the poplar used for that purpose was not the same species, or even in the same family as the tulip poplar (yellow poplar) that was used in the eastern U.S. to construct buildings. No doubt they used true poplar belonging to the genus *Populus* for their painting panels; whereas yellow poplar is in the genus *Liriodendron* and belongs to the Magnolia Family. The ring growth in *Liriodendron* is consistent and has been used without such problems as were encountered with the European poplar. Moreover, the technique used by Dr. Rochner requires that the spot on the timber from which the samples are taken has the bark or outside contour of the log intact. This is to ensure that the log can be dated to its last year of growth, or the point of harvest. All timbers in the log home still retain the bark, because this is the way the timbers were processed and used for building.

Statistical analysis of ring measurements and matchup with reference samples shows the results as being two orders of magnitude higher than what is necessary to be considered highly significant. This indicates a consistency in the materials as well as a sampling protocol that leaves the results beyond question.

The 1848 date of timber harvest also leads to the conclusion that the walls of the structure were assembled in 1848. Each log still has intact bark firmly attached and built into the structure. If the logs used had been allowed to weather for another season in the outdoors, the bark would not have remained attached to the logs and would not have been used in the building process; therefore, the main structure, at least, would have been completed in 1848. It is not likely that they would have delayed finishing the home from that point forward. Since it was sold by Dr. Tully to his son-in-law, Sinclair B. Merrell in 1852, it appears that it was completed to the point of coating the inside walls with whitewash as the final step. This was not a particularly time-consuming process, as Merrell's upgrading of the whole building, inside and out, would have been, and presumably was accomplished soon after the initial construction was finished.

It is crucial to our understanding of the history of this building that we accept the research and findings of Dr. Rochner. It was not, as Virgil Chandler assumed, the building that was pictured on the plat of the Cavens and Craig survey of 1811 (Fig. 1.). The building on that plat was Arnold's Tavern on the Dry Ridge Trace, which had been in operation since 1799.

Moreover, the Tully Addition (four lots) and Tully Street (that later became High Street) did not exist until 1848 (Fig. 2.). Sometime after inheriting the property in 1840, Dr. Tully put in a small housing development and sold the lots to his relatives, mostly in 1848 (Fig. 3.). The street that was built to access the housing development was called Tully Street or Mill Street. It connected at some point to the steam mill that his wife inherited from William Arnold in 1840 by the extension of Tully Street called New Mill Road.

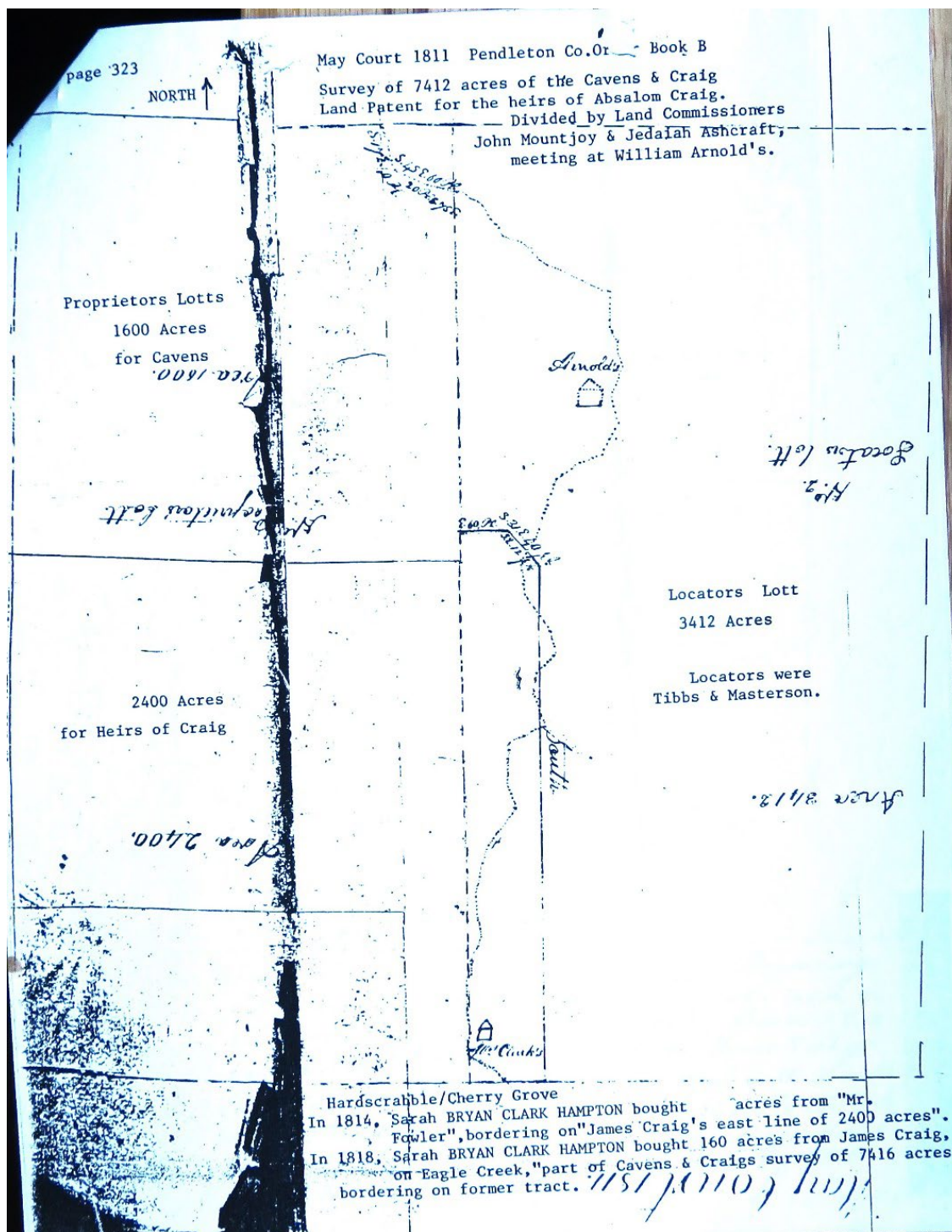


Fig. 1. This is a closeup of a blueprint of the 1811 Cavens and Craig Survey. It shows the location of Arnold's Tavern on the Dry Ridge Trace on the west side of what would become Williamstown.

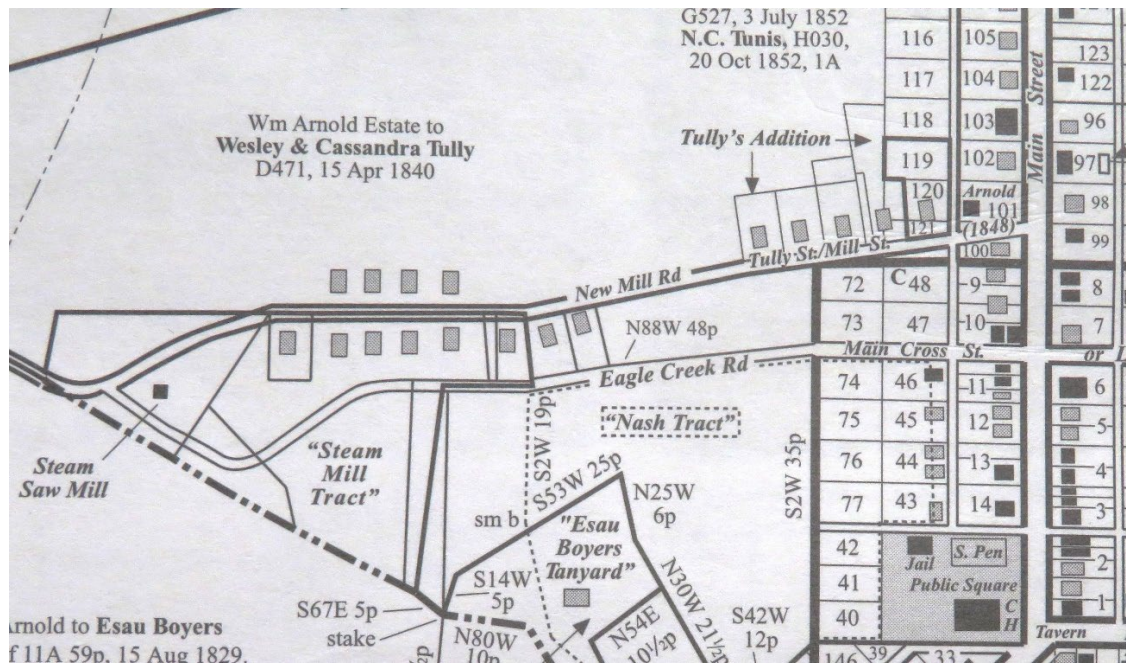


Fig. 2. This is an image from Plate 3 of Thomas Hutzelman's (1996) 1858 Atlas of Grant County. It shows, among other things, Tully's Addition, a housing development on Tully Street/ Mill Street). Tully Street, which was built in 1848, turns into New Mill Road and connects with the Arnold steam mill, which was established prior to 1820, according to Chandler's GCHS Newsletter # 59. The mill was also accessed by Eagle Creek Road, an extension of Main Cross Street, which was one of the original streets laid out for Williamstown in 1822. Main Cross Street is currently named Mill Street and extends only to the east of Main Street. Tully Street/Mill Street is currently named High Street. Notice that the location for William Arnold's Tavern is on Lot 101 on Main Street, whereas the 105 High Street location would be two lots to the west. In 1858, Arnold's Tavern would have been a two-story brick building that replaced his original log home on the same lot (Hutzelman, pers. com.).

We are still awaiting the results of the latest sampling of replacement logs in the Log House. Virgil Chandler mentioned that some of the logs from the back section of the house were used as replacement logs in the front section that we have now. This seemed like our last opportunity to gain information on the origin of the back section, so we asked Dr. Rochner to sample logs which were obviously not original to

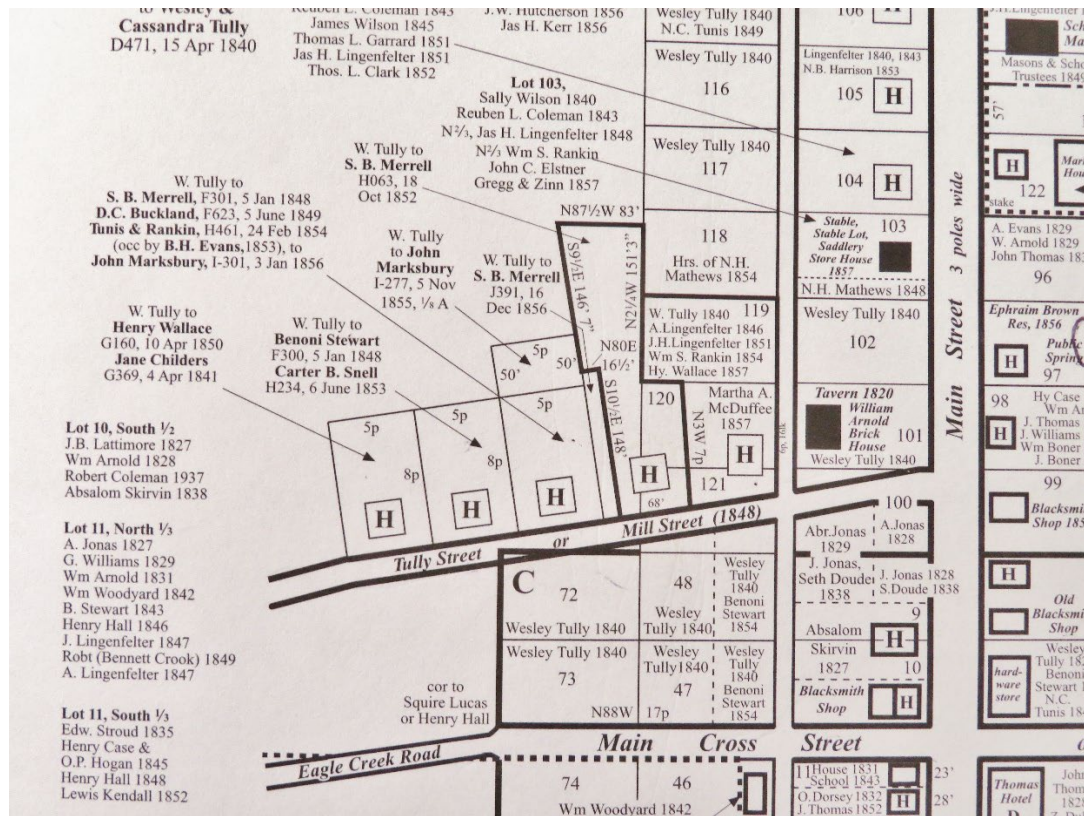


Fig. 3. Tully's Addition showing the ownership changes up to 1858. 105 High Street, where the log house was discovered, is the lot just west of Martha A. McDuffee. The railroad tracks now go between them. Other lots were sold to Wesley Tully's daughters/sons-in-law post 1848, except the last lot in the row, sold to Jane Childers in 1841. This early date indicates that there may have been a lane or trail in this area before Tully Street was built.

the construction of the front section. These logs had been avoided during the first sampling, but now may be significant. A report of her findings is imminent and may provide further information as to the history of the back section, which was completely removed in 1986.

END

Part 4. Dendrochronology Report (Actual)

See separate PDF file, "MEMO" of "8 September 2022"