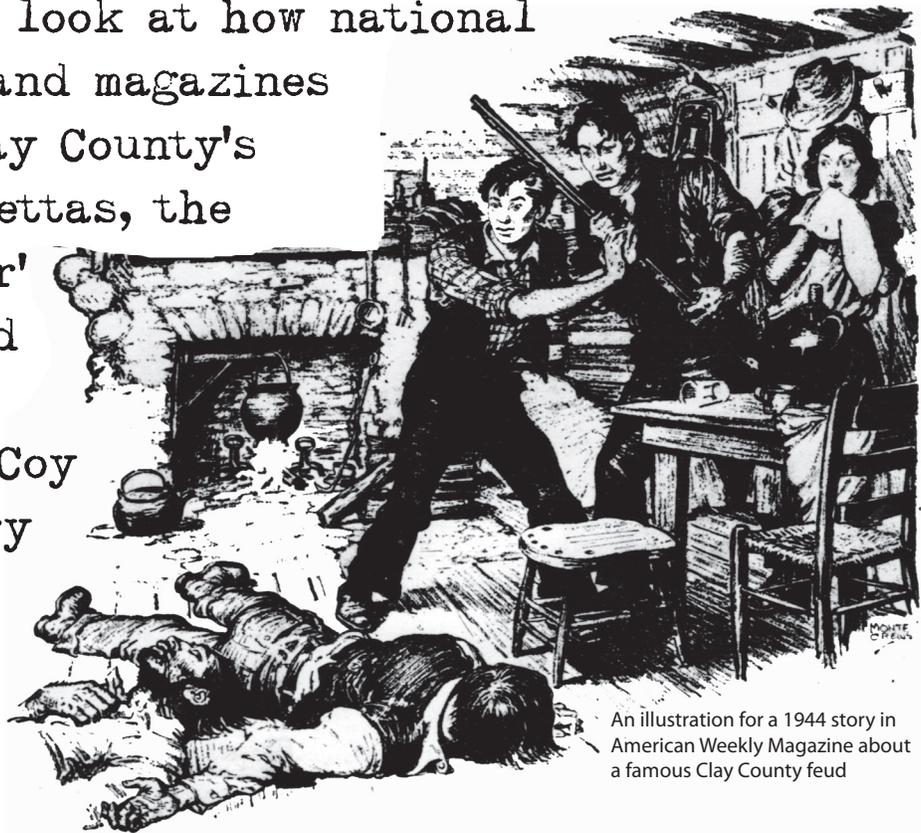


# Clay County Ancestral N · E · W · S MAGAZINE

## How Others Saw Us

An in-depth look at how national newspapers and magazines reported Clay County's famous vendettas, the 100-year 'war' that dwarfed in scope the Hatfield-McCoy feud in every measurable way.



An illustration for a 1944 story in American Weekly Magazine about a famous Clay County feud

Spring & Summer 2013

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Volume 29, Number 1

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**MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT****Get your salt ready . . . .**

In the past year or so the Hatfield/McCoy feud has captured the imagination of the American public, owing chiefly to a wildly popular TV mini-series. But before that infamous vendetta, and long after as well, the national press heaped even more coverage on Clay County's feuding, which was longer lasting, larger in scope, and more violent than that of our neighbors to the east. The body count was staggering and it will give you chills to read some of the news accounts in the following pages, from regional and national newspapers and magazines reporting at the time, mostly the late 1890s and the mid 1930s.

While the subject of the Clay County feuds is often seen nowadays as something akin to old west nostalgia, as per the Hollywood treatment of the Hatfield/McCoy variety, or even a History Channel presentation a few years ago of Clay County's "Hundred Year War," it is to many local people a subject of the utmost seriousness since memories are long, and old hurts sting to this day. In this special issue devoted to how others reported on our troubles, we don't mean to minimize the hurtful impact of our history; we only want to present it in a historical context through the eyes of the nation that seemed to have been fixed on Clay County's feuds far more than they were the Hatfield/McCoy version.

Our history is our history. Nothing can change it. Revisiting it in print, to paraphrase a famous dictum, can serve to make sure it never happens again. That is, after all, a big part of studying history. Even so, bear in mind when reading some of the fanciful accounts in the following pages, that these stories were presented in a somewhat tabloid sense, in the modern use of the world, by reporters who may have had a condescending attitude toward people they didn't understand, and who, for lack of research, often played fast and loose with the facts.

Some of the accounts are quite factual, and some well written, but some need to be taken with at least a moderate dose of salt.

--Charles House

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Family Surnames of interest to you:

Paid for year(s) 2013 \_\_\_\_\_ 2014 \_\_\_\_\_

### CLAY COUNTY GENEALOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

P.O. Box 394 • Manchester, KY 40962 • Telephone 606-598-5507

The Clay County Genealogical and Historical Society is a non-profit organization, incorporated on 11/15/1984. The organization is totally supported by memberships, donations and book sales. Membership is available any place in the United States at \$18.00 per calendar year (January through December). Membership is retroactive to the beginning of the year. Membership in places outside the United States is available at various prices (depending on the location; due to the variation in the cost of postage). The postage & handling on books purchased from the Society will be more per book to locations outside the United States. These postage rates will be obtained upon request for anyone who wants to become a member of the Society, or purchase books from it.

The CCAN Magazine (Clay County Ancestral News), is free to current dues paying members (dues paid for the year 2010). The Society is presently printing two issues of CCAN per year, "Spring and Summer" and "Fall and Winter." Each issue will contain 72 pages of information (articles, photos, genealogical findings, queries, etc.) most of which is submitted by members who are sharing their genealogical and historical research in this publication. All "current" members, all "lifetime" members and all "exchange" members (other Societies that exchange publications with Clay County) will receive a copy of each issue printed for the year 2010. The Society offices are open from 9 a.m. till 3 p.m. Thursdays and Fridays or by special appointment. Phone number is 606-598-5507.

Send manuscripts and photos to the Clay County Genealogical and Historical Society, PO Box 394, Manchester, KY 40962 or email: house12@windstream.net. Email is preferred.

WHERE FEUDS FLOURISH

Clay County, Ky., and the Homes  
of Its Residents.

How Others

A DIFFICULT PLACE TO REACH

No Disposition Prevent Investigation  
of Disturbances—Turbulent  
Spirits in the Minority.

Special Correspondence THE NEW YORK TIMES.

For over a hundred years Clay County's nefarious ways were chronicled in newspaper and magazine stories that portrayed the county as the most violent in America. At times various versions of the local feuds put the famous Hatfield/McCoy shenanigans to shame in terms of national coverage. Here, for the first time, is a look at how they portrayed us, what they got wrong. And right.

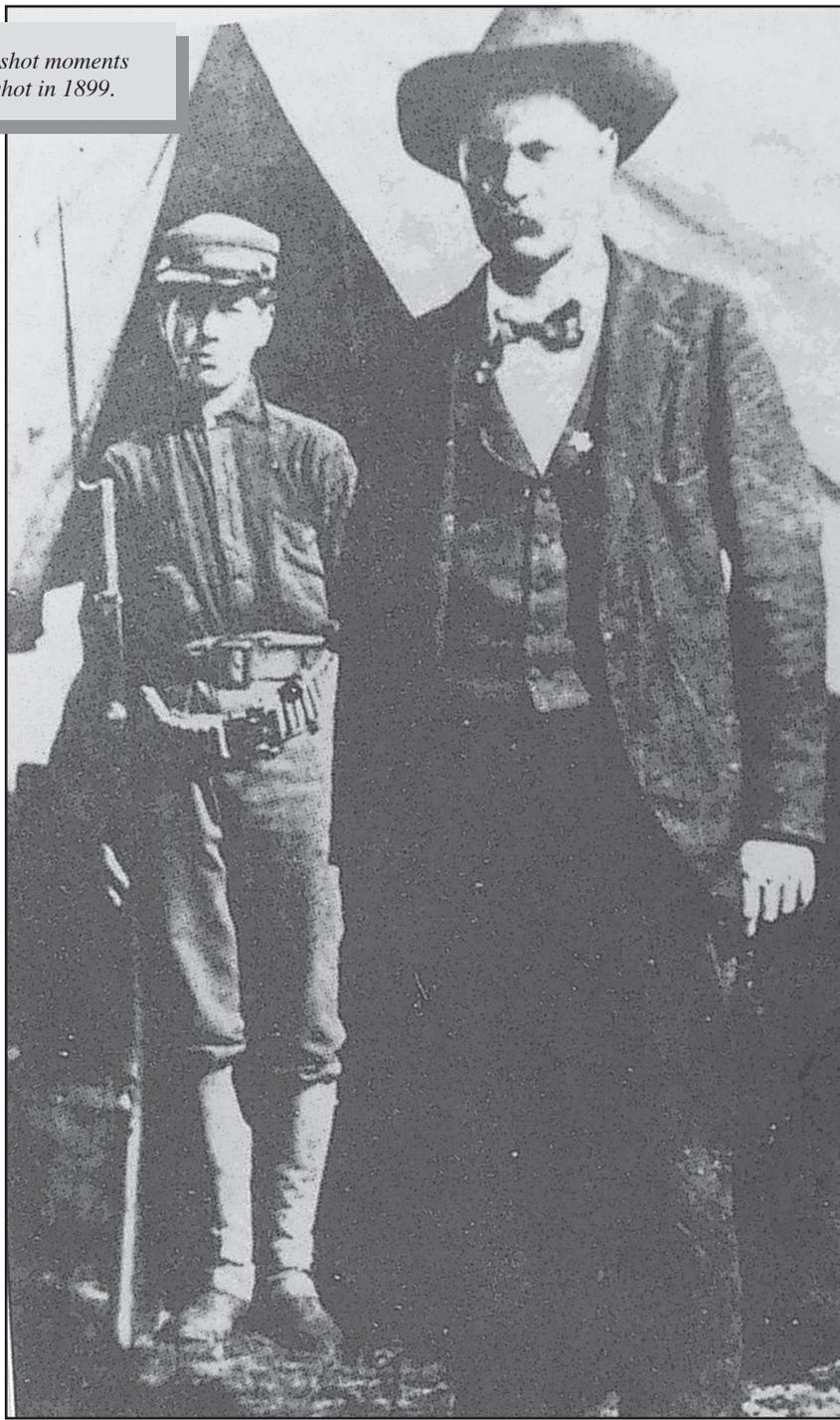
## SPECIAL SECTION: HOW OTHERS SAW US

## Our feuds from start to finish

*The famous photo of Tom Baker who was shot moments after a newspaper photographer got this shot in 1899.*

By Charles House

From the beginning, which is to say in 1806, the year of the infamous Cattle War, there was something about the particular kind of violence afflicting the headwaters of the Kentucky River that captured the public imagination. It was at least partly because of that “war” that boundary lines were drawn to encompass those headwaters and create a new county, an act it was hoped would put an end to the fighting. But it did nothing to stop it; it only served to give it a name. “Clay County” was destined to enter the national consciousness the way “Dodge City” would much later. Press coverage of Clay County fussing and fighting went nationwide in the mid-1840s with coverage of the trial of Dr. Abner Baker Jr., and of the factional fighting that led up to his hanging. Coverage waned in the years leading up to the Civil War (there were bigger fish to fry), but even during that period there were occasional Clay County murder stories in papers in New Orleans and Little Rock and other cities far from Manchester. After the war (even because of it some said) the feuding came back stronger than ever and coverage in regional and national press rose to an insane fever pitch in the 1890s. It was pronounced dead in the 1902 but rose like Phoenix from the embers so



that by the 1930s Manchester was deemed “The Worst Town in America.” Finally the violence seems to have collapsed of its own weight as the local population began to react

as much of the rest of the nation did in the wake of endless reporting in popular magazines and newspapers such as *The New York Times* and others from coast to coast.

*Articles from the Commercial Tribune July, 1899*



# Trouble Between the Factions

A big city paper keeps readers up to date with events of two of the biggest feuds in United States history

## Blood-curdling descriptions for Cincinnati newspaper readers attempt to help them keep score in the ongoing feuds

### THE PHILPOTS ARE FREE ACQUITTED OF MURDER AT EXAMINING TRIAL AT MANCHESTER

#### *No Trouble between the factions during the Day—Green Griffin's Trial Set for Next Week* *Special Dispatch to Commercial Tribune*

MANCHESTER, Ky., July 25 – George Philpot and his son Pete were tried before County Judge Wright yesterday for the murder of Aaron Morris and Hugh Griffin on Little Goose Creek last Monday and were acquitted.

Attorney Kash, for the defense, announced that he did not care to introduce any of his witnesses, and asked that his clients be dismissed. Judge Wright, after reviewing the evidence, declared that the Commonwealth had not sufficient proof to convict them. So he declared the defendants discharged.

The trial began yesterday morning about 11 o'clock. The first witness introduced was Deputy Sheriff Thacker. He stated that ---- ---- the battle. He stated that he could not tell who fired the first shot, and that it seemed like a continuous volley, other shots following so quickly after the first. He had asked Bob Philpot to fill a bond, and George Philpot was getting ready to sign it when the firing began. This bond was presented. It had been pierced by a bullet.

The next witness was William Palmer, who saw the battle. He stated that the Philpots and he were in the road under the shade of a Beech tree talking; that they had been there only a short while, till Thacker came up and asked Bob Philpot to fill a bond. He stated that also at the time the Griffin boys and Aaron Morris came up; that the first thing to call one's attention to the trouble was George Philpot asking Morris not to shoot him. He stated further that Morris fired the first shot, and others followed in rapid succession

till the battle ended.

Next J.B. Asher was introduced, and he was followed by John Treadway. Their testimony, however, was of no importance. They were followed by Mrs. Chris Bennett, who lives near the place of the fighting. She stated that she could hear the shots and see the smoke, but her testimony was of no importance.

The father of Ed Fisher was introduced by Attorney Kash, and he accused Green Griffin, who is now in jail in Manchester, of murdering his son, but Griffin's physician stated that Griffin could not be brought into court, he being shot four times. August 4 was then fixed as the day of his examining trial.

The Philpots came to town early yesterday morning about forty strong. They were in good spirits and

none of them drinking. They declared that there would be no trouble unless the Griffins began it. The Howards and some of the relatives of the Bakers were chatting pleas-

antly with the Philpots during the day. Some of the Philpots called on State Inspector Lester and told him that the late trouble had no connection whatever with the Whites or Bakers. It is believed now that there is no need of troops at that place.

### *Peace bond pierced by bullet as it is being signed*

### FEUDISTS MAKE PEACE

#### *A Compromise Between the Factions May be Effected at the Barbourville Trial.*

Special Dispatch to Commercial Tribune  
BARBOURVILLE, Ky., July 26.—Both factions of the White-Howard-Baker feud are gathering for the Baker trial, to come off tomorrow. John E. White, Daugh White and James F. Marcum, three members of the White faction, are among the arrivals. It is rumored that a peaceful settlement will be made and that Jim and Wiley Baker will not be prosecuted. The walking arsenals that the Whites are reported to carry with them are missing.

# Vendetta Up To Date

## Kentucky Mountaineers Using Long Distance Rifles and Smokeless Powder

### **BUSHWACKING A FINE ART**

*A Desperate Mountain War Involving Half a Dozen Families*

*Special Dispatch to Commercial Tribune*

Manchester, Ky., July 26.—“Let them fight it out” is the advice that comes up from all over the State when men high in official life are asked what ought the Governor do in regard to the Clay County feuds. “What does this advice, so lightly given, mean?” is the question the thinking people of law-abiding states will ask. It means a war of extermination; it means bloodshed by wholesale and retail; it means the destruction of values in lands and other properties; it means a reign of terror continued for an indefinite period, and it means a disgrace to a State which has already had its share of feudal wars and cold-blooded murders. Leaders of factions may cry peace, but at the same time they are buying new consignments of the most approved patterns of firearms and the most modern ammunition. Smokeless powder cartridges are as numerous in Clay County today as were black powder cartridges a year ago. The old-fashioned 44 and 45-caliber rifle is giving place to the 30 and 32 with a range of a mile. With these modern arms and smokeless powder the enemies of the fighting clans can be picked off at a safe distance, and as no smoke will follow the explosion of a cartridge, the art of bushwacking will be rendered safer than ever. Already, daytime travel has been nearly abandoned, save by the mail carrier or some intrepid drummer who comes into the mountains fastnesses to sell goods. No man connected with either of the factions now at war will travel well-beaten roads in the daytime, and most of them do not go abroad until night has settled down over the mountains, so the sharpshooters can not see them at a distance.

More fine firearms are now owned in Clay County than in any county in the State, and there are more men here who can use them accurately than can be found in a similar territory in the world. Clay County men are conceded to be the best marksmen in the State, and they have practiced so continuously during the

past year that they are adepts with the Winchester rifle or the 45-caliber Colt’s revolver. This was evidenced last week between the Philpots and Griffins, for, of the nine men engaged in the battle, only one escaped injury, and four were killed. With such desperate fighters, armed as well and supplied with an abundance of the best ammunition, it is plain that, should the clans be allowed to “fight it out,” the county of Clay would lose many of its prominent citizens. “Prominent citizens” is used advisedly, for the leaders of the factions are the most prominent men in the county.

The Whites belong to one of the oldest and most prominent families in the State, and one of their ancestors was John White, Speaker of the National House of Representatives. In recent years one of the immediate family of those now engaged in the feud, Hon. John D. White, was a member of Congress from this district, the Eleventh. The Whites have been office-holders in this county ever since it was formed, in the early part of the century, and at present they hold nearly all the county offices. Bev White, the Sheriff, succeeded his brother, Will White, who was killed by Tom Baker last year. He is a young man, and was his brother’s deputy. Daugh White, a cousin, is Circuit Court Clerk, and other members of the family hold various other offices. The Whites have always been a power in local and State politics, and Bev White was a delegate to the late State convention at Lexington. They are law-abiding citizens under ordinary circumstances, but when one of their close kin is killed, as was Will White by Tom Baker, it arouses in the desire for revenge. It is so difficult to convict a murderer by law in Clay County, especially if he has influential friends, that the party aggrieved feels there is no way to right a wrong save by taking the law into his own hands. And thus the feuds begin.

The Howard family form another influential family of the office-holding class. James Howard, now under indictment for killing old man George Baker, is County Assessor of Clay, and his father, A. Ballard Howard, who was so badly shot by the Bakers from ambush last year, was Sheriff of the county several years ago. The Howards have always stood high in

the estimation of the community, and are considered among the best citizens.

The Bakers, against whom the Whites and Howards have a mortal hatred, are also leading citizens. Old man George Baker was for many years County Attorney of Clay, and his sons have held positions of trust and honor. Allen Baker, one of his sons, is a practicing attorney at the Manchester bar, or was until hostilities broke out last summer. Tom Baker was prominent in Masonic and business circles.

The Philpots, who have just taken up the fight against friends of the Whites, belong to one of the largest families in Eastern Kentucky. Many of its members own large tracts of land and they are a power in politics. Granville Philpot has represented the county in the Legislature and other members of the family have held county offices. It is true they have been dominated to a great extent by the Whites, although both are Republicans. There has been hard feelings between the families for several years between the "ins" and the "outs." But as the Philpots number several hundred voters it can be seen they represent a great \_\_\_\_\_ to the Whites.

Aaron Morris, who was killed by the Philpots in the battle and \_\_\_\_\_ called Granville Philpot's son, Jim, two years ago, after Jim had killed William Bundy, a relative of Morris, the Whites went on the Bond of Morris and otherwise aided him. Of course this intensified the bad feeling between the families, and now that Dave Chadwell, one of Bev White's deputies, has espoused the cause of the Griffins, the Philpots very naturally, think the Whites are backing their enemies and this fact may precipitate trouble between the Whites and the Philpots. The Whites seem to think the Philpots are taking sides with the Bakers, and the scandal mongers are busy carrying tales between the members of these two powerful families.

### **It Needs Only a Spark.**

With the unstable condition of affairs that at present time prevails. It needs but a spark to set off the magazine of bad feeling which exists between the Whites and the Philpots, and should the war begin between them, there is not enough force in the State, either civil or military, to stop it until the leading spirits, at least, are dead. The Philpots have already armed

and equipped sixty men with a Winchester rifle and a 45 Colt's revolver each. These men are mounted, and, if necessary can fight from horseback. The Whites and Howards number fully fifty men, armed equally as well as the Philpots, and the Griffins and Chadwells can muster twenty-five or thirty men. Thus the two clans would be on fairly equal footing, with the exception that the Philpots can muster many more men if they deem it necessary. They are also considered the best fighters, although the Whites and Howards are experts with the rifle and pistol. If it becomes necessary, the Howards can draw on their numerous relatives in Harlan County for reinforcements. The Harlan County Howards prosecuted a successful war against the Turners, and came near exterminating them. If the Bakers lend assistance to the Philpots, which they are certain to do if the Whites and Howards combine with the Chadwells and Griffins, they will get much aid from the Bakers and Bowlings of Jackson County, and from Perry, Magoffin and Breathitt Counties.

In fact, the conditions are ripe for one of the biggest and most desperate mountain wars in the history of such outbreaks, and those who know the men who are arrayed against each other say that scores of lives will be sacrificed if hostilities begin along the lines indicated.

It was on account of this serious aspect the troubles in Clay have assumed that Governor Bradley sent his confidential agent, State Inspector Lester, here last Saturday to investigate the conditions and report. Inspector Leslie is well acquainted with the mountain character, and as he is a cool and careful official, it is likely that he will get at the bottom of the trouble and will find some remedy whereby the threatened outbreak will be averted. The seriousness of the situation has greatly disturbed the Governor, and he is using every effort to arrive at a proper conclusion regarding the right step to take to prevent further bloodshed. Prominent men all over the State have been asked their opinions, and the majority of them say:

"Let the feudists fight it out."

The sentiment is not pleasing to the Chief Executive, for, he says, he is sworn to execute the law, and, as the law is against murder in every form, he can not remain passive when men are being shot down and when armed bands are marching over the country creating terror among peaceably disposed citizens.

# Governor tries to prevent wholesale slaughter in Clay Co.

## Governor Bradley Anxious

The Governor has held many conferences with the best Judges and expounders of the law, and he has tried to find out as many of the details of the trouble here as he can, but he was not satisfied, and will not be, until Inspector makes his report. The Governor is also reading up on other feuds which have disgraced Kentucky. He is now reading the reports of the Investing Committee of the Legislature which looked into the Tolliver-Martin feud in 1888, and he believes he will find a way to stop hostilities here by taking advantage of the experience of his predecessors, although it may here be stated that no first-class mountain feud in Kentucky was ever stopped by the law. They have all been fought out to a finish, or until the remaining members of the weaker faction left the country. It is on this account that so many prominent men from other sections of the State say it is best to let the factionists fight it out.

## A HIRED ASSASSIN

Claims Tom Baker Killed By \_\_\_\_\_ From Another County Governor's Agent Reports

“No Man Can Kill a Philpot and Live Long”—  
Sheriff *White's Queer Methods*  
*Special Dispatch to Commercial Tribune*

LONDON, Ky., July 26.—Jailer Theodore Cundiff and John Byerly of Manchester, came in today and reported an unusual incident for Clay County, that of a man shooting himself. He is Dave Stewart, a farmer at White's Branch precinct. He was cleaning his Winchester at the time, and the shooting was accidental. Efforts have been made to circulate the story that Stewart was ambushed, but this is emphatically denied by people from Manchester.

Judge Lester has prepared his report to the Governor, and will favor neither an extra session of the Legislature nor a special term of the Clay County Court. Judge Lester will report verbally some of the inside workings in Clay County, which will not be to the credit of the county and district court officials. The inspector found that Sheriff Bev White had thirty deputies on record. According to Baker sympathizers, the Sheriff has thirty or forty more recognized as

deputies for the purpose of intimidating. The Sheriff denied this.

## WERE VERY TIMID

It was learned by Judge Lester that Circuit Judge Henry Eversole and his Commonwealth Attorney are very timid and the troops were called only through their timidity.

The Bakers say that the juries are intimidated and would not indict the murderer of John Baker last year, although there were witnesses to the murder, and the soldiers were present to protect the juries.

Judge Lester finds it to be the opinion in Manchester that Baker was murdered by a hired assassin taken there from Perry County, but the Bakers – Allen and Wiley – declare they can lay their hands on the man and not go outside those connected with the feud.

Judge Lester, in reporting on the Philpot-Griffin trouble, will quote a prominent Clay County citizen who says: “No man can kill a Philpot and live long after getting clear of it, but otherwise they are peaceable people and will not encourage further trouble.”

It is said that the younger Whites will retire from office at the close of the term and support the Philpots.

## THE FIGHTING IS OVER

The Griffins have sacrificed their farms and are leaving the country.

*Special Dispatch to Commercial Tribune.*

Barboursville, Ky., July 25.—State Inspector Lester arrived here this evening from Manchester. After talking with both factions of the feud, he says no further trouble may be expected, and he will state in his report that there will be no need of troops.

The Whites and Howards claim the fighting is all over. The Philpots also say there will be no further trouble.

On his way to London Mr. Lester met several families of Griffins moving out of the country. They have sold their farms at a low price in order to avoid further trouble. Some of the Whites will arrive tomorrow to attend the Baker trial.

**New Members Since the Spring 2012 Issue**

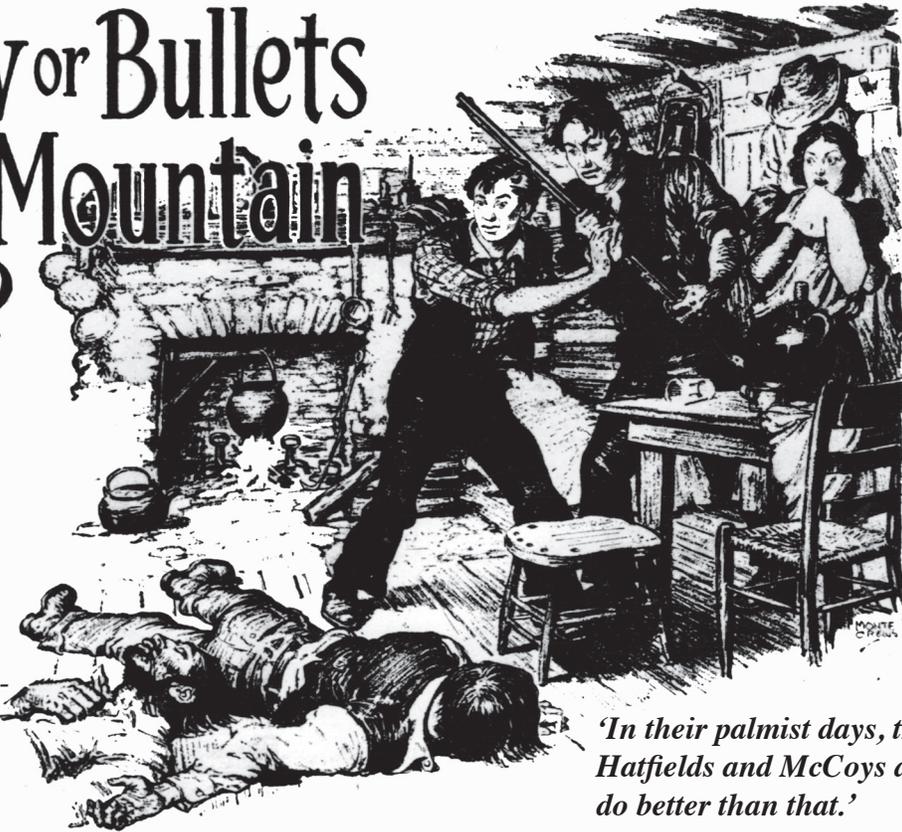
Charlie Smith, Jr. #4297 10894 S. Tank Pond Rd. Lexington, IN 49178	Vicki Johnson #4305 149 Edgewood Dr. Powell, TN 37849	Millard F. Roberts II #4312 3505 SE 176th Ave. Vancouver, WA 98683
Maxine Jones #4299 PO Box 20788 Louisville, KY	Freida Blair #4306 2821 Carthage Rd. California, KY 41007	Sandra Kratzer #4313 8410 N. 180th Dr. Waddell, AZ 85355
Arvil Smith #4300 3046 E. Hwy. 552 Lily, KY 40740	Sue Stanton #4307 3717 Stagecoach Dr. Ames, IA 50010	Dallas Jackson #4314 8989 Crosby Lake Rd. Clarkston, MI 48346
Paul D. Carmack #4301 2877 US Rt. 40 Tipp City, OH 45371	Rodney & Margy Miller 2308 Hwy. 80 Manchester, KY 40962	Loretta Smith #4315 2671 Crosspark Dr. Murfreesboro, TN 37129
Janette Burke #4302 2421 Giant Oaks Dr. Pittsburgh, PA 15241	Mary Burns Furr #4309 46436 McKenzie Hwy. Vida, OR 97488	JoAnne Stamatakos #4316 3987 Park Circle So. Hilliard, OH 43026
James Cornett #4303 1080 Fairgown Rd. Lebanon, KY 40033	Harley Bowling #4310 6355 Crossings Dr. Burlington, KY 41005	Carol Brown #4317 General Delivery Hima, KY 40951
Neville Smith #4304 146 Hwy. 638 Loop Manchester, KY 40962	Charles M. Wilson #4311 222 Rivendell Dr. Pelzer, SC29669	<b>Thanks!</b>

**Donations**

Jack Hornsby \$50.00 Grove City, OH	Bill Seal \$200.00 Manchester, KY	Robert S. Burchell \$ 32.00 Jersey Shore, PA
Sherry Baker Frazier \$100.00 Gallatin, TN	Donald Metzger \$ 25.00 Cocoa, FL	Linda Sibley \$ 50.00 Midlothian, TX
Richard Maupin \$ 7.00 Port St. Joe, FL	Eddie & Ruby White \$ 40.00 London, K	James Phillips \$200.00 Manchester, KY
Linda VanHee \$ 12.00 Marlton, NJ	LJ Smothers \$ 50.00 Tellico Plains, TN	Mark Haynes \$ 7.00 Ganado, AZ
David L. Walker \$ 32.00 Dunn Loring, VA	Jeanette Hensley \$ 32.00 Gray, KY	Harold Goins \$ 20.00 Fairfield, OH
Guylyn J. Bowling \$ 32.00 Chillicothe, OH	Georgia Reichenbach \$ 12.00 Franklin, OH	<b>Thanks!</b>

# Will Law or Bullets End the Mountain Feud?

*This article, about one of the bloodier Clay County feuds, complete with illustrations, appeared in The American Weekly Magazine, April 30, 1944*



*'In their palmist days, the Hatfields and McCoys didn't do better than that.'*

"The petition and supporting affidavits name some 12 families who have been engaged in a violent feud in Clay County during the preceding seven or eight years in which more than 50 persons have been killed, more than 25 barns have been burned feloniously, and a number of inhabited dwellings shot into."

In the foregoing dry phraseology, the august court of appeals in Kentucky recently accorded rare and startling legal recognition to one of the "shootinest" feuds in the long and bloody history of such Kentucky vendettas.

At the same time, the appellate judges called attention to the fact that the feuding families weren't fighting it out entirely with squirrel rifles these days. They're battling in court, too.

Good feudists down Kentucky and Tennessee way used to spurn the law as a device of weak-spined townsfolk, too lily-livered to defend their rights by the natural means of powder and bullet. In the current Clay County vendetta, however, it appears the judge's

gavel banged almost as often as the feudists shooting irons.

It might be argued from this that Kentucky feudists are losing the fine old spirit that used to send them charging into battle over any cause ranging all the way from an errant wife to a purloined pig.

But any such rash conclusion becomes obviously untenable in the light of the casualty figured duly certified by the Appellate Court.

There's nothing wishy-washy about a feud in which, as the court says, "more than 50 persons have been killed" over a period of seven or eight years. Not to mention the barns burned and the houses shot into. In their palmist days, the Hatfields and McCoys didn't do better than that.

The decision listing the casualties was handed down by the Appellate Court, sitting in the State Capitol at Frankfort, as part of an opinion reversing the lower court conviction of Ernest Benge, who was charged with burning the barn of Dense Philpot, a fel-

low feudist.

But the barn-burning was only a minor incident in the stormy history of this deadly modern-day Kentucky vendetta.

The region where the feud has raged is a mountainous county in the southeastern section of the state, adjoining the long-famous "Bloody Breathitt" County.

The chief feuding families, as listed in court, have been, on one side, the Greens, Philpots, Martins, Buttreys, Thackers, Hammonds, and Bundys; and on the other side the Benges, Cupps, Fraziers, Brittains, Hamptons and Houses.

Of course, this has not excluded relatives and friends of the main participants. Kentucky feuds are very social affairs and anybody who is interested can always take a hand – provided he is prepared to suffer the consequences..

There's rarely any authentic record of how feuds start in Kentucky, and this one is no exception. There is usually a clash of temper and a few hot words with a liberal sprinkling of that potent elixir sometimes referred to as mountain dew, but better known locally as corn. Sometimes the dead can be counted on the spot. Sometimes there is a short delay.

George Cupp had been in one of those arguments. On Saturday afternoon, April 11, 1931, he was ambling slowly on his mule along a trail beside Little Goose Creek, near Portersburg, a little community about eight miles from Manchester, the county seat of Clay County. Spring was coming to the Kentucky foothills, and George was communing genially with nature.

From a laurel thicket beside the trail the black snout of a rifle poked its way cautiously between the leaves. It rested steadily for a moment and then pinged sharply. George Cupp toppled to the fresh green grass with a small hole in his forehead, almost directly between the eyes. His mule hesitated, turned and then started back up the trail. There was a slight rustle in the laurel thicket – and that was all.

The Cupps were favorite targets for awhile. Howard Cupp was shot and killed from ambush early one evening as he was nearing his home. James Cupp

went hunting and never came back. They found his body beside his rifle, which was cocked and ready for action.

One by one the families in the neighborhood were drawn into the lethal dispute and private graveyards began to fill up rapidly. Not even the judiciary was immune. Police Judge Pitt Stivers of Manchester, hadn't taken sides openly, but one of these spontaneous shooting matches broke out suddenly one afternoon in the county seat and when it was over the judge was among the fatalities.

The Benges were among the first of the clans to join in the saturnalia of hate. Newt Benge, a brother of Ernest, had been a proud father only a couple of weeks when, on the last Sunday afternoon in May, 1934, he started on a tour of the district to spread the glad tidings. He got as far as Byron, on Little Goose Creek. Someone was waiting for him there. One of his kinsmen found his body.

Two years later, to the day, another Benge brother, Charlie, was ambushed on his way to Manchester. He fell within rifle shot of the spot where Newt had passed in his checks.

Although four of his barns have been burned down, Bill Benge, the patriarch of the family, has managed to keep his skin whole. But he had a narrow escape one afternoon. Sev-

eral friends had dropped in for a nip at the bottle and were sitting in the Benge living room. Two sounds interrupted the revelry. One was the crack of a rifle on a the nearby mountainside. The other was the shattering of glass in a window pane.

There was a third sound too – the thud of the body of Alex Hampton as it fell to the floor. He had been sitting next to hospitable Bill Benge.

That untoward incident brought the Hamptons into the hostilities. The Fraziers became allies of the Benges when Roy Frazier was waylaid and killed, and the Brittains were unofficially enrolled after a bullet got Ralph Brittain while he was getting water from a spring on March 28, 1938.

The death toll mounted steadily that year. One by one, at their homes, in their cornfields, on trails and roads, representatives of both factions unwillingly



and unexpectedly added their names to the growing list.

On the early evening of August 25, 1938, Dan Martin and Dan Cupp were riding down a steep mountain trail near Dripping Springs. Both were on mules. They were friends, even though their families were on opposite sides of the county war.

It was a shotgun that time. Perhaps the light was too dim for certain aim with a rifle. The charge struck Martin full in the chest and killed him instantly. A few of the buckshot sprayed Cupp. He turned his mule and dashed back up the trail.

That same night the feud guns blazed again. Bill Philpot thought he was safe as he stumbled along the trail in the darkness on his way home from a visit to relatives. Two shadowy figures rose before him. He cursed and pulled his gun to position. But he was too slow. Before he could press the trigger a bullet had pierced his brain.

Nerves were taut and trigger fingers were still twitching the Saturday afternoon almost a year later that Ernest Benge dropped in at the home of his brother-in-law, Monroe Greer, for a pot of corn. It was July 1, 1939. Monroe stepped out to the yard, leaving his wife, his brother, Steve, and the guest in the cabin's main room. Three visitors arrived – Stanley Young, Woodrow Feltner and Dan Cupp. They had hardly stepped into the room before the shooting started. When it was over, Young and Feltner were dead.

Telling the story at the next session of the Grand Jury, Ernest said that "someone" in the house fired the fatal shots, adding that "someone" in the yard was firing, too. Steve was indicted on two murder counts. Ernest went to Indianapolis and got a job in a war plant. While he was gone there was an election. Judge W. E. Begley and Commonwealth Attorney Sylvester Little were replaced, respectively, by Franklin P. Stivers, a brother of the slain Police Judge and a "blood cousin of recognizable degree" of the Greers, and Willie Rice, a brother-in-law of Steve Greer.

As soon as the new administration took office, T.T. Burchell, a brother-in-law of Judge Stivers, moved in court to quash the indictment against Steve Greer. It was quashed. Then a Grand Jury was convened and, after hearing the testimony of the two Greer brothers, indicted Ernest for the murders of which Steve had just been exonerated.

The jury listened also to Dense Philpot, father of

the slain Bill. He recalled that Ernest Benge and Ralph Brittain had stopped in for supper at the Philpot home on the evening of February 27, 1938. He said they appeared to have been drinking. Ernest was riding a gray horse; Ralph was astride a gray mule.

As the guests departed, Dense said he heard Ernest remark to Ralph: "We'll go over, and by God, we'll burn that other building of the Philpots'."

This hardly seemed like an appropriate adieu, and the Philpot family ignored it. But a little later, after dark, Dense saw a glare from the direction of an unoccupied house he owned about four miles away. He galloped off towards Manchester to get some bloodhounds, he said, but changed his mind when he was halfway there and turned back to the fire. When he arrived, he said, he found an old saddle blanket near the ruins with several gray hairs sticking to it.

Ernest insisted that he had spent that Sunday afternoon at his father's home and relatives corroborated his story, but the jury added an arson indictment to the two murder indictments.

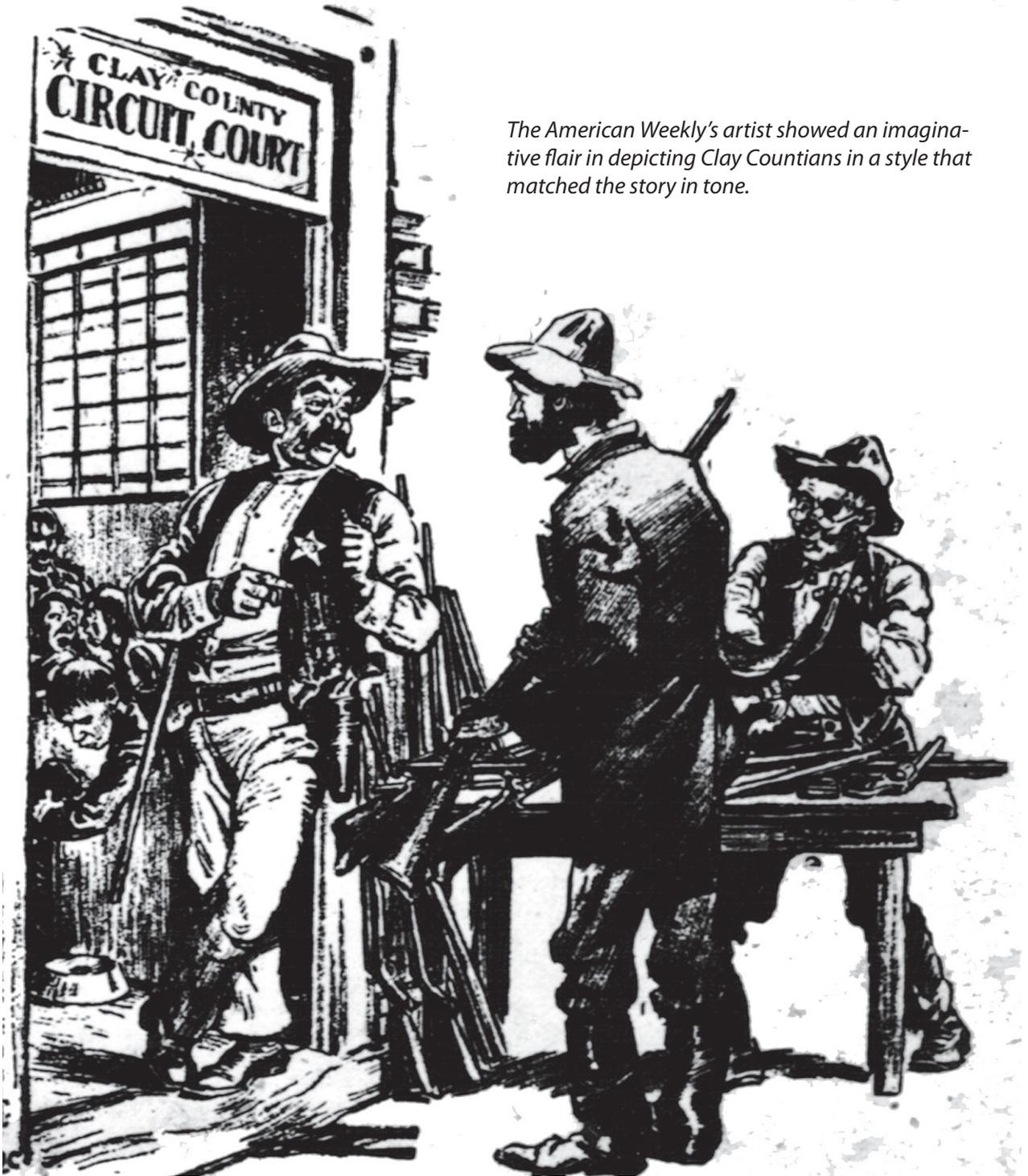
Ernest was acquitted of the two murders, but convicted on the arson charge and sentenced to two years in prison. His attorney appealed to the Kentucky Court of Appeals, contending that Judge Stivers should have granted a change of venue.

The case dragged on for a year, and the guns remained silent. The higher court first upheld the verdict, then on a second appeal, it held another hearing and reversed itself. Ernest is to have a new trial in another part of the state. But the question still remains whether law or guns will end Clay County's intestine warfare.

Probably the only beneficiary of the entire imbroglio, in either its normal or legal aspects, has been Stanley Benge, youngest member of the tribe. Stanley joined the Navy and was attached to a submarine. When his craft docked in San Francisco last May, he was picked up by the FBI and extradited to Kentucky.

The charge against Stanley was murder. He was accused of killing Oakley Cecil, an Army deserter from adjoining Owsley County. He was held in the Clay County jail for six months and then released on \$10,000, but ordered not to leave the jurisdiction of the court.

The Navy, deprived of the services of a first-class sailor, fretted and fumed. The Benge attorney con-



*The American Weekly's artist showed an imaginative flair in depicting Clay Countians in a style that matched the story in tone.*

tended that the case was a frame-up. Stanley himself grew impatient after a time and demanded that he be tried at once. But nothing happened.

And then, the other day, Stanley got word that the submarine to which he had been attached had been sunk by the Japanese. A feud, for once, had saved a

life.

The Bengue-Greer dispute may have ended in an appeal to law and order, but it was a legal controversy that started the Hatfield-McCoy feud, which is still referred to as the bloodiest and most vicious of them all.



Newt Bengel, Ambushed and Slain Shortly After the Birth of His Infant Son. George Cupp (Adjoining Picture), One of the First Feud Fatalities.



**With 50 Dead of Lead Poisoning, the Shootin' in Kentucky's Clay County Seems Over for a Spell, While the Combatants Are Sniping With Subpoenas—But It's Anybody's Guess Whether the Last Shot Has Been Fired**



The Sudden Death of Ralph Brittain (Above) Followed a House-Burning Party. Charlie Bengel (Adjoining Picture), Ambushed on Mountain Trail.

*An illustration from the article that apparently sought to embue local doings in a mobster style.*

One day in 1878 Floyd Hatfield was passing the Kentucky homestead of Randall McCoy and noticed a bunch of razorback hogs penned in the yard. Closer inspection convinced him that they were his own hogs, which, in accordance with neighboring custom, he had allowed to roam at large.

McCoy insisted 'twaren't so. Infuriated, Floyd brought charges before the Raccoon Hollow Justice of the Peace, who happened to be a Hatfield. The Judge awarded the pigs to Floyd, and assigned the costs to the now embittered McCoy.

Not long after that Randall McCoy came upon a party of Hatfield supporters fishing in the Tug River. He accused one of them, Bill Slayton, of perjuring himself at the trial. In the fight that followed, McCoy was knocked out with a rock.

Friction increased during the following weeks, but war was not declared openly until one afternoon when Slayton met Sam and Parish McCoy. Taunted by the pair, he opened fire. Parish was wounded in the hip, but Slayton was slain by Sam.

From then on any Hatfield was fair game to a McCoy. One of the bitterest battles took place in 1882 when both families attended a pre-election party. In no time at all, members of the rival tribes were in a free-for-all in which young Randy McCoy, in his teens, plunged a knife into Deacon Ellison Hatfield, the Justice of the Peace who had decided the hog issue.

The Hatfields trussed up three McCoy's, including little Randy, and took them across the West Virginia border to await the outcome of the Deacon's wounds. There were 27 wounds, and the Deacon survived less than a week. Old Devil Anse Hatfield, patriarch of the family, thereupon ordered the McCoy trio shot. His orders were carried out with enthusiasm.

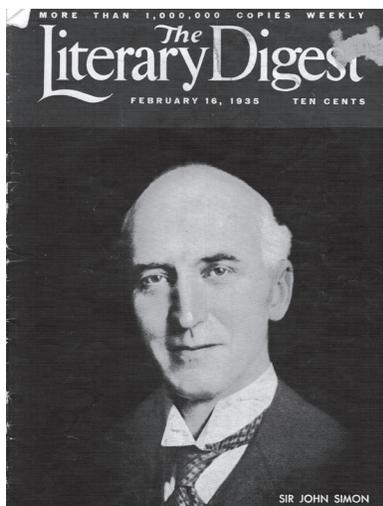
On New Year's night, 1888, a party of Hatfields trapped Randall McCoy, his wife, his son, Calvin, and three daughters, in their home. One of the girls appeared and insisted the men were away. The Hatfields shot her and set fire to the cabin.

Calvin dashed for the woods but was dropped by a bullet. Old Randall came out shooting. He killed two Hatfields and got away.

A Pike County deputy sheriff and a posse brought back ten Hatfields. Two were executed and four sent to prison for life.

In 1889, when a McCoy and Hatfield shot it out on the rear platform of a train, public indignation became so strong that the families moved to different sections of the mountain country.

It took the current war to bring peace to the clans. Forty Hatfield and McCoy descendants are marines. The Benges and Greers would find it hard to believe a scene on the rifle range at Parris Island where a Hatfield and a McCoy met daily to improve their marksmanship – on a paper target.



LITERARY DIGEST Feb., 1935

## Low Blow

*In 1935 a National Magazine reported that Clay County was declared "unfit for self government"*

*From the Literary Digest*

Twenty-six stolen automobiles, mud-spattered and contrite, escorted by State troops moved out of Clay County, Knetucky last week. It was the end of Clay County's first venture in crime in the modern manner.

Two years ago the county was declared to be unfit for self-government by a special examiner appointed by the Governor. It was proposed that the county be split up and absorbed by its neighbors. Recently a Department of Justice investigator reported the county as "the worst criminal stronghold in the United states." In the fall of 1932 Commonwealth's Attorney Frank Baker was mounting the steps of the county courthouse in Manchester to conduct the State's case against seven men indicted for murder. Someone leaned out the courthouse window and fired, Attorney Baker was killed. Four men were indicted. They were never tried.

1935: Troops and agents brought in to bust up stolen car ring



The indictments themselves are now missing.

But the abandoned violence of blood feuds has largely faded from Kentucky's foot-hills. Recently it became rumored that Clay County was a good place to register stolen cars. State officials said the county officials would not cooperate, and 175 State troops were moved in. For four days the wintry mud of the foot-hills was churned by Army trucks and an occasional mule towing the loot into Manchester. Cars that were nearly new had brought anywhere from a few hundred dollars to, in one case, two milk cows, ten bushels of potatoes and two sides of pork.

Local reports indicate that some old blood feuds may grow out of the four-day military occupation.

The Louisville Herald Post: "Day by day developments, however, on top of the county's recent history, fully justify the action of Gov. Ruby Lafoon and Adj. Gen. Henry H. Denhardt."

A 1932 newspaper article attempts to paint a big picture of the Clay County feuds and their history. Before television, it no doubt made for an entertaining evening for its readers.

## 'How Modern Gangster Tactics Entered Kentucky's Bloodiest Feud County'

*'First Full Details of the 1932 Gang Killings Which Local Authorities Tried to Link Up With a Famous American Vendetta'*

*Editor's note: The clipping from which this story and illustrations comes does not contain the name of the newspaper.*

Old Judge P.C. Stivers, of Clay County, was walking slowly along a road in Manchester, Kentucky.

He had recently been a witness in the hearing concerned with the death of an aged Negro, Alf Neal. Neal had been slain from ambush. Several arrests had been made in connection with the killing, but no indictments or convictions had been secured.

The Judge was leaving his home in leisurely fashion. Suddenly a car came racing up behind him. Then, half turning, Stivers noticed that the windows of the vehicle had been painted with soap and that the occupants' faces were blacked.

Before he could escape Judge Stivers went down mortally wounded under a barrage of shots. The car sped away to be found later near Richmond, Kentucky. Nearby police picked up a young man, Frank McDaniels. Inside the automobile were found two shotguns and a high-powered rifle.

McDaniels was arrested and charged with the crime. He was convicted, but at the time of this writing had appealed.

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"Wal, it certainly ain't like the old days," drawled an old settler. "These here gang tactics ain't a bit like the bygone feud in Manchester." And with those words he evoked vivid memories of long ago, when a spectacular vendetta raged on the "dark and bloody ground."

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In the early 1850's—and the story is still fresh in the minds of Clay County folk who gather to swap tales around winter fires—there came to Manchester a young country doctor named Abner Baker. Manchester had lately grown and waxed prosperous through the exploitation of the salt wells. Dr. Baker quickly won a place in the hearts of the rough mountaineers. Gaining in stature as a physician, handsome young Abner soon met a beautiful girl who was a descendant of General Hugh White of Virginia. They fell in love and after a romantic courtship were married. They took up residence with Dr. Baker's sister and her husband, whose name was Bates.

Behind Dr. Baker's love, deep as it was, loomed the green shadow of jealousy. Nurturing a secret grievance, he became moody, morose.

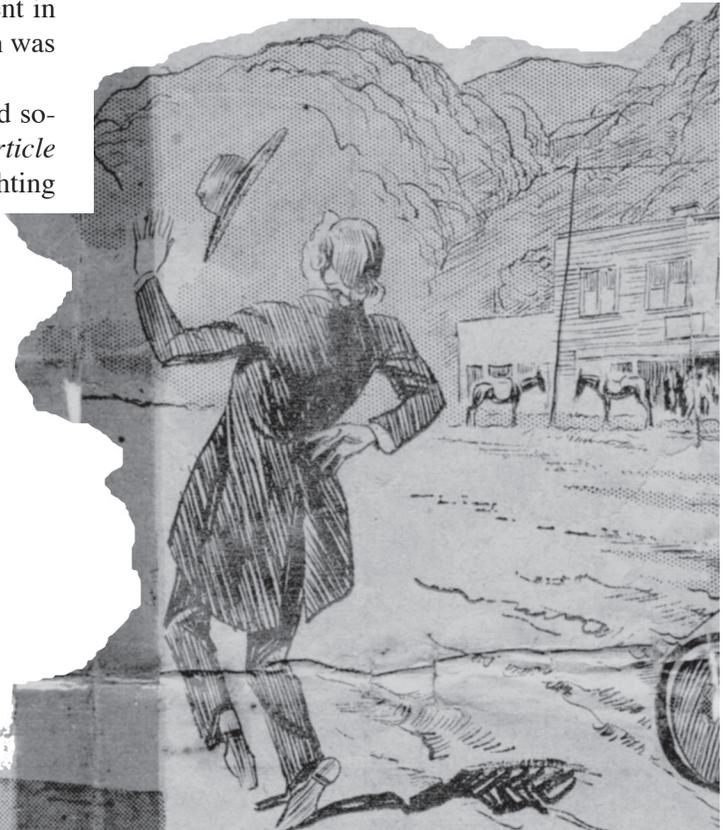
One day he openly accused his beautiful young wife of a clandestine relationship with Bates, and in the quarrel which followed, shot Bates, killing him instantly.

A jury acquitted Dr. Baker in an almost immediate trial, whereupon the disillusioned practitioner packed up his belongings and left for Cuba.

There was talk about a "necktie party." Curiously enough the threats against Dr. Baker's life were made not by surviving relatives of the slain man, but by members of the White family, relatives of the doctor's wife. They had the grievance for their kinswoman had been "dishonored."

Dr. Baker returned from Cuba to face a second trial for murder. By this time the public sentiment in Clay County had shifted and the young physician was convicted and hanged.

The Howards, a family strong politically and socially in the county had. . . [a portion of the article is missing here]. . . ing the trial, the Bakers fighting



practically alone. People said even then that “there would be shootin’.” For two decades, however, the bad blood between the families wa kept beneath the surface.

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Hostilities between the Baker and Howard families broke into the open in 1898, after most of the original principals were dead.

Bal Howard had been cutting timber and “snaking it down the mountain, assisted by Tom Baker, who was reputed to be the best shot in the county. When the logs were rafted, preparatory to going down the river to market, they were attacked by one of Bal’s creditors and bought in by Tom Baker at public auction. Bal was furious and there was a heated quarrel between the two families, who had gathered at the river bank to witness the sale.

The Bakers started home first, and when the Howards followed a short time later they were fired upon “from the bresh.” Bal’s son was killed and Bal and a work-hand were wounded. One of the Howards heard of his brother’s death. Taking a gun from its rack, he set out, declaring:

“I’m a-goin’ kill the first \_\_\_\_\_ Baker I set my eyes on!”  
At the Laurel Creek Post Office he met Tom Baker’s father.

He compelled the old man to fall upon his knees and, firing with careful aim to a vital spot, watched the bewildered old fellow die in agony.

Howard was tried for murder and convicted, but he obtained a new trial and was out on bond in time to become involved in the famous Goebel case. Senator Goebel, who was contesting the gubernatorial election, was shot and killed in front of the General Assembly Building at Frankfort by an assassin hidden in an office nearby. It was alleged that, in return for killing Goebel, Howard was promised a pardon for his earlier murder. He was tried three times and finally given a life sentence, only to be released later.

Meanwhile, the feud raged in Clay County with ever increasing bitterness.

The judge, clerk, jailer and sheriff of the county were members of the White clan, and when Tom Baker killed the sheriff's brother he escaped and remained in hiding in the mountains for several weeks. He finally surrendered to state troops, sent into the mountains by Governor Bradley. This resulted in a life sentence in Knox County, but his attorneys appealed the case and the verdict was reversed by the Supreme Court. Tom was released on bail and a new trial was set for June, 1899.

Then occurred one of the most amazing murders of the whole feud. Baker stood one day in front of a guard tent in Manchester, surrounded by members of the State militia. Each guard had a Gatling gun. Baker was asked to pose for a photographer.

A few minutes after the picture had been snapped, a shot rang out and Baker fell dead. The bullet had been fired from an upstairs window of a vacant house a hundred yards away.

Tom Baker's assassin was never identified. The finger of suspicion pointed—but no one was ever sure. The man to whom the finger of suspicion pointed was a young negro man named Alf Neal, whose crinkly, black hair was to turn a snowy gray before he was shot down thirty-three years later on almost the same spot.

Albert Garrard, allied with the Baker clan, was then fired upon by persons unknown. He was slightly wounded and he left Manchester for Pineville with

two guards who were shot from ambush, and killed on the way.

The Griffins, belonging to the White-Howard faction, met Big Jim Philpot and his cousin on the road and opened fire. Jim was a mountaineer almost seven feet tall and after his cousin had been killed and he himself severely wounded he crawled behind a log for protection. After killing his four enemies, he fainted beside the dead men. Big Jim Philpot was attached to the Baker faction.



*Big John Philpot and his cousin*

On July 17, 1899, four of the Philpots were attacked by four Morris of the Howard faction. In the ensuing battle, three were killed, three mortally wounded and the other two badly injured. No arrests were made.

Finally, in 1901, after a desperate battle in front of the Manchester courthouse, the two clans signed a truce. But after the truce had been signed Wiley and Gardner Baker, with their respec-

tive families were almost the only Bakers to remain in Manchester.

Then came the 80-year truce with practically no bloodshed. But in 1932 came a series of killings which the authorities tried to link to the old vendetta.

Just how do feuds start and what is the morbid psychology behind their persistence, often after the original motive has been forgotten with the passage of time?

Let us first examine the origin of the word in order to start with primary clues to the psychology of the vendetta. The noun itself comes from a Middle English term, *fede*, which, in turn, is derived from Old French and High German equivalents.

It is noteworthy that the word, *fiend*, is a noun is a noun allied to *feud*, the former once having signified an enemy.

The vendetta undoubtedly originated as a clan technique of foe-extermination in or near the lower Latin countries.

But vengeance—even for wrongs long buried in the past—dies hard. Often the original motive is trivial, not to say absurd.

Generally, a long sustained and bitter feud is rooted in one factor only: an insult, real or imaginary, to a woman's honor. As you have been told before, the old Kentucky vendetta came into being that way.

# In 1844 the national press had its first big Clay County story: Sex! Violence! Murder!

In 1844 the national press started a habit that wouldn't abate until the late 1930s (or even now some say): a Clay County Kentucky story that involved unusual violence and passion. The trial of Dr. Abner Baker Jr. was covered by the press from New York to New Orleans, and many other venues as well, far beyond the borders of Clay County. The stories of the trial, and the hanging of Dr. Baker, was the story of how the big shot salt makers insinuated themselves into the lives of ordinary Clay Countians to an alarming degree, forcing them to take sides in something that was, really, a sordid little matter for members of the local elite families to sort out amongst themselves. It was way more than your garden-variety "trial of the century" throughout Kentucky and beyond, and because of the nature of the thing—sex and violence and murder, with an emphasis on sex of the most lurid kind—it could only have been the subject of runaway innuendo from the South Fork to Otter Creek, Big Creek to Fogertown, and across the ridges into neighboring counties.

The case involved the county's three biggest salt families—the Bates, Garrards and Whites. Especially the Whites, two of whom were accused by Baker of incest with their niece, 15-year-old Susan White, who had recently been married to Dr. Baker. A third brother, perhaps Clay County's highest-achieving native son, John White, committed suicide shortly before Baker was hanged. Though John White was never implicated in the affair his untimely suicide was just more bad news for the beleaguered White family to have to deal with and for the tongue-wagging public to ponder. The White family was understandably outraged by the assault on their dignity, and made no secret that they were out for blood.

Before it was over almost everyone agreed that

Baker's charges against the Whites had been the fantasies of a lunatic; the only argument was whether he should hang or not. Baker was convicted in any case, not for his incendiary charges, but for shooting and killing his brother-in-law, Daniel Bates, with whom Baker and Susan were living at the time. For good measure, it almost seems, Baker also accused Bates of having sex with his young wife—on the floor of his bedroom, while Baker was kept at bay by an armed slave holding a knife on him. If all this seems over-the-top sensational today, one can only imagine how it played with the local public two decades before the Civil War.

The trial and its aftermath—Baker's hanging—has been credited with being the start of the so-called "Hundred Year War" in Clay County because it pitted the Garrards against the Whites. In doing so it created a dangerous animosity between the competing business giants that fifty years of contentious competition had failed to do. In fact, the Garrards and Whites seem to have got along fine until the hot-headed Dr. Baker came along, the feeling being that the numerous lawsuits and disagreements between them until that point was "only business."

If there was a true enemy of the two powerful families, it was a mutual one: the litigious, scheming, darkly ambitious Daniel Bates, who had been a thorn in the sides of both families for years. Cynical observers of local affairs of the day might have thought that Baker had done the Whites and Garrards a favor by removing Bates from the scene. The Whites and Garrards had actually sided with each other in troubles with Bates in the past. Had it not been for a lunatic being thrown into the mix the history of Clay County might have been very different indeed.

—Adapted from *Heroes & Skallywags*

Headline and story in *Louisville Times*, July 10, 1935:

# 'Toughest In World'

**That Is Title Given to Manchester,  
Kentucky By Writer after Visit**

By Robert J. Casey

Manchester, Ky., July 10—The hill men came down to the town, 250 of them. The gaunt and the fat and the old and the young, with carbines and pistols and Kentucky long rifles, to renew their allegiance to overlords.

They made their display of force (their "line-up," as it has come to be called in these parts). They glowered in silence at one another across the little public square and, having completed this odd ceremonial, they disappeared.

Probably nowhere else since the collapse of the feudal system in France has there been any such spectacle. These knights of the new day, who tomorrow may die, as so many of them have died in the past (in ditches or mountain paths or on their own doorsteps), wore the armor of the fields—overalls and chain-store corduroys.

## STRANGE THINGS DONE.

They spoke a language free from the symbolism and sentiment of the Middle Ages, but otherwise they were little different from the hardy ax wielders who rallied around the gonfalon of feudal lords.

Strange things have been done in Clay County. They ambushed and killed a county prosecutor and sniped at the citizenry who would have picked up his body as it lay for most of the day in the sun and dust. They shot a police magistrate. They wiped out three persons of minor importance in one nervous fortnight and fired on the funeral of one of them. And some say that such activities give a place a bad name.

Manchester, seat of Clay County, is the current winner of the popular vote as the toughest town on earth. It was largely because of resentment against the

half-merited criticism of the world beyond the mountains that the hill men came to the line-up of arms. But casual observers agree that there is something about the technique and finesse of Manchester's murders that have brought them a decision on points.

## STARE AT STRANGERS.

Manchester sleeps in a steep little valley in the Cumberlands—a sprawling collection of dusty brick stores and wooden houses, some of them bright and new, some falling to pieces. On a slope perches the Court House. An unpainted wooden hotel forms a background to the square. Where the highroad peters out beyond it are some garages and sheds and shops. And that is Manchester.

The sun beats fiercely into the valley. The surrounding hills cut off the breeze. Twenty or thirty men sit on automobile running boards or wagon tongues in front of the Webb Hotel, stare with casual curiosity at the visiting stranger and resume the whittling. There is no hostility in the air. This, save for the record that nobody is quite able to forget, might be Arcady on a Sunday afternoon.

The guide who had volunteered to point out the places of interest in Manchester, sniffed at the suggestion that this, after all was merely another country town.

"It looks very pretty," he said. "But two weeks ago a car with a dead man in it came crashing down the hill into that whittlers' convention in front of the Webb Hotel. Nobody knows who shot him—nobody ever knows who shoots anybody or why in Clay County, but people keep right on getting shot."

## OTHER MURDERS.

There had been other murders, of course, before



### Scene of events in the story

*The Town Square during the time of the story. Men thought to be state law enforcement agents are shown in front of Webb Hotel. The sign to the right of the Texaco sign advertises Burger Beer and is attached to "The Roost." When Bobby Baker was shot his car came down the hill from the right, past the The Roost, and came to a stop in front of the Webb Hotel.*



Bobby Baker came back to Manchester to get himself assassinated in his car on Court House hill. His removal came as a spectacular incident in a group of three murders and so merited more attention than might have been its due.

He was warned to stay out of the State and repeatedly notified that something might happen to him if he stayed in Manchester. But Mr. Baker was a home boy. Two of his immediate ancestors lay in the local burying ground, victims of the spirited civic consciousness of their neighbors. He himself had been taken up by the law for discharging firearms within the city limits, and the strange ideals of the hills were in his blood. When he was freed, he wandered for a time in such places as Indiana, and a great nostalgia had come over him. In spite of all that might lie ahead, he turned his eager eyes toward the Cumberland mountains and a few months ago appeared at the home of relatives outside of Manchester.

### TWO COMPANIONS UNHURT.

So there were plenty of people aware of his presence in town two weeks ago when he started to drive down the hill. One shot killed him. Elijah and Leonard Gabbard, riding with him, were unhurt save for the bruises they got when the driverless car crashed in

front of the hotel.

There was a tense moment then. The ancient code which forbade the removal of dead bodies might still be in effect for all the startled whittlers knew. The Messrs. Gabbard alighted, heads down, and the crowd pressed back into doorways. But there was no more musketry.

Town Marshall Philpot pushed the dead man away from the wheel, got into the car and drove it himself to the Baker home at Burning Springs. And that, save for a funeral and the beginning of a jittery period in the normally placid life of Manchester, was all about Mr. Baker.

Few persons know and fewer will discuss the motivation behind the killings in Clay County. But there have always been two factions in the county. And with the passing of the homesick Bobby Baker in the footsteps of his father, grandfather, uncle, cousin and brother, came a hint of the recurrence of tragedy.

Today the clans of the Cumberland mountains walk armed to the teeth, feudal troops sworn to the service of their particular baronies, while the whittlers whittle in front of the Webb Hotel and not so much as a harsh whisper disturbs the peace and hypnotic repose that is Manchester.

**BOOKS FOR SALE • at the Clay County Genealogical and Historical Society**

HEROES & SKALLYWAGS, The People Who Created Clay County Kentucky, by Charles House. This is the first of a projected two-volume detailed history of Clay County and sheds light on how the divide between the elite salt barons and the ordinary settlers shaped the character of the county that exists to this day. 331 pages with index and source notes. Price \$25 plus \$5.00 shipping and handling. Ky residents add 6% for Ky sales tax.

MAGGIE BOWLING'S 1913-1923 MARRIAGE BOOK - Includes bride and groom's name, age, license and marriage date, marriage statistics and parents. Also contains a bride index. Price \$20.00 plus \$5.00 shipping and handling. Ky residents add 6% for Ky sales tax.

NEWFOUND CREEK, And A One Room School Teacher From Burning Springs by Henry Banks - 169 pages. Chronicles the life of a school teacher in the Newfound and Burning Springs area in Clay County. Price \$20.00 plus \$5.00 shipping and handling. Ky residents add 6% for Ky sales tax.

PIPES OF A DISTANT CLANSMAN by Gary Burns - 457 pages. Chronicles the history of a Clay County family from their Scot-Irish roots up through the Revolutionary War and their life in Clay County. Price \$20.00 plus \$5.00 shipping and handling. Ky residents add 6% for Ky sales tax.

BLAME IT ON SALT by Charles House - REVISED, NOW WITH INDEX - the first 150 years of an unruly county and some of its people. Clay County history through the lives of an extended family. Soft cover, 320 pages. Price \$20.00 plus \$5.00 shipping and handling. Ky residents add 6% for Ky sales tax.

KENTUCKY PONDERS SUPPLEMENT, 367 pages, indexed. SALE! \$25.00 ppd. (Note that the book "Kentucky Ponders" is out of print.) Order "Kentucky Ponders Supplement" from the Society office or from:

Patricia Saupe 5411 Briarwood Dr. Aurora, IN 47001-3026 or Fox T. Ponder 2500 W. Hwy 80, Russell Springs, KY 42642-9319

HISTORY OF CLAY COUNTY, published in the Manchester Guardian from May to December 1932. Soft cover, contains index of names. Price: \$12.50, plus \$5.00 shipping and handling. KY residents add 6% for KY sales tax.

1807-1923 MARRIAGE INDEX, the book is indexed alphabetically by groom and also by bride, date applied for marriage license, date of actual marriage, and file box number at the Clerks Office.

MEMBERS PRICE: \$25.00, plus \$5.00 for shipping, KY residents add 6% for KY sales tax.

NON-MEMBERS PRICE: \$32.00, plus \$5.00 for shipping and handling, KY residents add 6% for KY sales tax.

1900 CLAY COUNTY CENSUS - VOL. 1

MEMBERS PRICE: \$17.00, plus \$5.00 for shipping and handling, KY residents add 6% for KY sales tax.

NON-MEMBERS PRICE: \$19.00, plus \$5.00 shipping and handling, KY residents add 6% for KY sales tax.

1900 CLAY COUNTY CENSUS - VOL. 2

MEMBERS PRICE: \$17.00, plus \$5.00 shipping and handling, KY residents add 6% for KY sales tax.

NON-MEMBERS PRICE: \$19.00, plus \$5.00 for shipping and handling, KY residents add 6% for KY sales tax.

1910 CLAY COUNTY CENSUS - VOL 1

MEMBERS PRICE: \$18.00, plus \$5.00 shipping and handling, KY residents add 6% for KY sales tax.

NON-MEMBERS PRICE: \$20.00, plus \$5.00 shipping and handling, KY residents add 6% for KY sales tax.

1910 CLAY COUNTY CENSUS - VOL 2

MEMBERS PRICE: \$18.00, plus \$5.00 shipping and handling, KY residents add 6% for KY sales tax.

NON-MEMBERS PRICE: \$20.00, plus \$5.00 shipping and handling, KY residents add 6% for KY sales tax.

1930 CLAY COUNTY CENSUS - VOL. 1

MEMBERS PRICE: \$19.00, plus \$5.00 shipping and handling, KY residents add 6% for KY sales tax.

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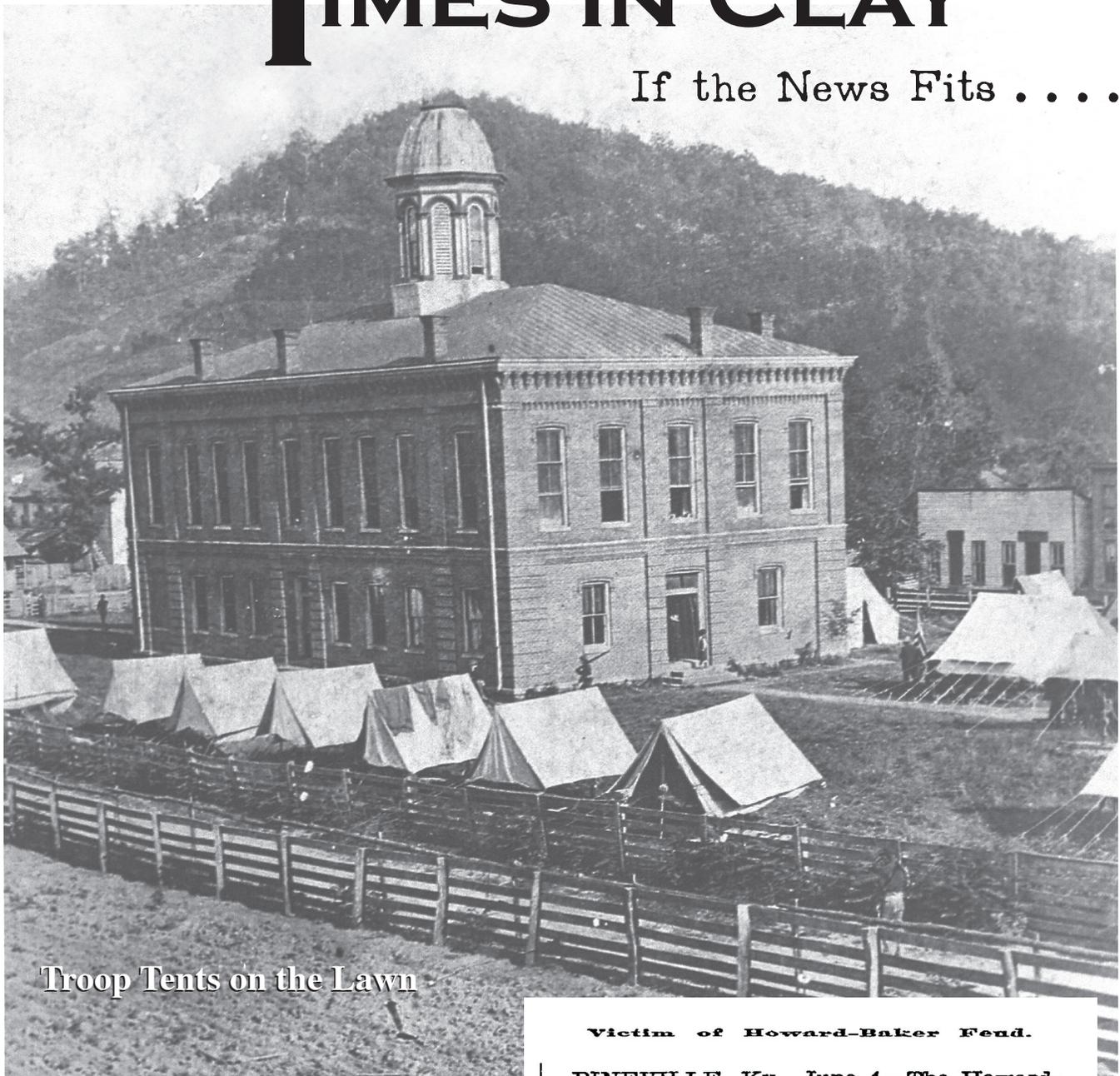
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# THE TIMES IN CLAY

If the News Fits . . . .



Troop Tents on the Lawn

*The governor sent the State Militia to Manchester to help protect "Bad" Tom Baker, who was to stand trial for the killing of Deputy Sheriff Will White. Baker was killed, though, as he stood in the midst of the troopers, from a bullet fired from White's brother, Sheriff Bev White's home across the street. No one was charged in the killing.*

**Victim of Howard-Baker Feud.**

**PINEVILLE, Ky., June 4.**—The Howard-Baker feud is raging in Clay County. Lisle Baker was killed last night. James Garrard has fled to Middlesborough. Judge Brown will not be allowed to hold court on Monday. It is said that Gov. Bradley has been solicited for troops to protect the court, but has none to send. Six men have been killed in the last ten days.

# The New York Times rarely missed an opportunity to report on the dastardly doings in Clay County.

By Charles House

In the December 24th, 1890 edition of *New York Times* the paper reported that a fifteen year old boy named Woods shot and killed a "well-known" merchant from ambush near Manchester. This story, which would have been front-page fodder for a weekly newspaper, perhaps, seems to have been carried by the *Times* solely to provide a fix for its readers' growing addiction to feud stories. It was hardly remarkable for Kentucky newspapers, let alone the national "paper of record." It is mentioned here only to serve as an example of how the county's reputation had gotten out of hand, to the point of absurdity. Lest anyone doubt the extent of the bad reputation, consider the following report in the *Times* of May 2nd, 1891:

The present session of Judge Lilly's Circuit Court at Manchester in Clay County presents a most appalling state of affairs, there being no less than twelve men held in custody on the charge of murder. John and Andrew Wilson are held for the murder of T. G. Baker. At the present term, they both were given a new trial that resulted in each case in a hung jury. In the case of John Wilson the jury stood nine for hanging and life imprisonment and three for acquittal. In Andrew Wilson's case eight of the jury were for life imprisonment and

## MUST DISARM IN COURT ROOM.

**New Judge in Kentucky Announces an Innovation in His District.**

*Special to The New York Times.*

MANCHESTER, Ky., Feb. 27.—Judge J. H. Tinsley, the new Circuit Judge in this district, made famous by mountain feuds, particularly in Clay County, read the mountaineers a lesson when he opened court yesterday. The Court House was

four for acquittal.

Alexander and Gilbert Woods are held for the killing of one Gregory two months since, bail having been refused them. John Robinson is in custody, without bail, for the killing of Elisha Young some six weeks since. One Harris is held without bail for the killing of a man named Bishop. Ham and Nat Bengé are now on trial for the killing of Joseph Bowling at the last November election. Nat Hampton and two sons are held without bond, charged with killing David and Hugh Bowling at the same time and place. Robert House is held in custody charged with the murder of Ed House.

Judge Lilly seems determined to have the law enforced against all these malefactors, and it would not be surprising if there were several hangings shortly in Clay County. The better class of citizens of the county seem to sustain him, recognizing that only very sturdy public opinion can



This photo of Manchester is thought to have been taken the year after Tom Baker was killed outside the courthouse, upper left.

reclaim Clay County from the unenviable notoriety from which it now suffers.

If Judge Lilly's intentions had any effect it wasn't apparent. Various Clay County crimes continued to be reported in newspapers from London to Louisville to Cincinnati, and, indeed, to New York, where the *Times* seems to have had a standing order to report on anything to do with Clay County. There would be plenty to report, and as we'll see, the *Times* wasn't shy about reporting them. The hangings the *Times* editorial called for hadn't happened. "Very sturdy public opinion" had reclaimed nothing. And the "unenviable notoriety" was about to be kicked up several notches. If Clay County had been a morbid curiosity to readers of newspapers like the *Times*, it was about to become a national preoccupation to readers of magazines and books as well, slick publications whose readership included governors and even the President of the United States. Clay County's history was about to become intermingled with Kentucky's to an unhealthy degree.

And before it was over it would threaten to become an unwanted slice of American history. The *New York Times*, its ear keenly tuned as always to dastardly doings in the mountains, reported President William McKinley was nervously awaiting the outcome of events that had started in Clay County in 1897.

This tense situation had its origins in two feuds that were widely and luridly reported from coast to coast: the Baker-Howard "war" and, to a lesser degree, the Philpot-Griffin feud. According to a famous court verdict, the Baker-Howard feud had a direct connection with—even led to, it was charged—the assassination of newly-elected Governor William Goebel. Mixed up in the family squabbling that started the whole thing was the alleged political jockeying of Clay County's aging Democratic leader, T. T. Garrard, whose influence was considered diabolical by some and, some claimed, extended deep into smoke-filled rooms in Frankfort. The political head of the White clan, sassy John D., does not appear to have been as involved in the dirty work as his nemesis on the

Garrard side, preferring to leave all that for lesser Whites in positions of power at the Clay County court house. Since the Garrards were famously associated with the Bakers, and the Whites just as famously associated with the Howards, the result was that the Baker-Howard feud was as often referred to as the Garrard-White feud. Having the warring partisans on opposite sides of a clearly-defined political line drawn by the famous Garrards and Whites just made the blood feuding more juicy for the press.

In the context of its importance as history, the feuding itself wasn't as meaningful as the reporting of it, which reached new heights toward the end of the 1890s even by Clay County standards. Reluctantly, then, the history of Clay County's defining century must dwell upon the feuding of uncommon viciousness that thrust it into the national spotlight while the majority of its law-abiding citizens remained in obscurity, stained by yellow journalism, demeaned by unfair stereotyping. This view was given a rare voice in a report by a *New York Times*' Washington correspondent who traveled to Clay County in late November 1899 to see what all the fuss was about:

"Manchester has been very unfortunate," said Dr. [T. M.] Hill, one of its most prominent and loyal citizens, a resident for thirty years, "in having been misrepresented by writers more enterprising and sensational than they were truthful. We are a people not rich, but independent. We are peaceable and law-abiding, and we also are law-enforcing people. A few persons in Clay County have quarreled, and some of them have been killed. Writers of lurid dispatches have represented the whole people as affected by the passions that moved the few men who engaged in fatal quarrels."

Dr. Hill was born and raised in Jefferson County, so his perspective was different than either the reporters or the natives. But he'd been in Clay County a long time, and he knew unfairness when he saw it. His lament was hardly the consensus outside the county, though. This particular *Times* article began

## KENTUCKY TROUBLE NOT ENDED

**The Courts Compelled to Close and Leave Clay County in the Hands of Desperadoes.**

LONDON, Ky., June 14.--Justice is impossible in Clay County in the Baker case, and the courts have been abandoned. Judge Cook adjourned court at Manchester last evening. The court offices and the town are controlled by the Whites and Howards,

with advice the reporter had been given in Frankfort, and even in near-by London, when he had inquired about traveling to the scene of the feuding.

"Go to Clay County? Well, not just now; or, at all events, if you go, go quietly, on some business pretext, and if convenient go provided with an introduction to some man not identified with any of the factions recently engaged in the feuds that have made the county notorious. If I were you, I would not venture into Clay County. Nice people. Oh yes! But there are two kinds of people they do not like out there—detectives and newspapermen. Detectives go at the risk of their lives, and they have run newspapermen out and will do it again. I wouldn't advise you to go."

There had, indeed, been many newspapermen in the county for the past few years, few if any who had shown the restraint of this latest *Times* reporter. Yet, he, too, felt he had to call a spade a spade. "It is a strange, bloody story, this of Clay County's two recent feuds," the reporter wrote. "Its ferocity, barbarity, and cruelty are appalling."

By any reasonable standards one would have to agree with the *Times* reporter even if, as Dr. Hill had complained, the majority of the citizens were peaceful and as appalled as anyone else. In Manchester, to where most of the news reporters flew like homing pigeons, there was plenty to be appalled about. Anyone would had to have been blind (and deaf) not to notice. A visitor, neither reporter nor citizen, gives us an eyewitness account of just how rough the county

seat had become, how thoroughly it was in the hands of non-ordinary citizens. "Most of the nights since I have been here have been made hideous by the yells of drunken men and the noise of their revolvers," Reverend Dickey, who was staying at the Lucas Hotel in Manchester, wrote in 1897.

Some nights hundreds of shots have been fired. While I am writing tonight the crack of the rifle is heard making a startling report. Drunken men are seen on the streets daily and along the highways leading into town. The law is not enforced against shooting on the highway nor against drunkenness. There is no fear of the law or its officers. 'Might is right' here, the weak must yield to the strong.

Compare the above report to that of the Mountain Echo reporter who had written back in 1875 about Manchester's bar rooms and groceries being "open both day and night, and bumpers of 'Paddy's Eye Water'" being "dealt out to a jolty multitude who are assembled here" to see just how much worse things had got. By the end of 1897 Manchester had become a parody of a wild west fable. Dickey reported on all sorts of rowdy behavior including a number of shootings. "Last Sunday a number of the leading young men of the town and county were drunk on the streets, fighting, yelling, brawling," Dickey wrote. "Yesterday Sheriff elect Bev White Jr. and William Treadway, ex-marshall, emptied their revolvers at each other but nobody was hurt."

The political side of all this could not have been ignored. The Whites, who mostly controlled local politics as well as law enforcement, and were backed for the first time in history by a Republican administration in Frankfort, seemed to have enjoyed flexing their muscles while butting heads with the staunchly Democratic Garrards, who hoped to change this situation locally and statewide. It was plain to see who supported whom as the bullets flew, and it seems to have boiled down as much to political alliances as to blood feuding.

If the Whites and Garrards were de facto sym-

bols for the county, General Garrard was the perfect metaphor for its sorry reputation. In physical and moral decline, he was the last of the old salt men, the last of a breed. His contemporaries, General Hugh White's sons Daugherty and James, who might have offered some balance to Garrard's sense of entitlement, were long gone. There were plenty of Whites around, but none quite on the same plane as the old General Garrard. Beverly Pryor White, son of B. F., who had drowned delivering a load of salt through the "narrows," was still living. But "Judge White," as he was known (he'd been elected county judge over thirty years earlier), apparently didn't have the jugular instinct that T. T. Garrard displayed. Judge White, in any case, had served with Garrard in the Seventh Kentucky Infantry during the Civil War, and was at Vicksburg with him, and that probably counted for something. Then of course there was the mercurial and rather refined John D., famous from Goose Creek

## FIVE KILLED IN KENTUCKY

### Reported Outbreak in Clay County Over an Old Feud.

## A BATTLE BETWEEN FACTIONS

to New York to Boston, but he seems to have levitated somewhere above the rough and tumble as it played out around—or beneath—him.

John G. White, brother of Sheriff Beverly and Deputy William, seems to have been more than capable of holding his own in the Garrard-White entanglements. Earlier, then-Sheriff John G. had gotten into an argument with two men at the courthouse. When John G. was joined by brother, Will, the men wound up dead. Though John G. had moved to Winchester after being acquitted in a trial, his brother, now-Sheriff Beverly P., was still around, as was brother Will, both of whom, events would show, were up to the task of mixing it up with any sort of scoundrel. So, what the Whites lacked of old General Garrard's sheer presence was made up for in numbers and grit. "The fac-

tions take [part] in all the political struggles, business enterprises and even in litigation,” Reverend Dickey wrote. “They are always on opposite sides. What one side favors the other side opposes. General Garrard said that his people have spent \$500,000 fighting the Whites.”

It’s not likely that the Garrards spent a half million dollars “fighting” the Whites. But the general may have enjoyed telling Reverend Dickey that. In another *New York Times* story about the feuds, it was reported that General Garrard “appears to cherish all the inherent traditions that have kept the Whites and Garrards rivals for years, and recently parties to one side or the other of the local feuds. Gen. Garrard is impetuous to put it mildly. He has ‘no use’ for the Whites.”

This was the climate, then, when the national press got interested in Clay County to the extent that made the publicity over the Garrard-White wrangling during the Dr. Abner Baker trial of 1844 seem like the report of a wedding. “The eyes of the nation, now, were more or less directed upon Clay County and its long record of lawlessness and the meager regard in which its people held the lives of others upon whom they vented their spleen and hatred,” Harold Wilson Coates wrote in *Stories of Kentucky Feuds, The Great Truce of Clay*. Coates was referring to the conviction of one of the principals of the Baker/Howard feud, James “Big Jim” Howard, of Manchester, for killing the governor, and of the wide coverage it received nationally.

Even before the assassination, the *New York Times* had shown more than a little interest in the Baker/Howard troubles. “Clay County knows that it has a bad name,” a long article on the feuds began. “The visitor finds that knowledge affecting its people who have never participated in the brutal assassinations that have characterized its two feuds of recent date.” The story then gave an overview of the county and its reputation, and of the participants in the feuds, including the Whites and Garrards and “Big Jim” Howard, who was about to be thrust into the national spotlight.

James Howard was a fairly large man, but not

huge. Photos show a man only by degrees larger than average. Some people were reported to be intimidated by his demeanor if not by his size, but by all accounts that was because of his quietness, not by any perceived threat. He had been a school teacher who was serving as the county tax assessor when he was drawn

## INDICT KENTUCKY MURDERERS.

**The Regular Judge, However, Fails to Appear in Court—Armed Feudists Await Further Developments.**

*Special to The New York Times.*

**MANCHESTER, Ky., Oct. 25.—True bills of indictment, charging Solomon and Jim and Tom Griffin with the murder of Deputy Sheriff Wash Thacker in Clay County on**

into the violence on Crane Creek that occurred a few months prior to the *Times* article. He seems to have been an unwilling participant, and had even brokered a peace between his family and that of his fellow office holder, County Attorney George “Baldy George” Baker. But the day following the peace agreement, on April 8th, 1898, Big Jim took aim at Baldy George and shot him dead, and in doing so set off a string of events that led to state militia soldiers being stationed in Manchester and, finally, it was charged, to the assassination of Governor Goebel.<sup>6</sup>

The events leading up to the killing of George Baker at the mouth of Collins Fork of Laurel Creek that day were widely reported in the Kentucky press and beyond. And widely, sometimes ridiculously, distorted, depending on who was doing the reporting: a Howard descendant, or a Baker descendant, or any of a number of newspapers and books and magazines (and, in one case, a national television documentary a century after the fact). The killing of George Baker itself was distorted to an absurd degree, and contributed to a fanning of the flames that were by then leaping from what had been a smoldering feud. The extent to which the troubles captured the imagination of the public can best be seen in articles and books that appeared a few years after the event. In *Weep No More My Lady* author Alvin F. Harlow took extreme cre-

ative license in reporting the confrontation between Big Jim Howard and Baldy George Baker.

“Get down on your knees,” he ordered, his handsome face distorted with passion. “You laid the plot to have my people killed, and I’m goin’ to kill you.”

“Don’t Jim!” cried the old man. “I didn’t have anything to do with it. You know I tried to settle the thing peaceable.”

But the cold glare in Howard’s eyes—a “pro-fessin’ Christian” and church-member for sixteen years, who didn’t drink nor even use tobacco—did not waver.

“Down on your knees, I said!” he commanded. The elder man, still pleading, sank to the ground, and Howard, carefully avoiding a vital spot, slowly shot him to death; some say with as many as twenty-five bullets, though this is probably an exaggeration.

Harlow must have read an article about the killing in *Munsey’s Magazine* that had appeared in 1903, and reported that “Jim Howard, the second best shot in a community famous for its marksmen stood before the white-haired, defenseless old man and shot him again and again, using nice skill to avoid a fatal spot, yet not missing. Twenty-five bullets pierced Baker’s body, and he bled to death, living only long enough to tell who had murdered him.” A later article in *Our Southern Highlanders* reported that Big Jim was careful to avoid a vital spot “and so killed him by inches.”

In fact, according to the writer John Ed Pearce, Howard most likely fired a single shot that went through Baker’s horse’s neck and struck Baker in the stomach, a wound that resulted in his death the following day. Both men were armed, Pearce reported, and Baker was probably killed only because he surprised Howard who was spooked after having been fired on a short time earlier as he was trying to get to his father’s home on Crane Creek.

Howard had been trying to reach his father, Bal Howard, who had been shot the day before in a scuffle with George Baker’s sons, in which two Howard men—Bal’s son, Wilson, and a nephew, Burch Stores—were killed. When he got news of the killings



*Big Jim Howard, a key figure in the Baker/Howard feud, served a prison sentence for the assassination of Governor Goebel, though many thought Howard was set up. He was later pardoned by a Republican governor.*

Jim Howard was told that his father, too, was dead along with his brother and cousin. By the time Jim Howard was at John Coldiron’s store and George Baker rode up behind him—perhaps not meaning to surprise Howard—the distinction between Bal being dead or merely wounded (as it turned out) was no doubt lost in the emotions arising out of the events that had started over a dispute over timber between Bal Howard and Tom “Bad Tom” Baker, a son of Baldy George. The Howards and Bakers had been assembling timber rafts at the mouth of Crane Creek when an argument that led to a shooting broke out. No one was killed in the shooting but psychic damage was severe. Later, on April 7th, 1898, as Bal Howard and his son, Wilson, and nephew, Burch Stores, rode their horses back up Crane toward home, they were ambushed by snipers widely believed to be Bad Tom Baker and some of his men. The Baker-Howard feud had begun in earnest. When Jim Howard killed George Baker in reprisal, if

that's what it was, the feud was roaring.

During the next several months reprisal was met with reprisal, houses were shot into, and several men were wounded and killed, including Deputy Sheriff William White, whose family, as we have seen, had had an historical alliance with the Howards. This incidence, on June 2nd, 1898, happened when Tom Baker and some of his men met Will White on the road near his home on Sexton's Creek. There were apparently no eyewitnesses to the killing, but a neighbor reportedly heard White name Tom Baker as his killer before he died.

The lack of reliable witnesses didn't deter Reverend Dickey from reporting on the killing. "I have just returned from the burial of ex-sheriff William

L. White," he wrote. "White met Thomas Baker, D. Baker, and a man named Helton in the road. Baker shot White with a Winchester, killing him in 20 minutes. Bakers say that White made an attempt to draw his pistol. Tom Baker got the drop, on him, his Winchester being already in his hands. The ball struck the body at the naval and passed through." Reverend Dickey was not an admirer of Will White's. In another diary entry he wrote, "During his term of office four years in length, he acquired the habit of drink. He has been the most offensive citizen of the county since I have been here. He was often drunk and at such times he was insulting and disagreeable."

Will White's killing drew the Garrards into the mix since they had had an alliance with the Bakers stronger, even, than the Howards and Whites. General Garrard immediately started clamoring for justice, demanding that Jim Howard be prosecuted for the killing of his friend, Baldy George Baker. For their part, the Whites, led now by Sheriff Beverly P. White, was demanding that Tom Baker be prosecuted for the killings of the Howard cousins, not to mention Bev White's brother, Deputy Sheriff, Will.

All this mixing of the law with the lawless, to the point one was indistinguishable from the other, did not, of course, go unnoticed by the citizens of the county, and especially in Manchester. "The tension in

Manchester was so bad that few people would walk the streets at night," John Ed Pearce wrote. "Almost everyone went armed." Pearce's source was probably Reverend Dickey, who reported that "The past few days a large number of the Whites and their friends have been under arms. I suppose there are 30 Winchesters in town today." Dickey continued at length about the activities of various partisans on both sides, finding as little to like about one as the other, and added, "Tom Baker is doubtless a very bad man. . . He led the war on the Howards, killing two of them a few months ago. He is a cool, calculating, daring man."

Reverend Dickey, at least, had the answer for the sorry situation.

When Judge William Brown was able to convince the governor to send troops to Man-

## **HOWARD READY FOR ARREST. Clay County Feudist Says He Will Make No Resistance.**

chester in June Dickey suggested that the judge indict all the parties to the feuding and send them off to another county. "If however a few more men were killed it would go a long way toward permanent peace," the good reverend wrote, wearing his true sentiments on his sleeve. "First class funerals are greatly needed here. This may seem harsh but it is true."

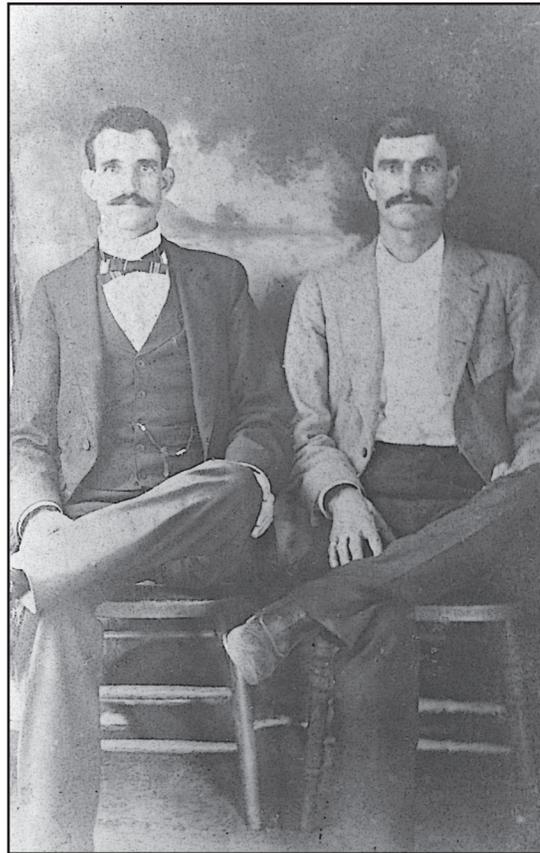
Funerals or not, incidences related to the violence piled up at a rapid pace. On July 1st Tom Baker was tried for the murder of the Howards (but was acquitted when witnesses swore that he was miles away the day the bushwhacking occurred on Crane Creek). On July 3rd Gilbert Garrard, son of General T. T., was shot and wounded as he rode in a carriage with his wife. (Dickey claimed the incident occurred because Garrard had run against Bev White for Sheriff the previous November as well as having backed a bond for the Bakers.) On July 20th John Baker and another man were on their way to General Garrard's for guard duty when they were shot and killed by deputy sheriffs Felix Davidson and Daugh White (one in a long line of Daughs—for Daugherty). The coroner reported John Baker had thirty-two bullets in him, a fact that lent little credence to White's contention that he shot Baker in self-defense. The next day John Baker's brother, Bad Tom, and twenty of the Baker clan, rode into Manchester and, like a scene out of a bad early western movie, shot up the town, shooting out win-

dows in stores and even the court house.

In September, the Courier Journal reported that “fifteen men have been killed in Clay County during the past month,” which seems to have been an exaggeration, albeit a common one. Nevertheless, there was plenty of gunplay to report, as Reverend Dickey continued to do. “A few weeks ago, Bev White, Jr., sheriff, got drunk and shot into Mrs. Lucas’ house and cursed her and her family, fearfully,” Dickey wrote in an October entry, adding that the sheriff had also shot into the post office. “The Whites have control of the courts and run things as they wish . . .” Dickey continued. “There may be much blood spilled yet before the feud is settled.”

Dickey suggested that such behavior had been the status quo for the past century. “The inhabitants have been revelers, drunkards, adulterers, Sabbath breakers, and murders,” Dickey wrote. “If monuments were erected on every spot where there has been a man killed or dangerously wounded it would be like a cemetery.” Nor did things improve when the new year arrived. “It seems that Manchester is being boiled down pretty low,” Dickey wrote on January 2nd. “We have five vacant store rooms, as many vacant residences and several offices. The people who are left have no children, scarcely and but few of them attend church. The Schools combined hardly make one. We certainly have struck bottom.”

Though it has been reported in some accounts that Jim Howard was free on bail after his conviction in London, the March 3rd, 1899 issue of the Echo reported, “Jas. B. Howard, whose trial for the murder of G. W. Baker, in Clay County, is pending in the Laurel



*Brothers John G. White, left, and Beverly P. White. John brokered a deal to end the feuds; Beverly was the Sheriff, from whose home the sniper's bullet that killed "Bad" Tom Baker was fired. Baker was on trial for killing the sheriff's brother, Deputy Will White.*

Circuit Court and who has been confined to the Madison county jail for several months for safe keeping until the beginning of the recent term of the Circuit Court, is now in jail in this place, no order having been made at the recent term of the court to return him to the Richmond jail.” It wasn’t until mid May, according to a following story in the Echo that Howard was released when John G. White put up part of his \$5,000 bail.

A few weeks after Howard was released from jail in London Tom Baker was getting ready to face his second trial in Manchester. Recognizing a disaster in the making, the governor in early June sent State Guard troops to Manchester to protect Baker. “Among the militiamen it was a task that was not received with the greatest of relish,” Harold Wilson Coates wrote in *The Great Truce of*

Clay. “Several of them got as far as London, and before the machine guns, baggage and equipment were loaded on the wagons for the trip over the hills some of them found excuses for not going while others were guilty of out and out desertion.”

Coates didn’t say where he got the information. As for the rest of the story there were sources aplenty, including a deposition given by Colonel Roger D. Williams, the forty-four year old commanding officer of the Second Kentucky Infantry of the State Guards, who was sent to Manchester with 150 troops “to assist in making arrests and maintaining order.” The soldiers set up their tents on the courthouse lawn while a contingent of soldiers were sent to Crane Creek to arrest Baker. Baker was brought to Manchester and housed in a tent along with the troops after he complained that he wasn’t a common criminal and should not be

placed in jail. Colonel Williams tried without success to find more secure lodging for his prisoner, but the judge and sheriff balked at housing him at the courthouse.

Baker had to wait with the soldiers for a week before a hearing was held on whether he could receive a fair trial in Manchester. Finally, on June 10th, attorneys gathered at the courthouse to make their case. After arguments the judge granted a change of venue to Barboursville. Back outside, Baker stood talking with his wife, Emily, along with several of Colonel Williams' soldiers when a reporter from the *Courier-Journal* asked Baker if he could take his photograph. Moments after the photo was taken, though surrounded by soldiers there to protect him, and in the company of his wife, Emily, Baker was shot. The shot entered his chest just above his heart, went through the walls of the guard tent and hospital tent and lodged in a fence post by the courthouse.<sup>11</sup>

Colonel Williams was standing about 20 feet from Baker when the shot rang out. When by-standers pointed to Sheriff White's house near the courthouse (adjacent to Captain Robert and Nancy Potter's house) as being where the shot had come from, Colonel Williams ordered the house surrounded. Soldiers had to break a fence gate to gain access to the house. "I found the front doors locked and all entrances and exits locked with the exception of one window in the rear and one window in the front," Williams testified. He crawled through a window and went to a bed room where he found a Winchester rifle lying across the bed and another one on the floor. The gun on the floor had been recently fired, Williams said, "as evidenced by the little smoke emitted from the chamber when I threw out the exploded shell, as well as the smell of powder at the muzzle."

While Williams was examining the gun Judge A. K. Cook and Sheriff White came into the room. Williams asked White whose gun it was and he said it was his. The sheriff demanded the gun but Colonel Williams refused to give it up. Williams asked if White knew who fired the shot. "I know nothing of it," the sheriff replied.

Colonel Williams testified that he had had a guard posted in front of White's house but that Judge Cook had forced him to take the guard away the day previous to the shooting.

From the deposition:

Q: Did Judge Cook give you any reason why he had said guard removed?

A: He stated that the sheriff, the plaintiff, B. P. White, requested it upon the grounds that himself and his deputies were frequently halted by the guard while going in and out of the court house. I protested against the removal of the guard.

Q: Did you request the sheriff to furnish you a place to keep Tom Baker?

A: Yes, I did.

Q: Where did you ask him to furnish you a place?

A: He offered the jail and Baker protested and stated that he would certainly be killed if put in the jail. We then asked to be allowed to keep the prisoner in some room in the court house that night.

Q: Did you get permission to keep him in the court house?

A: We did not. The sheriff, the plaintiff, stated that we could keep him there if they were not using the court house, and the first night some one was in the court house all night long or they used the court house all night long. The next night we asked to be allowed to put him in the jury room. This request was also refused. The next night we attempted to get into the grand jury room and found it locked, both windows and doors locked. We were unable to secure any other place to keep him. We tried to find another house to keep the prisoner but were unsuccessful and he remained in the guard tent.

It is not surprising that the killing of Tom Baker while surrounded by 150 state militia troops camped on the grounds of the court house would draw further attention to Clay County. If ever there were a public relations nightmare, a story to put the county in the worst possible light for a national audience, it was the following article published in the *New York Times* June 15th, 1899, under the heading, "The Courts Compelled to Close and Leave Clay County in the Hands of Desperadoes."

June 14—Justice is impossible in Clay County in the Baker case, and the courts have been aban-

done. Judge Cook adjourned court at Manchester last evening. The court offices and the town are controlled by the Whites and Howards, and justice is a mere mockery. There is danger of an outbreak at any moment, and non-partisans fear the Bakers will visit the town and avenge the murder of Tom Baker. The Whites and Howards are still here in force.

An effort is being made by lawyers and litigants to have all their business, both civil and criminal pending in that court transferred to other counties, as they believe that the bitter war waged between the Howards, Whites, and Bakers will last for many months to come, and the most important business matters will not serve to induce peaceable men to visit Manchester while these men are looking for blood.

Judge H. C. Eversole, the regular Judge of the court, is here, and will not return to Manchester, considering it dangerous to life as well as a farce to attempt to hold court there while such a terrible state of affairs exists.

It was he who asked Gov. Bradley to send the troops to Manchester to protect life, and when Tom Baker was assassinated it was he who asked Special Judge Cook to adjourn court and turn the town over to the lawlessness of its desperadoes.

Judge Eversole's life was not safe from the moment the militia arrived, and for that reason he had asked for a special Judge. Sheriff White, who opposed the coming of the militia, is strongly identified with the Howard side. The end is not yet in Clay County.

Later, as if deciding that the article may have been a bit over the top for such an esteemed institution, the *Times* decided to take a more sober look at the situation. In early December the paper sent one of its better correspondents to do an in-depth report. The result may have been the best reporting on the feuds to that time, albeit with the standard Clay County twist thrown in. "While in Manchester," the reporter wrote, "and on the way into Clay county from London, your correspondent, bearing in mind the stories about marauding parties, armed scouts patrolling the roads in search of intruders, 'bushwhackers' looking for victims of the ambush, and predatory ruffians abroad

simply for blood, looked for and asked about the custom of going armed." He then went on to debunk the stereotype. "The only firearms I have seen in Clay County were two shotguns carried by a very amiable town barber and his friend, who had been out to bag a few squirrels," he wrote.

Would that every reporter had exercised the same restraint. An article at about the same time in the Cincinnati Commercial Tribune was more colorful and far looser with the facts. The Tribune reporter claimed that when "men high in official life" all over the state were asked what the governor ought to do about the Clay County feuds the advice was, "Let them fight it out." What did that advice mean, the reporter asked his readers.

It means a war of extermination; it means bloodshed by wholesale and retail; it means the destruction of values in lands and other properties; it means a reign of terror continued for an indefinite period, and it means a fresh disgrace to a State which has already had its share of feudal wars and cold-blooded murders. Leaders of factions may cry peace, but at the same time they are buying new consignments of the most approved patterns of firearms and the most modern ammunition. Smokeless powder cartridges are as numerous in Clay County today as were black powder cartridges a year ago.

The article went on to "report" that "More fine firearms are now owned in Clay County than in any county in the state, and there are more men here who can use them accurately than can be found in a similar territory in the world."

In Manchester, Reverend Dickey had his own reporting to add. "The killing of Tom Baker and the subdued excitement resulting there from has absorbed the entire attention of the people," he wrote in a July 14th diary entry. "The Whites are in power and everything goes on without opposition. Their friends are protected and their enemies keep quiet. But no one would be surprised at an outbreak at any time. Either side is liable to waylay and kill the other.

The next outbreak, however, was that of another feud, albeit one which was attracting almost as much attention as the Baker-Howard. In a July 17th diary

entry Reverend Dickey reported on the latest killings, apparently part of the Philpot-Griffin feud, where “two men were killed, two mortally wounded, a fifth perhaps mortally wounded, and a sixth with two flesh wounds in a lower limb.” Six of the eight men in the fight were killed or wounded, Dickey reported. “The doctor says the ground where they fell looks like a slaughter pen.” Three days later Reverend Dickey decided to tell the story of Philpot-Griffin feud to date. In a remarkable effort to list every last detail, he wrote, “Last Tuesday Erin Morris, Harvey Griffin, and Hugh Griffin were buried in one grave near Manchester at Roark’s Graveyard and decomposition was so far advanced that they could not be taken so far.” Dickey proceeded to list those who were dead and wounded, and continued, “Pete Philpot was the only one in the fight unhurt and he did most of the executions.

He had a Winchester 15 shooter. Hugh Griffin ran a half mile holding his bowels in with his hands. It was the bloodiest fight in the history of Clay County. Both parties fought with desperation. It was a battle for life. They were in close contact and it was to be settled by the deadly Colt and Winchester. George Philpot, father of Bob and Pete, had been in two other fights, the one at Pigeon Roost seven or eight years ago was a bloody one. He is a cool headed man 50 years old, strong in body as are all the Philpots. He took command of the fight and gave direction all through it. He would call out to Pete when he saw danger to his life and so of the rest. He himself fell behind a log and one of the Griffins on the other side. In this position they fired at each other till Philpot blew his brains out. He says that this last act gave him great relief. It is told that he made at Griffin’s throat with a large knife after this and Deputy Sheriff, G. Washington Thacker, told him not to do that as he was dead.

Dickey continued on with his detailed descriptions of the participants of the feud and of various and sundry past battles. “There are about 25 Philpots old enough to fight,” he continued. “They boast they never let a man escape who injures one of their clan. Yet they are quiet law abiding people, and do not provoke attack.” Dickey then went into an extreme examination of even more killings, offering opinions on

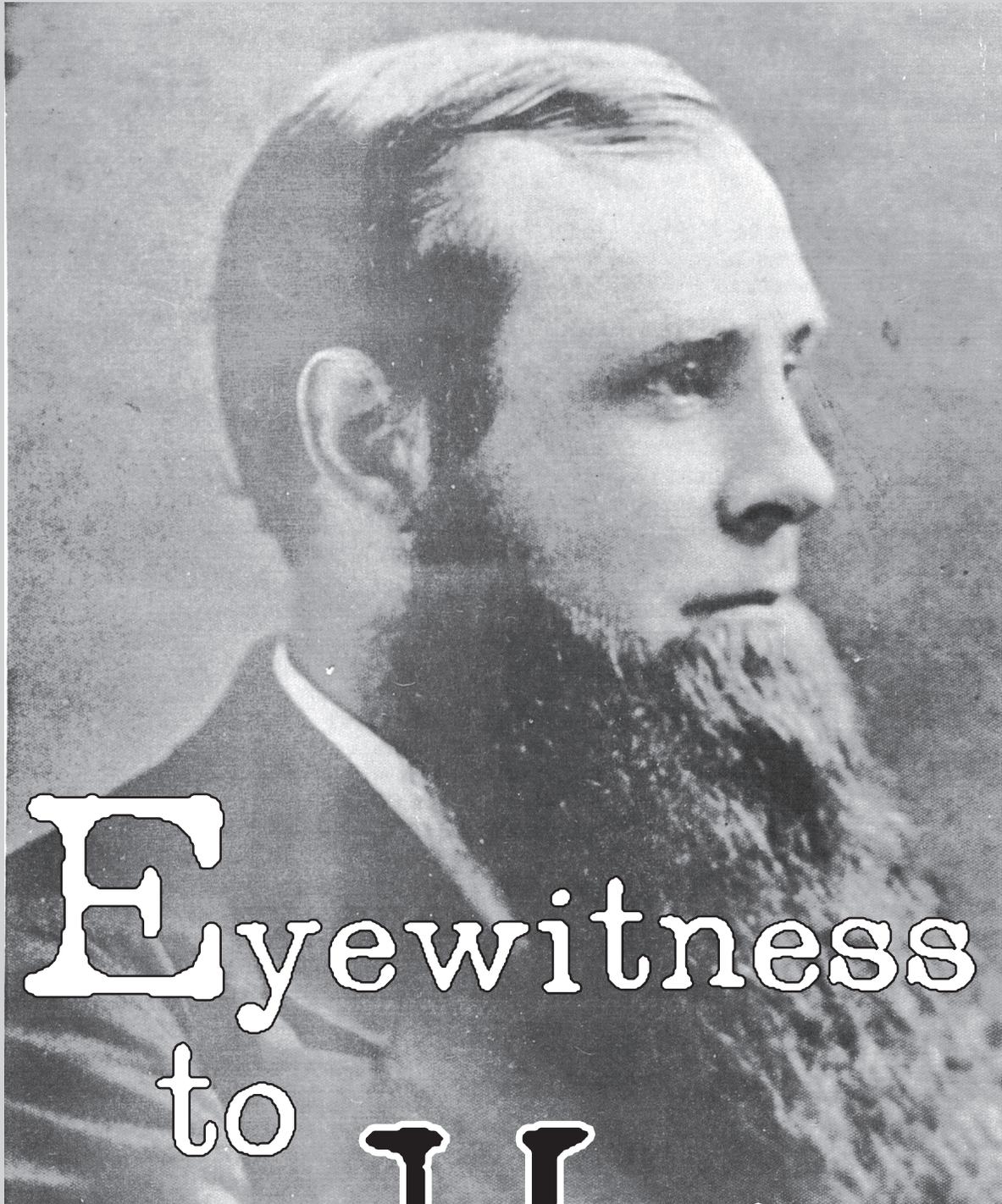
who was the culprit and how who might of thought of whom, and finally, though claiming that the feud had no connection with the Baker-Howard variety, wrote out a complicated scenario of the political connections and voting records of the several clans that wedded the two feuds together. “So politics have had much to do with the troubles in Clay County for 50 years,” Dickey wrote in summing up. “The future is concealed; but it will doubtless be bloody.”

It wasn’t long before the *New York Times* got interested in the Griffin-Philpot version of the Clay County wars. In a December 3rd piece that reported on members of the feud being escorted by state troops for their protection, the *Times* gave its readers a blow-by-blow description of that feud nearly as long and detailed as Reverend Dickey’s a few months earlier. Why readers of the *Times* needed to know every single name involved in every single incident wasn’t stated or implied. It was just another indication of the morbid curiosity the *Times* showed for the doings in the far-off hills of Clay County. The report included a sort of anti-climax that may have left readers wondering why all the fuss. “Gov. Bradley ordered the troops out to convoy the prisoners, and the escort arrived in Manchester one Sunday afternoon to find the hamlet of 200 persons as calm as a church.”

Eventually a peace of sorts was brokered between the warring factions and the feuds died down as Clay County entered the new century. Outside newspaper coverage dwindled as one would expect, but only for a while. As stories elsewhere in this issue show, things would heat up again, and, again, the national press would show up to give blow by blow descriptions for their readers who had grown up on a steady diet of Clay County stories in their newspapers.

—This article was adapted from the author’s *Heroes & Skallywags*. The information is contained in Chapter 14.

We need article submissions for the Fall issue of the Clay County Ancestral News Magazine. Stories of families, genealogy studies, or other items that may be of interest to Clay Countians former and present are most welcome. Email to: [house12@windstream.net](mailto:house12@windstream.net)



**E**yewitness  
to

**H**istory

# An OUTSIDER in every sense of the word Reverend Dickey REPORTED on the wickedness he found rampant in Clay County

## Selected excerpts from the famous diary of Dr. John J. Dickey

Nov. 19, 1897

### **Wicked Judges and Lawyers at Manchester**

Dr. Wyatt is a local preacher where I took dinner yesterday. He told me that when at Manchester last week he was surprised to find so much interest among the wicked men of the town. He went into Judge Parker's office, County Judge, whose two daughters and son were converted during our meeting. Dr. said he had seen Judge Parker arraigned by the Court on the charge of murder but he had never seen him so serious before.

The Judge said that he had lived a wicked life, said now when he ought to be leading his children to Christ they were seeking to lead him. He said he passed out of Judge Parker's office into Carlo Lyttle's office, the leading lawyer of the bar. He began to talk about religion. Said he had wasted his life in sin, had drank a great deal of whiskey, but he was now done with it. He said he believed the work done in Manchester was permanent, he had confidence in it because of the men who were promoting it. Mr. Carnahan, told me a few days ago that he had never seen Carlo Lyttle at church in his life. I am frank to say that I considered him the most hopeless case in Manchester. He said to be skeptical, He had never been to our meetings but his daughter has been converted and his sons have been at the altar, while his wife who professes to be a Christian has attended.

Dr. Burchell whose three daughters-sweet bright girls, have been saved in our meeting, was talking to Dr. Wyatt

about the great work in Manchester, said he was a member of the Presbyterian "joined Dr. Guerant" but had no religion, his children had -- he rejoiced in it.

### **Sinners criticize sermon by shooting off church door**

News comes from Bro. Bromley's meeting at Wyatt Chapel, 5 miles from here, that the sinners took offense at his rebukes and after service a few nights ago they shot a panel out of the door, a lamp off the wall and a number of window lights out. The leading members here said they were sure we could not hold meetings at the school house (Benge) but we told them we could and would and we are doing it. So far everything has gone off well. Praise the Lord! !

### **Drunkenness and pistol shooting**

I expect to see the two distilleries that curse this neighborhood shut down forever. O that they say may never make another run. O Lord thou canst stop them. We pray thee to do it for Christ's sake. Drunkenness and pistol shooting on the highways are the predominant sins of this community. May God deliver these people from these curses.

November 26, 1897

### **Drunken men and their noisy revolvers**

Most of the nights since I have been here have been made hideous by the yells of drunken men.

and the noise of their revolvers. Some nights hundreds of shots have been fired. While I am writing tonight the crack of the rifle is heard making a startling report. Drunken men are seen on the streets daily and along the highways leading into town. The law is not enforced against shooting on the highway nor against drunkenness. There is no fear of the law or its officers. "Might is right" here, the weak must yield to the strong.

### **The Garrards and Whites, obstacles to evangelizing**

Another obstacle to the evangelizing of Clay County is the White-Garrard feud that has existed here for fifty years. They are two leading families. The Garrards are the descendants of Governor Garrard, the second governor of Kentucky. His son James located in this county early in the century. General Theophilous Garrard now 84 years old still lives in the county. He and his descendants made a strong element of society. General Hugh White from Virginia settled here early in the century and has a large posterity here, much larger than the Garrards. The factions take (part) in all the political struggles, business enterprises and even in litigation. They are always on opposite sides. What one side favors the other side opposes. General Garrard said that his people have spent \$500,000 fighting the Whites. Both sides are intelligent and are wealthy people of the county.

### **Scruffy Manchester: Churches but no pastors**

The county seat, Manchester, has only about 150 inhabitants and is no larger than it was 50 years ago. There is not a sidewalk in the town save in front of two stores, one built by a White, the other by a Garrard. There are only 58 children in the town district. The school house is a frame structure large enough to accommodate about 50 pupils. It is comfortable, seated with patent desks in 1886. The Baptist Church has no pastor but a good membership in numbers. The Campbellite Church has no pastor and but few members.

There is a newspaper here, perhaps the poorest in the state. It cannot last much longer.

November 27, 1897

### **Manchester too wicked for Presbyterian minister**

There is a dance in town tonight at Dr. L.M. Hill's. He and his wife are members of the Presbyterian Church, converts of Dr. E.O. Guerrant at Jackson, Ky. when I lived there. Dr. Hill told yesterday that he intended to leave Manchester in January, that the town was too wicked for him and his family. They have but one child, a son, who is about 22 years old. He was in business here and a few months ago he sold his goods, put the money in his pockets and left his creditors to bewail their folly.

Dr. Hill said a party of men shot in front of his house recently and scared his wife and he could not afford to live in such a town.

### **Dancing called the religion of worst town in Kentucky**

Dancing has been the religion of this county about 100 years. The best people of the county have always danced or

patronized dancing. What is the result? One of the wickedest counties in the state. A county seat so godless and lawless that the people of the county visit it only when compelled to do so. In it are two church buildings and neither has a pastor. The county government reeks with corruption and the town has no government. Education is at a lower ebb than perhaps any county in the state. In the county seat are four saloons and in other parts of the county six, while divers distilleries dot the county which are to all intents and purposes saloons, as all the whiskey and brandy they make is sold on the ground for consumption. Drunkenness is almost universal. These are the results of dancing Christians.

All the dancing Christians in the land could not lead a single soul to Christ. They have no moral power; they are recognized by the world as its allies; they are never pious; never zealous for God though they may be for their church. They are the stumbling block over which the world is stumbling into hell. They are not Christians at all. The dance is simply a means of intoxication as is alcohol, tobacco, opium and all the long list of stimulants.

### **Sounds like rock and roll**

The pleasure it produces is animal, just as is that from the other causes mentioned. The thrill of the music, the regular movements of the body, the contact of the sexes, produce delightful sensations. So does the morphine habit, the opium habit, the tobacco habit, the whiskey habit. Every one of these minister to the sensual or animal nature. The cohabitation of the sexes does the same. In all these the nervous system is exhilarated, a sort of delightful delirium is produced and the individual is lost to the consciousness of physical suffering or mental suffering. "All goes merry as a marriage bell, What harm is there in the dance?" is constantly asked. We might answer, what harm is there in any of the other forms of intoxication? A sense of spiritual degradation always attends the indulgence. God always seems farther away, He is farther away. The soul has been insulted by giving supremacy to the animal. There is a conscious decline in spiritual power.

November 28, 1897

### **Local citizens seek to gratify their animal nature**

This afternoon the negroes were drunk on the street yelling and hollering though perfectly harmless. This was sufficient cause for everyone to stay though tonight, the town was as quiet as a graveyard. There is such a lack of fidelity in this people. They are controlled by impulses. The animal or lower nature is all they seek to gratify. This is the result in the long neglect of their moral and intellectual training, especially the former. There are no noble aspirations, no lofty purposes, no grand designs. How sad to see a people so capable yet so worthless. I have made out a list of the mature young men and young women of the town to whom I will propose the formation of a Literary Society. Their thoughts must be turned to something higher than mere animal. There is material here to make a good club if I can enlist it.



*The Webb Hotel, as it appeared when Rev. John Dickey was witnessing the goings-on around the square in 1898-99. Rev. Dickey usually stayed at the Lucas Hotel across the "square" from the Webb, thus had a good perch from which to witness the violence.*

November 29, 1897

**Damsel rescued from drunk on Greenbriar; "laws of chastity" not violated**

Bro. May came in from Benge today. Two miles from town he met a young man and a young woman in the road. The man was Gabe Potter, a handsome boy about 20, drunk and down off his horse holding the bridle of the young lady's horse with one hand while he was trying to pull the girl off the horse with the other. As Bro. May approached he told him to go on, drew his revolver, and told him if he looked back he would shoot him. He did look back and the girl says that Potter leveled his pistol at him and she knocked it down.

The girl told Bro. May to tell Mr. Carnahan, who lived at the next house, to come to her relief. The girl was employed by Mr. Carnahan's family, as cook and house girl, a very good looking young woman. Mr. Carnahan, Bro. May and another man who chanced to be at Mr. C.'s house came back, hollered at the fellow when they got in sight and he mounted his horse and rode away. The girl was bent on coming on to town and having him arrested but Mrs. Carnahan objected because the boy's mother was such a good woman.

Such is the feebleness of public sentiment on the subject of enforcing the law. This occurred in the highway about noon. Shame on such Civilization. It is said that the girl has been suspected of violating the laws of chastity, but in this case she was violently opposing the attacks of the drunken brute.

December 8, 1897

**Shooting up the town**

Last Sunday a number of the leading young men of the town and county were drunk on the streets, fighting, yelling, brawling. Yesterday Sheriff elect Bev White Jr. and William Treadway, ex-marshall emptied their revolvers at each other but nobody was hurt. Today some man was drunk and shooting on the street. He met Mrs. Burchell and the girls coming to church tonight and shot on the highway. Thus things go. Monday the petition was filed but this cannot relieve us for 12 months. Oh that we might get the saloonkeepers converted.

**Town under a curse**

Oh for the faith of an Abraham! Nothing short of it is equal to the work here. Sin and the devil reign. The town is under a curse and has been for 50 years. Oh for its deliverance from these hard masters. Oh for the holy fire to fall on my heart and fit me for this work! God send the fire on us all!

December 11, 1897

**Railing against the "sanctified preachers"**

Last night Robert Lucas, 20 years old, eldest son of Mrs. Amanda Lucas, proprietress of our hotel was drunk yelling like an Indian, cursing the "sanctified preachers." This morning he was up and out early doing the same thing throughout the forenoon.

Abe Pace recently pardoned out of the penitentiary where he was serving a life sentence for killing Allen Lew-

is, hotel keeper in Hyden was here and was raising a disturbance this morning. Sam Kash, his attorney, lives here and he told me that Pace ate some sort of soap until he spit blood and made the physician believe he had consumption and was about to die and on the certificate of the physician Gov. Bradley pardoned him. Now he is here ready to kill somebody and put the state to a vast expense.

### **Manchester more wicked than ever**

It is commonly remarked that Manchester is more wicked than ever before. Another saloon was opened in town this week, making 5 in all. The devil is loose but God is mightier than he, and will give us the victory. Glory be to His name! . . . This is a noisy day in town, drinking, carousing, cursing, laughing, shooting firecrackers and other pyrotechnics.

December 13, 1897

### **Taking aim at the saloons**

Light is breaking on the saloon question, Sam Kash, Police Judge, elect, of the town told me today that when he takes his seat Jan. 1, 1898 he will have the town corporation made legal, and then the saloon keeper will have to get town license, which now they have not. The thing to do is to get the new board of trustees to refuse license, then the saloons will have to close though they have state and government license.

Ance Baker [a saloon keeper] is one of the trustees. His conversation would settle the whole question if Mr Kash is right about the power of the new corporation. I pray God to convert him and for this I will labor day and night. I believe God will give us a majority of the trustees against license and March 18th have an election which will forever prohibit it. Glory be to God.

December 16, 1897

### **Taking aim at the dance**

Bro. Pickett . . . hailed fire and brimstone on dancing. To effect this, I suppose the dancers met en masse at James Reid's three miles from town, at the old Judge Reid's place last night. [This is almost certainly J. W. Reid's house on Greenbriar, on what is now Charlie Sizemore Road. J. W. Reid was a brother-in-law of Gen. T. T. Garrard, a former salt maker and Clay County Judge. The house, still standing as of this writing, was built about 1844.] As we came from Dr. Burchell's to church we met buggies, equestrians, and a two-horse wagon load going. Praise God, Misses Lucretia and Gertrude Reid, who live with their mother in a house in the yard of the old place, were at church testifying and praying. A few weeks ago they were leaders in the dance.

December 17, 1897

### **The dancers rage . . . but dance on**

The dancers are raging over Bro. Pickett's terrible onslaught. He read his attack Tuesday night and Wednesday night they had a dance. They are muttering over it still. The surgeon evidently pressed the place where the splinter had struck.

December 20, 1897

### **Some dancers relent; others shoot Roman candles**

Bro. Pickett preached a powerful sermon yesterday morning on "This is the will of God even your Sanctification," to a good sized audience. There was a strong opposition awakened in certain quarters by his denunciations of dancing but reaction has set in . . . There is great opposition in some quarters. We are scoffed at by some. This is usually by persons when drinking. It is an overflow of what is in the heart.

The Lucas hotel where I am boarding has ten regular boarders and I believe there is not a single one in sympathy with me. The madam of the house has a barroom. Seven of the boarders are enraged against Bro. Pickett; the oldest son gets wild, drunk and curses the "Sanctified preachers," downstairs and out in the yard etc. so we can see him.

As we, Bro. Pickett, and myself were returning from church Saturday morning some fellow just inside the door of Bill Treadway's saloon sang among other things, "Preacher, come in, Take a glass of Gin." He called us hypocrites, etc. As Bro. May and I were going to church Saturday night, from the same saloon they shot at us with Roman candles. When Bro. May and Pickett were at the hotel with me, one night when we came home from church the bed clothes were taken off and put under the beds. Similar things occur frequently. The devil is aroused. I am so glad there is something here to stir his ire. A religion that makes the devil mad is genuine.

December 21, 1897

### **The wages of gambling and liquor**

Today Robert Bennett shot and perhaps mortally wounded Robert Gregory, in Dr. Burchell's bottom near Roach's mill [near the intersection of Greenbriar Road and Liberty Hills Road]. They had been gambling and Bennett had beaten Gregory in the game. Bennet was sober and Gregory was drunk. Gregory and his crowd pursued Bennett, tried to kill him in town, followed him in the country with the above results. It is thought Bennett will be acquitted. So much for gambling and liquor.

There are a dozen lost souls that sleep under this roof — the hotel — every night. Last night I went down and prayed with four of them including the madam. Oh that this house may be saved!

December 26, 1897

### **Doing any good in Manchester?**

There were three men killed in the county yesterday, at least that is the report, two at a saloon 5 miles from town on Horse Creek, and one on Red Bird. The saloons are doing their legitimate work.

Bro. Hiram Farmer, a member of the Campbellite church who was converted during our recent meeting went into the country yesterday and attended a Campbellite meeting today on Martin's Creek. He told me after church tonight of what happened. There were four preachers at the service. Three preached or attempted to, but not a prayer was offered. He was shocked. They said a sinner had no right to pray, nor had anyone a right to pray for a sinner.



*This photo is dated 1906, about seven years after the period Rev. Dickey was reporting on. These men would have had an excellent view of the Webb Hotel across the square. Rev. Dickey's hotel, the Lucas, was just to the left of these men, on the block that is now Bridge Street. The men here no doubt were keenly aware of Rev. Dickey, who had become well known around the county.*

Referring to us, one said, "Are them fellers doing any good at Manchester?"

"They have just about made a Methodist of me," was his reply. His eyes are open. God's Spirit has done it.

December 31, 1897

### Happy in the "worst county in the mountains"

This is the last day of the year. It is 9 P.M. Bro. May is with me. Mrs. Lucas asked us to change our room after supper to give place for a man and his wife who wished to board here. She asked us to take a little room with the ceiling only 4 feet high on one side but large enough to give us room to walk about where the ceiling is higher than our heads. The room is comfortable, ceiled, with grate, and here we sit by a good coal fire, happy as though we were in a marble palace. It has snowed all day.

A number of men had a big time shooting Roman candles at each other. They laughed and shot and shot and laughed. It was some of our best citizens but two became angry at length and all quit . . . Sin still runs riot here. 16 saloons in the county, 5 of them in town and the consequent evil, but God is able to overthrow them all and inaugurate a reign of righteousness and I firmly believe He will do it. I praise God that the work of redeeming the mountains is so graciously going on. There are schools in every county seat now, except Manchester. Schools of high grade. No. McKee has none. What an advance in 15 years! I feel like shouting God's praises for calling me into this work. I am now beginning in the worst county in the mountains, morally, or as bad, and especially the county seat, but I was never happier, never more delighted with my work. I am lying in God's hands, not so anxious to do as be.

January 3, 1898, Manchester

### Skulduggery in the saloon business

I have just returned from A.W. Baker's. He is a member of the new Board of trustees, sworn in today. His brother and brother-in-law are two others so they have a majority. I went to talk to him about closing the saloons. He and his brother own one of the 5 that curse our town. I found him not only willing but anxious to talk on the subject.

I found that he was sick of the business. He opened the first saloon last May. He expected a monopoly for the county. Judge Wm Parker was his partner but there was such a pressure brought to bear on the Judge that he was forced to do something so he appointed a board of trustees for the town composed of men whom he believed would not grant license.

In this way he and Baker would keep the monopoly, but the board gave two licenses and then resigned. In the meantime the Judge sold out to Mr. Baker and his brother. The Judge then gave license to two others so that there are now five and everyone is losing money. The saloons have made so much disorder that Mr. Baker is thoroughly disgusted with himself as well as the whiskey business when he remembers that he really started the thing going by accepting the Judge's proposition.

I went to ask Mr. Baker to say he was willing to quit if the rest would, and if they would not, to put the license

to \$500 so that they would be compelled to quit. Praise the Lord he made exactly that proposition without my asking him to do so. I offered him my good offices to get the others to accept his proposition. He said he thought I was the proper one as I would not be suspected of having any mercenary motives.

Tomorrow morning D.V. and I shall go to each saloon keeper and ask him to close up and thus put an end to the iniquity. I believe that God is in it all that will be done.

January 4, 1898

### Meddling with the saloon keepers

I have been at work today looking into the saloon business. I find the dealers deceived into the belief that the town cannot tax them, now that they have license from the State and the two who have license from the old corporation or Board think the new Board cannot collect what is behind, what has accumulated the old Board of trustees resigned. I know of but one way, that is for the present Board to put up the license to \$500 and proceed to collect the old and the new. This is the only plan. Mr. W. Baker said last night the Board was ready to do this.

In my investigations today I found a lot for sale that I wish to buy. I have been looking at it ever since I have been here as the place or part of a place when we would want to put up our school building. It ought to be bought before it is improved. It lies opposite the Baptist Church. The old Dr. [name indistinct] place, where Judge John Wright now lives, is the place for the school, and this is a part of the property. I will do what the Lord leads me to do in this matter.

February 2, 1898

### Outbreaking sin at the Lucas

I have just returned from prayer meeting. There were three men and two boys present beside the sexton, a colored man. A letter from Bro. May this afternoon reports him teaching a singing school in the church at Hyden with 40 scholars at \$1. each. This will enable him to live while he calls the people to repentance. I am making poor progress here, I am standing by faith. The zeal of the young converts has abated, the people do not attend the regular services, as a rule, a few of course come. I have never seen a community so dead to everything like religion.

Then there is so much outbreaking sin. In this hotel cards are being played in two rooms while I write, one the main office which I passed coming in, and in an adjoining room I can hear the cards shuffling. I think everybody about the place swears and several of them the most blasphemous people I ever saw or heard.

April 13, 1898

### An ominous sign of the coming Baker-Howard feud

Wednesday morning the 6th, Wilson Howard and a man named Stores were shot and killed from ambush on Crane Creek this county and Ballard Howard was wounded. They were riding horseback up the creek with two Shackelfords and a Lewis and were half way between Gardner and Thena Bakers. The Bakers and Howards had been at outs for some

months over some timber which Tom Baker was hauling to the river for Israel Howard, son of Ballard Howard.

Tom and Israel had had a shooting match. Tom Baker and Ballard had had words and Tom had thrown an auger at Bal Howard. The Howards had been carrying their Winchesters as they passed up and down the creek by the Baker's houses. The Bakers, of course, were accused of the murder.

The following morning James Howard, son of Ballard Howard, County Assessor, met George Baker, father of the Baker boys in the road on Laurel Creek at John D. Coldiron's store and residence and killed him on sight with his Winchester. George Baker lived about 24 hours. The doctors took his bowels out and sewn up the torn parts and put them back but it was of no avail. Ballard Howard swore out warrants for John and Tom Baker and Charles Outen and asked for a guard to protect his life and property. The Judge granted it.

### Rival parties hole up in rival hotels

Saturday morning Judge Wright sent 40 men to bring in all parties banded together in the community where these murders occurred. They brought 8 or 9 Bakers and 2 of the Howards and their friends. They have been here ever since under guard of 15 or 20 men, the Bakers at the Lucas Hotel and the Howards at the Webb Hotel. The parties have their trials tomorrow.

I went to George Baker's burial at the Gap between Laurel Creek and Crane Creek. None of his 15 sons were with him in his last moments nor after he was shot. Three of his daughters were at the burial. The people were afraid to attend the burial. About 20 men and women were present, not half men and half dozen children.

While the men were completing the grave, after we arrived with the corpse, the reports of 6 or 7 guns were heard in the direction of Bal Howard's. It was parties shooting into his yard. It made a commotion among the people at the grave and I had to quiet them and urge them to stand at their post and bury the dead. They did so. I conducted services at the grave reading the 90th Psalms, singing "Rock of Ages," and praying.

The other dead were buried while we were doing this at a graveyard at the mouth of Crane. There has been great excitement over the county. What the out come will be we wait to see.

June 4. 1898

### The feud heats up dangerously

I have just returned from the burial of ex-sheriff William L. White. He was shot and killed on Sexton's Creek, the 2nd instant, near Bud Goforths. White met Thomas Baker, D. Baker, and a man named Helton in the road. Baker shot White with a Winchester, killing him in 20 minutes. Bakers say that White made an attempt to draw his pistol. Tom Baker got the drop, on him, his Winchester being already in his hands. The ball struck the body at the naval and passed through.

The corpse was brought to Daugh White's yesterday

and at 9:30 a.m. today we buried it. Miss Alice Callahan and I sang, "I will sing you a song etc." I prayed. Then when they were filling the grave up we sang, "Nearer My God to Thee." There were a hundred people present.

Just as the grave was made ready to receive the earth John G. White and Gill White, brothers of William White deceased, rode up. They live in Winchester, Theo. Cundiff went to Winchester for them. Cundiff accidentally shot himself this morning at Pigeon Roost Hill, He has a flesh wound in the leg.

### "Most offensive citizen of the county"

The killing is the result of the Howard - Baker feud. White's have shown a great sympathy for the Howards. On the 19th, last month, just as I was starting to Hyden I saw William White now deceased jump onto Jim Tish Philpot, a mulato, and beat and cuff him about. It seems that Philpot was an ally of the Bakers. White was drunk. During his term of office four years in length, he acquired the habit of drink. He has been the most offensive citizen of the county since I have been here. He was often drunk and at such times he was insulting and disagreeable.

He has a fine farm, a wife and several children, was about 35 years old. The Whites will now help the Howards to exterminate the Bakers. The Garrards have been in the habit of going on the bonds of the Bakers, I am told, so they are counted as allies of the Bakers by the Howard - White faction. If there could be such an upheaval here as the French-Eversole War made in Perry, we would have a new era in this county.

The old White-Garrard feud has been going on for fifty years, but has never broken out in violent form. It has kept the county back in moral and educational progress; and has really, protected crime, as each took sides in nearly every trouble that has come up in the county.

James Howard who killed George Baker came in and gave up about a month ago. Sid Baker, his brother-in-law who shot Charley Outen, an ally of of the Bakers, came in and gave up a few days ago. For this past week or ten days the Howards and their friends have carried their Winchesters all the time. James Howard and two of his brothers and Sid Baker his brother-in-law do this.

### 30 Winchesters in town today

The past few days a large number of the Whites and their friends have been under arms. I suppose there are 30 Winchesters in town today. The Bakers were in town a few days ago but kept off the streets. Al Baker rode into town in a buggy and Jim Howard seeing him made at him with his Winchester but was prevented from doing any violence. The Sheriff Beverly White, a brother of William White, deceased, was present but no notice was taken of it.

Yesterday Ibbie Baker, sister of the Baker boys, was at the Lucas Hotel where I board. She sent for me, out on the street, to come and escort her out of town, as she feared the Howards would kill her. I complied, though I could not believe she was in danger, yet other people thought differently. We met Miss Emma Baker, another sister, as we

returned from the burial today. Many People believe Jim Howard would kill either of them if he should meet them on the street.

The county is in a desperate condition. John G. White is now on the ground and he has shown himself a very dangerous man here in other days. He has killed his man and has always shown himself ready for a fight when there was a prospect for one. William White, deceased, was a bright business man. His mother was a Gilbert so he is a scion

of two of the most prominent families of the county. But his tyrannical disposition cost him his life. Tom Baker is doubtless a very bad man. He led the war on the Howards, killing two of them a few months ago. He is a cool, calculating, daring man.

### “A reign of terror” — “a happy deliverance”

The Bakers have been running Manchester ever since I have been in it. It has been a reign of terror. The Whites hold wealth, office and social position and are very determined men. The present turn in affairs will end the reign of the Bakers. It will be a happy deliverance. As the Whites have always held Supremacy in the county to a very great extent, we know about what to expect from them. The Sheriff, Beverly White, is a brother of the deceased, and has a good deal of the overbearing traits of his brother but he is a sober man and we may not expect any great break. May God lead in the councils of the people and direct everything to the clearing up of this foul atmosphere.

June 5, 1898

### Rev. Dickey’s “permanent peace” fantasy

I stayed at Dr. Burchell’s last night. . . . The Howards and Bakers are under bond to appear here today and fears are entertained of a fight between them. If there could be such an engagement and a half dozen of the leaders killed in it? That would terminate the trouble and lead to a permanent peace. The Court could then gather up the rest and prosecute them and the deck would soon be cleared. But I do not look for such results. Judge William Brown is a brave, cool-headed man and will carry everything through in peace.

June 8, 1898

### Troops needed to assure peace

News comes from Manchester today, that Judge Brown left for Frankfort early this morning to ask the Governor to furnish troops to aid in holding court. I am inclined to think the move a good one. Almost every man is afraid to take any part in the work of guarding the court, arresting men etc. because of the danger of awakening the ire of some desperado. Militia from a distance have nothing of this sort to intimidate them, I presume the Judge has found that he is powerless to enforce the law without some outside help. He is courageous and well balanced and will do the right thing, I believe.

The Perry and Breathitt feuds were stopped by State guards along with arrests and enabling the Grand Jury to make the indictments; then the Judge had the prisoners all

taken to Louisville from Breathitt — and from Perry to Winchester. I saw the Frenches and Eversoles pass through Jackson en route to Winchester. In these prisons they were kept for a long time and this stopped the shedding of blood. Few convictions were ever made but the war was stopped.

It may be necessary to do that in Clay. Nearly everybody takes sides in these feuds. This makes it hard to have the law enforced by the local authorities. Again, in this county, where the Whites and Garrards have been dividing the county for over fifty years, it is hard to enforce law. When one side attempts the other opposes. They have been taking sides in these court proceedings all these years and now the Garrards are on the bonds of the Bakers while the Whites are aligned with the Howards.

The Louisville Times of yesterday evening has a special from Manchester which has hardly a sentence of truth in it. It puts the Whites and the Bakers on the same side and includes the Philpots.

June 10, 1898

### State troops arrive. “The people will rejoice at deliverance”

Judge Brown returned today with State troops. He will now proceed to administer justice. I feel that he has acted wisely. He was at the mercy of one faction, as they were the principal officers of the court, Sheriff and Clerk. The people are not fit to try cases as they are afraid to convict men. The cases should be (tried) transferred to some other county. I trust that will be done. The work which Judge Brown has on his hands is delicate and difficult. May God guide him. The soldiers are from Louisville and Peewee Valley. The people will rejoice at deliverance.

June 11, 1898.

### Rev. Dickey’s plan for “permanent peace”: first class funerals

This morning I came to Manchester. There I found 37 soldiers. It is a Peewee Valley Company. Captain McCain Col. Forrester, Assistant Adj. General of Kentucky is with them, They came in yesterday afternoon. Judge Brown left Manchester Wednesday morning about daylight and Friday afternoon he had the soldiers on the ground. He went to Frankfort in person. This is pretty quick work. He found after two days observation that this was necessary and his conclusion was correct. There is not the respect for local authority necessary to enforce the law. Again The Whites are the officers and they are now parties to the feud.

If Judge Brown will do as Judge Lilly did in Perry — indict all the parties and then transfer the cases to some other county without bond he will stop blood shed. If however a few more men were killed it would go a long way toward permanent peace. First class funerals are greatly needed here. This may seem harsh but it is true.

If all the participants in the feud were in prison for four months they would become quiet and pacific. Their wrath would assuage and in a distant county the guilty might be convicted and the proper punishment inflicted.

A better sentiment must be formed here before we can

have a permanent peace. There is such a disposition to take sides. The Whites and the Garrards have had strife so long that their people or many of them seem to think that is the proper thing, at least the thing they like to have.

### **Enlightening a Lexington reporter**

I met my old friend Baxter, a reporter of Lexington. He had written me for an account of this feud, a few days ago, but I did not feel that I could afford to give it to him but I took him into a room at the Lucas Hotel where he is stopping and gave him a great deal of the inside of things. He was ready to leave but woefully ignorant of the true status. He had seen but one side, I did this in the interest of truth and justice. I felt that I would be guilty if I allowed falsehood to be published when I had such an excellent opportunity to give the truth. It is some-times criminal to keep silent.

June 16. 1898

### **Sizing up the wicked distillers**

I visited ten families today. Among them two distillers, ELihu Allen and James Bengé, son of Old David Bengé whom I visited yesterday. Mr. Allen talked very freely about his business but would not agree to quit unless he could sell his stills which he was trying to do. He is the father of the infant child mention-ed in the former entry. This has made a very serious disturb-ance in his home life. He has a wife and two children and is not over 40 I should think. He is a very sensible man but has been reared without God.

He asked me to visit his old father, who, he said, is a very wicked man. He was very cordial, expressed his appreciation of the interest I manifested in his family and pressed me to visit him again. I did not see Mr. Bengé, I saw only his daughter, Miss Florence, who has been attending school at London the past term with her sister, occupying one of the cottages. She is a splendid young woman, a fine teacher bitterly opposes her father and mother in their determination to make whiskey. The parents of both were distillers, hence it is hard for them to see the evil. They have made 800 gallons this year and the distillery is still running. These institutions are the curse of the community. Their removal would prove the greatest blessing that could come to it.

I visited Lee Bolling's house, It is an old log house standing out in the pasture field with no fence around it, no garden. The field belongs to Isaac Cornett another distiller in the neighborhood, who has made 800 gallons of whiskey this year, There was almost no furniture in the house, a stove, table, and two beds and this young woman with two babies and another in prospect, sits here, alone day in and day out with nothing to do, very little to eat or wear, while her husband drinks up much of his hard savings, though enriching these distillers. She says she sometimes has the presence of God. She wept while I prayed and talked freely of her condition. God help,

June 17 1898

### **Devil has his way on Town Branch**

Judge Brown closed Court today. He transferred the

cases of John Baker D.Baker and Tom Baker to Barboursville and sent the prisoners there without bail. He also transferred James Howard's Case to Laurel Circuit Court and sent him there without bail. D. and Tom Baker are indicted for murder of William White; and Jim Howard, for the murder of George Baker. The town is Quiet. Tonight about dark a negro man named James Collins was shot and killed in town on the town branch. I could not learn how it occurred. The devil seems to be having his way.

June 20. 1898

### **Bakers led away in irons; judge continues to drink**

I was in town a few hours this afternoon. Dined at Dr. Burchell's. Tom Baker and D. Baker, for killing William White are in Barboursville jail. They went away Thursday in charge of soldiers, in irons. John Baker also, with them for some crime. James Howard was taken to London jail by Sheriff Saturday. Soldiers did not return from Barboursville. Col. Forrester telegraphed to Gov. Bradley for permission to return home and it was granted. Judge Brown was surprised that they did not return. Col. was not pleased with some of Judge Brown's treatment. Quiet reigns. Jim Fish Philpot, Millard Philpot and James Fisher, cousins of the Philpots are charged with killing Collins. They surrendered today.

Judge White has a lovely home, a nice family but is killing himself drinking whiskey. He is an elegant gentleman, bright manly, noble. How sad. He once joined our church. His wife is a good woman, tries hard to train her children right, sup-ports the church, liberally.

July 3, 1898,

### **Assassination attempt on Gilbert Garrard, embers blaze**

I stayed at Dr. Burchell's near Manchester last night. . . About 9 o'clock this morning as Gilbert Garrard [Gen. T. T. Garrard's son] and his wife were on their way to the Pace's Creek school house to hold S.School, two shots were discharged at him, one piercing his coat and the other cutting his horse. He cried out,"O Lord I am shot". His wife said "No, you are not, get away from here quick." He obeyed and she looked around, saw where the smoke was 23 yards distant. The parties were concealed in the under growth with a mountain of timber behind them.

Upon examination the place where they were secreted showed that two or three men had been there. There were chicken bones and wrapping paper where they had eaten breakfast. They ran as their tracks showed and were worse scared than either Mr. Garrard or his wife. There is a very bitter feeling between the Garrards and the Whites with greater or less intensity for many years. But it has never been so bitter as during the last 8 months.

The cause of this is the race for Sheriff between Gilbert Garrard and B.P. White, just last November. Since then there have been frequent clashes that came near ending in death. Since the Whites have suffered in the death of William White, this feeling has been more intensified by the fact that Gilbert Garrard went on Tom Baker's bond last Nov. when he was indicted for arson, though this was before the

Whites and Bakers became enemies. But the Whites hold this against him I have heard some of them say. Last week Gen. Garrard went on John Baker's bond who is in Barboersville jail. This I think has caused the smoldering embers to blaze up, and the assault this morning is the result.

July 11, 1898

#### **Rev. Dickey drawn into feud**

The Garrards think they are drawing a coil around the would be assassins of Gilbert Garrard. They have evidence that implicates six persons. Three they think were in ambush. A man who has no interest whatever in S. Schools asked some children in the neighborhood when the Pace's S. School meets, whether morning or afternoon. I changed from morning to afternoon about a month ago. The 16 yr. old daughter of this man was heard to say, "I would not go to Pace's S.S. Sunday for \$2,000." The father is capable of doing such a deed. Circumstances throws suspicion on others.

The Bakers must be bad men. They have that name. They have always escaped punishment. They have been on rather intimate terms with the Garrards though so far beneath them socially. Both are Democrats and both are active in campaigns. The Bakers now at war with the Whites and the Whites interpret the action of the Garrards in going on bonds of the Bakers as an effort to destroy them. The Garrards deny the charge saying it is only to repay them for past favors and that the Bakers have never been proven to be bad men in the courts.

July 5, 1898

#### **First class funerals would solve everything**

Word comes today that Charles Wooton is dead and that before dying he confessed that himself, Thos. Baker and Baker's son killed the Howards on Crain Creek. The whole story lacks confirmation, even Wooton's death. The Garrards believe the Whites had threat-tempt at Gilbert Garrard's life made by hired accomplices. They are pretty certain from circumstantial evidence that they know who the parties are. Bro. Horton's wife was a sister of Gen. T.T. Garrard, hence his sin is being a cousin to Gilbert Garrard. They all live in this community. I believe the drift of affairs is leading to a final and permanent peace between the Whites and Garrards and that means much to this county. Removals or first class funerals seem to be only remedy.

July 6, 1898

#### **Stories about killings change**

Word comes that two sons of Tom Baker are being tried at Manchester on the charge of participating in the killing of Wilson Howard and Stores and that the witnesses are contradicting the statements they made when Tom Baker was tried on the same charge. I will find out when in town what are the real facts in the case. They now say it was Tom Baker and his sons.

July 7, 1898

#### **Sizing up the players in the Garrard-White feud**

I was at Manchester a little while this morning. Old man Wright told me that he heard Gilbert say, in the court house, when he signed Tom Baker's bond for arson, "I am for the Bakers right or wrong, they are my friends and I will stand by them." Gilbert Garrard is a nice man, a moral man, a clever, good citizen but such statements as that put into action will ruin any country. Lloyd Walker says Jim Garrard said on the streets of Manchester last winter, drunk, to the Bakers, "Kill who you please we will stand by you."

Last week Gen. Garrard went on John Baker's bond which took him out of the Barboersville Jail and turned him loose on the country. The Whites boys John G., Will who was killed, and Bev. have been doing a great many reckless things, insulting men, running over them rough shod and bullying them on every hand. The friends of the Garrards have been the victims of injustice very largely, though it is not confined to them. It is such things that make feudal wars. It has made this one.

The Whites and Garrards are people of brains and wealth; but like other mortals they have their faults, and cannot call these faults virtues.

I heard the trial of Tom Baker's son and a fellow named Barrett, yesterday, for the killing of Wilson Howard and Stores. Hacker testified under oath, that Tom Baker, Barrett, and Jim Baker, Tom's son, killed Howard and Stores; that they told him that if he told it they would kill him, and this was the reason that he testified just the opposite, at the examining trial of Tom Baker. A woman made a similar statement excusing her perjury. It seems that one John Baker, half brother to George Baker, hence half uncle to Tom Baker, has turned against Tom and the others of the family and he is stirring up this prosecution. There seems, now, a fair prospect of bringing the Bakers to justice. If the [would-be] assassins of Gilbert Garrard could be convicted and about four more men either converted or killed we would have a permanent peace.

One of Tom Baker's brothers . . . gave a \$20 note to Bige Hampton to collect. Alan Baker, his brother, saw it and tore it up, telling Bige that it was forgery.

#### **A small thing here to kill a man**

Smallpox is reported in this county and the town will probably be quarantined tomorrow. Tom Baker's second son was held to answer for drawing a pistol on Bal Howard last winter. He is out on bond. The criminal record of this county is fearful.

So many men have killed their men and have thus made so many orphans and widows. It is a small thing here to kill a man. It is so common. I remember when I first went to Breathitt how I was shocked at the stolid indifference with which the news was received of a killing near town, one Sunday afternoon. No one seemed moved. No one offered to go and see about the dead man or arrest the murderer. They laughed about it.

David Lunceford a strong, stubborn half-deaf man had killed a young (boy) man that had come to his house and

raised a disturbance with him, then had gone away and came back either with a weapon or some other person and Dave killed him. It is so all over these mountains.

July 9, 1898

#### **Even the horses are victims**

News comes today that William Treadway's horse was shot six times and killed last night in Mrs. Lucas' livery stable in Manchester. He had bought the horse from Tom Baker. I have not learned upon whom suspicion rests. Treadway has not been a partisan in (any) sense, in the troubles. He and Reuben Woods guarded Alan Baker from the store, in town into which Jim ran him, a few weeks ago to his residence. This is all I have heard. This was done at the insistence of Woods, the town Marshal.

A man named Beatty came to Gilbert Garrard today and said that a compromise was desired. Gilbert said he did not know who to compromise with.

A party of Cincinnati people are camping at the salt furnace tonight. [This most certainly refers to the Union Salt Works at Garrard. By this time it was one of the very few, if not the only one, left, down from at least 18 some 50 years or so earlier.] They came to Berea on the train and then got horses and are going through to Middlesboro. The ladies ride with a spur on either side of their horses. It is just a pleasure party, taking an outing.

July 9, 1898

#### **Manchester "hated by everybody in the county." Even the railroad**

Left Bro. Horton's this morning. Met the engineers of the Black Diamond R.R. moving their camp from Rader to Goose Creek. Their present survey misses Manchester one mile which is a good thing. It will carry the county seat to a better site and start a new town. Manchester is hated by everybody in the county. This r.r. proposes to start at Chicago and terminates at Charleston, S.C. They are surveying for a double track. English Capital is to build it and Englishmen to run it. It will be a God-send to this Country. [This scheme was pretty much like the canal proposed in the 1830s for roughly the same route. Both were wishful thinking.]

July 12, 1898

#### **A missed opportunity; a bawdy house killing**

I left Bro. Rigg's This morning, dined at Isaac Chestnuts [on Sextons Creek] and arrived here at 5 o'clock. I find the old gentleman who is 83 years old, very feeble in mind, His memory is very weak, He can not tell when his father, John Gilbert, came to Kentucky. I am doomed to disappointment in regard to that, so important in Clay History. No record kept and memory has failed. This is the case so often.

The day has been cool and pleasant. I learned today that young Lewis, a white man, killed Cotton Collins and mortally wounded Dan Collins in a Hawkins woman's bawdy house, near Manchester, last Saturday night.

July 14, 1898

#### **Thirty-two bullet holes; the "war" heats up**

I left Mr. Gilbert's yesterday at 1 p.m. and arrived here [Beattyville] at 6 p.m., stopping in Booneville. . . . Since coming here I learn that John Baker and Frank Clark were shot and killed at the mouth of Horse Creek in Clay Co. Ky. the 20th just as they were going to Gen. Garrard's from Al. Baker's in Manchester. It was just a little after dark. One of the Coroner's jury said Baker had 32 bullet holes in him and Clark eleven. They were literally riddled. After the first fire there was a short silence, then it began again and continued some time.

There was a third man with them, Dick McCollum. He says there were three of the assassins. After the first fire they ran on their victims and dispatched them. John Baker has been charged with all manner of crimes though he is a young man, inside of 25 years. He has a wife and one or two children. His father, Garrard Baker, a relative of George Baker and his sons, was assassinated when John was only 10 years old. He swore then that he would avenge his father's death when he was old enough. A man named Wilson was charged with the crime.

A few years ago Wilson was waylaid and killed and John was tried for the crime and acquitted. Wilson had been tried and acquitted also.

Last winter the residence of Wilson's widow was burned. Baker was indicted for stealing meat but was acquitted. He seems to be one of those men so numerous in the mountains who could always prove himself innocent. But Nemesis had followed him overtaken him and has been avenged upon him.

Frank Clark was a negro who had been consorting with the Bakers and Garrards. His assassination was incidental. He was with John Baker and had to be killed to conceal the crime. Gen. Garrard had bailed Baker out of the Barboursville jail about three weeks before this happened and a few days before Gilbert Garrard was shot at. A young man who lives in Manchester, young Brittain, said to me here this morning that Garrards had Baker bailed out for a purpose. I knew the Whites would take that view of it and so expressed myself when I heard it. Brittain sympathizes with the Whites.

Gilbert Garrard and wife have fled the country. The Whites and the Garrards have "sown to the wind and they are reaping the whirlwind." Clay County is having a baptism of fire. No doubt more will be killed. Several of the Bakers will be convicted of murder in the courts and will be either hung or sentenced to life imprisonment. The slayers of John Baker and Frank Clark may be apprehended and punished and those who attempted to assassinate Gilbert Garrard.

After the war is over there is prospect of permanent peace. God hasten the day in His own way. The county will yet blossom as a garden. Oh for grace and wisdom to do my part in the great revival that is coming.

*Continued on page 62*

# Headlines from the Mountain Echo

Not to be outdone by newspapers in New York, New Orleans and Cincinnati, the 'Mountain Echo' in nearby London kept up a lively stream of Clay County stories in the 1870s, 80s and 90s.

1876, Jan 21 – Hopper Gilbert steals a French Harp and is locked up

1876, April 21 – “Hopper ‘Go away and sin no more’”

1877, Jan 12 – “If Gen. Grant has any soldiers to spare wish he’d send ‘em over to Clay.”

1878, Nov. 1 – Barton Simpson held for murder of James H. White

1879, Jan 24 – Viney Powell’s whorehouse trashed– 83-year-old Frederick Lincks is a father

1879, Feb. 28 – Mary J. Eaton arrested for murder of her stepchild

1879, March 14 – More on above case

1879, March 28 – James House murdered on Horse Creek by “Filpots”

1879, April 4 – About four hundred indictments stolen from Clay Clerk’s office. On the docket is Barton Simpson for killing James H. White

1879, Aug. 29 – Mrs. James H. White in London for trial of Barton Simpson

1879, Sept. 5 – Jurly deadlocks in trial of Barton Simpson

1881, Dec 2 – Laura R. White opens an architecture office in Washington D. C.

1888, Feb. 24 and March 2 – Killings

1888, March 9 – Raftmen report good sales from timber

1888, Oct 19 – Killing on Red Bird

1889, Aug 8 – Killing during election at Big Creek

1891 June 17 – Man would risk a dog’s bite every day of the week to get to see those Manchester girls

1891, July 17 – Killing at Pigeon Roost over election

1891 Nov 6 – Judge J. W. Reid dies of stroke

1892, Feb. 19 – Two men rob safe

1892, Feb. 26 – At Panco J. O. Barger with his 15 boys and 10 girls marries Mackie Hensley with her six children

1892, Aug 25 – White and Garrard women in London together makes society news. On same page story about “several drinking shops” in Clay on way to London.

1892, Oct. 7 – Woman’s Industrial Training school proposed for Clay

1892, Oct. 14 – Pomp Bates dies in jail

1893, March 3 – Several Clay County black men enlist in army

- 1893, Oct 27 – Railroad that had been proposed to Manchester may not come off.
- 1895, Jan. 11 – Rains give timber people “splendid tide.”
- 1895, Feb. 15 – Dale C. Reid killed in W. Va (Hatfield/McCoy feud)
- 1895, Feb 22 – Philpots and others acquitted in murder trial
- 1895, March 22 – Sheriff W. L. White and brother B. P. transport prisoners
- 1895, Aug. 16 – R. C. Ford, Democratic nominee for Treasury, accuses men of horse stealing. “Mr. Ford will learn after awhile that everything that sells cheap under a Democratic administration is not stolen.”
- 1896, Sept. 25 – “Every White of the name in Clay County is for John D. White for Congress.”
- 1896, Nov. 13 – Rev. Dickey injured
- 1898, April 15 – A. B. Howard, Wilson Howard and Burchel Store ambushed on Crane
- 1898, April 22 – Baker brothers acquitted of killing Howards. Sid Baker shot
- 1898, May 24 – Jim Howard surrenders
- 1898, June 14 – Troops arrive to suppress Baker/Howard feud
- 1898, June 17 – Six Bakers surrender
- 1898, June 23 – James Collins killed – Jim Howard lodged in London jail
- 1898, July 8 – Attempted assassination of Gilbert Garrard
- 1898, Aug. 12 – Jim Howard trial
- 1898, Aug 19 – Jim Howard trial
- 1899, March 3 – Jim Howard trial redux
- 1899, March 24 – Sheriff B. P. White transports prisoners
- 1899, April 28 – Manchester set for telephone service
- 1899, May 12 – Bail set for Bakers
- 1899, May 26 – Jim Howard released on \$5,000 bail
- 1899, June 9 – Trial for Bakers opens amidst Gatling guns and troops etc.
- 1899, June 16 – Tom Baker shot down
- 1899, June 30 – False report of Louisville Times reported
- 1899, July 14 – Arm and leg shot off
- 1899, July 21 – “Bloodiest Battle in the History of Clay”
- 1899, July 21 – “His Head Mulitated”
- 1899, Aug 11 – James Baker acquitted
- 1899, Aug 18 – “Shot from Ambush”
- 1899, Aug 25 – Caleb Powers attends rabidly Republican affair in London
- 1899, Sept 15 – Warrant issued for J. T. Griffin for muder of Sheriff Wash Thacker
- 1899, Sept 29 – Anderson Griffin arrested
- 1899, Dec. 22 – Killing at Benge - more Philpot carnage
- 1899, Dec. 29 – Brothers kill each other discussing Philpot/Griffin feud

# Dead Summer in a Dark City, Addendum

*A retired cop revisits the story of Harvey Dezarn, the Manchester police chief gunned down in the mid-1930s violence*

L J Smothers

On August 9th, 1936, at approximately 10:00 PM, Police Chief Harvey DeZarn was killed on the streets of Manchester, Kentucky. That's what is known, and that's what was reported in Ohio, Tennessee, Kentucky and New York newspapers. Trying to gather further information on this incident was difficult.

After the CCAN story was printed in the fall of 2010, and reprinted in the August, 2011, Manchester Enterprise, the "naysayers" and "stand-by" witnesses started chirping in about the event. I wonder where these folks were when I was collectively seeking the facts.

I interviewed over thirty people (2010), in and around Manchester, to find out what happened, what events brought it about and what was done about it. On one occasion, a stout hearted soul met me at the door with just a little bit more than an attitude.

A majority of the witnesses asked that their names not be used. I concurred, reluctantly. Most disputes around the shooting involved the actual scene of the crime and the moments after the attack. This summer I went back and reinvestigated. There was a "new" group of witnesses who reported another version (they didn't want me to use their names either). So, I listened, and this time, most of the story-telling was unsolicited. The biggest discrepancy, they said, was the actual scene of the crime (See Map). This round of story-tellers was relating the testimony of their parents and the story told to their family the night of the killing. Here's their story:

At or about 10:00 PM, on the night of August 9, 1936, Chief Harvey DeZarn was making his rounds in downtown Manchester. It was Sunday and the almanac recorded a three-quarter full moon. A relative of the owners of the Marcum general store (on the fork of Littleton & Marcum Avenue) stated that a relative had to go into Manchester that night to retrieve a 1931 Ford Pick-up truck he allowed Chief DeZarn to bor-

row earlier. One child of a true eyewitness said his father saw DeZarn shortly before the shooting walking west on Bridge Street by the First State Bank. Amenities were exchanged as the Chief was approaching Richmond Road.

I can't know what Harvey was thinking about that night, but the entire

city police force, save him, had quit the day before. The atmosphere in town was "thick." I reckon Harvey knew somethin' was "in the air" as he walked the streets and knew that he was alone.

Another indirect witness revealed that, according to his father, the Chief was approaching the businesses directly across from Baker's grocery store and the pool hall on Richmond Road (today the City Police Headquarters is located in that area). The establishments were a couple of "Juke Joints": the Red Star, the Blue Moon and a café known as The Tearoom at the corner of Town Branch Rd. After checking out the three establishments, Chief DeZarn started walking East across Richmond Road toward the Pool Hall. He approached a small wooden bridge built over the drainage ditch. Two men positioned on the roof of the "Red Star" must have felt a sense of hubris as they cocked and aimed their devices. Harvey stopped at the curb; maybe he heard something, maybe not.

As he stepped to the crown of the small bridge, the sound of thunder was heard; in this case, accompanied by 12 gauge double-aught lightning bolts (Some still scar the north side of the former pool hall).

According to the new witnesses (2011), Harvey received most of the damage to his mid and lower extremities. The story goes that the two perpetrators, on top of the "Red Star," ran to an establishment in Man-



chester and returned their borrowed shotguns.

Meanwhile, witnesses said that Harvey did moan, but nobody remembers his last words. Harvey was either carried by hand or in the "Marcum" truck to the Webb Hotel across the square. Harvey's spine was cut in two, his heart perforated and his shirt peppered and shot of.

Chief Dezarn's shift had ended. His badge was retrieved and given to the Clay County Sheriff.

Most folks in town knew who was responsible for the mayhem and why. It seems like it was about "whiskey" and the pros and cons of those who controlled

it. It is said that the two "gun handlers" were eventually "eliminated by design" by their own kind. It seems like everyone knew who was involved, but no one was "talkin" especially after their deaths . . . even to this day. No law enforcement outside Clay County was called in, it seems that the only official report was a death certificate recorded in Frankfort that listed Chief Dezarn "gunned down by shotguns and murdered" as cause of death. A semblance of truce between the factions was established just a month after when Manchester citizens voted to go "dry."

EPILOGUE: The City's Loss. People who knew Chief Harvey Dezarn (or as their parents remembered) related that he was a bit "dark in his moods" and a disciplinarian. He was a bit of "teetotaler" and notorious for voicing his opinion on any subject. He usually brushed aside or ignored opposing views (a definite trait of the Dezarn clan). What we cannot ignore . .

## THE ZANESVILLE SIGNAL

ZANESVILLE, O., MONDAY EVENING, AUG. 10, 1936

### Police Chief Killed In Front of Jail

Manchester, Ky., Aug. 10.—Chief of Police Harve Dezarn, 45, was shot to death in front of the city jail last night.

Dezarn, who had been chief of police about one month, was felled by buck shots from a shot gun fired from across the street near a pool room on Main street.

The officer had visited the jail to investigate a disturbance among the prisoners. He was shot as he left the jail door. No arrest had been made this morning.

Manchester's Main street in recent years was the scene of several spectacular assassinations.

Dezarn is survived by his widow and five children.

. and less we forget, that on that summer night whoever Harvey was, whatever he did or wherever he walked, the City of Manchester had a "Chief".

Shortly after Harvey's passing, the City voted to make Manchester a "dry" community. In the summer of 2011, the City of Manchester voted to "rewet the whistles and jugs of their sisters and brethren." That was seventy five years almost to the day Harvey died.

So that's the other version. This time I "kept the dog home and barked myself." My cousin was Chief Dezarn, the two Prometheus ambushers and co-conspirators were kin also.

It seemed that all the involved parties were alleged Little Beach Creek dwellers. In those violent years of the thirties, several of Clay County's finest and worst met their demise on Manchester's streets. Most are documented in the book, *Heroes & Skallywags*. It was definitely the worst of times.

I was a Policeman in Miami, Florida for 28 years and I know the apprehension which occurs while patrolling alone on dark, seemingly abandoned streets. The job is not for the "faint of heart," but of course my DNA has some Dezarn "stuff" and my roots grew on the banks of the Little Beech Creek . . . so I had an edge.

In August, 2012, a plaque was placed at the "Fallen Officer Law Enforcement Memorial" in Washington D.C. The plaque honored Harvey Calvin Dezarn, Police Chief of Manchester, Kentucky. One native son

*Continued on page 65*

# Willis Roberts heads west

By Willis Beryl Roberts

My Grandfather, Willis Daniel Roberts, was born near the banks of Goose Creek in Clay County, Kentucky on January 26, 1873. His parents were Felix Garrard and Tennessee Roberts. Felix was born in 1845, and Tennessee in 1850. They were both born in Clay County, Kentucky. Felix was the oldest child of George Washington and Malinda Roberts. Tennessee died about 1883, when Willis was 10 years old. It is believed she is buried in an unmarked grave in the Roberts Family Cemetery on the side of a "hollar" near Goose Creek. Felix moved to Arkansas, shortly after her death, with his eight children and his father, George Washington Roberts. His younger brothers Andrew Mack and John Edward Roberts and their families had already left Kentucky for wide open spaces of Oregon in 1879. Felix and his family were in Arkansas only three years when Felix died in 1886. The small children were taken in by family members. At 13 years old, Willis had lost his mother and father within three years. Back in Kentucky Willis' baby brother, John, died at two months in January 1878.

Willis' paternal grandparents were George Washington and Malinda Roberts. George Washington was born in 1814 in Clay County, Kentucky. Malinda was born in 1822 in Clay County, Kentucky and died in 1878 in Clay County. Linda Sibley, my cousin in Texas, provided me with research information that George Washington Roberts served in the Civil War. Her research showed that George Washington Roberts served in Company A, 14th Kentucky Volunteer Calvary. He enlisted August 15, 1862 and mustered out September 16, 1863 at MySvl. He died in 1894 in Arkansas at 80 years old. In 2008, my wife Patricia, and I flew to Arkansas to meet my third cousin, Willis Scott Hensley. He took us to several rural cemeteries where many Roberts' were laid to eternal rest. He took us to the Sherman Marshall Cemetery in Newton County where, according to oral family history, George Washington and Felix are buried in unmarked graves.

Willis' maternal grandparents were Thomas Boone and Nancy Roberts (Bowling). Thomas Boone Roberts was born April 16, 1808 in Lee County, Virginia. He was an older brother of George Washington Roberts. At age 18, Thomas married Nancy Bowling on July 10, 1826. One of their twin daughters, Tennessee, was Willis' mother. The other twin was named Alabama. Thomas Boone died March 4, 1880 and is buried at Salem Predestinarian Baptist Church Cemetery in Boone County, Kentucky. I have a photo of Thomas Boone's grave marker and it has a Bible engraved in a circle above his name on the marker.

Willis' great-grandparents were Jesse and Nancy Roberts (Anderson) Jesse was born in the colony of North Carolina in April 1763. He had two known brothers, Joseph and Moses. Nancy was born in 1774. She was the daughter of Peter and Margaret Anderson Sr. Jesse and Nancy married in 1790 in Buncombe County, North Carolina. In 1796, Jesse and Nancy migrated to Virginia with their two young daughters, Elizabeth and Rachel. Tax records show they lived in the Powell Valley section of Lee County, Virginia for eleven years. Research, by Linda Sibley, shows Jesse's father was James Roberts, who came from England around 1730.

When Jesse and Nancy settled in Clay County they were one of the first few families among the Native Americans. Other pioneers were the Ashers, Gilberts, and Callahans. The most famous pioneer of Clay County was frontiersman/pioneer, Daniel Boone. Boone spent time in the area as a surveyor for land "speculators" who lived in Pennsylvania. Jesse and Nancy named one of their sons, Willis' maternal grandfather, Thomas Boone Roberts. The name Daniel has been passed down through generations to, my grandfather, Willis Daniel Roberts Sr. and my father Willis Daniel Roberts Jr. Jesse died in 1823 at the age of 59 years. Nancy died July 1, 1838 at the age of 64 years. Both died in Clay County and are buried in the Roberts Family Cemetery, which became part of Leslie in 1878.

Willis (my grandfather) came from a large family, which was not unusual for pioneer families. His oldest sibling was Millard Fillmore who was born August 25, 1868; next was Mack born March 28, 1871; then Willis on January 26, 1873; America Rose born January 25, 1875; and baby John was born in November 1877. The last three children were William born September 6, 1879; Thomas born February 15, 1881; and Martha born January 11, 1883. No information has been found on the last three children. Millard and Willis went to Oregon around 1886; we do not know if they traveled together. My dad, Willis Jr., always told me that his father came to Oregon in a covered wagon with an aunt. Andrew Mack Roberts was in Central Oregon at that time. John E. Roberts had returned to Kentucky with his wife America and family in 1884, so I don't know who the aunt might have been. Andrew Mack had several homesteads about 45 miles east of present day Prineville, Oregon near the John Day River. Willis and Millard worked on cattle and sheep ranches. Soon they decided they wanted a homestead. To get a homestead they had to settle on unimproved land and after showing improvements and living on the land for five years, they could apply for a patent from the Federal Land Office in The Dalles, Oregon. Millard patented his claim in 1902. It is not known when he sold his 160 acre homestead. Willis settled on his homestead about 12 miles southeast of Ashwood, Oregon and 20 miles northwest of his uncle Andrew Mack's homestead in 1894. Millard's homestead was about 20 miles east of uncle Andrew Mack. Willis patented his homestead July 15, 1899. On March 5, 1900, he sold his 160 acres to Jacob Kaser. A tall butte on Willis' homestead was named "Roberts' Butte" and still named that today.

Willis and Millard went to North Central Oregon about 1902 and settled near Wamic, in Wasco County. It is not known if they worked on the same ranches, but they were in the same area. Millard was married to Polly Estep. She was from the Estep family in Clay County, Kentucky. No information has been found about where or when they were married. The 1910 census shows Millard in a logging camp in Clackamas County, Oregon. He is widowed. Annie Lauri was his favorite fiddle tune so they named their only child Annie Lauri Roberts. She was born in Oregon January 28, 1904 and died in Los Angeles, California October 1, 1994. In 1931, Millard traveled to Harpster, Idaho and settled in a "fixer up cabin" on the South Fork of the Clearwater River. The neighbors

soon named him "Dad" Roberts for his kindness and generosity. He loved playing his fiddle and he carried his fiddle in a "gunny sack" everywhere he went. The parents of two young neighbor girls, Eldene Wasem and Edna Collins lived near Dad Roberts. Eldene and Edna have told me about dancing to Dad's fiddle music when they were little girls. Eldene, who now lives in Grangeville, Idaho, did a wonderful article on Dad in the Fall and Winter 2012 edition of the Clay County Ancestral News. Edna's daughter, Connie McLeod, who now lives in Clarkston, Washington, was nine years old when Dad drowned in the South Fork of the Clearwater River near Harpster in 1954. Connie, who is a very skilled painter, has painted several pictures of Dad Roberts that have been displayed in art shows. She told me about the wonderful memories she relived as she painted each picture. She told me about having several offers to sell them, but just couldn't part with them as she would be parting with those special memories of "Dad" Roberts. When Connie found out I was the great nephew of Dad Roberts, she said that she knew the pictures belonged with me. I felt I was the luckiest person on earth when she offered to sell them to me. I have them hanging on my living room wall. He was the first old time fiddling champion at Wieser, Idaho in 1953. My grandfather, Willis, was an accomplished banjo player. I don't know if they ever played together. I believe it is because of them that I became a fiddle player.

**W**illis stayed in North Central Oregon working on ranches. The year 1909 was the start of the great railroad race up the Deschutes River Canyon from the Columbia River into Central Oregon. Willis growing tired of ranch work went to Maupin and started work for the Oregon Trunk Railroad, which was owned by the Spokane, Portland and Seattle Railway. (SP&S) Rail camps were set up every few miles and the laborers worked each direction until they met the next camp laborers. The back breaking work was done by pick, shovel and dynamite. While working in a camp in Maupin, Willis met a young lady, Cora Russell, who was a waitress in the local restaurant. On May 26, 1912, they were married in Maupin, Oregon. Willis continued his employment with the SP&S Railway until he retired on January 26, 1945.

The following article was in a 1961 SP&S history magazine about a severe snow storm that blocked the railroad up the steep Deschutes Canyon in November 1921.

Ahead of the tapioca snow came a silver thaw and everything was glazed and slick. When it started to snow, the rice-like particles slid down the steep glazed canyon walls and funneled on down onto the track and into the Deschutes River. Places like cuts were funneled full and then some.

When passenger train #102 made it's run at the cut at mile post 68 1/2 and found she couldn't plow through, they decided to run back to Maupin. The cuts had refilled behind them and there they sat. Soon the doors had to be opened on both sides of the baggage cars so the snow could drift on through instead of piling up against them and tipping them over. It took crews working with snow plow equipment from both ends about two weeks to reach to reach the train.

Frieda inspector Willis Roberts, whose son, Willis Roberts Jr, is our Section Foreman at Nena today, did the snowbound crew a long-remembered good turn during their trouble; he butchered one of his beef and sledged it in to them for a change of diet.

My grandparents Willis Daniel and Cora Mae Roberts (Russell) had six children. (1) Willis Daniel Roberts Jr. (my father) was born July 16, 1913; Mable M. Roberts on November 13, 1916; Lloyd D. Roberts on February 2, 1919; Beryl Dale Roberts on June 22, 1921; Millard F. Roberts on October 27, 1923; and Erma M. Roberts was born March 1, 1935. Willis Jr. (my father) worked



*Willis D. & Cora M. Roberts. Wedding Day May 26, 1912.*

for the SP&S Railway, as a supervisor, for 34 years retiring in 1976. Willis Jr. died March 28, 1997. Mabel spent her career as a nurse. Lloyd worked as a plumber for the SP&S for 39 years, retiring in 1985. He died May 31, 1999. Beryl died in Germany in World War II on July 25, 1945. Millard was a truck driver for Consolidated Freightways for 42 yrs. Erma spent her career as a nurse.

The children of Willis and Cora Roberts, Sr.

My parents Willis D. Roberts Jr. and Ellen M. Campbell were married in 1942. They had five children: Lloyd Dorwin, Marylou, Millard Dale, Willis Beryl (yours truly), and Mabel.

Mabel married Orin Farlow. They had four children. Delores; Dorthy; Daniel B; and Donna Lynn.

Lloyd D. Roberts married Betty Rupert. They had three children. Patsy Jean; Terry Ray; and Gary Lee.

Millard married Kitty Oaks. They had a son, Millard F. Roberts II, who was a career police officer in Portland, Oregon. He was also a Captain in the U.S. Coast Guard Reserve.

Erma married Hubert Test. They had four children. Mary; Hubert Jr.; Catherine; and Stephanie.

Willis Sr. had four grandchildren who served in the military. Willis Beryl, Patsy Jean, Terry Ray, and Millard F. II all served in the military during the Vietnam Era.

Willis Sr.'s sister, America Rose, was raised by family in Arkansas after Felix died. Her two brothers, Willis and Millard were in Oregon by 1887 and she no doubt felt she would never see them again. America married Alex Lewis in 1892. They had eleven children. America died June 28, 1952. Alex died September 18, 1958. They are buried in Venus Cemetery in Madison County, Arkansas.



Willis & Cora Roberts. Willis Jr. in seat. Sept. 1915.

I have the original letter that America wrote February 6, 1945 from Aurora, Arkansas to her brother in Oregon.

Mr. Willis Roberts Dearest brother. How are you all by now. This leaves us all able to go and do a bit of work, but we have some bad weather here some snow, bit of sleet and not very much rain and not much sunshine. Well if we hear it's true the war will soon be over that will be a great joy. My it has been so long. My I sure will be pleased when that is done. If hitler gets whipped my I will be glad and I think he will sure get whipped so I would quit if I were him but I don't think they will let him quit now. I sure don't. Well, how is all of your sons and Cora. Well farm time is here and we are ready for it but it is too wet most all of the time for plowing but can get by all right. I think of course time will be hard but we are used to all that so we will be ok. I guess Alex can do some and me and Stella will do the rest. We are used to hard work. Well, I will close hoping to here of all you boys being home from the war in your next letter. So now I will close. Asever your sister and write soon.

Andrew Mack Roberts wrote the following letter to his niece, Mrs. Catherine D. Bryant in Oklahoma City who is the daughter of John and Nancy Davidson (Roberts). Nancy is a sister to Felix, Andrew Mack, John E. and the other children of George Washington and Malinda Roberts. Catherine was born in 1877 and married William T. Bryant. I have two photos that Nancy's son, James Solomon Davidson, sent to his cousin, my grandfather, Willis Sr. in 1920. One photo is James Solomon Davidson playing fiddle. The other is his picture with his writing saying he is 46 years old and working for American Railway Express Co. in Sapuepa, Oklahoma.

Lewiston, Idaho  
April 5, 1943  
Mrs. C.D. Bryant  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma  
Dear Niece,

It is a pleasure to read your letter of the 29 ULT. Pleased to know that you and family is fairly well and that you are in the old age class...65. I am 92 past the 12-day of January. I am not so feeble as you suppose. I am still attending to business. I make my walks downtown often and attend to business. I have great grandsons in the war and am doing my part to fight it. I have just paid the Federal Government \$1841.29 Income Tax for the year '42 and the State of Idaho \$480.00 and a Property Tax of \$1560.00. I have 10 farms in the Country, all leased to tenants. My daughter, Veda McCarty lives with me. Her husband works in the mines

and she works (clerks) in a department store downtown in the day. Both make good wages. Nellie Berier lives here in town; has two children grown. She is my youngest daughter. Her husband has the post office here, which is a first class office and pays \$300.00 per month. My second oldest daughter Orlena Turner has been with me here all winter and is still here, but will go home in a few days to Mohler, Lewis County, Idaho where her chil-

dren live. Her husband died 3 years ago. I have 7 living children scattered in Idaho and California. All are doing fairly well, but none of them so far have competed with the old man.

In answer to your questions ask, I am unable to answer all. Yes, your Uncle John died several years ago and your mother, Nancy, many years ago. (1910 Arkansas) All of my father's family (children) is dead except Kate and I. (Andrew's sister Catherine) Willis Roberts lives in Oregon, but I cannot give to you his address. Millard F. Roberts, his oldest brother, lives here in Idaho. His P.O. address is M.F. Roberts (Star Route) Grangeville, Idaho. I think if you write him he will tell you where Willis is. I'm doing this writing myself and trust it will find you and family all well. While I remain as ever your uncle.

A.M. Roberts

**M**y grandfather Willis Sr. had three sons enlist in the Army in World War II. Lloyd joined January 7, 1942; Beryl joined January 1942 and Millard November 1942. Willis Jr. failed to pass his Army physical three times so he went to work for the SP&S railroad, on February 9, 1942, to do his part in the war effort as most military equipment was moved by rail. Willis Jr. was promoted to supervisor in 1944 and held that position until retiring in February 1976.

I have the original letter that Beryl Roberts wrote to his parents dated July 24, 1945 from Olberporning, Germany. It would be the last letter he would write as he died the next day.

Dear Dad and all-----

Have time now to write you a few lines to let you know that we still got things under control. Things are quite. Once in awhile they have some trouble in the mountains and we go up there and settle it down. But it doesn't happen very often.

How is everyone there at home? The last letter from Mable said everyone was okay. I found some bunnies in the hills the other day that were pretty good eating. I can't wait till this war is over. We have caught some darned nice fish in the Danube-most of them are Pike-these little mountain streams have some nice trout in them. If they don't bite we use a hand grenade to help us a little.

I tried to ride a horse for one of these famers over here. So far I haven't stayed on very long, but I'm getting him worn down to where he will be so tired he can't throw me off. So far all that's hurt is where I sit down. I guess it will take it though. General Patton is supposed to be around inspecting today so we have to be pretty well on our toes.

It's almost time for chow so I guess I'll close for now. So be

good and take care of yourself.

Affectionately,

Beryl

The following letter was written by Willis Sr. to his son, Lloyd Roberts, upon hearing that Beryl had died. Lloyd was still in Germany and stationed about 60 miles from Beryl's station.

Redmond, Ore. Aug. 12, 1945 Sgt. Lloyd Roberts.

Dear Son. I received your letter a few days ago and I'm glad you are okay. Just this evening we got a telegram that our Dear Son is dead in Germany July 25, 3pm. Our Dear son Beryl. Do what you can by seeing that Beryl has a nice burial and I want him sent to Redmond when they can get around to it. Be sure and see that his grave is well marked. Beryl wrote me a nice letter July 24th. He sent one to Mabel July 22nd. It is a terrible shock on us. Sgt. Millard is here now and went to see Willis Jr. today. We have already notified them at Nena by telephone. We will soon get a letter of confirmation giving details of Beryl's death. Write again son and come home soon. From Daddy. Willis Roberts Sr.

A Redmond Spokesman Newspaper dated August 1945 states the following:

Sgt. Beryl D. Roberts, son of Willis and Cora Roberts, joined the Army in January 1942 and was in a tank battalion. He had gone overseas in March 1943, first being stationed in England. He entered Normandy on D-Day and fought through the French and German campaigns. Sgt. Roberts was a mechanic and assistant tank driver. A recent letter written to his brother, Lloyd, by an Army buddy stated that Beryl had been recommended for the Bronze Star for retrieving a tank while under heavy enemy fire. The last letter received from Sgt. Roberts was written to his parents from Olberporning, Germany and dated July 24. A few days previously he had written his sister, Mabel, saying his brother, Sgt. Lloyd D. Roberts was stationed about 60 miles away and was hoping they might meet soon.

A Redmond Spokesman Newspaper dated November 1, 1945 states the following:

After three years service as a sergeant in Africa, Sicily, Italy, France and Austria, Lloyd D. Roberts, son of Willis D. and Cora Roberts has returned home a civilian. He received his discharge October 20, 1945 at Fort Lewis, Washington, which was five days before his dad, Willis Sr., died.

Sgt. Roberts earned six overseas medals the maximum awarded, not to mention the purple heart medal. He joined the Army just a month after Pearl Harbor, on January 7, 1942 and went overseas February 20, 1943 being with the Seventh Army. He reached Africa when the battle for Kasserine Pass was under way and was a spearhead for the D-Day landing at Sicily and France.

"I got the purple heart when I parted company with my truck," said young Roberts, who is 26. "Hit a land mine, but it didn't hurt me too much." The soldier riding with Sgt. Roberts was killed instantly.

Sgt. Roberts attained the rank of Sergeant only three months

after he joined the Army and held that rating until his discharge. He reached the states October 9th and was discharged eleven days later. Two of his brothers also held the rank of Sergeant. Millard, who is home a civilian and Beryl who died in Germany July 25, 1945.

The following is an article in The Redmond Spokesman Newspaper dated January 4, 1945.

Sgt. Millard Roberts Heavy Bomber Mechanic in Italy gives his idea of way he'd spend New Years at Home. Twenty-four hours leave in your home town on New Year eve would excite most soldiers, but according to Sgt. Millard Roberts, 20, of Redmond, Oregon,

he "would just take it easy and enjoy every minute."

A mechanic in a 15th AAF Liberator bombardment group "somewhere in Italy", Sgt Roberts looked at the mud and slush around him and told of the normal life he'd like to pursue back in Redmond on New Year's eve. "As soon as I hit Redmond," said Sgt. Roberts, "I'd have my Mom and Dad call on me and take me out to our old home near Maupin." "I wouldn't go running around looking for excitement," said young Roberts, "I'd let excitement try to find me."

"After one of Mom's home-cooked meals I'd have the folks drive me around to see the rest of the family." I'd see my sister, Mabel, and brother, Willis Jr. and ask them to join us in a move at the Odem Theater. It would be nice if my other brothers, Lloyd and Beryl could join us, but then

they're in Germany and that would be wishful thinking.

"To get myself re-acquainted with Redmond, I might have the folks take a leisurely drive out to see Suttle Lake by early moonlight, or we might spend some time at the 86 club. Then no evening would be complete without a cup of coffee at the Redmond Café. I always went there after a movie or dance.

"Probably the New Year's eve celebration I'd like most is like the ones I spent with my friends and family before the war." "This is all wishful thinking," said Sgt. Roberts, looking around at his present surroundings. "I'll more than likely spend this New Year's day down on the line-knee deep in mud-fixing a plane. "There ain't no justice," he added.

Son of Mr. and Mrs. Willis D. Roberts Sr. of Redmond, Sgt. Roberts is one of the many unsung heroes of the war. His job of keeping the heavy bombers in flying condition is not a romantic job, but its one of the important jobs of heavy bombardment. Many times when a formation of bombers attack a target in southern Europe or the Balkan the planes must fight their way out. That is when Sgt. Roberts' job becomes important.

Sgt. Roberts begins his daily cycle several hours before the planes take off, often before dawn. He is usually out working on the line checking and rechecking the big engines for malfunctions and making certain that his plane will have no mechanical difficulties while in the air.

When the bombers come back with battle damaged engines, systems or controls, it's usually an all-night job for Sgt. Roberts.



Front Row: Millard B.1923; Willis D. Jr. B.1913 D.1997; Erma B.1935. Back Row: Beryl B.1921 D.1945; Lloyd B.1919 D.1999; Mabel B.1916.

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## THE CHILDREN OF JOHN E. AND AMERICA ROBERTS

By Dianne Burns Brads

In the Fall/Winter 2012 edition of the LCCAN, I wrote a detailed article about the lives of John E. and America Burns Roberts. They were married on January 12, 1875. In the spring of 1879, they and their children left with John's brother, Andrew Mack, and his wife, Mary Jane, and their children to go West. They settled in Oregon but returned to Clay County in about 1884 to claim property on the Meadow Branch of Little Bullskin left to America by her father.

### Albert

Albert was the first child, born June 6, 1876, about 17 months after his parents' marriage. He was less than three years old when his family left Clay County for the West. He would have been about eight years old when his grandfather Perry Baker Burns died, resulting in his family's returning to Kentucky. He would have had some memories of the sojourn in Oregon and the trip back to Kentucky.

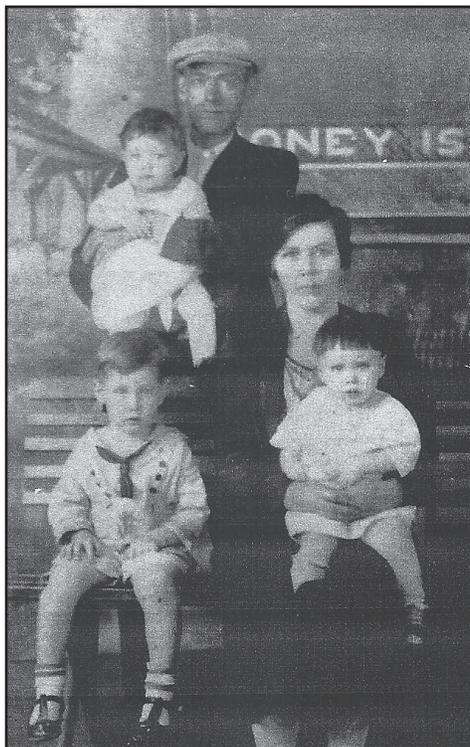
No one knows why or when, but, at some point Albert was given the nickname, "Bishop." Albert never married and so he appeared as an adult living with his parents in the census records of 1900, 1910, 1920 and 1930. In all instances he was classified as a farm laborer. A grandson of John and America, Golden, was living with the family and was counted in the census in 1910, 1920 and 1930. We are unsure of the identity of this boy's parents and suspect that his father may be Albert, as in 1930 Golden and Albert were the only persons living with John and America in their old age. Golden was 23 and Albert was 52.

Albert owned a fiddle. He would allow his nephew, Sam Carmack, born in 1914, to touch the fiddle and even taught him the notes, but he would never allow Sam to touch the bow. One can guess that he saved his money faithfully to buy his fiddle and bow. After his death, Albert's fiddle and bow were in the possession of his brother, Garrard. Garrard later gave it to Sam and now it is in the hands of Sam's son. It is a family treasure.

Albert had a very close friend, who was also his first cousin. He was Andrew Jackson Burns, A.J., son of Samuel "Flinter" Burns, America's brother. A.J. played the banjo and he and Albert would go into the woods, build a fire and make music. They probably made a night of it by enjoying some moonshine.

These good friends and cousins had something else in common. Their lives ended violently at the hands of relatives. These stories have been told in the family for years by Sam Carmack, nephew of Albert, who was living on the Meadow Branch of Little Bullskin at the time of the incidents. Sam was an eye-witness of the death of A.J. and so the stories, though unpleasant, are credible.

Albert died first. The details are this: Charlie Burns, son of Robert Franklin "Boozer" Burns, and first cousin of both Albert



and A.J., was known as a mean drunk. He had a still "up in the holler." Albert wandered up to the holler and he and Charlie somehow got into an argument. Albert went running down the ridge and Charlie went after him with a club. Albert went missing and a couple of days later he was found hanging from a tree. However, his head was bashed. Those two facts pointed to foul play. The story goes that there was an inquiry but that no one admitted anything and no one was ever charged. But the family knew in their hearts that it was Charlie. Were the family relationships strained? They all lived in close proximity. Charlie's wife and Albert's brother Lloyd's wife were sisters. Albert's nephew Sam Carmack married Charlie's sister, Esther, in 1935. It is hard to imagine how they all peacefully coexisted. As he so often did before, John E. Roberts recorded his son's death in the Family Bible as August 9, 1930. America had died in April, 1930 and was spared the sorrow of this family tragedy.

Albert's best friend, cousin and fellow music-maker, A.J. suffered a similar sad demise. Sam "Flinter" Burns, America's brother, and his family

appeared on the census records of the early 1900's on the same page as John and America and family. They were both relatives and neighbors. In 1930 Flinter's sons A.J., 45, and McKinley, 26, were still living at home with their parents. Albert's nephew, Sam Carmack, was 18 years old in November of 1932. He told the story of A.J.'s death as follows: Sam was at the Meadow Branch in the holler making moonshine with his cousin Golden and he heard gunshots. He ran to find out what was happening and saw that McKinley Burns and his brother A.J. were shooting at each other. Sam picked up A.J. in his arms and A.J. said, "Did I hit the S.O.B.?" He died in Sam's arms.

I was able to find the death certificate for A.J. and, strangely enough, he died on November 4, 1932, which was his forty-eighth birthday. No doctor was called in to give the cause of death. A.J.'s father, Flinter, listed himself as undertaker and informant. His anger pervaded the description of the cause of death, "gunshot wound in the spine by an assassin." Sam Carmack always told the family that McKinley left the state and ended up in Ohio, where he eventually went to the "pen" for counterfeiting. I have been unable to find any trace of McKinley following the shooting. Sam said that A.J. was buried next to his friend and cousin Albert in an unmarked grave at the Bev Burns Cemetery. Sam's son Doug was shown this grave by then 86 year old Ed Bishop. The Meadow Branch was quieter after the deaths of the fiddler and banjo player.

### Garrard

Garrard "Dauber" was born on November 30, 1878, the second child born to America and John. He was an infant when the fam-

ily set off for Oregon and he was nearly six years old when they returned to Clay County. In 1900 Garrard appeared on the census, living with his parents and helping out on the farm as a laborer. He was twenty-one years old and single. On April 16, 1910 the census was taken at Fort Benjamin Harrison in Marion, Indiana, where Garrard was counted as a private in the U.S. Army. By 1913 he was married to Lucy Bishop. Unfortunately, I gained this information through a death record for their daughter, Lonzie. She was born on September 23, 1913 and died on October 25, 1913. John Edward recorded this death in the family Bible.

Since I have no contact with Garrard's descendants, my information comes from public records. Garrard registered for the draft for WWI. In 1920 Garrard and his family lived on Little Bullskin and they were on the same census page as his brother Lloyd and his father John. He was a farmer and rented. He and Lucy had 3 young daughters. But change was in the air. In 1930 Garrard and family were counted in the census at Hazard, Perry County. Another daughter, America, her grandmother's namesake, had been added in about 1923. Garrard was trying his hand as a car repair helper at a railroad shop. His property value was \$15.00. John Edward died in 1934 and in 1940 Garrard and family were back on Little Bullskin. His occupation was once again farm laborer, but his home value was \$200. It is likely that he had inherited property from his father and came back to Clay County to claim it. Another child, a granddaughter, was living with the family. Information about education was first recorded in the 1940 census and I learned that Garrard had an eighth grade education. Other than the Social Security Death Index, which gives Garrard's death as April, 1963, I could find no other records about Garrard.

#### Susan

The next surviving child was Susan, born in Oregon on January 10, 1882. I can picture her being born in a shack on a cold winter day, with no family to help the new mother except Mary Jane Roberts, America's young sister-in-law. Susan would have been two years old when she arrived back in Kentucky with the family. Oregon for her was only a story told around the fire.

I have seen just two pictures of Susan. In one picture she was posed with her parents and siblings. The picture was taken about 1906 and she would have been about 25 years old. In the second picture Susan was seated, holding a baby on her lap. She and the unidentified baby were quite lovely.

Susan's father made three entries in the Bible relating to her. Susan's daughter's birth was given as February 11, 1908. John recorded the name as Lodis May Hacker, but the correct spelling was Lotus Mae. The entry on the Marriage page was short on information, "Susan to McMullian 1911". The last of John's entries was that Samuel Carmack was born March 1914. Sam's descendants know that Susan was his mother.

From public records I learned further information about Susan and her first child. In the 1900 census Susan, aged eighteen and single, lived on the Meadow Branch with her parents and she appeared again at home in 1910, still single, and her daughter, known as Mae, about 2 years old, was with her. The census record indicated that she could read and write and that she was a housekeeper in a private family.

The Roberts family members who have descended from Susan believe, but do not know definitively, that Susan may have been mentally impaired in some way. It could have been mild retardation or emotional instability. My 87 year old mother knew of Susan when she was an older woman and she has told me that everyone thought that somehow Susan was not quite "right." At a time that I have not been able to determine as of yet, Susan

and Mae left John and America's home. Neither appeared on any census that I could find after 1910 until I found Mae in the 1930 census after she had married.

A descendant of Susan obtained documentation of her marriage, which was incorrectly stated in the family Bible. According to Clay County court records, she was married to Mark Mullins on June 1, 1910 in Oneida by none other than J.A. Burns. I have not been able to find them on any census record but they did have a son, Luther.

It does not appear that Susan reared any of her children. However, they all became productive persons who married and reared families of their own. I find their stories to be interesting, sad and often inspiring.

#### SUSAN'S DAUGHTER, MAE

Mae's father no doubt was known by John Roberts, as he recorded his granddaughter's last name as Hacker. However, the father's name was not conveyed to Mae's descendants down through the years. There is a gap in our knowledge about Mae's life and she did not fill in those gaps for her children. Her daughter felt that talking about the past was very painful for her and she shared little. However, Mae's daughter did have the impression that Mr. Hacker provided for Mae. Mae spoke of attending Oneida Baptist Institute as a boarding student, probably to the eighth grade since she reported in the 1940 census that she had an eighth grade education. She recollected to her daughter that she had received some training in the nursing field. It may have been due to this training that Mae was hired by my grandfather to help take care of my mother when she was born in April, 1925.

She met a young man named James W. Britt who was a native of Alabama. James was in Kentucky as a railroad worker. He married Mae and whisked her away from the mountains to the coastal city of Mobile, Alabama.

Mae and James appeared on the 1930 and 1940 census in Mobile, with James being employed as a machinist in a railroad yard. By 1940 they had 4 daughters and 1 son. Another daughter was born in 1940, too late to be numbered in the census. Though Mae's children don't know a lot about the past due to their mother's reticence, they do have some helpful memories. One of Mae's daughters remembered going to Kentucky with her mother and believes that Mae saw Susan in the hospital. This could have been shortly before Susan's death in 1943. It is known that Mae had a close bond as an adult with two of her one-half brothers and with some of her cousins from her mother's family. Mae and her children made the trip from Alabama to Ohio and Kentucky many times to see these family members, including two of her mother's younger sisters, Florida and Laura.

Mae knew that she had a half-sister, Bessie Hacker. After Bessie's mother passed away, Bessie felt free to contact Mae. It appears to the family that it would have displeased Bessie's mother for the sisters to be in touch and so Bessie waited. Visits back and forth ensued between the families and a relationship was established. Bessie was an anesthetist in Lexington, Kentucky and she had cared for her mother in her old age. Despite this new relationship, Mae's family had never been told the identity of their grandfather Hacker.

With the information about Bessie, I was able to find Bessie Hacker on the 1920 census in Clay County with her father, James Hacker, age 50, and her mother, Kizzie Hacker, age 31. However, Mae was not on the census, even though she was only 12 years old. We do not know where she was living or with whom. I do not know if Oneida Baptist Institute would have been taking boarding

students of her age at that time . I found the family in the 1930 census still in Clay County, with an additional child, Paul, age 8. In both years James was a farmer. James and Kizzie were married April 10, 1913, well after Mae's birth in 1908. Because we knew that Mae had a half-sister named Bessie Hacker, it appeared that James was Mae's father.

Other facts confirm that we have found the right father for Mae. A city directory revealed that Bessie Hacker, an anesthetist at Good Samaritan Hospital and Kizzie Hacker, widow of James Hacker, lived at 372 Rose, Lexington, Kentucky in 1954. Bingo!! I found James Hacker on numerous family trees on Ancestry.com. While I realize that the accuracy of this type of information is not consistently reliable, one can obtain some clues. All of the trees that identified James' parents listed them as Henry Hacker and Elizabeth Arnett. Further, all of these identified Henry's parents, James' paternal grandparents, as Samuel Hacker and Chaney Roberts. It is not at all shocking to learn that Susan's maternal grandparents were also Samuel Hacker and Chaney Roberts and so, if this information is correct, they were second cousins. I could not find a census record that revealed where James lived in 1900 so I don't know if he lived near Susan on Little Bullskin. Perhaps they had known one another for years. At the time of Mae's birth, James was thirty-nine years old and Susan was twenty-six. Did an older man take advantage of a pretty young lady who may not have been quite "right?" I can find no evidence that James was married at the time. He did not marry Susan so far as we know, and her father was very meticulous about recording such events. Two of the above-mentioned family trees list Susan as James' wife, but with no documentation. What I learned from these mentions was that there is knowledge outside of our small branch of the family that Susan had a relationship with James Hacker.

Some of our questions about Mae's childhood have been answered and some remain a mystery. What is known is that she survived a childhood that was quite likely sad and lonely to become a woman who was beloved by her children, her aunts and uncles and cousins and finally by her half-sister who found her in 1970. When Mae passed away in 1984, she was mourned and she still is missed today.

#### SUSAN'S SON, LUTHER MULLINS

Susan married Mark Mullins in June 1910. On the 1920 census I found a grandson, Luther Mullins(Mullins), in the home of John and America, age 8 or 9, indicating his birth as 1911 or 1912. It is apparent is that Luther was not being cared for by either of his parents, but was in the household of his grandparents. Luther does not appear in the 1930 census. Perhaps he was somehow living on his own at that time.

My next opportunity to learn anything of Luther was in the 1940 census. He appeared in Clay County on Little Bullskin Road at age 30. He was employed as a farm laborer and he reported that he had a 4th grade education. In the household were his wife Anna, age 34, and step-daughters, Bessie Marie Dykes, 16, and Dortha (Dorothy) Dykes, 14. In the 1930 census, Luther's wife, Anna Dykes, was a widow, living in the home of a brother-in-law in Perry County and her daughters were living in the same county but in the home of a different uncle. These circumstances indicate that Anna had experienced difficult times which caused her to be separated from her children. Now that she was married again, the family was reunited.

A family researcher has uncovered a newspaper article from the Lebanon, Ohio Western Star dated August 5, 1942 which documents the tragic outcome of Luther's life. He died on July 30, 1942 at the Kings Mills Ordinance Plant in Kings Mills, Ohio. There was an explosion on that date that caused buildings to

shake and windows to rattle throughout most of Butler County. A production accident occurred in which five employees died and eleven were injured. No doubt Luther left Kentucky to get a good job to provide for his family and to assist in the war effort. He lost his life and his wife was once again a widow.

#### SUSAN'S SON, SAM CARMACK

John recorded the birth of Susan's third child in the Bible. He was Samuel Carmack, born March 16, 1914. John gave the name Carmack but there is no record that Susan was ever married to a Carmack. The father of Sam was strongly believed by the family to be Elihu Carmack and probably he was identified as such by Susan. However, family lore is that Elihu passed by Sam on the road and would not acknowledge him.

There is some information in public records about Elihu Carmack. He was born in Owsley County on March 12, 1885 and died in the same county in 1946. He was married to Sally B. McIntosh on March 10, 1910. It is impossible to ascertain how Susan and Elihu got together. He was married with 2 children in 1914 when Sam was born.

Sam's descendants believe that he was not treated properly by Susan's family. Sam can't even be found on any census records until he was a married adult in 1940. We know from census records that in 1910 John and America had 2 grandchildren, Golden and Mae, living with them. In 1920 Golden was still with them, as well as Luther Mullins, Susan's second child. Although Sam was only 6 years old in 1920, neither he nor his mother appear in the census. I suppose that it was possible that old John E. had enough of caring for Susan's children. Susan's indiscretions with men may have become more than John could tolerate. Golden, who probably was Albert's son, was reared in his grandparent's home but perhaps John felt that it was appropriate for the father to be responsible for the child and made Albert pay for the boy's expenses. Sam told stories of other children throwing rocks at him and calling him names. Others in the community had a nickname for Susan, "old Sook," which Sam hated. He knocked a boy named Bill Johnson out cold for using that epithet. Who actually provided food, clothing and shelter for Sam and saw that he got some schooling is a mystery.

Sam was a survivor, in that he survived a traumatic childhood and had a successful family life of his own. In 1935 he married Esther Burns. By 1940, Sam and Esther were living in Montgomery County, Ohio with their first child. Sam was employed as a factory laborer. Later in 1940 their next son was born, followed by a third son in 1944 and a daughter in 1951. The family eventually moved to Miami County, Ohio, north of Dayton. Sam made a very nice home for his family and he maintained contact with his half-sister, at least one of his half-brothers and his Aunt Florida, as well as many cousins.

Sam was a man with a goal. In his later years he purchased the property once owned by his grandparents, John and America, which consisted of about 200 acres on the Meadow Branch of Little Bullskin Creek. He made a little retreat for himself there and he became the property owner, not the neglected child who was the object of scorn. The property currently remains in family hands and is the repository of Roberts/Burns memorabilia and serves as the place where many stories of the old days are told, debated and discussed. Sam is honored there by all of those who knew him. His memory and that of his mother are lovingly preserved.

#### SUSAN'S SON, CHESTER

John completed the Births page of the family Bible with absolutely no more space remaining. Perhaps he recorded further births of grandchildren in another unknown location. At any rate, we have no family recording of Susan's next child. The Kentucky

Birth Index informs us that Susan gave birth to Chester Roberts on May 19, 1917. No one was named as the father of Chester so far as I know.

At the time that Chester was born, Susan's daughter Mae seemed to be under the provision of her father and Susan's son Luther was with her parents. Sam would have been 4 years old and his whereabouts and caregivers are unknown.

One of Chester's daughters, Amanda, related to me the story of Chester's childhood. When he was 5 years old, he remembered riding on a train from Hazard to Manchester and being picked up by a tall woman in a long, black coat. She lifted him onto her horse and took him to the Poor House on Island Creek where there were a lot of old people. When he arrived he had sores on his body and was not in good health, but he did chores at the home, such as sweeping and emptying bed pans. The facility was run by Steve and Mae Sizemore, a couple who lived on what is now Green Briar Road. Steve noticed Chester's poor health and took him home with him. Chester never returned to the poor farm. Chester's story is confirmed by census records. In the 1930 census he was listed as the 11 year old "adopted son" in the home of Steve Sizemore and his wife Mae, who also had 3 young children of their own. Steve's occupation was Clay County Clerk of Courts.

Chester helped Steve on the farm, but he never had a formal education. His daughter reports that Chester felt loved and that the Sizemores considered him to be their son. He earned the lifelong nickname of "Doc" from Mae Sizemore because he was always caring for the animals on the farm and nursing them back to health.

At age 18, Chester joined the CCC's. He suffered a ruptured eardrum and was honorably discharged, returning to the Sizemore's home. The timing was perfect because a lovely young lady with dark, curly hair and high cheekbones had just moved in next door. It was love at first sight for them both. Chester and Lottie Hibbard were married in Clay County on June 6, 1942. The young couple left for Louisville where they both obtained employment. Their next move was back to Clay County to the Sizemore farm, where they lived in a house behind Steve and Mae.

Chester and Lottie were parents of 3 sons and 2 daughters. During his life he was a farmer, a coal miner and construction worker. He was a kind, gentle and patient man who was a devoted Christian. He had a passion for singing and had a great bass voice. The family sang in the car when they were on an outing. He loved spending time with his family and hunting with his sons.

By rights Chester could have been considered an orphan, but he did not appear to his family to feel sorry for himself. He loved spending time with his half-siblings Sam and Mae and going to the property on the Meadow Branch that belonged to Sam and his descendants and to hear the family make music there.

Chester had to retire after developing black lung and his health deteriorated further with hearing loss and Parkinson's disease. He lost his dear Lottie in 1999 but lived on without her until May 27, 2007 when he died at age 90.

Chester survived without the care and love of Susan or her family. However, his daughter tells that at the time of Susan's death he attended the funeral and Lottie sang for her service. Lottie shared with her children as they grew up that Susan had been treated cruelly. Chester seemed to have felt only sadness for her.

One can't help but think that Chester became the man that he was due to his being nurtured by the Sizemores as their own son. As an adult, he loved and was beloved. He was a man of faith and left a legacy for his children, 12 grandchildren, 11 great-grandchildren and 1 great-great-grandchild.

#### SUSAN'S SON, HUGH

Susan's fifth and last child Hugh was born October 17, 1918 ac-

cording to the Kentucky Birth Index. This public record gave his last name as Burns. I am unsure as to whether this was his birth name or whether it was added later. There are no other records available for Hugh until the 1930 census when he was 11 or 12 years old. The family story is that people frequently saw Susan walking around with Hugh tied to her with a rope. Susan's mother America's half-brother, Dudley Burns, had asked several times for Susan to give the boy to him. One day she untied the rope and gave Hugh to her Uncle Dudley. Perhaps it was at that point that Hugh took the name Burns and he was listed as a son on the 1930 census. Family members tell me that Hugh's nickname was Junior and the census named him as H Junior Burns. In 1930 both Dudley and his wife were 61 years old and their son Walker was about 23. Hugh joined the family sometime between the 1920 and 1930 census; a family researcher told me that when the foster parents were too old to care for Hugh that he was taken in by Walker. He was reared as a brother to the children of Walker.

Hugh next appeared on the 1940 census as an Army Private, age 21, at Fort McKenley in Portland, Maine. I learned on Ancestry.com that he married Martha Louise Landry, who lived until 2002. An entry on the U.S. Veterans Gravesites stated that Hugh, born 18 October, 1918, died 29 August, 2003. He attained the rank of Sgt. U.S. Army in WWII. He was buried in the Holy Family Cemetery in Rockland, Massachusetts. Family members indicate that he served in Italy and participated in 223 separate fights. His commendation was signed by Mark Clark.

**H**ugh was saved by an uncle and then a cousin who loved him as a son. I had the privilege of reading a tribute to Hugh written by his own son after his death. It was very beautiful. Hugh was an extraordinary man who was described as simple, in that he loved nature and his family, the simple things of life. As a supervisor in his various occupations, he was respected and admired. Hugh was noted for his mechanical ability, his integrity and the strength of his friendships.

Hugh was very attached to his Burns family. His parents were listed in his obituary as Walker Burns and his wife and his siblings were their children. Hugh's own children did not know that Susan Roberts was his mother until after his death. Hugh's life is a testament to the power of love.

I conclude that in regard to Susan we have many unanswered questions. Why did she have unstable relationships? Did she have disabilities of some kind? How did she survive? Did she love her children? Why didn't her family give her more support?

I have been told that Susan was given a house in the Bullskin area in her later years. I also have been told that she lived with her sister, my grandmother Florida, and her family in the Little Bullskin area near the end of her life. I know that my grandmother was a kind person and so I believe Susan received the proper attention and care from her. Susan died October 8, 1943 at a hospital in Lexington. Her life began as part of a grand adventure in Oregon and was fraught with problems and difficulty. However, in Susan's descendants one can see great success, much intelligence and happiness and many talents. Susan would be amazed.

#### Frank

John and America added a son named Frank to their family while still in Oregon. He was born March 20, 1884. Although I had been interested in our Roberts family history for many years, Frank had escaped my notice until I examined the family Bible records a few years ago. I suddenly realized that I had never heard of Frank. I found that his death date had been scribed in the Bible as October 6, 1913.

My grandmother, his sister, would have been 16 years old  
*Continued to page 66*

*Continued from page 49*

August 6, 1898

#### **Death by smallpox and booze**

I preached last Sunday and attended S S at 2:30 p.m., stayed at Peter House's at night. Monday I went to Bengé to look after the church building and remained there till this morning. The mill is not yet moved and so we wait. I preach tonight at the Dr. Burchell school house and an at his house tonight. He is tending the small pox patients on Horse Creek at \$300 a month. There have been perhaps a dozen cases. It is not spreading. There have been 4 deaths in this neighborhood this week. James Roach died yesterday from drinking. He has been on a spree for months.

August 8, 1898

#### **A visit with "a wreck, a magnificent ruin": Gen. T. T. Garrard**

Today I visited General T.T. Garrard. He is 86 year old, well preserved, lives in this ancestral home, built of brick in 1835. His grandfather, Governor Garrard, was a Baptist preacher but he became tinged with Unitarianism, perhaps through Mr. Tee, his secretary of state whose daughter was General Garrard's mother. Daniel Garrard. The general's father, was a skeptic, though a moral man and a good citizen.

The General is perhaps, the same. He is thoroughly honest and reliable, a model citizen but profane and is licentious. He has been a good hater, has hated the Whites for year 60 years and has been hated in turn and now this hatred has issued into violence. I found an armed guard at this house. He said he had kept them there for some time ever since his son Gilbert was shot at. His son James is afraid to stay at home and is at Middlesboro with his sister, Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_ . The old man and his two youngest sons make the family, one of them is on Red Bird lodging.

Here is a wreck, a magnificent ruin, an old man of intellect, wealthy, social position, everything that this world can afford but alas! Soon has marred the vessel in the potter's hand and it is a vessel unto dishonor. The old man's life is not thought of to be safe. Places have been found on the farm where men have been camped in the brush evidently to assassinate somebody, either the old man or his sons. Gilbert Garrard has gone to Goldsboro, North Carolina, and his wife is about ready to follow him having disposed of stock, etc. Hatred is the most dangerous sin man can commit as it brings upon him the wrath of his enemy and at the same time shuts him out of heaven. Malice has ruined this country. This rivalry between the Whites and Garrards is bearing its natural fruit.

#### **Tom Baker sentenced to life**

Tom Baker was tried last week at Barbourville for the murder of William White and found guilty and sentenced to life imprisonment. Five men were for life sentence and seven for hanging, I hear. No doubt his brother, D., who was with him will meet a similar fate. Then Tom's sons and cousin Fuller Barrett will be convicted for the killing of the

HOWARDs.

I was on the ground yesterday where John Baker and Frank Clark were killed July 20, 1898, in the evening twilight. Dick McCollum, who was with them, escaped. They had been to Miss Ibbie Baker's in town and were returning to General Garrard's when they were acting as a guard.

It is said that Alfred Neal, of color, saw them on the way, perhaps had some unpleasant words with them. They went up the "town branch" and down the "muddy gap" toward Horse Creek. Neal went to town and reported them. It is said two men, D.W. and F.D. got on a mule and went up Goose Creek just in time to intercept them. Baker and Clark were shooting along the road just before they reached the place where they were killed.

No warrants have been issued nor any arrests made; nor is it likely any will ever be made in the name of law. The men who did the deed will in all probability be waylaid and killed sometime in the future, or killed in a street fight, though it may be several years before it is done.

August 14, 1898

#### **Gunning for witnesses?**

I came from General Garrard's to Bengé. . . . Tonight I am at Andrew Rogers' near where I preached this afternoon. How deep the need of salvation, here, in this county. Dr. Wyatt told me today that James Hilton and a Mr. Carmach were fired at near Wyatt's Chapel Saturday night. He had just passed the spot a few hundred yards and heard the report of the heavy firing.

Carmach's wife was a witness in the Tom Baker case having been one of the first to reach ex-sheriff, William White, after he was shot by Baker; the tragedy was near her father's house where she was visiting. The Baker's have complained about her testimony and the supposition is that they shot or had it done. Hilton has been a nonpartisan. His brother has been a friend of the Bakers. The statement is made that as many men have been killed in feuds in the mountains of Kentucky in thirty years as have been killed on the American side in the Cuban war; and I believe it is true.

There have been less than 300 Americans killed and there is no doubt in my mind but that many have been killed in these feuds in that time and it still continues. When the end will come none can tell. There must be more gospel in the hearts of the people before the end comes. Clay County is the last one to enter the list and she has been favored with prosperity above any of her sisters.

August 20, 1898

#### **Waiting for the general to die; Jim Howard convicted**

I stayed at Henry Garrison's last night. This afternoon preached at the school house near Judge White's to about 30 persons, mostly children. I am more than ever impressed that the remedy for the White and Garrard feud is a church right here in the midst of the families where they have controlled for more than a half century. This cannot be done while General Garrard lives, perhaps; I asked him for a lot for this purpose yesterday a week ago and he gave no sat-

isfactory answer. His death will mark an era here. With his passing the struggle ceases and perhaps before that time several of the fiercest on the other side will receive justice. But a church here in which to rear the young and rising generation is the need. If the Lord wills it, I will put it here. A school in it would be good, or in a small house near it.

May God give relief. James Howard has been convicted and sent up for life but has gotten a new trial.

October 3, 1898

#### **Sheriff gets drunk, shoots up the town**

Saturday night a ball was fired at W.H. Treadway's body or at his bed, in the east room of the Lucas Hotel, second story. It missed the mark about 6 inches. It was at midnight--evidently it was an attempt at his life. He keeps a saloon here, has a wife and no children, and while he is an industrious and law abiding citizen, he is a wicked man. He drinks but little and is little and is peaceable but known to be undaunted by any danger. He is a dangerous man to antagonize.

A few weeks ago, Bev White, Jr., sheriff, got drunk and shot into Mrs. Lucas' house and cursed her and her family, fearfully. He also shot into the P.O., no one was hurt. He has removed to town being afraid to stay in the country. Saturday about noon, Joe Hooker, an ally of the Whites shot a pistol on the street scaring horse and men but nothing was done with him. The county judge, John Wright, seems to take no notice of the violations of the law. The Whites have control of the courts and run things as they wish. Gilbert GARRARD and wife who fled a few weeks ago, during the reign of terror returned Sunday. He is still in London. She is at home. There may be much blood spilled yet before the feud is settled.

December 4, 1898

#### **Manchester going to seed**

The two principle business firms of the town have consolidated leaving but two stores that sell dry goods and one little grocery and a Negro store, very small. It seems that Manchester is going to seed. The jailer, Theo Cundiff was drunk today and had to be carried home on a board and put to bed. The Devil seems to have control and his aim seems to be to utterly destroy the town. The last saloon closes next Wednesday and it would seem that the time had come to do some good work here but the town seems to dead to resurrect. In the 21 families making up the town proper there are only 10 children between 6 and 20 years and two of these are leaving. There are only 3 young ladies and one of them is leaving the first of January. For nearly 100 years this town has existed but God had not been in her thought or purpose. The inhabitants have been revelers, drunkards, adulterers, Sabbath breakers, and murders. This is an awful record. If monuments were erected on every spot where there has been a man killed or dangerously wounded it would be like a cemetery. There have been some moral people here, some respectable people, some rich people, some talented people, but I have yet to hear of one celebrated for piety. My faith is staggering but God can work miracles of grace in lifting men up to holiness and heaven.

April 25, 1899

#### **Another feudal war**

The Murrays and the Parkers are having a feudal war. A.C. Turner, brother-in-law of the Murray's was killed about Christmas. Both parties are expecting daily to be attacked by the others. They live in sight of each other. I tried to persuade the Murrays to rent their farms and move away but they will not. Part say they will but others say, "No." Yet they say they expect to be killed. How foolish this is! I have found the same feelings wherever I have been, in these feuds.

May 17, 1899

#### **Shot at Tom, killed his horse**

Came here this afternoon en route to Manchester. Learned that two men shot at Tom Whitenmore recently killing his horse but did not hurt him. William Turner was held to answer at circuit court for the crime.

July 14, 1899

#### **Tom Baker killed**

The killing of Tom Baker and the subdued excitement resulting there from has absorbed the entire attention of the people. The Whites are in power and everything goes on without opposition. Their friends are protected and their enemies keep quiet. But no one would be surprised at an outbreak at any time. Either side is liable to waylay and kill the other.

July 17, 1899

#### **Bloody Tragedy**

This morning on Hooker Branch, near Henry Marcum's, about 4 or 5 miles from Manchester two men were killed, two mortally wounded, a fifth perhaps morally wounded, and a sixth with two flesh wounds in a lower limb. There were 8 men in the fight and 6 of them were either killed or wounded. It was done in the presence of Wash Thacker, deputy sheriff. He met the Philpots and Fishers on the highway going to Red Bird to a log (rolling) armed with their Winchesters. He had a bench warrant for Bob Philpot who surrendered and was giving bond, at the roadside, when Aaron Morris and two Griffins came along and began firing on the Philpots and Fishers. The doctor says the ground where they fell looks like a slaughter pen. It is sad that such things are possible. This is the fruits of a fight last winter a year ago in Beatty's Distillery in which two men were killed, Bundy and Jim Crow Philpot. Whiskey has done it all.

July 20, 1899

#### **Griffin/Philpot feud heats up**

Last Tuesday Erin Morris, Harvey Griffin, and Hugh Griffin were buried in one grave near Manchester at Roark's Graveyard and decomposition was so far advanced that they could not be taken so far. Ed Fisher died Tuesday and was buried Wednesday. Bob Philpot who was shot through the body it is thought will recover. The others who were wounded, Green Griffin, George Philpot are only slightly

wounded. Pete Philpot was the only one in the fight unhurt and he did most of the executions. He had a Winchester 15 shooter. Hugh Griffin ran a half mile holding his bowels in with his hands. It was the bloodiest fight in the history of Clay County. Both parties fought with desperation. It was a battle for life. They were in close contact and it was to be settled by the deadly Colt and Winchester. George Philpot, father of Bob and Pete, had been in two other fights, the one at Pigeon Roost seven or eight years ago was a bloody one. He is a cool headed man 50 years old, strong in body as are all the Philpots. He took command of the fight and gave direction all through it. He would call out to Pete when he saw danger to his life and so of the rest. He himself fell behind a log and one of the GriffinS on the other side. In this position they fired at each other till Philpot blew his brains out. He says that this last act gave him great relief. It is told that he made at Griffin's throat with a large knife after this and Deputy Sheriff, G. Washington Thacker, told him not to do that as he was dead. Ed Fisher's mother was a Philpot, his father is a Baptist preacher. They live in the same neighborhood. Pete and Bob Philpot were starting to Red Bird to join Tim Philpot and sons in logging. George Philpot and Ed Fisher were going to work somewhere near where the fight occurred. They had a wagon load of corn taking it to Red Bird for the mules with which they were logging. Reverend Jack Garland conducted religion exercises over Ed Fisher's body on Wednesday. There are about 25 Philpots old enough to fight. They boast they never let a man escape who injures one of their clan. Yet they are quiet law abiding people, and do not provoke attack. The fight between William Bundy and Jim Crow Philpot in which Jim Crow was killed Christmas day 1897 was brought on by Bundy who fired the first shot without provocation. Both were drunk and at a saloon. Bundy testified before his death that he killed Philpot. Philpot killed Bundy and Erin Morris, Bundy's brother-in-law killed Philpot. Reliable witnesses declare that Morris killed Philpot. Morris declared this after he was acquitted on Bundy's dying testimony. At his first trial, Judge Clark ruled Bundy's testimony out and Philpot was convicted and sent up for 21 years. But the Court of Appeals reversed the lower court on the ruling out of Bundy's testimony. At the next trial he was acquitted. Since that Morris has been foolishly threatening the Philpots and they have been on guard. This fight settles the question as the friends of the Griffins are not likely to renew the conflict. Morris was a bad man and loved to fight. He expected to move to Jackson County the week he was killed where his father lives. I have been living in Clay County since October 1, 1897, and during that time 17 men have been killed by their enemies. A young man named Hayes was found dead at the mouth of Stone Creek near Manchester returning from Berea. His pistol lay beside him. They were both at a spring where it is supposed he had stooped down to drink and his pistol fell from his pocket and went off and killed him. Dick LOVEUS, a desperado, was found dead about two weeks ago but as there were no marks of violence on his person it is thought he died of heart failure.

He was drinking and carousing the day before. These

are not included in the 17. A landslide last winter killed (Page 2848) three persons on Red Bird. There may be others killed purposely and by accident I never heard then. The Griffin-Philpot battle had no connection with the Baker-Howard-White feud. The PhilpotS are friends to the Bakers but have taken no part with them. George Philpot was defeated by B.R. White Jr. for the nomination for sheriff in the last election—1897, which caused some feeling between the two clans especially because Philpots supported Gilbert Garrard against White at the November election. The Whites considered it bad faith to go into a primary and then bolt the nominee and this was especially aggravating to the Whites since the Garrards have supported the Philpots in the primary although the Garrards were Democrats. So politics have had much to do with the troubles in Clay County for 50 years. The future is concealed; but it will doubtless be bloody.

August 5, 1899

#### **Manchester quiet**

I left Wyatt's yesterday afternoon and to Brother Joseph Riggs'. This afternoon I came here. Manchester is unchanged. It is as quiet and peaceful as any town in the state, to all appearances. It has been so on the surface all the time during the Baker feudal war; same when troops were here or when there was some denomination of that kind. There has been no fighting in town since the killing of Tom Baker. Dances occur every few nights. It seems that if it were announced that Gabriel would blow his trumpet at a given date that the Manchester and Clay County people would announce a dance for the last night. Every event of any importance is celebrated with a dance. Satan seems to have complete control of the White-Garrard people. They are clever people but they will dance, dance, dance. God save this country. It is in an awful state morally.

August 7, 1899

#### **Griffin/Philpot feud quietens down**

Green Griffin was tried and acquitted today for being in the Griffin-Philpot fight. There is no prospect of further trouble in Clay County as I can discover. It is thought or said a compromise has been proposed by the Bakers and the Whites and Howards are disposed to accept it. It is to cease prosecuting and fightings and live peaceably in the future. This would be well. The Commonwealth could not offer to do this though it could do little without the cooperation of the feudists. The troubles have attracted the attention of the entire country. Editorials have appeared in all the papers in the nation commenting on Kentucky's out lawry. I pray God to use me to change the state of things here.

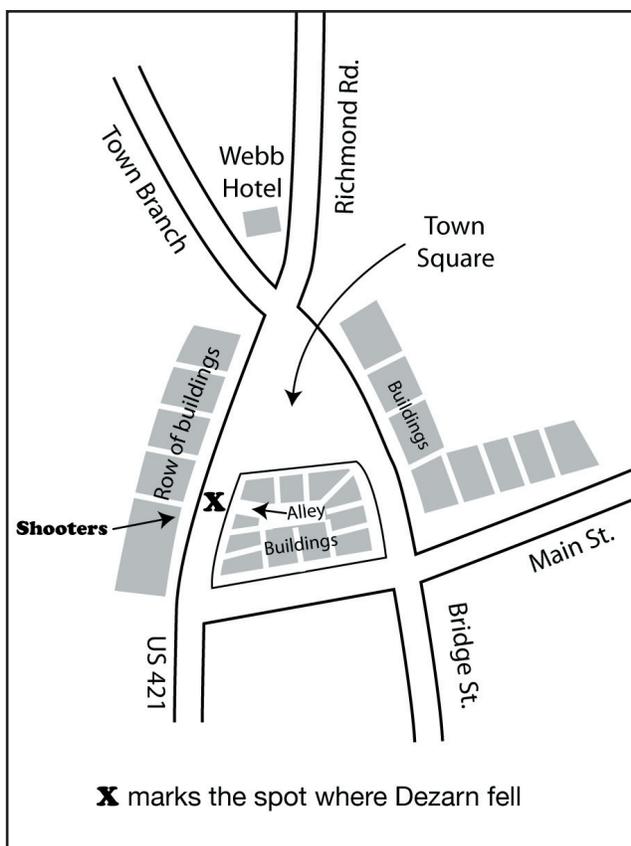
Submit your family history, stories, photos etc. to the Clay County Ancestral News Magazine. Email to house12@windstream.net. Or mail to the Clay County Genealogical and Historical Society, Box 394, Manchester, KY 4096.

## Manchester's police chief was a victim of the mayhem in the mid-1930s

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attended. There are no such remembrances in Manchester.

In 1767 poet John Milton wrote an epic poem he entitled *Paradise Lost*. The theme of the poem was separated in two parts; the war in Heaven and the fall of Man. One of the most prophetic passages from the poem reads; "The mind is its own place and in



itself can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of a Heaven." Whatever happened or whoever was involved on August 6th, 1936 . . . it was a "Hell of a night"!

Thanks to the Clay County Historical Society (especially Ms. Jean Baker Cobb for her English Tutelage), the concerned Clay County contributors, and Clay County Library records. The "U. S. National Archives," the Kentucky Historical Society and Rodney Miller of the Manchester Enterprise.

## Willis Roberts heads west

*Continued from page 57*

There are a million and one jobs to be performed on a heavy bomber and every one of them takes time.

Throughout the day, when the planes are on a mission, Sgt. Roberts is busy rounding up spare parts and getting them ready for the return of the bombers. He and other members of the ground crew are waiting on the hardstands when the planes rumble along the taxi strip. It is usually late at night that Sgt. Roberts is able to check into his tent for a few hours of precious sleep—sure his bomber is ready to fly on the next day's mission.

Sgt. Roberts enlisted in the Army November 16, 1942. When his unit was cited for outstanding performance duty while in armed conflict with the enemy, he earned the distinguished unit badge. He also wears the good conduct medal and the European-African-Middle Eastern theater ribbon with three bronze battle stars.

My 12 year journey of researching my ancestors has been a wonderful trip. I have met 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th cousins who I wouldn't have known without this journey. Anyone who has searched their past is well aware that we run into conflicting information at times and sometimes no information. I recall an old saying my dad told me when I was just a young boy that helped keep me going. I have to believe his father, Willis Sr., passed that old Kentucky spirit on to him. "Upon the plains of hesitation lie the bleaching bones of millions, who with victory within their grasp sat down to wait and waiting died." I have to believe that is what kept the Roberts going when they left Kentucky, Arkansas and other areas to head west 130 years ago as they looked for excitement over the next hill or across the next valley. No doubt that pioneer spirit was with them each step of the way.

### *Acknowledgments*

I thank my wonderful wife Patricia. She has traveled this journey just as excited as me. I also thank my daughter, JoAnn and my two granddaughters Tanya and Melanie. I would also like to thank all of those third and fourth cousins who have exchanged emails, phone calls and shared their research. Along with my research I have traced my family back to my 4th grandfather, James Roberts, who started the Roberts pioneer journey in America in the early 1700's. A special thanks to Diane Burns Brads who filled in the gaps about her great grandfather John E. Roberts, who is a brother to my great grandfather Felix G. Roberts. Our trip to Virginia in July 2012 was a dream come true. Diane and her husband, Charlie, met us at the Roanoke, Virginia airport and we spent two wonderful days with them in their Smokey Mountain home near Lexington, Virginia. Thanks to Doug Carmack, another cousin, for hosting the reunion at his home on Meadow Branch of Little Bull Skin near Oneida, Kentucky in July 2012. Thanks to Scott Hensley in Arkansas. We flew to Arkansas in 2008 to meet Scott and he shared much information about the Roberts who went to Arkansas in the 1880's. His great grandmother, America Rose is a sister to my grandfather Willis Sr. Thanks to 2nd cousin, Wanda Exceen (Hensley) of Missouri. Thanks to distant cousins, Linda Sibley of Texas and Lynn Anderson of Florida. Thanks to Eldene Wasam of Idaho and Edna Collins of Oregon. Thanks to Connie McLeod, of Washington, for the painting's of "Dad" Roberts. And of course none of this would have been possible without the great group at the Clay County Historical Society. Thanks!! My email is wil\_4ret@hotmail.com

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when he died and I wondered why I had never heard her mention his name. I looked at the family picture from 1906 and he was not there. I then looked at the census records and discovered that he had been listed with the family in 1900 as a son and farm laborer. However, I was very shocked to find him in 1910 as a patient at the Eastern Kentucky Lunatic Asylum (later Eastern State Hospital) in Lexington. It was one of life's "if only" situations for me. I knew that my grandmother would have told me about her brother "if only" I had known to ask. In fact, no one still remaining in the family had ever heard of Frank. So I became determined to find out something about him so that he would no longer be forgotten. Since John had given Frank's date of death, I searched for a death certificate and found one. Frank died at The Eastern State Hospital, the former Lunatic Asylum. The hospital was listed as undertaker, informant and as the place of burial. The hospital had no record of Frank's parents' names. His age was given as 29 but no date of birth given, except 1884. The death certificate stated that he had been in residence for 6 years, 1 month and 5 days. This would make his date of admission at about September 1, 1907. The physician of record attended Frank from October 2 to October 6 and last saw him alive on October 5. The cause of death was pulmonary tuberculosis. The most personal information about Frank was that his former residence was Clay County. Frank was buried on October 8, 1913. The question was asked on the certificate, "Where was the disease contracted, if not at place of death?" The answer was, "Don't know."

It is plain that John and America were notified in some fashion about Frank's death because John was able to record the date. It is also plain that Frank died miles away from home with no family to care for him in his suffering and to hold his hand as he passed into eternity. There was no one to mourn as he was buried on the hospital grounds or to note his burial spot. I fear that it is likely that due to the distance involved and expense of travel that Frank had no visitors from home during his hospitalization of just over 6 years. I also fear that his family had just forsaken him.

I was able to find a record of Frank's being committed to the Eastern Kentucky Lunatic Asylum at the Clay County Court House. Although I do not know much about the procedures, it is easy to see that there was a trial in which Frank was declared to be a lunatic. The date was August 19, 1907 and the judge was D.W. White. The Clay County attorney was T.H. Webb and the court-appointed attorney for Frank was A.B. Hampton. In the interest of readers who might find an ancestral name, I will list the jury: Wm. Foister, Wm. Deaton, Tom Gregory, Frank Corum, J.B. York, Ance Lovins, B.J. Finley, Marsh Corum, J.F. Roberts, Elijah Robinson, John...(can't read) Hensley and D.L. Hobbs. The foreman was J.F. Roberts, undoubtedly a relative of some stripe. The history of the case was as follows:

DATE OF FIRST ATTACK: "about 18 months ago...by getting mad & trying to burn up the things on the place"  
 HAS IT CHANGED IN CHARACTER AT ANY FORMER PERIOD: " same thing only seems to grow worse"  
 SUPPOSED CAUSE: " naturally weak-minded"  
 VIOLENCE TOWARD OTHERS: " yes"

The result of the trial : " Wherefore it is adjudged by the Court that said Frank Roberts is of unsound mind and a Lunatic, and that he be immediately conveyed to the asylum at Lexington, Kentucky."

Since the hospital seemed to have no record of personal information on Frank, it makes me think that his father did not accompany him to the hospital. Perhaps Frank was in no condition to answer questions that would normally be asked at admission. It

is likely that he was conveyed to the hospital by strangers. I was curious as to the conditions at the Eastern Kentucky Lunatic Asylum in 1907, and I was fortunate enough to find a book entitled, Kentucky's First Asylum: A Saga of the People and Practices by Alma Wynelle Deese copyrighted 2005 and 2012. Ms. Deese was an employee at the Eastern State Hospital for many years and fortuitously saved early records of the hospital from the trash bin. She decided to preserve the history of the hospital through writing a book. The information which I obtained was most helpful to me as I tried to picture what Frank's life might have been like during his hospitalization.

The book focused an entire chapter on an event that occurred in 1906, just one year prior to Frank's admission. A male patient died and appeared to have been beaten. An inquiry was held. The investigation into the death yielded information about the conditions of the hospital in 1906 which can be generalized to the time of Frank's hospitalization, from 1907 to 1913.

For many years both before and after Frank's six years at the hospital, nearly all jobs, from the most menial to the administrative, were political appointments. The incoming Governor would give jobs to his cronies, his relatives and anyone who was calling in a favor. Those providing direct care for the patients in the wards were often illiterate and had no training at all. So caregivers and administrators were constantly shifting, leading to instability in the operation of the institution.

The hospital in 1906 had city water, and a 230 acre farm on the premises provided most of the food for the patients. Those patients who were able to do so worked on the farm, in the greenhouse or in the stables. Frank would have had the experience for the farm chores if he were capable of working.

There were male and female wards, with about fifty patients per ward. There was inside plumbing, with bathroom facilities. Three caregivers were assigned to each ward, and they were called keepers. Another employee, called an officer, was in charge of several wards and made the rounds as supervisor. They worked in shifts so there was usually one caregiver on duty at a time. The beds, lined up against each other, were wooden boxes covered with sawdust so that toileting accidents could be more easily cleaned and the resulting odors would be less offensive. However, not all keepers chose to bother with the sawdust. If a patient were out of control, he or she would be tied to a chair. Some patients could not feed themselves and were difficult to keep clean. Incidents would occur in which patients would fight and hurt one another. The most difficult patients were kept in a separate ward, away from more docile ones. Some of the wards were described as filthy and due to the high patient to keeper ratio, care was even less than what would be considered custodial.

There was an infirmary for the sick, but I found no indication of a separate ward for TB patients during the time of Frank's stay. In fact, in the book there was no mention of TB at all. There was a staff doctor, but treatment for any disease in that day, including mental illness, was mostly ineffective. There were frequently epidemics and the infirmary was used to isolate patients in those instances. It was rare for any patient to be released and most died in the institution, as did Frank.

A passage in Ms. Deese's book recorded the memories of an aide who was employed beginning in 1923. Although the aide's tenure began ten years after Frank's death, her description of the circumstances of a mountain patient is pertinent to my look at Frank's experience. The aide stated, "All patients were transported here by train. There were aides who went up (to their homes) to get the patients, many times in sad, horrible conditions and would bring them back. Often, a patient had to be brought out on a cot, and they were put in the train baggage car with an aide. It was of-

ten hard to bring them out of the mountains of Kentucky... Yes, the aides often told us how the local sheriff would meet them at the train station, and they would hike into some distant remote area to bring out a filthy, disturbed person who would often fight the aide."

I must wonder how his mother felt about his being sent away. Perhaps she and her daughters were afraid of him. Trying to burn down the farm was a serious offense. Were there alternatives? Did old John E. just not want to support him anymore? The court record states that Frank was "not capable of laboring either in whole or in part for his support." Did John fear that no one would care for Frank when he and America passed on? The answers to these questions are lost in the dust of the mountains. Yet these questions are as fresh as today's newspaper headlines. Mental illness is still frightening when it presents itself in the young and how to care for the mentally ill is still a challenge.

There is a project called Naming the Forgotten- The Eastern State Hospital Project, the goal of which is to identify patients who were buried at the facility. The graves have been moved several times in the course of construction on the hospital grounds. I know that Frank was one of those buried there. Although we do not know the location of his grave, Frank is no longer a mystery name in the pages of our family Bible. Like all of us, he deserves to be remembered.

#### Daniel

The first child born to John and America after returning to Kentucky was Daniel, born February 10, 1886. In the 1900 census Daniel was 14 and going to school. Sadly, John penned on the Deaths page that Daniel died April 9, 1909. I have an individual photo of him and I would guess that he was about 18 years old. He was pictured with his parents and siblings, also, in 1906. He was a nice-looking young man with heavy, dark hair and thick eyebrows. There was not a hint of a smile in either picture. He was dressed up in both instances, wearing a white shirt, tie and suspenders. The family story is that Daniel and his brothers were logging and that a tree fell on him. It was a tragic incident in the life of this family, which had already suffered many losses.

#### Walter

Walter was the next child, born June 10, 1888. The 1900 census taker found Walter to be living at home and going to school. Walter would prove to have a bit of the wanderlust and prior to the census enumeration in 1910, Walter enlisted in the Army. Military records available on Ancestry.com indicate that he enlisted in Manchester on July 18, 1906. Walter was described as having blue eyes, brown hair and a ruddy complexion. He was 5 feet, 6 and one-half inches tall and was 18 and one-half years old. He had a 3 year tour of duty and was discharged at Ft. Washington, Maryland on July 17, 1909.

During the time of Walter's Army duty, he essentially lost two brothers. Frank was admitted to the Lunatic Asylum in September, 1907 and Daniel was killed in a logging accident in April, 1909. Walter's enlistment helps me to date the featured family photo to prior to mid-July 1906 since Walter was present in the picture and that 1906 date matches the age frame of my grandmother and the other younger sisters who were pictured. It leads me to think that Frank must have been in a very serious condition as he was not included in the picture but had not yet been institutionalized.

Walter was back at home for the 1910 census and was a farm hand. He must have liked Army life as he re-enlisted on April 15, 1910 at Columbus Barracks in Ohio. He was nearly 22 years old. It appears from the records that he was assigned to the Calvary at both enlistments and he was discharged as a private both times. His second discharge was April 14, 1913. It was impossible to

read the place of discharge on the record.

My grandmother, Florida, had a picture of Walter which showed him in WWI style regalia. The image is not clear but was labeled with his name in her handwriting. So far I have not been able to learn anything further about his WWI service except for information about his burial from the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs. He was a Sergeant in the Army and was buried at the National Cemetery at Dayton, Ohio after his death on May 6, 1946. I would be extremely interested in knowing more about his service, where he was stationed, where he traveled and where he was discharged.

He returned to Clay County following the war and was found on the 1920 census at age 31 with his parents. He must have been attracting a lot of attention from the neighbors due to his frequent trips to the post office. Who could have imagined that he was conducting a long distance romance with a city girl?

John recorded in the Bible that Walter married Mary Agnes Flanagan on April 8, 1920. Flanagan does not sound like a familiar Clay County name because Walter had managed to find a bride from afar. According to their grandson, he had met Mary, a young woman from Holyoke/Springfield, Massachusetts at a dance at some time during his Army enlistment. The details of their courtship are not known, but he won a bride not only from New England, but from a life of privilege.

I was fortunate to know Aunt Mary, my great-aunt by marriage. She lived in the small Ohio town where I grew up. Her house was on the route that I walked to and from school, of course uphill both ways. I often stopped to see her. I knew her from the time when I was about 6 years old until she died when I was a college student. My knowledge about her is a combination of my experiences with her, my research and information from her grandson.

Mary was born December 25, 1889 in Holyoke, Massachusetts. Her father, Thomas James Flanagan, who was born February 14, 1847, died October 24, 1915. His obituary published in the "Springfield Union" was rich in details about his life. He was an Irish immigrant who came to America as a 3 year old child with his family, which settled in Chicopee, Massachusetts. Mary's birth record, found in Massachusetts Town Records, stated that her father was a liquor merchant. The first available census is 1900, where I found Mary at home with her parents, 6 brothers, 1 sister and 2 servants in Holyoke. On this census there was no occupation listed for her father but he obviously was prospering. In the 1910 census, Mary's father is described as the president of a brewery and the family still resided in Holyoke. His obituary named him as President of the Springfield Brewery. There were 9 brothers living at home, as well as her mother and one live-in employee. Mary's sister Sarah had died, confirming what Aunt Mary always told me about her being the only girl in a family of 10 children. And where might Mary be? She was counted in the census but was listed as being an art student in Switzerland.

Aunt Mary told me that she had been educated at convent schools in Europe and the census verified her story. When I was a young girl, she showed me her sketch books and, also, her notebooks in which she had written in French. She reminisced with me that she had attended a World's Fair while in Europe. She displayed in her modest Ohio home an antique curio cabinet that was filled with fragile figurines and glassware, mementos from a long ago life. Aunt Mary was devoutly Catholic and reared her daughters in her faith.

I know that Walter and Mary were married in April of 1920, but Mary appeared in the 1920 census in Springfield, Massachusetts prior to her marriage. Her mother was the head of household since she was now a widow. Mary had 2 adult brothers at home,

both of whom were employed at the brewery. Mary was 29 both at the time of the census and at the time of her marriage. Perhaps the family's circumstances were reduced after the father's death since there were no servants listed on the census. If Thomas Flanagan's death had not adversely affected the family's finances, the closing of the brewery at some time in 1920 due to Prohibition may have caused difficulty.

There is no census information available between 1920 and 1930, but I have obtained some facts about the early married life of Walter and Mary. They settled in Dayton, Ohio early on and their first child, a daughter, named Dorothy, was born there but passed away and was buried at Calvary Cemetery. I believe that she was stillborn or died at birth since she died and was buried on the same day, March 15, 1921. Thus the newlyweds started out their life with sorrow. Their second daughter, Mary T., was born in Dayton on March 8, 1922. My Great-Aunt Mary named her daughter Mary T. after her mother Mary T. McDermott Flanagan. Walter's and Mary's daughter was always known as "Little Mary." The family was in Massachusetts when the third and last child, Kathleen G., was born on January 30, 1924. Kathleen's son believes that Mary and Walter were living in Holyoke at the time of his mother's birth, rather than just visiting there.

In examining the life of Walter and Mary together, it is difficult to ascertain what attracted them to one another. What could they have had in common? How did they overcome their differences to find love?

Although Mary was born into the family of an Irish immigrant who struggled in his early years in his new country, Mary's childhood appeared to be idyllic. She enjoyed the special status in the family of being the only surviving daughter. Her father's obituary identified their home as 619 State Street, Springfield. I was delighted to find a picture of the home on Ancestry.com, taken in 2010. It is obviously located downtown, surrounded by tall and modern buildings, a throwback to another day. It is an imposing two-story home with a steep roof and dormers, surrounded by a wrought iron fence. The outside features of the home leave no doubt that the home was well-appointed, probably with an ornate staircase, highly polished woodwork, oriental rugs, sparkling chandeliers and lace curtains. Her father and mother would have provided their only daughter with stylish clothing and perhaps the luxury of fine jewelry. Mary had the privilege of a European education, focusing on art, and the opportunity to travel while in Europe. Mary's grandson reports that she was fluent in several languages and quite a good artist. The 1910 census revealed that two of Mary's brothers were studying vocal music and one of them became a professional opera singer so it was likely that Mary had received musical training as well.

Since the family could afford to employ servants, Mary probably had little training or experience in the basics of house-keeping. She seems ill-suited to be the wife of a man of modest means and minimal education. It is easy to speculate that Mary's mother and brothers were very concerned about the prospect of their loved one marrying a backwoods Kentuckian. Perhaps St. Michael's Cemetery experienced some disturbance as her father turned over in his grave.

The cultural and lifestyle differences between Mary and Walter could not have been more apparent. While studying in Europe, Mary had worshipped in beautiful cathedrals with pageantry and ancient rituals under the watch care of nuns. Thomas Flanagan's obituary revealed that the family parish was St. Michael's Cathedral in Springfield, even then an historic church, built in 1860. If Walter had attended church at all, it would have been in a simple

log church with an unlearned preacher. In 1920 in Springfield there would have been automobiles, indoor plumbing and opera houses. Walter's thoughts must have drifted back to Little Bullskin and the primitive conditions in which his own family lived and to the humble community in which he had grown up. If he had tried to describe it all to Mary, I feel sure that her imagination would have failed her. Or perhaps he did not try to describe it at all for fear of losing her.

In fact, Walter took Mary to Oneida and to Little Bullskin to meet his family. He was a brave soul. I guess that he thought that he could survive anything after three stints in the Army and fighting in the "war to end all wars." Aunt Mary told me the story and I hope that my memory is accurate after all of these years. They had one baby at the time of the visit so it must have been in 1922 or 1923. Dayton was their place of residence at the time and they rode the train from Dayton as far as they could. I assume that they would have disembarked at London or East Bernstadt. Then she told me that they traveled by mule the rest of the way, which I interpret to mean that they rode in a wagon pulled by mules. The ride would have been an ordeal over creek bed roads and rugged terrain. If "Little Mary" were like most babies, she probably did not cooperate and made the journey even more difficult. The trip culminated with their arrival at the Roberts home and Mary's observing her mother-in-law sitting on the porch, chewing tobacco and spitting it over the rails. If Aunt Mary detailed the visit any further, I do not recall. However, I have a feeling that the visit was short and I don't think that they ever went back.

In 1930 the census records revealed that Walter, Mary and the two girls were living in Lanier Township, Preble County, Ohio. This area would have been approximately thirty miles west of Dayton. Walter was 41 and Mary was 39. The girls were 8 and 6. They were living on a farm and Walter's occupation was poultry man.

In 1940 the family was in the same location. All, of course, were ten years older. This time Walter was listed as a farmer. Perhaps they had given up on chicken farming or perhaps the census taker was less specific. The 1940 census described the educational level of each family member and it was somewhat revealing. First of all, both Walter and Mary had completed eighth grade. I know that Mary had an extensive education and it must not have been properly disclosed to the census taker. Sadly, the census gave me a little insight into a further sorrow in the life of Walter and Mary. Although "Little Mary" was eighteen, third grade was her highest grade of schooling. Aunt Mary told me that her daughter had fallen and suffered brain injuries. I never met "Little Mary" and I don't know the extent of her disabilities, but Mary and Walter's grandson shared with me that she was non-verbal and apparently was not able to attend school very long due to her accident. In fact, Kathleen's son related to me that his mother went to school at age 4 with "Little Mary" to help her sister. At the time of the 1940 census Kathleen was in high school and a picture from that time period portrayed her as a very lovely girl.

My great-uncle, Walter, died on May 6, 1946. His father John had passed away by then but some family member continued to record deaths in the family Bible. Walter was only fifty-eight years old. He had lived an unusual life in some ways. He was the only one of his surviving brothers to leave the mountains of Kentucky to enter the Army, to fight in a world war and thus travel to faraway places. He was the only one of the brothers to marry a girl who was not a neighbor or maybe even a cousin. Perhaps some of his wife's culture and faith had rubbed off on him, even if he were still a farmer. Walter was honored as a veteran by being buried with his fellow soldiers and heroes in a National Cemetery.

He lives on in his grandson and great-grandsons, probably in ways that they do not even recognize since he died before any of them were born.

Aunt Mary and Uncle Walter had left the farm at some point and settled in a nearby small town. Probably after Uncle Walter's death, Aunt Mary was unable to care for "Little Mary" alone so she was placed in a state institution for the disabled. I believe this occurred after Walter's death because Walter's grandson informed me that his grandfather was totally against the idea of his daughter's being institutionalized. Perhaps he remembered his brother Frank's being sent away and that sad memory affected his decision. Aunt Mary did not drive, but she was driven by family members to Columbus to see her daughter from time to time.

**A**unt Mary died on November 15, 1966 at age seventy-six. She was buried in my home town cemetery and my family remembers her with flowers on Memorial Day. She was a special part of my growing up years.

"Little Mary" died March 18, 1993 and was buried with her mother. Her sister Kathleen was blessed with a happy marriage, two children and two grandsons. She passed away on December 1, 2007 at age 83.

Aunt Mary never expressed regrets to me about her life, even though it ended much differently than it began. I was young and perhaps she would not have felt free to share any negative feelings that she might have harbored. She seemed to enjoy sharing her memories with me and only expressed disappointment with not having maintained contact with her brothers. I think she felt that they had not cared as much as they should have. Mary's grandson has the impression that the relationship with some of her brothers may have been broken due to her marriage. He also knows that one of her brothers gifted her with significant sums of money at Christmas, which was also her birthday. She never spoke to me of any disdain about having been a farmer's wife or of any bitterness about her heartaches but her grandson believes that there was bitterness and unhappiness.

#### Lloyd

Lloyd was born on April 25, 1891. I have spelled his name in the way his father spelled it in the family Bible but in some public records it is spelled with one "l." Lloyd was the youngest son in the family. In the family picture of 1906 he was about 15 years old. He looked more like Walter than like his other older brothers.

I have no contact with any of Lloyd's descendants, although I am sure that there are many. So I am relying on public records for what little information that I have. The 1900 census found Lloyd to be a 9 year old school boy sharing his parents' home with 8 other siblings. By 1910 Lloyd was no longer in school and was a farm hand. His brother Daniel had been killed in a logging accident in 1909 and, with Walter away in the Army and Frank being hospitalized, it was likely that Lloyd was involved in the family's logging and was present at the accident that took Daniel's life.

Lloyd married a local girl, Armilda Stidham, on September 15, 1915, a date recorded by John in the Bible. The 1920 census reported that Lloyd was living next to his older brother Garrard on Bullsken Creek with his wife Armilda and 2 children. He was employed as a laborer in a paper mill. This was not an occupation that I expected to see but I found another man with the same listing on the census. The last census in which I could find Lloyd and Armilda was the 1930 one. They were living next to his father and mother and were the parents of 6 children, two of whom, Walter and Florida, were named for siblings of Lloyd. At this time he was a farmer. During the year of 1930 Lloyd lost both his mother and his brother Albert. The Kentucky Birth Index indicated that an additional child, Stanley, was born on October 2, 1936. It ap-

pears that Lloyd and Armilda lived out their lives in Clay County. Lloyd died in July, 1964 and Armilda, May 29, 1968. I hope that descendants of my great-uncle Lloyd will contact me to add to our family information.

#### Laura

Laura was the oldest of the last group of girls born to John and America. She was born September 23, 1893. In our treasured family group picture of 1906, Laura was 13 years old but still looked like a little girl, slender and serious-looking. In 4 short years, she would be transformed into a wife, celebrating Christmas by getting married on December 25, 1910. It was also her new husband's 24th birthday. Her little sisters probably thought that it was all terribly romantic. Laura married her first cousin, Luther Burns, son of her uncle, George Burns.

The next information that I found about Laura was on the 1920 census. She, Luther and their 4 children were living on Island Creek Road in Clay County. Ten years later nothing much had changed, except that they had added 5 more children. They were living in the same place and Luther was still farming. Laura had grown up in a large family so she was no doubt adept at raising a garden, cooking on a wood stove and delegating responsibilities to the older children. She was a busy woman.

I was unable to find Laura and Luther on the 1940 census. I learned that Luther died first, on May 24, 1948. His place of residence was still Clay County at the time of his death. Laura outlived her husband by 10 years, dying on January 9, 1958. Without a doubt, they are survived by many descendants, and I hope to learn more about my grandmother's sister.

#### Florida

Florida, born March 19, 1897, was my dearly loved grandmother. It has been a great pleasure to learn so much about her family. I only regret that I did not ask her more questions while I had the opportunity, and I had many opportunities.

When the family picture was made in 1906, there were still 9 children at home, although Walter was about to leave for the Army and Frank was very ill. The older boys were helping on the farm and logging the property of about 200 acres. Florida was 9 years old, going to school and helping her mother around the house. In the picture she had darker hair than the other younger girls, about the color of her mother's. I don't have a date on the next picture but I will guess that she was about 20. She was wearing an ankle-length dress and high-button shoes. Most impressive was the beautiful smile that I always loved. I imagine that this picture was before her marriage at age 23.

A review of the 1940 census tells me that Florida went through the eighth grade. Although Oneida Baptist Institute would have been accessible to her, I do not know if she attended school there or at an even more local school. I often heard her speak of the Meadow Branch and I think it was always special to her. Hopefully, she had fun playing in the creek with her sisters and cousins, in between helping with the chores. I can imagine that she enjoyed hearing her older brother Albert and cousin A.J. making music. Perhaps her mother played a gourd fiddle with them. She would have gone to church with her mother and enjoyed the company that came home with them for Sunday dinner. She learned how to kill a chicken, pluck it and cook it to a crispy finish. After completing eighth grade at about age 14, she would have had plenty of time to learn all of the skills she would need to manage a household of her own without the conveniences that had begun to change the lives of city folk.

Florida married her second cousin, Ambrose Burns, on August 18, 1920. Ambrose was born February 23, 1895. Although he was definitely of the Clay County Burns clan, I am not sure

that he was born in Clay County. In 1900 his family lived in Jackson County and in 1910, in Hamilton, Ohio, where his father was working as a laborer in a machine shop. In 1920 the family was on Little Bullskin and Ambrose was living at home, just prior to his marriage to Florida.

Ambrose's mother was Susan Hensley, a daughter of "Big Henry" Hensley of Oneida and his father was U.S. Grant Burns, son of Andrew J. Burns, Jr. (Andy) of the Bullskin area. So even when the family lived away from Clay County, I am sure that they were back home from time to time.

Ambrose enlisted in the Army on July 7, 1913 and his enlistment lasted until July 16, 1919. He must have been in Clay County on leave occasionally and no doubt made a dashing figure to the local girls. When I knew him as my grandfather, he was reserved and quiet. However, this was not the young Ambrose. He has been referred to as a "character" and, fortunately for me, was the subject of stories from his brother Roscoe, passed on down by Roscoe's grandson Gary Burns in his book, *Pipes of a Distant Clansman*. Ambrose liked the home brew early on and his behavior while drinking ranged from wildly bragging to shooting it up with his ever present weapon to diving under the house to get a copper head, which bit him. Whatever reputation Ambrose may have earned, Florida was smitten. She told a family member about her crush on him, "He's mine if I don't get him." I have never heard that expression before but it shows that she had set her cap for Ambrose.

Ambrose as an older man told my brother something like this, "I roughed up some of Pancho Villa's boys." We learned that he had been stationed at Texas City, Texas while in the Army during the time of the Punitive Expedition against Mexico in 1914. We have a picture of him in his uniform against a desert backdrop with a marker saying, "U.S./Mexico." General Pershing was in command of this campaign and so Ambrose had an introduction to the man who would be in charge of the U.S. Army during World War I.

In a recent edition of the Clay County Ancestral News, Gary Burns described in detail the roles of my grandfather Ambrose Burns and his grandfather Roscoe Burns in the Great War. Just over one year after his discharge, Ambrose married his Florida, whom he always called "Belle." I think the courtship had begun by 1917 because he wrote her a postcard in that year and said that he would see her after the war and signed it, "Sgt. Burns." It certainly wasn't emotion-filled but at least he thought of her as he was preparing to go overseas.

There is a gap in my knowledge about the whereabouts of Florida and Ambrose in the first years of their marriage. I know that Ambrose's father seemed to move from place to place and it appears that Ambrose may have done the same. One clue is a picture of Florida and Ambrose and their 3 first children that was taken in front of a Coney Island sign. I am sure that it was Coney Island in Cincinnati. My dad, Laton, is the baby in Ambrose's arms and he was born January 7, 1926. I would be surprised if they took a pleasure trip with 3 young children. So I think that they were living in Northern Kentucky or Southern Ohio.

In 1930 the census showed that the family was living in Pendleton County, Kentucky in the Northern part of the state. Interestingly enough, the family was next on the census page to Ambrose's father Grant and his family. Both men were farming. Gary Burns heard from his father the story of why Grant and Ambrose would have been on the move and shared it in his book on page 280, "There had been a small misunderstanding between them and the law. The law did not like the idea of them making their moonshine and had shut down the operation on Keith Branch by the Burns'. Uncle Ambrose was locked up in the county jail while he awaited court for a short time after they were caught.

Like most things in life, Uncle Ambrose decided to have it his way or no way at all. Late one night he kicked the bars out on the window and scurried two stories to the ground on bed sheets tied together. He left the state for Ohio the same night." What kind of a mess had Florida gotten herself into?

By 1940 Florida and Ambrose were back in Clay County on Little Bullskin. Since the 1930 census another son and daughter had been born, making them parents of 5 children. It appears that the 4 youngest children were in school. I believe that they went to a school on the Meadow Ground, which was still standing until recently, for at least part of their school years. I know that my dad and his older sister attended Oneida Baptist Institute for their high school years, verified by their stories. The oldest son and Ambrose were identified by the 1940 census as laborers on road construction. This was surprising since I expected them to be farming. I have learned that the WPA had road construction projects going on in the county at that time so I expect that they were both farming and earning income in the WPA project.

My mother knew my dad, Laton, and his older sister, while they were students at OBI. She told me that Ambrose had a house built on Little Bullskin during the 40's when Dad was in high school. She has pointed out the house to me, now the residence of another Bullskin family. My dad left high school after his junior year in the spring of 1944. He enlisted in the Navy and became part of "the greatest generation."

When Dad returned home from the Navy in 1946, he did not go to Clay County, but to a new family farm at Waynesburg, Kentucky. The story is told that he arrived home in the middle of the night and everyone got up to see him and they talked until time for breakfast. Florida was so excited and flustered that she forgot to put the baking powder in the biscuits and they were flat and hard. It was a big joke for years, but disappointing for her as she wanted her sailor boy to have a special breakfast.

My parents got married November 23, 1946. Florida and Ambrose had moved again and had purchased a farm at Crab Orchard in Lincoln County, Kentucky. Dad and Mom lived nearby and Dad helped on the farm. In about 1950 my parents joined the tide of Kentuckians heading north to find employment.

The Crab Orchard farm was the site of many visits of my family when I was growing up. I was shocked to see my grandmother kill a chicken, but I loved the tire swing in the tree. I enjoyed sitting on the front porch and watching the chickens run through the yard so innocently, not knowing their eventual fate. My grandmother was 50 when I was born. My first memories are of her being plump, with silky skin on her arms and a soft bosom. She always wore dresses, stockings and lace-up shoes with medium heels. There was a Warm Morning stove in the living room and a couch that felt scratchy on my skin. I recall going down steps in the kitchen to the cellar and seeing rows and rows of canned green beans, fruit and other garden bounty. I remember Ambrose going to the barn to milk the cows and feed the animals. He whistled a unique tune. I can't reproduce it but I would recognize it anywhere. The most interesting memory that I have about my grandfather is that I saw him being baptized in a creek. I did not know it then but it was a symbol of a life-change.

Some of the above stories give an indication that Florida's dashing soldier had a drinking problem. Apparently, he was the type of guy who would go on binges and be gone for days at a time. Family stories say that she got along just fine without him and had access to money to care for the family in his absence. Indications are that he may have been a mean drunk. It seems that his little girls were afraid of him. He went after the boys once and Florida responded by threatening him with a frying pan and told him that if he ever hit her boys again that she would kill him. One

would think that he took her seriously since her threat worked. Maybe he realized that if she didn't kill him, one of her brothers, uncles or first cousins would. She may not have considered the option of leaving him, as she had no way of supporting herself and her children. Maybe the times were good when he was sober. After all, he did whistle a fine tune and called her "Belle."

My dad was a teetotaler as an adult. He could have been a young man who just saw too much suffering as a result of his father's drinking or perhaps his Christian faith and the influence of Oneida Baptist Institute made all of the difference for him in how he chose to live his life. However, one of my dad's brothers was involved in an escapade of sorts with my grandfather in December of 1947.

My grandparents were farming in Crab Orchard and my parents lived just up the road. Grandpa Ambrose had the only car in the family. He and his son had gone to Manchester one weekend to drink and Grandpa got drunk and came home without his son. So the next day he took off in the car to retrieve him. As fate would have it, my mother suddenly went into labor and she had no way to get to the hospital. My dad had to go to get a neighbor to take them to the hospital and then he had to return home to milk the cows and take care of the animals since Grandpa was gone. Dad missed the drama of sitting in the waiting room and sweating over the big announcement. Grandpa and my uncle came home to a surprise....a baby girl...me!

The time came when Grandpa Ambrose got horribly sick after a drinking episode. Maybe he got into a bad batch of moonshine or even went into Delirium Tremens. At any rate, the story goes that he truly thought that he was going to die. He promised God to stop drinking if God would let him live. God allowed him to live and Ambrose stopped drinking. He was baptized and joined the Ephesus Baptist Church in the Crab Orchard area. He was entirely sober the whole time that I knew him and he lived until July 17, 1978.

Ambrose and Florida retired to Ohio in the late 1950's. All of their children and grandchildren were living in the Buckeye State. Ambrose had been gassed during WWI and suffered from emphysema so he received a disability pension. Finances never seemed to be a problem and they were able to live in a nice home with all of the modern conveniences that they had never enjoyed on the farm. They hosted many family holiday events and Sunday dinners.

Grandpa Ambrose was taciturn and he loved to stay home. I remember his listening to the Cincinnati Reds play on the radio. Grandma Florida was very talkative and she smiled and laughed a lot. She acted as though everything that I had to say was intensely fascinating and she was full of questions about my activities when I was growing up. I was fortunate to live close to her after I became a mother. She was thrilled with my children and even Grandpa liked to jostle them on his knee.

The family hosted a 50th Wedding Anniversary celebration for Florida and Ambrose in August 1970. I was glad that the marriage survived the very hard times and that we were able to be together for this great occasion. Sadly, within a few short weeks, they experienced the death of their son Laton, my dad. Florida had endured many losses in her life but this loss of a child was probably the worst. The arrival of my first son five months later, bearing his name, was a comfort to us all.

I have mentioned the 3 sons in the family briefly. The oldest son was Milton, the middle was my dad Laton and the youngest, Roy. All were very hard workers and provided for their families well. My dad was quite insistent on higher education for my brother and me. He was proud to attend my college graduation and later to escort me down the aisle as the father of the bride. He died

before my brother graduated but knew that he was almost finished with his degree. As my grandparents grew older and their health began to fail, the 2 surviving sons were very attentive and helpful. When my grandfather was residing in the VA center with dementia and health issues, my uncles were there to visit several times each week. There was no way that he would have been neglected on their watch. That Clay County Burns family loyalty was very evident.

My 2 aunts, Pauline and Reva, were very, very lovely. Pauline, the oldest daughter, had beautiful red hair, which some say came from the Hensley side of the family. They both loved to laugh and were a happy presence at any occasion. Pauline had a heart for children and the elderly. Reva was a savvy business-woman. Both of them were always very kind to me. As the Proverb goes, "Her children will rise up and call her blessed." Their children certainly did so, as well as all who knew them. I have to say that I saw no signs of nostalgia for Clay County in either of my aunts. I think they left there and never looked back.

My grandmother was cared for very tenderly in her later years by Pauline. She had slipped into dementia and had become very weak. She passed away on December 24, 1983 at home. All of Florida's children have now taken their places in eternity with her. We miss them all and treasure our memories of them.

#### Esther

John recorded the birth of their last child, Lillie Easter, as on February 4, 1901. In the family picture of 1906 she was snuggled up to her older sister Laura and was a sweet-looking 5 year old with a pensive expression. In the 1910 census, she had ceded her position as youngest to a 4 year old nephew and a 1 year old niece. There were still 6 siblings at home, as well.

By 1920, when she was 18, she was listed in the census as Esther. I don't know when her family ceased to call her Lillie, but my grandmother always referred to her as Esther. She, her brother Walter and sister Florida would all be leaving their parents' home in the year of 1920 to marry. Esther married Tolie (Toleman) Riley on November 11, 1920.

Esther and Tolie were living on Bullskin Road in 1930 and Tolie was farming. They had been blessed with 1 son and 2 daughters during their 10 years of marriage. They do not appear on the 1940 census. I believe that they had moved to South Lebanon, Ohio by the time that my grandparents retired to Ohio because the 2 couples visited one another. I am also sure that they had at least 1 more son. I visited Aunt Esther with my grandmother one or two times. She was kind enough to write to me in 1982 to answer some of my questions about the family.

Esther was the youngest of the children of John and America Roberts. She also had the distinction of living to the oldest age. She died at age 93 on May 17, 1994. She, like my grandmother Florida, died at home. She only outlived her husband Tolie by 2 years. He died at age 91 on June 15, 1992. They had the privilege of 72 years of marriage. With Esther's passing, a generation ended.

John and America live on through their descendants. I do not have sufficient information with which to tally the number of persons in whom their genes have continued, but the children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great grandchildren of Florida and Ambrose alone reach a total of 50. New stories are being lived, old stories are being told and family history goes on and on.

*Thanks to Paul Douglas Carmack, Diane Britt Halstead, Amanda Roberts, Scott Flischel and Gary Burns for their very helpful contributions to the research for this article. Please contact me at charliebrads@yahoo.com if you have further information about the Roberts family.*

## *Will Beech Creek Become a Major Archeological Site?*

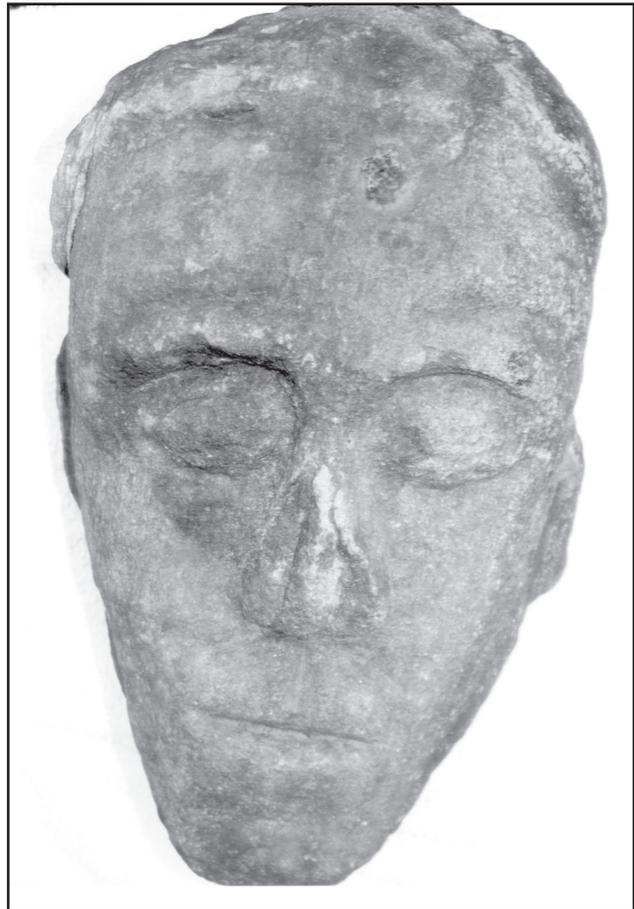
# National TV show to feature ‘fossil cast’ of a human head found under Clay County soil

*By James Burchell*

On March 17, 2010 a stone head was discovered on Beech Creek in Clay County. Until heavy rains eroded the bank of a small stream and exposed the top of the head, it had been under 53 inches of undisturbed earth. Research has shown that this stone head is actually a fossil cast of a human head. According to a Salisbury University document, when an organism is buried, an imprint of the fossil will form a mold in the sediment surrounding it. “If the original material then dissolves away, the resulting space can be filled in, forming a ‘cast’, which resembles the original fossil,” the document explains. “Fossils with hollow interiors can also be filled in, forming an internal cast. The key here is that the fossil has no internal structure.”

This head was buried in an oxygen free, mineral-rich soil which was at one time a marsh or a lake. The head was found in a clay deposit. The clay resembled modeling clay. I asked an Archaeologist from the University of Kentucky to give his opinion about how long ago this particular level of clay was formed, in which the head was found. He said it would be 30,000 years minimum and more likely 40,000 to 45,000 years.

The length of the head from the chin to the top of the head is nearly 11 inches. This suggests that the person was rather tall. Smooth cuts on each side of the neck (3 inches below the ears down through the jugular vein to just below the Adam’s apple) shows that the head was severed by a sharp instrument like a sword. The nose was broken, perhaps by being hit with a blunt instrument or by falling upon his face to the earth. The wound in the forehead was caused by an object that penetrated into the skull, causing a fracture from just above the nasal bone, up through the point of impact and up into the frontal bone of the skull. At the top of the head is a 2-inch gash into the skull near the coronal suture. The dark colors at the two wounds suggest blood and/or brain matter.



A team of experts will be coming to Beech Creek in the near future to examine the head. They will do an electroscan on the head and sonic technology on the land, in conjunction with a dowser. They will use infrared and thermographic cameras to determine if there are other fossils or artifacts in the environment.

A brand new TV Series called “Ancient America” will start in the near future on a major network. The head that was discovered on Beech Creek will be featured in their documentary about giants in America.

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