

# Bits and Pieces

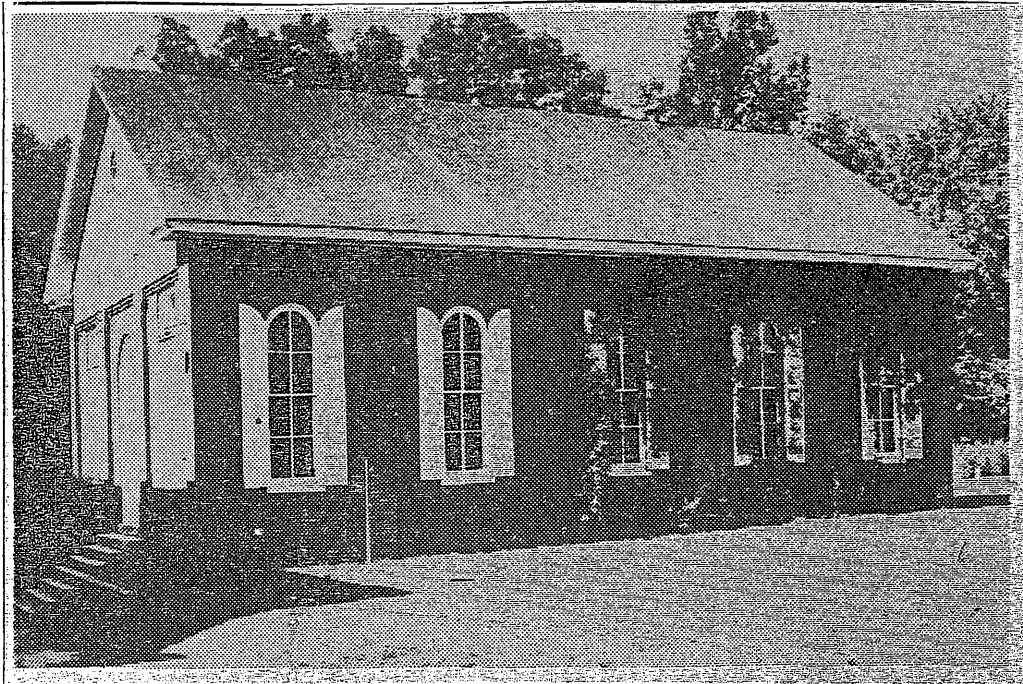
of Hardin County History

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MARY JO JONES, EDITOR

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From an old newspaper clipping, courtesy Wayne H. Hayes

## GILEAD BAPTIST CHURCH

Warren Cash, a native of Virginia who had served under Washington in the Revolutionary War, and his wife Susannah Baskett Cash, came to Kentucky in 1784, and in 1806 found themselves in Hardin County, where Cash organized Bethel Church near Sonora, also known as "Sandy," and became its pastor.

On March 17, 1824, Cash, with a number of persons from the Bethel Church, met to organize a separate church near Glendale. The Constitution, Articles of Faith, and Rules of Decorum were adopted. Records indicate that there was meeting house used by the church from the beginning. The church acquired title to the land on September 10, 1827 by a deed made between the heirs of Isham Ready and the Trustees of Gilead Baptist Church for one acre of land on the Nolin River, which contained a meeting house built by Thomas Dorsey. Price paid for the land was twenty-five cents.

Cash became the first pastor of Gilead Church and served until 1840. The church, with 31 members, was admitted to membership in the Salem Association in September, 1824.

In 1840 the membership divided on the subject of missions. The Rev. Mr. Cash led off part of the members and organized an anti-mission church under the name of "Regular Baptists." Those who remained as United Baptists took the name Gilead Church. Both organizations worshiped in the same building for a number of years. In time, the anti-missionary group ceased to exist.

The troubles over holding slaves and the resulting Civil War which disturbed so many churches throughout the country seem not to have given Gilead any serious worry. According to the custom of the day, the colored people worshiped at Gilead with the whites. In 1871, however, all colored members were notified to be present at a meeting, and letters of dismissal were granted to them.

In the fall of 1880 the old church building was torn down and a more substantial one was erected in its place. The new building, like the old one, was made of brick. The cost of the new building, with equipment, was \$1,792.25. In 1924 two inexpensive rooms were added to the church. In 1930 a brick veneer building containing fifteen classrooms was dedicated. On June 10, 1956, the fourth building of the Gilead Baptist Church was dedicated. In 1967 a new educational building was constructed and the 1880 building was razed.

The seeds planted by Warren Cash almost two centuries ago have grown into a powerful force in the Glendale area. A magnificent church building still stands on the banks of the Nolin River.

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## **TREASURER'S MESSAGE**

**HARDIN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY DUES FOR THE 2003 CALENDAR YEAR ARE NOW DUE AND PAYABLE. DUES ARE \$8.00 PER MEMBER, \$16.00 PER FAMILY.**

**DUES WERE RAISED TO \$8 ABOUT TWENTY YEARS AGO, AND HAVE BEEN MAINTAINED AT THAT AMOUNT IN ORDER NOT TO EXCLUDE ANYONE. HOWEVER, THERE HAVE BEEN TREMENDOUS INCREASES IN POSTAGE AND PROGRAM COSTS, AND THE SOCIETY IS OPERATING SLIGHTLY "IN THE RED." IF YOU CAN PAY \$10 OR \$12, IT WILL BE APPRECIATED. PLEASE MAIL YOUR CHECK TO THE SOCIETY AT P. O. BOX 381, ELIZABETHTOWN, KY 42702, AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, IN ORDER THAT YOU WILL NOT MISS ANY OF THE INTERESTING PROGRAMS PLANNED FOR THE COMING YEAR OR ANY ISSUES OF *BITS AND PIECES*.**

**MERANDA CASWELL, TREASURER**

# INDIAN PROBLEMS



The pioneer settlers in Severns Valley were subject to frequent attacks by the Indians. In 1782, the Rev. John Gerrard, first pastor of Severns Valley Baptist Church left home with his gun, apparently alone, and went into the wilderness to hunt for game. He was expected back that night, but his wife and daughter looked for him in vain. He was never seen or heard from again. It was concluded that he was killed by the Indians who were then prowling near with the determination of driving the white man from their hunting grounds.

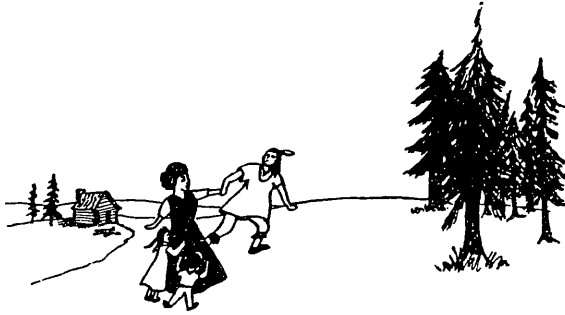
Haycraft's *History of Elizabethtown* details the occasion in which Dan Vertrees, grandfather of W. D. Vertrees, one-time County Judge, was killed. Vertrees was described as a stalwart young man of daring. According to Haycraft: "He, with . . . Colonel Nicholas Miller and others, were pursuing a band of Indians; Miller, then young, was tall, slenderly built, but as active as a cat, and as fleet as a hind, and as brave as Julius Caesar. This company, coming upon the Indians suddenly, a desperate fight ensued. Vertrees was killed at the first fire. A stout warrior seized a white man, wrestled his gun from him, and was about to cleave his head with an axe. Miller at that moment, with a celerity of action which few men could equal, and with a power that few possessed--in the language of John Glenn 'snatched the white man from the Indian as he would a chicken from a hawk,' and, with an equal rapid motion, killed the Indian. This turned the tide, and the remaining Indians fled, leaving several [of their number] dead on the ground."

Haycraft also reports that Henry Helm, son of pioneer settler Capt. Thomas Helm, was killed by Indians.

About the middle of September, 1782, a roving band of Indians made their appearance in Hardin County and committed several depredations. Miles Hart, whose keen penetration and skill as an Indian fighter, had gained from them the name of "Sharp-Eye," with several other settlers, pursued them. In the pursuit, Hart shot their chief, while several others of the party were also killed. Only two of the Indians made good their escape. These two reported the chieftain's death to the tribe. Vengeance was declared by them against Sharp-Eye and his family for the death of the fallen chief, and speedy execution followed the threat. A short time thereafter, a band of Indians, led by a brother of the slain chieftain, secretly and silently made their way into the neighborhood of Elizabethtown, where they emerged from their hiding places and commenced their outrages. The neighborhood was instantly aroused, and Hart, always ready to assist in repelling the savage foe, was the first upon their trail. The whites followed in rapid pursuit for an entire day, but were unable to overtake them.

As soon as the locals had turned toward their homes, the Indians, who must have been closely watching their movements, picked up their trail and followed them back to the settlements. Hart arrived at his home five miles from Elizabethtown about dark in the evening and slept soundly through the night, as he had no apprehension of further Indian depredations.

On the succeeding morning, just as the family was beginning to partake of their frugal meal, the band of Indians, who had been prowling around the house all night, suddenly appeared at the door, and the brother of the fallen chief shot Hart dead. Joseph Hart, son of the slain man, a brave youth only twelve years old, grasped his rifle the instant he saw his father fall. Before the savage could enter the door, the boy sent a ball through his heart, thus avenging his beloved parent's death. The Indians then rushed to the door in a body. Joseph plunged a



hunting knife to the hilt into the breast the first who entered the threshold, and he fell by the side of his leader. A contest so unequal could not, however, be maintained.

The youth, with his mother, Elizabeth Rawlings Hart, and his sister, were overpowered and carried off to the Wabash as captives. The sister, from the feebleness of her constitution, was unable to bear the fatigue of a forced march, and was killed after proceeding only a few miles. Elizabeth and Joseph were intended for a more painful and revolting death.

Elizabeth Hart was regarded as a very delicate woman for those days, and was in an advanced state of pregnancy when taken prisoner. She was burdened with camp kettles and other Indian plunder. They were taken across the Ohio River into the Northwestern territory. After journeying a few days, at nightfall she was

compelled to kindle the Indian fires, and then made to go aside and kindle a fire for herself, raking up rubbish from under the snow. There alone, unaided by any kind of assistance, she was delivered of a son. The squaws then showed a spark of kindness in the morning by giving her a little water in which a turkey had been boiled. Then cutting a block from a tree, they wrapped a piece of blanket around the infant, fastened it to the block, and laid the block upon her back with camp kettles, and so forth, and pursued their way. In the course of a day, they waded a river waist deep, and yet she experienced no serious inconvenience; however, from the rigors of life, the child died at the age of six months.

Upon arrival of the party at the Wabash villages, preparations were made for the sacrifice. However, an influential squaw, in pity for the tender years and in admiration of the heroism of the youth, interposed and saved his life. The mother was also saved from the stake by a chief, who desired to make her his wife. She lingered in captivity and wretched slavery for several years, until a trading Frenchman at Detroit purchased her and Joseph from the Indians and restored them to their family.

Mrs. Hart often declared that she would have preferred the stake to a union with the Indian chief. She later married Peter Guntriman, with whom she had several children, and lived in Hardin County to a very advanced age, dying about 1840.

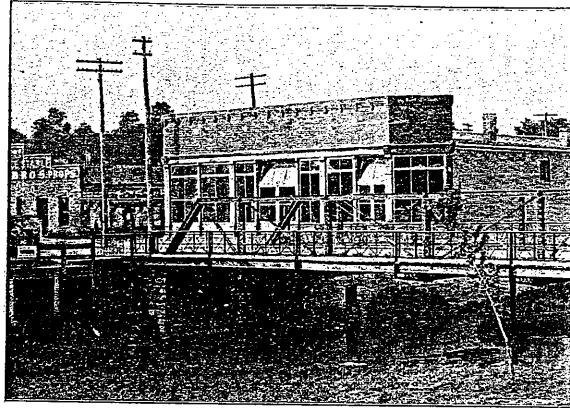
Joseph Hart also lived to old age, having moved from Kentucky to Missouri.

M. J. J.

(Sources: Samuel Haycraft, *History of Elizabethtown*; Lewis Collins, *History of Kentucky*; Greenspace, Inc., *History and the Greenbelt Park*; personal files.)

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# THE GARDNER-WARREN IMPLEMENT COMPANY



Gardner-Warren Implement Co.

According to a local newspaper of September, 1900, one of the most extensive businesses in Elizabethtown and probably in Hardin County was that represented by the Gardner-Warren Implement Company, which was duly incorporated under the laws of the State of Kentucky. This plant was described as "a small city." There were in connection with the buildings some half dozen houses and smaller sheds. The two main buildings were brick structures, the combined floor area of which measured more than 12,000 square feet. These two large floors, one 60x120 and the other 65x75, were completely covered with their varied line of goods, embracing not only every variety of farm implements, such as mowers, binders, drills, plows and harrows, but also buggies, carriages, threshing machines, corn shredders and boilers and engines for flouring mills.

A partial list of the various makes of carriages and buggies sold there will appear from the following list of manufacturers from which they come: The Staver Carriage Company, the Ames, Delker, Seeler, Kaufman, Morris-Woodhull, Bonner, Perry and Bunel carriage factories.

They also handled the famous "Studebaker" and "Old Hickory" wagons.

The company guaranteed for one year all its goods and kept on hand a large quantity of supplies.

In connection with the implement business they operated a large planing mill from which they manufactured all kinds of building material, such as dressed and grooved lumber, sash, doors, screens, blinds, lathing, studding, veranda posts and shingles, and in fact every kind of wood material used by builders. In connection with the implement department they also handled harness, swings and wire for fencing.

Another branch of their business not to be overlooked in this summary was the buying and selling of horses and mules, these animals being mostly of a fine grade, especially the horses, which were noted for being elegant roadsters.

This business was begun about 1885 and up to the first day of July, 1899, was known as the Joplin Implement Company. At that time it was organized into the Gardner-Warren Implement Company, under the proprietorship of W. H. Gardner, T. S. Gardner and C. T. Warren, all residents of Elizabethtown and men of well known business integrity and who were said to have the best interests of their town and county at heart.

The partnership was apparently dissolved, because in 1902 Charlie Warren and his son, J. Lancaster Warren, established the Charlie Warren Implement Company at the intersection of Dixie Avenue and the Illinois Central Railroad tracks, and shared quarters with Morrison and Roby, lumber dealers.

On December 4, 1904, Mr. Gardner, obviously in an attempt to sell the business on account of his poor health, wrote the following letter to J. D. May in Bardstown describing the finer elements of his business and of the town in which it was located:

DRIVING, REPAIRS, REAR-END, RIVETERS AND OLD RIGIDITY WAGON, DICK TRUCKS, BROWN CULTIVATORS, OLYMPIA PLUM, HULLS COMFORT AND DICK BIRD'S PLUM, WOOD MILLS, PASTEURIZERS.	OFFICE OF <b>W. H. GARDNER</b> <b>Implement Company.</b> AGENT FOR <b>THE CELEBRATED ATLAS ENGINES.</b>	FARMING IMPLEMENTS, LUMBER, ALL KINDS BUILDING MATERIAL, DOORS, SASH, BARRIS, DOORS AND WINDOWS, BURNING IRON, WASHINGTON MACHINES, WAINWRIGHT, CHURCH, ETC.
ELIZABETHTOWN, Ky., Dec 16 1904		

DRIVING, REPAIRS, REAR-END, RIVETERS AND OLD RIGIDITY WAGON, DICK TRUCKS, BROWN CULTIVATORS, OLYMPIA PLUM, HULLS COMFORT AND DICK BIRD'S PLUM, WOOD MILLS, PASTEURIZERS.	OFFICE OF <b>W. H. GARDNER</b> <b>Implement Company.</b> AGENT FOR <b>THE CELEBRATED ATLAS ENGINES.</b>	FARMING IMPLEMENTS, LUMBER, ALL KINDS BUILDING MATERIAL, DOORS, SASH, BARRIS, DOORS AND WINDOWS, BURNING IRON, WASHINGTON MACHINES, WAINWRIGHT, CHURCH, ETC.
ELIZABETHTOWN, Ky., Dec 16 1904		

J. D. May Esq  
 Bardstown Ky  
 Dear Sir,

Your letter to the Farmers Home Journal in regard to a business for sale has been referred to me, as I am the party. You can see by my letter health character of stock I am handling my business is located in the business part of the town, in a good Brick Building 50 ft wide and 120 ft deep with a large lot and plenty of shed rooms for lumber. It is one of the oldest stands in the State and has always enjoyed a good trade. The town has about 3000 inhabitants with water works electric lights and first class graded school and College, 5 different Churches baptist, Methodist, Baptist, Christian, and Pres.byterian, there is not a more pleasant place any where to live or better people. I have been connected with the business

for 8 years, and have made money, and am now and in fact doing better the last year than any other during the 8 years. The only reason I have for selling is bad health, I am not able to attend to it, judging from your location, you have likely been there if so, I am just across the bridge from the L. & N. R. Depot in the old John Land, I have about \$1800 worth of Buick wagons, implements 75 on hand and also in lumber, will sell the stock from your building or sell all, I sell about 150 Buggies 50 to 75 wagons, 200 sets of horse and mule harness, the trade has been good. If you think the place will suit you come over and look it up or over the Courier-News. Stephen call me up & talk about the matter. You could not buy it, if it was not for my health, kindly let me hear from you at once,  
 Yours Truly  
 W. H. Gardner

(Source: Files of *The Elizabethtown News*, 1900 and 1906; letter from the files of the Hardin County Historical Society.)

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# *Abraham Lincoln and Ben Hardin Helm*

R. Gerald McMurtry

One of the closest connections between Abraham Lincoln and Elizabethtown was through Ben Hardin Helm. This illustrious Elizabethtown citizen was the son of Governor John L. Helm and Lucinda Barbour Hardin, a daughter of the famous lawyer, Ben Hardin. He received his literary education in the seminary at Elizabethtown and in the winter of 1846 went to the Kentucky Military Institute. He remained there only three months, and after becoming of the required entrance age, he entered West Point Military Academy. He graduated with high honors in 1851 and was brevetted second lieutenant in the Second Cavalry. He then served six months on the frontier of Texas, but due to ill health he obtained a leave of absence. When he returned to Elizabethtown he resigned his commission.

Helm next studied law at the University of Louisville and graduated in the spring of 1853. He began the practice of law with his father, and afterwards formed a partnership with Col. Martin H. Cofer with whom he was connected for some time at Elizabethtown.

In 1855 he was elected to the legislature, and the next year he was made Commonwealth Attorney. While a member of the legislature, he met Miss Emily Todd, a half sister of Mrs. Lincoln, and was married to her in 1856. Lincoln and Helm were not acquainted at the time of Helm's marriage, but in 1857 Helm had occasion to go to Springfield, Ill., on a law case and while there he visited with the Lincolns a week, and he and Lincoln became friends, although their political ideas were different.

These two men had much in common as they were both from the same community in Kentucky, having been born about fourteen miles apart. Lincoln made many inquiries about Elizabethtown and Hardin county as he was always interested in the town and its people, with some of whom he was more or less indirectly familiar.

Some time in April 1861, Ben Hardin Helm went to Washington in response to a cordial personal letter of invitation from Lincoln. Lincoln knew that Helm was a strong southern rights democrat but on the 27<sup>th</sup> of April the President handed him a sealed envelope. "Ben," he said, "here is something for

you. Think it over by yourself and let me know what you will do." The envelope contained a commission as paymaster in the United States Army with the rank of Major.

This office was a coveted one, and Mrs. Lincoln was anxious to have her sister live with her in the White House, but Helm, after considering the matter, chose to cast his lot with the Confederacy. On September 20, 1863, General Helm, Commander of the Orphan Brigade, gave his life for the South on the Battlefield of Chickamauga.

Senator David Davis said in reference to President Lincoln's reception of the news of General Helm's death, "I never saw Mr. Lincoln more moved than when he heard of the death of his young brother-in-law, Ben Hardin Helm, only thirty-two years old, at Chickamauga. I called to see him about four o'clock on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of September; I found him in the greatest grief: 'Dave,' said he, 'I feel as David of old did when he was told of the death of Absalom.' I saw how grief stricken he was, so I closed the door and left him alone."

Ben Hardin Helm is considered by many to be Elizabethtown's most illustrious native born citizen. The fact that he chose the Confederacy, which he considered his duty, but which would compel him to work under the most adverse conditions, contrasted with the prominence that he would likely have achieved in Washington, indicates his character. The Helm-Lincoln connection with Elizabethtown is one of the most interesting of Lincoln's contacts with his native state.

Helm was buried in Atlanta on September 23, 1863. Twenty-one years later, under the auspices of the famous Orphan Brigade of which he was a commander, his remains were brought from Atlanta to Elizabethtown and on September 19, 1884, were reinterred in the family burying ground at the Helm place. The survivors of the Orphan Brigade had met in Elizabethtown at this time for their annual reunion.

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(The above article was written about 1938.)

# ***HARDIN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY ORGANIZED IN 1931***

(Editorial, *Hardin County Enterprise*, July 23, 1931)

A movement of worthy note, now under way, is the organization of a Hardin County Historical Society. With as many places and objects of historical interest as there are in Hardin county, it is indeed strange that an organization of this kind was not formed years ago. However, now that a historical society is in the preliminary stages of formation, worthy citizens will give it their support and many are expected to take advantage of the opportunity to become its charter members.

The society will gather and record for posterity all historical data, believed beyond a doubt to be true, and will cooperate in the proper marking of places of historical interest. It will reveal to the public many interesting but now almost forgotten events, which occurred in Hardin county in the past. These will prove of immense value not only to the students of history but to the county's progress and prosperity, as an advertising medium, drawing thousands of tourists within our borders.

Historical and family records have not been preserved in the south and west to the extent they have in the eastern states, especially in New England, where historical organizations have been active for many years. However, numerous old records at the County Courthouse, this city, can be delved into. From them and family records, often kept in Bibles, much interesting data concerning the early history of the county and its citizenry at that time can be ascertained.

When this information is divulged by the historical society, many will find that their ancestors played a prominent part in the early history of the State and Nation. If they can trace their line of descent from a Revolutionary War soldier or other patriot who aided in the cause of freedom, they will be eligible to join the Sons (or Daughters) of the American Revolution and similar patriotic societies of national distinction. It is the writer's desire to see a local chapter of the State Society of the Sons of the American Revolution established in this city. It could work in cooperation with the historical society and the two prove mutually beneficial.

A preliminary meeting of the proposed Hardin County Historical Society was held Sunday at the Brown-Pusey House, attended by thirteen interested citizens. The next meeting, at which organization will get under way, will be held Sunday, August 2. All interested in this worthy project are urged to attend and if they then wish to affiliate, will be given the opportunity to become charter members of the Hardin County Historical Society.

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