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# Bits and Pieces

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## Bad Reporting Makes The News

### PRACTICE MAY HAVE LEAD TO BUSINESS DEMISE

Impossible people exist; you will eventually encounter them. These are two givens that T. L. Stovall, the editor of the *Independent*, came face-to-face with in June 1889. While the little editor of the short lived Elizabethtown newspaper may have been accustomed to revealing his take on a good news story from the safe advantage of a byline, he failed to acknowledge the frustration of J.R. Neighbors with his less than favorably received reporting skills and Stovall quickly became a clone of Neighbors' well known over-the-top short fuse antics and part of the endless parade of customers for the local court.

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REPRINTED IN ITS ENTIRETY FROM THE JUNE 14, 1889  
ISSUE OF THE ELIZABETHTOWN NEWS

#### EDITOR STOVALL ASSAULTED BY BOB NEIGHBORS

#### THE LITTLE EDITOR OUT ON THE WAR PATH FOR HIS ASSAILANT WITH A SHOT-GUN.

#### BOTH PARTIES PLACED UNDER BOND FOR HEARING TODAY.

About five o'clock yesterday evening as Bob Neighbors was passing by G.R. Smith & Co. store, on his way home from the Court House, T. L. Stovall, the editor of the *Independent* asked him how the William's trial had gone. Neighbors replied and after a few remarks on both sides, Neighbors advanced on Stovall grabbed him around the neck, started to strike him when parties interfered and they were separated. Stovall went almost immediately to Bryan Young's where he got a shot gun and returning down town started in search of his assailant. By this time a tremendous crowd of people had gathered both at Kaufman's and Smith's corners, Neighbors had gone into Charlie Lott's and that was Stovall's objective point. As he got on Kaufman's corner he was met by Officers Coombs and McClure, who took his gun

away from him and prevented bloodshed. Both parties were arrested on a peace warrant and held over on bond of \$200 each, to appear before the Police Court this morning. There was also another warrant issued for Neighbors for disorderly conduct.

The NEWS took occasion to gather the full details of the affair from the only eye witness of the whole of it. A gentleman who is strictly reliable and therefore we quote it exactly as he gave it to us:

After stating that Neighbors came by on his way up town from the Court House he says, "As he came up Stovall said to Neighbors, 'how did that case go?' Neighbors said "What case do you have reference to?" Stovall, "The Williams case." Neighbors, "He was acquitted." Stovall, "That does not change my

VOL. 1.

THE INDEPENDENT.

T. L. STOVALL, } Editors.  
J. L. DUNCAN, }

\$1.50 PER ANNUM.

OFFICE OVER G. R. SMITH & CO.'S STORE.

Entered at the Post Office at Elizabethtown as  
Second-class Matter.

TUESDAY, JULY 16, 1889.

An advertisement in the *Elizabethtown News*  
announces the advent of a new publication for  
Elizabethtown.

## THE WILLIAMS TRIAL

Tuesday morning in the court room the case of Jake Williams, for killing Dave Bethel, was called and as both the Commonwealth and the accused announced ready for trial the work of securing a jury began. The Commonwealth is represented in the case by Hon. T. A. Robertson, the Commonwealth's Attorney Mr. Chapeze Wathen, John S. Sprigg and Jas. Irwin. H. T. Wilson, H. H. Smith and Kincaid stand for Williams. Owing to the wide publicity given to the case, it was a difficult matter to secure a jury. Over one hundred men were brought in from the country before a jury could be selected and the whole of Tuesday and a part of Wednesday was consumed in doing this. The examination of witnesses began Wednesday morning and as we go to press the case has been given to the jury. The case is one quite familiar to the reading public and is one in which there is a great deal of interest.

Bethel was killed by Williams, it will be remembered, in a low saloon in which he (Williams) had been the barkeeper and an attempt was made in the examining trial to set up grounds of self-defense by the statement that Bethel after he was shot had walked to the counter and laid down his pistol. The doctors contradicted this with the statement that from the nature of Bethel's wound, he could not have walked, after he was shot. Those who heard all the testimony at the examining trial, state that the case, from the testimony taken yesterday, is much stronger against him.

- *Elizabethtown News*, June 14, 1889

Legal woes for Jake Williams, contemporary of J. R. Neighbors, made the local news. While the editors of the *Elizabethtown News* offered coverage of the Williams trial, both citizens and the courts took objection with T.L. Stovall's approach in the *Independent*.

opinion of the matter." Neighbors, "Tommy, he is not such a murderer as you made him out to be." Stovall, "Don't you give me any of your d—n slack." With that Neighbors walked back and throwing one arm around Stovall hit him with the other. I am not certain whether he struck him or not.

From this statement it appears that Stovall provoked the difficulty, but it was not sufficient by any means to warrant an attack. Had Stovall been a man able to cope with Neighbors physically it would not have been so bad, but to strike a little fellow like he is was cowardly. Neighbors for several years past been walking around this town with a chip on his shoulders and from his general conduct has made for himself a reputation as a pretty tough citizen. Stovall criticized him severely some time ago in his paper for selling whisky and it is believed that neighbors took this opportunity to get even with him. Anyway he waked up the wrong citizen.

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Public opinion arising from this matter and the handling of the ensuing criminal prosecution caused the county attorney to address the publishing practices of the editor in a newspaper account that appeared in the *Elizabethtown News* on July 26, 1889.

### **COUNTY ATTORNEY SPRIGG, SAYS DUNCAN AND STOVALL, ARE HELD ON BOND. HE MAKES A CONCISE STATEMENT OF THE FACTS FOR THE PUBLIC.**

Since a false impression has gone out about the arrest and trial of editors, Givans, Stovall, and Duncan, I feel it my duty to give the public a true statement of that matter. In the first place, the warrants were issued by Justice O'Meara on my motion as County Attorney, as I believed the law had been violated, and the proof was before me in the way of the letter which they were tired for publishing, and I felt it my duty to take steps to enforce the law when its violation and the proof was before me. My opinion is that the publication of that article was a violation of the law.

If they had violated the law what reason can be given for not prosecuting them as other men, when the proof was before me, plain and positive? Stovall and Duncan now criticize Justice O'Meara because he tried warrant which he had issued. If they had any objections to him trying the case why did they not make it then, as the law requires, and not wait until the trial was over and then do so through their paper? This warrant was issued by Justice O'Meara and it was his duty under the law to try it, unless objections were made by the Defendants as provided by law which was not done, and had he failed to sit at the

trial, he would have failed to discharge his duty as an officer. The warrant was returned before him and the Defendants came before him for trial and made no objections to him sitting, whatever, and now they have no right to complain of his ruling in the case. The warrant read:

"And bring them before the undersigned or any magistrate of Hardin county, to be dealt with according to the law."

They could have had this warrant returned before any magistrate in Hardin county whom they saw proper. Then is clear that they have no right to complain of him sitting on the trial, as they had the warrant returned before him and made no objections to him trying the case. All magistrates try warrants returned before them, unless there are objections made.

The report has been currently circulated, that they were turned loose without executing a bond. This is not true. They were on a good bond before that trial for their appearance, and on motion of J.P. Hobson, their own attorney, they were permitted to stand on that bond to answer to the Circuit Court, which in law is same as their own motion. This was done as soon as the decision was rendered, hence, no mittimus or other process can be issued against them. Should they fail to appear at the Circuit Court, their bond will be forfeited and the bondsmen will be responsible. Were

## HUNG JURY.

**In the case of the Commonwealth vs. Jake Williams, indicted for the murder of Dave Bethel, the jury failed to agree after having the case some thirty-six hours. The jury stood eleven for acquittal, and one for the penitentiary for two years on the final ballot. This was a great surprise to many and gives public conviction that the case against Williams is not as strong as thought.**

J. R. Neighbors' opinion of Jake Williams and the Bethel affair may have been closer to the truth than Stovall's reporting.

they not on bond, a capias would be issued and they would be placed in jail if they failed to give bond, as other men.

Now I have nothing to say in regards to the dismissal of Givans, more than this: The question at issue was purely one of law, on which the two magistrates differ in opinion.

- John S. Sprigg

Court proceedings listed in the November 20, 1891 edition of the Elizabethtown News included the disposal of the Hardin Circuit Court case in the matter of the Commonwealth vs. Jake Williams for killing Dave Bethel. The guilty verdict carried a sentence of two years in the penitentiary.

In a second matter of false swearing, Williams was found not guilty. Next to that report appeared the following news story.

### **CHRYSANTHEMUM BUDS AND ORANGE BLOSSOMS**

**Editor Stovall "Locked Up" in Wedlock.  
An Imposing and Pretty Ceremony**

Tuesday evening at half past eight o'clock, at the Presbyterian Church, in Elizabethtown, Mr. Thomas L. Stovall, the well known editor of the Hardin Independent, and Miss Martha Francis, the handsome and attractive daughter of Mr. I.F.G. Cann were united in matrimony. The ceremony was performed by Rev. John D. Jordan pastor of the Baptist church, and a prayer was offered for the young couple by Rev. S. Williams.

The wedding was a chrysanthemum one, as these beautiful and popular flowers superseded the orange blossoms, except a lovely wreath of the product of

Florida which rested upon the head of the bride. The church, itself was artistically decorated with chrysanthemums, hanging in all their beauty from pulpit, per and chandelier, and the bride and three brides maids carried bouquets of this favorite flower.

Miss Katie Hotopp presided at the organ and filled the church with the soft strains of wedding music as the bridal party entered and during the entire ceremony. The ushers were Drs. O'Conner, Shacklette, Montgomery, and Mr. Horace Hays. The attendants were Mr. H.H. Smith and Miss Abbie Wood, Mr. Lee Duncan and Miss Mattie Willett, Mr. Lee Howell and Miss Cora Duncan, Mr. Jas. Rihn and Miss Carrie Sweets. The ceremony was performed immediately in front of the pulpit beneath the mistletoe bough. The bride's gown was a white silk, close fitting neck and sleeves, en train. She wore the usual bridal veil, and was crowned with a wreath of orange blossoms. The bride's maids were all dressed in white silk. After the wedding and bridal party were given an informal reception at Mrs. Kate Duncan's. This young couple was the recipients of a number of presents. They left on the night train for a three weeks trip to Florida and Cuba.

satisfied with their own ugly position for encouraging mob violence by publishing an article signed Judge Lynch have tried to drag the News down to their level, by one of the most contemptible and dirty tricks ever practiced in journalism. They published an extract from an article which appeared in the News Dec. 7th, 1888, signed Judge Lynch. Here is the article as it appeared in their papers:

A CARD.

ELIZABETHTOWN, KY.  
ROBERT VICKERS:— You have been cleared by the court. If you are not out of this State in thirty days, Judge Lynch, with one hundred and twenty-five men, will settle your case by tying you to a limb. We shan't have no more negroes killed by white men. If you are about here after Christmas you shall be tried before my court: just as Petty was—to a limb.

Respectfully, JUDGE LYNCH.

Now what impression does this card as it appeared in these newspapers create upon the minds of the readers? None other than that the News had published an article from Judge Lynch threatening the life of Robert Vickers. That we allowed our columns to be used by Judge Lynch to try to run Vickers out of the State. That we were indirectly by publishing such a card encouraging mob violence and that in this the News was no better than other sheets.

These are natural conclusions and they only go to show what a contemptible and dirty trick has been practiced upon us. We publish below the article as it actually appeared in the News:

[Elizabethtown News Dec. 7.]

AN ATTEMPT TO INTIMIDATE.

Rob. Vickers who had his trial at this term of the Court for killing a negro man and was honorably acquitted has received the following anonymous card threatening his life:

ELIZABETHTOWN, KY.

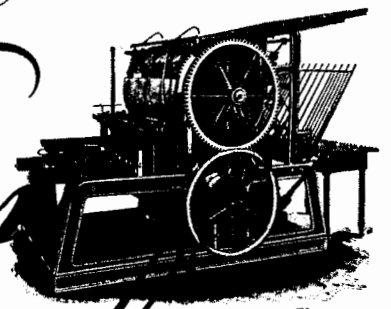
ROBT. VICKERS. You have been cleared by the Court, if you are not out of this State in 30 days Judge Lynch with 125 men will settle your case by tying you to a limb. We shan't have no more negroes killed by white men, if you are found about here after Christmas you will be tried before my court just as Petty was to a limb. Respectfully, JUDGE LYNCH.

Mr. Vickers requests us to state that he will at all times be found at his home and has no intention of leaving the State and that he has numerous friends to protect him from any mob of negroes. The News can hardly believe that the writer of the above card has any intention of carrying his threat in execution. Vickers has been acquitted in the courts, and any attempt on his life by negroes would be followed in a manner by the law-abiding citizens that those who engaged in it will rue for the rest of their lives.

This card was furnished us by Vickers. It was published at his request to protect him and to show that he was not intimidated and the News took an occasion to warn Judge Lynch that the people would not submit to his work in Hardin county. Why didn't these newspapers publish this article as it appeared? because they knew when they read it that instead of advocating Lynch law it was published by the News for just a contrary purpose and that did not suit them. Being in the soup themselves they tried to drag the News in with them by a trick. What do the people think of this kind of journalism?

Exposing the Pitfalls of

# Yellow Journalism



LOCAL EDITORS WRITE TO  
FURTHER OWN AGENDAS  
Biased Opinion Masquerading  
As Objective Fact Causes Stir

## MORE MISREPRESENTATIONS.

THE Independent published an article last week in which we are accused of instigating the arrest of the editors of that paper and the editor of the Welcome Tidings, and this week re-iterates the charge. This entire attack is based upon a statement, that we showed an article in the Grayson Gazette to Judge Gardner. Now the whole truth of the matter is, that Judge Gardner takes the Grayson Gazette, and would have seen the article whether we had shown it to him or not, and the further fact, that St. Vall had gone around town talking about the aforesaid article in the Grayson Gazette and had told Judge Gardner about it before we had gotten our paper out of the post-office. In order, however, that the public may fully understand that we did not even suggest to anybody that the editors should be arrested, we publish the statements of Judge Gardner, Squire O'Meara and John H. Spriggs: Mr. Sommers showed me an article in the Grayson Gazette, but he said

Elizabethtown experienced no shortage of the written word in regards to news story coverage during the Gilded Age and for a period of time sensationalized news was commonly reported by the media to attract readers and increase circulation as there was a furious competition between publishers.

The *Elizabethtown News*, under the leadership of publisher Harry A. Summers, employed a serious approach in reporting the news to keep the public fully informed. Both publisher and publication enjoyed a lengthy career in the history of local news.

The *Hardin Independent*, published by T. L. [Tom] Stovall and J. C. Duncan, and the *Welcome Tidings*, published by T. S. [Timothy] Givan, made use of liberal reporting, sometimes skirting unprofessional tactics of yellow journalism, a common place practice, that arose during this century. Both these news sheets experienced a short life span and their editors reprimanded by the local court for their work before continuing their careers elsewhere.

### MR. T. L. STOVALL

Mr. Harry Sommers, while assembling an account of Elizabethtown in his golden years, had the following to say about Stovall's end in business: "The *Independent* was a stormy petrel of journalism in Elizabethtown and things were lively while it was being printed, however it was not a profitable venture and Stovall sold out to a nephew of F. M. Joplin, who came from California and was a very nice man.

Stovall was a nephew of his partner, J. L. Duncan. Duncan was the son of Major Tom Duncan, a dry goods store merchant, following the Civil War, with an impressive business located at the corner of North Mulberry and Main Cross Streets where the *Elizabethtown News* building once stood.

Charles Joseph "C. J." Richerson entered the local newspaper business in 1888 at the age of thirteen, working for the pair until landing a job with the *Elizabethtown News* in 1900 after Stovall's exit from business.

### MR. T. S. GIVAN

Givan is remembered as a man of recognized literary talent and attainments, that contributed largely to the periodicals of the West and South according to the *Memphis Trade Journal*



when commenting on his connection with the *Breckenridge News*.

This acclaimed newspaper man and writer was born in Hardin County on October 8, 1845. He left the family farm at the age of ten to enter the office of the *Cloverport [KY] Journal*, where he served an apprenticeship of four years.

Givan worked with a great number of newspapers across Kentucky, Tennessee and mid-west as well as serving in the Federal Army during the Civil War, and an interlude back home in Hardin County farming, merchandising and writing for the *Welcome Tidings*.

After his brief stint as publisher and proprietor in Elizabethtown, Givan went on to pen the following literature what stamped him as an author of no ordinary merit: "The Pearl of Great Price," "Happy at Last," "My Darling," "The Guardian Angel," and "Two Novel Marriages."

Another lengthy work, "How Life Came Upon the Earth; the Master-Key to Human History," by Givan was picked up and published in 1922 at Boston by the Christopher Publishing House.

The book, available for reading online from the Hathi Trust Digital Library at <http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=nyp.33433088105261>, is quite thought provoking and ends with this final paragraph: "The birth of Jesus; the blood of Jesus; the death of Jesus, each and all, have nothing whatever to do with your salvation. That depends entirely upon your own merit, in purity of character and good works, according to the golden rule.

## MARVELOUS

Little ROBERT HAYES DILLARD, the eleven-year-old son of Mr. JOHN W. DILLARD, who lives four miles west of Elizabethtown, who has been in bad health for several years, complaining much of his head, on last Thursday morning, after an unusual spell with his head, emitted from his nostrils an immense egg-shaped globule, bound by a thin membrane, fully the size of an egg and containing a strange object, almost like a young rat, with four legs, yet having a head more like a water dog. This object seemed to have had its birth and grown to the size of a large bean, in this egg like mass.

This article first appeared in the *Elizabethtown Welcome Tidings*. The sensationalized news event, much in the way of today's yellow journalism style reporting, was reprinted in the March 8, 1889 issue of the *Elizabethtown News*.

# Locked Up, Shot At, Burned Out

## GETTING TO THE SOLE OF THE MATTER

In March 1889, J.W. Shaw, a shoemaker with space located next door to that of J.W. Slack's in Elizabethtown, ran a small advertisement in the Elizabethtown News offering his services to area residents. On a personal level, the return on that investment was monumental for the old gallant Mexican and Civil War Veteran, as the paper fell into the hands of Alexander Shaw of Henderson County. The brothers had lost touch during the Civil War, serving in opposite armies, and thought each other a casualty of war until that chance advertisement.

While the newspaper reported on their part in the reunion of the men, it failed to elaborate on the sibling's inability to re-establish family ties following their separation from military units. A search through the many historical records available for that time period to answer the looming question of why they could not learn of their well-being reveals an eventful and nomadic life to the Shaw brother who eventually made Hardin County his home.

According to census records, John W. Shaw was born in Virginia in 1824. It is not known when or how he came to live in Kentucky. It is from his March 13, 1896 obituary that we know he was raised in Barren County and lived in Hardin County the last ten years of his life and that he was buried at Glendale.

In the years between his youth in Barren County and his final days here we find a most interesting tale. That story should serve as a reminder that we all are remembered by our recorded deeds.

Life in 1850 must have been good for John Shaw. That year's census tells us he was living in the Hamilton's area of LaRue County with his wife, Elizabeth, and a ten month old son, W.J. Even then his trade was that of a shoemaker, a good profession for the illiterate young man.

By the same time ten years later, John Shaw is in the Hart County Jail at Munfordsville and charged with passing counterfeit money. The Jailer, John W. Fitzpatrick, was housing four men under his watch in August 1860.

In that same 1860 census, Shaw's wife, Elizabeth, is living in the Bacon Creek area of Hart County in the home of Fielding Hodges. Also living in the home are Shaw's children: eleven year old Thomas, nine year old Joseph, six year old James and 5 year old Mary.

Shaw did not remain in his restricted confines for



**A simple monument marking John Shaw's existence is hid among the vines in the graveyard at Glendale Christian Church.**

long, but remained separated from his family for some extended time as he traveled to Keysburg in Todd County and enlisted in the Confederacy on August 25, 1862 to serve in Gano's Regiment of the 7th Kentucky Cavalry C Company. That unit later became Co. B of Prentice's/Dorch's 2nd Kentucky Cavalry Battalion. Shaw's name does not appear on the roster for the later unit.

In 1870, John Shaw's name is found in the Kentucky census of Meade County at Garnettsville. The forty-seven year old shoemaker was living with only his fifteen year old son, James. There is no mention of his wife living during that period of time.

By 1880, Shaw is found living in Glendale. The fifty-six year old shoemaker has married once again. He and his twenty-two year old wife, Mary, have a one year old child, William.

Tombstones erected in the churchyard at Glendale for the Shaw family indicate that the couple had another child following the birth of William. Charley entered this life on October 16, 1862 to only pass through heaven's gates a short month later.

The entire 1890 Federal Census for Kentucky was destroyed by fire on January 10, 1921 while housed in the basement of the United States Commerce Department. This loss of critical historical information robs us of some insight on Shaw's family life in the final years of his life; however, the Elizabethtown News captures a memorable day in his life just five months prior to its end in an October 4, 1895 news story.

A fire that began in Weller's Livery Stables on Main Cross Street [Dixie Avenue] spread quickly up Race Alley [Central Avenue] and destroyed the Hoskins Cottage where shoemaker Shaw lived. He lost all his household goods and \$28 in money in the midnight inferno.

McClure in his extensive collection of local history, spanning two centuries, addresses the Elizabethtown Fires of 1869, 1887, and 1893. Absent from that list is the late September 1895 fire that affected shoemaker John W. Shaw, and others, in the east end of town.

Ironically, three months prior to this fire reported in the *Elizabethtown News* that newspaper had run a story on June 21st about the system of water works proposed for Elizabethtown that would provide for a sufficient number of hydrants to protect the property of the town from fire.

Reprinted in its entirety from the October 4, 1895 edition of the *Elizabethtown News*.

## A BIG FIRE

### Elizabethtown Visited By Another Conflagration 8,000 Worth of Property Destroyed Including Fifteen Horses

Again the city of Elizabethtown has been visited by a destructive and disastrous fire. Saturday night about half past twelve o'clock, Weller's livery stable on Main Cross Street was discovered to be on fire by Mr. Henry Sweets who had just gotten off the midnight train. The alarm was promptly given but in less than five minutes the entire building was wrapt in flames. Owing to the amount of combustible materials in the stable it went like a tender box. John Williams who sleeps in the office of the building in the front end barely escaped. He was aroused from his sleep by the horses breaking loose from their halters and running to the doors. He started to open the large front entrance but was driven back by the smoke and flames without accomplishing his purpose to the office where he made his exit through a window in his night clothes dragging he truck after him. The stable contained fifteen horses and every one was burnt to death. The sight was a most horrible one. Nothing but the direction of the wind saved the town from a general conflagration as the water supply is very low, everything being dry and the wind blowing a perfect gale. The flames spread rapidly in the rear of the stable up Race Alley burning a double cottage belonging to the Hoskins heirs; a cottage belonging to Mrs. Fannie Thomas, occupied by Lucy Wintersmith, colored; Funk's blacksmith shop; stable of Abe Perciful; stable of Mrs. Belle Pusey and several barrels of molasses owned by F. M. Joplin, J. W. Shaw, the well-known shoemaker who occupied one of the Hoskins houses lost all his household

goods and \$28 in money.

Mr. Weller's loss was eleven horses, all his buggies, harness, a wagonette and a large stock of feed valued at \$25,000 with \$900 insurance.

The stable belonged to Hillary Bryan, an infant ward valued at \$2,500, insurance \$1,800.

The loss of the Hoskins heirs amounts to \$1,500, insurance \$400.

Mrs Thomas' cottage valued at \$300, insurance \$150.

Lucy Wintersmith's household goods \$150, no insurance.

Funk's blacksmith shop valued at \$100, no insurance.

Perciful's loss \$150, no insurance.

Mrs. Pusey's loss \$100, no insurance.

John Jones, colored, a cart and lot of feed.

Mr. Harvey Smith lost his fine stallion, Eureka Lad, one of the best horses in the county. Loss \$500, no insurance.

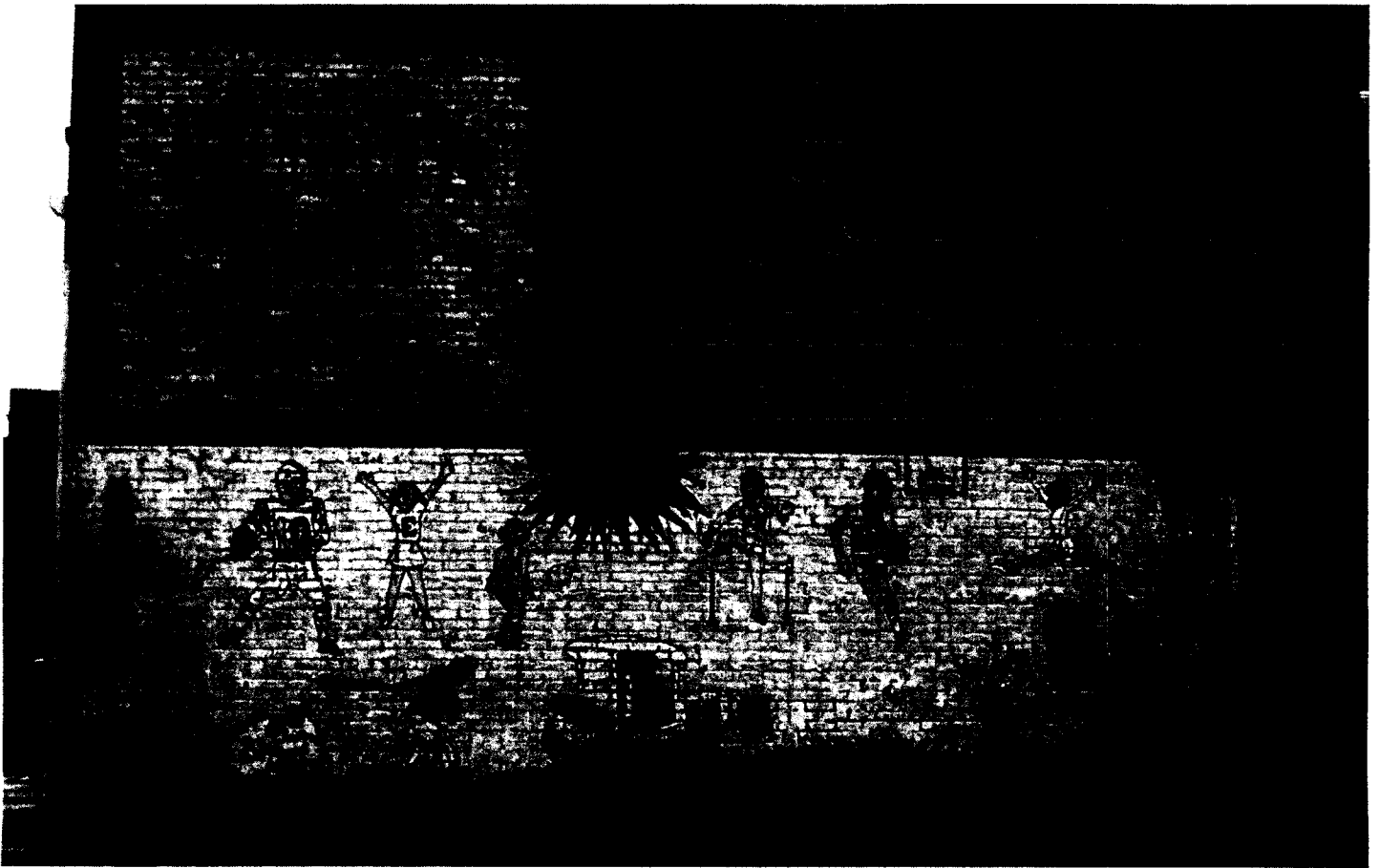
Miss Lila Johnson, sister of Collector Ben Johnson, lost a fine horse and phaeton, valued at \$300.

Mr. Thomas McFall, who formerly lived here, had arrived here the night of the fire from Decatur, Ill., with his fine pacing mare, Temple Winslow that he had but a few days before refused \$800 for. The mare was burnt in the stable including his sulky, cart, all his harness and traps, his truck of clothing and \$60 in money, everything in the world the man had.

John Williams also lost a horse.

The total loss foots up about \$8,000, with about \$3,500 insurance.

The origin of the fire is not known but it is certain that it caught from the inside as the walls were brick and there was no way for it to be set a fire from the outside. The part of the stable where the fire started could not be determined, for when first discovered it was in a blaze all over. Mr. Weller believes it was the work of an incendiary and the circumstances are very strong in that direction. Mr. Jim Williams who can in from the country on horseback about fifteen minutes before the alarm of fire says that he saw a crowd of drunken Negroes just in front of the stable. That he put up his horse and came back in front of the stable not five minutes before the alarm of fire was given and that the Negroes were still there. That they should not have discovered the fire is rather remarkable and a thorough investigation should be made and a good detective would just at this time furnish valuable service. The people of the town are very indignant and outraged over the belief that the stable was set on fire, and if the fiend was discovered he would be hung as soon as a rope could be put around his neck.



The Elizabethtown/Hardin County Heritage Council has formed a committee, consisting of members from the Elizabethtown/Hardin County Heritage Council, Hardin County History Museum, Hardin County Historical Society, Central Kentucky Art Guild and private citizens including Stewart and Laura Couch owners of the former Western Auto Building where the old mural is to be replaced with a new moment from the pages of Elizabethtown History, and need your input.

Write a paragraph or two explaining what you wish to see pictured in this location and mail to Mural Concept, 790 N. Dixie Ave., Suite 800, Elizabethtown, KY 42701 or email to [marylouh3@comcast.net](mailto:marylouh3@comcast.net). You may also hand deliver your vision for use in this downtown revitalization project to Heath Seymour at the Heritage Council office in the Historic State Theater or email to [info@etownheritage.org](mailto:info@etownheritage.org).  
Deadline for entry is July 25, 2011.

If you would like to assist in the financial commitment to this project, donations are being accepted at the Elizabethtown/Hardin County Heritage Council at 209 West Dixie Avenue, Elizabethtown, KY 42701. Donations are tax deductible.

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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Please explain your idea. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



## LOCAL BROOM MAKERS REMEMBERED

# Enterprise Promises Clean Sweep

## EXCLUSIVE RIGHTS RESERVED AS OPERATING CAPITAL

On October 10, 1904, John E. [Jonathan Edward] Royalty, the son of James Rector Royalty, Sr., and his wife, the former Mary Ellen Walker, sold one hundred acres of land along the waters of Rough Creek in Hardin County to Charles R. Walker. In that deed the land, all appurtenances and the growing crop, except the broom corn, was conveyed to Walker for \$400 cash.

One might wonder why Royalty specifically held on to the crop of broom corn over any other that might have been harvested that year.

While much in the way of the history concerning the Hardin Springs area is written about her hotel, five lines of note appeared in the October 30, 1891 *Elizabethtown News*, written by Henry Clay to the her editor about that community, that quite nicely answers the riddle of the broom corn exemption.

*"Jas. Royalty and Sons are constructing a broom factory, which, when completed will be quite an addition to our town in the way of industry and enterprise."*

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Broom corn is almost exclusively grown in the United States and according to the eleventh census, in 1889 there were 93,325 acres of broom corn grown that produced at total of 39,557,429 lbs. of brush. By 1899, the planting had been increased to 178,584 acres, with a total production of 90,947,370 lbs., or an average yield of 509 lbs per acre. In 1909, the



James Rector "Preacher Jim" Royalty, Sr. is pictured here with grandchildren Eleanor Meece, Ova Lee Carman, Ruby Roof, and Irene Carman.

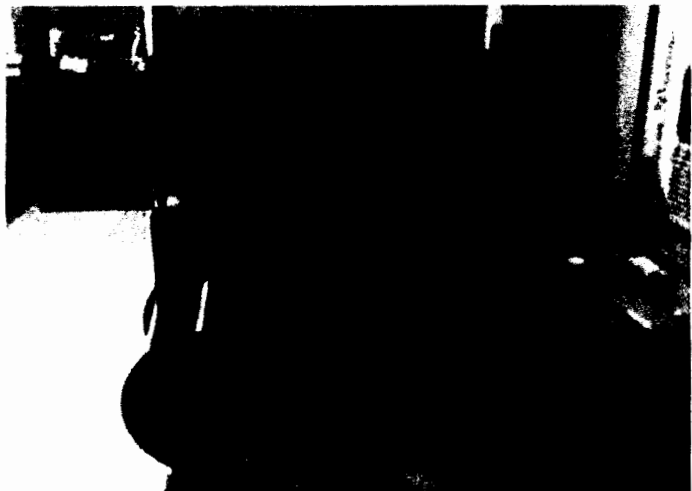
value of U.S. broom corn production was \$5,134,434 and practically all raw materials were made into brooms. The export trade during that period of years was around \$425,000 a year with a large share shipped to Canada and Cuba.

Broom corn belongs to the grass family and comes from the sorghum group where its seeds are borne on long straight branches from which brooms are made.

The first record of this plant being used to make brooms is from an Italian source.

The soil and growing season climate, wet in the spring and dry in the late summer, makes Kentucky and several states to the west idea for this crop.

Its use in local industry by the Royalty family, who saw migration to Oklahoma and Kansas, is just one of many stories of how the many specialized crops such as hemp and mulberries once supported our economy and added to our rich agricultural heritage.



This handcrafted broom making table was last used by Hardin County native, Judson N. Berry. Notice the removable vice sitting in the middle of the table. The vice was used to secure the broom under construction in order for it to be stitched.

# Samuel Haycraft, Jr. Scheduled for Honors

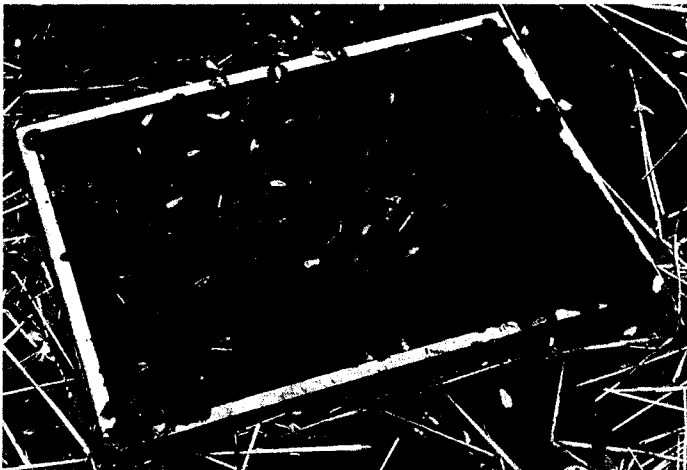
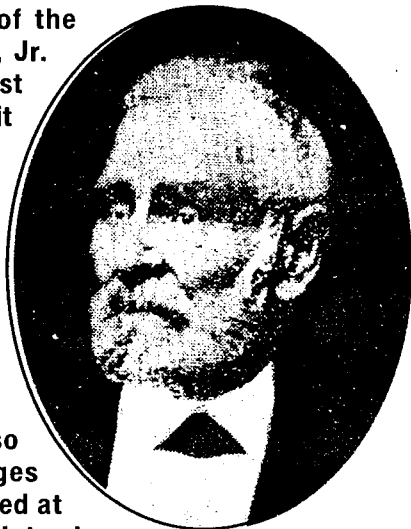
## ONCE AGAIN

It's official. Samuel Haycraft, Jr. is being honored yet once again. While the faces of several citizens who have made significant contributions to the quality of life in the community are soon to be seen suspended from lofty heights along the downtown streetscape, courtesy of a grant from the Elizabethtown Tourism and Convention Bureau, it is the likeness of the Honorable Samuel Haycraft, Jr. who will become the newest bronze commission for exhibit at the Hardin County History Museum.

The only known image of Haycraft, a photo taken in September 1877 in his 83rd year, is the inspiration for the sculpture currently underway by artists at LifeFormations.

Museum officials are also working on securing images from Haycraft's Journal housed at the Filson Historical Society in Louisville to become a part of a permanent exhibit honoring the man who was the first historian for the area.

The museum has submitted a down payment on the commission and is currently looking for benefactors to help defray the costs of the commission and exhibit.



Above: Marker in the Elizabethtown City Cemetery honoring Samuel Haycraft, Jr. erected by the Hardin County Historical Society.

Right: On March 21, 1916, the *Elizabethtown News* reported the sale and known history of a letter to the Honorable Samuel Haycraft, Jr. from Abraham Lincoln.

## LETTER FROM LINCOLN TO HAYCRAFT SELLS TO PAPER FOR \$500.

### Newspaper Pays Large Sum For Communication Received By Elizabethtown Pioneer.

(Owensboro Inquirer.)

A letter written by Abraham Lincoln to Samuel Haycraft, of Elizabethtown, clerk of Hardin county for many years, has just been sold to a New York commission agent for \$500 by Henry Morton of this city, great-grandson of the man who received the letter from the "Rail Splitter." Mr. Morton has had the letter in his possession for many years, and the interesting communication was made public for the first time by the Inquirer fifteen years ago. The letter was purchased through H. Barton of New York, a commission man, but Mr. Morton does not know where the old relic is destined to go.

Shortly after Lincoln was nominated by the Republican party, Mr. Haycraft addressed a letter to Springfield and asked "Honest Abe" to visit his old home in Kentucky. New York and Chicago papers heard of the invitation and immediately it was rumored that Lincoln had been invited to Kentucky, the hot bed of democracy that he might be assassinated. Lincoln read the newspaper stories and wrote to Mr. Haycraft, assuring him that he realized the absurdity of the charges and thanking him for the invitation. This was the letter which this week brought the great grandson of Haycraft a check for \$500.

Deeming the old letter of general interest, Mr. Morton in 1901 had it published in the Owensboro Inquirer. The New York Times investigated the authenticity of the letter and shortly afterward published a special article dealing with the correspondence between Lincoln and Haycraft.

# *Kenneth Tabb Accepted Into Hereditary Society*

Kenneth L. Tabb was formally inducted into First Families of Kentucky Hereditary Society during their Fifth Annual Meeting on Saturday, June 4, 2011 at the Pendennis Club in Louisville, Kentucky. Tabb was issued an invitation to join the prestigious society based upon proven lineage to John Bland who settled Nelson County while still part of Virginia.

The First Families of Kentucky, 1671-1792 Statehood June 1, 1792, was conceived and organized by its founders 30 April, 2005 with the following purposes and objectives:


The purposes of The First Families of Kentucky are to honor, preserve and promote the memories of the pioneer families that entered Kentucky prior to June 1, 1792

Within the stated purpose, The First Families of Kentucky shall:

- Encourage interest in history, culture and traditions of the Commonwealth known as Kentucky;
- Collect genealogies and important history of the members of the Society and provide a permanent record for posterity;
- Sponsor Society events and foster a "feeling of kinship" among the descendants of The First Families of Kentucky.

The purposes are exclusively charitable, educational, literary, scientific and religious within the meanings of 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue law.

The period 1671 through and up to June 1, 1792 was chosen to include descendants of American colonists who explored or lived in Kentucky any time during that period.



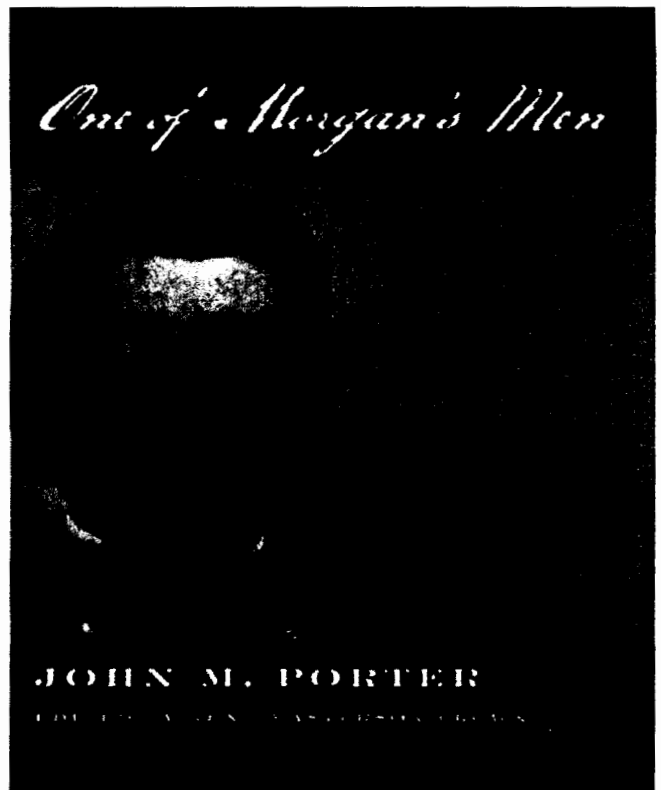
Liz Tabb pins a society medal on her husband during the night's event.

## **BOOK REVIEW**

By Matthew Rector, Hardin County History Museum Curator

### **One of Morgan's Men: Memoirs of Lieutenant John M. Porter of the Ninth Kentucky Cavalry**

Butler County native John M. Porter served the Confederacy in the Ninth Kentucky Cavalry under John Hunt Morgan. Porter wrote his memoirs within ten years of the end of the war in 1872. By doing so, readers are treated with stories that may provide more details than those written by veterans twenty or more years after their youthful adventures. He was interested in genealogy, but was disappointed with the lack of information he could find about his ancestors. He wrote that one of his primary reasons for writing his memoir was for future descendants. Fortunately, his work was published for all to learn and enjoy. Porter gives a detailed account of his service. Perhaps most exciting are Porter's stories of scouting and hiding behind enemy lines. He was no stranger to Elizabethtown, passing through it on a number of occasions and fought in Morgan's battle there on December 27, 1862. Porter was captured twice, the last time being interned at Johnson's Island for the remainder of the war. Readers will find this memoir to be a comfortable read and not over-bearing. Kent Masterson Brown provides a brief introduction to each chapter and provides endnotes.



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# Historical Society announces next meeting



**Heath Seymour**  
Elizabethtown/Hardin County  
Heritage Council Director

The Hardin County Historical Society will meet Monday evening, July ~~27~~<sup>22nd</sup>, 2011, at the STATE THEATER GALLERY, 209 West Dixie Avenue, in downtown Elizabethtown. The buffet dinner, catered by BACK HOME, will be served at 6:30 PM. The price is \$8.50 per person. Call Judy French at 735-9698 by **Friday, July 24th**, for dinner reservations; later reservations for the meal cannot be guaranteed.

The dinner is followed by a program on the Revitalization Downtown Elizabethtown with special guest speaker Heath Seymour. For many years he made a living as an artist before beginning a career in downtown development by helping Hodgenville, KY revitalize and redesign their downtown prior to the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Celebration. From there he worked as director of the Statesboro, GA Downtown Development Authority and directed the development of downtown Scottsville, KY for three years. The recent Scottsville project resulted in \$25 million in investment in 3 years and the City of Scottsville was awarded the League of Cities Enterprise City Award in 2010 for the work.

Heath has recently come back to his hometown of Elizabethtown, KY to help with the City's efforts to revitalize the downtown area. *"There are many reasons why Elizabethtown has such potential, including support from the City government, proximity to the Interstate, population of the area, and so on. But what may be the most important factor in the City's downtown redevelopment is that there are so many creative and energetic people interested in helping to improve the downtown area, it is truly an exciting time to be here."*

Come and learn more about the Hardin County Historical Society's and your own individual roll in this historic project currently underway.

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