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HAUNTED BY THE MYSTERY OF A HOUSE OF SPIRITS *Gone...Lock, Stock and Barrel* FEW TRACES OF OLD E'TOWN BUSINESS SURVIVES

By Susan McCrobie, newsletter editor

Situated on just three acres, one-quarter of a mile southwest of the heart of Elizabethtown, once stood a business that the Federal Government kept watch on for a decade near the turn of the century.

The location of this little operation was ideal with a railroad line at its door, ready to carry off the goods.

Whether known as Bryant & Thompson Distillery, Ashton Distillery Company No. 403 or the Muldraugh Hill Distilling Company, this jewel of an operation took in the sweet, pure waters of Valley Creek, percolated through the native limestone, to assist in the fermentation of its mash and the production of a whopping twelve barrels of fine whiskey each day.

A few years back, John Lay came across a small bit in the March 15, 1889 *Elizabethtown News* naming the Elizabethtown Distillery. The piece was a personal ad inserted in the publication by Mrs. John Mahar. The advertisement sent Lay on a search through old deeds to locate the source for whiskey manufacturing in town.

Inspection of deeds in the office of the Hardin County Clerk indicates that in October 1880 J.H. Bryan and wife, Sallie, and W.E. Bryant of Hardin County along with B.F. Bryant of Nelson County and Diller Thompson of Louisville joined together in the ownership of property where a distillery soon appeared. (Deed Book 24, Page 13-14)

The following year, B.F. Bryant and his wife, Bettie, were listed as residents of Hardin County along with Diller Thompson and putting a lien on the distillery site. That lien, payable to the United States Government who was underwriting the business operation, was also placed upon the machinery, mash, fermenting tub fixtures, tools, stills and merchandise including whiskey in barrels and the brand, Muldraugh Hill Distillery. (Deed Book 24, Page 636)

Bryant & Thompson Distillers appeared by name

as a noteworthy business operating in town in the 1881-1882 *Kentucky Gazetteer*. Also of note in that publication is the existence of nine new distilleries in the town. Whether this number of distilleries can be substantiated remains unexplored; however, by the 1887-1888 printing of the *Kentucky Gazetteer* we find only one distillery in town, the Ashton Distillery Co. (of Louisville.)

The 1889 annual report of the names of distillers and locations of distillery warehouses in which spirits were held on deposit, issued by the commissioner of Internal Revenue, lists the Muldraugh's Hill Distilling Co., Ashton Distilling Co. "D. T." and Ashton Distillery Co. all operating under the registered number 403 in the 5th district at Elizabethtown.

THE NEWS

FRIDAY, MARCH 15, 1889.

HOUSE AND LOT FOR SALE.

I want to sell my two story frame dwelling house near the Ashton distillery in Elizabethtown. The house has an acre of good land attached. Will sell cheap.

MRS. JOHN MAHAR.

Photo Courtesy of Elizabethtown News Archives
Newspaper add mentions the operation of a distillery in Elizabethtown.

Just where was that Distillery? Speaking in terms of today's landmarks, it stood at the rear of the Sandy Springs Subdivision and along the old Illinois Central Railroad lines part of and adjacent to the Southern States Cooperative on the Leitchfield Road.

When did it disappear from public record? In a deed made in 1889 between William Wolf and R. B. Park and eventually recorded in 1906 (Deed Book 52, Page 283) we find that the property being transferred by Wolf was obtained from the Ashton Distillery Company in 1888. (Deed Book 33, Page 12.)

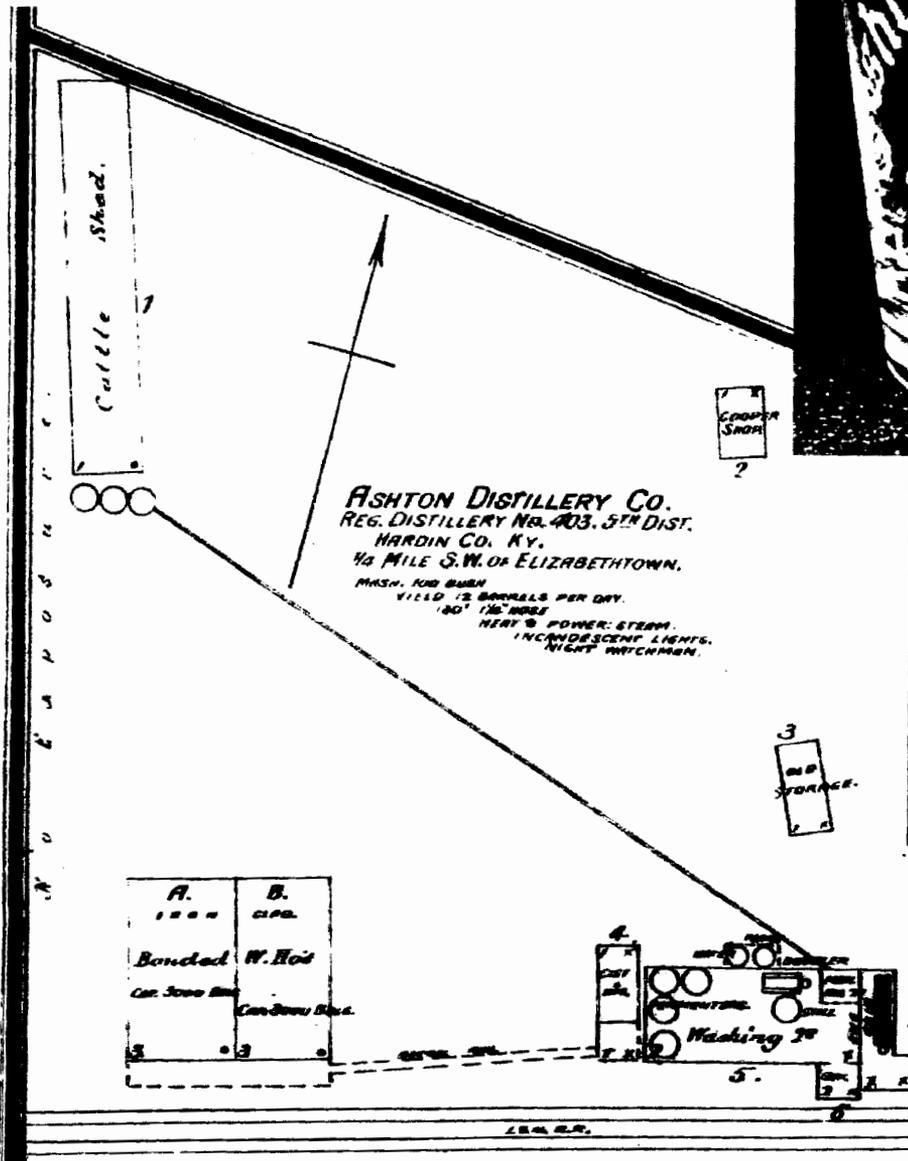
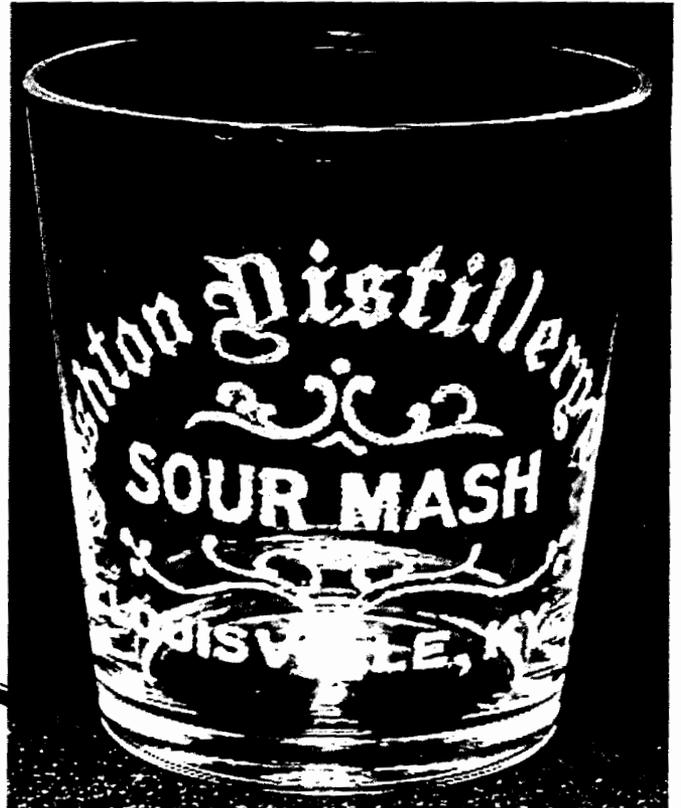
In 1911, a transfer of that land by Park to L.A. Faurest finds no mention of the distillery in the deed description.

Well in a 1905 deed between Sallie Culley, widow of J. H. Bryan, and Silas English the operation was simply referred to as the 'still house lot.' This does not give evidence of a thriving business operating at the edge of a town. The absence of a business name

speaks volumes as to its existence or in this case the lack of existence.

The distillery was not mentioned in a special industrial section for Elizabethtown and Hardin County that ran in the *Elizabethtown News* in September 1900.

It would appear that this Distillery closed its doors right before the dawn of the 20th century.



Few traces of the Registered Distillery system, as it existed in the years leading up to Prohibition (1920) survive in public record. This August 1886 Elizabethtown, KY Sanborn Fire Insurance Map documents several key aspects of the local distilling operation including its registration number, district, local location and production capacity. The railroad line name was incorrectly identified in the lithograph.

Real American Spirit Found Here

A lot on which is located a distillery about 2 miles east of Elizabethtown and bounded as follows: Beginning at a stone at the north west corner of the lot running thence N 56 E 186 feet to a stone, thence S 34 E 69 172 feet to a stone, thence S 56 W 154 feet to a stone, thence N 34 W 60 172 feet to the beginning. This deed included the distillery and all machinery therein. The title to said land was derived from H. A. Bading & c by deed of record in the Hardin County Court Clerks office in Deed Book 54 page 92 and bears date 28 day of May 1907.

The waters of Severns Valley Creek has turned out an excellent drink over the years. Early in the county's history we find Jacob VanMeter, the old miller "Jake of Valley Creek," making a little home brew. He built his grain mill on the creek where Billy's Creek entered the stream, a location not far removed from the Ashton Distillery, and distilled a little whiskey. At the time of his death, VanMeter had a still and a tavern license to keep travelers in his large home.

Over one hundred years ago, some two miles east of town and north on that creek, near its head waters, we find yet another distiller.

It was October 1907, three years after the good people of Elizabethtown spoke out about the 'evils of liquor' following J. R. Neighbors' confrontation with Carrie Nation, that Neighbor's brother-in-law, Henry Frederick McDermott, was purchasing a working distillery and all its machinery on the Valley Creek. [Deed Book 54, Page 336 of the Hardin County Clerk.]

How large of an operation was to be found here we many never know; however, there are a few facts we can share regarding the enterprise. According to deeds the distillery was there in May 1808 when H.A. Bading, father-in-law of McDermott, sold it to J.A. Spaulding of Howardstown. It was not part of the deed description when Bading purchased the land from T.W. Bush in November 1900.

It must have been a desirable operation for McDermott to purchase it from Spaulding just four short months after his father-in-law's selling out.

Perhaps McDermott sold all of his production from the distillery at the saloon he operated in town on Main Cross Street. It is beyond any shadow of a

doubt when looking back through the local newspaper that the spirituous drink caused nearly as much talk about town for Harry McDermott as it did for his brother-in-law, J. R. Neighbors.

DRUNKEN BRAWL.

Costs Joe And Blake Sorry \$8,60 Each. — Jim Roberts Discharged.

A drunken brawl took place back of Harry McDermott's saloon, Saturday afternoon, in which Joe Sorry, Blake Sorry, Henry Sorry, Jim Roberts and Pat Mann were involved.

Joe and Blake Sorry were fined \$8,60 each in Police Court for drunkenness. Jim Roberts was taken up for breach of peace, but it appearing that he had only interfered to separate some of the parties, he was discharged.

Photo Courtesy of Elizabethtown News Archives
The April 17, 1906 news reported on a fight at McDermott's saloon.

McDermott was a Real Character...

Saloon Closes.

Harry McDermott's saloon on Main Cross street closes to-day, the license having expired. It is the second saloon to close in this city under the County Unit law, that of R. H. Nicholls having closed some time ago.

HARRY McDERMOTT CONVICTED.

Elizabethtown Man Fined \$150 For Violating Local Option Laws.

Harry McDermott who was arrested in Clarksville-Tenn. several days ago following a raid on his restaurant by the police officials was convicted on the charge of violating the liquor laws. At his place were found 300 bottles of "Schlitz's Fizz" and 45 pints of whiskey. McDermott who has lived in this city until recently when he skipped out to escape service on the numerous indictments against him. This morning's Nashville Tennessean in a dispatch from Clarksville has the following to say of his conviction.

H. F. McDermott, who has been conducting a soft drink establishment on the east side of the square, was arraigned before Judge W. B. Young in the police court yesterday morning on a charge of violating the liquor laws and was convicted in three cases, getting \$50 in each. McDermott will appeal to the circuit court, and was returned to the holdover, where he has been confined since his arrest several days ago.

The witnesses in the several cases were A. F. Tilley, Will Dean, Mack Hodge and Chief of Police Robinson. The three former testified to having purchased the beverage in question and stated that it tasted and looked like beer. Chief Robinson had taken two bottles to Nashville and had the contents analyzed by Lucius P. Brown, chemist, the analysis showing that it contained 1.55 per cent alcohol. The label stated that the contents contained less than 2 per cent, but the federal government requires dealers to have tax stamp for sale of all beverages containing over one-half of one per cent alcohol, and the sale of any beverage of a higher percentage than that is prohibited in the city of Clarksville.

The January 18, 1907 news reported the close of McDermott's saloon. The saloon may have closed but old Harry still pushed his whiskey until 1908 when his business attracted the attention of the law and he left town only to be discovered at it in Tennessee the following year.

*Photo Courtesy of
Elizabethtown News
Archives*

HARRY McDERMOTT GONE.

Puts up \$420 Bond And Boards Fast Train For Louisville.

Harry McDermott, against whom seven indictments were returned by the present grand jury has left town. He boarded No. 4 Wednesday morning with his grip in hand and has not been seen or heard of since. A bench warrant was issued for him Tuesday afternoon by Judge French after the indictments were returned and he put up \$420 as bond. The grand jury is making a thorough investigation of whiskey selling in Elizabethtown and will probably return a number of other indictments against him and others.

When McDermott eventually sold his land to R. W. Cates in 1909, after prohibition had taken effect in the county, the deed clearly acknowledges the presence of "distillery" buildings but no longer mentions the equipment used for production of some real American Spirit.

McDermott bounced around the country, living in Chicago and then Tennessee.

In 1917 he was in Pitkin County, Colorado where he was registered for the draft. His draft card notation says he was born 15 MAR 1877 and his relative lives Elizabethtown, KY.

Local history also has him serving in the Louisville Legion during the Spanish American War during 1898.

All that fighting was bound to have a man looking for a little taste of some smooth Kentucky Whiskey. It was too bad that a local option vote wouldn't allow a man to sell a bit of the golden drink without landing in a legal battle...

THE APPEAL

McDERMOTT v. COMMONWEALTH.

(Court of Appeals of Kentucky, March 22, 1907.)

1. INTOXICATING LIQUORS - LOCAL OPTION LAW - SALES - EVIDENCE.

A saloon keeper who, while in a town in which the local option law was in force, received from a person there 50 cents, and agreed to forward to him there a pint of whiskey, and who forwarded the same, was guilty of selling liquor in the local option town.

(Ed. Note - for cases in point, see Cent. Dig. vol 29, Intoxicating Liquors S162.)

2. CRIMINAL LAW - FORMER JEOPARDY- COLLUSIVE PROSECUTION.

One indicted for a misdemeanor was arrested and gave bail. He and his bondsmen went to the office of his attorney who directed the jailer to take accused, and without any legal authority the jailer confined accused in jail, and took him before the county judge, who discharged him from custody. No notice was given to the county attorney, and no time was fixed for the trial. *Held*, that the court was warranted in ignoring a plea of former acquittal based on the proceedings before the county judge who had authority under Ky. St. 1903, SS 1703, 1704, to try accused on his being lodged in jail in default of bail, on the judge fixing a time for trial and issuing summons for necessary witnesses, on the ground that accused was guilty of collusion to avoid a trial in the circuit court.

(Ed Note-For cases in point, see Cent. Dig. vol. 14, Criminal Law, S 299.)

Appeal from Circuit Court, Larue County. "Not to be officially reported."

H. F. McDermott was convicted of selling liquor in violation of the local option law, and he appeals. Affirmed.

Williams & Handley and O'Meara & James, for appellant. N.H. Hays, Atty. Gen., and C.H. Morris, for the Commonwealth.

LASSING, J. Appellant was indicted in October 1905, for selling liquor in violation of the local option law in force in the town of Hodgenville. He was thereafter tried by a jury and fined \$78. From the judgment predicated on this verdict he appeals.

Appellant complains that the jury was misinstructed, that the verdict is not supported by the evidence and is contrary to law, and that the court admitted improper evidence and refused to admit proper evidence. The facts as developed on the trial are as follows: In September, 1905, appellant, who was the proprietor of a saloon in Elizabethtown, was in Hodgenville, and while there met one Jesse Quinn, who gave him 50 cents and requested him to send him by express a pint of whisky. Appellant took the money and agreed to forward the liquor on the day following. This was done. It was admitted that the local option law was in force at the time in Hodgenville.

Appellant states that on the 30th day of December, 1905, he was tried on this same indictment before the county judge of Larue county, and that the indictment was dismissed. Logan Gore, the circuit clerk, testified that in December, 1905, either Judge Creal or Mr. Handley called upon him for a copy of the record; that he copied the indictment, which was all of the record there was, and delivered it to the person who called for it; and that he was not asked for a copy of the bail bond. J.T. Brown, the jailer, was called as a witness, and testified that in December, 1905, he was called to the law office of Williams & Handley, where he found the appellant, Harry McDermott, and Alf Pickerel, and he was told that Mr. Pickerel, who was on the appellant's bond, desired to surrender him; that he thereupon took charge of appellant and placing him in jail, where he remained for an hour or more that he notified the county judge (Judge Creal), and was directed to bring appellant out before the judge for trial; that he did so; that he had no papers for the commitment of appellant, and no copy of the bond was ever delivered to him. A.M. Howell, the present county judge of Larue

county, testified that the record in his office showed that at a special session of the Larue county court held December 30, 1905, the appellant was brought before the then judge of the Larue county court for trial, on indictment No. 1981 from the Larue circuit court, on a charge of violation of the local option law of the town of Hodgenville, and that on motion of the commonwealth's attorney the cause was dismissed, and the defendant released from custody.

On this evidence the court gave to the jury the four following instructions: "(1) If you believe from the evidence, to the exclusion of a reasonable doubt, that the defendant, Harry McDermott, within 12 months before the finding of the indictment herein, sold to Jesse Quinn whisky in a quantity less than five gallons at one time, in the city of Hodgenville, Ky., and you should find him guilty as charged in said indictment, and fix his punishment at a fine in any sum not less and \$60 nor more than \$100, or at confinement in jail for any time not less than 10 nor more than 40 days, or at both such fine and imprisonment, and you may in your discretion provide in your verdict that he shall work at hard labor until the fine and costs are satisfied, or until both are satisfied. (2) If the defendant, in Hodgenville received money from Quinn, and agreed in Hodgenville to furnish Quinn whisky therefor to Quinn at Hodgenville, and Quinn received said whisky in Hodgenville, such transactions was a sale in Hodgenville. (3) If you have a reasonable doubt of the defendant being proven to be guilty, you should find him not guilty. (4) If you believe from the evidence that the defendant was in good faith lodged in jail in default of bail in this prosecution, and that the county judge of Larue county obtained a copy of the record in this case from the clerk of the court and thereafter entered an order dismissing this prosecution, then you should find for the defendant. If, however, you believed from the evidence, to the exclusion of a reasonable doubt, that defendant, if lodged in jail procured himself to be so lodged in jail for the purpose of avoiding a trial of this prosecution in this court, you should find for the commonwealth as to the plea of former acquittal." These instructions presented the whole law of the case as warranted by the facts.

That the sale was made and the liquor delivered in a local option territory is not denied. The only question, we take it, necessary to be considered, is: Did the evidence offered support the plea of former acquittal? and should the trial judge on this evidence, have directed the jury to find for appellant?

Well the opinions of the judge go on and on and they are part of the public record if you care to finish out the legal script, line for line. The final judgment was to affirm the previous finding of the court and go as far as to say 'that McDermott had a fair trial, and the instructions given were more favorable to him than he was entitled to have.'

All in all this was only a minor setback for Harry McDermott; obviously he took to heart the whole concept of the 'American Dream' and being able to freely pursue any type of employment to acquire a house and all the finer things life had to offer. In this case, he just conveniently decided to ignore local option laws that hampered his work.

In the next instance, in another time and place, well..Harry McDermott was just being Harry McDermott. Let history show that he was very persistent in his pursue of happiness.

Historic Strickler Home Burns

One of the historic homes of Hardin County was destroyed by fire at an early hour this morning.

It was the A. J. Strickler residence, two miles west of Elizabethtown on US 62.

The 10-room, two-story brick house, which had been unoccupied for about eight years, went up in flames which were discovered at 3:15 a.m. Only two walls are left standing. Between 7,000 and 8,000 bales of hay in the house were burned.

Property belonged to J. Frank Strickler and his son Randall Strickler. They also owned 80 acres of land adjacent. No insurance was carried on either the building or its contents.

Hardin County Fire Department was called.

Building 200 Years Old

The building was about 200 years old, Randall Strickler told The NEWS this afternoon. Part of it was constructed by Jacob VanMeter, generally credited with being the pioneer settler of Elizabethtown. He lies buried at the rear of the burned home.

The house was the home for many years of Mr. and Mrs. A. J. (Jack) Strickler. Mr. Strickler was a substantial farmer of the county. Mr. and Mrs. Strickler had three sons, Jesse F. Strickler, Eugene G. Strickler and Robert Strickler, and one daughter, the later being the first wife of the late J. S. McMurry.

Randall Strickler said there were no plans to rebuild the house.



—Staff Photo by R. B. Creighton



Photo Courtesy of the VanMeter Family Archives at the Brown-Pusey House

Valley Creek Jake's home once stood along the Elizabethtown & Leitchfield Turnpike. Some of the old foundation stonework is still visible beneath the lawn of the Manatee Funeral Home.

RAISING A GLASS TO OUR TAVERNER ANCESTOR'S *VALLEY CREEK DOMICILE* MASSIVE HOME AND INN ON THE VALLEY CREEK

By Susan McCrobie, newsletter editor

When U.S. 62 was built, the roadway was moved several feet from the original pike that ran by a place once owned by the man who literally brought so much to the area. Delivering 100 people to Kentucky and leading a portion of that great number into this valley in 1780 to create the first permanent settlement between the Falls of Ohio and Green River was a massive feat.

Jacob VanMeter died at his home on November 16, 1798. He was buried at the rear of the two-story log home and his son, also known as Jacob, carved a sandstone tombstone for the old pioneer and patriot. (That stone and a symbolic cup of the remains of the VanMeter Patriotic was moved to the Haycraft lot in the Elizabethtown City Cemetery in 1965 following the burning of the old homestead.)

After VanMeter's demise and his wife's death the next year, son Jacob inherited the old homestead and continued to live there until 1806, when he relocated to Meade County and sold the farm to the Geohegan family.

The log home was eventually covered with board

and after it passed from ownership of the VanMeter family a large brick addition was added. A brick saved from that addition of the burned out home carries the date of 1840.

In the latter years of the past century, the house was home to Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Jackson Strickler.

Strickler grew up just across the creek and up the hill from the VanMeter Place. His childhood home, the house of his father George Washington Strickler, was known as the "Strickler Place." That brick home (pictured below) was torn down some years ago.



Doc Brown Outlaw of Grayson County

Doc Brown was an outlaw in Grayson County in the mid-1800's. Doc's parents were Gilliam Hopper and Nancy Campbell. Gilliam was born on October 17, 1776 and died on May 27, 1845 in Campbellsville, Kentucky. Nancy was born in North Carolina, and she died around 1862 in Adams, Illinois. Doc's brother, Absalom Hopper was born in approximately 1808 in Tennessee. Absalom married Ollie B. Moore from North Carolina. Absalom died in 1851. Absalom killed Doc, getting killed in the process. Doc was an outlaw in Pine Knob, KY where he would rob banks, kill, and steal horses. The mayor of Leitchfield during Doc's career had a daughter named Emily Ross. Doc, whose real name was Gilliam Hopper, killed Emily's brother for her love and then killed his own dad to cover his wrongdoings. In 1876, Colonel William R. Barnes, a former attorney in Elizabethtown, KY wrote a book about Doc Brown. William's book was reprinted in 1950 in the Leitchfield Gazette. A playwright named Honus Shain now owns the farm Doc Brown once owned. He runs a theatre on the property. Honus has five plays every summer, including one on Doc Brown, called "Doc Brown, Legend of an Outlaw." It was also the first play performed at the theatre.

ONE TIME ELIZABETHTOWN RESIDENT PENS *Memorable Writings about a Man on the Wrong Side of the Law*

By Susan McCrobie, newsletter editor

William R. Haynes was born March 15, 1845 in Grayson County, KY to Lurane (DeWeese) and Henry Haynes.

When nineteen years of age, he enlisted in the Confederate Cavalry under General Nathan Bedford Forrest. In yet another story addressing division within Kentucky families during the War Between the States we learn that during fighting at Western Kentucky in March 1865, Haynes was almost slain in Sullivan's Barn by a Yankee soldier. The Yankee turned out to be his brother, a brother who took him prisoner and watched him sent off to Camp Morton, Indianapolis, IN.

Samuel Hardin Haynes had went against the wishes of his own family and the family of his finance Jane (Jennie) Shirley Field, daughter of Louisa McFarland and Willis Field, all of whom were loyal to the South, and joined the Union Army. His choice strained family relations for years.

After the war, William started the first newspaper in Grayson County. He also taught school and read law. He was admitted to the bar in 1868.

The Friday, April 16, 1880 issue of the Elizabethtown News announced William R. Haynes' candidacy as Commonwealth Attorney. He was successful in his bid for that race in the old Sixth Judicial District. His friend, a fellow Confederate soldier and resident of Grayson county, Thomas R.

McBeath, was elected Circuit Judge.

Haynes served only one term as Commonwealth's Attorney and was succeeded in 1886 by Chapeze Wathen of Brandenburg.

Following his stint as the Commonwealth's Attorney, Haynes and his wife, the former Ellen P. Chick of Basin Springs, removed to Elizabethtown where he had a law practice on the North Corner of the Public Square over the office of Dr. John M. English.

He also enjoyed doing a little farming.

His son, George Henry, and a daughter, Willie R. attend school here.

He achieved local reputation as a public speaker and writer, not solely due to his judicially career but because of his book on the life of the Outlaw Doc Brown, a Grayson County outlaw.

Charles Stuteville, a Regular Baptist Preacher from Nolin, and William May of Elizabethtown, who sold a horse in 1840 to Ned DeWeese of Pine Knob are two Hardin County citizens mentioned by name and trade in Haynes book.

In the late 1890s the Haynes family moved to Oklahoma. In April 1900 from Cleveland County, Oklahoma, the Haynes house and lot in Elizabethtown was conveyed by deed to J. W. McGinnis.

Haynes and his wife both died in Oklahoma.



According to the Big Clifty news column published December 18, 1891 in the Elizabethtown News, we learn the following: 'Popham & Stoner have started their distillery at New Fruit, and will make a barrel of whiskey per day.'

This distiller was assigned 110 as its identification number by the Commissioner of Internal Revenue.

Hardin County Historical Society member John Lay has come across a few other interesting 'finds' when researching the distilling history of the county like this little dandy of a moonshine still owned by Fern Calvert. This still was once operated near the Hardinsburg community.



Photo Courtesy of the United Daughters of the Confederacy Albert Sidney Johnston Chapter #120, Louisville, KY

ORPHAN BRIGADE KINFOLK ASSOCIATION 100TH ANNIVERSARY REUNION HELD IN ELIZABETHTOWN

Historical Society President Featured Keynote Speaker

By Susan McCrobie, newsletter editor

On Saturday, September 20, 2014, our very own illustrious leader, Mike Bell spoke to an assembly at the Helm Family Cemetery marking the 100th Anniversary of a truly great gathering of soldiers of Kentucky's Confederacy and their children.

Those gathered in 1914 and in 2014 were there to remember a time when valiant men came together in defense of their homeland and celebrate their stories.

The questions Bell ask of those assembled in 2014 were simply ones. Why gather? Why remember? Why mark this site and thousands more like it in nature?

His answer was found in the scriptures.

When God's people crossed the Jordan River, the Lord instructed them to place memorial stones so that when their children asked, "What do these stones mean to you?" they would have an answer: "These stones are a memorial... forever."

Today, we place historical markers and gravestones for the same reason: to pause, to read and to remember. Sometimes we get caught up in the many diversions of our daily lives and forget why we should pay homage to the fallen and why we should educate our children of our history.

100 years from now, I wonder how we will be remembered?



Message From The President

Greetings to all members,

Summer has given away to autumn, usually the best time of year – weather-wise, at least – in these parts. A beautiful place in the fall is to sit on the porch to allow the brisk fresh air to permeate your body.

Your executive committee thought we should try some new approaches to promote attendance for our meetings. Our October meeting is a Tony York's. January will be at the State Theater, and April will be at the Brown Pusey House and gardens. We have great programs and need your attendance and participation.

Many thanks to those of you who have renewed your memberships...to paraphrase Blanche in "A Streetcar Named Desire," the Historical Society is "dependent on the kindness of our friends." And please let us know if you have suggestions for programs...we're always looking for interesting speakers.

I am excited about our meeting in my adopted home town! Tony York will have a unique meal for us and Angela Townsend will present an interesting program that is very timely with a recent article in the Courier Journal. I hope you will join us for our gathering in Glendale.

Kindest Regards,
Michael L. Bell

It is all in the telling of the tale...

I think I would have liked Mr. Joseph Gray. He had a rather quick wit. Instead of building a stage, for he was a carpenter by trade, he could have been the star of the show for he could certainly make the whole world believe he was cast in a different role than that of a simple prisoner of war.

The Tuesday, November 12, 1907 *Elizabethtown News*, provides us with a delightful look back at Gray in some of his memorable scenes...

Joseph Gray was born 82 years ago on the 8th of December. Married November 28, 1848 to Miss Lucretia Redman, daughter of John and Nancy Redman. They had one son, Dr. Jas. R. Gray of Elizabethtown. He had a brother, James who moved to Missouri years ago and a sister who married Wash Singleton of Hardin County. His father was a sturdy blacksmith in Constantine, Breckenridge County. He came to this county when 14 years old, living ever since in Elizabethtown.

He was a Confederate soldier during the Civil War. General Buckner placed him on his staff as a courier. At Fort Donnellson he and about 60 other Confederates were captured and put on board a

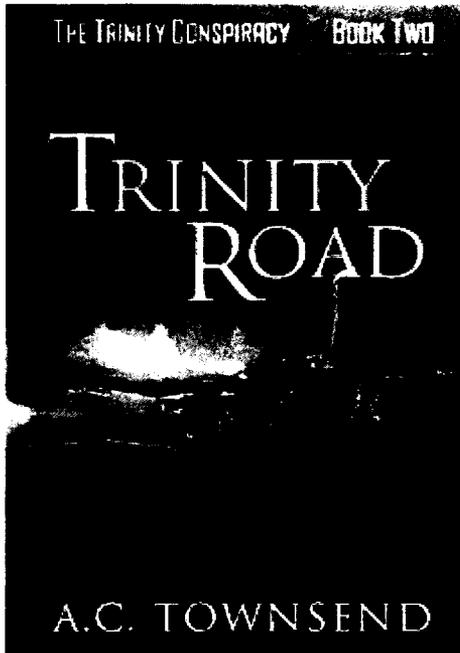
steamboat, bound for a Federal prison. All were dressed in plain clothes and when asked by the officer in command why they were dressed that way, Joe Gray answered, "Sir, we are farmers and were captured within the fort." This subtle response, made with assumed air of innocence, proved a lucky stratagem and he and his comrades were liberated.

Soon after the incident he joined General John Morgan's command and was with him in his noted invasion of Indiana. In this raid he was again captured and imprisoned at Fort Douglas. The good fortune of the brave artful soldier did not desert him in this duress. Through the good office of a lady Confederate sympathizer, he was furnished the suit of a civilian and again secured his freedom, thus disguised by assuming an intrepid bearing as he passed out of the prison walls and through guards and cordon of sentinels.

Again he joined service until the close of the war.

Returning to Elizabethtown, he resumed his traded as a carpenter. He was elected to serve Elizabethtown at different times as Marshall, Deputy Marshal, assessor and collector.

Historical Society announces next meeting



The Hardin County Historical Society will meet Monday evening, October 27, 2014 in Glendale, Kentucky at Tony York's on Main. The buffet dinner, featuring burgoo, cornbread, salad and bread pudding with a bourbon sauce will be served at 6:30 PM. The price is \$9.00 per person. Call Twylane VanLahr at 270-765-2515 by **Friday, October 24th, for dinner reservations**; later meal reservations cannot be guaranteed.

The dinner is followed at 7 P.M. by a very special program, *Conspiracy in the American Desert* presented by Angela Townsend of Elizabethtown.

July 16, 1945, sixty-nine years ago, a test took place in the New Mexico desert that changed lives in the world and America.

Our speaker, using the alias A. C. Townsend and the license of a good mix of history and fiction is currently writing her fourth and final novel of the Trinity Conspiracy and the first-atom bomb test. Join us as we explore the detonation that mushroomed into a living nightmare for twenty-two people in the wrong place at the right time.

HARDIN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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