

George W. Conrad (1840-1894) & Mary Brand (1846-1917)

By Jerry Long, Owensboro, Ky., 1987

George W. Conrad was born 9 September 1840 in Missouri. His parents, Jacob and Mary Conrad (Coonrod), were natives of Germany. About 1841 his parents left Missouri and moved to Kentucky where they were listed in the 1850 census of Daviess County, Ky.

1850 Daviess County, Ky. census, #111-110:

Coonrod, Jacob	42	m	farmer	Germany
Mary	31	f		Germany
George	10	m		Missouri
Francis	9	m		Kentucky
Elizabeth A.	7	f		Kentucky
Jacob	4	m		Kentucky
Snyder, Caleb	23	m	carpenter	Canada

In the Daviess County, Ky. Circuit Court on Tuesday, 2 July 1844 it is recorded that Jacob Conrad, age 34, an alien, born Germany, made a declaration of his intent to become a naturalized citizen of the United States; he was late of Bavaria, has resided in the U.S. the last eight years and in this court's district for the last three years (Daviess County Circuit Court order book F, page 298). The family of Jacob and Mary Conrad during the 1850's moved to Jefferson County, Ky. where they are listed in the 1860 census.

1860 Jefferson County, Ky. census, post office Louisville, Ky.:

p.901 #1205	Conrad, Jacob	52	m	tollgate keeper	Bavaira
	Mary	42	f		Baden
	Lizzie	16	f		Ky.
	Mary	10	f		Ky.
p.889 #1112	in household of Christopher & Sarah Newton –				
	Conrad, Geo.	20	m	wood chopper	Ky.

On 25 May 1864 George W. Conrad married Mary Brand of Louisville, Ky. They were probably married in Louisville. Within the following year George W. Conrad returned with his new wife to his former home, Daviess County, Ky. Their first child, George G., was born in Daviess County on 4 July 1865.

Mary Brand Conrad was the daughter of Otto and Eva Brand, German immigrants. She was born 5 March 1846 in Kentucky. In a computer index of the 1850 census of Kentucky her father was not listed, however, many names were omitted and misspelled in this source. Several

grandchildren of Mary Brand Conrad told that as a child she lived in Louisville. A granddaughter, Betty Mitchell of Owensboro, Ky. stated that: "Her family lived near a butcher shop at the corner of Broadway and Shelby Streets in Louisville. She inherited land in Louisville and years later some businessmen from Louisville came to her home in Daviess County and tried to get her to sell it but she would not. Later it was told in the family that she gave the land to the city of Louisville for the purpose of a city park which was to be named Conrad Park. Later investigations have failed to discover if there was a park established or not," Mrs. Mitchell went on to say that she remembers that her grandmother had a brother named Alex Brand, for whom her father, Alexander Conrad, was named.

A sister of Mary, Catherine Brand, was living in the Conrad home at the time of the 1870 census of Daviess County. In the family bible kept by Mary Brand Conrad, now in the possession of a grandson, John Ben Conrad of McLean County, Ky., the following birthdates of Mary's parents and brothers and sisters were recorded: Otta Brand 15 March 1811, Eva Brand 16 August 1822, Heinrich Brand 15 October 1843, Wilhelm 15 January 1845, Maria 5 March 1846, Elisabeth 12 March 1849, Alexander 12 April 1851, and Katharine 12 October 1853.

George W. Conrad was working as a farmhand on the farm of Bazel G. Smith in the Vanover Precinct when the 1870 Daviess County, Ky. census was taken. Shortly afterwards he bought a farm about five miles west of the then city limits of Owensboro, Ky. Located in the Lowertown Precinct the farm was a short distance south of what is now called Bittel Road and near the present site of the Owensboro-Daviess County Airport. Part of the farm is reportedly now part of the Airport. On this farm George W. and Mary Conrad reared their family of eleven children. Following their deaths the farm was sold to Anthony Bittel and today members of the Bittel family still own it. Jesse Conrad, a grandson of George & Mary, later resided at 3401 Bittel Road, his home was not part of his grandparents farm, but the farm was a short distance behind (south of) his house. A lane off of Bittel Road lead back to the farm and family house. George W. Conrad later purchased a second farm on the Big Ditch Road (Carter Road). He also owned a livery stable in Owensboro, where his son, Alexander worked and later owned it.

In the 1870 and 1880 censuses of Daviess County, Ky. the following listings of the family of George W. and Mary Conrad were made:

1870 Daviess County, Ky. census, Vanover Precinct. p.346, #181:

Smith, Bazel G.	30	m	farmer	Ky.
Conrad, George	28	m	farmhand	Ky.
Mary	23	f		Ky.
George	5	f		Ky.
Irene	3	f.		Ky.
William F.	8/12	m		Ky.
Brand, Catherine	16	f		Ky.

1880 Daviess County, Ky. census, Lowertown Precinct, p.15, #121

Conrhad, George	31	farmer	Mo.-Germ.-Germ.
Mary	29	wife	Ky.-Germ.-Germ.
G.W.	15	son	Ky.-Mo.-Ky.
Rena	13	daughter	Ky.-Mo.-Ky.
Tell S.	11	son	Ky.-Mo.-Ky.
MeLelan	8	son	Ky.-Mo.-Ky.
Jacob	6	son	Ky.-Mo.-Ky.
Alexander	4	son	Ky.-Mo.-Ky.
Rosie	2	daughter	Ky.-Mo.-Ky.
Fletcher, Gus	30	(black) laborer	Ky.-Ky.-Ky.

Living near the Conrad family in 1880 and in 1900 were John H. and Laura Alford. Mrs. Laura Alford, born 7 August 1852 in Indiana, may have been a sister-in-law of George W. Conrad. In Daviess County, Ky. John Hardin Alford on 25 December 1879 married Mrs. Laura Conrad. Living in the home of John H. Alford in 1880 was a step-son, Walter Conrad, who was born about 1875 in Illinois, in the census it was reported that his parents were born in Indiana. Walter F. Conrad married Anna Leer Feemster on 24 December 1901 in Daviess County, Ky. His father apparently had died between 1875 & 1880, he may have been a brother of George W. Conrad. Laura Conrad Alford died 21 February 1933 Chandler, Ok.

Jacob Conrad, father of George W., in his later years, his wife having died, came to Daviess County to live with his son, George W. Conrad. Betty Mitchell, a granddaughter of George W. Conrad, stated that his father, Jacob, died at her grandfather's home in Daviess County near Bittel Road. He was buried on the farm and a cedar tree marked the spot, no monument was placed on the grave. He was the only one buried at the site, the family had intended to start a family cemetery on the farm but later decided to have members of the family buried in the nearby city of Owensboro. Mrs. Mitchell in speaking of her grandfather's family recalled that he had a brother, Jake Conrad, who lived in Louisville, Ky, and some of the family lived across the river in Jeffersonville, Indiana.

On 3 February 1894 George W. Conrad went to Owensboro to deposit money in the Bank of Commerce there. Later that day he was seen leaving a saloon in Owensboro with two unknown men. That night he did not return home and did not pickup his horse which he had left at the Haeffendorfers Livery Stable for the day. The following day, Feb. 4th, he was declared missing. The mystery of his whereabouts was not solved until 27 April 1894 On that date his body was discovered along the banks of the Ohio River a short distance below Owensboro. Two men spotted the body while fishing at Bon Harbor. The body was identified as George Conrad when his bank book and other papers were found in his clothing. The Daviess County coroner ruled that he had died as a result of a blow to the head which had fractured his skull. Articles on the discovery of his body was published in the Owensboro newspapers on April 28th & 29th 1894 giving details of the case.

On 28 April 1894 funeral services for George W. Conrad were held at St. Paul's Catholic Church in Owensboro and he was buried in the Elmwood Cemetery in Owensboro. His monument, with a cross on its top, is located in the east half of section A, the first section after entering the gate, it is in the sixth row from the Old Hartford Road. The monument bears the following inscriptions:

Geo. W. Conrad
born 9 Sept. 1840
Murdered at Owensboro, Ky., Feb. 4, 1894
Found in Ohio River Apr. 27, 1894
Oh weep not for me loved ones
So rudely from you I was driven
Twas but a flower too good for earth
Transplanted into Heaven



Following her husband's death Mary Conrad moved to a house on the Henderson Road, at this residence she was listed at the time of the 1900 Daviess County census. Her household was listed as follows:

1900 Daviess County, Ky. census, Lowertown Precinct,
Henderson Road, p.158, #117-121:

Conrad, Mary B.	head	Mar 1846 (54)	widowed	Ky.-Ky.-Ky.
Willie	son	Apr 1883 (17)	single	Ky.-Ky.-Ky.
Mary J.	dau.	Jan 1886 (14)	single	Ky.-Ky.-Ky.
Ben H.	son	Jun 1888 (11)	single	Ky.-Ky.-Ky.

Mary Conrad in the census listing was shown as owning a farm free of mortgage, and as having 11 children who were all living. Listed immediately next to her in the census was her son, Alexander. In 1900 her sons, Jake, Tell and George were all living in Daviess County; her daughters, Rosie Minton and Vertie Minton were living in Ohio County, Ky., and her daughter, Renie Burdette, was living in McLean County, Ky.

Mary Brand Conrad on 13 February 1917 died of pneumonia at her home near Owensboro, Ky. She was 70 years old and was buried beside her husband in Elmwood Cemetery, The following obituary appeared in the Owensboro newspapers:

Owensboro Messenger, Wednesday, 14 February 1917:

Mrs. Mary B. Conrad died Tuesday morning, following an illness of the past few weeks of bronchial pneumonia at her home west of the city. Mrs. Conrad was the wife of the late George Conrad. She is survived by four daughters, Mrs. Rena Burdett, Mrs. Josie Green, Mrs. Loney Minton, and Mrs. Alberta Minton, and six sons, Messrs. G.G., T.S., Jake, Alexander, William and Bennie Conrad, The deceased was seventy years of age. The funeral will be from the residence at 11 o'clock this morning. Interment will be in Elmwood Cemetery.

In the Conrad plot in the Elmwood Cemetery four members of the family were buried: George W. and Mary Conrad, their son, McClellan, and their daughter, Victorena Burdette. Only George W. Conrad and Victorena Burdette have monuments marking their graves.

John Ben Conrad of McLean County, Ky., has a large wall portrait of his grandfather, George W. Conrad, and another grandson, Archie Green (now deceased, his wife lives Livermore, Ky.) had a wall portrait of Mary Brand Conrad. Mrs. Karen Yvonne Conrad Simmons of McLean County, Ky. compiled a small booklet entitled The Descendants of George W. Conrad. Hereafter several passages from Mrs. Simmons book are directly quoted and are designated by quotation marks followed by Mrs. Simmons initials "K.C.S.". Mrs. Simmons is the daughter of George D. and Audra L. Conrad, the granddaughter of Harry and Josie Davis Conrad, the great-granddaughter of George G. and Josephine Shepherd Conrad, and great-great-granddaughter of George W.. and Mary Brand Conrad.

Mrs. Simmons in her book wrote the following about her great-great-grandmother, Mary Brand Conrad: "She was left a widow at the age of 48 with several small children at home. Later years she owned a beautiful farm house on the Henderson Road, out of Owensboro. (according to a family member.) Here she had a big pond, some geese and ducks, and a beautiful orchard. She owned a keen horse and a rubber tired buggy. She wore a long black skirt and a white blouse with lace on the cuffs and collar. She took small steps and was described as very danish." (K.C.S.).

To George W. Conrad and Mary Brand eleven children were born. Their birthdates as recorded in the Conrad family bible, now in the possession of John Ben Conrad of McLean County, Ky., are as follows:

George G.	born	4 July 1865
Victorena	born	27 March 1867
Tell Sherman	born	29 August 1869
McClellen	born	21 February 1871
Jacob	born	12 August 1873
Alexander	born	8 April 1876
Rosa May	born	8 April 1878
Alverta	born	13 August 1880
William	born	14 April 1883
Mary Josephine	born	20 April 1886
Benjamin Harrison	born	8 June 1888

Today many descendants of George W. and Mary Conrad are living in Daviess and McLean Counties, Ky. In the early years of the 1900's George and Mary's sons, George, Tell, Jake, Alex, William and Ben moved to McLean County, Ky. They had learned there was a lot of undeveloped land there and went there and acquired land. They cut the timber off the land and took it down the Green and Ohio Rivers to Evansville, Ind. Several of the brothers owned farms in the Knobbs community near Rumsey in McLean County. They and their children became some of the most successful farmers and citizens of McLean County.

George G. Conrad, son of George W. & Mary, married Katie Oxmer, 19 April 1887 Daviess County, Ky. They had two children: Morton "Moda" and Mary Josephine. After her death he married about 1895 Josephine Shepherd (10 October 1870 - 7 September 1937) and they had eight children: Joseph "Harry", Vernon, George, Claude D., Master "Louis", Estill and two babys who died at birth. "They lived in McLean County where he farmed and mined at the Knobbs community. Their old home place is marked today by the still standing chimney, at the back side of Bates Knobb. On top of Bates Knobb three of their infant children are buried. In later years they lived in Livermore, Kentucky where he owned a small grocery store near the railroad depot. This store still stands today at the corner of Highway 136 and Morton Street in Livermore. He also owned a house up the street behind the store. The lot is vacant now where the

house stood. He died of cancer and is buried in the Catholic section of Oak Hill Cemetery in Livermore, Ky." (K.C.S.). George G. Conrad died on 22 August 1922 in Livermore, Ky.

Victorena ("Rena") Conrad, daughter of George W. & Mary, married Forest Lee Burdette (9 April 1865 - 20 February 1943), 9 July 1891 Daviess County, Ky. Following their marriage they resided in McLean County, Ky. for a number of years. In the early 1900's they moved to Ohio County, Ky. where they owned a farm. In later years they lived in Owensboro, Ky. After suffering a stroke she died at the Owensboro-Daviess County Hospital on 15 April 1946 and was buried by her parents in Elmwood Cemetery in Owensboro. Eight children were born to them: Addie Lee, Victorene, Robert McKinley, Clarence A., Golda Mae, Louvena, Myrtle Verdie and Forest Estryal.

Tell Sherman Conrad, son of George W. & Mary, married Mary S. Burdette (c1875 - 1894), 8 April 1892 Daviess County, Ky. They had one son, Justice S., who died at the age of five months. Several months after the baby's death, Mary, also died. On 6 January 1895 in Daviess County, Ky. Tell Conrad married her sister, Martha Jane Bettie Burdette (18 April 1882 - 10 August 1938). To their union thirteen children were born: Annie S., Frank D., William Tell Sherman, Orville, Clemmie, Lawrence Morton, Richard, Lora Bettie, Vertie Mae, Edward Washington, Bertha, Maudie Lee and Clifton. They lived in the Knobb's community in McLean County, Ky., where he farmed and owned quite a bit of land. "He built a two story yellow house with nine rooms where the home of Clifton and Lela Conrad is now located. Two or three years after his death, the house completely burned." (K.C.S.). He died at his home in the Knobb's community on 6 Jan. 1931. He was buried in the Union Hill Cemetery at the Glenville Methodist Church in Daviess County, Ky., where his wife's family had been buried.

McClellan Conrad, son of George W. & Mary, never married. He suffered from seizures and after he was grown he was placed in the Western Kentucky Hospital at Hopkinsville, Ky., where he died on 29 November 1912. He was 41 years old. He was buried by his father in Elmwood Cemetery in Owensboro, Ky.

Jacob Conrad, son of George W. & Mary, married Rosie Etta Clark (10 November 1882 - 5 February 1970), 3 November 1898 Daviess County, Ky. Six children were born to them: Golda May, Carrie Ethel, Charles "Martin", Clarence Jacob, James "Tony" and "Jesse" Franklin. "Jake owned a grocery store at the Knobb's in McLean County, where he was a merchant for several years. He also farmed and hauled logs to make a living. He owned a lot of land around the Knobb's. He took ill and after being bed-fast for only about three weeks he died of a serious illness on October 27, 1953." (K.C.S.). He was buried in the cemetery at the New Cypress Cumberland Presbyterian Church, at Semiway, in McLean County, Ky.

Alexander Conrad, son of George W. & Mary, married Anna Lambert (26 July 1880 - 29 January 1976), 5 August 1897 Rockport, Spencer County, Ind.. They were the parents of eleven children: Minnie Bell, Bruce "Walter", Katie May, Elizabeth, Mamie Lou, Ethel, Sherman Alex,

Bettie Mae, Anna Pearl, Addle, Bea and Lena. "Alexander or Alec as he was called, owned a lot of land in Daviess County and McLean County. He farmed and logged for a living. He owned a house on Independence Avenue in Owensboro, and a farm on the Big Ditch Road, and the livery stable on 3rd and Walnut Streets (in Owensboro). One of his farms had 385 acres and another had 92 acres. He grew tobacco, corn, wheat, soybeans and he raised cattle."(K.C.S.). At the age of 93 he died on 31 January 1970 at the Fern Terrace Lodge in Owensboro, Ky. He was buried in the Mater Dolorosa Cemetery in Owensboro, Ky.

Rosa May ("Rosie") Conrad, daughter of George W. & Mary, married Selonius ("Loney") Minton (29 August 1873 -1950), 11 October 1894 Daviess County, Ky. To them six children were born: James Polk, Lillie May, Sadie Pearl, Betty Geneva, Beuna Lee and Ruby Ann. They lived near Hartford in Ohio County, Ky., where they ran restaurant. "They later sold it and moved to Central City, Ky. and bought another restaurant. While there they separated, Rosa left with her children and moved to Michigan and her husband moved to Florida," (K.C.S.). She died 6 May 1948 in Detroit, Michigan' and was buried in Grand Lawn Cemetery in Detroit.

Alverta ("Vertie") Conrad, daughter of George W. & Mary, married Alonzo Minton (28 February 1871 - 10 March 1917), 20 December 1894 Daviess County, Ky., They had seven children: Ida Mae, Tillie Lee, Katie Belle, Nettie Mabel, Vernie Ray Daniel, Maude Ellen and Mary Lela. Verie married David A. Thomas (13 September 1888 - 5 November 1970), 5 July 1919 McLean County, Ky. They resided in Ohio County, Ky. near Hartford. "Alverta or 'Vertie' as she was called, married at age 13. She was left a widow at age 36 with three girls still at home to raise. She had a small canning factory and 10 acres of tomatoes to can. With help she canned a half a railroad car load of cans on contract. She married David A. Thomas at age 39. She was a hard worker in factories and had rooming and boarding houses to support her family. She was a grand lady." (K.C.S.). She died at the age of 92 at her daughter's home in Benton, Ky. on 19 April 1973. She was buried lit the Memorial Gardens Cemetery in Benton, Ky.

William Conrad, son of George W. & Mary, never married. He lived in McLean County, Ky, most of his life, residing at times with different members of the family. At the age of 82 he died at the Sparks Nursing Home in Central City, Ky. on 22 July 1965. He was buried at the New Cypress Cumberland Presbyterian Church, at Semiway, in McLean County. His grave is not marked with a monument, it is located next to his brother Ben's grave.

Mary Josephine ("Josie") Conrad, daughter of George W. & Mary, married Arthur Thomas Green (18 March 1893 - 8 January 1929), 19 February 1913 McLean County, Ky. To them were born: Archie Franklin, Otis T. and Paulene. They lived in the Sorgho community in Daviess County, Ky. They worked as share-croppers and hauled coal by team and wagon. After her husband's death she lived with her son, Archie, at Island in McLean County. She died in the McLean County Hospital at Calhoun on 22 February 1968, she was 81 years old. She was buried at the Sorgho Baptist Church Cemetery at Sorgho in Daviess County, Ky,

Benjamin Harrison ("Ben") Conrad, son of George W. & Mary, married Rosa Belle Millay (7 September 1888 - 2 December 1974), 23 December 1916 Owensboro, Daviess County, Ky. One son, John Ben (J.B.), was born to them. He worked as a farmer in Daviess County, Ky. and in his later years lived in Owensboro, Ky. at 1800 West 9th Street. At the Owensboro-Daviess County Hospital he died on 9 October 1956, he was 68 years old. He was buried at the New Cypress Cumberland Presbyterian Church, on Highway 81, four miles south of Rumsey in McLean County, Ky. Three of the sons of George W. and Mary Brand Conrad were buried at the New Cypress Cemetery.