

Coomes Cemetery

Daviss County, Ky.

By Jerry Long, Owensboro, Ky., 1991

Located at the southern edge of Owensboro, Ky., at southeast corner of the intersection of Highway 431 (Frederica St.) and Southtown Boulevard. Under a tree about 100 feet southeast of the Kentucky Fried Chicken store, opposite Town Square Mall. Copied on 26 October 1989 by Jerry Long:

Benedict D. Coomes	12 Oct 1810	1 Dec 1882
Corrilla Coomes (w/o B.D.)	10 Jun 1818	14 Dec 1894
Henry J. Coomes (s/o B.D. & C.)	23 Aug 1859	27 Sep 1873
A. W. Forde Coomes	26 Oct 1854	7 Jul 1855
Elizabeth consort of Richard O'Flynn (aged 31 yrs., 4mos., & 9 ds.)	19 Oct 1846	28 Feb 1878
Norvill Harl	5 Feb 1833	18 Apr 1905
Martha A. F. Harl	15 Nov 1838	14 Oct 1873
Baldwin Harl (s/o J.S. & Kate)	4 Nov 1885	6 Jan 1888
Ottis Lee Harl	5 Oct 1878	22 Feb 1912

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On 28 February 1991 the graves of those buried in the Coomes Cemetery were moved to allow for the commercial development of the area. Benedict D. Coomes, his wife, Corrilla Ford, and their sons, A. W. Forde & Henry J. Coomes, were moved to the Mater Dolorosa Cemetery in Owensboro. Elizabeth Coomes O'Flynn was reburied by her husband, Richard O'Flynn, in the Mount St. Joseph Cemetery, at Maple Mount, in Daviess County, Ky. The four members of the Harl family, who were neighbors to the Coomes, were removed to the Owensboro Memorial Gardens Cemetery.

The half-acre of land on which the cemetery was located had been the property of the Coomes family for 152 years. It was part of a 240 ¼ acre tract sold by William R. Griffith & Phillip Triplett to Benedict D. Coomes on 16 January 1839 (Daviess County, Ky. deed book F, p.69). In 1990 Henry D. Payne, of Mt. Carmel ILL., introduced a petition in the Daviess County Circuit Court to have the cemetery relocated (Owensboro Messenger & Inquirer, Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 26 September 1990, p1C). Mr. Payne is a great-grandson of Benedict D. & Cornilla Coomes and in recent years had cared for the cemetery. The cemetery half-acre

was sold by the Coomes heirs on 18 February 1991 to the Harry C. Holder estate (Owensboro Messenger & Inquirer, 6 October 1990, 9 February 1991 p1B, 2 March 1991 p3C, 17 Mar 1991 p6D). In February 1991, prior to the removal of the graves in the Coomes Cemetery, I compared my listing with listings by two other individuals and where there were differences I rechecked the original monuments at the cemetery to get a correct copy. - Jerry Long, Owensboro, Ky.

Published in Kentucky Family Records, Vol. 16, West-Central Kentucky Family Research Association (Utica, KY: McDowell Publications, 1992), 25-26.

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Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 26 September 1990, p3C:

“health tax only rate increased in Daviess” ... In other business, Fiscal Court approved a resolution to allow the removal and relocation of a small family cemetery located off J.R. Miller Boulevard and a few hundred yards from Frederica Street. The cemetery, started in 1901, is being moved to allow commercial development, said lawyer John Thacker, who represented H.B. Payne at Tuesday's meeting. According to an application presented by Thacker, Payne owns part interest in a half-acre site containing Coomes Cemetery. The cemetery was part of a 40-acre tract when the property was deeded June 3, 1901. Thacker said there are at least eight graves in the cemetery, the last having been placed in 1912, but they have not been cared for in many years. Payne will pay for the cost of removing and relocating the graves, he said. County Attorney Bob Kirtley said the relocation must be advertised and the public given 60 days notice before the removal and relocation occurs.

Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 2 March 1991, p1C:

“Five graves moved to make way for expansion along U.S. 431”.. When Benedict Coomes bought 240 acres on Livermore Road in the late 1830s, it was mostly a swampy woods several miles south of the small town of Owensborough.

When he died in 1882, Coomes' farm was still three miles from Owensboro.

Today Coomes' old homestead sits in the midst of the southern expansion of the state's third-largest city. So Thursday, his grave and four others in the old family cemetery across U.S. 431 from Towne Square Mall were moved to make way for commercial expansion

Hank Payne of Mount Carmel, Ill. – Coomes' great-grandson – said Coomes and three other family members were moved to Mater Dolorosa Cemetery. A fifth family member was moved to the cemetery at Maple Mount, he said.

Payne said the half-acre cemetery, the last remaining property owned by Coomes' heirs, was sold at auction recently. The sandy knoll where the cemetery was located will be bulldozed to level the property for commercial development, he said.

The property, now part of the Harry Holder estate, is between Kentucky Fried Chicken and Tapp Motors. Several companies have considered it in recent years for shopping centers.

George Thacker, attorney for the estate, said Friday no announcements are pending about the property.

Payne said Coomes was born in Nelson County in 1810 and moved to Daviess County with his parents in 1817. After Coomes bought the property where the cemetery was located, he and his wife, Corilla Ford Coomes, spent most of their lives clearing and draining it, Payne said.

Paid said one of Coomes' granddaughters recalled what is now U.S. 431 being paved with tree trunks when she was a child in the 1870s.

The last burial in the tiny county cemetery was in 1894, Payne said.

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The Family of Benedict D. Coomes & Corrilla Ford

By Jerry Long, Owensboro, Ky.

Benedict D. Coomes, the son of William & Rachel (Coomes) Coomes, was born in Nelson County, KY on 12 October 1809 or 1810. His obituary in the Owensboro Semi-Weekly Messenger and the History of Daviess County, Kentucky (1883, pp.418 & 807) record that he was born in 1809, while his gravestone has his year of birth as 1810. In Daviess County, KY on 20 April 1840 he married Corrilla Ford, who was born on 10 June 1818 in Caldwell County, KY. She was the daughter of William Ford & Sarah D. Chapman, and granddaughter of William Ford, Sr. & Cassiah Jones, of Caldwell County, KY & Joshua Chapman & Frances Dorsey, of Ohio County, KY; her brother, Joshua G. Ford, was an editor of the Southern Shield, an Owensboro, KY newspaper, and a member of the Kentucky Legislature.

Benedict D. Coomes died on 1 December 1882 and his wife Corrilla on 14 December 1894. They died on their farm just south of Owensboro and were buried in the family cemetery there. In February 1991 their graves were moved to the Mater Dolorosa Cemetery in Owensboro, Daviess County, KY. To their marriage nine children were born, they were:

1. Francis Marion (Frank) Coomes, born 12 February 1841 Daviess County, KY. Married Fredericka Mary (Molly) Brandenstein, 15 November 1867 Dubois County, IN. They resided Spencer & Dubois Counties, IN. He died 17 March 1905 & his wife on 26 September 1911. They were buried in the Dale Cemetery at Dale, Spencer County, IN. Their children were:
 - a. Corrilla, born ca 1869 IN, married C. H. Reinkin; lived Indianapolis, IN.
 - b. Lula M., born ca 1874, married John E. Bell; lived Evansville, IN, d. 1958.
 - c. Ada V., born May 1876 IN, married ___ Rutledge; lived Princeton, IN.
 - d. Benjamin, lived Salt Lake City, Utah.
 - e. Nellie, born Aug 1883 IN, married ___ Holtman; lived Evansville, IN.
 - f. Daisy Ford, born Jan 1886 IN, married Paul Wendholt, 23 April 1910, Huntingburg, Dubois County, IN. Died 1 April 1971 Evansville, IN, buried Memorial Park Cemetery, Evansville, IN.
2. John Tryles Coomes, born 27 July 1842 Daviess County, KY. Married in Daviess County, KY on 2 August 1905 to Maude Eskridge, who was born ca 1885 Grayson

County, KY. He died 20 September 1919 Daviess County, KY and was buried in the Mater Dolorosa Cemetery in Owensboro. Their children were:

- a. Jesse H., born ca 1907, died after 1921.
 - b. John W., born ca 1909, died after 1921.
 - d. Grace E., born 1910, died after 1921.
3. William Peter Coomes, born 22 September 1844 Daviess County, KY. Married Deborah Elizabeth Hix, 14 January 1875 Daviess County, KY. The daughter of Robert W. Hix & Mary Ellen Ricks, she was born in December 1848, Perry County, IN & died in June 1922 in Pittsburg, TX. Following 1910 they moved to Pittsburg, TX, where he died in April 1923. They had one child:
- a. Lillie, born 1875-1895, married Dr. Arthur L. Coke, 11 February 1909, Daviess County, KY; died & buried Pittsburgh, TX on 14 March 1927. They had three children: William Broughton, Archie & Robert Coke.
4. Teresa Elizabeth (Bettie) Coomes, born 19 October 1846 Daviess County, KY, married Richard O'Flynn, 28 February 1865 Daviess County, KY. She died 28 February 1878 Daviess County, KY and was buried in the Coomes family cemetery, in Feb 1991 her remains were reinterred beside her husband at the Mount St. Joseph Academy Cemetery, at Maple Mount, Daviess County, KY. Richard O'Flynn was born 25 March 1838 Owensboro, Daviess County, KY, to Timothy O'Flynn & Frances Clary; he died 19 March 1918 Owensboro, KY. Their children were:
- a. Eufalia ("Lula"), born 8 January 1866 Daviess County, KY, married Robert Emmett Clark, 21 February 1882 Daviess County, KY; died 6 November 1924 Louisville, KY, buried Mater Dolorosa Cemetery, Owensboro, KY.
 - b. Robert E., born 26 September 1867 Owensboro, Daviess County, KY, married Alsie J. Snead, 26 December 1889 Daviess County, KY; died 12 March 1936 Owensboro, KY, buried Elmwood Cemetery, Owensboro, KY.
 - c. Richard, born 22 June 1870 Owensboro, Daviess County, KY, married Annie C. Snead, 19 November 1890 Daviess County, KY; died 1 May 1942 Owensboro, KY, buried Rose Hill Cemetery, Owensboro, KY.
 - d. Mary Agnes, born 24 July 1872 Owensboro, Daviess County, KY, died 14 July 1947 Mount St. Joseph, Daviess County, KY. She served as mother general of the Ursuline convent at Mount St. Joseph, KY, buried there in the convent cemetery.
 - e. Elizabeth C., born 5 July 1875 Owensboro, Daviess County, KY, married Henry D. Payne, Sr., 27 April 1897 Daviess County, KY; died 5 September 1967 Owensboro, KY, buried Mater Dolorosa Cemetery, Owensboro, KY.
5. Benedict D. (Ben) Coomes, born 28 January 1849 Daviess County, KY. Married Mattie Whitaker, 23 August 1883 Daviess County, KY. The daughter of Wilson Lee Whitaker & Cynthia C. Simmons, she was born 1 August 1865 in McLean County, KY. He died in 1905 & she on 12 October 1948 in Evansville, IN, where she and her children had moved

after her husband's death; they are buried in the Oak Hill Cemetery, Livermore, McLean County, KY. They had 11 children:

- a. Verna, born August 1884 Daviess County, KY, married Jesse M. Rowe, died in 1978. Burbank, CA.
 - b. John T., born Mar 1886 Daviess County, KY, married Fannie Belle Ridenour, 9 August 1911 Daviess County, KY, died & buried in Evansville, IN on 10 June 1945.
 - c. Donna, born Aug 1888 Daviess County, KY, married 1st __ Thompson & 2nd __ Callow, died 1948-1954 San Francisco, CA.
 - d. Lee, born March 1890 Daviess County, KY, married 1st Idell Tetrick, 21 December 1910 Daviess County, KY, 2nd ? & 3rd Pearl; died 13 January 1954 Evansville, IN.
 - e. William Henry, born November 1891 Daviess County, KY, married Emma Dougherty, 15 July 1915 Daviess County, KY; died in 1918 Nashville, TN, buried Mater Dolorosa Cemetery, Owensboro, KY.
 - f. Geneviva (Veva), born May 1896 Daviess County, KY, married Gerald H. Leeper; died 1954-1970, lived San Diego, CA.
 - g. Corinne F., born 3 May 1895 Daviess County, KY, married 1st __ Sutton and 2nd Herschel M. Wright; died 19 October 1970 McLean County, KY, buried Oak Hill Cemetery, Livermore, KY.
 - h. Mary Lou, born December 1898 Daviess County, KY, married 1st Monroe Crowder & 2nd Carl Slum; died 31 March 1962 Evansville, IN.
 - i. Frank G., born Oct 1899 Daviess County, KY, never married, died 1910-1945.
 - j. Joseph Dunlap (Jack), born 6 April 1902 Daviess County, KY, married Florence Verlay, 21 July 1930 Troy, NY; died 10 September 1968 Troy, NY, buried St. Mary's Cemetery, Troy, NY.
 - k. Alice E., born 7 September 1905 Daviess County, KY, married Roy Timberlake; died 27 February 1988 Newburgh, Warrick County, IN, buried Park Lawn Cemetery, Evansville, IN.
6. Corrilla C. Coomes, born 26 February 1851 Daviess County, KY, married W. Abel Meadows, 24 August 1898 Daviess County, KY. The son of Pascal Meadows & Martha Lloyd, he was born in February 1852 in Breckinridge County, KY, and died 5 November 1938 Owensboro, KY, buried in the Rose Hill Cemetery, Owensboro, KY. She died 24 June 1943 in Indianapolis, IN, buried in the Oak Hill Cemetery, Livermore, McLean County, KY. They had no children.
 7. A. W. Forde Coomes, born 26 October 1854 Daviess County, KY, died 7 July 1855 Daviess County, KY. Buried in the Coomes Cemetery and in Feb 1991 was moved to the Mater Dolorosa Cemetery, Owensboro, KY.
 8. Sarah F. (Sallie) Coomes, born 23 July 1856 Daviess County, KY. Married Jesse Whitaker, 11 January 1883 Daviess County, KY. The son of Wilson Lee Whitaker & Cynthia C. Simmons, he was born 7 June 1861 McLean County, KY, died 9 November

1925 McLean County, KY. She died 14 October 1930 Owensboro, KY. They were buried in the Oak Hill Cemetery, Livermore, McLean County, KY. They had two children:

- a. Agnes L., born April 1893 McLean County, KY, married Herschel M. Wright, 24 June 1914 Daviess County, KY; died 2 July 1951 Indianapolis, IN, buried Oak Hill Cemetery, Livermore, KY.
- b. Myrtle C., born 28 July 1897 McLean County, KY, never married, died 23 April 1918, buried Oak Hill Cemetery, Livermore, KY.

- 9. Joseph Henry Coomes, born 23 August 1859 Daviess County, KY, died 27 September 1873 Daviess County, KY. Buried in the Coomes Cemetery and in February 1991 was moved to the Mater Dolorosa Cemetery, Owensboro, KY.

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Daviess County, KY marriage book A, page 105:

Benedict D. Coomes to Corilla M. Ford 20 April 1840 by Rev. John C. Wathen.

St. Lawrence Catholic Church Baptismal Records, Daviess County, KY:

Francis Marion Coomes, born February 12, 1841, baptized May 16, 1841. Son of Benedict Coomes & Corilla Ford, godmother Rachel Coomes.

1850 Daviess County, KY census, section 1, #910:

Coomes, Benedict	37	m	farmer,	real estate \$960	KY
Corilla	27	f			KY
Francis M.	9	m			KY
John T.	8	m			KY
William P.	6	m			KY
Elizabeth	5	f			KY
Benedict	1	m			KY

1860 Daviess County, KY census, section 2, #572:

Cooms, B. D.	49	m	farmer	real estate \$3000	KY
Corilla	39	f			KY
Francis	19	m			KY
John	17	m			KY
William	15	m			KY
Elizabeth	13	f			KY
Benedict	11				KY
Corilla	8	f			KY
Sarah	4	f			KY
Henry	11/12	m			KY
O'Neil, John W.	25	m	laborer		KY

1870 Daviess County, KY census, Uppertown Precinct, P.O. Owensboro, p.333, #132:

Coomes, Benedic D.	58	m	farmer	real estate \$7200	KY
Corilla	48	f			KY

John	26	m		KY
William	23	m		KY
Richard	20	m		KY
Corrilla	17	f		KY
Sallie	14	f		KY
Henry	9	m		KY
Buckner, Jacob	8	m	[Black]	KY

1880 Daviess County, KY census, District 2, #15:

Coomes, Benedic	69	farmer		KY-MD-MD
Corilla	58	wife		KY-KY-KY
Ben	30	son		KY-KY-KY
Corilla	24	daughter		KY-KY-KY
Sallie	22	daughter		KY-KY-KY

History of Daviess County, Kentucky, Inter-State Publishing Co., Chicago, IL, c.1883, p.428:
 “Nov. 1, 1882, death of Benedict D. Coomes, in his seventy-fourth year, after a tedious illness. He was born in Nelson County, Ky., and came to this county about 1840.”

History of Daviess County, Kentucky, Inter-State Publishing Co., Chicago, IL, c.1883, p.807
 (Uppertown Precinct biographies):

Benjamin D. Coomes, son of B. D. and Corrilla (Ford) Coomes, was born in Daviess County, on the farm where he still resides, Jan. 28, 1855. His father is a native of Nelson County, Ky., born in 1809, and his mother of Ohio County, Ky., born in 1818. They have five children - F. N., John T., W. P., Benjamin D., and Corrilla. Benjamin D. was educated in this county, and is still living with and assisting his father in carrying on the farm. His father came to Daviess County when a young man, and now owns 240 acres of well-improved land, three miles south of Owensboro. In religious faith the family are Catholics.

Owensboro Semi-Weekly Messenger, Owensboro, KY, Friday, 15 December 1882:

Benedict D. Coomes, one of Daviess County's oldest inhabitants, died at his home, near Owensboro, on Friday, December 1st, 1882. He was the son of William Coomes, and was born in Nelson county, Kentucky, in the year 1809. He removed to this county about forty-three years ago, and here he has since lived, respected, honored and loved by all who knew him. An affectionate husband, a kind and indulgent father, an honest, upright, industrious and charitable neighbor, he gained the esteem of a very large circle of acquaintances.

Confined to his room for more than two years, and for one year of that time almost entirely to his bed, he bore with exemplary patience and Christian fortitude the painful disease that gradually destroyed his life.

Having received the last rites of his church from the hands of his pastor, Father Crane, with resignation to the will of God he breathed forth his soul into the hands of his Creator. His remains lie buried in the family graveyard on his farm. May he rest in peace. Amen. C.

Daviess County, KY Will Book D, page 58:

Will of B. D. Coomes, written 25 August 1882 & probated 18 December 1882. Names wife, Corrilla M., and following children - William P., John, Ben, Corrilla, Sallie, and "to children of

my daughter Bettie O'Flynn, deceased". Sons William & John to pay to Frank Coomes \$100, relationship not stated.

Owensboro Daily Messenger, Owensboro, Ky., Thursday, 20 December 1894, p4:

After suffering for more than three months the most excruciating pain, death mercifully came to the relief of Mrs. Corrilla Coomes Friday morning, December 14, at 4 o'clock. With her one of the landmarks of Daviess county has passed away. Born and reared in Caldwell county, she and her husband, Benedict Coomes, deceased, were among the pioneers of Daviess county. They found the country where now stands the well known Coomes residence, a dense wilderness, (about four miles from Owensboro on the Livermore road.)

Together they toiled indefatigably from year to year. The cries of wild beasts, which had to be repulsed from their cabin door, often struck terror in their hearts, but nothing daunted their ambition. They knew that success must inevitably crown persevering labor, and soon they saw the dismal wilderness transformed into one of the most flourishing farms of Daviess county.

Mr. Coomes preceded his faithful wife to his home of eternal rest just twelve years, having died December 1, 1882, at the advance age of 72 years.

Finding herself alone to fight the battle of life, bits, Mrs. Coomes devoted herself to the sad and arduous task with a will and ambition befitting a man; nor did it relax until the voice of her last illness and death said "rest."

Early in September she was attacked with typhoid flux in a malignant form, But her iron constitution battled heroically against it, and in about six weeks she was able to be up, but her strong will soon overtaxed her physical strength and a relapse followed. Then began a period of suffering seldom witnessed. All that medical skill, willing hands and devoted hearts could accomplished to relieve or restore the sufferer was resorted to, but to not avail.

She craved for health, but when instinct told her it was not God's will she resigned herself to the inevitable, sent for her minister and calling her children to her bedside exhorted them to lead truly Christian lives, and after receiving the consolations of religion, rejoiced that death would soon relieve her sufferings. Often when her agony seemed unbearable and human hands could not alleviate the pain, did she look upward and beg God for strength and grace to suffer patiently and to accept her sufferings in atonement for her sins.

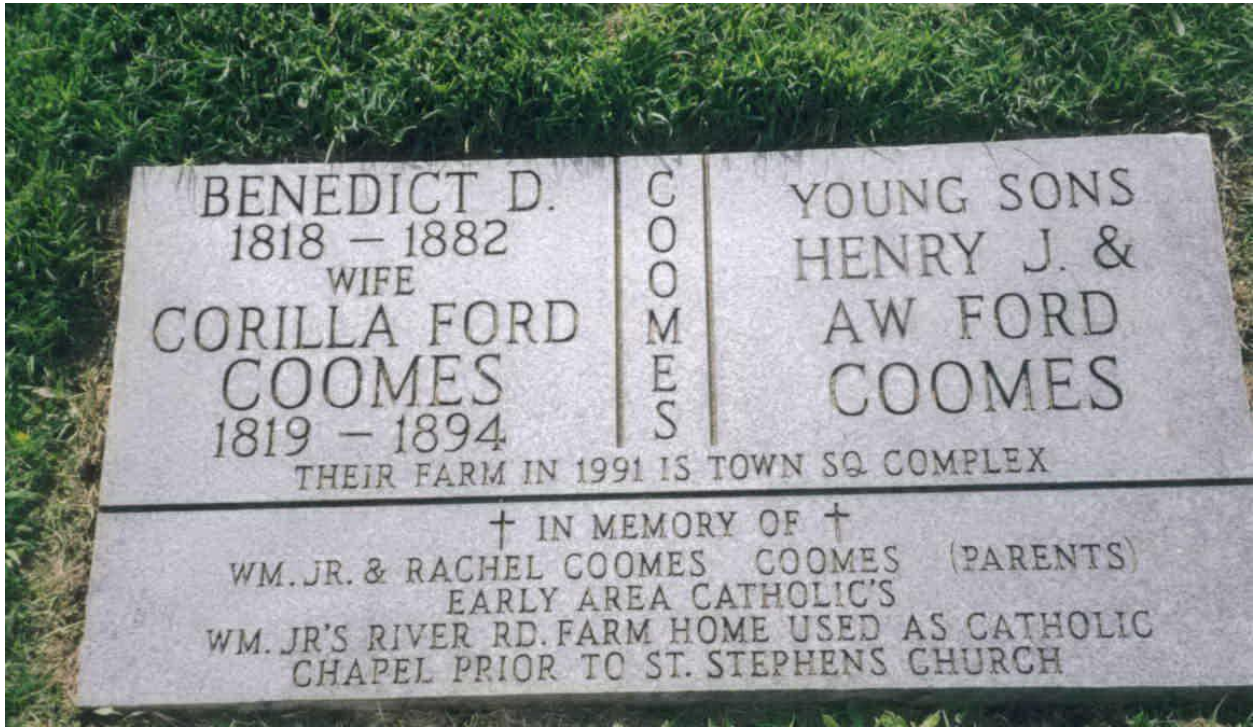
The funeral occurred from the family residence and was conducted by Rev. Cashman, of the Methodist church, of which deceased was a staunch and devoted member. The vast crowd which assembled and followed the remains to their last resting place in the family burying ground within the shadow of her home, testified the high esteem in which she was held in the community.

Long will the passers by miss her familiar form from field, orchard, garden and everywhere on the farm, for she was to be seen at all times, and in all kinds of weather caring for and preserving the fruits of her toil. Her life of usefulness and industry is its best eulogy. Words now cannot add to its beauty and glory. Long will we miss her, and sadly mourn her loss, but oh, we would not call her back to this "valley of tears" for we believe, though her body lies beneath the sod, her soul is in a bright home of rest; for we can well say she had, few idle moments to account for.

The family chain of Mrs. Coomes is almost dissolved, Two brothers, J. G. Ford, of Tennessee, famous as an editor and journalist, and Mack Ford, of Ohio county, are all who survive her.

The sympathy of the community goes out to the six sorrowing children who mourn their loss. They are Frank Coomes. of Huntingburg. Ind.; John, Will and Ben Coomes, of Davies couny; Mrs. Jeas Whitaker, of Livermore, and Miss Corrilla Coomes, who clung to her dear mother during life, consoled her last hours and closed her eyes in the sleep of death. Two sons, Joseph Henry and A. W. Coomes, and a daughter. Mrs. Richard O'Flynn, preceded their mother to the other shore.

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Mater Dolorosa Cemetery, Owensboro, KY