

Thomas Stevenson Pettit


(1843-1931)



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Owensboro Monitor, Owensboro, KY, 1 June 1864, p2
(first issue of the Monitor with Thomas S. Pettit as editor)

OWENSBORO, KY., JUNE 1, 1864.

 The MONITOR appears to-day under new control. The name of THOS. S. PETTIT, Esq., will be found at the head of this column, who has purchased an interest in the paper and will have the immediate supervision of the editorial and business affairs of the office. Mr. Pettit has been connected with the press of Kentucky for several years, and it is with no little pleasure we recommend him to our readers as a gentleman in every way fitted for his present position.

We consider the MONITOR now as upon a firmer footing than ever before, and it will be the aim of its publishers to make it a paper still more worthy of support in the future than it has been in the past.— It is hoped that all citizens of this and adjoining counties, who desire a good paper published in this part of the State, will lend their influence and assistance in extending its circulation. It is our wish to increase the size of our paper at the beginning of the next volume. We trust that the regular appearance of the MONITOR for the past two years, notwithstanding the disturbed condition of the State, is sufficient assurance that a newspaper can be successfully conducted in Owensboro, and we therefore look with confidence for such an increase in the patronage of the paper as will justify us in making the proposed increase in its size.

H. M. WOODRUFF.

SALUTATORY.

On entering upon our duties as editor of the "Monitor," our salutatory will be brief.

A Kentuckian by birth and education, we are ardently attached to the old Commonwealth—to her Constitution and her social and domestic institutions. As a citizen of the United States we are equally devoted to the Government as our fathers made it and as it was administered in the halcyon days of the Republic; before the sectionalists of the South and the fanatics of the North involved us in our present unhappy strife, and will therefore exert our abilities to restore to our chastened country that peace, Union and prosperity, under which, by the blessings of a Gracious Providence, we attained a national greatness and glory, which excited alike the admiration and the envy of the nations of Europe.

A large portion of the paper will be devoted to the promotion of local interests—to foster and advocate all that pertains to the social and material prosperity of the people of this city and county.—We shall also give the latest general, political and war news, and the agricultural, commercial and literary shall find a place in our columns; in short, we will endeavor to make it a welcome visitor to all classes of intelligent readers.

Having, in a word, set forth our future course, we close with suggesting for the future consideration of patron and proprietors that glorious motto that emblazons the shield of our noble old Commonwealth: "United we stand; Divided we fall."

THOS. S. PETTIT.

The Owensboro Monitor.



THOMAS S. PETTIT, Editor.

How to Dispose of the Negro.

Since "the elephant" has been won, by the fate of war, the question of disposing of him arises in magnitudinous proportions before our eyes. As to how we shall dispose of the black race to his advantage of our own white society is a question that has received great speculative suggestions. Gen. Howard, who has been assigned to the "Freedman's Bureau," a department created by the last session of Congress, favors the colonization of the negroes in Virginia, it is stated. We have more confidence in his wisdom, however, than to believe that he ever expressed such an idea. Such an undertaking would be one accompanied by insurmountable obstacles. The Old Dominion is the "garden spot" of our Government, and to place the negroes there would look indeed like taking them into the bosom of our Government.

The leaders and picket guards of the fanatical party have begun to openly advocate the right of the negro to an equality with the white race, and demand of our President and the Government that the elective franchise, with all its horrible and degrading results, shall be extended to the negro. They take advantage of the political corruption in the Southern States, and create a long and yawning howl because President Johnson did not override the Constitution and invest the negro with the right of voting in re-organizing the Southern States. This would have been their initiatory step towards investing the negro with political and social equality all over the land. But the thing

equality all over the land. But the thing is not done with; the black Republican press in the eastern States, and of late to a considerable extent in the west, are beginning to not consent to the disgraceful concatenations of the down-east fanatics. Close by, only as far as Evansville, is one of the amalgamation sect of journals that is setting sails to lead out when it thinks the minds of the people are fully prepared to receive the move without a shock; and closer still may we expect to hear the same policy advocated, if public sentiment admits of such policy.

There is a country and a clime more suited to the nature of the negro than this one where he can enjoy his freedom, and at the same time not interfere with the political status of any State North or South. Maximilian is to be driven out of Mexico, and it is not probable that he will be peaceably and quietly withdrawn by the Emperor. He has manifested a disposition to maintain him in his position. As best we can judge from military movements in the south-west it is the policy of the Administration to threaten and probably enforce the Monroe Doctrine.— If a military force is required to do so let it be done by colored troops, who can be organized into an army of seventy-five or a hundred thousand and by the assistance of the Mexicans that refuse the Imperial rule, the occupation of Mexico would be an easy matter. When the adult male population of the colored race have aided the oppressed Mexicans in throwing off the yoke of French oppression their claims upon the country and a right to gather their families there for future habitation can hardly be denied, and would certainly meet with a favorable consideration by the Mexicans. This would take the question of negro suffrage from our land, while, the negro not being a citizen of our Government, it would not necessarily involve us in a war with France. The Mexican government would no doubt accept the offer, and feel grateful that they had been so fortunate in receiving such a powerful addition to their strength.

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History of Daviess County, Kentucky (Chicago, IL: Inter-State Publishing Co., 1883), pp199-201:

THOMAS S. PETTIT was born in Frankfort, Ky., Dec. 21, 1843, the son of Franklin Duane and Elizabeth (Zook) Pettit; father a native of Virginia and mother of Kentucky. He attended Georgetown College, and before he was grown up learned the printer's art, which came natural and easy to him, and he became an adept. In 1864 he came to Owensboro and purchased the Monitor of Mr. Woodruff, and began the publication of a lively local paper, advocating Democratic principles. Unlike his predecessor, he freely criticized the acts of the Republican party and their conduct of the war, and consequently in a few months (Nov. 17, 1864) he was arrested by order of General Stephen G. Burbridge, imprisoned and banished south, under the general charge of being "notoriously disloyal." He was hurried away, and was sent under an escort to Memphis, Tenn., where he was transferred across the lines within the Confederacy, in whose territory he traveled until the following May, when he returned and resumed the publication of the Monitor, as already noted. He was the first to establish a successful, paying paper in Owensboro, which he did before he was twenty-five years of age; and he was the first to bring Gordon and power presses to Owensboro. In this paper he published, in several successive numbers, his "Trip to Dixie," giving his experiences during the whole of the "round trip." These exciting annals helped the circulation of his paper to a wonderful degree, as already mentioned. In the South he underwent the many hardships and privations incident to a common soldier.

Subsequently he was elected Assistant Clerk of the House of Representatives of the State Legislature, which position he held for six years, when he was appointed Private Secretary to James B. McCreary. This position he afterward resigned, to accept the situation of Reading Clerk of the House of Representatives at Washington, D.C., for which duty he has extraordinarily good voice and articulation. On the death of Hon. John S. McFarland, in 1869, and through the influence and personal popularity of Senator T.C. McCreery, he was appointed by President Johnson Assessor of this Internal Revenue District, the duties of which position he filled with conscientious fidelity to the close of the term.

Mr. Pettit has never been recognized as a true Democrat. He has attended a number of State conventions of his party, and at every one of them he was elected secretary; and at the last National convention, which nominated Hancock and Hendricks, he was one of the secretaries. He is still active in the political field. Last fall (1882) he was a candidate for Congress against James B. Clay, of Henderson, but, after an exciting race, he was defeated in the pivotal county of Union, by less than 150 votes.

With all this political work Mr. Pettit has also engaged heavily in industrial pursuits. (See account of Marble & Pettit's stave factory and lumber mills in the History of Murray Precinct.) He has been active in many local and philanthropic enterprises too numerous to mention here. He is a Freemason of high degree. Within four years after he entered the State Grand Lodge he was elected Past Grand Master, a distinction never before accorded to a member so young in that body. In December, 1870, he married Miss Margaret Blair, a native of this county, and a daughter of James Harvey Blair, formerly a merchant of Owensboro. Their only child is named Harvey Blair Pettit.

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Biographical Cyclopedia of the Commonwealth of Kentucky (Chicago – Philadelphia: John M. Gresham Co., 1896), pp141-143:

THOMAS S. PETTIT, a prominent business man and politician of Owensboro, and one of the best known and personally popular men in the state, was born in Frankfort, Kentucky, December 21, 1843 and is a son of Duane and Elizabeth (Zook) Pettit. After his primary schooling in Frankfort, lie attended Georgetown College and then learned the printing trade, for which he had a fancy and a remarkable aptitude. He became an adept in all of the mechanical work of the printing office while he was yet in his teens, but lie was too ambitious to stick to the cases, and in 1864 he went to Owensboro, and purchased the "Monitor" newspaper from a Mr. Woodruff, and began at once to attract attention by publishing a lively local paper and advocating the principles of the Democratic party. Unlike his predecessor, he freely criticised the Republican party and its war policy, and his articles on such topics brought down the wrath of the United States authorities upon his head; and, as a result, on the 17th of November, 1864, he was arrested by order of General Stephen G. Burbridge, imprisoned and "banished to the Southern Confederacy," under the general charge of being "notoriously disloyal;" and was sent under escort to Memphis and there transferred across the lines.

He spent the following months until May, 1865, traveling within the Confederate lines, and then, the war being over, lie returned to Owensboro and resumed the publication of the Monitor, in which he published in several consecutive numbers a detailed and interesting account of his trip through Pixie, giving his experiences and impressions and relating the hardships and privations which he necessarily suffered during his enforced vacation. These articles attracted much attention and had a very wide circulation, bringing the young editor into prominent notice, The Monitor was one of the brightest papers in the state, and Mr. Pettit soon became widely known as one of the most enterprising newspaper men of Kentucky,

He was the first man to establish a successful newspaper in Owensboro—and he did this before he was twenty years of age—and brought the first Gordon and power presses to that section of Kentucky.

In 1863 lie was elected assistant clerk of the House of Representatives, which position lie held for six years, when lie was appointed private secretary of Governor James R. McCreary, which he resigned to accept the position of reading clerk in the national House of Representatives at Washington. During his service in the Legislature and in Congress, he had the distinction of being known as the best reader in the United States. His strong voice and clear and distinct enunciation enabled him to read, not only so as to he heard from all parts of the house, but he had a ready conception and a quick understanding and could rend intelligently documents which he had never seen before. His services in the house were cut short by the Republicans gaining the ascendancy.

To go back to the '60's again: On the death of John S. McFarland in 1869, through the influence and personal popularity of Senator Thomas C. McCreery, President Johnson appointed Mr. Pettit assessor of internal revenue for the Second District, the duties of which he performed with ability and fidelity until the close of Mr. Johnson's administration.

In the fall of 1882 Mr. Pettit was a candidate for Congress against J. B. Clay of Henderson and was defeated, after an exciting race, by less than one hundred and fifty votes. In that contest Union was the pivotal county, and the friends of Clay looked after it in such a way as to secure the majority for their candidate. Mr. Pettit has attended more State Conventions than any man in Kentucky and has been elected secretary of all of them, and in this capacity has

rendered the Democratic party valuable services, which have been appreciated and highly complimented. He was one of the secretaries in the Democratic National Convention which nominated and elected Cleveland, and was called to serve in the same position four years thereafter and selected as one of the notification committee to inform Cleveland and Thurman of their selection for President and Vice-President.

Mr. Pettit's political views have not been strictly in harmony with the Democratic party for some years and he has been one of the ablest leaders of the People's party, having been a candidate of that party for governor in 1895.

He served with ability and distinction as a delegate to the last Constitutional Convention of Kentucky, and advocated such reforms as the secret official ballot, the taxing of corporations like individuals and the two-thirds verdict of juries in civil cases. He was afterwards chosen by a large majority as one of the representatives of Daviess County in the General Assembly, so as to put into practical operation the provisions of the new constitution, and his election in this instance followed one of the bitterest contests ever known in the state.

He is still actively interested in politics, not for revenue or for honor, but from principle. Having - strong convictions upon topics of national import, he has the courage to stand up for them and does - not wait to count the noses of those who are ready to stand by him before expressing his sentiments.

He has for many years been engaged in industrial or manufacturing enterprises in Owensboro —too numerous to mention in' this brief sketch—and his success, which has been uniformly good, has brought him a fair share of this world's goods. Popular with all classes, industrious, enterprising, generous and philanthropic, he is easily one of the best citizens of Owensboro. He has always been ready to participate in public enterprises, and, in questions of public interest, has always been found on the right side and in the front.

He is Past Grand Master of the Masonic Fraternity, and deservedly holds a high social position.

Mr. Pettit was married in December, 1870, to Margaret Blair, daughter of J. H. Blair, who was prominent merchant of - Owensboro in his day. They have one son, Harvey Blair Pettit.

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History of Kentucky, Vol.III, Judge Charles Kerr, ed. (Chicago & New York: American Historical Society, 1922), pp157-159:

THOMAS STEVENSON PETTIT. Ceaselessly to and fro flies the deft shuttle which weaves the web of human destiny, and into the vast mosaic fabric enter the individuality, the effort, the accomplishment of each man, be his station that most lowly or one' of influence and Power. Into the great aggregate each individuality is merged, and yet the essence of each is never lost, being the angle of its influence wide-spreading and grateful, or narrow and baneful. In his efforts he essays biographical writing. finds much of profit and much of alluring fascination when he would follow out, in even a cursory way, the tracings of a life, history, seeking to find the keynote of each respective personality. One cannot contemplate the life record of the gentleman whose name forms the caption to this paragraph without exciting genuine, admiration, for his career has not only been successful in a material way, but, what is of far more importance, it has been characterized by a depth of character and strict adherence to principle which has called forth the esteem and confidence of his contemporaries.

Thomas Stevenson Pettit, of Owensboro, is a native son of Kentucky, having been born at Frankfort on December 21, 1843, and he is a son of Franklin Duane and Elizabeth (Zook) Pettit. His father was born at Fredericksburg, Virginia, of French-born parents, his father, who was an ardent admirer of the Napoleon, having fled to the United States after Napoleon's army was defeated at Waterloo, settling at Fredericksburg, where he was an educator, as he had been in France, being a man of letters and literary - attainments. Franklin Duane Pettit as a young man went from his native town to Frankfort, Kentucky, where he met and married Elizabeth Zook, who was of Pennsylvania Dutch parentage, At Frankfort Franklin Duane Pettit and Thomas B. Stevenson became owners and publishers of the Kentucky Farmer. Mr. Pettit died rather early in life, and not long afterwards his wife also passed away, the subject of this sketch therefore being left an orphan when but a boy, being but ten years of age when his mother died. At that tender age he was thrown upon his own, resources, and from that time on made his own way in life. The boy's first opportunity to make a definite start in life was found in the print shop, where he showed remarkable aptitude, for while yet in his teens he had become an expert in all of the mechanical work of the printing office. His only educational advantages were confined to the schools of Frankfort and a brief attendance at Georgetown College, but in the printing office, which has aptly been termed, "the poor man's college," he absorbed a fund of general information which made him an equal of many who had greater opportunities for academic study. In 1864, when he was not yet twenty-one years old, he went to Owensboro and purchased the Monitor, a newspaper, from a Mr. Woodruff, in which transaction he incurred an indebtedness of \$1,500. This obligation he was not enabled to meet until after years, for when he assumed the role of a newspaper publisher and editor he changed the politics of the Monitor and ably supported the policies and measures of the democratic party, freely and fearlessly criticising the republican party and its war policy. His writings on such topics brought down upon him the wrath of certain government authorities and resulted in his arrest on November 17, 1864, by order of Gen. Stephen G. Burbridge, of the Federal army. He was "banished to the Southern Confederacy," under the general charge of being "notoriously disloyal," and was sent under escort to Memphis and there transferred across the hues. The following months, until May, 1865, Mr. Pettit spent in traveling within the Confederate lines, and then, the war being over, he returned to Owensboro, to find that his printing office had been destroyed by the Federal military authorities.

Mr. Pettit at once went to Cincinnati, there to arrange for, the purchase of a new printing outfit. Telling his story there in a plain and straightforward manner, together with his own pleasing personality, Mr. Pettit made the friendship of a Mr. Allison. manager of a printer's equipment company, who extended him more credit than he asked for and induced him to take a much better and more complete outfit than he had planned. The result was that Mr. Pettit returned to Owensboro with ample equipment for a printing office, far better than had, ever before been in Owensboro. The outfit included a Gordon and a power press, this being the first Gordon press to be set up in this locality.

Now, fitted out for publishing a first-class newspaper and for high-grade job printing, Mr. Pettit began anew his business career, though heavily in debt. He revived the Monitor, his old newspaper, and made it very early popular paper, increasing its circulation by means of popular editing and the publication of interesting articles reviewing his travels in the southland while in banishment, which were followed by able articles from the pen of the then distinguished Thomas C. McCreery, afterward United States senator from Kentucky. Business success attended Mr. Pettit's efforts and eventually he was enabled to wipe out his indebtedness, including the old debt

he owed Mr. Woodruff. The Monitor soon became known as one of the brightest newspapers in Kentucky and Mr. Pettit was recognize as one of the ablest newspaper editors and publishers of the state. He was the first man to establish a successful newspaper in Owensboro, and continued to publish the Monitor for many years. He afterward sold, when it became the property of Urey Woodson, who changed it to the present Owensboro Messenger.

As the editor of a successful and influential democratic newspaper Mr. Pettit very early was drawn into the field of politics. In 1868 he was elected assistant reading clerk of the House of Representatives, which position he held for six years, and was then appointed private secretary to Governor James B. McCreery. Later he resigned this position to accept that of reading clerk of the National House of Representatives at Washington, where he quickly won the distinction of being the best reading clerk who had ever held that position. His strong voice and clear and distinct enunciation enabled him to read so as to be heard from all parts of the house, and he also had a ready perception and quick understanding, which enabled him to read intelligently documents which had never seen before. His services in the House, ended when the republicans regained the ascendancy. In 1869 President Johnson had appointed Mr. Pettit collector of internal revenue for the Second District, which position he held with ability until the close of President Johnson's administration.

In the fall of 1882 Mr. Pettit was defeated by J. B. Clay, of Henderson, as a candidate for Congress by less than 150 votes, after an exciting race. Perhaps Mr. Pettit has attended more state conventions of his party than any other man in Kentucky, and was for years, time after time, elected secretary of the conventions. In this capacity he rendered the democratic party valuable services, which have been appreciated and highly complimented. He was one of the secretaries in the national convention which nominated Grover Cleveland the first time for President, and four years later he served in the same capacity, and was also selected as a member of the official notification committee to inform Cleveland and Thurman of their nominations for President and Vice President.

Mr. Pettit was elected a member of the Kentucky Constitutional Convention of 1891-2, and his services rendered in that capacity were perhaps the most conspicuous and helpful ever rendered by him in a public capacity, for he was a leader in that convention, advocating such reforms as the secret official ballot, the taxing of corporations like individuals, and the two-thirds verdicts of juries in civil cases. He was afterward elected by an overwhelming majority, not as the regular, democratic nominee, but as an independent candidate, as representative from Daviess County in the General Assembly, there to put into effect and practical operation the provisions of the new Constitution. His election in this instance was in the lace of strongest opposition in his county and followed one of the most exciting and bitter contests ever known in the state. The independency of his candidacy naturally estranged him from the organized democratic party and he became in 1895 the people's party candidate for governor. He made, a strong campaign, but was not successful of election. However, his candidacy so divided the democratic party as to elect a republican governor. Mr. Pettit has never lost interest in politics, keeping at all times in close touch with political conditions and the course of public thought and opinion.

He has always been a man of strong convictions and had the courage to stand up for them. His actions have ever been the result of careful and conscientious thought, and when once convinced that he was right no suggestion of policy or personal interests could swerve him from the course he had decided upon. And this has been one of the secrets of his strength with the people, who have reposed the utmost confidence in his integrity and sincerity.

For many years Mr. Pettit was interested in the clearing and developing of extensive land areas in the vicinity of Pettit, Daviess County, which village was named in his honor, and here he developed fine farm; lands, much to his credit as a man of enterprise and foresight. He has given financial support to a number of business enterprises in Owensboro and has been, successful in the accumulation of a fair share of this world's goods.

Religiously Mr. Pettit has for many years been an earnest member of the Presbyterian Church, and is also a member of the Ancient Free and Accepted Masons, in which order he has received distinctive preferment, being a past grand master of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky, and the imposing Masonic Temple in Owensboro stands as a monument to his enterprise and fraternal fidelity. He has always been its president.

Mr. Pettit has been twice married, first in 1870, to Margaret Blair, the daughter of J. H. Blair, who in his day was a prominent merchant of Owensboro. To this marriage was born a son, Harvey Blair Pettit, a graduate of Rose Polytechnic Institute at Terre Haute, Indiana, and now an electrical engineer, residing in Chicago. Mrs. Pettit died in June, 1913, and in September, 1916, Mr. Pettit was married to Miss Alice Frakes, of Owensboro.

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Manuscript Collection Margaret I. King Library, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY, 1987:

415. Pettit, Thomas Stevenson, 1843-1931. Papers, 1884-1932. 87M36, .4 cubic ft.; 5A-202, 1 reel. 14761818

The papers of Kentucky politician Thomas Stevenson Pettit consist of correspondence, documents, speeches, a scrapbook and an autograph album. Correspondence comprises most of the papers focusing primarily on political topics. Included are letters and documents related to his Civil War arrest, and letters from John Young Brown, Cassius M. Clay, Jr., Senator Marion Butler, William Randolph Hearst, P.H. Hopkins of Glasgow, and James McCreary. Of particular interest is an exchange of letters between Pettit and William Goebel when the latter was the Democratic candidate for governor in 1899. There are also a number of letters from the national People's party concerning the 1900 presidential race and their candidate, William Jennings Bryan, another Democratic nominee. The papers also contain a scrapbook and art autograph album from the 1890-1891 constitutional convention. The speeches relate to religion, education and politics. Three letters from Governor J. C. M. Beckham concern Pettit's appointment and other political matters. Deposit, Harvey B. Pettit, Jr., 1956.

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Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 8 June 1997, p3G:

‘Little Man with the Big Voice’

Outspoken politician Tom Pettit was an Owensboro original

By Aloma Williams Dew
Owensboro Historian

Tom Pettit now rests in silence beneath spreading dogwood branches in Elmwood Cemetery. Quiet at last, and largely forgotten.

A man of small stature with flashing black eyes and a deep, resonant voice, Thomas Stevenson Pettit was never still or quiet during his long life. From the time he burst upon the Owensboro scene in 1864 to become editor of the Owensboro Monitor until his death of old age at 88 in 1931, Pettit was writing, speaking and crusading – creating swirls of controversy.

The scrappy, outspoken Pettit came from Frankfort to adopt Owensboro as his new hometown. He spent the rest of his life taking every opportunity to champion the town – and himself. A man of great ego and great political ambition, he was a strong populist. Pettit was a Constitutional conservative in the model of Jefferson and Madison.

Despite his feel for the pulse of the people, he was not always popular with the press or his party and never achieved the political success he desired. Pettit was a man who raised issues, but not votes.

He seemed to always be barking at the establishment, whether it was the Republican Party of the 1860s or the Democratic Party of the 1890s. He attracted controversy like a magnet.

Before his 21st birthday, Pettit took control of the Unionist Monitor during the last year of the Civil War. He turned it into a strong Democratic mouthpiece, criticizing the Republicans, their war policies and President Lincoln.

He was arrested for sedition because of his blatant support of the Democrat George McClellan over Lincoln in 1864, and banished to the Confederacy for the remainder of the war. Lincoln pardoned Pettit, noting that if everyone who was opposed to him were arrested, the jails would be full. But Pettit, caught up in the last frantic weeks of the war in Richmond, did not return to Owensboro until May 1865.

He started his paper again and continued his scathing editorials about the Republican Party. He also used it as a forum to crusade for a railroad for the city.

Because of his support for Andrew Johnson, Lincoln's successor, Pettit was appointed as assessor of internal revenue for the second district. Although he would continue publishing the newspaper until 1875, Pettit had savored the taste of politics as assistant reading clerk of the Kentucky House in 1868 and during his time as private secretary to Gov. James McCreary, following his term with the revenue service.

He resigned his secretaryship to accept appointment as reading clerk of the U.S. House of Representatives, where he served for 10 years. He was referred to as the "affable little man with the big voice." It was said he could be heard clearly throughout the chamber. Pettit was mentioned in newspaper articles as a real power behind the official Kentucky delegation in Washington.

He took the plunge into elective politics in 1882 when he ran for Congress. He was defeated in a close election by J. B. Clay of Henderson. When he ran in 1890 as a delegate to the Constitutional Convention he won by a large majority and was known by his fellow delegates as hard-working and a man of strong convictions. He was referred to as the "little Giant from Daviess" and pushed for progressive reforms such as direct election of senators. But he seems to have spent much of his time seeking the limelight and insisting on strict parliamentary procedures.

The state's new constitution was very conservative, a document which reflected distrust of big business and big government. Pettit was credited with being one of its major architects. His efforts reflected the deeply agrarian nature of his constituents, one which still exists today.

During the convention, Pettit became known as a friend of the woman's suffrage movement. He was credited with passage of the 1894 Married Woman's Property Act. But it was

not Pettit , but McLean County's Jep C. Jonson who urged votes for women in the 1890 Constitution, although Pettit did support the measure.

Newspapers such as the Messenger attacked the new constitution and Pettit for his role. He bolted the Democratic Party and ran on the People's Party ticket for the legislature, winning by 4,000 votes. The people of Daviess County obviously still had faith in him. He was officially read out of the Democratic Party and, although he would later re-align with them, his political future was sealed - he would never again be elected to office other than the General Assembly.

In 1892 he ran unsuccessfully for Congress, but continued in the legislature and was called by the Louisville Courier "the acknowledged leader of the reform movement in Kentucky."

Pettit took strong stands against the Jim Crow laws which called for separate railroad cars for blacks and whites. He worked for women's property rights and regulation of gas and water rates. He pushed through a bill which led to the draining of the Panther Creek bottoms, a bill which benefited Pettit , who owned 2,000 acres of the swampy land that provided material for his sawmill and stave factory in the village of Pettit (named for him). This was also a station on the railroad for which Pettit had labored after the Civil War.

But his position was not totally self-serving. Draining the Panther Creek swamps benefited the entire community by finally controlling the anopheles mosquitoes which bred there and spread malaria, long a scourge of the region.

Pettit 's political pinnacle came when he ran for governor on the People's Party ticket in 1895. His participation caused a split in Democratic ranks which allowed the Republican candidate, William Bradley, to be elected. Pettit finished second in Daviess County, and polled 16,911 votes statewide. The Democratic nominee lost by 8,474 votes. Not only did this election signal the end of the People's Party in Kentucky, and change the state's direction toward a more favorable climate for industry, but it effectively ended Pettit 's political career. Had he won, he had been discussed as a possible vice-presidential candidate for 1900.

Pettit ran for county judge in 1897 on the Republican-Populist Citizen ticket, driving a greater wedge between him and the Democrats. He lost, 3,333 votes to 1,973.

Pettit 's time was past. He would run for other offices including as a Democrat for mayor in 1901. He once said: "I was born to get beat and speak the truth." He would never wield the political power he had courted so fervently.

He did remain active as a booster for Owensboro and its economy. He was a stockholder in the Owensboro Wagon Company, the Masonic Temple Co. and the Brick and Tile Works. He was also a director of the Female College Co. He was active in the Masons, the Presbyterian Church and the Investigators Club. Pettit often gave speeches encouraging citizenship education, women's rights and other topics.

His influence is all over our city. He began a crusade for industry after the Civil War, and fought for a rail connection to make Owensboro competitive with other progressive areas. He foresaw a large city, bolstered by industry. In pursuit of that dream he eventually left journalism and became involved in business, farming and politics.

Tom Pettit was courageous but conservative in his ideals and causes. He represented the "ordinary" people who feared big government. Perhaps had he been a better politician he would have achieved higher office, but perhaps he made a greater contribution because he spoke for the people and perceived and reflected their views against the establishment. He and his friends stirred up many controversial ideas that would finally become reality in the New Deal policies of the 1930s. He was man ahead of his time.

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“To Be Sent Through the Lines as Notoriously Disloyal” The Banishment of Thomas S. Pettit

By Glenn Hodges

On Nov. 2, 1864, six days before the presidential election, Thomas S. Pettit, editor of the Owensboro newspaper, the *Monitor*, blasted President Lincoln and the Republicans in another editorial. Pettit wrote that the “Republican Party came into power a little less than four years ago, and yet it stands today and justly too, charged with crimes and misdemeanors against the Constitution, the harmony and order of society --- crimes and outrages which ought in the minds of all humane and Christian people stamp the party with eternal infamy. That was the darkest day of our national history which first saw Abraham Lincoln president. The few years which he has sat as Executive have accomplished the ruin of the country. If the Divine Being had sent upon this land pestilence and famine and the blighting curses which have afflicted other nations, devastation and ruin could not have been more complete.”

The Republicans’ “ruinous policy”, Pettit continued, “took the lives of nearly one million of our nation’s sons, sacrificed to the infernal spirit of Abolitionism and not less than three thousand million dollars in public debt and taxation, such as no people in the history of the world have ever had imposed upon them, and with no possible chance of escaping for many years to come.

“And it is needless to say, in addition to all this, that the Republican Party has destroyed property beyond all means of calculation,” Pettit continued. “Cities and towns, beautiful and flourishing, consigned to the madman’s torch, extensive tracts of land once the homes of a united and prospering people brutally wasted and destroyed, and above and beyond all of this, the Republican Party with Mr. Lincoln at the head has planted in the hearts of the people on this continent, a spirit of invincible hatred. With this frightful record before you free men of Kentucky, you are again invited to place Mr. Lincoln at the head of our country four years more. With these astonishing facts staring you in the face you are asked to cast your suffrage for a man who has violated every law of the Constitution.”

Pettit said that many who voted for Lincoln in 1860 were “now tired of high prices, heavy drafts, taxation and bloodletting and will most assuredly vote for (George) McClellan.” Pettit predicted that a large soldier vote would make McClellan, the former Union general and one-time commander of the Army of the Potomac, a big winner nationally.

McClellan won the state of Kentucky by a 2-1 margin, and easily carried Daviess County in the election, getting 1,124 votes to Lincoln’s 37. But Lincoln was reelected in the states of the Union, thanks to winning the heavy vote of Union soldiers that Pettit said McClellan would surely get. In Daviess County, Lincoln made a much better showing in the 1864 election than in the 1860, when he received only seven votes.

Negro soldiers were still in Daviess County after the election. Sixteen of them led by a young white lieutenant arrested Pettit on Thursday night, Nov. 17, 1864, while the newspaper editor was visiting a friend in a rural section of the county. As Pettit later told the story, he was totally surprised as the Union officer came inside the house and showed Pettit an “order of banishment,” directing him to be removed from Kentucky. The 20-year old editor was taken into

custody, and escorted eight miles to Owensboro in what he described later as “the darkness, mud and rain.” Pettit slept on the hard floor of the courthouse that night.

In the morning Maj. John Free of the 31st Ohio Regiment showed Pettit the signed order. Free was to “proceed to Owensboro and arrest the editor of the paper published in that town (Thomas S. Pettit) and by order of General Burbridge will take him to Memphis Tenn., and leave him with the commanding officer there to be sent through the lines as notoriously disloyal. The officer in Owensboro in command will furnish necessary guards and the Quartermaster’s department will furnish necessary transportation.”

Free and his prisoner took the riverboat *Tarascon* the next day to Evansville, and from there the two men made the four-day trip down the Mississippi on the steamer *Darling*. There Pettit was allowed to talk to news reporters in Memphis, and told them that he had not been charged with any crimes against the U.S. government, only that he had urged election of McClellan in his newspaper columns. *Owensboro Monitor*, May 31, 1865

Pettit would never forget his journey throughout the South during the six months of his banishment. He saw in a starkly different, more realistic light, the destruction of the Southern states and how deeply secession had hurt the civilians living in the Confederacy.

Pettit’s odyssey through seven states took him south to Oxford, Jackson, Brandon and Meridian, Miss., Selma and Montgomery, Ala.; Columbus, Macon, Milledgeville and Augusta, Ga., Charleston, S.C. and finally through North Carolina to Richmond, the capital of the war in Virginia. Pettit made his trip across the South on foot, horseback, riding a farm wagon, by railroad or traveling on a steamboat.

Pettit recounted the experiences during his journey in an 11-part series of stories he headlined as his “Trip to Dixie,” which ran in the *Monitor* from May to August 1865. In the first chapter of the series, Pettit talked about leaving Owensboro and his first day in western Tennessee. As he departed, he noted. “How well do we remember that bright Saturday morning when we left on the boat for --- we know not where? The earth looked more beautiful, the river more placid and friends seemed more dear than ever before.” *Owensboro Monitor*, May 31, 1865

Once in Memphis, Pettit appeared before Brigadier General Cadwallader Washburn, the Union commandant of the military district of Tennessee, who paroled Pettit and turned him over to the Federal provost marshal.

While Pettit waited to be sent south, he thought about what he had seen during his days in Memphis and began to take notes and write about it. Pettit used the editorial “we” or “us” as he referred to himself in the series of stories.

“The city presented rather a hot bed rather than real prosperity, the bulk of business being confined to that thrifty class of people known as the children of Israel who pervade bee-like every nook and corner, the older denizens having migrated south and other parts. We saw little evidence of improvement in the city which justly boasts of a beautiful and highly embellished park. The police system was sadly deficient and outrages and robberies were of a nightly occurrence, so that the military even was often compelled to patrol the streets to preserve the semblance of order.”

Pettit continued to level criticism of the Jews of Memphis, who he declared were disloyal to the Confederacy while profiteering on the war. “As we before remarked, business of every character ---- reputable and disreputable --- was chiefly monopolized by the Jewish persuasion ... who in Memphis are the connecting link between the more aristocratic home smugglers and the Knights of the Bush,” the latter, a nickname Pettit gave to independently operating rebel guerrilla bushwhackers he would encounter in the South. The Jews were involved in an illicit

transfer of goods of all kinds, Pettit said. "Their facility for transfer of contraband articles of war Dixie-ward is surprising and their skill and ingenuity in evading detection and accomplishing their purpose and baffling justice are marvelous." *Ibid*

Pettit cited one example of a Jew involved in the contraband trade who had attended a sale of "condemned government horses." The Jew, Pettit wrote, selected one horse of "mammoth proportions" which "in due items was knocked off for a more pittance to the cunning Israelite." The man took the animal to a "suitable place" where he killed and disemboweled it, Pettit said. The insides of the horse were gutted and cleaned by the "Jew " and then "filled with a respectable size cargo of quinine, morphine and needles and other smarter articles of great value in the South, and nicely sewed it up," according to Pettit.

After getting the necessary permit from the military authorities for the removal of the carcass from the city limits, Pettit wrote, the man placed it upon a dray and drove out to the commons area on the outer edge of the Union picket line. When in the act of apparently dumping off his load he was hailed and ordered by the pickets to drive a little further because the odor of the decomposing carcass would become intolerable in a few days.

"To which suggestion the cunning shylock demurred as his permit did not allow him to remove his precious load any further because he did not want to violate any law or have difficulty with the military. Finally Mynheer (again Pettit's term) was persuaded by the insistent pickets and the "reward of a dollar to drive his horse further out, which he did." By that night, the "Jew" and his cargo were "far in the bowels of the Confederacy," Pettit wrote. "Thus is how trade was carried on to a great extent here and by "many other cute dodgers which we might instance."

The week that Pettit stayed in Memphis, was as "agreeable under the circumstance as could be expected," he wrote. He noted that he had "found many warm friends and hoped lasting acquaintances" among the Memphis residents "for their many offices of kindness in tendering money and other necessities of comfort for our unknown journey. He used the occasion "to express our warmest thanks for their endeavors and interest in my behalf." *Monitor*, May 31, 1865

At 3 o'clock in the afternoon of Nov. 28, 1864, a Union army escort arrived at the place Pettit was staying and told him "your time's up." He said later he was "turned loose" by the Union army in Memphis, provided a horse and ordered to ride south with an escort until he made contact with Confederate picket line, only a few miles out of town. Once there as he encountered the Confederates, Pettit wrote, "I dismounted, underwent a *scrutinizing* search, and after no infernal machines or diabolical writing or dispatches being found on my person, the order of our banishment was read to the picket who gently reacted for me, gave a slight push, and lo, I was cast into Dixieland on foot, friendless and alone." *Monitor*, June 7, 1865

A few minutes after he had officially entered rebel territory, he was already frightened and considered turning around. As he walked, he thought that at nightfall he might try to bribe a Confederate picket. He also wrote later that he considered slipping back into Memphis and proceeding by the under ground railroad northward as others had done before. "But the horror of being shot or the dislike of the Erving Block Bastille (the Union army prison in Memphis) I decided to take up the march as my favorite general (Burbridge) in Kentucky had directed," he wrote later.

While he was trying to make his decision, considering the safest road to take, four men approached on horseback. Pettit didn't say from what direction. He soon learned that the four were "blockaders," a term Pettit used broadly to identify thieves, smugglers and marauders in

that part of Mississippi. "After reciting my tale of woe they suggested that if I would accompany them, they would provide for me comfortable quarters for the night at a house four miles distant.

"Readily assenting to any proposition that looked to bettering my position, I was not long in mounting behind one of the men and proceeding on their way, somewhat relieved if not rejoicing," he said. "In a short while, we approached a farm house in an out of the way place surrounded by a dense forest which upon entering, we found it occupied by about thirty souls, or parts of souls," Pettit said. The house contained "all the features of a hospital and insane asylum, every one of them being possessed of the afflictions which 'flesh is heir to' --- that included the "blind, lame, halt and crazy."

Pettit realized that he was in bad company. He had never encountered such a peculiar group of people as he did in the hospital, and he was very suspicious about the blockaders' intentions. Maybe they were conspiring to waylay him there. "I did not know what to make of my condition. One woman was all I could find in this incongruous mass of masculine gender," he said. "I knew not into whose hands I had fallen; and from the warlike preparations which were being made soon after supper and a dance, I concluded my days were numbered and I would be offered up as a sacrifice upon the altar of misfortune."

"Dancing usually typifies mirth," he wrote. "With me in this predicament, apparently enjoying the amusement with our soles and heels in the mazy dance, keeping time to the dulcet notes of their 'shoe string fiddle,' mirth was far from my heart. The 'now I lay me down to sleep,' which I learned in childhood days was constantly being rehearsed inwardly, whilst outwardly" he said he was using his "best exertions to make our hospital acquaintances" believe he was enjoying himself and feeling comfortable with them by appearing friendly and congenial. He commenced doing whatever it took to mollify and win the trust of this party of strangers. He conjectured that the woman might be his only ally if there was trouble that night, so he joined the party.

They surely weren't "out to rob or kill me," Pettit speculated. "Reasoning within, about my probable dispatch I could see no object they could have in view of taking my life, as I had impressed on their minds that I had been hurried away from Kentucky in such an unceremonious style that my destitution of money and valuables was indeed pitiable," and he had expressed his gratitude for their hospitality and lodging.

Pettit's amiable performance seemed to be working, but he still remained cautious. "At a late hour in the evening, becoming weary of the hilarity, by mutual consent, we all sought refuge in sleep," he said. The woman led him into a room where five men were sleeping on the floor and two others were lying in a bed. She warned Pettit to stay away from the two men in the only bed in the room where he and the four blockaders would sleep. She told them not to hurt the man "who had his arm hacked off a few days ago" but advised that it "would be well to keep your eye on the other as he had sometimes 'got crazy' and killed people. All of us are afraid of him" she said as she made her exit.

"The information (she revealed) was certainly anything but to encourage sleep but making a virtue of necessity, I kept my eyes on the individual in question," Pettit wrote. "Weary as I was, if the slightest movement of our disagreeable bedfellows awoke me and if undue restlessness from our crazy companion with the least suspicious demonstration, it would have resulted in a victim to our editorial belligerency or be subject for a coroner's inquest," said Pettit, who was carrying what he said was "a respectable sized knife to use in case of an emergency."

The morning dawned, however, without anything startling transpiring except for the firing of guns in the neighborhood from prowling bands of guerrillas. Deserters from both armies

inhabited this neutral territory (a no man's land 30 miles wide, between the Confederate and Union lines) "intent only on what they can make for their own personal aggrandizement," Pettit said. "The loading of guns the night previous (by Pettit's companions) was thus explained by the movement of these men as the blockaders had to protect their interests from these guerrillas although as a general rule they were violators of the laws of both the United States as well as of the Confederate government, the possession of which knowledge the night previous would have given us a much more comfortable repose," Pettit would write.

"At an early hour, a horse was procured for me for as to ride beside my blockader friends, one doubtlessly stolen from the United States because its brand, though old, was still visible. It was in that way I could be serviceable to them by riding it into the interior where they could dispose of it at a handsome sum without creating suspicion or having the trouble of leading it," wrote Pettit. "I readily consented that they could use me for their advantage because it was a much better way of reaching Confederate forces or a railroad, otherwise I would be compelled to walk."

"We had not proceeded far in the company of these blockaders before we met some dozen of the Knights of the Bush (a term Pettit used to describe guerrilla forces) and a more villainous looking set of cutthroats is not often met with, and for the sake of our state we regret to say they were commanded by a man claiming to be a Kentuckian." One of the guerrillas reined his horse alongside Pettit's mount in a very menacing and intimidating way. "The first greeting with these chivalrous chaps was the sudden and violent removal and appropriating of my hat by one of them, and on remonstrating at so abrupt a salutation he remarked that it was 'the way they had of doin' and on hinting that I would report him to his captain, he replied that if I did, the captain would take my boots." It was an eye opener for Pettit during his first days in northern Mississippi. He had never been treated in such an ungentlemanly and violent way in Kentucky.

Pettit managed to compose himself and finally asked for directions to the nearest headquarters of regular Confederate soldiers. The leader of the rebel band, Pettit noted, "readily pointed out the proper road, but remarked that the route was infested by numerous bands of cutthroats and he would not wager a button for our safety and suggested for our individual security we had better remain and place our self under his direction and he would show us a road some miles ahead that would lead us to the coveted destination and less frequented by bands of robber to which we not too readily assented.

"They had not traveled another mile when a halt was ordered and everyone commanded to conceal himself in the bushes," Pettit said. "Whether it was preparatory to our execution or what, we left to gloomy surmises and conjectures but acting on the belief that obedience like discretion was the better part of valor, we trembling assumed the post assigned to us, waiting what the next moment would develop. A few moments the clatter of horse hoofs was heard and approaching nearer we discovered seven Federal soldiers as videttes (mounted sentries) who rapidly passed by and in a short time they were followed by some fifty others, who were immediately fired on by our (guerrilla) companions."

Three of the Federal troopers were killed and two wounded so severely that the main force rapidly retreated toward Memphis but the videttes returned and fired on the brutal gang with some effect. One more of them was killed and wounded. All the dead men were stripped of arms, overcoats and blankets, and the wounded were paroled with privilege of going to Memphis.

“After securing plunder and horses,” Pettit wrote, “they mounted and started for their rendezvous near Senatobia, Miss.,(about 40 miles south of Memphis) where we were told by the chief of the gang they had their weekly sales of their ill gotten gains which were divided between them, according to rank and services.”

Before leaving the main road for their encampment, the guerrilla leader and four of his men accompanied Pettit a distance of more than 10 miles beyond Cold Water Creek, thus placing him within the regular Confederate lines where “I breathed freer and felt at least secured from the molestation of other marauding bands,” Pettit noted thankfully. “The captain (of the guerrillas) I must say in his behalf offered us no indignity and on separation gave me a fine pistol and his benediction (such as it was),” Pettit wrote. *Ibid*, June 7, 1865

That night Pettit’s party found lodging at a farmer’s house and had a supper of bread fresh pork, sorghum, and sassafras tea, for which Pettit paid \$10. *Ibid*, June 14, 1865

Scarcely as day had dawned, Pettit again sensed that his companions would try to rob him somewhere before they reached the opposite side of Cold Water Creek. Knowing that Pettit now had a gun, they told him that they only meant to provide him safe conduct to Oxford. It was then that Pettit indicated that he thought their full intent was to take back the horse they had given him.

“Thanking them for their *disinterested* interest in my behalf, we started off together,” Pettit said. They traveled only a few miles, when they came in contact with some regular Confederate soldiers. They were hunting deserters, and checking and arresting illicit traffickers in cotton going in the direction of the Federal lines.

“After giving each of our party another scrutinizing survey and directing their attention to our humble self, the spokesman of the party (Confederate soldiers) requested to see our papers being doubtless impressed that we were about the proper age and physical stamina to be the bearer of a Confederate knap sack and gun, which added no little to our perplexity, as we had been informed that ‘everybody and his friend who had not been dead more than two days were fit subjects for the Confederate war path.

“After reading of our order of banishment and being subjected to rigid questions and cross questioning, the captain expressed a satisfaction at our sympathies by directing us to accompany him” but not before one of Pettit’s group let it slip and unwisely identified himself. “And to our great surprise the captain told him he was just the chap he was looking for,” Pettit later wrote, “and that he had an order for his arrest as a spy and a violator of Confederate law and immediately placed him under arrest, putting a strong guard about him. The other blockaders in his party, “seeing their companion in limbo and thinking discretion the better part of valor, quickly and quietly vamoosed,” Pettit said.

During that day the rebel captain overhauled several parties of men and women engaged in “the nefarious business of blockaders,” among them the niece of the rebel general Jacob Thompson and other ladies connected with the most prominent and respectable families of the South. These with their loads of cotton, drawn by oxen, were turned over to the Confederate authorities at Oxford,” Pettit wrote. “The cotton and teams were confiscated but the disposition of the ladies we did not wait to see after our arrival omitted to mention that during the night preceding our arrival at Oxford, our former friend, the spy, the blockader, by the persuasive powers of his tongue and a judicious application of Confederate *blue backs*, succeeded in eluding the vigilance of his guard and escaped much to our joy as we were spared the painful exhibition on seeing a fellowman gibbeted and being left the sole possession of a very fine four-year-old colt.”

Pettit no longer had to be fearful in his journey after he parted with blockaders and guerrillas. He remained in Oxford for nearly two weeks after meeting and sharing the hospitality of some friends he had known from Kentucky. "Our stay at Oxford was really an oasis in our desert of travel," he added. "We met and made many pleasant acquaintances particularly among the ladies whom we found to be pretty and intelligent. The country surrounding this place was pleasing to the eye and had every indication of being productive."

However, the town of Oxford, Pettit added, "bore itself sorry and unmistakable evidence of war, being more than half destroyed by fire by a Federal raiding party; for the fear of further raids little or no trade was going on. In short the whole country was desolated by the cruel and vengeful torch of war, and which seemed to us to be inhuman and barbarous in the extreme. But this section of the state presented nothing in horrible aspect to what we were to see in our future route, and which we hope we never again will be called upon to witness in this once called civilized land of Bibles and Americans.

"At a later hour of a Saturday afternoon we took leave of the kind, war-stricken people of Oxford, including our female friends who we hoped were to be soon released from arrest and in company with two Kentuckians whom we met at this place, and proceeded on our course to Jackson, the capital, where some friends we had known in Kentucky resided.

"Two days afterward and four miles to beyond Grenada, meeting with nothing of note save the terrible traces of war --- houses burnt, homes made desolate and pity and sorrow depicted in every view -- we were overtaken by a party of state militia composing seven men who broke the unpleasant intelligence to us that the horse we rode was subject to confiscation and they had orders on their persons to that effect, as the animal was known to belong to the blockader who had escaped, as I related.

"After relieving us of our horse, for which the captain of the squad gave us quittance in writing that we were not an illegal dealer of horse flesh (a poor salve to our feelings by the bye) he suggested as they designed encamping there for the night that we could share his hospitality to which we readily acceded.

"Before retiring for the night we found the captain to have been once a resident of Frankfort (Pettit's home town) such information I lost no time in turning to my advantage by recalling to his recollection all the beauties that were on the topic in the day the captain lived there. Under this potent influence he soon became very voluble and took an immediate interest in our behalf, and finally invited us to share his blanket.

"Our conversation in time naturally turned to horse flesh, a subject just then of undivided interest to me, and discovering I thought in the captain a growing interest on the subject I finally suggested to him that he could 'loan us our horse.' To which he demurred, stating that the blame would then be thrown on him. We thereupon suggested to him to place some fellow on picket that night who would, for a consideration and sympathy for me, permit the escape of horse and rider to which (the captain) finally assented. Ordering out a picket about two o'clock in the morning he informed us that now was our time to strike, if not for country, at least for Dixie.

"Bidding him adieu, I lost no time in approaching our new found friend whose breast was filled with milk of human kindness, but whose pockets were emptier than our own at that time. Talking the matter over, the arrangement was soon effected and striding to our horse we mounted and soon left camp and pickets behind, but having no fear of being overhauled as the captain told us what route to pursue with the understanding that I would take a different course to find me in the morning. Personally we like the captain now; officially, I say little on the subject," Pettit wrote. *Monitor*, June 14, 1865

After traveling several “fatiguing days,” Pettit found the city of Jackson mostly destroyed. It was “shorn of all her glory with no vestige of her former greatness remaining -- scarcely anything but the blackened chimneys -- monuments of ruin and desolation. Its population of several thousand had dwindled down to a few hundred citizens. The torch had done its busy work well and for years it will remain as a monument to conjure up all the hellish born phantoms of civil war.” Ibid, June 14, 1865

Leaving Brandon, 12 miles east of Jackson on Dec. 22, 1864, Pettit left his horse and took a train bound for Richmond with “the discomfiting assurance that the accomplishment of such a journey would be as difficult as ‘passing through the first battle of Manassas without getting hurt,’ ” and the people of the South regarded that conflict one of the bloodiest of the war.

“We passed through Meridian and reached Selma on Dec. 24 where I stayed to partake of the festivities of Christmas day. But it was a day of very little cheer indoors and less outside. Rain was pouring in torrents. We attended here the Baptist church, one of the most flourishing congregations in the state and on the evening of that day resumed our journey by steamer for Montgomery, reaching the place 30 hours after and spent a pleasant day, examined the sights to be seen in this former Confederate capital, Pettit said.

“This city presented none of the effects of the war. The people seemed numerous and the ladies we were surprised to discover were dressed in the most fashionable and attractive attire. And for personal beauty and graceful demeanor surpassed any ladies (save our lovely Kentucky girls) we have ever seen and the same deserved mention is due those of Selma. If our heart had not already been mortgaged we would have been tempted to forget friends at home.”

It was in Montgomery that 14-year-old Warren W. Price of Frankfort, “a member of a much esteemed and highly respected family there” became acquainted with Pettit. Warren had joined General Bragg’s army when in Kentucky at the age of 12 but “not being quite large enough nor of the proper age, he was quickly discharged when his age was known.” No reason was ever given why he had come South and got a job working in a store in Montgomery. Bragg’s army had fought in the battle of Chickamauga in September 1863 in Georgia.

“For a long time was he the pride of the family of a wealthy merchant with whom he lived, sharing all the comfort and luxury than money could afford,” Pettit said of young Price in 1865. “He was anxious however to return to his home and at my earnest request joined me as my companion, sharing with scarcely a murmur all of the ups and downs of a jaunt from Dixie to Richmond. We succeeded in procuring the necessary passes to reach his home without being compelled to subscribe to an oath or any requirement and is now enjoying the society of the ones that are dearest to him on earth --- mother, brothers, sisters and friends.”

Their next stop was Columbus, “a beautiful place where we met many ladies and gentlemen from Kentucky,” Pettit observed. Moving on to Macon, Pettit was “detained several days where General Sherman’s march through Georgia had destroyed about 100 miles of railroad track.” There Pettit procured a horse-drawn farm wagon and they traveled about 40 miles beyond Milledgeville over a rough road, which Pettit said would have been pleasant enough if it had not been for scores of rotting dead horses left in the wake of Sherman’s march.

They soon arrived at Augusta, which Pettit called the “Queen City of the South.” The city had a population of 15,000, and probably next to Richmond, had fabricated all the machinery of the war for the South. “It is situated on the banks of the Savannah River, which is here nearly as wide as our own Ohio River at home. The streets are very broad and handsomely embellished with shade trees and equaled, if not surpassed, all other Southern cities in the

charming and attractive appearance of its private residences. It has many public buildings and its large and numerous hotels are not excelled by any of more pretentious Northern cities.”

Pettit had the opportunity to see Gen. P.G.T. Beauregard in Augusta, describing him as “probably the greatest living military engineer in the world. He is quite a small man in stature and the many photographs of him that our readers have doubtless seen are a correct counterpart of his sharp and intelligent features.

They reached Charleston on the evening of Jan. 7. “This place, noted for prominence during the war, we were not very favorably impressed with neither its beauty nor magnitude. The streets of the city, Pettit said, “were very narrow and dirty and the damaging evidence of the ordeal it had and was then passing through was attested on every side. Fully half of the buildings of the city were completely riddled by the Federal shot and shell. The people presented a very discontented and dejected appearance; no business transacted, and little to eat. We heard more bitter anathemas uttered against the Confederate rule here, than in all other parts of the Confederacy combined.

“The fortifications impressed us as excelling those of any other point we had yet seen, and were certainly beyond human skill to have attacked them with any degree of success seaward,” Pettit continued. “The city boasted of more costly church edifices than any other Southern city, many of which suffered sadly by the disfiguring agency of hot shell. Those that remained uninjured were numerous attended. We made an examination of the ruins of the Old Church, the building where the Convention sat and passed the Ordinance of Secession, which has resulted so disastrously to the chief city of the Palmetto State and the state itself. The edifice was consumed by the great fire in that city about one year previously.

As for law and order in Charleston: “Garroters and robbers held a high carnival in the city, and no man’s life and property were secure after nightfall,” Pettit noted. *Monitor*, June 28, 1865

“We were permitted to inspect the historic wonders of this city --- the famous forts (Sumter, Pinckney and Johnson) --- It was a night we shall never forget.

“As there were not hotels kept open, all being in range of bombardment from the Federal fleet, (and that was nearly everywhere) the traveling public and all others had to seek lodging as best they could. We were fortunate enough to obtain a bed belonging to an old African woman. Be it known however, that this old woman sought repose in other quarters, leaving me and my young companion, Mr. Price, the sole possessors.”

Pettit and the teenage boy left South Carolina by railroad to Richmond. When they arrived in the Confederate capital, Pettit wrote down his observations of the destruction and chaos he had seen in the lower Southern states, telling what he had learned about how the civilians lived in the region during those times. It was quite a story; one that all journalists of that time would die to have had. It had been an experience that had changed his life and the way he would look at the Union in the future.

“The seven states through which we have passed, some portions the most populous and wealthy, whilst other parts scarcely a human being exists and supposed to be in close proximity to the identical spot where patient old Job raised his poultry and mixing freely with the people from every section of its domains, I draw the conclusion that Southerners, like other people, have their excellencies and their defects. They are excitable, brave and generous. No people in the world are more open to the power of kindness or can be influenced more strongly by the exhibition of it. For a friend, or one in distress, they will peril life itself; to an enemy the bitterness of their resentment knows no bound. Born to regard honor as the most prominent trait

needed in the character of a gentleman, they pride themselves on a display and look with contempt on a person devoid of that principle

“A majority of them hated the whole scheme of an attempt at Disunion and the setting up of an independent Government and used their exertions to keep their respective states under the old flag and step to the ‘music of the union’, but the leaders held a tight rein on the head of governments and launched them headlong on that uncertain sea of revolt and revolution.”

“Their states assuming this position and wedded to ultra State Rights doctrine, aided by Northern encroachments, they were not long in espousing the cause with their lives and fortunes. We were impressed with one fact. The men who were the fire eaters or original secessionists after grim visaged war had made its inroads in their fair country, and mourning and desolation became the inheritance of the people, were either out of the army or skulking duty, whilst the cooperationists or conservative, sound thinking men, who were anxious to keep safely by the moorings of the old Constitution were forced into the army or from state pride were trying to fan the dying embers of the Confederacy into a flame. It was this last class that was willing to sacrifice property and even life itself for the establishment of their independence.

“Hard at first to move, some radical acts of Federal authorities had fully aroused them and they were willing to ‘*stand the hazard of the die*’ (a Shakespeare phrase from King Richard III) as they could see no hope for themselves or their posterity in submitting to the laws of the United States. With confiscation, subjugation and extermination staring them in the face, no gleam of hope illuminated the future in the event of defeat. As a general thing this class of the population was bitter opponents of the Davis Administration and their anathemas were loud and deep. The freedom of speech in this particular was indulged in to a boisterous extent. It seemed to be a theme the mass of the people delighted to dwell upon. The Administration however, had as warm supporters as bitter enemies though probably not as numerous. This enmity did not result from any love for the government of the United States but dissatisfaction at the manner the Richmond government controlled the interests of the Confederate states.”

During Pettit’s trip through Dixie, any man not bearing a Confederate knapsack or carrying a rifle was questioned by rebel army authorities, he said.. Any person without these articles would soon be questioned. Where’s your regiment? Show me your papers. Any unsatisfactory answer would put that man under suspicion. As squads of soldiers were scouting in every direction hunting up deserters and absentees from the army, Pettit finally explained why he was exempt from being drafted or pressed into service in Kentucky or during his trip through the South.

Pettit’s order of banishment always assured him safe travel in the South, and had freed him from interrogation, he claimed. “I had duly prepared myself for these queries not only in procuring passes but with legal knowledge (having examined the statutes of the Confederate Congress on all-important subject of conscription) sufficient as the lawyers would say to ‘plead our case.’ in the event some pompous official should dispute my right to pass unmolested. According to the laws conscribing the citizens, one editor to each newspaper published was exempt. So I was clear. If Kentucky was not claimed as a member of the Confederacy, then we were a non-resident and of course not liable to be placed (in the military); if included as one of her (Confederate) states then being an editor in one of the states, our right to exemption was indisputable. But the order of our banishment was sufficient for a free passport to any point we desired to proceed within the limits of the Confederacy and having it inspected, secured for us every consideration and attention until reaching the capital in Virginia.

When he arrived in Richmond Jan. 13, 1865, Pettit described the Confederate capital as “one of the finest, most picturesque cities I have ever beheld.” From forty to sixty thousand people were living there, but he also observed, “There was sadness and desolation everywhere.” He was surprised how much business was being transacted, but saw that the vast majority of the people of Richmond were living in poverty. Wartime inflation had an iron grip on Richmond. Food prices had skyrocketed. Residents had to pay \$25 for a pound of butter, \$20 for a dozen eggs, \$15-17 for a pound of meat. Most civilians of Richmond felt they were fortunate if they had a meal of fresh pork, bacon fat and sassafras, Pettit wrote. Other poorer folks existed on a diet of sorghum, bread and butter, eating twice a day.

By 1865, with reduction of the food supply and the blockade on goods coming from overseas strangling the Southern economy, even the upper class women of Richmond had long forgotten about even talking about the latest Parisian styles in bonnets and dresses. “The home spun dress was neat and plain and generally worn, and comported more with the dreary and desolate aspect of the country and with the gloomy feelings of the people than the exquisite satin and flashing silk, which most of the ladies in previous years had adorned themselves,” Pettit noted.

“Four years before, the people of the South depended nearly entirely upon the North for every article of wearing apparel and when they were cut off from this source of supply they were forced to obtain things needed by the work of their own hands,” Pettit said. “How well they have succeeded is attested by the prolongation of the horrible war.”

“Nearly every household had been called upon to weep over the memory of deceased loved ones,” Pettit said. “The scarcity of black goods in the South and the impossibility of obtaining them, the weeds of mourning were seldom seen except what could be dyed by bark or roots of trees to be obtaining throughout the country. . .” and soldiers traveling through the Confederacy were compelled to rest for the night wherever dusk would over take them, Pettit said. “They either carried their rations or money sufficient to purchase food. The blighting influences the war had so reduced the people that they were compelled to charge heavily for every thing the soldiers required.”

There was always trouble and delays in the transportation system in the South. Railroad travel was not pleasant by 1865, Pettit said. The rolling stock and railway track were unmaintained and in a miserable condition, and it was about as expeditious to walk as to travel in the crowded cars. Accidents were numerous. Mechanical breakdowns were common. Parts were scarce. Every article used by mechanics and machinists was difficult to obtain. Travel by steamboat was not much better than rail. Pettit once was delayed six hours on the Alabama River as the engineer and his crew attempted to find parts to make the necessary repairs. Monitor, July 12, 1865.

Because Richmond was crowded with people from all of the states of the South and others from as far away as Europe, hotel rooms were difficult to get. Accommodations at the American and Spottswood hotels in Richmond cost from \$50 to \$75 per day. Tables at the first class hotels were well supplied with basic food essentials and many of the delicacies of life, but the amount of Confederate currency to secure a ticket of admittance was agonizing. Some private families that had not been frequently disturbed by squads of soldiers were living quite comfortably.

The always resourceful and lucky Pettit was able to find a friend from Kentucky who offered to share a room with him in a local home. Pettit stayed in Richmond for two months. One of the first events he had the opportunity to attend was a reception at the Confederate White

House where he saw Confederate Secretary of State Judah Benjamin, Secretary of War John C. Breckinridge and Generals Longstreet and John Bell Hood. At that reception, Pettit was introduced to President Jefferson Davis. "Davis was somewhat amused at the way military authorities in the Union Army were acting toward political editors of Kentucky," Pettit wrote later. "I trust you will receive kind treatment at the hands of soldiers and citizens of the South." Davis told Pettit.

Pettit had nothing but time on his hands during those days of exile in Richmond and he did a lot of sight seeing. In one of those moments of leisure, Pettit had his only brush with death during the war. He got to know a Colonel Hatch who was one of the Commissioners of Exchange of the Confederate States government. Pettit was interested in seeing how the flag of truce boats operated and how prisoners were exchanged between the contending governments, and how other business was transacted between the two opposing armies.

Hatch invited Pettit to accompany him frequently to Aikin's Landing on the James River. "On these excursions we could observe the Confederate flotilla as we passed Drury's Bluff and we could plainly see Fort Harrison, and many other places made prominent by the war. But an occurrence put a damper upon our desire for sight seeing in this direction and came near giving me a final release from my long banishment"

One of the flag of truce steamers, the *Schultz*, was to make her first trip to the above landing, and having nothing to do, Pettit wanted to see how the boat would run, and he started early for the "Rockets" which was the landing in Richmond. "Nothing strange occurred on our way to the Federal point of communication and we spent the day pleasantly in conversing with some of Uncle Sam's boys and Colonel Mulford, the Federal Exchange Commissioner. And it was late in the evening before we were on our way back to Richmond. We had not proceeded more than three miles when a dull, booming, thundering crash greeted our ear," Pettit explained. "The steamer had hit a torpedo (mine), the explosion cutting it in half. A rise in the river (level) having caused the removal of some of the obstructions and torpedoes placed there by the Confederates and had washed them immediately into the rebel channel."

Pettit, sitting on deck in the middle of the boat, was thrown backward about 20 or 30 feet, and knocked unconscious by the explosion until shaken awake by one of the deck hands. Pettit got up quickly and scurried to help the injured. Three men were drowned, one was scolded and several others sustained injuries. A hard knock on the head was the only wound or injury that the civilian Pettit sustained in the war.

The explosion probably saved the lives of many Confederate prisoners who had been scheduled to take the *Schultz* that day, Pettit stated. "A disagreement between the commissioners of the two governments had retained five hundred Confederate prisoners in the hands of the Federal authorities at the landing. They were to have taken passage on this boat, which was quite fortunate for them, as, in all probability most all would have perished by the explosion," he said. *Monitor*, July 26, 1865.

The *Monitor* editor attended Sunday services several times at St Paul Episcopal Church while in Richmond. At one communion service he saw President Davis, Generals Lee, Longstreet and Hood. Pettit also seemed amazed by the number of newspapers still being published in the Confederate capitol. The town had five dailies and several weeklies. *Monitor*, August 23,, 1865.

On March 13, 1865, just before adjourning, the Congress of the Confederates states passed an act placing a certain number of Negroes in the rebel army with the consent of their masters. It was not long thereafter before several companies were organized partially equipped

and ready for battle. "The sight of a company of the ebony persuasion donned in the habiliments of the Confederate gray, decorated with brass buttons on them created a sensation scarcely surpassed than if General Grant and his whole army had entered the city," Pettit said. "Young ladies and matrons, old men and young men, children scarcely emerging from their swaddling cloths, were all congregated in the capitol grounds for many hours before their appearance to be ready to view this strange spectacle to Southern eyes, and when they did make their appearances their martial mien was rather a disappointment as verdant 'Africa' just from the plow with their awkward tramp could scarcely make an imposing display. The citizen darkies were not pleased and many amusing comments were made on the streets by them, one objecting to 'puttin' in the scrubs instead of the F.F.V. (First Families of Virginia) nigger in de army to fight dem dar Yanks.'" *Ibid*, Monitor, July 26, 1865.

Finally Pettit received his ticket to go home to Kentucky. He got it with the help of two Republicans. "The rescinding of the order of banishment by President Lincoln's own hand with the remark 'that it was exceedingly unjust' was procured through the kindness of our representative in Congress, the honorable George H. Yeaman," Pettit wrote. "It was sent to us per flag of truce to Richmond for which intercession and interest manifested in our behalf we shall ever regard him, personally, with favor, however intense may be our objections to his political principles which the high claims and loud calls of country require us to oppose with earnestness." *Ibid*, July 26, 1865.

After eight weeks in Richmond, and officially released from his Southern exile, Pettit said adieu to another friend, expressing his gratitude to George W. Triplett, a member of the Confederate Congress and a resident of Owensboro, for providing him accommodations in the Confederate capital and his cheerful influence in securing proper papers.

Then he prepared for his trip home to Kentucky. "The 240-mile trip from Abingdon, Va. to Mount Sterling even in peace time in the 19th century would require caution, prudence and not a little determination but as the war was raging the risks were fearful, and fight and self protection were the only watch words that will insure a safe conduct," Pettit wrote. Monitor, Aug. 19, 1865.

"It would have been the essence of rashness for anyone to attempt to accomplish the journey without being duly armed and equipped and with a less number of persons than ten or a dozen" Pettit said. "Bands of armed men, thieves and cutthroats inhabited the mountain crags, intent only to plunder and robbery, and it made but slight difference with them whether a man was a Unionist or a rebel, or of what age, sex or condition, so they could by force, place him in their power when they would rob him of everything he possessed and might consider himself a lucky individual if escaping with life itself. It was against this class of men that persons whether citizens or soldiers passing through to Kentucky had to guard against."

Castle Wood, a place made notable by the war, was situated about 30 miles from Abingdon in the mountainous western tip of Virginia, immediately on the main road leading to Pound Gap on the Kentucky-Tennessee border. It was the rendezvous point for all who intended coming to the state. Pettit had taken a train from Richmond. "In this neighborhood we tarried, days before our guide and party were fully prepared for the wearisome journey. At last all were ready, our party numbered 13, some citizens, some Confederate soldiers and others to this day we have not learned who they were or of their intentions. The party had met in these woods and banded together for the sole object of mutual protection in crossing the mountains and it was far from any person's intentions to be too inquisitive about one's motives in visiting the state.

“Our party was a conglomeration of all classes from the refined gentleman to the rough and uncouth backwoodsmen. Some no doubt, deserters from their post of duty and on their way to ‘take the oath’, and slipping into Kentucky to their homes... Law and order had its sway and there were too many men in our company who were gentlemen and with daring enough to make the trip safely. Before reaching Pound Gap we overtook another party of 15 whom we had learned were in our front and all joined in one body and pursued our way through the mountains with very little fear of an attack being made by small bands of plunderers.

“Our original squad was commanded by Lt. William Clay of Paris, Ky., and one overtaken by us was under the leadership of Major Cameron of Harrison County. Two more affable men would be hard to find. They bestowed every attention upon us, and by their friendly hints and suggestions on our march we were often enabled to find some comfortable quarters for our self and something for our tired and famished horse to feat upon. Both of these gentlemen had served during the war as officers in the Confederate army were highly cultivated and esteemed and are now peaceable and quiet citizens of the state engaged in the secular duties of life.

“We must not fail to mention that in our company there was a real curiosity in the shape of a man or giant more properly speaking, the distinguished personage of one ‘Brother’ Bates as he was jocularly called,” Pettit wrote. Bates was on his way home to Letcher County. “He weighed 352 pounds, was about 20 years of age, seven feet one inch in height with a foot measuring 18 inches. He was good company and the favorite with the party. His life was not an uneventful one, but in the early stage of the war he raised a company of mountaineers for the Confederate Army of Eastern Kentucky and served under General Humphrey Marshall for three years with merit as a soldier when at his own request, he was honorably discharged. We have since noticed that he has joined some traveling circus and doubtless will be the ‘observed’ of many observers throughout the country of many in his new occupation.”

Pettit’s group was able to find decent people who went out of their way to help them as they traveled into Eastern Kentucky. In Perry County, an old man offered them a supper of cornbread, fried bacon and onions that, Pettit said, “we were compelled to eat out of a tin wash basin, the only article of ware at all suitable for the occasion on the premises...Our bill of fare was not sumptuous, though exceedingly palatable for persons not having tasted a mouthful for more than 24 hours.” Ibid, Aug. 19, 1865.

Pettit and his group had supplies with enough articles to get to more populated areas: “two bushels of corn for each horse and several days of rations for ourselves but hope of meeting with better luck that all others who had traveled this passes,” he said. “During the eight days of their journey, Pettit noticed the ravages of war had driven nearly every inhabitant of the mountains from their homes and it was sometimes days before we would see the face of a human being. Some of the houses looked like their inhabitant had left months ago.”

They also had enough gold, silver, greenbacks and Confederate script to pay for provisions if needed, Pettit said. As they were traveling through Morgan and Bath counties, Pettit’s company plodded through a rainy night, expecting to have to sleep under what shelter they could find. But then they approached the house of a Good Samaritan who insisted they take shelter inside his two-room home and spread their blankets on the floor. The thirteen in his party would sleep two and three deep on the floor in their hats, boots and clothes while five women, 12 children and two men, slept in the other room of the small house.

Later as they were traveling through Morgan and Bath County, Pettit’s party acquired Cincinnati newspapers that told of the evacuation of Richmond, General Lee’s surrender to

General Grant, and finally, the assassination of President Lincoln. All in Pettit's group were saddened by Lincoln's death, the *Monitor* editor wrote, after returning to Owensboro. "The sorrow manifested was depicted upon the countenances of each member of our party. Even the most violent rebels --- those who had fought against the Government for years he was the head -- regarded it, as one of them expressed himself to me, 'as more fatal under existing circumstances than any calamity that could befall all the Southern people.'"

On Aug. 23, 1865, in the final installment of Pettit's series "Trip to Dixie," he wrote: "War is now over, and peace once again usurps her sway." He said his course and that of his newspaper "has at all times, and upon all occasions, striven to be that only which was dictated by patriotism and what we sincerely believed the best conducive to both North and South, and while we then and now regard our banishment cruel and unjust I feel the proud consciousness our escutcheon is untarnished and name unstained, and feel no regret at our past course, but confirmed by late events that the policy pursued by us, was one who felt for his country's best interest, something more than mere 'lip loyalty.'"

"By appeal in arms in assertion of the right to secede, the decision has gone against the Southern States no matter by what means or by virtue of what overwhelming odds --- against them it is. And I believe that all Southern men of high and honorable character do frankly accept the new position that war has made for them, and acknowledge to duty of applying themselves to the task of reconstructing and reestablishing their society upon the basis of the Union and Constitution of the United States. This they will assuredly do if they are permitted to do it in peace. If the successful government does not trample them into the earth or torture them by prosecution for the crime of having asserted a right long known to have been claimed by most Southern politicians and admitted by many in the North also.

"The institution of slavery is virtually abolished on this continent," he conceded. "The irrepressible conflict between free labor and slave labor has come and slave labor has gone down. To this also the Southern people submit. On this point they accept the decision of the war and, if they do so with reluctance and regret, it is but just to them to say that in most cases their sorrow is more for the sudden upheaval of their institutions and the fate which threatens that unhappy race they have protected so long, than for the loss of the money value of their slaves," Pettit, "Trip to Dixie", Aug. 23, 1865.

Thomas Pettit found his print shop trashed by Federal authorities when he arrived in Owensboro in May 1865. Undaunted by such discouraging circumstances, he returned to work as editor of the *Monitor*, increased the number of subscribers to 2,000 within the next year, expanded the number of pages of the paper, bought a new power press in 1869, and acquired other equipment to get his newspaper and job printing business back in operation.

"Owing to the disarrangement of the materials and fixtures in our office we hope our indulgent readers will not regard the appearance of this issue as a specimen of what we intend with their cooperation to make the *Monitor* a paper unsurpassed in matters and appearance to any in the state" *Monitor*, May 31, 1865.

Pettit did not hesitate in rebuilding his business, quickly reminding his readers and advertising customers that the *Monitor* was still equipped to do "job printing," which meant he could produce letter heads, bills of lading, pamphlets and handbills. "Through the columns of the *Monitor* this morning, after an absence of more than six months, we send a greeting to our kind friends and patrons, we trust that time has dealt more gently with them than it has with us during the absence from the chair editorial and that in the future our communion may be pleasant and uninterrupted and that though that fickle flame, Fortune, may not have been so lavish with

her favors and smiles, during the bloody drama of the past few years. And now on which the curtain of oblivion has we trust forever dropped, that the goddess will again empty her cornucopia and shower her richest and rarest of gifts on each and all of our good readers.

Since our long absence (at least to us) from them, and the scenes through which we have passed, and the many advantages of seeing in the true condition of the country, our mind, as regards the great fundamental principles for which we have contended in the past remains the same and we see no reason to add thereto, either, to mend or modify. We are still for that government devised by the wise and patriotic sages of the better and purer days of our once united and prosperous Republic. The position of ourselves as enunciated in our paper has always been of the conservative stamp with the Union of the States under the Constitution ever in view and have opposed the radical means of prosecuting the war, believing that if the sword was to settle the difficulties existing that a constitutional method would have accomplished the object more speedily and satisfactorily, certainly in a spirit partaking more of civilization and Christianity and become the age in which we live.

We believe little in war and think that great national questions can be settled through the agency of statesmanship without any appeal to the sword. Our minds should revolt against such barbarian means of arbitration and prove to the world that this great nation of ours can govern itself upon more enlightened principles. Questions, if not identical of equal moment, have to be settled at the termination of wars in council and why not dispose of them before such a calamities overtake a people by such methods.

Our views in relation to state and national questions will hereafter be referred to at greater length in a more appropriate article and as the occasion may arise. With these views briefly expressed and reiterating the happiness of communing with the good people of this county. We again tender our warmest salutation to one and all of our readers."

Pettit began immediately writing about his journey through the South during his banishment, and he reported on problems and improvements he saw in Owensboro that occurred during his exile. In the May 31, 1865, paper, the first published since his return, Pettit pointed out that a big section of upper Main Street washed away by flood waters, the courthouse and yard were in ruins, and the Planters House was dirty and disheveled.

However, he acknowledged, "We are pleased to note since our return the many improvements that have been made during our absence. Among the most conspicuous and worthy of note is the beautiful Episcopal Chapel which is really an ornament to our city and favorably compares with more pretentious churches of other places."

Pettit praised J.A. Scott for building a two-story brick house on Main Street that was suitable for business. J.C Rudd was planning construction of a first class hotel at Third and St. Ann streets, adding, "Every house in the city is occupied and new comers are anxious to procure places for business. May the work go bravely on." He urged the people to "get to work and clear away the debris of our locality. Repair the courthouse and re-embellish the fairgrounds," where Union troops had camped. *Monitor* June 14, 1865.

"We are glad to see that our young, energetic, intelligent and well known friends, Payne and Bridwell, have embarked in that tide that leads to fortune." They have opened a large and complete stock of fresh staple and fancy groceries, and bought at panic prices. They are too well known to need commendation at our hands but we will say they deserve a helping hand and should have a good start in the battle of life."

In mid-May, the women of the Methodist Church in Owensboro announced to the public that they needed a large and well known venue to hold their Strawberry Festival, an event they

planned to raise enough money to pay off the debt on the church's parsonage property. Timothy Burgess, proprietor of the Planters House, told the ladies that they could use his hotel for free.

The Planters House had for many months been used as a barracks for white Union soldiers, and as Pettit stated May 31, the hotel parlor had been "infested with a company of ebony persuasion on which account it was deemed by many persons not to be a desirable" for a church event. But Burgess had worked quickly to prepare the hotel for the event. There were people in town who opposed holding the church fundraiser, the newspaper admitted, but the Planters had recently been "cleansed with a view of reopening and having never been used as a hospital and there consequently to being no cause to fear either ghosts or contagious diseases" it became suitable for the festival, the Monitor reported.

The idea for the Strawberry Festival had been quickly conceived the past Saturday so the ladies of the church and other organizers of the event acted quickly. The parlor and dining room of the hotel were "handsomely decorated with evergreen, floral and pictorial ornaments," according to the Monitor.

A large display of paintings and engraving were set up in the parlor where ice creams, and strawberries were dispensed. The tables were "crammed with delicious berries and refreshing ice cream, custards and sherbets." On Friday night, a large group of adults attending seemed to be enjoying the company and the refreshments afforded. The evening passed pleasantly to all with profit to the object for which the feast was given nothing occurring to mar the pleasure of the event.

On Saturday evening the rooms opened at 6 p.m. to receive "the small fry" of the town. Just as many children attended that night as had adults the previous night," the Monitor reported. "The rooms were crowded with a merry juvenile throng. All seemed to be supplied with pocket change and right freely did they spend it for ice cream and strawberries, the stock of which rapidly diminished under the repeated and vigorous assaults of the young assailants."

The night for the kids ended at 10 o'clock and everyone dispersed to their homes. The two-night event made \$400. The event was successful financially but more importantly the children had a good time and it lifted the spirits of the adults of Owensboro, who foresaw the local crisis that lay head after slavery was abolished.

Pettit Postwar

Tom Pettit now rests in silence beneath spreading dogwood branches in Elmwood Cemetery. Quiet at last, and largely forgotten.

A man of small stature with flashing black eyes and a deep, resonant voice, Thomas Stevenson Pettit was never still or quiet during his long life. From the time he burst upon the Owensboro scene in 1864 to become editor of the Owensboro Monitor until his death of old age at 88 in 1931, Pettit was writing, speaking and crusading - creating swirls of controversy.

The scrappy, outspoken Pettit came from Frankfort to adopt Owensboro as his new hometown. He spent the rest of his life taking every opportunity to champion the town - and himself. A man of great ego and great political ambition, he was a strong populist. Pettit was a Constitutional conservative in the model of Jefferson and Madison. Despite his feel for the pulse of the people, he was not always popular with the press or his party and never achieved the political success he desired. Pettit was a man who raised issues, but not votes. He seemed to

always be barking at the establishment, whether it was the Republican Party of the 1860s or the Democratic Party of the 1890s. He attracted controversy like a magnet.

Before his 21st birthday, Pettit took control of the Unionist Monitor during the last year of the Civil War. He turned it into a strong Democratic mouthpiece, criticizing the Republicans, their war policies and President Lincoln.

He was arrested for sedition because of his blatant support of the Democrat George McClellan over Lincoln in 1864, and banished to the Confederacy for the remainder of the war. Lincoln pardoned Pettit, noting that if everyone who was opposed to him were arrested, the jails would be full. But Pettit, caught up in the last frantic weeks of the war in Richmond, did not return to Owensboro until May 1865.

He started his paper again and continued his scathing editorials about the Republican Party. He also used it as a forum to crusade for a railroad for the city. Because of his support for Andrew Johnson, Lincoln's successor, Pettit was appointed as assessor of internal revenue for the second district. Although he would continue publishing the newspaper until 1875, Pettit had savored the taste of politics as assistant reading clerk of the Kentucky House in 1868 and during his time as private secretary to Gov. James McCreary, following his term with the revenue service. He resigned his secretaryship to accept appointment as reading clerk of the U.S. House of Representatives, where he served for 10 years. He was referred to as the "affable little man with the big voice." It was said he could be heard clearly throughout the chamber. Pettit was mentioned in newspaper articles as a real power behind the official Kentucky delegation in Washington.

He took the plunge into elective politics in 1882 when he ran for Congress. He was defeated in a close election by J. B. Clay of Henderson. When he ran in 1890 as a delegate to the Constitutional Convention he won by a large majority and was known by his fellow delegates as hard-working and a man of strong convictions. He was referred to as the "little Giant from Daviess" and pushed for progressive reforms such as direct election of senators. But he seems to have spent much of his time seeking the limelight and insisting on strict parliamentary procedures. The state's new constitution was very conservative, a document which reflected distrust of big business and big government. Pettit was credited with being one of its major architects. His efforts reflected the deeply agrarian nature of his constituents, one which still exists. During the convention, Pettit became known as a friend of the woman's suffrage movement. He was credited with passage of the 1894 Married Woman's Property Act. But it was not Pettit, but McLean County's Jep C. Jonson who urged votes for women in the 1890 Constitution, although Pettit did support the measure.

Newspapers such as the Messenger attacked the new constitution and Pettit for his role. He bolted the Democratic Party and ran on the People's Party ticket for the legislature, winning by 4,000 votes. The people of Daviess County obviously still had faith in him. He was officially read out of the Democratic Party and, although he would later re-align with them, his political future was sealed - he would never again be elected to office other than the General Assembly.

In 1892 he ran unsuccessfully for Congress, but continued in the legislature and was called by the Louisville Courier "the acknowledged leader of the reform movement in Kentucky." Pettit took strong stands against the Jim Crow laws which called for separate railroad cars for blacks and whites. He worked for women's property rights and regulation of gas and water rates. He pushed through a bill which led to the draining of the Panther Creek bottoms, a bill which benefited Pettit, who owned 2,000 acres of the swampy land that provided material

for his sawmill and stave factory in the village of Pettit (named for him). This was also a station on the railroad for which Pettit had labored after the Civil War.

But his position was not totally self-serving. Draining the Panther Creek swamps benefited the entire community by finally controlling the anopheles mosquitoes which bred there and spread malaria, long a scourge of the region.

Pettit's political pinnacle came when he ran for governor on the People's Party ticket in 1895. His participation caused a split in Democratic ranks which allowed the Republican candidate, William Bradley, to be elected. Pettit finished second in Daviess County, and polled 16,911 votes statewide. The Democratic nominee lost by 8,474 votes. Not only did this election signal the end of the People's Party in Kentucky, and change the state's direction toward a more favorable climate for industry, but it effectively ended Pettit's political career. Had he won, he had been discussed as a possible vice-presidential candidate for 1900.

Pettit ran for county judge in 1897 on the Republican-Populist Citizen ticket, driving a greater wedge between him and the Democrats. He lost, 3,333 votes to 1,973.

Pettit's time was past. He would run for other offices including as a Democrat for mayor in 1901. He once said: "I was born to get beat and speak the truth." He would never wield the political power he had courted so fervently.

He did remain active as a booster for Owensboro and its economy. He was a stockholder in the Owensboro Wagon Company, the Masonic Temple Co. and the Brick and Tile Works. He was also a director of the Female College Co. He was active in the Masons, the Presbyterian Church and the Investigators Club. Pettit often gave speeches encouraging citizenship education, women's rights and other topics.

His influence is all over our city. He began a crusade for industry after the Civil War, and fought for a rail connection to make Owensboro competitive with other progressive areas. He foresaw a large city, bolstered by industry. In pursuit of that dream he eventually left journalism and became involved in business, farming and politics.

Tom Pettit was courageous but conservative in his ideals and causes. He represented the "ordinary" people who feared big government. Perhaps had he been a better politician he would have achieved higher office, but perhaps he made a greater contribution because he spoke for the people and perceived and reflected their views against the establishment. He and his friends stirred up many controversial ideas that would finally become reality in the New Deal policies of the 1930s. He was man ahead of his time.

In May 1865, Pettit returned to Owensboro and found his print shop and printing press destroyed by federal authorities.^[2] He traveled to [Cincinnati, Ohio](#) to purchase replacement equipment and, on hearing the story of his arrest and subsequent travels, the equipment dealer extended him a generous line of credit, allowing him to purchase more sophisticated equipment than had ever before been used in Owensboro.^[2] With this new equipment, Pettit revived the Monitor and published his stories of wartime banishment, bringing him significant acclaim in Kentucky.^[3] Moreover, he also published editorials by future [U.S. Senator Thomas C. McCreery](#), giving the Monitor further credibility and increasing its readership.^[2]

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DEATH COMES TO THOMAS S. PETTIT AT HIS HOME HERE

**Long Career In Public Life.
Began In Publishing Business;
Funeral arranged
For 10 A. M. Wednesday.**

Funeral arrangements for Thomas S. Pettit, 53-year-old citizen of Owensboro, who died at 11 o'clock Monday morning at his home at Fourth and Crittenden streets, have been tentatively fixed for 10 o'clock Wednesday morning, dependent upon arrival of his son from his home away from Owensboro. Burial will be in Elmwood cemetery. Mr. Pettit's death was due to infirmities of advanced age, as he had enjoyed moderately good health until a short time ago. Mr. Pettit was one of the first newspaper publishers of Owensboro. As a result of his taking the side of the Southern Confederacy at the beginning of the War Between the States, he was banished to the South by federal authorities, and on his return to Owensboro after the war, found that his newspaper plant had been destroyed, but he soon had the "Monitor" again appearing and won statewide recognition by his forceful editorials.

Born at Frankfort

Mr. Pettit was born at Frankfort, Dec. 21, 1843, a son of Franklin Duane and Elizabeth (Zook) Pettit. His father was born in Fredericksburg, Va., of French-born parents, whose father was an ardent admirer of Napoleon and who fled to the United States after Napoleon's army was defeated at the Battle of Waterloo, settling at Fredericksburg where he was an educator. Franklin Duane Pettit as a young man went from his native town to Frankfort, Ky., where he met and married Elizabeth Zook, who was of Dutch parentage. At that city together with Thomas B. Stevenson they became owners and publishers

(Continued on Page 2, Column 1)

Continued from Page One

of the Kentucky Farmer. Mr. Pettit died early in life and not long after his wife also passed away, thus leaving the son an orphan early in life, he being but 10 years of age when his mother died. At that age he was thrown upon his own resources, and from that time on made his own way in life.

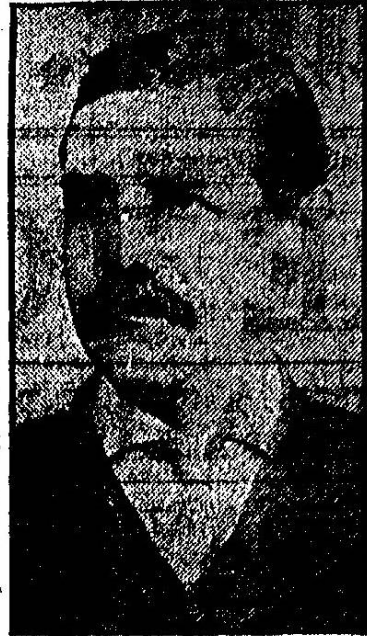
Enters Print Shop

His first opportunity was found in a print shop where he showed remarkable aptitude, for while yet in his teens he had become an expert in all of the mechanical work of the printing office. His only educational advantages were confined to the schools of Frankfort and a brief attendance at Georgetown college. In 1864 when he was not yet twenty-one years old he came to Owensboro and purchased the Monitor, a newspaper, from H. M. Woodruff, in which transaction he incurred an indebtedness of \$1,500. This obligation he was not able to meet until after years for when he assumed the role of a newspaper publisher and editor he changed the politics of the Monitor and ably supported the policies and measures of the Democratic party freely and fearlessly, criticizing the Republican party and its war policy. His writing on such topics brought down upon him the wrath of certain government authorities and resulted in his arrest on November 17, 1864, by order of Gen. Stephen G. Burbridge, of the Federal army. He was "banished to the Southern Confederacy" under the general charge of being notoriously disloyal, and was sent under escort to Memphis and there transferred across the lines. The following months until May, 1865, Mr. Pettit spent in traveling within the Confederate line and then the war being over, he returned to Owensboro, to find that his printing office had been destroyed by the Federal military authorities.

Gets New Equipment

Mr. Pettit at once went to Cincinnati there to arrange for the purchase of a new printing outfit. Telling his story there in a plain and straightforward manner, together with his own pleasing personality, Mr. Pettit made the friendship of a Mr. Allison, manager of a printer's equipment company, who extended him more credit than he asked for and induced him to take a much better and more complete outfit than he had planned. The result was that Mr. Pettit returned to Owensboro with ample equipment for a printing office, far better than had

Taken By Death



Thomas S. Pettit

after before been in Owensboro. The outfit included a Gordon and a power press, this being the first Gordon press to be set up locally.

Now fitted out for publishing a first class newspaper, and for high grade job printing, Mr. Pettit began his business career, though heavily in debt. He revived the Monitor, his old newspaper, and made it a very popular paper, increasing its circulation by means of popular editing and the publication of interesting articles reviewing his travels in the Southland while in banishment, which were followed by able articles from the pen of the then distinguished Thomas C. McCreery, afterwards United States senate from Kentucky. Business success attended Mr. Pettit's efforts and eventually he was able to wipe out his indebtedness, including the old debt he owed Mr. Woodruff. The Monitor soon became known as one of the brightest newspapers in Kentucky and Mr. Pettit was recognized as one of the ablest newspaper editors and publishers of the state. He was the first man to establish a successful newspaper in Owensboro and continued to publish the Monitor for many years. He afterwards sold it to Jas. A. Munday, who later sold it to C. W. Bransford, and this owner later sold it to Urey Woodson, who changed it to the present Owensboro Messenger.

In field of politics

As the editor of a successful and influential Democratic newspaper, Mr. Pettit very early was drawn into the field of politics. In 1868 he was elected assistant reading clerk of the House of Representatives, at Washington, which position he held for six years and was then appointed private secretary to Governor James B. McCreary. Later he resigned this position to accept that of reading clerk of the House of Representatives at Washington, where he quickly won the distinction of being the best reading clerk who ever held that position. His voice and clear and distinct enunciation enabled him to read so as to be heard from all parts of the house and he also had a ready perception and quick understanding, which enabled him to read intelligently documents he had never seen before. His services in the house ended when the Republicans regained the ascendancy.

Internal Revenue Collector

In 1880 President Johnson had appointed Mr. Pettit collector of internal revenue for the Second district, which position he held with ability until the close of President Johnson's administration.

In the fall of 1882 Mr. Pettit was defeated by J. B. Clay, of Henderson, as a candidate for congress, by less than 150 votes after an exciting race. Perhaps Mr. Pettit attended more state conventions than any other man in Kentucky, and was for years, time after time, elected secretary of the conventions. In this capacity he rendered the Democratic party valuable services, which were appreciated and highly complimented. He was one of the secretaries in the national convention which nominated Grover Cleveland the first time for president and four years later he served in the same capacity and was also selected as a member of the official notification committee to inform Cleveland and Thurman of their nominations.

Mr. Pettit was elected a member of the Kentucky Constitutional convention of 1891-93 and his services in his capacity were perhaps the most conspicuous and helpful ever rendered by him in his public capacity, for he was a leader in that convention, advocating such

reforms as the secret official ballot, the taxing of corporations like individuals, and the two-thirds verdicts of the jury in civil cases. He was afterwards elected by an overwhelming majority, not as the regular Democratic nominee, but as an Independent candidate, as the representative from Daviess county in the general assembly, there to be put into effect and practical operation the provisions of the new constitution. His election in this instance was in the face of the strongest opposition in this county and followed one of the most exciting and bitter contests ever known in the state. The independency of his candidacy naturally estranged him from the organized Democratic party and he became in 1895 the People's party candidate for governor. He made a strong campaign, but was not successful of election. However, his candidacy so divided the Democratic party as to elect a Republican governor. Mr. Pettit never lost interest in politics, keeping at all time in close touch with political conditions and the course of public thought and opinion.

For many years Mr. Pettit was interested in the clearing and developing of extensive land areas in the vicinity of Pettit, Daviess county, which village was named in his honor, and here he developed fine farms.

Mr. Pettit was many years a member of the Fourth Street Presbyterian church and was also a member of the Ancient Free and Accepted Order of Masons, in which order he had received the distinctive preferment, being a past grand master of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky, and the imposing Masonic Temple in Owensboro stands as a monument to his enterprise and fraternal fidelity.

Mr. Pettit was twice married, first in 1870, to Margaret Blair, the daughter of J. H. Blair, who in his day was a prominent merchant in Owensboro. To this marriage was born a son, Harvey Blair Pettit, a graduate of Rose Polytechnic institute of Terre Haute, Indiana, and now an electrical engineer, residing in Cleveland. Mrs. Pettit died in 1918 and in September of 1918 Mr. Pettit was married to Miss Alice Frakes, of Owensboro, who died three years ago. Mr. Pettit is survived by his son, and five grand children.

Owensboro newspapers articles about Thomas S. Pettit
Compiled by Jerry Long

Owensboro Monitor - 1864: 6/1 p.2 & 3 (becomes co-editor of the "Owensboro Monitor"), 11/16 p.3 (becomes sole editor of the "Owensboro Monitor"), 11/23 p.2 (arrested on Nov 17 by Union forces & taken to Memphis, TN), 11/30 p.3, 12/7 p.2 & 3 (charged with disloyalty against the Union), 1865: 5/31 p.2 (returns to publish "Monitor" after a forced absence of 6 months, first of several articles describing his forced trip to Dixie), 6/7 p.2 ("Trip To Dixie", Chapter II), 6/14 p.2 ("Trip To Dixie", Chapter III), 6/21 p.2 ("Trip To Dixie", Chapter IV), 6/28 p.2 ("Trip To Dixie", Chapter V), 7/12 p.2 ("Trip To Dixie", Chapter VI), 7/19 p.2 ("Trip To Dixie", Chapter VII), 7/26 p.2 ("Trip To Dixie", Chapter VIII), 8/2 p.2 ("Trip To Dixie", Chapter IX), 8/9 p.2 ("Trip To Dixie", Chapter X), 8/23 p.2 ("Trip To Dixie", Chapter XI), 1866: 9/26 p.2&3 (accuses Joshua G. Ford, editor of the "Southern Shield", of being a liar), 1867: 12/4 p.2 (elected Assistant Clerk of the KY House of Representatives), 1874: 3/25 p.2 (sells an interest in "Owensboro Monitor" to Robert Campbell),

Owensboro Weekly Messenger - 1877: 10/17 p.3 reappointed Reading Clerk of the US House of Representatives), 1878: 10/30 p.3 (biography from "Louisville Evening News", born Frankfort, a Mason for 7 years, 5 feet 8 or 9 inches tall, weighs about 140 pounds), 10/30 p.3, (elected Grand Master of Grand Lodge of Masons of KY),

Owensboro Examiner - 1878: 11/1 p.4,

Owensboro Weekly Messenger - 1879: 5/28 p.3 (son born 27 May 1879), 6/4 p.1 (Grand Master of Masons of KY),

Owensboro Messenger - 1879: 10/21 p.3,

Owensboro Messenger & Examiner - 1881: 11/30 p.1, 1882: 9/6 p.2 (testimonials for his nomination as Congressman), 1883: 12/19 p.3 (made tally clerk of the US House of Representatives, for 6 years he has been reading clerk of the House),

Owensboro Messenger - 1887: 11/30 p.4 (sells his saw mill & 8 acres at Panther Creek on the O. & N. Railroad to T. W. Kerr), 1888: 1/1 p.2 (in May 1864 became part owner of the "Owensboro Monitor", due to his anti-Lincoln writings in the fall of 1864 he was arrested by order of Gen. S. G. Burbridge and was banished to the South, in May 1865 he returned and resumed publication of the newspaper, in 1874 he sold the paper to Robert Campbell, who suspended its publication on 1 March 1877), 1889: 6/2 p.8 (new post office, Pettit, established at Panther Creek on the O & N Railroad, named in his honor, he has done much to advance the interests of that section),

Owensboro Weekly Messenger - 1889: 12/19 p.4 (reading clerk of the House of Representatives for ten years, has earned over \$30,000 in the position), 1890: 8/28 p.3 (Pettit tract, 14 farms, at Pettit, five miles from Owensboro, to be auctioned on 15 September 1890),

Owensboro Inquirer - 1890: 7/14 p.4 (ad for Pettit tract), 8/22 p.1, 8/27 p.4, 1891: 4/17 p.1 (gives reasons for adoption of the new Kentucky Constitution),

Owensboro Weekly Messenger - 1891: 7/29 p.1 (letter by Josh G. Ford criticizing his politics), 1892: 5/14 p.1 (accepts Congressional nomination),

Owensboro Daily Tribune - 1896: 3/30 p.1 (broke his leg while working on his farm about a mile and a half from the city),

Owensboro Inquirer - 1897: 10/28 p.2, 1899: 3/15 p.2 & 3/16 p.3 (sells his farm of 160 acres to John H. Nave, of Louisville, for \$8,000 and a house in Louisville valued at \$4,000, Mr. Nave will move to the farm, Mr. Pettit will move back to Owensboro and will occupy his

residence at the corner of Fourth & Crittenden), 1900: 9/12 p.1 (court supports his lien on 1,482 & 1/2 acres near Pettit station), 9/25 p.2, 9/28 p.1 (judgment rendered in Hill vs. Pettit case),

Owensboro Messenger - 1900: 4/26 p.1 (attends Peoples Party convention),

Owensboro Inquirer - 1901: 1/27 p.12 (represented county in the Kentucky House of Representatives in 1891-1892), 5/29 p.1 & 4 (candidate for mayor of Owensboro), 8/4 p.1 (replies to questions), 8/8 p.1 (wins Democratic primary for mayor), 8/9 p.4 (editorial), 10/29 p.4 (editorial), 11/3 p.2 & 4, 11/6 p.1 (loses mayoral race to Martin Yewell by 55 votes), 11/12 p.1 (contesting mayoral vote), 11/14 p.1, 11/17 p.9, 11/21 p.1, 12/15 p.1, 12/22 p.1,

Owensboro Messenger - 1901: 5/29 p.1 (consents to run for mayor), 6/6 p.5, 8/9 p.1&4 (chosen as Democrat candidate for mayor), 9/18 p.1 (his speech upon acceptance of nomination for mayor), 10/27 p.4 (editorial on his candidacy for mayor), 11/3 p.10&15 (his efforts for the laboring classes), 11/20 p.1 (contests mayor's election), 12/29 p.1, 12/31 p.1, 1902: 1/2 p.1, 1/3 p.3, 1/5 p.9, 1/24 p.1, 2/8 p.3, 2/13 p.3, 2/14 p.3, 2/16 p.9, 2/19 p.3, 2/23 p.1&9, 11/18 p.5 (Pettit post offices to be discontinued),

Owensboro Inquirer - 1902: 2/23 p.1 (judge rules that Martin Yewell won mayor's race), 1903: 5/25 p.3 (describes the Green River country), 1905: 10/29 p.11 (his residence on the corner of Fourth & Crittenden has been remodeled into the Pettit Flats which will be available for rental),

Owensboro Messenger - 1916: 10/1 p.1 (married Miss Alice Frakes in Atlanta, GA on 30 September 1916, he was born in Frankfort on 21 December 1843, married Miss Margaret Blair in 1870, she died about two years ago, leaving one son, Blair Pettit, biography), 1921: 1/2 p.1B (Illustrated Looking Backward),

Owensboro Messenger & Inquirer - 1976: 5/2 p.2 ("Drive for industry began in 1866"), 7/4 Bicentennial Edition Part 3 p.28 ("Populist Thomas Pettit is now all but forgotten"), 1992: 7/5 p.1D ("here's a politician who spoke his mind"), 1995: 7/11 Community p.8 ("Community History: Murray Precinct and Pettit"), 1997: 6/8 p.3G ("Little Man with the Big Voice: Outspoken politician was an Owensboro original"), 2014: 8/30 p.3B ("Voices of Elmwood tickets on sale Tuesday", Thomas S. Pettit will be portrayed, the town of Pettit is named for him, bought the newspaper the Monitor on credit, he was pro-slavery and anti-Lincoln, because of his strong anti-Lincoln articles, he was arrested and was banished to the South, after the war, he returned to Owensboro to publish the Monitor, he later was involved in the populist party and was a supporter in the suffrage movement), 2020: 1/16 p.1B ("A List of wants from 1866", On June 6, 1866, Thomas S. Pettit, editor of the 'Owensboro Monitor', wrote an editorial called "Our Wants"; he wrote - "We want a telegraphic line to Louisville, so that we can hold a short, quick conversation with the rest of mankind. We want 100 (buildings), as stores, dwellings for mechanics and residences in the suburbs. Our rents are too high, and property owners must follow the example of the people of Louisville, where rents are being reduced. A joint stock company for building suitable houses would be profitable to the parties and greatly advance the interests of our city. We want the streets graded and graveled and the ponds drained. We want the ravines filled up or their inroads arrested. We want an extension of our wharf to accommodate the steamers which a population of 10,000 in five years will demand. We want the courthouse rebuilt, and the lot tastefully improved. Let the county do it if the general government (state) will not help. We want the gas light extended over the city, which will serve to reduce the number of police, and thus reduce our expenses. We want a steam fire engine by which thousands of dollars of our property may be saved. We want a railroad to Calhoun. "We want an increased subscription to our paper to enable us to do justice to this subject.")

FAMILY GROUP No. _____ Husband's Full Name Thomas Stevenson Pettit

This Information Obtained From:	Husband's Date	Day	Month	Year	City, Town or Place	County or Province, etc.	State or Country	Add. Info. on Husband
1870-80-1900 Daviess Co. Ky. censuses; "History of Daviess County, Ky.", 1883, pp.198-201; "Historical Atlas Map of Daviess County, Ky.", 1876, p.29; "Owensboro Messenger": 28May1879, 28Aug1908, 10Jun1913, 1Oct1916, 3Mar1930, 1Dec1931; "Bio. Cyclo. of the Commonwealth of Ky.", 1896, pp.141-143; "History of Ky.", Kerr, Vol.3 c1922, pp.157-159;	Birth	21	Dec	1843	Frankfort,	Franklin County,	Ky.	
	Chr'nd							
	Mar.	22	Dec	1870	Owensboro,	Daviess County,	Ky.	
	Death	30	Nov	1931	Owensboro,	Daviess County,	Ky.	
	Burial		Dec	1931	Elmwood Cemetery,	Owensboro,	Ky.	
	Places of Residence	Occupation real estate Church Affiliation Presbyterian Military Rec.						
	Other wives, if any. No. (1) (2) etc. Make separate sheet for each mar.	2. Miss Alice Frakes 30Sep1916 Atlanta, Ga.						
	His Father	Franklin Duane Pettit			Mother's Maiden Name	Elizabeth Zook		
	Wife's Full Maiden Name	Margaret Jane Blair						
	Birth	21	Aug	1841	Owensboro,	Daviess County,	Ky.	1 child
	Chr'nd							
	Death	8	Jun	1913	Owensboro,	Daviess County,	Ky.	
	Burial		Jun	1913	Elmwood Cemetery,	Owensboro,	Ky.	
Compiler Jerry Long	Places of Residence							
Address 1701 Alexander	Occupation if other than Housewife	Church Affiliation Presbyterian						
City, State Owensboro, Ky.	Other husbands, if any. No. (1) (2) etc. Make separate sheet for each mar.							
Date 1989	Her Father	James Harvey Blair			Mother's Maiden Name	Susan A. Rogers		

Sex	Children's Names in Full (Arrange in order of birth)	Children's Date	Day	Month	Year	City, Town or Place	County or Province, etc.	State or Country	Add. Info. on Children
	1 Harvey Blair Full Name of Spouse* Mattie Marvin	Birth	27	May	1879	Owensboro,	Daviess County,	Ky.	
		Mar.	25	Aug	1908	Chicago,	Cook County,	Il.	
		Death		Nov	1955			lived Chicago, Il.	
		Burial	10	Nov	1955	Elmwood Cemetery,	Owensboro,	Ky.	
	2	Birth							
	Full Name of Spouse*	Mar.							
		Death							
		Burial							
	3	Birth				Thomas S. Pettit married second:			
	Full Name of Spouse*	Mar.				Alice Frakes, born ca 1866			
		Death				died 3Mar1930 Owensboro, Ky., buried			
		Burial				Elmwood Cemetery, Owensboro, Ky.			
	4	Birth				Daughter of William & Martha C.			
	Full Name of Spouse*	Mar.				Frakes,			
		Death							
		Burial							
	5	Birth							
	Full Name of Spouse*	Mar.							
		Death							
		Burial							
	6	Birth							
	Full Name of Spouse*	Mar.							
		Death							
		Burial							
	7	Birth							
	Full Name of Spouse*	Mar.							
		Death							
		Burial							
	8	Birth							
	Full Name of Spouse*	Mar.							
		Death							
		Burial							
	9	Birth							
	Full Name of Spouse*	Mar.							
		Death							
		Burial							
	10	Birth							
	Full Name of Spouse*	Mar.							
		Death							
		Burial							

*If married more than once, each marriage should be listed separately.