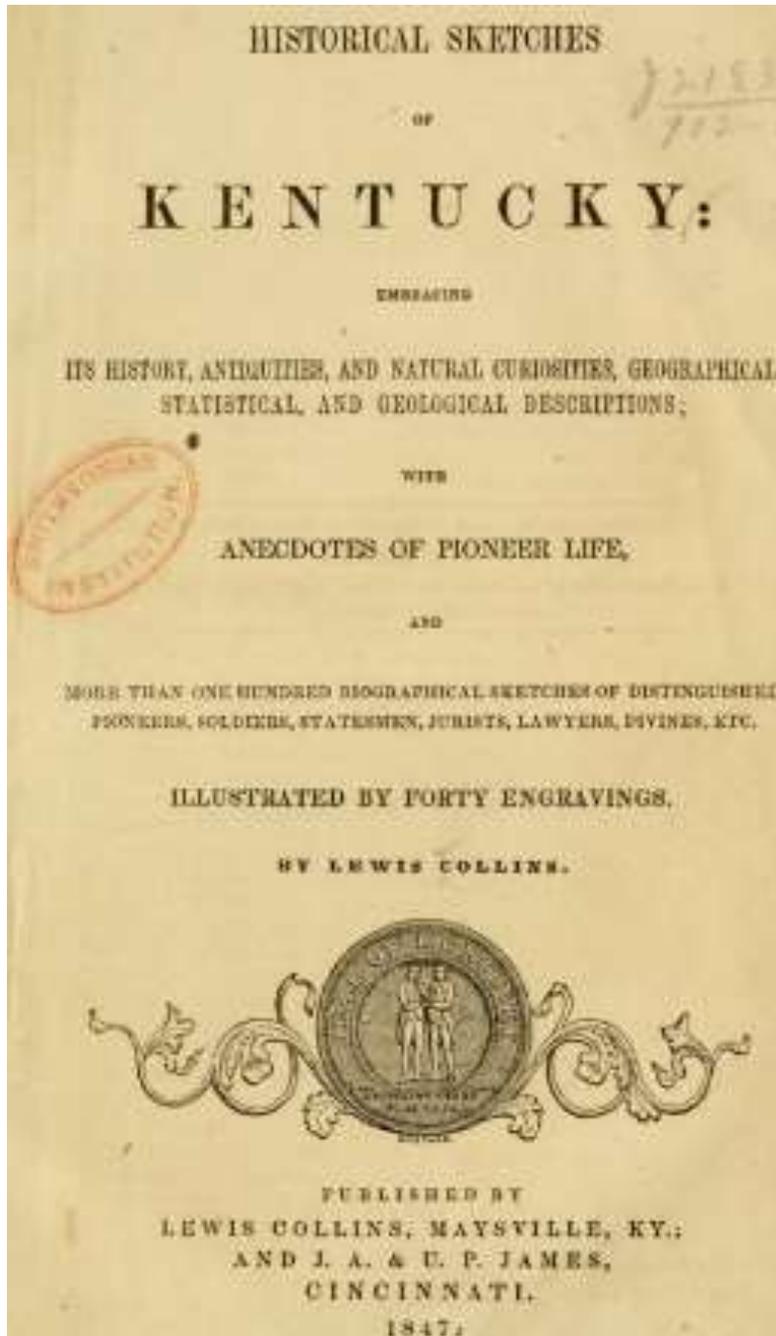


Daviess County in 1847

Transcribed by Jerry Long



Historical Sketches of Kentucky: Embracing its History, Antiquities, and Natural Curiosities, Geographical, Statistical, and Geological Descriptions With Anecdotes of Pioneer Life, and More Than One Hundred Biographical Sketches of Distinguished Pioneers, Soldiers, Statesmen, Jurists, Lawyers, Divines, Etc. Illustrated by Forty Engravings, by Lewis Collins, Maysville, KY, 1847, pages 250-253: [spelling as used in original text]

DAVEISS COUNTY

Daveiss county was formed in 1815, and was so called after the gallant Joseph H. Daveiss, who fell at the battle of Tippecanoe. It lies upon the Ohio and Green rivers : Bounded north by the Ohio river; east by Hancock and Ohio; south by Muhlenburg and Hopkins, and west by Henderson. The lands are generally level, fertile and well adapted to the production of corn and tobacco, its principal exports. Hemp has been cultivated for a few years past as an experiment, and the crops produced compare well in quantity and quality with those in the best region. Grasses also succeed well, and there is an increased attention to stock raising in the county. The lands are heavily timbered, consisting of sugar tree, locust, hackberry, walnut, dogwood, beech and poplar.

The taxable property of Daveiss in 1846, was valued at \$2,558,592; number of acres of land in the county, 306,651; average value of lands per acre, \$4,20; number of white males over twenty-one years of age, 1,674; number of children between five and sixteen years old, 1,928. Population in 1830, 5,218 – in 1840, 8,331 – increase in ten years, 3,113.

The towns of the county are Owensborough, Bon Harbor, Nottsville and Yelvington. Owensborough, the seat of justice, is situated on the Ohio river at the Yellow Banks, about one hundred and thirty miles from Frankfort. Contains a handsome court-house, Baptist, Cumberland Presbyterian and Catholic churches, an academy and common school, ten dry good stores, three groceries, four taverns, six lawyers and four physicians, with a population of about 1,000. A considerable trade is carried on by this town with the interior of the country, especially during a suspension of navigation on Green river; and the tobacco stemming business is extensively carried on here. *Bon Harbor* is a small village, three miles below Owensborough, on the Ohio river, where there is an eddy formed by a bar, which serves as an excellent harbor for steam boats and other craft. This place bids fair to become quite a manufacturing town. *Nottsville* is a small village, thirteen miles from Owensborough, on the Hardinsburg road. *Yelvington* is a small village, eleven miles from Owensboro, on the Hawesville road.

Daveiss county abounds in mineral resources, especially coal, which is found in vast quantities. The only mine which is in successful operation, is that known as the “Bon Harbor coal mine,” lying about three miles below the county seat, and three-fourths of a mile from the Ohio river. There is a railroad from the mine, at the terminus of which, the owners of the mine have erected one of the largest cotton and woollen manufactories in the west. At this point there has been a town laid off, and several very handsome houses built. The population, composed principally of operatives, already numbers two or three hundred.

There are several medicinal springs in the county, which are frequented by those in the immediate vicinity. The tar and sulphur springs in the neighborhood of the “Old Vernon settlements” on the Green river, are deservedly the most popular.

Colonel Joseph Hamilton Daveiss, (for whom this county was named,) was the son of Joseph and Jean Daveiss, and was born in Bedford county, Virginia, on the 4th of March, 1774. The parents of Mr. Daveiss, were both natives of Virginia; but his father was of Irish, his mother

of Scotch descent; and the marked peculiarities of each of those races were strongly developed in the character of their son. The hardy self-reliance, the indomitable energy, and imperturbable coolness, which have from earliest time distinguished the Scotch, were his; while the warm heart, free and open hand, and ready springing tear of sensibility, told in language plainer than words, that the blood of Erin flowed fresh in his veins. When young Daveiss was five years old, his parents removed to Kentucky, then in almost unbroken wilderness, and settled in the then county of Lincoln, in the immediate vicinity of the present town of Danville. An incident which attended their journey to Kentucky, although trifling in itself, may be related, as exhibiting in a very striking light the character of the mother, to whose forming influence was committed the subject of this notice. In crossing the Cumberland river, Mrs. Daveiss was thrown from her horse, and had her arm broken. The party only halted long enough to have the limb bound up, with what rude skill the men of the company possessed; and pursued their route, she riding a spirited horse and carrying her child, and never ceasing her exertions to promote the comforts of her companions when they stopped for rest and refreshment. The parents of young Daveiss, in common with the very early settlers of Kentucky, had many difficulties to encounter in raising their youthful family, especially in the want of schools to which children could be sent to obtain the rudiments of an English education. It was several years after their settlement in Kentucky, before the subject of this, sketch enjoyed even the advantages of a common country school. Previous to this time, however, his mother had bestowed considerable attention in the education of her sons, by communicating such information as she herself possessed. At the age of eleven or twelve, he was sent to a grammar school taught by a Mr. Worley, where he continued for about two years, learned the Latin language, and made considerable progress in his English education. He subsequently attended a grammar school taught by a Dr. Brooks, at which he remained a year, making considerable advances in a knowledge of the Greek language. At school he evinced unusual capacity, being always at the head of his class. He was particularly remarkable for his talent for declamation and public speaking, and his parents felt a natural anxiety to give him as many advantages as their limited resources would permit. There being at that time no college in the country, he was placed under the charge of a Dr. Culbertson where he completed his knowledge of the Greek tongue. At this time, the sudden death of a brother and sister occasioned his being recalled from school, and he returned home to assist his father in the labors of the farm. There is a tradition that young Daveiss was not particularly distinguished by his devotion to agricultural pursuits, frequently permitting the horses of his plough to graze at leisure, in a most unfarmerlike way, while he, stretched supinely on his back on some luxurious log, indulged in those delicious dreams and reveries so sweet to young and aspiring ambition.

In the autumn of 1792, Major Adair, under government orders, raised some companies of mounted men, to guard the transportation of provisions to the forts north of the Ohio river, and Daveiss, then in his 18th year, volunteered in the service, which it was understood would be from three to six months duration. Nothing of particular interest occurred in the course of this service, except on one occasion, when Major Adair had encamped near fort St. Clair, Here he was surprised, early in the morning, by a large body of Indians, who, rushing into the camp just after the sentinels had been withdrawn from their posts, killed and wounded fourteen or fifteen of the men, and captured and carried away about two hundred head of horses. These were taken within the Indian lines and tied. After the whites had sought shelter in the neighborhood of the fort, young Daveiss, discovering his own horse at some distance hitched to a tree, resolved, to have him at all hazards. He accordingly ran and cut him loose, and led him back to his companions amid a shower of balls. This exploit nearly cost him his life; a ball passing through his coat, waistcoat, and cutting

off a small piece of his shirt. He, however, saved his horse, which was the only one retaken out of the two hundred.

When his term of service expired, he returned home, and spent some time in reviewing his classical studies. He ultimately concluded, to study law, and accordingly entered the office of the celebrated George Nicholas, then the first lawyer in Kentucky. Daveiss entered a class of students consisting of Isham Talbott, Jesse Bledsoe, William Garrard, Felix Grundy, William B. Blackburn, John Pope, William Stuart, and Thomas Dye Owings, all of whom were subsequently distinguished at the bar and in the public history of the country. Nicholas was very profoundly impressed with the striking indications of genius of a high order, manifested by Daveiss while under his roof; and so high an opinion did he form of the power of his character and the firmness of his principles, that at his death, which occurred but a few years after, he appointed him one of his executors. He was a most laborious and indefatigable student; he accustomed himself to take his repose upon a hard bed; was fond, of exercise in the open air,, habituating himself to walking several hours in each day; he was accustomed in the days when he was a student, to retire to the woods with his books, and pursue his studies in some remote secluded spot, secure from the annoyance and interruption of society. In connection with his legal studies, he read history and miscellaneous literature, so that when he came to the bar, his mind was richly stored with various and profound knowledge, imparting a fertility and affluence to his resources, from which his powerful and well trained intellect drew inexhaustible supplies. He commenced the practice of the law in June, 1795; in August he was qualified as an attorney in the court of appeals; and in his first cause had for an antagonist his old preceptor, over whom he enjoyed the singular gratification of obtaining a signal triumph.

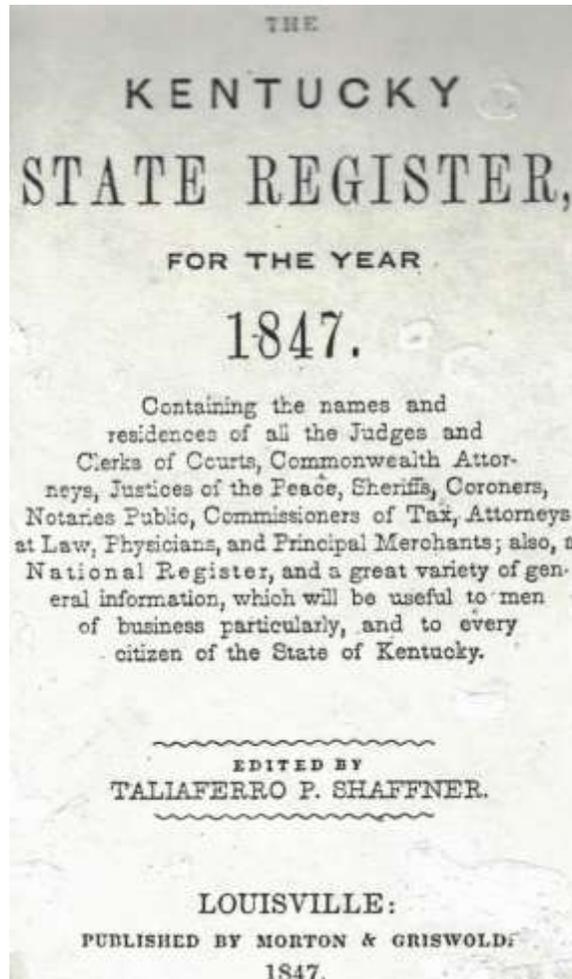
At the session of 1795-6, the legislature passed a law establishing district courts. One of these courts was located at Danville, one at Lexington, and one at Bardstown. Daveiss settled at Danville, and soon commanded a splendid business, not only in that, but in all the courts in which he practiced. He continued to reside in Danville until the abolition of the district courts, and the substitution of circuit courts in their place. He then removed to Frankfort, to be enabled more conveniently to attend the court of appeals and the federal court, having been appointed United States' attorney for the State of Kentucky. In the year 1801 or '2, he went to Washington city, being the first western lawyer who ever appeared in the supreme court of the United States. He here argued the celebrated cause of Wilson vs. Mason. His speech is said to have excited the highest admiration of the bench and bar, and placed him at once in the foremost rank of the profession' During this trip he visited the principal cities of the north and east, and formed an acquaintance with many of the most distinguished men of America, with several of whom he continued to correspond until the period of his death. In 1803, he was united in marriage to Anne Marshall, the sister of the chief justice of the United States. After he had resided in Frankfort a few years, he removed to Owensboro, Daveiss county, to be able to attend more closely to the interests of a large property he had acquired in that region. In 1809, he removed to Lexington, and resumed the practice of the law. During the short period of two years previous to his death, there was hardly a cause of importance litigated in the courts where he practiced, that he was not engaged on one side or the other. We should have noticed before, his prosecution of Aaron Burr for treason, whilst acting as attorney for the United States. He had noticed the movements of this person for some time before he commenced a prosecution, and became satisfied from his observations that he had some unlawful design in view; and, considering it to be his duty to arrest his movements, he caused him to be apprehended and brought before the court; but, from a failure of evidence, the prosecution was ultimately abandoned.

In the fall of 1811, Colonel Daveiss joined the army of General Harrison, in the campaign against the Indians on the Wabash. He received the command of major, the duties of which station he discharged promptly, and to the entire satisfaction of his superior officer. On the 7th of November, 1811, in the celebrated battle of Tippecanoe, he fell in a charge against the Indians, made at his own solicitation. He survived from 5 o'clock in the morning until midnight, retaining to the last the full command of all his faculties.

Colonel Daveiss was near six feet high, with an athletic and vigorous form, combining with his high intellectual endowments, a remarkably commanding and impressive personal appearance. His bearing was grave and dignified. His manner bland and courteous to those he loved, but haughty and repulsive in the extreme to those he disliked. As an orator, he had few equals and no superiors. The late Judge Boyle, the Hon. John Pope, and the Hon. Samuel M'Kee, all competent judges, and associates of Daveiss at the bar, frequently declared that he was the most impressive speaker they ever heard. As a colloquialist, he was unequalled, and the life of every circle in which he was thrown. His death occasioned a shock in the public mind throughout the State.



The Kentucky State Register For The Year 1847, Taliaferro P. Shaffner, editor, Morton & Griswold, Louisville, KY, 1847, pages 72-73 and 184:



Daviess County

Formed, 1815.

County seat, Owensboro.

Terms of County Court, Second Monday in every month except April and October.

Justices of the Peace, Christopher Jackson, Abner Sea, Simpson Stout, Andrew Jones, Wm. Metcalfe, Creed Burton, Wm. M. Owen, Wm. H. Davis, Amos H. Goodwin, Wm. Ewing, Benjamin B. Hawes, Benj. Duncan, Warner Crow, Wm. M. Stephens, James Walltrip and S. M. Moorman.

Sheriff, Henry Dugan, Yelvington, commissioned January 7, 1845.

Clerk, Wm. B. Wall, Owensboro.

Deputy Sheriff, Wm. Cavin, Josiah Veach, do; Edward S. White, Yelvington.

County Attorney, James L. Johnson, Owensboro.

Jailer, William F. Sharp, do.

Coroner, William H. Howard, do

Constables, Jos.. M. Potts, Peter Anderson, Robt. P. Sharp, Wm. C. Norris, Benj. Alsop, Owensboro; Gardner Fitz, Samuel Handley, Long Fall creek Post Office; Nathaniel H. Bottorf, Yelvington; John B. Hinton, John B. J. Jackson, near Owensboro; Wm. Higdon, Knottsville.

Notary Public, Hugh T. Priest.

Surveyor, George W. Triplet.

Commissioners of Tax, George W. Triplett, P. Chambers.

Attorneys at Law, Philip Triplett, Wm. Anthony, James L. John, Jas. Weir jr., Ebenezer T. Allen, Alex. M. Stone, John P. Devereaux, Win. B. Pegram, Alfred Allen, Owensboro; Thomas L. M'Creary, Yelvington.

Physicians, Robert W. Murray, John Roberts, Henry Roberts, Wm. H. Howard, Madison Williams, S. F. Ogden, Gustavus B. Taylor, Wm. Lockhart, Daniel S. Slaughter. Owensboro; Wm. Miller, Thomas C. Aud, _ Lewis, Knottsville; Hubbard Taylor, F. F. Conway, Joseph Lively, Yelvington; John N. Dorsey, Samuel Haynes, Alex. O. Ayre, Albert G. Corby.

Principal Merchants, Samuel M. Wing, S. W. Moorman, David Morton, Blair & Scarborough, Willett & Ogle, Daviess & Thomas, M. P. Athy, Paul Danelli, Wm. H. Kerney (grocer), George N. Holmes (druggist), Owensboro; _ Martin, Yelvington; _ Hefferman, Knottsville.

Baptist Church, Daviess County Association — Thomas Downs, H. H. Ellis, Livermore; R. Cottrel, J. G. Howard, J. R. Allen, Owensboro; F. Tanner, Livermore; Wm. Head, Yelvington.



From the diary of Joseph Thomas (1821-1911) published in the book, History of Daviess County, Kentucky, Inter-State Publishing Co., Chicago, 1883, p410:

1847.

- Jan. 1, Sons of Temperance have a public march, to the number of forty, and were addressed by Rev. Mr. Hunter.
- March 8, first trip up the river, by the Alex. Scott.

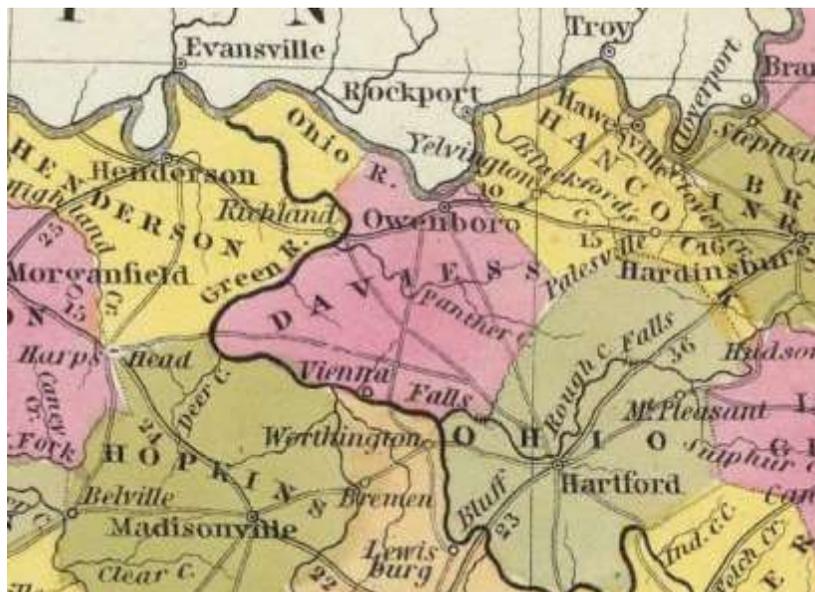
- May 23-29, a jubilee, Revs. Depercq, Coomes and Coghlan officiating; 22, Pugh cleared of the charge of murder.
- June, Mexican volunteers of the previous year return home. 9, Thomas Field died.
- July 11, steamer Wheel of Fortune burned about 3 A. M., six miles below town.
- Aug. 2, exciting election. See Political chapter.
- September, Captain McCreery's company raised for the Mexican war
- Oct. 9, regimental muster, and D. Province elected Colonel; 19th, the steamer Concordia makes her first trip down the river; 20th, S. D. Johnson died. During the month, Prof Honfleur taught drawing lessons. Joseph Thomas' pork-house completed.
- November and December, Mountaineer and Hibernia, packets. Dec. 25, march by the Sons of Temperance.



Daily Courier, Louisville, KY, 18 September 1847, p3:

▪ A fine Volunteer company of 94 men has been raised in Daviess county, of which the following gentlemen have been elected officers: Captain, Decius McCreery; 1st Lieutenant, Wm. Bristow; 2d Lieut., W. P. D. Bush; 2d Lieut., J. P. Washbourne; Orderly Sergeant, Hiram Senour.

The officers passed through this city yesterday, on their way to Frankfort to report the company to Adjutant General



From Map of Kentucky, by Samuel Augustus Mitchell, Philadelphia, PA, 1846.