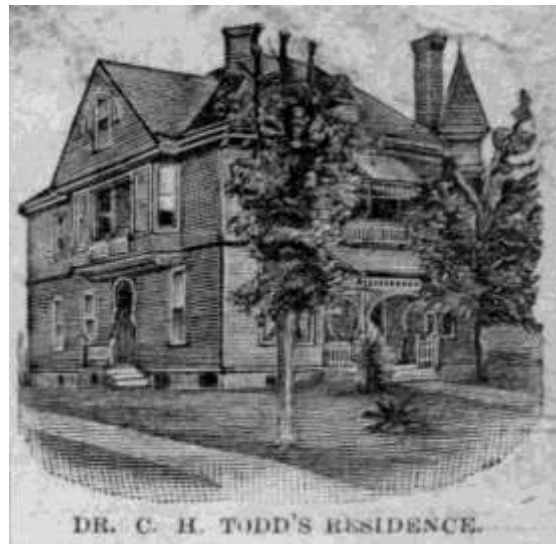


Some Historic Landmarks of Owensboro

By Jerry Long



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 11 October 1888, p2:



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 20 March 1904, p9:



Will Be Replaced By Two Modern Residences Last Occupied By Joshua C. Griffith.

Joseph Gropp will soon dismantle the large frame dwelling at the southeast corner of Fourth and Locust streets to make place for two modern residences, and thus another of the old landmarks of Owensboro is soon to disappear.

This house was built about 1850 by the late Dr. W. D. Stirman, who bought half an acre of land for its site and made a very pleasant and comfortable home in it for several years. Later he sold it to the late John H. McHenry, who made it his typical Kentucky home while he lived, and

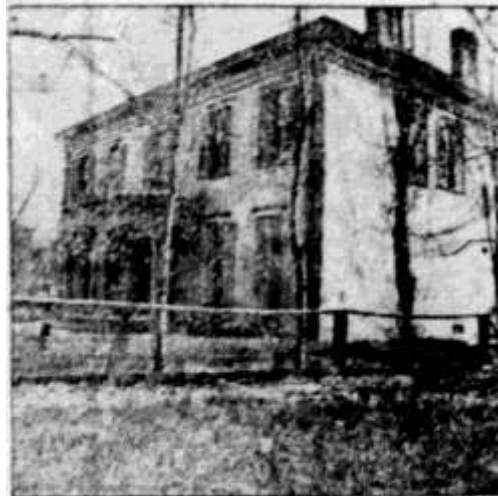
died there. He died November 1, 1871. The house has large roomy apartments, a central hall, in which a graceful stairway winds to the second floor. The place was last occupied as a residence by Mr. Josh T. Griffith, and for the past several years has been rented for a boarding house.

When Dr. Stirman sold the place he bought a large lot from the Moreland estate and built the large brick which still stands In the middle of the block between Fifth street and Mason's Avenue.



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 17 April 1904, p1:

Old Owensboro Home Being Cut in Twain



Sweeney Homestead

Nearly a half century ago one of the then finest residences in Owensboro was erected. It is the Sweeney homestead at the southwest corner of Daviess and Fourth streets. With but three years remaining of the half century of existence it is now being remodeled and will be made into two houses.

The house was built for Hon. William N. Sweeney, a native of Casey county, Ky. where he was born May 5, 1832. He rose to eminence in the practice of law. , He came to Owensboro in 1853 and the following year was elected county attorney. The same year he was married to Lizzie Rodgers, of Owensboro.

Now that the old place is being in part demolished, a short history of the house itself is interesting. It was erected in what was then a corn field, in the year 1857, Barney Trimble was the contractor who guarded the destinies of the construction, The name of the architect, if one was employed, is not known. The old house contains fourteen rooms.

The residence is of brick, and almost square in ground plan. There is little of the frills of modern architecture about the place, but it was a notable and handsome residence in the days of its building. So ancient is the place & so meagre the information that none remember where the brick of which it was made, then a scarce article, was obtained. There was no yard here then and the material was brought from a distance and was very costly.

Theo original owner of the house died in 1895 and the property passed into the hands of the present owner, Gilmour Sweeney, a son of its founder.

During its life the house has been visited by nearly all the Kentucky congressmen and others of state fame. Lawyers of great ability have eaten beneath the hospitable roof, and some of the brightest intellects of the country have ben guests of the original owner.

While the old house was the birthplace of the present owner and his brothers, there is a dearth of marriages connected with the historic mansion, and the only wedding known to have taken place within its walls was that of T. Stewart Pettit and Miss Margaret Blair.

Although built before the war, the house was never to suffer from its ravages, and Providence has always been kind to it, fire and storm hating spared it from violence.

As the house stood before workmen began the work of remodeling last week, it reflected in exterior its appearance when built. During the years of its existence the only changes made in the property were the installation of modern sanitation. The original plan of the house was never changed.

The photograph of the place was secured less than half an hour before the old fashioned square porch was torn away. The house today looks bare and grim without this useful ornament.

When the changes now undergoing are completed the old building will be made into two residences. It is divided through the center by a spacious hall, another evidence of the age in which it was built. This hallway will be removed, and the side walls of the hall become the outer walls of the respective buildings that are to succeed the old structure. One of the halves of the home will be occupied by the present owner and the other will be placed at the disposal of tenants.



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 4 October 1903, p3:



LATE DR. J. B. ROBERTS BUILT OLDEST HOUSE HERE.

'T WAS ERECTED IN 1825 OR 1826.

According to Capt. Hall the Bricks Were Made By Landen and Weaver – Other Ancient Structures.

The old frame house which was razed last week at the corner of Crittenden and Lewis streets by the Guenther-Wright Machine company to make place lor the firm's new foundry, has been pointed to by some as the oldest house In Owensboro. Captain Frank Hall, who has for years been one of the very best authorities on local history, says this is quite erroneous. He says the house was built as late as 1840 or 1841. He is not sure which date is correct. It was erected by Col. Peter F. Smith, who came here from Virginia and went into the tobacco business. He bought the entire block fronting on Main street, between Crittenden and Lewis and extending half way out to the river. He built his tobacco factory just west of his dwelling. When the residence was completed he gave a "house warming" that was, in those days, a common but very hospitable way of

"opening" a new residence. Captain Hall says he remembers distinctly of hearing Col. Smith invite the late United States Senator T. C. McCreary. then a stylish young attorney, just home from a law school. where he graduated. to the I "house warming."

Col. Smith lived in the house until his death, which occurred about five years after the house was erected. It was then occupied for years by his son. the late John H. Smith. His son is Mr. Peter F. Smith, who now resides in this city.

Captain Hall was asked by a Messenger reported to name the oldest house in the city. He at once declared that the old brick house on Third and Daviess streets was the oldest. It is of brick and was built by the late Dr. John B. Roberts, whose venerable widow and daughters still occupy it. The date of its erection, Captain Hall says, is either 1825 or 1826. The next oldest house is the Kennaday house, at Allen and First streets, now occupied by Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Wandling as a boarding house. This also is of brick. The bricks were made here by John Y. Lamden and Joseph Weaver. When Captain Hall mentioned these names, in answer to the question. "Who made the bricks?" he broke out in a eulogy of the two men, but spoke especially of Weaver. He said Lamden was always called "Black Boss" because of his dark skin, and his "running things" when he was around. Of Weaver he said: "He was a good fellow, and a philanthropist; he would do anything for one; he was one of the best men that ever lived. He was my friend. Once he went to St. Louts and heard for the first time a calliope play. It was a wonder to him and when he came back to Owensboro the first thing he told me about was the 'wonderful piano that played by steam.'

A very ancient looking frame house disfigures the fine business lot at the northwest corner of Main and Lewis streets. Captain Hall himself was the builder of this, but it dates back only fifty-eight years.

The old landmarks are passing but a few of the notable ones yet remain.



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 23 October 1904, p9:

First Residences of Owensboro

Owensboro is, comparatively speaking, a young city. It is a matter of little more than two lifetimes since Western Kentucky was all but an unbroken wilderness, the home of the wolf and the bear, the wild cat and the panther, the deer and the wild turkey, but many towns even in Western Kentucky had grown into staid and settled communities before Owensboro was any thing more than a mere landing on the Ohio river, or a tavern site on the trail that led from Lexington and the older group of towns in the blue grass region to the hunting posts and trading stations to the South and West. As a town worthy of the name Owensboro is less than three quarters of a century old, and men now in the prime of life can remember when it was of less importance than Hardinsburg, Hartford and other towns in the Green liver section.

But young as Owensboro is, little remains of the original town. Boston has pointed to the old South church and Philadelphia to Liberty hall through more than a century and a quarter, but Owensboro, the growth of a much later day, can point to no single building that played an important part in her early history. Not a church building remains, not a school house is left standing. Of the store houses, the last indication of their existence has disappeared, and of all the residences that were erected in the bounds of the original town, between the river and Fourth street, and between Triplett and Walnut streets, only six remain standing.

Most of these were built about the same time, seventy-five years ago. Some of them, however, are still among the most respectable residences, while others are rapidly approaching dissolution.

The old residence that now fronts on Third street between Daviess and Lewis streets, was built in 1825 by Dr. John Bott Roberts, who lived there for a number of years and died there. The building originally fronted on Main street and an accompanying view shows the Main street side. At the death of Dr. J. B. Roberts, the house became the property of Henry Roberts and now belongs to his heirs. The entire front of what was once a magnificent lawn is now and has been for a number of years occupied by business houses.

The house at the corner of Allen and water streets, now occupied by J. C Wandling, was erected by Isaac Kennady, father of James Kennady and the late Dyson Kennady, about 1825, and has been continuously occupied as a residence since. It is today one of the most comfortable and desirable residences in the city of Owensboro.

The two story brick house on Third street, in the rear of the custom house, was erected about the same time by a man named Hanna and was sold by him to Phillip Triplett. when the latter came to Daviess county to settle. Judge Triplett's family lived there during his service in congress and he himself spent his last days quietly there. It is still in fair repair.

The old building almost directly across Third street from the Triplett house was built shortly after the three above mentioned. James Weir rented it when he came to Owensboro, more than fifty years ago and lived there until he completed his present residence on Frederica street. It has since been owned and occupied by various persons.

A one story frame house which now fronts on St. Ann street between Fifth and Seventh streets was built about 1830, or perhaps a little later, by the McFarlands and was occupied as a residence by the late John S. McFarland. It is now the property of Tyler heirs.

A small cottage at the corner of Fourth and Mulberry streets was built about 1835. It was for a number of years owned and occupied by the Chism family. It is now a part of the J. B. Morehead estate.



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 8 August 1907, p7:

One of Owensboro's Oldest Houses Soon to Be Razed

"Disturb not the ancient landmarks that thy fathers have set," is an admonition that cannot be strictly heeded in this bustling age of industrial progress. In a progressive community like Owensboro, the changes in any particular section of the city are so great from generation to generation as hardly to leave marks of recognition. Persons returning to Owensboro after an absence of twenty years or less find very few familiar objects remaining.

One of Owensboro's most historic houses, if not absolutely one of the oldest, is about to be razed to make room for a modernly built and equipped federal building – post office, revenue offices and court house. This is the old Benjamin Bransford residence on the north-east corner of Fifth and Frederica streets. Within a short time now, this place, dedicated for half a century to the

household gods, will become the abiding place of the paid servants of the United States government.

The ground on which the Bransford residence stands and on which the new custom house will be erected is a part of a grant of 3,000 acres from the commonwealth to Ross & May, and the history of its various ownerships and transfers would be a history in epitome of the city of Owensboro, its beginnings, its growth and its development.

In the year 1799, shortly after the Kentucky territory of the Old Dominion had been formed into a separate commonwealth, a grant of 3,000 acres, comprising what was afterward the site of Owensboro and on which the principal business portion of the city now stands, was made to a firm composed of two men, Ross and May. Some years later John W. May succeeded to the property of the firm and, in 1827, transferred to Anthony Kirkpatrick a tract of land embracing the site recently purchased for the government building. May was not a resident of Owensboro, and the transfer was made by Robert Triplett as trustee or attorney in fact.

The property transferred from May to Anthony Kirkpatrick descended to Matthew Kirkpatrick, his only son and heir. In 1851, Matthew Kirkpatrick sold to Benjamin Bransford a portion of his land, extending along Frederica street from Fourth street to the Warner Crowe property, the present south line of the Kimbley property near Seventh street, for a consideration of \$4,000. A few years later, Benjamin Bransford sold part of this of \$5,000. The land sold for this comparatively small sum had a frontage on Frederica street of nearly three blocks in what is now the highest priced residence property in Owensboro. The price paid then for the entire tract would not today buy a single building lot in any portion of it.

Sometime later, Mr. Bransford re-bought a portion of the tract sold by him to S. M. Moorman. This was a tract of one acre at the corner of Fifth and Frederica and is the site on which the Bransford residence now stands.

In 1857, Mr. Bransford began the erection of a residence on this site, which is the building now standing. Some slight changes have been made in it from time to time, but it stands now substantially as it was built half a century ago. It was occupied by Mr. Bransford as his residence until his death in 1892. since which time it has been occupied by tenants.

The old house is one of the most substantially built in Owensboro. The walls, which are of brick, are eighteen inches thick. The interior painting, which would be exceptionally skillful work even for the present day, was done by Angelo Deal, a rather celebrated painter who came to Owensboro from Philadelphia. Mr. Bransford moved into the house immediately upon its completion.

For forty years, bountiful hospitality was dispensed at the Bransford home and some very distinguished persons of two continents were entertained there. Among them was Thomas Babbington, a cousin of Lord Macauley, the great English historian and essayist. Another was John S. Gilliatt, governor of the Bank of England.

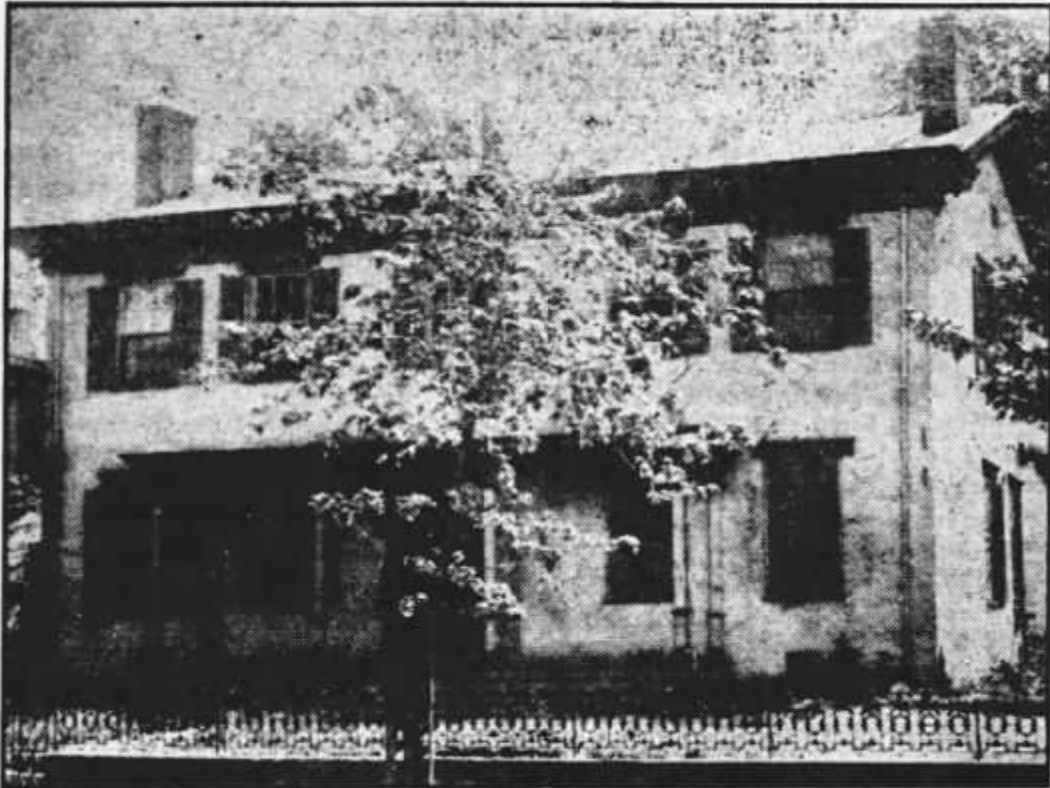
The property was transferred to the United States only a few weeks ago by the heirs of Benjamin Bransford. The government is particularly careful about titles to its real estate and it was no very easy matter to satisfy the officials of the treasury department as to this particular piece of property. When an attempt was made to prepare an abstract of title, a gap was found in the succession. There was no trouble in finding the record of the original grant, but no record could be found of this particular piece of ground having passed out of the hands of Ross and May.

But for the excellent memory and accurate information of one of Owensboro's venerable citizens, Capt. Frank L. Hall, the government would probably have looked further for a building site. The matter was presented to Capt. Hall, who straightened out the tangles in short order. "The

transfer was made," he told them, "by Robert Triplett for John W. May, successor of Ross & May, to Anthony Kirkpatrick in about 1825." He missed the date of the transfer by only two years.

The work of tearing down the building will probably begin within the next few weeks.

[Note: see also article, "Another Landmark Is Passing in Owensboro", Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 5 December 1920, p3A]



The Bransford House, on Frederica street, which will soon be razed. new government building will be placed on the lot.



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 25 March 1908, p2:

HISTORIC HOUSE
—
**ON THIRD STREET WILL BE DE-
MOLISHED.**
—
**Has Been Home of United States
Senator and Two Members
of Congress.**

The old house on East Third street just east of the government building, will be torn down within the next few weeks. Mrs. Ann Herr, the owner of the building, has let a contract for its demolition. She will erect on the lot one or more business houses.

This house is one of the oldest in Owensboro and has been the Home of at least three prominent men. It was built by Philip Triplett, the pioneer lawyer of Owensboro and later congressman from this district. After his death it was occupied for a while by Judge James L. Johnson, also a member of congress. Later it became the home of Thomas Clay McCreary, who was for two terms a United States senator from Kentucky and was probably the most unique public man that Kentucky has produced, with the possible exception of Ben Hardin.

For a number of years past the old house has been rented. Few repairs have been made on it in recent years and it has grown dilapidated. The business section of the city has encroached upon it to such an extent that the property is too valuable to be rented as a cheap residence.



Owensboro Inquirer, Owensboro, Ky., Sunday, 2 August 1908, p.1B:



MAKES WAY FOR MODERN HOMES
Was Most Handsomely Frescoed Residence In State,
the Frescoing Costing \$12,000.

The old Weir homestead is no more. The old landmark which stood for half a century has been torn asunder, and only a heap of ruins are left where once stood this stately old home. The brick are being cleaned and sold for building material.

The property, which originally consisted of 400 acres, was bought by James Weir from John D. Howard. The tract extended from where now lays McFarland street, south to the old McHenry farm about one mile out Frederic' street. It extended west about one-half mile. The tract has since been broken up and many of the principal residences of Owensboro are standing on it. Portions of it were sold until the Weir homestead, Waveland, contained about 20 acres.

The old residence was built by the late James Weir in 1858. It was unpretentious square brick house, which originally cost less than \$20,000. The brick work was done by a contractor named James Wilhite, and the carpenter work by Bonnie Tribble, both of whom have been dead for many years. All the lumber used was yellow poplar, then plentiful, but now so rare and valuable.

The house was out of the ordinary for architecture. Several years ago when a representative was looking for a site for the Carnegie library, he was taken through the house and he remarked that he had been through many a house but none had come up to this one for completeness in every way.

The frescoing of this house, which was considered the finest in this part of the country, was done in 1870, by Captain Buler, a Prussian army officer, who had fought through the civil war as a Confederate officer. The cost of frescoing was \$12,000, and the designs were magnificent, such as are now rarely seen.'

The house contained 12 rooms, besides the servants' rooms. There were also a string of brick and log buildings used as houses for the slaves. Mr. Welt owned about 20 slaves, all of whom are now dead. After the emancipation many of them remained with him on account of his kindness towards them. After the death of Dr. James Weir in January, 1906, the property was sold to the Homestead Land company, which has run streets through the place and is now selling the lots as sites for residences.

There was much debate as to what was to be done with the old house and it was at last decided to tear it down. In a few years all traces of this once beautiful place will be destroyed.



James Weir (1821-1906) residence, Waveland, Frederica Street, Owensboro, KY



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 20 June 1909, p2:

Where Oldest Houses in Owensboro are Located

The following article signed "J. K." appeared in the Saturday Post of April 28 1895:

Some one had suggested that it would be of interest to utilize a few leisure moments and give to the present generation an outline of "Yellow Banks" as viewed in the thirties or, in other words, to tell something about the location of the oldest houses now standing in the city but built prior to that time. If my memory serves me right the oldest house now standing in the city is one on the south side of Main street, about the center of the square between St. Elizabeth and Locust street built by Willett Holmes, brother of Col. J. M. Holmes. Willett Holmes moved to the state of Texas some time in the thirties and the house was then occupied by his brother-in-law, Elijah Comstock, for a great number of years. Comstock then sold the house to Elijah Hathaway, colored, who remodeled it. His widow and children still reside there. This house was then in the extreme western portion of the village of Yellow Banks.

The house on the east side of Allen street fronting on the river, owned by John Wandling, and occupied now by J. C. Wandling, was built by Isaac and James Kennady in 1826, father and cousin respectively of S. D. and James Kennady. The frame house on the west side of the same street opposite to the Wandling house was built about this time by Henry Priest, father of Mrs. Fannie Conway and the grandfather of Mrs. Fannie Owen, wife of Judge W. T. Owen. At the time which I write. First or River street, was the main thoroughfare of the town, and was a street two or three hundred feet wide.

The house on Third street between Daviess and Lewis streets now occupied by the widow of Dr. Henry Roberts, was built about this time by Dr. John Roberts, the leading physician of this and surrounding country. At this time there was not a - house standing east or south of the Roberts home except the old seminary building on the upper ward school property, which was torn down a few years ago to give place to the large edifice fronting on Third street.

The next house I will speak of is the one known as the Triplett or McCreary house on Third street near the custom house. This house was built about the time of the one last mentioned. George Handley, and, if I am not mistaken, he was the first circuit clerk of Daviess county. Mr. Handly, a few years after building this house, sold it to the Hon. Philip Triplett, who lived in it until his death in 1852. The house then passed into the hands of Hon. J. L. Johnson, his son-in-law, who afterwards sold it to Hon. T. C. McCreary, and he lived in it until he purchased and moved to his fine suburban residence, south of the city. The old houses now owned by one of his daughters, Mrs. Anne Herr.

The house owned by S. M. Deane's heirs, on the corner of Frederica and Fourth streets, was built also about this time by Matthew Kirkpatrick, but was remodeled a few years ago, and one would hardly believe it now to be one of the landmarks of the city.

On what is known as the Sweeney Block site, abutting on Main and Frederica streets, there stood when the writer of this sketch was a small boy, a pretensions brick, dwelling house, owned and occupied by James Rogers, father-in-law of the late W. N. Sweeney.

There are the only houses standing in Owensboro, that the writer has not seen built. . The writer of above is supposed to have, been the late James Kennady who was reared in the city and who knew local history well. The houses enumerated in this article are still standing and apparently "as good as ever," except the Triplett house which was torn down last Fall to give place to the pretty, modern two story brick building erected on it by Mrs. Herr.

The Deane house was recently bought by Dr. D. M. Griffith and has been further repaired. The wall was exposed at one point and found to be eighteen inches thick.





FIRST TWO STORY BRICK THAT WAS BUILT IN OWENSBORO
MANY CHERISHED MEMORIES
Long Occupied as Hospitable Home By John Wandling and Later By His Brother

Mr. J. M. Haynes is remodeling the old brick house on the corner of First and Allen streets. Some interest attaches to this house because it was the first two-story brick building in Owensboro, built by Mr. Isaac Kennady about eighty years ago. It had old-fashioned tall mantel-pieces, solid cherry stairway and oak floors, and was considered very handsome at that time. The rooms were twenty feet square with brick partitions. When built it stood 1,200 feet or more from the river's edge, with a lawn and driveway between the house and what was called the "river bank." During the civil war the trees along this bank were cut down and since then floods have so encroached that only a narrow strip of lawn are left, but neither time nor floods have effected these brick walls.

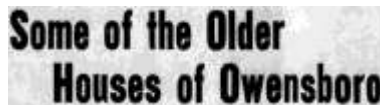
All the more recent additions to the house have been torn away, among them the first bathroom built in Owensboro. This was added to the house by Mr. John Wandling, the owner at that time, as soon as water works were introduced in the town before there was a sewerage system. He had a private sewer to the river.

Until fifteen years ago a magnificent old cedar tree stood in front of the house, and under its evergreen branches more than one prominent citizen of Owensboro wooed and won his wife, while it was a landmark for the boats and rivermen. One of the pleasant features of this old place is the view of the river afforded from its windows and porches. No more gorgeous or variedly beautiful sunsets are anywhere seen than those over Bon Harbor hills.

For the past ten years the old house was used for a boarding house and under the late Mrs. J. C. Wandling's regime was popular and home like. It has undergone many changes in the past and is now completely remodeled into a comfortable commodious house with every modern convenience and equipment, and only the brick walls left to keep the secret of its age.



Owensboro Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 22 May 1910, p11:



There are a number of old in Owensboro that are still standing, many having been erected long before the civil war. One of the oldest brick buildings in the city is the old Wandling place on the river front, at the foot of Allen street. This house was built more than 60 years ago by Isaac Kennady, one of the pioneer merchants of Owensboro.

One of the oldest hotel buildings was in the block now known as the Bill Hunter property, and for more than half a century ago was the leading hotel in the town. William Reinhardt was the owner of the property in those days and conducted the hotel. Capt. E. S. Ayres, a veteran steamboat

captain, was another old-time hotel man, who also conducted this place, and he was the first mayor of Owensboro.

Around the corner from the old hotel property, fronting on north Frederica, were some very old buildings. Just north of the Columbia hotel was B. C. Murphy's place, and across the street, the present office of the Lee line company, was the Kearney grocery.

Suntheimer's storehouse at the corner of Main and Triplett streets is a very old building and was one of the leading stores in town for many years. This corner was a noted place for public speakings and many heated campaigns have closed with debates on this corner.

Not far from this place, and at the corner of Fourth and Center streets, while quite a young man, in the beginning of his political career, William Jennings Bryan made his second speech in Owensboro, and by his matchless eloquence and persuasive argument challenged the admiration of many who differed with him on the great political issues of the day.

Another favorite place of meeting in those days was Norton's hall, in the same block, west of Suntheimer's corner, Norton was a member of the city council and took a great deal of interest in municipal affairs, his hall being called the Tammany hall of Owensboro for many years.

Another very old house is the little brick cottage at the corner of Second and Crittenden streets, the home of George N. McKay, the first undertaker. Funerals were very simple and plain in those days. , There were no pipe organs in the churches and no closed carriages in the procession to the cemetery, which was then located on Fourth street, just east of Triplett.

A few doors south of McKay's is the old home of D. S. Colgan, an old-time Baptist preacher. This is a very old; house, and is now being remodeled and converted into a modern fiat by the Bruner brothers.

At the corner of Second and Lewis streets, the old residence of E. R. Coffey, the present site of the Gunther Grocery company, and opposite the James Sutton house has been torn away for many years. It is said that Mr. Sutton was very careful about his shade trees in front, and on one occasion when the telephone men wanted to trim them to run a line, he forbade them, saying that be owned all the way up to heaven and clear down to Hades. Mr. Sutton was a plain spoken, but very kind hearted man, and was, excused from serving on a jury because he had conscientious scruples against capital punishment.

There are several very fine old residences on the river front in the eastern part of the city. Many of these old homes were owned and occupied by the merchants and business men of Owensboro more than half a century ago.

The Capt. C. R. Tyler place was the old suburban home of S. M. Wing, one of the leading merchants in Owensboro, in the early history of the town before it was incorporated as a city. This house is an old fashioned frame, long porch in front, commanding a splendid view of the beautiful Ohio. The grounds were densely shaded with magnificent forest trees and ornamented with flowers, shrubbery and fruit of every description, including a very large vineyard. There was a lovely shade drive down the river road to the city and up the river to the Crutcher farm. Adjacent and near by this place was the W. II. Kearney place, which was a large old fashioned two-story brick residence with a large yard in front. The bank has caved in until the old place has been abandoned and is now almost in a wrecked condition.

West of the Wing property was the home of W. B. Pegram, master commissioner of the Daviess circuit court. This was then the fashionable residence district of the town. Here Mr. Hamilton, a wealthy tobacco buyer, had his home, a beautiful two-story brick house. In latter years John Faulds, another wealthy tobacconist, erected a fine house on the present site of Columbian college.

The first building in Western Kentucky costing over \$100,000 was erected on the Faulds' place by Richard Monarch. This residence has been changed into a school building, and both the buildings and grounds have been improved and adorned until it is now regarded as the most attractive place in the city.

One of the old-time builders of fine houses was the late Dr. W. D. Stirman. More than 50 years ago he planned and constructed the large old fashioned frame on the corner of Fourth and Locust streets, known for many years as the McHenry home. This was the old home of Judge McHenry, at one time judge of the Daviess circuit court, and for years the home of his son, the late Col. John H. McHenry.

Dr. Stirman also erected the large brick on Locust between Fifth and Seventh streets, now owned and occupied by S. R. Ewing. This was a masterpiece of workmanship, Dr. Stirman giving the work his personal attention, using the best material and employing skilled mechanics in the construction of the building. The Interior was finished in hard wood and the decorations were elegant. When completed, it was regarded as the finest home in the Green river country in that day. The building is surrounded by large and beautiful grounds that add to the beauty of the place.

OLD TIMER.



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 29 September 1918, p1B:

Owensboro "In The Good Old Days"

THE Louisville Courier-Journal recently in its "in the good old days column published the following:

"One of the relics of Owensboro has been compelled to give way to the spirit of public improvement. The first log house ever built in that place, situated on Frederica street, is being torn down and Leo Sims is going to erect a spacious tobacco warehouse on the site. The old residence was built nearly fifty years ago by a man named Yeager, and has been occupied ever since."

This factory was really built at Main and Locust streets and is now in the possession of the Guenther Hardware Co., and is used as a warehouse, being known for some time as the Owensboro Hardware and Iron Co.

The Sims home in early years was on the site now held by the duplex apartments known as the Alex Hill place, later purchased by Dr. J. C. Hoover and made into the present flats, owned by A. Y. Allen and occupied by Dr. Hoover and Mr. Allen and their families. The Sims home was a small frame standing at that point. Later the family moved further down town and lived at Eighth and Frederica, now the home of Miss Edna Gates. F. L. Sims formerly came from West Louisville. He has a son and daughter now in Owensboro, Mrs. William Murdock, who was Miss Melissa Sims and Melvin Sims, who live in Walnut street.

Memories Brought Back

This paragraph from the Courier will bring back memories of days gone by to the older citizens of the town when just after the war the whole tract of land from the Ohio river to Glenville, including the site the Sims tobacco factory and the home, Waveland, and on out the Frederica street road was the Griffith estate, later being the property of three brothers. Dan, Clint and Will Griffith, the first named being the father of the present D. H., J. T., and Clint Griffith. Besides a

landowner, Dan Griffith of the Civil War days was a lawyer of prominence. The Zack Robinson home in Frederica street was built by the Griffiths. Later R. H. Crutcher purchased the place later known as the Sims home and later the Alex Hill place, as above outlined. Rev. F. F. Howard purchased Wave-land later sold to James Weir.

Popular Picnic Ground

Waveland, belonging to the Weirs, was in the after the war days the popular picnic ground of the city. John McFarland bought the site where the high school stands from Griffiths and there built his home, the grandfather of Miss Vitula McFarland. Jack Thompson, clerk of . the circuit court bought his home near the McFarland home, now where the home of Judge L. P. Little now stands. Jack Thompson held the position of clerk of the circuit court before the war and when he returned when the war was over he was re-elected. The McFarland home was a two story brick residence. The McFarland home and the Little home were the only two in the square.

Coming down the other side of Frederica Street, 48 years ago, there bounded by Seventh, Frederica, Eighth were but three houses in the square and Allen streets, which was for years known as the Anthony Place. William Anthony had his home at the corner of Seventh and Frederica and for a time the square was a garden for the residence. Then Ed. Mitchell built his home near Eighth street, the site now occupied by the E. T. Franks home, and on the corner of Frederica and Eighth the present P. T. Watkins bought his lot and on the garden spot erected his home. The Anthony place has long since been converted into Dr. M. G. Buckner's home. Hon. Phil Triplett's land continued up Frederica street with, the exception of the James L. Johnson tract, back of St. Ann street from Fourth street to Wilson's Lane and on this land had been built the Union Station, College, Farnsworth flats, public library and the residences on out Frederica, The Johnson estate was an extensive holding, later being known as the Phillips place in Phillips court, and back of it for years stood the new L. and N. station. The old L. and N. station still stands in East Main street.

Duck Shooting Pond

For years the square bounded by Frederica, Eighth, Ninth and Allen was a duck shooting pond and skating rink in the winter time for the young people. And Frederica had no asphalt road then, but there were ditches on either side of the street for drainage and every home had its little bridge to get in from the road.

Coming down town, what does one find in the past history of the city? There was the Planters just where it now stands, and there was the Planters bank standing opposite it facing Frederica, where the Hayden & Ratican in saloon now stands, at Third and; Frederica. It was first the Southern Bank of Kentucky and went out of existence during the war, but was reorganized after the war and became the Planters in '65 and in '81 the First National. The other bank was the Deposit Bank, located at Second and St. Ann. where now stands the L. D. Baer saloon.

Another hotel was the Reinhardt, operated by the father of the present grocymen, located at Frederica and First streets, now the Bill Hunter place. And associated with him was John Neicam, a baker, who later owned the whole square facing Frederica. The father of Mrs. Henrietta Weill, and Mrs. J. V. Gasser. Where the City Transfer Co. building is was a clothing shop run by a Mr. Kigel.

Where the Y. M. C. A. stands, the whole block was a Catholic school and the home of the sisters. Where the Rudd now stands and the adjacent territory was law offices.

Frederica street Buildings

Going toward the river on north Frederica stood general merchandize shops of Billy Weber, the hatter, father of Mrs. Frank Gunther, McGill Bros., and Simmons Bros. W. H. Kerney's grocery stood on the site occupied by Dahl & Groezinger. Judge George Triplett, lawyer, surveyor and general business man was instrumental in the surveying and laying out of the city.

To get to Louisville alter the war one took the packet, boat and made the trip in a day and a half and the round trip to Louisville took three days, quite an adventure in the lives of all who took the excursion. A little later the L. & N. Co. built its spur in from Bevier and Mr. T. M. Murphy made the first trip to Bevier as a passenger on the new road.

And Owensboro had her warriors. There was Captain Joe Millett, at Camp Burnett, where people for twenty miles around were busily engaged in providing for the want of the soldiers. A newspaper account says of the conditions: – "Everything of luxury and comfort is to be had – and without the exorbitant taxes lavished upon the Northern army. Capt. Millett is vigorously engaged in forming his company, and having them well disciplined for the field. It is a fine looking company. And not speaking disparagingly of the 'Dixies,' who left here some months ago, it is take them all in all the finest and most commanding company ever selected in this section of the country. Many of them were soldiers in the Mexican war and know to hold a sturdy nerve and true eye on the enemy. Such a company as that of Capt. Millet's, we feel no hesitation in saying will be received with universal praise in Camp Burnett. We thought the soldiers that left here last spring for the Confederate service under Capt. Jack Thompson were as fine a set of men as we have ever seen together in one company, but this last turn out surpasses our most sanguine expectations." Capt. Millett was a grandfather of Lieut. Joe Lewis now in France, his mother, Mrs. W. W. Lewis, being a daughter, also Mrs. Sam Ewing is a daughter.

Capt. Todd's Death

The Louisville Democrat publishes the death notice of Capt. C. S. Todd.

"We regret to learn that in the recent battle before Murfreesboro, that Capt. C. S. Todd, of Shelby county, lost his life while gallantly leading his men into action. Capt. Todd was for several months on Gen. Rousseau's staff as volunteer aid. When Capt. Hauptoff resigned, Capt. Todd was commissioned in his stead as captain of Co. C un the 6th Ky. Regt., which position he held at the time of his death. He was the son of Col. Thomas Todd, of Shelby county and the grandson of Co. Charles S. Todd, formerly minister to Russia, and the great grandson of Governor Shelby. A more gallant officer, better soldier, and pleasant gentleman was not to be found in the regiment. He nobly represented the family traits and yielded his life up in fighting for his country's cause – following in the line of his ancestors." Capt. Todds relatives are many in the city. But a short time ago a silken flag was dedicated to his memory in Trinity Episcopal church.

Linking days that were with days that are, these few reminders of "after the war days" will bring to mind many people and many incidents long since forgotten by their contemporaries and their descendents.



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 22 August 1920, p1B:

*Land Marks In Owensboro Passing
Not Many of Old Homes Standing*

The passing of the property directly adjacent to the new Knights of Columbus home, known as the "old Bransford home," into the hands of the order to be used as an annex and swimming pool, will clear away another of the old landmarks of Owensboro. This house was built, by Barney Tribble possibly 70 or more years ago. In later years R. S. Hughes and L. Freeman Little were born in this house. In time it passed into the hands of Alexander Craycroft and then to C. W. Bransford. The house originally stood at the corner of Frederica and 7th street but about 20 years ago when Mr. Bransford erected his new home, now owned by the Knights of Columbus, the old family residence was moved back on 7th St. and leased from time to time. The old Knights of Columbus property at Frederica and 5th also was owned by the Bransfords. Ben Bransford and his family lived in property situated where the postoffice now stands and he bought the property across the street for his two daughters, Mrs. Gabriel Crutcher, of Henderson, and Mrs. Frank Clark, now deceased. Later they sold this property to L. W. Marble, father of Mrs. Sadie Qulgley and Miss Henrietta Marble. Then the Knights purchased it some 10 or more years ago and have since occupied it and still own it. This property is 70 or more years old.

The site of the old Mary Kendall home is another veteran in Owensboro, belonging to "before the war days." For years, early recollection of those with graying hair and wrinkling cheeks, give the owners as Ben Read, later Sam Harrison, father of Mrs. J. D. Hays, Miss Mame and Mr. Todd Harrison. More than 10 years ago it came into the hands of the Mary Kendall Home and is now owned by P. W. Smith.

The Old Johnson Place

The present Mary Kendall Home property is an old, old residence, also, having been built before the Civil war. It was owned in the olden days by James L. Johnson, and later by his son, Philip Johnson. Hugh Philips, the dry goods merchant bought the place and later the W. C. A. purchased it from the heirs and made it into the splendid edifice it now is.

An old time home, one of the show places of the days gone by, is the old George Scarborough place, which could it talk, could tell of many good times among the then social crowds. The original home burned and a newer edifice was erected, both handsome in their days. Part of this property near Cherry, on the river front, is still standing. George Scarborough will be remembered by some of the older inhabitants as marrying Miss Emily Thompson, a sister of Jack Thompson, an aunt and an uncle of Philip T. Watkins. The place was later owned by William Shelby and then by his daughter, Mrs. McAllister and for many years was known as "The McAllister place."

Dr. A. W. Wood's Home

Every day the people down town pass the old Wood home at the corner of 3rd and Allen, lately occupied by Dr. C. J. Lockhart as an office and residence. In the earlier days this was the home of Nimrod Allen, later the Fisher home and then bought by Dr. A. W. Wood, father of E. W. Wood, the present owner.

Another Civil war relic is the Wilhoyt place corner Main and Crittenden streets. This is still owned by one of the heirs, Mrs. Lizzie Owen.

The old Mayo place corner 3rd and Daviess is another well known place built in an earlier century. This was built by Mr. Wahl, father of Finley and Billy Wahl and Rachael Wahl, who became the wife of Dr. William Stirman, father of Dr. W. F. Stirman. Afterwards it was bought by Sandy Mayo, father of Mrs. William Parrish and became his family residence. It is now owned by E. B. Anderson.

The old Wandling property on the river front at Allen street' is another olden days holding. It was built by a Mr. Kennady, father of James Kennady, a former postmaster, Dyson and Dan Kennady. John Wandling bought it and occupied it as a residence for many years. It is now owned by Gray Haynes and is known as the Gipe boarding house.

The Old Wing Home

The Frederica flats is a building that has stood the test of time and been added to from time to time, and modernized. It was in war days known as the Sam Wing place, a two story brick home of 9 rooms, all of which are still incorporated in the present building. Ben Stout, father or Mrs. Margaret Calhoon, bought the property and resided there with his family, and from this home Mrs Calhoon was married in 1868, her husband being Isaac Calhoon, who became a major in the Civil war. J. C. Rudd, father of the late William Rudd, later owned the place and then Mrs. Tom Higgins bought it. T. S. Anderson bought it then and remodeled it and then it was bought and owned for a short time by W. H. Whitely and then W. S. Hazel and T. A. Pedley, who remodeled it into an apartment house and then sold it a few years ago to R. P. Farnsworth, the present owner.

Old Anthony Place

Dr. M. G. Buckner now owns one of the oldest of properties, which he has remodeled into an up to date residence. His home was in the long years ago before the Civil war was owned by William Anthony, lawyer. It was the only home in the block between 7th and 8th streets and was originally made of logs. It was bought by Dar. Griffith, father of D. M., J. T. and Clint Griffith, who moved it to its present location and after some years divided it, part of it being made into the property recently sold to Del Lashbrook and Mrs. Anna Foote, by D. R. Tyler. T. S. Venable bought the property and added to it and later it was purchased and made into the present commodious home by Dr. Buckner.

Coming down Frederica street, the Gillim home is another relic of days gone by, recently purchased and remodeled by J. R. Hays. It was built before the war and sold to John Woolfolk, father of the present John Woolfolk. He later sold it to Alex Hill, who in turn sold it to Col. Powers, and he sold it to Dr. Frank Gillim. J. R. Hays is the present owner.

A pretty piece of property which has been remodeled from the before the war days is the Reno place at 3rd and Daviess. This property was built before the war by Dr. G. B. Tyler, who married Nina R. Hawes. They occupied it as their home their lifetime, when it passed to Miss Hart Tyler, and Mrs. Wm. Reno, one of the grandchildren of Dr. Tyler, now owns and occupies it as her residence, having remodeled it.



Owensboro Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 20 May 1923 p1B:

**Reminiscences of Old Residents Stirred
By Razing of 'Olden Days' Mansion and
Church Squire Thought 'Largest in World'**

Oldest Church Gives Way to Largest and Newest

Many landmarks of Owensboro have passed during the building boom of recent years –

buildings dating back to the time when Third at Daviess was a country estate and this postoffice was known as Yellow Banks.

In the construction of the new First Baptist church there will be obliterated from the landscape for all time the remaining portion of what once was the most pretentious private dwelling of Owensboro. The little brick house which was removed from the rear of the church lot, in the early part of the last century was the show place of the Yellow Banks. It was referred to as "spacious" and many were the grand social affairs held there. This little brick residence was the home of Dr. John Roberts, until his death in 1852. It then became the home of his brother, Dr. Henry Roberts. Both were fine physicians in their day and were more or less social arbiters, with their families. Just who built the house is not certain, at this time, no one recalling its founder.

Was Fine Old Estate

Dr. Roberts' home extended from what now is Second or Main street to Fourth street. The front gate was into Main street, then a county road and his garden plot took in what is now the site of the Settle Memorial church. The old Tyler homestead, at Third and Daviess streets was built years later by Dr. Tyler after the opening of the road now known as Third street.

Dr. John Roberts was the first physician, to settle in Owensboro. He was a native Virginian, born in 1788. He came to Yellow Banks in 1811 and was besides being a fine physician, representative for several terms of the district in the state senate. He left no children, but willed his home and much other property to Dr. Henry Roberts, whose widow died in the old home in 1912. Dr. Henry Roberts was grandfather, of Mr. Roberts Karn of the firm of Karn and Carpenter.

Quite a romance attached to the courtship and marriage of Dr. Henry Roberts and Mrs. Roberts, then quite a belle among the younger girls, and Mrs. Roberts frequently referred to a remark she made in girlish glee and lightness, which afterwards came true.

Pretty Romance Recalled

Mrs. Roberts, who was Miss Harrietta Daviess, daughter of a brother of Col Jos. Hamilton Daviess, for whom the county was named, as well as Daviess street in the city. Her own father, General John Daviess was a noted soldier and citizen. Her home was some distance east of the city the story goes, and she, with others, girls and boys, rode horseback to the school which they attended, in the western part of what is now the city but then a mere clearing.

The passage of the young people over the road then, which is Second street, now, was through lanes of great trees, and directly in front of the old Roberts home. It was with a great deal of awe that the young unsophisticated girls would speculate as to the great wealth and social prestige of the family who lived in the handsomest home in this section. Of course, all of the young girls had their eyes cast toward the possibility of attracting the attention of the handsome young men who lived in the fine home.

Mrs. Roberts, who in her later years, as all older folks do, loved to talk of the times that were gone. For a number of years W. C. Moors, now conducting a blacksmith shop on the west side of Daviess street, operated a shop on the east side, which was located on a part of Mrs. Roberts' property. Mr. Moors frequently talked with the aged lady about the early occurrences in the county and she told him in one of these talks of how the girls would talk and argue about how they were going to capture one of the fine young fellows at the handsome home.

Girl's Roast Realized

Mrs. Roberts then Miss Daviess, assured the other girls that they were entirely without chance of capturing either of the young men, as she has "set her cap" for one of them, and it would soon be fixed up, and as she had completed her schooling they were to be married and then she would invite the other girls to visit her in the fine home, sit with her on the beautiful lawn under the big trees, drinking tea. "Little did I think," Mrs. Roberts is quoted as saying, "that this eventually would , come true. It was but the fancy of a maiden and the speculations of a school girl. But soon after leaving school, Dr. Henry Roberts was called to the home of the Daviess' in a professional capacity. He was then a young physician, and quite a dashing young beau, about whom all the girls were excited, and to whom most of them had lost their hearts.

Married in 1842

"Dr. Roberts and I soon became well acquainted, and just as the other girls had lost their hearts, so was mine gone. Our friendship grew into frequent companionship. Dr. Roberts was an ardent wooer, and in 1842 we were married. My occupation of the fine home was coming true of a girlish dream. My wildest flights of imagination had been realized and you may be sure it was not long until all my young school mates had come to visit me and sit on the lawn under the great trees, to drink tea.

"But now," the good old woman continued, "this is about the poorest house in the city. It has been squeezed back into a mere spot of ground. But then it is still the home of girlhood days. I can still look back into the past and see half a dozen deer come up to the yard fence and drink from the hewn log water trough. The wild turkeys were so ' plentiful over there on Main street that frequently the negroes would knock them over with long sticks.

"Why it was not unusual on going into the yard in the morning to see bear tracks across the moist lawn and where there would be low places the imprint of a big foot would be seen. Young pigs were carried off right out of my back yard many a time. And then the church was built, and my handsome home was squeezed back out of sight almost. When the business houses were built on my front lawn, my heart was broken for that was the pride of my heart, but then progress must be made and in your time you will see cherished things give way to the ravages of time and advancement.

Squire J. F. Hite, who has a vivid recollection of many things that happened more than half a century ago, reminisced somewhat yesterday afternoon. The genial magistrate, who has accomplished a great deal toward causing profound respect for the laws of the land, by his strict enforcement program, was just waiting for a moonshiner who was coming before him merely to plead guilty.

Ssq. Hite Remembers Construction

"Walking down Third street the other day." Squire Hite said. I saw the toppling over of the spire of the old church that I have watched for over 60 years. I recall that _ years ago I came to town from my father's home east of Owensboro astride a mule, with a sack of corn thrown across its haunches, have it ground into meal. Work men were just getting under way with the building.

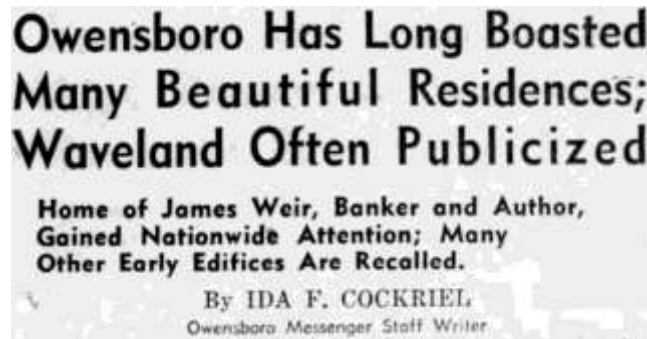
"Taking my corn to the mill, _ knowing I would have to wait, short time for the grinding, I got sack of ginger cakes and a bottle of sweet cider from John Neicam, who was selling soft drinks then – soft drinks consisting of sweet cider, butter milk and sweet milk. Carrying my luxuries in my hand I strolled over to the new church building and watched for a long time the building of what I thought must be the finest church in the world.

"We thought then, of course that such a fine church would suffice for all time. Yet in the span of one man's short life, it has become too small to accommodate the congregation, notwithstanding _ several other have been lopped off and started in other sections of the city and county. That was just at the beginning of the Civil war, because I know it was not long after until things began stirring and I felt for the fighting before the building was completed.

[Note: in last three paragraphs words underlined were missing]



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 20 December 1942, p1B:



Owensboro, known today for its beautiful homes, had famous homes almost from its very beginning. Probably the most noted one was the James Weir mansion, Waveland, located on property now covered by the area between the Eagles home, in the 1200 block of Frederica street and the Clarke home in the 1500 block on Frederica street, and extending back to Walnut street.

The home itself had 14 spacious rooms, each room 20 feet square. The kitchen, servants and slave quarters were in a building back of the mansion. The walls of the home were frescoed by the same artist that frescoed the walls of the Congressional library. Genuine gold leaf was used on the elaborate handcarved woodwork throughout the house.

The library was noted for its lifesize handpainting of Washington Crossing the Delaware. The painting was done on the ceiling of the room. On the library walls were actual paintings of famous artists and historians. Waveland was named after the girlhood home of Mrs. Weir, in Danville, and which is still in existence.

Almost as well known to early Owensboroans as the mansion, were Weir's park and Weir's pond, according to Miss Jennie Cosby. The park extended from the ridge off Griffith avenue, south of the mansion, back to Walnut street and north on Walnut street to what was then the W. B. Crosby property, and is now the home of Fred Walt. The park was in reality a virgin forest, and in summer time was the scene of church picnics and community gatherings for many years. It was said to have been the pride and joy of Mrs. Weir and was kept intact during her lifetime. Weir's pond was the scene of many skating parties in winter time, and a favorite of swimmers in summer.

Was Founder of Bank

James Weir was founder and president of the old National bank, and was a man of aristocratic mein and stately bearing. Mrs. Weir, charitable, gracious and lovely, always rode in her own carriage, driven by her colored coachman. Her personal maid for many years, until her death, was Amelia Wheatley, mother of Stirman Wheatley, Owensboro undertaker.

Weir, in addition to being a financier was also an author, having written three of the first historical romances of Kentucky. Among them were Lonz Powers, Simon Kent, and Winter Lodge.

Descendants of Mr. and Mrs. James Weir include Mrs. Levy Hathaway, Mrs. Nora Weir Millican, James Weir, John Weir, and Weir Griffith, of Owensboro, and Mrs. Theron Sammis, Long Island, N. Y., who is spending the winter in Owensboro.

Torn Down, Land Sub-Divided

Following the death of Mr. and Mrs. Weir, the home was bought by the Parrish real estate interests, dismantled and the section subdivided much to the regret of the older residents of Owensboro who had looked upon the section as the most handsome spot in the city.

Reminiscent of the early days are memories of the old board walk along Griffith avenue south of the Weir home. From the W. G. Crabtree home on the avenue, east, was a low spot and water often stood three feet deep. To negotiate that section on foot, residents built a high board walk that raised gradually until it was three feet from the ground, a point where water was usually deepest. From that spot it sloped gently downward until it reached Frederica street. The walk was built by Judge James Stewart, John Weir, and Dan Griffith, so members of their family could cross that section in all kinds of weather.

Another famous old home was that of D. M. Griffith, the home having been built on the same knoll where Longfellow school is now located. Mr. Griffith, father of Dr. D. M. Griffith, and Mrs. S. S. Watkins, built the house around 1860. It was a handsome red brick edifice and faced Frederica street. It sat far back and a landscaped driveway led up to the house. The Griffith estate extended from Griffith avenue to Ford avenue and back to what is now McCreary avenue. Mr. and Mrs. Griffith, known for their gracious hospitality, entertained extensively.

Many Old Homes Still Stand

Mr. Griffith's father, William Ridgely Griffith had built a handsome home farther down the avenue in the early 1840's. It is still standing and is owned by Clint Griffith, of New York, Weir Griffith, living in the house.

Griffith's woods, another famous old landmark extended from the back yard of the D. M. Griffith estate down the avenue beyond Walnut street. In the orchard of the estate was a famous private school. It was supported by the Griffith, Johnson, Triplett and Weir families, and tutors were brought from Virginia to teach the children attending the school.

The home now occupied by Mr. and Mrs. S. T. Burns, in Lexington avenue, was the old Judge Stewart home. It was moved back on Lexington several years ago, when that avenue was opened.

On the corner of Griffith avenue where the home of the late Mr. and Mrs. Loren Whitely is located, was, in the early days, the home of Robert Triplett. Later the property was sold but the house retained and is still in the Triplett family, being the home of Mrs. George Triplett.

Just beyond the Griffith estate was the Crutcher estate, the original home of which is still standing in Hill avenue, being known now as the old Scherm home. The residence of Dr. O. W. Rash is located in what was the front lawn of the Crutcher home.

Mary Kendall Home Was Residence

Facing Frederica street in what is now Phillips court, was the handsome residence of Judge James Johnson, the present Mary Kendall home, being the Johnson house. The judge, a wealthy

man, was a jurist and his land extended out Frederica street to the Panther Creek bottoms. Eighteenth street at that time was known as Johnson's lane.

The residential section of Owensboro in the early days was in what is now the downtown area. Where Hotel Owensboro is now located, was the old Porter home. Across the street was the old Moreland home, both houses being built high above the street level, with steps leading up to the ground floor.

Another famous old home was located in the center of the block that is now embraced between Third and Fourth and Allen and Daviess streets. It was the home of Senator Thomas McCreary. The large, square, gray brick edifice, with landscaped lawn, faced Third street. Sen. McCreary later traded homes with Dan Griffith, the McCrearys moving into the Griffith home and the Griffiths into the McCreary home. The house was later torn down to make way for business houses, the corner on which the present Messenger-Inquirer building is located, going to the United States government for a postoffice building.

Numerous Homes Along River

The W. N. Sweeney home at Fourth and Daviess was the scene of many lovely social events. The home is still in the Sweeney family, being now the home of Mrs. Forrest Sweeney, widow of Gilmour Sweeney, son of W. N. Sweeney. Many old homes that figured prominently in Owensboro's early social life and whose owners were prominent pioneers, were built on the banks of the Ohio river, where they had their own boat landings. Among them were the David Hamilton home, located on the spot that is now the office of the Owensboro Milling company, the Samuel Wing home, the Charlie Tyler residence, and the Pegram home, east of the business district. West, was the Henry Herr home, ancestors of Mrs. D. M. Griffith. This home is still standing and is now the T. L. Tanner residence in Woodford avenue. Farther west was the Gilmour estate. The home was built at the north end of Gilmour Court. It was purchased by Allen Gilmour when he married in 1866. A toll gate was located on the road, almost in front of the house. The home later burned, but part of the foundation still remains. There, were the Scarborough and McAllester homes, and the James Herr home farther out the River road where the Simon Smith home is now located. The old home burned and was later rebuilt by Mr. and Mrs. Simon Smith, Mrs. Smith being a granddaughter of the pioneer, James Herr.

Another home, still standing, that was famous for the gracious hospitality of its hosts, the late Mr. and Mrs. Phil T. Watkins, is at Eighth and Frederica streets. It still is the home of their children.

The old McFarland home was located where Central Junior high school is now, and the Ideal Pure Milk company was built on the site where Judge L. P. Little lived, Frederica court, or West Tenth street off Frederica street, having been the entrance to the Little grounds.



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 21 October 1945, p1B:

Many Old Landmarks Of Early Owensboro, Long Forgotten, Are Recalled

A search for "what was where" in the -"gay nineties" and before even as far back as the days of Yellow Banks has revealed many interesting sidelights. Many of the old landmarks and

prominent establishments of those old days have long been forgotten, and are never mentioned. Much of the information was gleaned from E. G. Meisenheimer, whose store of knowledge comes not only from what he remembers of Owensboro when he was a mere child, but the many things of early Owensboro he remembers as told him by his mother and father, who spent their lives in down-town Owensboro living in the 300 block Frederica street, and conducting a business there. For instance a large one-story residence once occupied the corner where now the Karn and Carpenter drug store stands. It was the home of the pioneer Widow Wipf, who established a school book fund for the city of Owensboro. The fund still is in existence. It was in that house that Mr. Meisenheimer was born, a son of Mr. and Mrs. George Meisenheimer.

It is interesting to note that every block in Frederica street from the river to Fourth street and every block in Main street from Lewis to St. Elizabeth had its share of saloons. Just how they all showed a profit at the end of the year remains a mystery.

Old Hotels

Long forgotten is the old Hotel Sporee, which was located on First street near Frederica. Operated by the Sporee brothers, who later went to Louisville, it catered to river travelers.

Of course, there was the gas works located where the Veterans of Foreign War home now is. Across the street near St. Elizabeth was the Cary and Marble Planing Mill. Near First, on the west side of Frederica were several saloons, then the St. Cloud hotel, another old landmark, long since gone. There was another saloon, and then the Newbauer bakery which was celebrated for its rye bread. The owner was the father of Mrs. Elmer Mahoney. On the corner now occupied by the Marathon filling station, stood a large rooming house.

On the East side of Frederica street, there was the celebrated Palmer house owned and operated by the father of Robert Palmer, of S. W. Anderson company. It had a reputation for being the headquarters of ballplayers, back in the days when Owensboro played an important part in the baseball world. That block, which once was important in the hotel business in the city, is now given over to produce markets, a plumbing shop, tin shop, junk market and building establishment. Few of the older residents will remember that where Parker Super market is now located, once stood the Deposit Bank, later named the National Deposit Bank, of which James Weir was president.

Old Postoffice

A postoffice, which few will remember, was located in the building next to the bank. The postoffice later, when the entire building was taken over by the bank, was moved to where the Owensboro Messenger and Inquirer are now housed. A country store operated by John Simmons and Joe Gropp's fruit stand were located near the postoffice. Where Friedman's drug store now stands, there was the Wimp & Brashear drug store.

Where Guenther Hardware store is now located, there once stood the Alexander Hill theater. On the south of the theater was the old Brashear drug store, another saloon and then came the Planters house, which has held down that corner for many years.

The court house block has been the town square since the days of Yellow Banks.

Many changes have taken place in the Frederica street block between Third and Fourth streets. For instance where the National Deposit bank now stands there was once a hotel which gave way later to a dry goods store, and this in turn gave way to a saloon and later to the Deposit bank. South of the bank, there was a jewelry store for many, many years, conducted first by a Mr. Zuloff and later by the Steitlers. The Parrish book store stood in that vicinity for many years. Many

people will remember the Frederica market which was conducted at 310 Frederica street, which during the recent war years was an army aid station. But few will remember when it housed the Guenther Hardware company. Later it became the home of the Birk grocery. Where the Elite now is, Frank Brooks many years ago had a saloon, dining room and hotel. There was the Will and Frank Smith Meat market, which was later combined with the Wible Meat market, which stood where the filling station at Fourth and St. Ann streets is now conducted, and the Frederica market resulted. Next to Smith's grocery was the Birk grocery, then the Lacer saloon, and later the Baer saloon, and on the corner, for many years was Bud Brotherton's livery stable.

Open Air Theater

On the east side of Frederica street, probably the outstanding landmark was the old airdrome theater. Only the stage was protected from the elements and of course shows were presented only in fair weather. The theater was preceded by the Logan Smith livery stable.

The home of the First Owensboro Bank and Trust company has for many years been a banking site. Next door was a saloon, and then a grain storage elevator operated by Frank Smith. It was in this building. Mr. Meisenheimer remembers that he had his first ride, as a boy, in an elevator. It was a hand-operated, rope affair, but the ride was thrilling, nevertheless, he stated.

Where the OPA offices are now located, a hotel was operated for many, many years, long being known as the Roby house. In the Western Union building Adam Steitler for many years operated a Queensware store. Steitler was Mr. Meisenheimer's grandfather. Next door was DeWitt's harness shop, later purchased by A. Bresler and operated as a harness shop. He later added implements and seeds.

The next site was the theater location, and then the Sumner and Seifred blacksmith shop. Before the days of Sumner and Seifred, it was operated by Simon Coonz, father of the late Mrs. L. A. Sourbeer, who during the War Between the States, was credited with paddling across the Ohio river on a plank, when things became "hot" during one of the skirmishes in the city.

The Wipf residence, which stood on the corner of Fourth and Frederica streets, in later years was torn down and the present brick building erected which was used first by the late W. H. Brannon for his wholesale grocery business.

Old Main Street

Changes on Main street have been just as great, Mr. Meisenheimer recalls. In the 200 block West Main street was located the first Nickelodeon operated by Bud Nunn, where for a nickel a person not only saw motion pictures but heard the very latest in phonograph music. The square also afforded in addition to the Joe Gasser bakery, the Thixton, Millett and company, wholesale liquors, a saloon, notion store and on the corner now occupied by the Strand theater was the old Charles Green hotel.

In the next block, on the North side, the location now housing the Louisville store, years ago was the site of the Louis Baer Whiskey house. Adam Steitler operated a hardware store near the Baer establishment, later combining with John J. Hill in a hardware store known as Hill Steitler and located for many years in the site now occupied by the Darling Shop. Prior to the time of the Hill and Steitler hardware. A. J. Mitchell had a dry goods store there. Next to the hardware, Eugene Gasser conducted a bakery. The John Brown restaurant and hotel was also located in that immediate vicinity as was another bakery operated by a woman whose name Mr. Meisenheimer doesn't remember, and a Queensware store. There was also Goldsmith's men and boy's store, the

Parrish bookstore and on the corner now occupied by Gene & Jimmie, there stood for many years the Owensboro Savings bank.

On the South side in the same block of old firms, were the Bank of Commerce, located where Walgreen's drug store is now; The John Head dry goods store nearer the center of the block: Lossie's Tin shop. Smith's meat market operated by the father of Frank and Will Smith, the John Frederick Hardware store and on the corner now occupied by the Citizens State Bank, stood the Reinhardt Grocery store for many years.

Livery Stable

On Main street between Allen and Daviess streets, there have been many changes, and it will be hard to believe that a livery stable once stood where the Penny store is now located. Horace Miller operated an undertaking establishment and livery stable there for many years. It was the scene of a big fire, which totally destroyed the establishment, burning to death many horses. Mr. Meisenheimer remembers walking; past the scene of the fire the next morning, and seeing the burned horses lying in the basement of the building.

The John Delker Harness Shop had an L-shaped building which also had some frontage on Allen street, near the corner, where a bicycle factory was operated by Delker for many years. On the corner now owned by the S. W. Anderson company once stood the old Temple Theater, the original home of the Anderson company having been across the street where Purdy Furniture company is now located.

On the corner occupied by J. J. Newberry company, and which was for many years the home of Wile Brothers, at one time stood the Bonnyham fruit stand. Other well known old business firms were the Myer and Moyce notions and Queensware store and Levys. A residence stood where McAtee's now stands, McAtee's starting in the location across the street now occupied by Tots & Teens and Turley Hardware company, where it was known as Phillips Bros. & McAtee, operating an L-shaped store including the present site of the Turley Implement company, where a country trading store was operated.

Farther down, at Lewis and the river was the city's first railroad station. It was then moved to Fifteenth and Frederica street, and later to its present location. The city's first circus ground was in the middle of the block in the West side of Frederica street between Fourth and Fifth streets. A large residence stood back from the street at the corner where now is the Holland building. The residence gave way to the Central Trust company building. Next to the residence was the Katterjohn and Van Arsdell laundry, which later became Katterjohn's steam laundry. Then came the circus grounds, where Al G. Fields appeared many times, being employed by a man named Fisher, of Owensboro, who started circuses, gave performances in Owensboro. then went on the road, only to lose out and come back to Owensboro, reorganize and try all over again.

That block was the end of down town Owensboro.



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 25 November 1945, p1B:

*Old-Timer Recalls Institutions, Landmarks
Of Owensboro And Vicinity Of Long Ago*

"Who remembers when ..." a favorite question of "old-timers" has resulted in A. B. (Judge) Palmer, of Owensboro, recalling many early institutions of Owensboro, that have long since been forgotten.

The judge, as his friends call him, starts out his reminiscences with, 'Who remembers when the Cumberland Presbyterian church stood where the Troy Laundry is now and the new one built at Fifth and St. Ann streets; when the First Presbyterian church stood at the location now occupied by the Central Trust Company; and when the Horace Miller residence stood on the site now occupied by the S. W. Anderson Co.? The residence burned in 1886. There was the old Coffey home at Main and Lewis streets, the location now of the Red Front store. Mr. Coffey and Mr. Miller having been partners in the livery business located where the J. C. Penney company now is located. The Levy home, of course, occupied the present site of McAtee, Lyddane & Ray store. The Mayo home occupied the corner that is now the home of Feldhaus-Weller & Co. The old Roberts home was across the street, northeast corner of Third and Daviess. Of course, where the Y. M. C. A. now is, at one time St. Frances academy was located. I wonder how many remember the small one-story office of Colonel Bevier, attorney for the O. & N. railroad, which occupied the corner that is now the home of the Messenger-Inquirer. The Bevier home was located at Fourth and Allen streets, now the home of the Y. W. C. A.

"The site now occupied by Nu-Way restaurant at one time was a frame residence, two stories in front and one in the rear. The Dr. Woods home was located across the street. Where the Rugby building now stands, at one time was the old Reinhardt home. The site now occupied by the Wright Machine company at one time was the home of A. M. C. Simmons, who was city tax collector.

"There was the old Hall's Opera House where, as a boy, I saw Eliza cross the ice many a time with the blood hounds after her and Uncle Tom pass away time after time. Those were great days.

"When the Rudd house burned with several other buildings in Main street, on November 6, 1890, Frank Mayo played Davy Crockett at the Temple Theater, southwest corner of Main and Daviess streets. John Young Brown spoke in the courthouse yard the same night."

Mr. Palmer takes exceptions to previous recollections of other "old timers." "The first nickelodeon was not operated by Ben (Bud) Nunn. but was located on Main street where the Jones Hardware company now has a kitchen shop. The man's name was Walker. He ran it for several years, and when he left, he took with him plenty of nickels," he said, continuing:

"The Bonhomme fruit store was in the same building occupied by the nickelodeon, the Bonhommes living in the rear of the building, before the days of the nickelodeon. Later the couple separated, Mr. Bonhomme going to Frederica street, in the building next to Helmke's Cigar store, Mrs. Bonhomme remaining at the Main street address later going to East Main street, to the second door from Triplett street. Later Mr. Bonhomme moved to the building now occupied by the R. Moss Jewelry store. The telephone office was on the second floor." Mr. Palmer was employed there as the first all night operator.

Mr. Palmer recalls that the Sporrrie hotel was located at the corner of Main and St. Elizabeth streets in the building now occupied by Sutherland's grocery and was in two sections on buildings with a large stairway between. Mr. Palmer also takes issue with the location of the first water works, which he states was at the foot of Triplett rather than Bolivar street.

The first steam laundry ever operated in Owensboro. Mr. Palmer recalls was operated by Hager Brothers, Fred, the father of the present Fred Hager and the former's brother, Charlie. It was in the building that stands in Frederica on the East side between Main and the river. The building

was owned by Dr. Magill, who opened a drug store where the Smith and Bates store is now located and who lived at the corner of Third and Lewis streets, where the Fisher home now is located. Later the laundry was moved to the corner of Third and St. Elizabeth streets, where the Wright Supply company now is located. Still later it was moved to Frederica street between Fourth and Fifth streets.

Mr. Palmer recalls that Joe Gentile had a fruit store in the Frederica street building next to Friedman's drug store, now the home of Cline's barber shop. He brought the Velotta boys, his brothers-in-law here from Italy. He later moved to New York and entered the hotel business.

The old city scales, Mr. Palmer recalls, once stood on Third street, near St. Ann and pens for stock and hitching posts were strung along Third street with chains from one post to another. This was all torn down when the new jail was built in 1886, which is the present jail structure, and the court yard extended to its present size. That is why, Mr. Palmer states, the courthouse is not in the center of the square.

Another 'way back there'" location was the old postoffice, which was at one time located in a one-story building on St. Ann street, which is now the entrance of the Masonic temple. The J. C. Rudd Insurance company had offices there for many years. The postoffice was later moved to Frederica street, near Main, with the Deposit bank being located on the corner and a stairway separating the bank and the postoffice.

Reminiscing, Mr. Palmer recalled the shows that played at Taylor or Sisters field, located on West Main street, at Maple and extending to the river. He also recalled the powder magazine, a small brick structure located near Fifth street and the Ravine; how the shows and circuses used to visit Owensboro traveling by boat and barge, unloading at the foot of Frederica street, and showing on the circus grounds at Walnut and Fourth streets.

While on the subject of circuses, Mr. Palmer recalled that in 1890 a man by the name of William Collins who had in previous years owned a small wagon circus, was doing quite well, when one night the "treasurer failed to show up. The show' was left "on the rocks," being on the road somewhere in Southern Indiana or Illinois, Mr. Palmer stated. Al G. Fields was a clown with it. Mr. Collins came back to Owensboro and Fields, too, came to this city, staying at the Palmer house, operated by Mr. Palmer's father. He soon obtained another engagement and went on to it, however he would return to Owensboro in the winter and played here with different circuses from time to time. Soon he got his minstrels together and kept them on the road until his death some few years back. On all his visits to Owensboro, he was always met by Bill Collins, the two being staunch friends. The year prior to that fatal 1890, Mr. Collins, with Fields' help, got a small circus together and showed for a week at a lot in Frederica street, going then by wagon to Whitesville. There a disturbance arose between the show folks and some outsiders and when it was all over, so was the show. It never moved any farther.

Mr. Palmer recalled there were many medicine shows in those days and there used to be a small one-ring circus which played on a lot at Third and Bolivar streets where Joe Bell's place of business now is, and at Fourth and Walnut streets. From Walnut to Elm and from Fourth to Fifth streets was vacant and made good circus grounds. Few people will remember the three old log cabins there, the one near Walnut street where an old faithful colored man by the name of Foxy Thomas lived. Next was Uncle Ned Erwin who lived to pass the century mark. In the last cabin was 'Crazy Jake.'" He was a harmless old soul, and a good one at that, Mr. Palmer stated.

While talking about the early circuses, Mr. Palmer recalled a man by the name of Trimbo, who attended a circus at Fourth and Walnut streets, and gave an elephant a chew of tobacco. It made the elephant very angry and he tried to attack Trimbo, the attendants having difficulty in

keeping the animal in check. Trimbo, Palmer states, ran to the police for protection. After that when ever elephants showed up in Owensboro. Trimbo would go to the Police Station which was then located on Fourth street by the side of Engine House No. 1, and ask some one to lock him up, and they would oblige. Palmer, who for many years was associated with Zack Terrell's circus stated: "As to elephants being against tobacco, I have given them tobacco and have seen them stand and beg for more. Trimbo must have done something else that he did not like as they are very touchy, but a great friend if you treat them right and they form a liking for you."



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 29 August 1948, p12B:

Two Of Owensboro's Oldest Homesteads Yield To Progress

12-B—THE OWENSBORO, KY., MESSENGER—SUNDAY, AUGUST 29, 1948

Expansion Of Owensboro's Business District Takes Toll Of Landmarks



RAZED TO MAKE WAY FOR THE NEW HOME of the Bell Telephone and Telegraph company was this 88-year-old residence, occupied until recently by the A. S. Griffin family. The picture was taken at the turn of the century after Mrs. Griffin's father had modernized the windows, which originally reached the floor and faced iron balconies. In those days modern homes had fenced in yards, iron fences being marks of distinction. This one was long since remembered. Most of those remaining in Owensboro at the beginning of World War II went to the war effort, when steel companies cried for scrap iron.

IN THE PROCESS OF BEING WRECKED to provide a site for a large new theater building for Owensboro is this 88-year-old residence, which was until his death the home of the late Abe Baer. When erected, this building at 518 Frederica Street was on the fringe of Owensboro's residential district. Now the remaining section houses offices. This will disappear when the occupants move into their new quarters, after September 1. The site will be used for the Paramount Theatre, to be erected by Malco Theatres, owner of the Malco, Strand and Bleich.

With the razing of the Baer property, 518 Frederica street, purchased in March, 1946, from the late Abe Baer estate by the Malco Theatres, Inc., on which soon the new Paramount theater will be erected, and the Griffin residence, 720 Frederica street, bought in June of this year, for a new telephone exchange building by the Southern Bell Telephone and Telegraph company, two landmarks for more than half a century are passing into history, joining others in the progress procession.

Wrecking of the Griffin home was begun on July 1 and will be completed with the carrying away of the last load of debris on Monday. The house has been completely torn down, nothing remaining now but rubbish, the result of the destruction of the building.

The Griffin residence was built by the late Miller Hathaway about 1850. Mr. Hathaway was the father of the late Roy Hathaway and grandfather of the late Col. Levy M. Hathaway. But three families have owned this property.

Mr. Hathaway sold it to T. J. Monarch, owner and operator of the then existent Eagle distillery near Grissom's landing. He sold it to the late Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Mitchell in 1896. It became the property of Mr. and Mrs. A. S. Griffin (formerly Miss Louise Mitchell, their daughter) at their deaths. Four generations have made this their residence in direct line of descent. Mr. and Mrs. Mitchell, Mr. and Mrs. Griffin and family, Mr. and Mrs. Charles D. Ralph, Jr, (formerly Miss Mary Griffin, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Griffin) and their daughter, little Miss Louise Mitchell Ralph, who now resides at 735 Cottage drive. Mr. and Mrs. Griffin are residing at 1806 McCreary avenue.

The Baer property was built by John Long, a brick mason, probably about eighty-five years ago. It was a two apartment house, or "double house" as called then, as it is now, and was bought seventy-eight years ago by Bernard Baer. Mr. and Mrs. Baer and their children, Ike, Abraham, Louis D., Mrs. Mary Baer Greenberg, Mrs. Rosa Baer Wittell, and Miss Tillie Baer made it their residence. At the death of the parents, Abraham and Louis D. Baer came into possession of the property. At the time of the death of the late Abraham Baer, "Abe" Baer as he was familiarly called, April 18, 1945, he had made the property his home for seventy-five years.

Four generations in the Baer family have made it their home. Mrs. Joseph Adell, (formerly Miss Frances Wittel) and sister, the late Miss Faye Wittel, children of Mrs. Rosa Baer Wittel and the late George Wittel, were born at the Baer home. Following the death of their mother, Abram B., and Louis D. Walker, twin sons of J. B. Walker and the late Mrs. Frances Greenberg Walker, daughter of Mrs. Mary Baer Greenberg, made it their home until the death of Abraham Baer, and the subsequent sale of the property to the Malco Theatres, Inc., These were children, grandchildren and greatgrandchildren of the late Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Baer.

Erection of the new properties is expected to be started as soon as the clearing of the sites of the two buildings is completed.



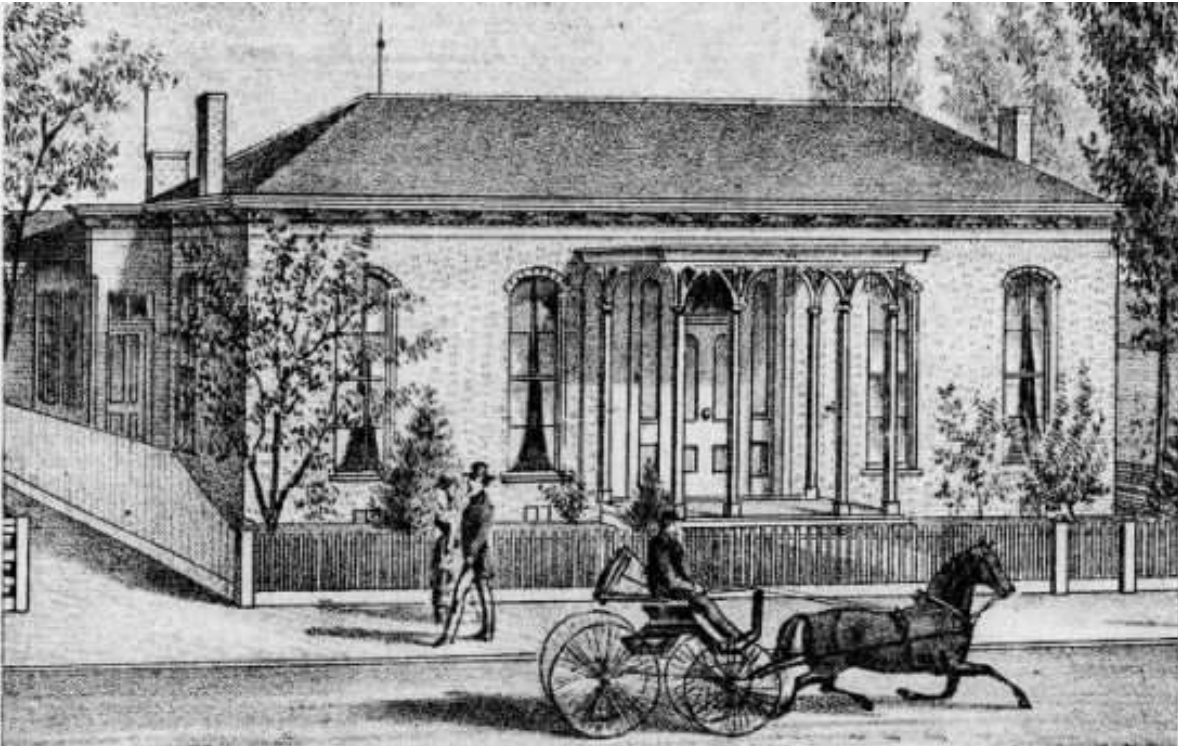
An Illustrated Historical Atlas Map of Daviess County, KY,
Leo McDonough & Co., 1877, pages 62, 75 and 78:



Residence of Salem H. Ford



Residence of David Hamilton



Residence of Henry W. Scott (Sheriff)