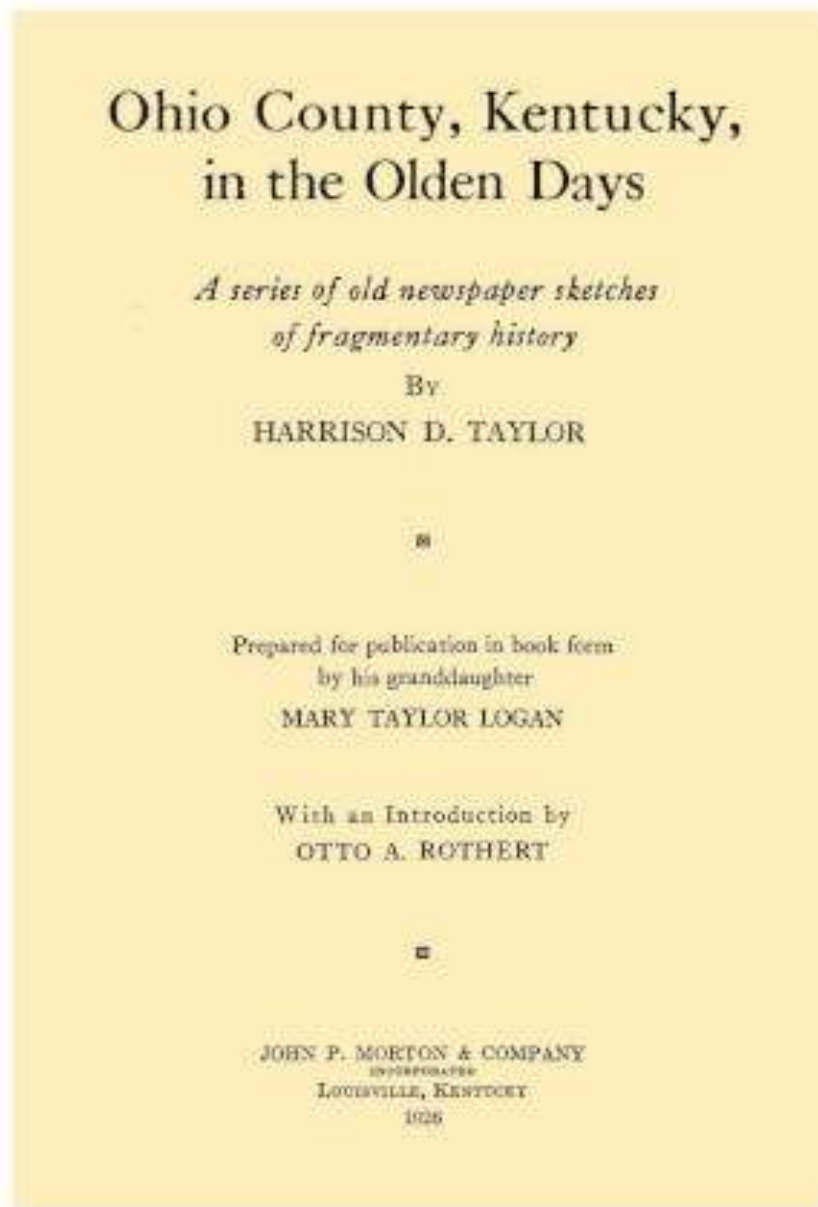


Some Pioneer Families

Harrison D. Taylor (1802-1889), a prominent lawyer of Hartford, KY, authored a series of articles entitled “Fragments of the Early History of Ohio County”, that were published in the newspaper, Hartford Herald. The articles appeared in 45 weekly installments during 18 April 1877 and 27 March 1878. Harrison D. Taylor’s granddaughter, Mary Taylor Logan, organized these articles and added some supplemental data and in 1926 published them in the book, Ohio County, Kentucky, in the Olden Days: A series of old newspaper sketches of fragmentary history, by Harrison D. Taylor.



The following was chapter XIV (pages 64-68) in the book:

Some Pioneer Families

In examining the old county records we find many names of early citizens who are now lost sight of and have passed from the memory of the present generations. In fact, much of the early population was of a very migratory, transient character. It is amusing to look over the delinquent list returned by the sheriff in early days. "Gone to Logan County," "Gone to Nelson County," "Gone to Post Vincent," "Gone to New Orleans," "Gone to Spanish Dominion," and various other places, known and unknown, followed the names of numerous delinquents. There are many other names whose descendants still constitute the bone and sinew of our present citizens and who are perpetuating the good qualities of their ancestors. The names of many of those early pioneers are now given, also, as far as can be ascertained, the county from which they came. This is done with the hope that their descendants who may know of any interesting facts in relation to their family record will make them known so that they may appear in this fragmentary history.

The Bairds, Bernetts, Statlers, and Browns were from Pennsylvania; the Condit from New Jersey; the Crowes, Addingtons, Leaches, Ambroses, Bennetts, Griffiths, Stevenses, Millers, Phippses, and Barneses from Maryland; the Bells, Fields, Hayneses, Rowes, Renders, Mays, Thomases, Walkers, Hendersons, and Taylors from Virginia. Besides these there are many other names quite familiar, but, owing to the imperfect knowledge of the writer, the country from which they came cannot now be designated. Among there are the Mortons, McFarlands, Smiths, Handleys, Faithes, Glens, Hustons, Maddoxes, Ashleys, Rileys, Tichenors, Showns, Rhoadses, Rowans, Shultzes, Barnards, Shanks, Moselys, Wallaces, and other others.

Perhaps the Bennett family has the most numerous descendants of any of the early settlers of Ohio County. Old John Bennett, called "Governor" perhaps from his numerous family, with his sons Jeffries, John, Samuel, Reuben, Asa, Titus, Obed, and George Bennett, were among the first settlers on No Creek. The old man and most of his sons were very industrious, frugal, sober, honest farmers. The descendants of the Bennett family are now intermarried and mixed with most of our population, and, with very few exceptions, perpetuate the virtues of their ancestors.

During the War of 1812 Reuben Bennett was, by seniority, entitled to the office of lieutenant in the company which went to New Orleans, but when the regiment rendezvoused at Henderson, by some legerdemain of superior officers, a more pert and showy youth was placed above him. Reuben was not to be bulldozed in that way, and instead of resigning and coming home, he went south as a high private. At New Orleans his regiment happened to be among that Kentucky force that General Jackson branded with "inglorious flight," and in which the young lieutenant who had supplanted him was said to have made two-forty speed in retreat, but Reuben Bennett was the last man to leave the field, and gallantly bore off a wounded officer under the fire of the enemy.

The Presbyterian and the Methodist camp meetings were located for many years in the No Creek neighborhood, and the hospitality of the Bennett family is still fresh in the memory of many survivors of those days.

The next most numerous family is Stevens. John, William, Thomas, Richard, and Henry Stevens all settled in this county in about 1800. They had two sisters; one married John Duke and the other Higginson Belt. Richard Stevens removed West at an early period. All the others lived and died citizens of the county, sober, honest, liberal, industrial farmers. Thomas Stevens was remarkable for his portly form and beaming, benevolent countenance. He was a class leader in his

church from time unknown. "Uncle Henry" Stevens and his sister Mrs. Belt are still fresh in the memory of the writer. His strong sense and his stronger will made him as firm as a rock and as obstinate as a mule. He always sought the right and when he thought he had found it, he went ahead, like Davy Crockett. Honesty, frugality, benevolence, and industry were the rules of his life, which was prolonged in unusual mental and physical vigor to an extremely old age.

The writer has but an indistinct recollection of the head of the Render family in Ohio County. As far back as his recollection extends, he sees a large, portly old gentleman [Joshua Render, Sr.] whose head was silvered over with grey, and who rode a fat horse. Joshua, George, and Robert Render were his sons and the early settlers of those once thrifty farms in the vicinity of the Render and McHenry coal mines. All were strict members of the Baptist church and industrious, honest, and peaceable members of society.

Colonel Joshua Render died at about middle age, leaving a family of children, and grandchildren, all of whom, as far as known, are doing well.

George Render, the oldest son, was a preacher, well accepted where he was known, but spent most of his time on his farm. He preached only at such suitable times as occurred, receiving no pay or salary from the churches. He was a man remarkable for his strength and melody of voice, which was pleasing and enchanting to the hearer. The following story is told of an old sister's description of one of his sermons:

"Well, Sister H., did you hear Brother Render preach last Sunday?"

"Yes indeed I did."

"Well, what for a sermon did you have?"

"Oh, a most excellent one."

"Well, what was the text?"

"Now, I can't tell you that, but I do believe it was the best sermon I ever heard; it had such a heavenly tone to it."

George Render's children, so far as recollected, died early in life. Green and George Render, and Reverend James Austin, his only grandchildren, rank among our best citizens. Robert Render would have been a model citizen in any community; thoroughly modest and unassuming almost to a fault, he was a man of unusual good sense and sound judgment. He was seldom passed by when a juror, road viewer, commissioner, or arbitrator was needed, for his good, practical sense and scrupulous honesty always pointed him out as the best person. He left a long line of descendants, none of whom has ever tarnished the name of so good a man.

Largely intermingled with the population of our county is the Rowe family. George, Edmund, and Robert Rowe were among the first settlers and best farmers on Walton's Creek. Industrious in their habits, honest in their dealings, social and jovial in their intercourse with others, and fond of all kinds of jokes, they never failed to have some good-humored story to tell on each other.

George Rowe was a remarkable man in various respects, possessing a splendid physique, fine, intellectual head and face, and sound practical sense. He, like many of the other earliest pioneers, could neither read nor write, yet his powers of mental arithmetic or calculation were remarkable. For many years he sold the greater amount of the meats and vegetables that were bought by the citizens of Hartford. He was never known to fail in filling his engagements. Regardless of the state of the weather or of how dark the previous night, he would be in town with his marketing and ready to sell before his customers were fairly out of their beds. No matter how many different articles the purchaser might buy, Rowe, without slate or pencil, could tell to a cent the amount of the bill, and with equal facility he could perform almost any ordinary calculation

involving addition, subtraction, multiplication, or division. His marketing was always equal to what he represented it. With a proper education he might have become a leader among men.

George and Edmund Rowe left large families, and a large portion of their descendants are frugal, industrious, and punctual in their dealings – and remarkable for the good quality of their marketing.

The memory of no old settler occurs more vividly to the writer than that of old Elijah Williams, living near Hartford on the south side of Muddy Creek. Mild, modest, and unassuming; never involved in any family, church, or neighborhood feuds, he and his good old lady died at a ripe old age, leaving untarnished memories. Other parents pointed out as an example to their children the quiet good order and affectionate harmony of this family of children. It was, no doubt, a misfortune to our community that all the sons, save one, died in early life; for all those sons, unless they had been unfortunate in selecting wives, might have reared equally respectable families. The only surviving son, Mr. Jerry Williams, seems to have walked in the footsteps of his father.

There is perhaps no period in social life more agreeable than the midway point between the deprivations and hardships of pioneer days and the advanced stages of wealth and fashion. Hartford and Ohio County enjoyed this midway point between the years of 1820 and 1840. The most conservative families had acquired all the comforts and conveniences of life, not knowing or caring for its luxuries and fashionable fooleries. They had means to acquire an abundance of wholesome, substantial food and neat and decent apparel. All lived and dressed and entertained as their fancy dictated. In some of the homes there was substantial mahogany furniture which was purchased by the merchants either in New Orleans or in Philadelphia. It came by river to Owensboro and in wagons to Hartford for the more well-to-do citizens. Some of their cherished possessions had been brought with them from old Virginia. The writer well remembers an “old blue schooner” wagon, brought by the Taylor family from their home near Winchester, Virginia, in which they had hauled their household goods.

During the most of the period from 1820 to 1840 there were among the principal householders: Dr. Charles McCreery, Richard Elliott, Dr. Benjamin Smith, Charles Henderson, John McHenry, William B. Charles, Reuben Bennett, Harrison Taylor, and Reverend Thomas Taylor. All were fond of social engagement, and always kept their doors open, or at least the latchstring out, to young and old. All these families, as well as many others in the county, were of quiet, refined habits and literary taste. All of them were of our pioneer families.

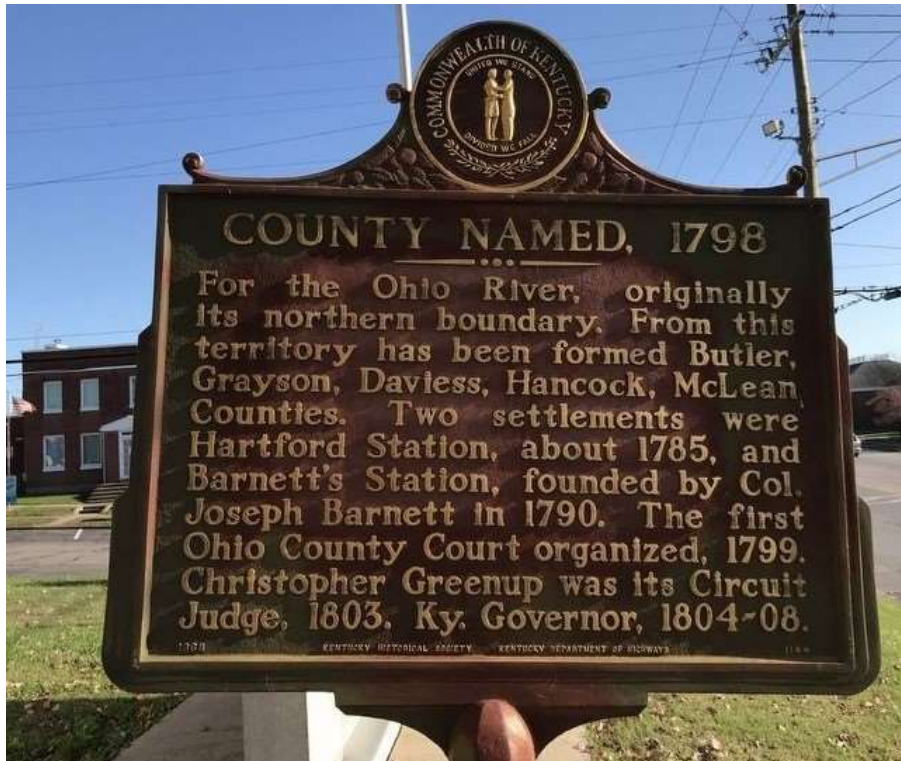
Among the resident belles were the Misses Ferguson, Henderson, McCreery, Crutcher, Shanks, and Davis, besides a great accession of frequent visitors from Daviess, Muhlenberg, and other counties.

Among the single men and youths and widowers in Hartford at that time, 1820 to 1840, were William M. Davis, Dillis Dyer, Samuel O. Peyton, John M. Austin, Ben Duncan, James Smith, Joshua Ferguson, Martin D. McHenry, and Harold McCreery. All of these I have mentioned were endowed with a high degree of social, intellectual, and moral virtues, and were of pioneer parentage.

One or more social parties occurred every week at different private homes. The heads of the families justly believed that their company preferred “brains to bacon” and put themselves to no further trouble than that of furnishing houseroom, fuel, and light. They joined with a zest in the social intercourse and amusement, which consisted in discussing the news and literature of the day, telling jokes and anecdotes, singing songs, and – *sub rosa* – occasional love making. The writer cannot recall to mind a single incident that marred the social intercourse of those days of

“auld lang syne.” This happiness grew mainly out of the fat that the miss in her calico felt as well dressed as the madam in her silks; and the boy in homespun never thought of casting a glance of envy at the broadcloth of the gentleman.

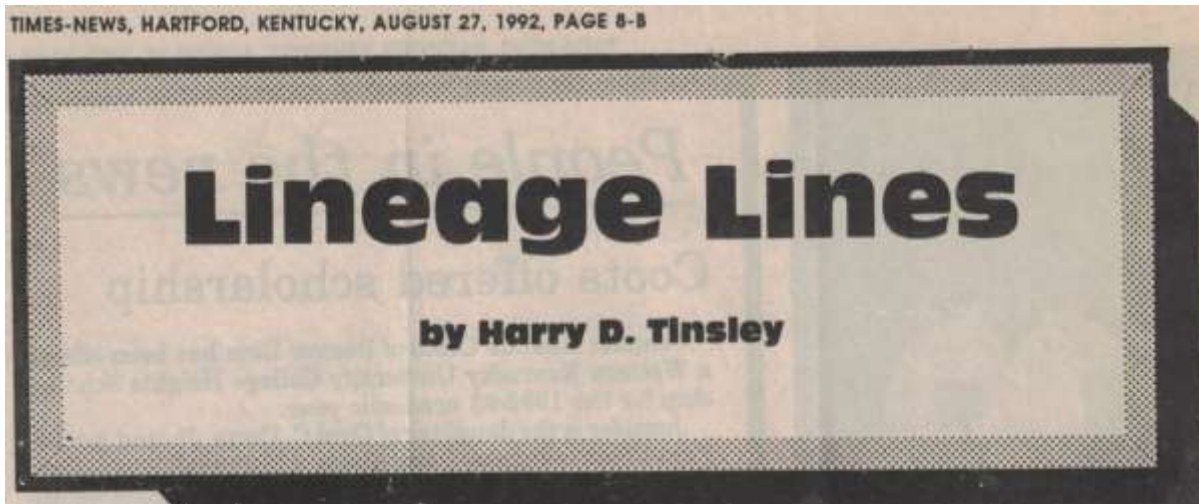




Map of
OHIO COUNTY, KENTUCKY
1799



In 1958 a “Pioneer Committee” was organized to celebrate Hartford’s 150th anniversary. The committee prepared the following list of the pioneers and settlers of Ohio County. Harry D. Tinsley, author of the “Lineage Lines” column in the *Ohio County Times-News* was a member of the committee:



The Pioneer Committee is listing the names of the pioneers and early settlers and the states from which they came:

Bairds, Barnetts, Statlers and Browns from Pennsylvania; Condit from New Jersey; Crowes, Addingtons, Leaches, Ambroses, Bennetts, Griffiths, Stevenses, Millers, Phippses, and Barneses from Maryland; Bells, Fields, Hayneses, Rows, Renders, Mays, Thomases, Walkers, Hendersons, and Taylors from Virginia.

Others are: Mortons, MeFarlands, Smiths, Handleys, Faiths, Glenns, Hustons, Maddozes, Ashleys, Rileys, Tichenors, Showns, Rhoadeses, Rowans, Shultzes, Barnards, Shanks, Moseleys, Wallaces.

Perhaps the Bennett family has the most numerous descendants of any of the early settlers of Ohio County. Old John Bennett, called "Governor" perhaps from his numerous family, with his sons, Jeffries, John, Samuel, Reuben, Asa, Titus, Obed and George Bennett, were among the first settlers on No Creek.

The next most numerous family is Stevens. Lydia Stevens, together with her sons, John, William, Thomas, Richard and two sisters came from Maryland about 1800 and settled on No Creek

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Harry D Tinsley wrote *History of No Creek, Ohio County*, 1953.

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List of founding fathers, classified as pioneers in Ohio County prior to 1798 After 1798, all who came to the county were classified as settlers.

All of the following pioneers first lived in and around Fort Hartford because of Indiana depredation and came at the date designated. They later settled at different places in the county. The date of their arrival at Fort Hartford and the place of their later settlement are as follows:

John "Tickeye" Miller, 1782, settled at Prentiss; Mike Riley, 1782, Maxwell; Rev. Wm. Downs and Rev. Thos. Downs, 1782 (brothers, both ministers and the founders of the Baptist Church, settled above Rockport) (Roscoe Downs, published of the *Hancock Clarion* is a descendant).

Joseph Barnett, 1783, Revolutionary Soldier, Barnett's Station; Alexander Barnett (brother to Joseph), 1783, Revolutionary Soldier, Barnett's Station; William Rowan, 1784, Revolutionary Soldier, Livermore; Henry Rhoads, 1784, Revolutionary Soldier, "A Squattter" at Rhoadsville, later called Vienna, now Calhoun, lost his land in three suits and later settled at or near Goshen.

John Handley, 1785, Clear Run (he was the land agent of Henry Rhoads); Martin Coleman, 1786, Revolutionary Soldier, Beaver Dam (Rev. Jim Coleman and all the Colemans in the county are descendants); Samuel Neal, 1787, near Smallhous; Major Joshua Crowe, 1789, Revolutionary Soldier, Hartford (one of first three judges of Court of Common Pleas in Ohio County, the family of the late Charlie Crowe are descendants).

John Anderson, 1790, Revolutionary Soldier, Barnett's Station (two of his children were slain in an Indian attack and his wife scalped. His wife lived several years 'after the attack).

William Sharp, 1790, first male child born in Ohio. County, Crane Pond (east of Pleasant Ridge); Stephen Statler, 1794, first Sheriff of Ohio County, Hartford; Philip Taylor, 1797, not related, to "Old" Harrison. Taylor; Robert Moseley, 1797, Revolutionary Soldier, near Sandefur's Crossing..

Matthias Shultz, 1797, Revolutionary soldier (practically all the Shultzes in Ohio County are his descendants); Aaron Atherton, 1798, Livermore; Ignatius Pigman, 1798, Revolutionary Soldier, Methodist minister; Charles Wallace, 1798, built the first' two Court Houses.

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Courtesy of Mrs. Gilce Moore, of Hartford. It was prepared by Forrest P. Bell, also of Hartford.