

Sketches of Historic Homes

By Jerry Long



From June 15 thru October 5, 1975 the Owensboro Federal Savings and Loan Association sponsored seventeen ads in the Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer newspaper that appeared with the heading of “Historic Homes of Owensboro”. The ads included the caption – “This is one of a series of ads with the purpose of informing the community of the historical homes in Owensboro. Compliments of Owensboro Federal.” The series was announced in Owensboro Federal’s ad published on Sunday, 8 June 1975, p.3A. Each of the sketches were labeled as being by David Davis. Several of the homes included were in Daviess County outside of the city of Owensboro.

Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, Ky., 8 June 1975, p.3A:

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**Owensboro
Federal Savings
AND LOAN ASSOCIATION**

Since 1913

Beginning Sunday, June 15, Owensboro Federal will present a series of sketches on the historical homes of Owensboro and Daviess County. Watch for our ads.

*Sketches by
David Davis*

DOWNTOWN: 700 FEDERICA ST.





BIRKHEAD HOUSE

This historic home, located at 121 East 5th Street, was built before 1896-1897. Stone used under the window sills and on the porches came from South Carrolton, Kentucky. The downstairs has Italian parquetry floors. Throughout the home the woodwork is cherry, oak and burled pine. There is a divided chimney in the living room with a stained glass window in between. There is a three-sash stained glass window over the stairway landing. The home, containing ten fireplaces, is known locally for its lead and stained glass windows. (Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, Ky., Sunday, 7 September 1975, p.8C) [note by Jerry Long – this was originally the home of James Joel Sweeney, who had it built in 1893.]



HOME OF THOMAS CLAY

This historic home is located on Kentucky 405. Thomas Clay came here in 1812, although it is unsure as to when his home was built. Clay, a Revolutionary War Captain, was a cousin to John Clay, father of the well-known statesman, Henry Clay. He was an uncle of Cassius Marcellus Clay, famed Kentuckian of the Civil War, and grandfather of U.S. Senator Thomas Clay

McCreery. Clay was a member of Kentucky House of Representatives (1792-93 and 1796-98), and Kentucky Senate (1793-95). The home is now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Jake Gerteisen. (Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro Ky., Sunday, 5 October 1975, p.11A)



LA VEGA CLEMENTS HOUSE

Built by Sylvester Monarch around 1893, this historic home is located at 1530 East Fourth Street. The library and sitting room floors have unique geometric squares of different kinds of wood. The doors in the home are more than nine feet tall. La Vega Clements, who was a local attorney for over fifty years, bought the home in 1906. His name is carved in the concrete of the front steps. The home is still owned by a member of the Clements family. (Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, Ky., Sunday, 17 August 1975, p.8A)



THE FELIX GRIMES HOUSE

Felix Grimes, who owned and operated a coal mine in this area, built this home between 1867-1876. It was a duplicate of Catherine Murphy's childhood home in Providence, R.I. She became Mrs. Felix Grimes. Wood used to construct this historic home was cut from trees; located on the Grimes' property. The street beside the home, named after Mr. Grimes, was once a carriage drive. The two back rooms of the home were used for teaching school. It is believed to be the first private school in this area. Part of the Grimes family still own the home - Mr. and Mrs. Jerome Conrey. Mrs. Conrey is the granddaughter of Felix Grimes. The home is located on the corner of Grimes Avenue and Leitchfield Road and has been placed in the National Register of Historical Places by the U.S. Dep't. of Interior's National Park Services. (Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, Ky., Sunday, 31 August 1975, p.4C)



LAWRENCE HAGER HOUSE

This historic home, built of Colonial Architecture, is located at 1844 Griffith Avenue. The property was once part of the Bosley farm. It is believed that the land was given to Nicholas G. Bosley's granddaughter when she married J. H. McVay. The home was built in 1867/68. A spiral staircase leads to the upstairs where the original poplar floors can be seen. The remains of an old cemetery are still on the property. The home, situated on approximately five acres, is owned by Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Hager, Sr. (Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, Ky., Sunday, 27 July 1975, p.2E)



"WILLOW HILL"

Built in 1821 of logs, this historic home is located on the Jones Road, and owned by Mr. and Mrs. Tom Blue, Jr. Hog hair and mud were used between the logs allowing them to adhere. The original logs can be seen in two rooms. The low ceilings, approximately seven feet, allowed maximum comfort in heating. The bricks used in the fireplaces were made and fired on the property. The home has been remodeled authentically. (Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, Ky., Sunday, 3 August 1975, p.3A) [note: built by James Jones, Revolutionary War veteran]



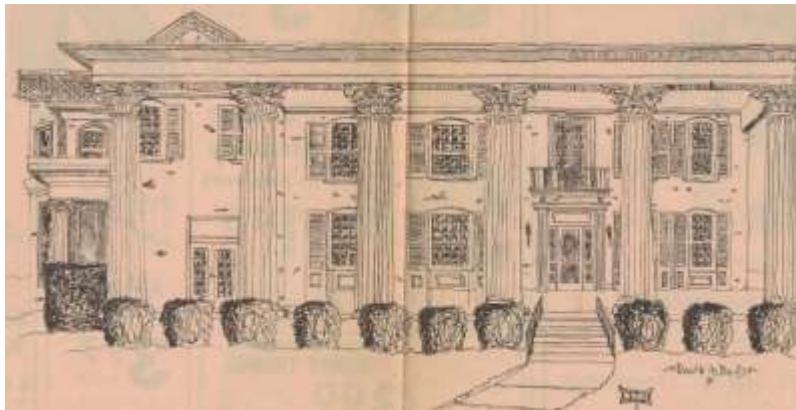
SENATOR THOMAS C. MCCREERY HOUSE or BEECH WOODS

Located high on a knoll on Kentucky 405, this historic home was built circa 1840. Senator Thomas Clay McCreery was an accomplished lawyer, orator, and farmer. Besides being a presidential elector in 1852, 1856 and 1860, he was United States senator from 1868-1871 and 1873-1879. He named this home Beech Woods because the house was surrounded by Beech trees. Senator McCreery also owned a home on Griffith Avenue, where the public library is located today. Beech Woods is built of yellow poplar and is owned by the children of A. Y. Buck Crowe. (Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, Sunday, 28 September 1975, p.7E)



JOHN H. McFARLAND HOME

John H. McFarland was one of the most prominent farmers and tobacco growers in Daviess County. Prior to the Civil War, he raised 130 acres of tobacco a year. He also took an interest in politics, and was elected to the legislature in 1848. His loss was heavy as a result of the Civil War, \$40,000 in slaves alone. He also deeded a portion of his property to his slaves after the War. The home, built between 1836-1850, is located at 2731 Fairview Drive and owned by Mr. and Mrs. Robert M. Short. (Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, Ky., Sunday, 10 August 1975, p.6B)



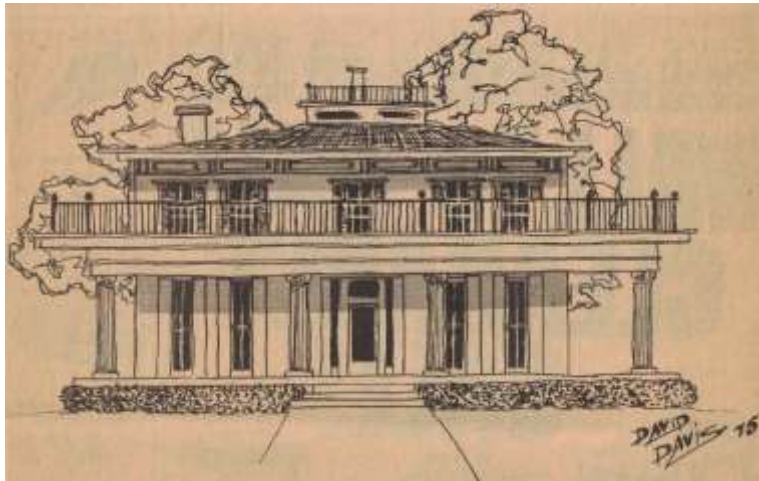
JOHN A. MEDLEY HOUSE

This historic home is located at 320 Maple Avenue. Built around 1848, it was situated on a farm of approximately 2000 acres. Originally, the home faced Frederica Street with the current Maple Avenue being the drive to the side of the house. The columns, added by Mr. Medley, were initially part of a plantation in Mississippi. (Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, Ky., Sunday, 22 June 1975, p.6A)



THE MORGAN HOUSE

... is located at 2725 Frederica Street. Built of Victorian Architecture in 1907, this home as once known as "the old haunted house." It is now owned by Dr. and Mrs. M. David Orrahood. (Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, Ky., Sunday, 15 June 1975, p.6A)



THOMAS E. PAYNE HOUSE

This historic home, located on U.S. 60 West, was built circa 1840. Known to many as "the hospitality house," it was built by Henry DeHaven Moorman, a local distiller. Edward Chrysostom, partner of Mr. Moorman, acquired the home around 1867. Made of yellow poplar with hand-hewn beams, the home was surrounded by orchards. Approximately 85 acres of land still remain with the home. Mr. and Mrs. Thomas E. Payne own the home, where four generations of the same family have lived. (Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, Ky., 21 September 1975, p.8A)



MAJOR HAMPDEN SMITH HOUSE

Located at 909 Frederica Street, this historic home was built of Georgian architecture around 1860. The wrought iron trim was added just after the Civil War. The solid brick masonry walls are approximately 13 inches thick. The hall is fully one-third the width of the house, and includes a large, curved stairway. Still owned by the Smith family, where six generations of Smiths have lived, the home was featured in Antiques magazine in April, 1974. (Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, Ky., Sunday, 6 July 1975, p.7C)



COLONEL COLIN S. THROCKMORTON'S HOUSE

This historic home is now owned by Mrs. Guy Deane, who believes the house was built around 1793 of bricks made and fired on the site. The first occupants of the home were believed to be the Mayo's, grandparents of the Mayo Brothers who founded the famous clinic. Colonel Throckmorton, who died in 1878, was once a resident of this home and an officer in the United States Army. At a much later date, Wendell Ford, now United States Senator, lived here when he was a boy. The home is located off Highway 144 near Thruston. (Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, Sunday, 13 July 1975, p.2D)



HAPHAZARD or (TRIPLETT-BELL HOUSE)

Built around 1820 of Greek Revival architecture, this historic home is located on Pleasant Valley Road, just off Highway 60 East. The land on which the home was built was first owned by George Mason of Virginia, who was a close friend of George Washington. Robert Triplett, founder of Bon Harbor area, built the home. It was purchased from Triplett by William Bell. It remained in the Bell family for over a generation. The home is now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Garland Howard. (Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, Ky., Sunday, 29 June 1975, p.6C)



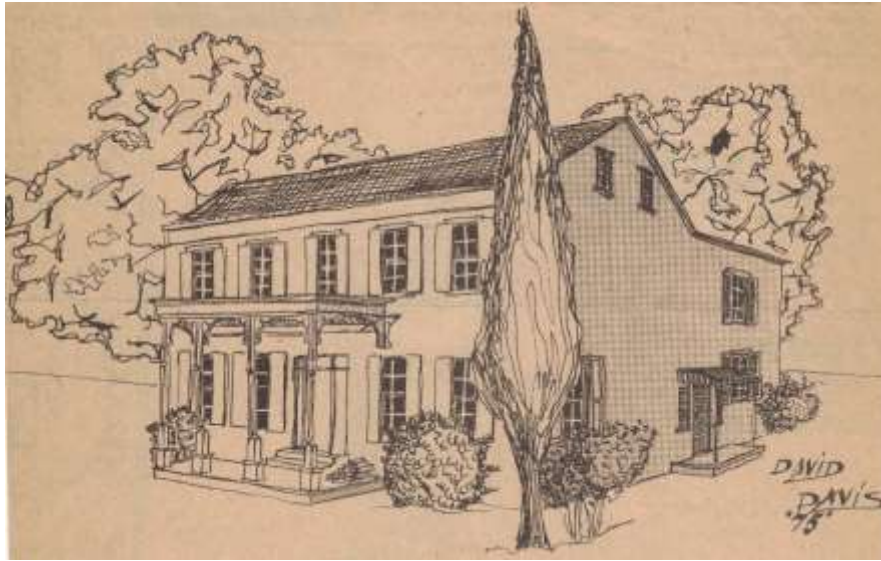
CAPTAIN ROBERT S. TRIPLETT HOUSE

Captain Robert S. Triplett was a steamboat captain who owned and operated the Wharf-Boat. He built this historic home circa 1867-1870. Several rooms on the first floor have ceilings of fifteen feet. The home has a unique single room at the top of the house that has windows on all four sides. Although legend has it that the room was built as a look out for Indians, it was most likely added for the architectural design of the home. Robert S. Triplett named after Captain Triplett. resides at the home at 1540 Frederica Street. (Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, Ky., Sunday, 24 August 1975, p.6C)



JUSE NICOLA VAIRIN HOUSE

One of Napoleon Bonaparte's bodyguards spend his last thirty years in Daviess County. Juste Nicola Vairin, who lived with his five daughters, built this historic home around 1842. Besides being a guard of Napoleon's, Vairin also took part in the Battle of Waterloo. After moving to the United States, he saw an opportunity to become a tobacco exporter in Daviess County. The home, located east of Thruston, has been completely remodeled by Mr. and Mrs. Robert M. Moorman. (Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, Ky., Sunday, 20 July 1975, p.5A).



JEREMIAH YEWELL HOUSE

Jeremiah Yewell, the first distiller of Oldham County, built this home circa 1850. The structure was first designed to be a church; but, since no pastor could be found, Yewell finished it into a home. Bricks were made and fired on the property. The solid brick masonry walls are thirteen inches thick. Each wall extends into the ground to form the foundation. The original baseboards in the home are a foot in height. The old family cemetery on the property still contains the tombstone of Jeremiah Yewell. Located off Fairview Drive, with over 200 acres of prime farm land, the home is owned by Mr. and Mrs. Roy Yewell, III. (Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, Ky., 14 September 1975, p.3A)

