

Horse Branch, KY

By Jerry Long
c.2021



1874 map showing Elizabethtown & Paducah Railroad station depots at Horse Branch, Pigeon Roost (later Rosine), Elm Lick (later Horton).





**Kentucky Place Names, Robert M. Rennick (Lexington,
KY: University of Kentucky Press, 1984), p.144:**

Horse Branch (Ohio County): This village with post office is on the Illinois Central Gulf Railroad and Horse Branch of Caney Creek, 11 miles east of Hartford. There was a stop here in antebellum times for a change of horses on the Owensboro-Morgantown stage run. According to one account, it was customary, after a long trip, to take the horses to the branch for a dip. On one occasion a horse got stuck in the mud and local people ran about excitedly crying "horse in the branch!" The Elizabethtown and Paducah (Illinois Central) Railroad was built through in 1871 and a station was built on land deeded by William M. Miller and Job Arnold. The post office was established on March 8, 1871, with Miller as the first postmaster. Over the past few decades the community has shifted 1/2 mile north to US 62.

Sources: "How Horse Branch Was Named", Loreca Arnold, Ohio County Messenger, Beaver Dam, KY, 20 October 1967; "Horse Branch – Stage Coach and Railroad Played Initial Parts in Its Beginning", Nina Schroeder, Ohio County News, Hartford, KY, Centennial edition, 26 December 1974, Part III, p.3, 4 & 19; and Harry D. Tinsley, No Creek, KY, August 25, 1978.



Daily Kentucky Yeoman, Frankfort, KY, Monday, 16 January 1871, p.2:

The Elizabethtown and Paducah railroad is now finished to section 55, and soon the trains will run to Horse Branch station 56 miles from here. – *Elizabethtown News*.



Elizabethtown News. Elizabethtown, KY, Thursday, 30 March 1871, p.3:

Our young friend "Ham" Churchill is depot agent, and has, also, a store of his own, at Horse Branch, in Ohio county, on the Elizabethtown and Paducah Railroad. Be active, polite, and keep good wares, and your fortune is made, Ham.



Hartford Herald, Hartford, KY, Wednesday, 12 April 1876, p.1
(first Horse Branch community column found in the Ohio County newspapers)

From Horse Branch

Horse Branch, April 10th.

Mr. Editor: – Until recently, this beautiful and business point, or R. R. Station, has not been noticed in public print. Horse Branch is situated in a beautiful little valley, thirteen miles below Caneyville, and three miles above a little station called Rosine. It contains a large,

commodious freight and passenger depot, telegraph office, one store, and one large new tobacco ware-house, recently erected, by our old and much respected citizen, Mr. Make Miller.

Mr. Ford, one of our energetic business men, and granger farmers, has a very large tobacco barn on his farm, one and a half miles back of the station, and will prize for the planters this year about 150,000 pounds of tobacco, equal to 100 hogsheads, which with the addition of other prizers, Messrs. Isaac Axton, Van Rains and James Axton, who are also prizing, will make the shipment from this point this season, somewhere in the neighborhood of 200 to 250 hogsheads of the weed, equal to about 375,000 pounds. Mr. Ford, I am credibly informed, contemplates erecting a large commodious tobacco prizing house immediately at the station, with all the modern arrangements for handling and prizing tobacco. The house will be 80 feet long by 50 feet wide, capable of holding 1000 hogsheads.

Our farmers are energetic and industrious. The health of the community is good, and the morality is second to none in Kentucky. With all these advantages nothing can prevent Horse Branch from being one of the most enterprising and business points on the L. & P. R.R. Look, for instance, at the amount of business done at Spring Lick. The neighboring farmers and railroad company should forever feel under obligations to those two energetic and thorough business gentlemen. Fonso and Martin Rowe. I remember when they first started there, comparatively in the woods. Through their unbounded energy and industry, the thriving little town owes its origin, So will this place grow, through the enterprise of such men as Joseph Ford, Millers, Axtons, Christians, and a host of energetic farmers, too tedious to mention.

Mr. Jas. Axton has been, and is yet confined to his house with, an attack of the measles, but is now convalescent, the report of his sickness being the smallpox, I am happy to state is false. Mr. John D. Miller, with the- other members of Mr. Axton's family, is also down with the same disease.

I shall occasionally drop your valuable and much appreciated paper a few casual notes.
Yours,

BUCKEYE



Kentucky Gazetteer and Business Directory For 1881-82, III,
R. L. Polk & Co. & A. C. Danser, Louisville, KY, 1881, p.229:

HORSE BRANCH. On the P. & E. R. R., in the southeastern part of Ohio county, 15 miles south-east of Hartford, the county-seat, and 96 south-west of Louisville. Southern Express. Daily Mail. Population 50. R. A. Miller, postmaster.

Axton, J. T., tobacco.
Bunch, G. T., R. R. agent.
Cowan, Rev. James, Christian.
DeHeart, Wm., staves.
Fields, H. C., grocer.
Ford, John A., grain and live stock.
Ford, Joseph, tobacco.

Ford, N. H., general store.
Howard, A., general store.
Miller, J. D., justice of peace.
Miller, Robert A., farmer.
Neaphas, S. W., grocer and drugs.
Tilford, Jerry, dentist.
Wilson, Ansel, distiller.



Hartford Herald, Hartford, KY, Wednesday, 7 February 1900 p.4:

Notice.
OHIO CIRCUIT COURT,
PETITION IN EQUITY.

We, the undersigned citizens and legal voters of Ohio county, Kentucky, most respectfully petition the Judge of the Ohio Circuit Court to establish or cause to be established a town of the sixth class at Horse Branch, Ohio county, Kentucky, on the Illinois Central railroad, in said county, at a point where the Owensboro, Falls of Rough and Green River railroad intersects the Illinois Central railroad at a place that is now known as the station of Horse Branch, on said railroad; the name of said town is to be Horse Branch, and the object of your petitioners is to have a town established at that point as provided for by chapter 89, article 8, Kentucky Statutes, creating and organizing towns of the sixth class. The proposed town as set out by metes and boundaries is as follows:

Beginning at a stone on the S. W. corner of said town 42 Poles N. of the Illinois Central railroad, near Miller's corner; thence S. 83 ½ E 160 poles to a stone near the creek; thence N. 2, W. 160 poles and extending 32 poles beyond the railroad to a stone; thence N. 83 ½ W. 160 poles to a stone; thence S. 2, U. 160 poles to the beginning, inclosing in said boundary an area of one-fourth of a mile in each direction necessary to form a square.

Your petitioners state that they and each of them are now legal qualified voters of Ohio county, Kentucky, and reside in said boundary as set out above, and that there are now residing in said boundary 162 inhabitants, and of that number there are 44 legal qualified voters residing in said boundary. They state that the proposed town of Horse Branch is located at a regular freight depot and passenger station on the Illinois Central railroad, and that many people passing through said town are compelled to wait for several hours for trains coming in and going out from said station, and that they have no police protection whatever and can not have same unless said town is incorporated as set out above. They state that they have no officers of the law residing in said town or near same and that the citizens and residents thereof have no protection from violation of the law frequently occurring around said station, and that by establishing said town as a sixth-class town that it will afford them all necessary protection, and that the establishment of same is a public necessity, and especially those citizens residing therein would be greatly benefitted by the establishment of a town of the sixth-class as set out above.

Wherefore, your petitioners pray judgment establishing a town to be known as Horse Branch, In Ohio county, Kentucky, within the prescribed boundary as set out above, and they pray that the court appoint for said town not less than five trustees, a police judge, marshal, assessor and all other officers necessary for the government of said town, and finally they pray for all proper and equitable relief.

J. B. McDaniel,	R. L. Boyd,
Wm. M. Awtry,	Wm. Dehart,
Perry Dehart,	John Moore,
R. L. Canan,	W. H. Lyons,
J. W Bradley,	L. N. Worley,

J. B. Martin,	Dr. J. L. Lynch,
C. D. Short,	G. B. Staples,
W. E. Doyle,	Ed Taber,
Van Hazelip,	W. A. Miller,
Isaac Haycraft,	W. S. Cole,
S. Pierce	J. A. Purcell,
C. E. Ellington,	M. B. Crowder,
H. Morris,	W. C. Leach,
W. M. Miller.	Joe Miller,
L. S. Storms,	J. M. Purgeson,
Jas. M. Miller,	W. M. Underhill,
R. L. Viteto,	James T. Acton,
H. Short,	L. P. Crowder,
G. T. Price,	Wm. P. Miller,
W. B. Crews,	L. S. Simpson.



Hartford Herald, Hartford, KY, Wednesday, 12 March 1902, p.3:

Horse Branch was incorporated last week as a sixth-class town. The following are the new officers: Police Judge, W. S. Cole; Marshal, Laban Frizzell; Assessor, R. A. Miller; Trustees: W. M. Awtry, P. H. Alford, Jr., W. G. Bond, James M. Willer and M. B. Crowder.



Owensboro Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, Wednesday, 15 March 1905, p.5:

New Depot — At Horse Branch

The Illinois Central Railroad company has completed the new depot at Horse Branch and it has been occupied. The new structure is adequate to the needs of the traffic and is located half a mile distant from the former site. Capt. W. H. Sandusky, proprietor of the Central City hotel, has purchased ground nearby and erect a modern hostelry there.



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, Sunday, 3 December 1916, p.7A:

HORSE BRANCH "TOUGH TOWN THAT REFORMED"

Horse Branch, Ky., Dec. 2. — Horse Branch is now known as "The Tough Town That Reformed." No longer are traveling men loath to stop here over night. Brawls and drunken men lying in the gutters which five years ago were common, today are rare. Feeling that the town's toughness was hurting its business, the good people of the community started a crusade for reform. Meetings were held in barns and schoolhouses. A Christian church was completed last

June and another, to be used as a union tabernacle, is under course of construction. The town has reformed.



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, Thursday, 31 July 1941, p.7

Heard About Town

Passenger service on the Illinois Central lines between Owensboro and Horse Branch will be discontinued after today, according to an announcement made Wednesday by Walter Thomas, agent. No reason was given as to the discontinuance of the service. Passenger service on the Horse Branch line has been made possible in the past on a mixed train, a passenger coach being attached to a freight train.



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, Sunday, 9 May 1943, pp.1B & 2B:

**Three Conductors, Two Engineers Make Up Crew Of
Illinois Central Unit Serving People On 43-Mile Run**

W. E. Daniel, Owensboro Messenger
(article has several pictures of railroad personnel)

Not since the last of July, 1941, have passengers been carried on the Illinois Central branch from Owensboro to Horse Branch, 42 miles away in Ohio county, but when No. 641 left the station on East Fourth street a few days ago at 10:40, it had aboard two newspaper men, guests of the veteran conductor, Captain Alonzo C. Mitchell, whose 43 years of railroading have been spent in Kentucky with the I. C., but not all here.

Reared near Louisville, Mr. Mitchell began while still in school, and his more than four decades of service have been on the main line between Louisville and Paducah; on the Princeton-Evansville branch; in Central City as yardmaster; during the first World War at Fort Knox in a similar capacity, and here, where he was five years before the war, from 1912 to 1917, and to which assignment he returned a few years ago to round out his career.

Ahead of the caboose in which the newspaper men chatted with Captain Mitchell was a combination baggage and mail car, with Frank Marcell, 39 years a railroader, and Toney H. Carter, 27 in the railway mail service, in charge, while C. T. Mulhall, with 33 years back of him, as head brakeman went back and forth all over the train. And in the engine cab were two more veterans of the rail, Robert Harris, with 40 years service, mainly about Paducah, at the throttle, and his fireman, Freeman Clark, who had worked half that long, five years on the Horse Branch run. These five men make up the crew, three conductors and two engineers, for such is the rating of the men, and the man who handles the mail spent nine years in the school room as teacher before he entered the postal service. His experience was gained mainly in Eastern Kentucky, on the L. & N. and L. & E.

Varied Experiences Recalled

Newspaper men could not have wished for more courteous hosts, each vieing with the others to make the trip enjoyable. And it was, in listening to the veterans reminisce about the change in railroading since they began, and the many varied and unique experiences that make up the story. "Captain" Mitchell recalled the time a circus train was overturned in part, wild animals released from their cages and the job of rounding up the fugitives. The lions sneaked back into their broken cages, the elephants trumpeted a while and then peacefully submitted to being captured, and a tiger that eluded the searchers for some hours that night was finally snared with a big tarpaulin which trembling hands tossed over his head. And not forgotten is the trip when the conductor was accompanied by his two small sons and the caboose left the rails without injuring them, but throwing a big scare into the father.

Mr. Marcell, who lives in Whitesville and makes the 30-mile round trip drive to Owensboro and back each day by automobile, pointed out the spot where in 1937 about 2,000 feet of track washed off the roadbed without being torn apart. That was in the neighborhood of Narrows where the train stopped for water at a tank kept filled from nearby Rough river. The train was unable to operate for several days, as after the waters receded some time was required before workmen could repair the track. Near that point, winding Caney creek, from up in Grayson county, empties into Rough river, and on toward Horse Branch the smaller stream lines the rails and accompanying highway some miles.

Mr. Carter, the railway mail clerk, is not native to this part of the state, having been reared far up in Eastern Kentucky in Morgan county at West Liberty, and the Horse Branch run has been his only assignment since transfer to this territory. At intervals he came back into the caboose and joined the crewmen contributing incidents from his extensive experience. And at Horse Branch, where the train stayed two hours, he visited in the store of Carl Perguson, their sons, Paul D. Carter and D. C. Perguson, Jr., having been fellow boarders while attending the Western State Teachers College, Bowling Green, before young Perguson went into service a few months ago and is now stationed at Camp Wheeler, while the son of the postman is ready for his call.

The senior Mr. Perguson, a veteran of the first World War, remarked that a brother, J. L., and wife were to arrive that afternoon from Salina, Kansas, where J. L. is in the Army. His wife was Ann Alford, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Alford at nearby Rosine, and a teacher in the Owensboro city schools before her husband entered the Army last year.

Horse Branch is a once thriving business town that has lost much of its importance to progress and inevitable change. It curves around the bend with, houses strung along for a mile or more. The R. L. Renfrew general store, operated by his wife, a former teacher while the husband is away working, was the Sandusky Hotel, a large two-story frame building. And two other hotels then catered to those who did not live at home. Beyond the Y where the branch train turns around, a path points across a brook, through the tree and up a sharp hill to the high school on the heights where Stanley Byers is at the helm since his return following the death of his father, State Senator and Dr. R. A. Byers, who had moved in from his farm to live in town and to serve in the general assembly.

Quickly passed the two hours at Horse Branch, with the newspaper men getting acquainted with merchants and other local folk, including the I. C. agent, A. G. Morrison, 26 years in service, who knows Owensboro from having worked here and spoke rather intimately and with pleasant memories of his acquaintances here. Two heavy main line I. C. trains paused to put off passengers and dispatch other business, their dozen or more coaches each filled with soldiers, sailors and civilians.

The station platform was an observation post for local people who have not outgrown the once popular pastime of seeing the trains go by, and a pastime that in these days of change and history making events is fast returning to its former importance in every community. Then No. 461 was coupled up and with the photographer busy with camera as the trainmen worked and soon the return trip was started.

An alert-faced young soldier from Fortress Monroe, Va., en route to spend a furlough with relatives at Davidson on the branch, set Captain .Mitchell and Engineer Harris talking with justifiable pride of their sons away serving their country. The son of the pilot, Robert Harris, Jr., first lieutenant, attached to a bombing squadron, was heard from recently in Alaska, and the conductor's son, Anthony, only 26, has had many experiences having been, twice shot down only to escape unscathed. And two sons-in-law of the conductor, Robert Evans, in Oklahoma, and Jewell Pendley, at Camp Campbell, are adding to the family lore of martial service.

Homeward Bound

Homeward bound the veteran conductor talked entertainingly and with increasing interest of the son, a radio observer or operator, who rides huge planes into action, keeping the units in contact with his equipment. Once going to bomb the Java oil fields, which the American airmen did effectively, only three of the 27 ships returned intact. That bearing the conductor's son lost its human cargo in the ocean, fortunately a half-mile from shore to which they swam, and found themselves facing a jabbering bunch of wild men in Borneo. The group selected young Mitchell as the envoy to talk with the jungle men, and finally one back in the bushes was located who knew a few words of English, to whom the plight of the Americans was made known. They were guided across the island and provided with a crude boat in which they rowed 27 miles to rescue. It was but one of the many episodes the conductor says his son related.

Veterans all, the crew members have no intention of retiring. They plan to hold their jobs and keep the wheels rolling, bringing into Owensboro and hauling away the many car loads of coal, cement, whiskey, beer, lumber and merchandise. And along the way the visitors were shown points of more than ordinary interest. Mr. Marcell, more than 30 years on the branch, saw the oil boom and its decline from the peak to present production, and gas also in large quantities. And along the route he would call the guests' attention to such places as the 75 acre tract of locust trees near Reynolds, planted by the late Josh Griffith, and the conductor interrupter to chuckle over the time high water stalled the train near Philpot and passengers and crew spent the night aboard, their restlessness partly relieved by the negro preacher who would alternately pray and use rather unbecoming language for a man in his position.

Back through Dan and Olaton and Davidson into Narrows, but no stop this time for water; through Fordsville and laborously up the long winding hill and down the other side across the long trestle to Reynolds and into Deanfield before the stop at Whitesville to leave a car of fertilizer; then through Shorts and Philpot and home as the sharp winds whipped wildly about the train. It was such a trip that seasoned travelers would enjoy and one the guests aboard found more than satisfying. It was into and through a country of high hills carpeted with springtime growth, and beside lowlands that await the touch of toilers to yield corn and other crops in abundance. It was to pass by the homes of solid, substantial people whose sons and daughters are away in service. It was a real trip.



**Ohio County News, Hartford, KY, Thursday, 26 December 1974,
Centennial Edition, Part III, pp.3-4:**

**Horse Branch - Stagecoach and railroad
played initial parts in its beginning**

By Nina Schroader

Horse Branch -- one of the unique names of towns and hamlets in Kentucky.

The northeastern Ohio County hamlet of today was perhaps brought into being with the advent of railroads and once was an incorporated town. It is not known exactly when but when saloons operated there and according to Mrs. D. C. Ferguson, who provided information for this article, not for long.

The most likely reason for its naming was the following story. There was a stagecoach line which operated from Morgantown to Owensboro the route believed to go across the present D. C. Ferguson farm, the route now grown up with sassafras. At a pool of water in a branch is where the drivers changed their horses. Another tale is that a horse mired up there and drown. A former blue print of the stagecoach line before the railroads existed provided this data.

The first known post office was in 1876 according to records and prior to that persons received mail from Dundee via railroad.

At one time eight daily trains from Louisville stopped at the Horse Branch depot, which is still in use on the IC tracks, and four passenger trains from Owensboro also stopped there. Among the large landowners were Make Miller and Job Arnold who sold land to the railroad company. A house over 100 years old built by Miller still stands in the area now known as "old Horse Branch."

The rail lines at the south end of the town had a curve which was very dangerous with many wrecks occurring there and several killed. In 1906 the tracks were moved to their present location to straighten the curve.

First School

The first school was built in 1892, a log building just off where Highway 62 runs now and classes were taught by Henry Leach and the late Dr. R. A. Byers. Later a two-room school was built on the hill above the depot in "old Horse Branch" and in 1920 a consolidated high school was built. Prior to then, students rode horseback to Yeaman to school or went by train to Fordsville. Mrs. Ferguson recalls that the PTA made up money in the early days and built a board walk from the depot to the school. Jack Walker gave land for the 1920 school and Dr. Byers was serving on the board of education and was instrumental in getting the high school. The old two-room school was moved to the present location and four other rooms added. R. E. Denney was the first principal of the six-room school. A gym was built in 1928. First only two years of high school studies were offered and later four years. Ray Hocker was the first principal of the 4-year institution and Laura Haggard was the coach of a girls basketball team which won wide acclaim for its ability on the hardwood. The first graduating class of 12 persons finished at Horse Branch High in 1930. In 1949 the school burned and classes were held in the three churches. "This was a trying time for the teachers" said Mrs. Ferguson, one of them. "We had no desks, no books, nothing -- but this was a time of closeness and togetherness and sharing," she

went on. Mrs. Ferguson taught 20 years at Horse Branch and Narrows. The present school was opened about 1951.

The townspeople were never without medical attention, the first physician being a Dr. Camp, who reportedly had no license but just experience. Dr. Lynch practiced there but later went to Hancock county to practice. Other physicians included Dr. Lovelace, Drs. Charles and Clarence Deweese, Dr. Byers and Dr. J. S. Bean, 95, who lives at Elizabethtown.

Business

Everything from soup to nuts was sold at one store in Horse Branch -- at Walker Myrtle's store. He was also the druggist and the undertaker. He bought coffins and Mrs. Ferguson often assisted he and Mrs. Myrtle in lining the coffins, in making shrouds and laying out the corpse. A flu epidemic struck the community. No one would come about the town and one person died of the flu. "Mr. Myrtle dedicated himself to giving him just as good a burial as anyone else. Mrs. Ferguson was brave and went along to trim the coffin, line the pillow and prepare the corpse as usual.

William DeHart, step-father of Mrs. Ferguson was also a druggist and he had some sort of certificate on the wall according to his step-daughter, but "I am not sure just what the requirements to fill prescriptions were".

Horse Branch at one time boasted three hotels, the McDaniel which on November 18, 1896 had an ad in the Hartford Herald "stop at the McDaniel House. Mr. J. B. McDaniel, the proprietor, gives his personal supervision to the hotel and sees that all guests are satisfied. Two minutes walk from depot, everything first class, rates \$1 per day. Patronage of the public solicited."

The Sandusky hotel was operated by a man of the same name who came from Central City. There were saloons before the 1900s and the late Sam Keown, grandfather of Mrs. Pat Woosley, was the first marshal. The first lock-up for unruly persons was built by Bev Boyd and according to stories he was the first to be put in it.

The social life centered around the schools because it was not until 1915 that the community had a church. Pie suppers, spelling matches, square dances were the events of entertainment. Many persons would don their Sunday best in the afternoon on the Sabbath to go down to meet the 8 p.m. train from Louisville which was a highlight. The depot was sort of a public meeting place to just talk. Many of the person's who came with the railroads to Horse Branch were of the Catholic faith and on St. Patrick's day, they threw a square dance which was a big event. Tent revivals often continued all summer with Revs. Jenkins and Cox preaching. Singing schools played a part in the life of the area.

The first religious services, Sunday Schools and revivals were held in the barn of P. H. Alford. Services in the area have almost always been undenominational. The order of Redmen decided to move away. Water was removed from the lodge hall and services held there until a church was built jointly by the Methodist, Baptist and Christians. The Christian group later pulled away and the church built and designed by Jess Wilkerson still stands -- forlorn and lonely not in use. A Christian church built in 1917 has services today and there is a church of God. The Methodist and Baptist still own the church but no one attends. The congregation never had a specific pastor with ministers of different denominations preaching, one Sunday a Methodist, the next a Baptist. "It was the next thing to heaven that a church could be with everyone getting along" noted Mrs. Ferguson. No denominational literature was used. Finally the Baptists

dwindled away until the Baptist preacher, Rev. Fuqua, preached one Sunday with not a single member.



Left: Church in old Horse Branch, in which worship is not held, is still owned jointly by the Baptists and Methodists. Right: A Former Hotel in Horse Branch is now the residence of present day dwellers.

Trains began to decline their stops in 1956 and so the town dwindled too.

D. C. Ferguson operated a standard oil station in the town for 34 years with gas being delivered by train. Raymond Renfrow operated a grocery for a time. "We could tell it was spring not by the blue birds but by the coming of the first car to the Station" recalled the school teacher.

Another remembrance of the town was J. B. McDaniel who had surrey with a fringe on top who took passengers to the Hotel for dinner.

Fraternal organizations have played a part in the town with the Order of Eastern Star having members who recently received 25 year pins including. Nola Barnes, Anna Mary Landrum, Anna Lee Nabours, and Portia Casey.

The latest date on which as many horses as perhaps were to the stagecoach that mired in the branch was in 1972 when many former area residents now living in Louisville, began a horseback journey home. Upon their way they stopped in Leitchfield and Rough River Dam for camping. The trip was highlighted and ended with a final stop at Landrum's store with press coverage.

Today the town has a Masonic Hall, two churches, a grocery store, a post office, a depot, and several homes, and grade school.

Whether It will ever have more than a unique name future will tell.

[Ed. note: Pearl Rains Ferguson (1894-1987) is buried in the Horse Branch Cemetery.]



Ohio County News, Hartford, KY, Thursday, 26 December 1974,
Centennial Edition, Part III, p.19:

Horse Branch-Owensboro Line Train was conducted by Capt. Riley

By Henry Daniel

The first passenger train crew on the Horse Branch Owensboro run was ---- (Capt.) Riley, conductor, Bill Reed, engineer, postal service Sam Jones and baggage master Valley Morrison, flagman ---, (according to Blackman Davison) all these men except Riley were operating the train in the late twenties.

Ticket stations along the line were Horse Branch, Davidson Station, Narrows, Fordsville and Whitesville. Other stops were Dan's Station, Olaton, Collier's Station, Deanfield and Philpot.

Until about 1919 two round trips daily of passenger trains were in operation. In addition, there a round trip of a local freight, a through freight from Owensboro to Central City one day and back to Owensboro the next day.

About 1919 an extra passenger train known as the fast train was added to this line. This train stopped only when a flag was displayed on the Depot by the station master.

As this writer has been unable to obtain a schedule of these trains I can only give the approximate schedule of trains at Narrows (10 mi. from Horse Branch).

Horse Branch to Owensboro. 6:36 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 3:45 p.m. Owensboro to Horse Branch, 9:05 p.m., 2:05 p.m., 7:10 p.m.

This period was the heights of service along this line.

High School students along this line rode these trains to Fordsville and even to Whitesville. I remember a book of tickets for students from Narrows to Fordsville sold for \$3.36. One oddity of this road was that trains going into the station at Fordsville had to pull in and back out a distance of approximately one half mile and reverse on the opposite run.

Regular passenger service was dis-continued on this line in the over this line in the early thirties.

At present a diesel freight piloted by Bob Nunnley of Owensboro and conducted by Milard Hurt of Olaton makes a daily run over this line.



Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, Monday, 12 July 1982 p.1B:

Once a railroad boom town, but now the railroad's gone

By Karen Owen, Messenger-Inquirer

HORSE BRANCH – German opera singers aren't a common sight here anymore.

This former stagecoach stop and railroad boom town has been reverting back to one-horse status for years, but Tuesday it becomes official. Illinois Central Gulf Railroad is abandoning its 15-mile Horse Branch-Fordsville line, company officials said Friday.

The abandonment concludes a plan ICG began in 1977 to end service over 40 miles of spur line track connecting Owensboro with its Louisville-Paducah line where it passes through Horse Branch.

The company finally achieved half that goal last year, when it abandoned the section between Owensboro and Fordsville after wrangling in and out of court for nearly four years with shippers and businessmen who wanted to keep the spur open.

The Ohio County towns ICG will leave behind Tuesday may seem small and sleepy now, but in the heyday of railroad activity here in the 1920s, they boasted hotels, flourishing businesses, and even celebrities passing through on their way to Louisville or New Orleans, area residents remembered Friday.

Pearl Ferguson, 88, a Horse Branch native and local historian, says she can remember when four passenger trains a day passed through town on the main Paducah-Louisville line, and two a day made the round trip across the spur line to Owensboro.

The railroad's main line opened up in 1876, and the Horse Branch-Owensboro spur was built in 1887, she said.

The branch line passed through Magan. Olaton. Davidson Station, Narrows, Fordsville, Deanfield, Philpot. Whitesville and Seven Hills on its way to Owensboro. said Narrows native Henry Daniel, 75, who still lives in the area.

In the years before World War I, Horse Branch had three hotels, a restaurant, drugstore, barbershop and two general stores, and everyone in the town either worked for the railroad or ran a business that profited from the railroad's presence, she said.

Narrows was also a bustling little town in the '20s, with four doctors, a saw mill, a barrel stave mill, and a general store that sold everything from automobiles to medicine, remembered Daniel.



The train station was once the hub of a bustling town, but the Illinois Central Gulf Railroad will officially abandon the tracks through Horse Branch Tuesday.

"Everything revolved around the railroad," Mrs. Ferguson said. After church on Sunday everyone went home, ate lunch, and headed for the depot to watch the trains come through.

The trains brought traveling salesmen, dentists, preachers, and on Saturday, a supply of light bread, remembers Eula Mitchell, 67, a Narrows native who now lives at 2230 Stratford Drive, Owensboro.

"Many famous celebrities came through," including a German contralto named Madame Schumann Heint, who was quite famous in the early part of the 20th century, Mrs. Ferguson said.

The ribbons of track connecting Horse Branch and Narrows with the rest of the world was the quickest way to get around in a horse-and-buggy world. "We rode trains like people (today) ride in automobiles," Mrs. Ferguson said. Before Ohio County's first beauty shop opened, she used to pay \$1 for a 30-minute train ride to Owensboro to get her hair styled, she said.

Daniel rode the branch line 20 times a month to Fordsville High School for \$3.36 a month. "You wouldn't run a car very far on that today," he said with a chuckle.

"We even went a-courtin' up the railroad," Mrs. Mitchell said.

ICG's tracks are in such bad condition now they wouldn't be safe to travel, even if the trains continued to run, Daniel said. "I wouldn't have ridden that train (under such conditions) for \$50." he said.

ICG discontinued passenger trains over the spur line in the 1930s, but allowed passengers to ride on mail coaches in "mixed trains," carrying mail and freight until sometime in the '40s. Daniel remembered.

The extinction of the passenger train also killed off most of the businesses along the line. Hotels had no customers and families moved away, natives of the area said.

ICG's freight business across the spur began to falter, too, in the late 1960s and early '70s. said James Wilson, 64, of Horse Branch, who operated ICG's depot there for two years until 1976.

"They really didn't have enough traffic (on the spur) to pay expenses," he said. There were times when he worked at Horse Branch when locomotives chugged back to Owensboro "with just a caboose."

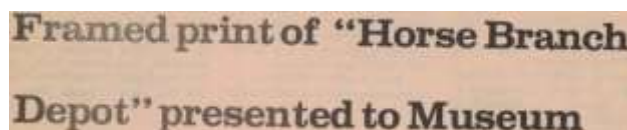
These days Horse Branch and Narrows are pale shadows of their, former glory, the towns' natives agreed.

About a dozen people live at Narrows now. Daniel estimated, and the store that sold everything from cars to cough syrup was finally torn down two years ago.

Progress ruined Horse Branch. Mrs. Ferguson said. 'I know that sounds kind of corny. Trains have always been a part of my life. . . . I miss them yet."



Ohio County Times-News, Hartford, KY, Thursday, 15 July 1982, p.4B:



Framed print of "Horse Branch
Depot" presented to Museum

Shown are Mary Jo White, artist, and Mrs. D. C. Ferguson, who presented a framed print of "The Horse Branch Depot" to the Ohio County Museum Saturday, during a meeting of the

Ohio County Historical Society. The program, presented by Dr. Lee Dew, of Owensboro, was on the subject, The Madisonville, Hartford and Eastern Railroad.



On left – Mary Jo White and on right – Pearl Ferguson

Mrs. Ferguson, local historian, retired teacher and native of Horse Branch, stated the small western Kentucky community of Horse Branch owes its existence to the railroad and recalls how W. M. (Make) Miller, known as "Uncle Make" was the first settler and built the first house at Horse Branch over one hundred years ago.

On January 8, 1868, the Elizabethtown and Paducah Railroad Company bought a strip of land 66 feet wide from "Uncle Make" and the first train depot was built in the late 1800's.

The location of the depot was on a curve, and at that time there were no caution signals, resulting in several accidents. In 1906, the depot was moved about a mile down the tracks to a location with a better view of oncoming trains. This is the present Horse Branch depot.

The Post Office was established in 1876 after trains were running in and out of Horse Branch resulting in the formation of "old" and "new" Horse Branch. In Old Horse Branch before the depot was moved there were two hotels, three saloons, two grocery stores, and a general store that served the needs of the large farming community.

After the depot was moved, there was a business boom in New Horse Branch, with three hotels built, two restaurants, two grocery stores, a general merchandise and drug store, barber shop, livery stable, blacksmith shop, a candy kitchen, and a mill for grinding corn and wheat.

The social life in the community featured country dances and dressing up in their Sunday best to meet the trains on Sunday afternoons. Eight trains came and stopped during the average day from Louisville and return.

After the railroad track was built to Owensboro, many celebrities stopped in Horse Branch, providing good business for the town's hotels and restaurants. The Horse Branch Depot was the hub of the business community of the rural western Kentucky town.

Mrs. Ferguson says that according to railroad history, the community got its name when the stage coach ran from Owensboro to Bowling Green. The drivers rested and changed their horses in a wooded area near the little stream and deep pool of water which became known as Horse Branch.

Mary Jo, painted the Horse Branch Depot, is a native of Daviess County and was reared on a farm in the vicinity of Utica.

She has a B.A. degree in Art Education from Kentucky Wesleyan College in Owensboro and taught art at Ohio County High. Her decision to give up her teaching profession was made in order to allow her to devote more time to her family and develop her own talent, working at her own speed. She does a wide variety of commissioned work.

Mary Jo's release, "Humble Valley Home" marked her first serious attempt to establish a broader public awareness of her work. Her next work, "The Horse Branch Depot" was a commissioned painting of the historic depot located in the rural community of Horse Branch.



Ohio County Times-News, Hartford, KY, Thursday, 12 September 1985:

**Pearl Ferguson presents
Horse Branch highlights**

Mrs. Pearl Ferguson appeared to enjoy reminiscing about her native Horse Branch as much as her listening audience Saturday, as she spoke proudly of "the wonderful little railroad town that is no more" for the program of the Ohio County Historical Society.

Judge-executive C.B. Embry, vice president, presided at the meeting in the absence of president Earl Russell and introduced the Hartford resident from Horse Branch. (Mrs. Ferguson will mark her 91st birthday September 30.)

She said that Horse Branch got its name from a stop for stagecoaches that traveled from Owensboro to Bowling Green, that there was a beautiful stream of water, a tributary of Caney Creek, and an ideal place for watering and changing horses and coaches. The stop became known as "horse branch" spelled with a little "h" and "b" and was later adopted as the name of the community that sprang up.

The Elizabethtown and Paducah Railroad (Illinois Central line) was built through in 1871 and a station was built on land deeded by William M. Miller and Job Arnold, extensive land owners.

"People changed trains at Horse Branch and after the depot and post office were established, businesses started coming in," she said.

The first hotel was built by a man from Hartford, whose name she had not learned, and "pretty soon two more hotels were built in Horse Branch. Now that's old Horse Branch, not the new Horse Branch there on Highway 62," she explained.

Mrs. Ferguson, who said she "happened to grow up in one of the hotels," told about one of the ladies at the finest hotel who was somewhat of a manager for the Grayson County owner, said there was always a beautiful rose garden kept at the rear where she served tea "promptly at 4 p.m. to all the guests" and, she, then a teenager, was always invited.

She told of the 2 a.m. awakening by her mother and arousing of all hotel guests, with the exception of one who refused, on the morning that Halley's Comet was visible so that guests

could watch the spectacular comet. The 76-year-old comet will not be visible in this part of the world later this month, she said.

"Horse Branch had everything anyone needed... two doctors, two drug stores, a nice restaurant, and a general store that sold everything including caskets, and 12 passenger trains a day," she said. "Eight trains also brought mail and we could receive mail after each train."

The depot had been built at the foot of a hill and several serious wrecks occurred there which made it necessary to relocate the depot in 1906. The old depot remained, but a new one was constructed about a mile back, she said.

The first school was a log building, and Henry Leach was the first principal. She has a list of all postmasters and school principals at Horse Branch and said the post office was established in 1871 with W.M. Miller as postmaster.

During the business meeting, a discussion was held on the need for a sound financial status for operation and maintenance of the museum, its continued growth and need for improvements and possibly expansion due to the many additions that continue to come.

It was suggested that a Perpetual Care Trust Fund be started with expectation that contributions may, in time, provide interest earning to help with the financial income.

Judge Embry said because of time involved in getting a large amount needed in the trust, it should be started in order to build up interest earnings. The account will be set up as a permanent one, with only interest accrued allowed for museum expenditures.

Persons who would like to donate to this cause should state "Trust Fund" on checks mailed to the Historical Society, and these are federal tax exemptions.

Gifts to the trust would, in no way, substitute for annual membership dues as dues are used for utility payments and other museum expenses.

A large number of members attended the meeting and lye soap making day was set for 9 a.m. Saturday, September 28. Homemade soap has been a popular item at the museum and the previously made lot has been sold.



The Daviess County Historical Quarterly, Vol. XI, No. 1
(Owensboro, KY: Daviess County Historical Society, January 1993) p.4:

The Building of the Madisonville, Hartford, and Eastern Railroad
By Lee A. Dew

.... The first railroad through Ohio County, the Elizabethtown and Paducah, passed several miles south of Hartford, and a new town, Beaver Dam, sprang up to profit from the economic stimulation afforded by the Iron Horse. This line, completed in 1871, was merged with connecting lines in 1882 to form the Chesapeake, Ohio and Southwestern, and its gauge was narrowed from 5 feet 4 inches to 4 feet 9 inches to conform to the national standard. In December, 1893, this line became part of the Illinois Central Railroad.

Other rail lines also touched Ohio County. The Owensboro, Falls of Rough and Green River Railroad was built by Owensboro businessmen from that city through Fordsville in the extreme northeastern part of the county to Horse Branch and a connection with the Chesapeake, Ohio and Southwestern. This line was purchased almost immediately by the CO & SW and became a part of the IC with the acquisition of the parent company....



Descendant Families of William Makel Miller and Mary Mitchell Miller of Ohio County, Kentucky, Dee Carl Perguson, Jr (1921-2010), Seattle, Washington, 1995, pp.7-8 & 11:



William Makel 'Make' Miller (1806-1886)
& wife, Mary Mitchell Miller (1810-1886)

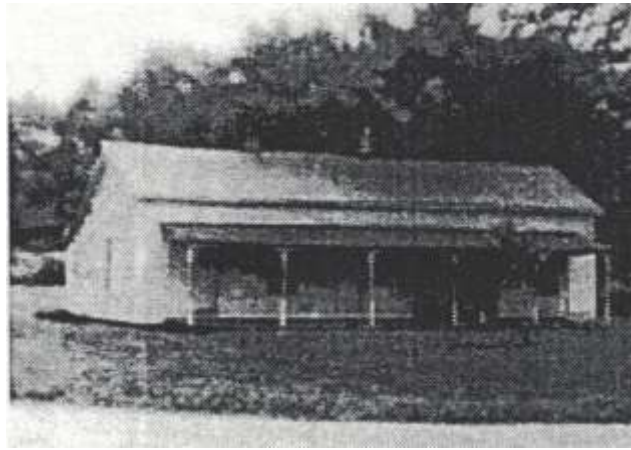
In the flurry of railroad building after the Civil War, developers recognized the need for a rail link between central Kentucky and the western part of the state, through a large area much of which was then served by boats on Green River and its tributaries. Plans were made to construct a trunk line from Elizabethtown to Paducah in the Jackson Purchase. The route selected crossed Ohio County and ran directly through the land owned by Make Miller. Recognizing the many benefits a railroad could bring, Make, like many others living along the designated route, willingly gave land for the right-of-way. On January 8, 1868, Miller signed the standard deed granting the Elizabethtown and Paducah Rail Road Company a strip of land "sixty-six feet in width (or so much as may be necessary within the provisions of the Charter of said Company)." Ten months later as plans for the railroad became more definite and the need for additional space more evident, another deed was made. By this deed Miller granted the railroad "ten (10) acres of land. . . for the purpose of a depot lot. . in consideration of the said construction of said road through my lands and the benefit I will derive from its being so constructed." Although the depot which was built on that land was later moved eastward, the sidings have remained, and the shape of that ten acre donation is still plainly discernible in "old" Horse Branch,

The prospect of railroad service through the area prompted an application for a post office, and in 1871, the year the first trains began to run, a post office was authorized and assigned the name "Horse Branch", after the creek which ran through the little community. Make Miller was appointed the first postmaster. He was 65 years old.

The coming of the railroad produced immediate changes there on Horse Branch creek. A real town was developing around the depot and the post office. The railroad provided a new source of employment, attracting more people to the area. One of the benefits hoped for from the railroad was soon apparent; there was a demand for Make Miller's land for building lots. Small

stores, rustic hotels, a school and residences were built near the railroad station. Recorded deeds show that among those buying lots from Make and Polly Miller were Walker Myrtle (for many years the most successful merchant in Horse Branch), Thomas Bond, Amos Bratcher, Dan Wilson, Robert Freed, and Artelia Brady.

Although the railroad brought beneficial changes to the area and to the elder Millers, according to family tradition, the railroad also became an annoyance. The log home they had built near a bountiful and dependable spring was only about fifty yards from the tracks of the Elizabethtown and Paducah Rail Road. The increasing number of passenger and freight trains made a great deal of noise and clatter as the steam locomotives increased their speed to climb the considerable grade up to the tunnel near Rosine. Perhaps poorer health in advanced age was as important as the train noise in Make's reaching the decision to build a new home a distance from town.



The home of the Millers near the "Myrtle Crossing" as it appeared in about 1950. Probably the first house in Horse Branch, it was built before 1870 and still stands in 1995.

The location they chose for the new two-story log house was about a mile up the hill north of the railroad on farmland owned by Make. The Site was on the Hartford and Leitchfield Road, a few hundred yards east of where the narrow, dirt wagon road skirted the north side of Wildcat Knob. (The site was the home of the Homer McCormack family in recent years.) It was in this house that Polly and Make Miller lived their last years, cared for and in the company of their unmarried daughter, Mary, and their youngest son, Giles Cicero.



Ohio County Times-News, Hartford, KY, Thursday, 9 May 1996:

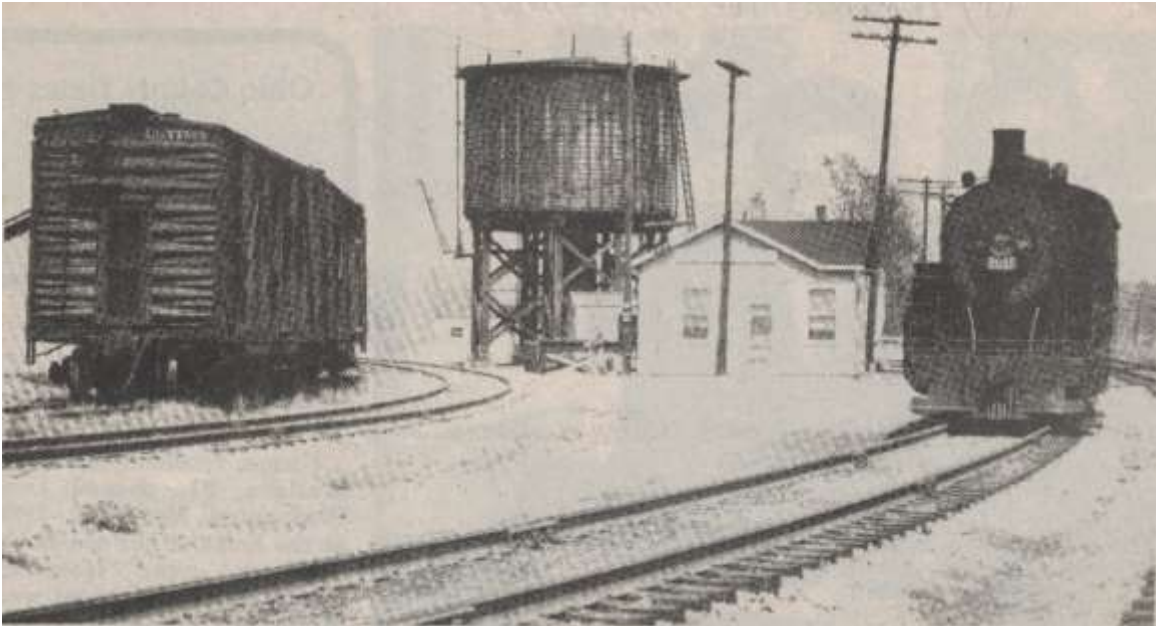
Rough River Ripples by Dorothy Gentry

Here's some more Horse Branch history taken from the Miller family book. In the flurry of railroad building after the Civil War, a need was seen for a rail link between Elizabethtown and Paducah. The route crossed Ohio County and ran directly through the Miller ground. On January 8, 1868, Mr. Miller signed the standard agreement granting the Elizabethtown and Paducah Railroad Co. a strip of land to do so. Ten months later he granted the railroad company

10 acres for the purpose of a depot. The shape of that 10 acres of land donation is still plainly discernible as "Old Horse Branch". The coming of the railroad produced many changes. A real town developed, in 1871 a post office was established and the trains began to run. A post office was authorized and assigned the name of Horse Branch after the creek which ran through the community. Make Miller was appointed as postmaster in 1872. He was 65 years old then. Make Miller can be said to be the founder of Horse Branch. He built the first house and store in the area and gave the ground for the railroad. He was also appointed postmaster. It is not known how Horse Branch received its name. This writer has heard many stories, and would appreciate hearing about it if anyone knows. One is that travelers on horseback used to water their horses in the branch. This town could have been easily named Millertown, but there was already a Millertown in Grayson County. Or it could have been named Millerville in honor of Make Miller, but it became Horse Branch.



Ohio County Times-News, Hartford, KY, Thursday, 21 March 1996:



From the past... An Illinois Central Railroad engine was captured in this scene at Horse Branch sitting on the main line of the dual track with the depot at left and water tower. The far left curve track lead to Owensboro and the boxcar on the siding was sitting next to a small shed. The water tower was dismantled in the early 70's. Water for the tower came from an artesian well. The passenger boarding platform was on the north end of the station.



**Ohio County, Kentucky Pictorial History,
Paducah, KY: Turner Publishing Company, 1998, pp.59 &162:**



ICC Train Depot, Horse Branch, KY



Present Horse Branch post office.

HORSE BRANCH

Horse Branch Unique in the fact it is the only town with a post office by that name. The exact date that Horse Branch was first called by that name is not known. Hallie Duncan said it was called by this name in 1868 when her father, Elmer Miller, was born. However, there are several theories of how Horse Branch got its name: some say a horse fell in a branch, or a horse drowned in quicksand while crossing a branch, or a doctor who was going on a house call had horse fall into a branch and drown. From records of the Illinois Central railroad office in Chicago, Illinois comes the most logical and believable theory. Their files state years ago there was a stage-coach that went from Owensboro to Bowling Green which made a stop in Horse Branch to get fresh horses. The passengers on the stage occasionally stayed overnight here. The horses which were used to run the were kept in a corral by the branch thus the name Horse Branch.

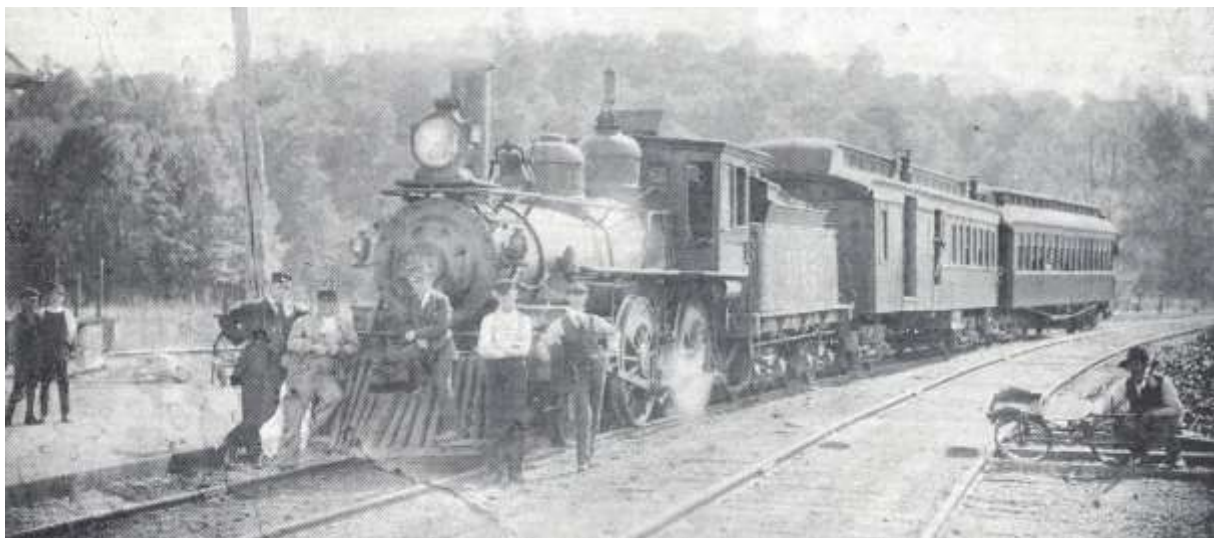
The first house built in Horse Branch, located in the southwest corner of Horse Branch. This house was built by Makel Miller who lived there until the railroad was built. He moved to another house on the old cane run road to avoid the noise of the trains. This house was also the first post office of Horse Branch, which was started in 1871, and Makel Miller was the first postmaster.



Ohio County, Kentucky Pictorial History Volume II,
Paducah, KY: Turner Publishing Company, 2000, pp. 42-43, 72:



Horse Branch depot, ca 1932



Illinois Central, Owensboro-Horse Branch train with Engine #1189 at Horse Branch depot, ca 1909. Boys are far left of the picture are Carl Perguson and Claude Pierce. Train crew from the left: Bob Moore, conductor; Bill Reed, engineer; George Arnold, flagman; Maxie Ruthart (one of the two others). Man on far right unknown.



The Horse Branch Union Church was not only historic, but an architectural masterpiece – its windows, doors, bell tower; choir loft, and pews made the structure a treasure. The Church served three denominations: Methodist, Baptist, and Christian. The old Church was torn down several years ago [since 1968].



Ohio County Times-News, Hartford, KY, Thursday, 1 March 2007, p.8B:

The purpose of the Rosine News is to report news about the Rosine area. Its purpose, is not nor should it ever be used as a political forum. The writer can, however, include a bit of history about the area. Horse Branch School was founded in the late nineteenth century and has been educating area students since that time. It was first a one-room school with grades one through eight. From about 1928 until 1965, there was also a high school. Many of Ohio County's citizens received some or all of their public education at Horse Branch Elementary or High School. Ohio County's only Medal of Honor recipient graduated from Horse Branch High School in the spring of 1943. PFC Wesley Phelps, USMC, MOH, was the first Kentuckian to receive a posthumous award of the Medal of Honor for service during World War II. The Horse Branch School building was destroyed by fire on December 6, 1949. All of the students, elementary and

high school, finished that school year in area churches and other available buildings, the school building, currently in use, opened in September 1950. Horse Branch School is important to the people of the Rosine area. Prior to 1965, when Rosine Grade School was still here, there was only eight grades and Rosine students attended high school at Horse Branch. Since the fall of 1965. Rosine students have attended elementary school at Horse Branch. Though located 3 ½ miles up Hwy. 62E at Horse Branch, the school is an intricate part of the Rosine community.

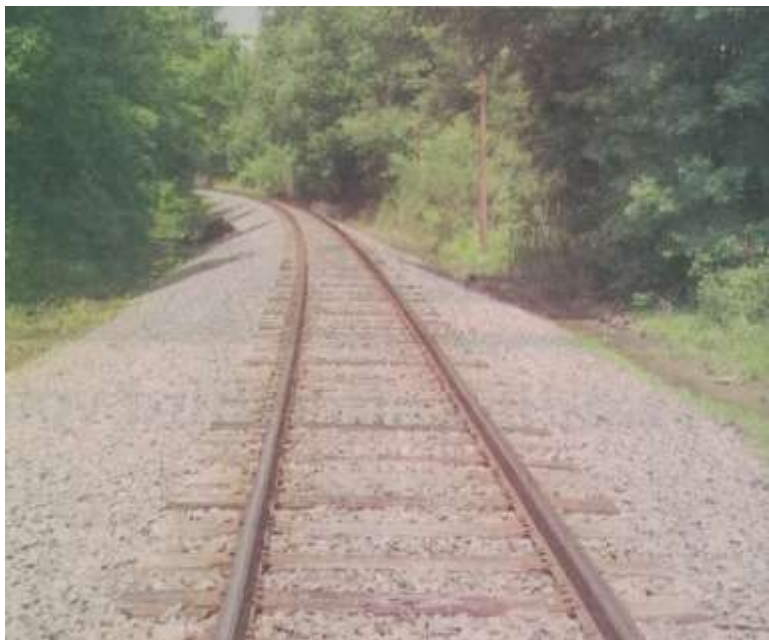


**U.S., Appointments of U.S. Postmasters, 1832-1971,
Horse Branch, Ohio County, Kentucky:**

Postmaster	Appointed	Vacated office
William M. Miller	8 March 1871	
George L. Brady	27 March 1883	
Walker Myrtle	12 July 1893	
Miles B. Crowder	26 Jun 1897	
William T. Sanders	30 April 1915	
Laura A. Boswell	16 May 189?	
Stanley Byers	30 December 1928	
Mrs. Hallie M. Duncan	28 February 1929	1 July 1933
Lawrence Wilson	18 October 1933	6 July 1943
Raymond L. Renfrow	7 December 1943	
Raymond L. Renfrow	20 September 1944	3 May 1971



Ohio County Times-News, Hartford, KY, Wednesday, 6 June 2018 p.2A:



The railways have brought a lot of employment and visitors into Horse Branch throughout the years.



The old caboose has served as a landmark in Horse Branch for many years.



The old post office was a place where locals would hang out. The one bedroom apartment attached has served as the first home for many newlyweds. In 1966, the apartment rented for \$15 a month.



Horse Branch Cemetery

The cemetery is located on the north side of Highway 62 at Horse Branch just east of the Horse Branch Elementary School. It is adjacent to the Wilson Cemetery. In my interview of Horse Branch historian, Mrs. D. C. (Pearl Rains) Ferguson (1894-1987), on 18 April 1983 she said the Wilson Cemetery was the Dan T. Wilson (1841-1924) family cemetery. His son, Job Wilson (1873-1942) gave an acre adjoining the Wilson Cemetery to the town of Horse Branch for a public cemetery and it was setup as the “Horse Branch Cemetery”. Several obituaries refer to the cemetery as the Horse Branch General Baptist Church Cemetery. See listing of Horse Branch Cemetery, by Jerry Long, in the Ohio County Cemeteries section on the website, West-Central Kentucky History & Genealogy (<https://wckyhhistory-genealogy.org/ohio-county-ky/>).



Ohio County Times, Hartford, KY, Thursday, 20 January 1972, p.11:



Horse Branch School – 1913: This early school photo was furnished for the TIMES through the courtesy of Mrs. D. C. Perguson of Horse Branch. Pictured on the front row from left to right: Estill Heath, Thomas Perguson, Ernest Willoughby, Foy Ragland, Gola Willoughby, Johnny Perguson, Lillian Stewart, Luvina Daugherty. Second row left to right: Teacher Frank Wright, George Johnson, Vonnie Wilson, Earl Haycraft, Tommie Wilson, Charlie Ragland, Nola Arnold, Buster Wilson, Eloda Heath, Vigie Evans, ___ Evans girl, and Martha Sandefur, teacher. Third row left to right: Marie Skaggs, Boyd Camp, Opal Stewart, Thomas Ragland, Nellie Arnold, Hayden Brown, Pearl Rains (Mrs. Perguson), Arthur Morrison, Ruby Stewart, and Roma Willoughby. Frank Wright, a teacher pictured with [his group was the originator of the bus line operating through Ohio County from Owensboro to Bowling Green known now as Fuqua Bus Lines.

Ohio County Times-News, Hartford, KY, Thursday, 2 April 1981 p.2B:



This old photo of Horse Branch School was made in 1914. In the first row are Stoy Phelps, Logan Arnold, Charlie Duvall, Carmon Duvall, Harold Stuart, Willie Phelps, Estil Heath, Joe Buck Arnold, Johnny Phelps, ----, ---, Thomas Perguson. In the second row are Jerome Heath, Louanna Miller, Florence Frymire, Allierie Frymire, Vonnie Wilson Ella Wilson, Ursa St. Clair, Duel St. Clair, Eloda Heath, Vonnie Duvall, Lillie Phelps, Nellie Phelps, Lillian Stuart, Merry Heath. In the third row are Fred Heath, George Johnson, Foy Ragland, Gabe Arnold, Vigie Evans, -----, Randolph Frymire, Foy Wilson, Buster Wilson, Tommy Wilson, Ermine Short, Maymee Wilson. In the fourth row are Wavie St. Clair, Hayden Brown, Joy Arnold, Iva Short, Belma Wilson, Nola Arnold, Damie St. Clair, Marie Skaggs, Opal Stuart, Nellie Arnold, Charlie Ragland and teacher, Miss Martha Sandifer. In the back row are Musker Wilson, Pearl Rains, Thomas Ragland, Edna Short, Charlie Johnson, Ruby Stuart, Roy Geary, -----, Herbert Wilson, Leslie Wilson and teacher, Vernon Crowder.



Intersection of U.S. Highway 62 East and the Olaton Road





First Illinois Central Railroad Station at Horse Branch, which was located at the Walker Myrtle Crossing in "old Horse Branch." The last station was moved about one half mile up track in 1906, allowing freights to get a better run at the approaching "Rosine Hill.". Taken around 1900.



Train depot at Horse Branch – picture taken by Jerry Long on 5 August 1980



Team pulling an “Owensboro Wagon” leaving Horse Branch
– picture taken by Jerry Long on 5 August 1980.



Horse Branch High School



Horse Branch Elementary School



Horse Branch store



Horse Branch General Store, U.S. Highway 62 East