

Henry Scott Berry (1864-1948)

By Jerry Long
c.2025



Henry Scott Berry



**History of Kentucky, Vol. III, Judge Charles Kerr, Editor
(Chicago & New York: The American Historical Society, 1922) p.228:**

HENRY SCOTT BERRY, a prominent and successful farmer, leading business man and influential and public-spirited citizen of Daviess County, residing just west of Owensboro, has passed his entire life in this community, where he has built up and maintained a reputation for integrity in business affairs and dependability in citizenship. He is a native son of Daviess County and was born on his father's farm March 11, 1864, his parents being Edward C. and Sallie A. (Hagan) Berry.

An interesting history surrounds the name of Berry and the family has played no inconsiderable part in civic and military life. John B. Berry, the grandfather of Henry S. Berry, was born in Maryland and as a young man came to Kentucky and settled in Nelson County, where he became a prominent and successful farmer. After the Mexican war he bought three farms in Daviess County to the west of the City of Owensboro, and on these properties his sons Edward C.,

Jerre I. and William L. Berry located, subsequently becoming farmers and prominent citizens of the county in their day. John B. Berry and his wife, whose name was Ann Hagan before marriage, had five sons, Edward C., Nicholas T., Jerre I., William L. and Robert M., and three daughters: Ann, who married Jerre Hagan, of Nelson County; Mary E., who married Melvin Buckley; and Fannie, who married Judge Thomas McIlvoy. John B. Berry never lived in Daviess County, but passed the greater part of his long and useful life in Nelson County. The Berry family is descended from ancestors who were numbered among Lord Baltimore's colonists of Baltimore, and is of English lineage.

Edward C. Berry was born in Nelson County, Kentucky, March 22, 1823, and in 1848 located on the farm which had been bought by his father for him. In 1868 he established the E. C. Berry whiskey distillery on the bank of the Ohio River, about three miles west of Owensboro, which he operated until his death in 1877, the same being afterward sold in the settling up of his estate. From 1868 to 1876 he resided near his distillery, and continued his farming interests even while in the distilling business, and his endeavors in life were rewarded with consistent and gratifying success. Beyond serving several years as a magistrate he never held public office, but all times was a progressive citizen and a prominent promoter of the interests of the county, including the Daviess County Agricultural Fair, which was an institution of great importance and interest during the early days. He was a democrat in politics and very strongly in favor of the cause of the Southern Confederacy. He was a life-long Catholic and died firm in that faith September 14, 1877, at the present home of his son, on the Berry Road just west of the city limits of Owensboro, this farm having been purchased by him in 1876. Mr. Berry was married December 31, 1850, to Sallie A. Hagan, who was born near St. Mary's, Kentucky, September 14, 1834, and survived her husband many years, dying January 6, 1914. They had seven children who grew to maturity and six of them are still living, all being reared in the faith of the Catholic Church. At the outbreak of the Mexican war Edward C. Berry raised for that struggle a company at Lebanon, Kentucky, of which Edward Graves was made captain, Mr. Berry being made second lieutenant and later advanced to first lieutenant. He served gallantly during that war and returned to Daviess County, where he was equally faithful and courageous in the discharge of the duties of citizenship during his later years.

Henry Scott Berry was reared on his father's farm and educated in the public schools of Owensboro and at St. Mary's College. Farming has been his occupation in the main, although he has been and is connected with various other business interests, at this time being president of the Owensboro Forging Company, president of the Daviess 'County Farm Bureau and vice president of the Kentucky State Farm Bureau. For several years he was president of the Green River Tobacco Association. Mr. Berry was married July 9, 1901 to Miss Bessie Ewing, a daughter of the late Samuel Ridley Ewing of Daviess County. Mr. and Mrs. Berry are the parents of two daughters: Elizabeth and Sallie May, both residing at home. The family belongs to the Catholic faith and are communicants of St. Stephen's Church of that denomination at Owensboro.



An Illustrated Historical Atlas Map of Daviess County, KY.
(Edwardsville, II: Leo McDonough & Co., 1876) p.28:

Precinct No. 1 (Lower Town) Patrons

| Name | Post-office | Residence | Business | Nativity | When Came to Daviess County |
|--------------|-------------|-------------|------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| Berry, E. C. | Owensboro | – W. ½ mile | – Distiller and Farmer | – Nelson Co., Ky | – 1848 |

[page 80 – land owned by E. C. Berry is shown on a plat of Owensboro; located on the Ohio River on the west side of Owensboro about one-half mile west of the Daviess County Courthouse]



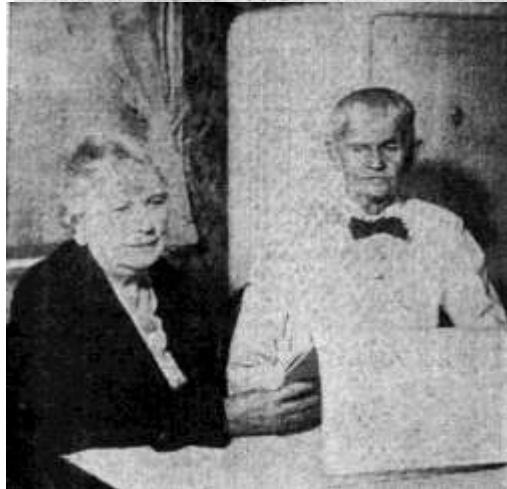
History of Daviess County, Kentucky
(Chicago, IL: Inter-State Publishing Co., 1883) p. 639:

MRS. SALLIE A. BERRY, daughter of John Hagan, is a native of Lebanon, Marion Co., Ky. Dec. 31, 1850, she married E. C. Berry and came to Daviess County, settling on a farm about five miles west of Owensboro, where they lived till 1868. In 1868 Mr. Berry built the first large distillery in this county, on the Ohio River, a half mile west of Owensboro. Its capacity was eight barrels per day. Mr. Berry died Aug. 14, 1877, leaving seven children – Lida, born May 29, 1859; John H., born June 27, 1861; Henry S., born March 11, 1864; Nannie, born Jan. 30, 1867; Rowena, born July 13, 1869; George B., born July 20, 1874; Edmund, born May 19, 1877. Mrs. Berry owns a farm of 160 acres. She is a member of the Catholic church.



Owensboro Messenger & Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 6 September 1936, p.4B:

**Mr. And Mrs. Berry Have Long
Record With Weather Bureau**



Mr. and Mrs. Henry S. Berry shown reading, a weather chart at their home.

Have Seen Hot and Cold Records
Broken During 30-Year Period

For nearly thirty years Henry S. Berry and Mrs. Berry have been keeping a daily record of Owensboro's weather for the U. S. Weather Bureau. Their job has been more a labor of love than anything else since the compensation is only twenty-five cents a day during the "corn and wheat" season which the weather bureau figures extends from April 1 to September 30 each year.

When Mr. Berry took the responsibility of keeping a daily check on the rain, the zero, sub-zero, warm and torrid days which occur here, Mrs. Berry recalls they gave little thought to the pay. It would provide pocket change for the children (there was only one child then, Elizabeth, now Mrs. Tom Payne). Since then they have thought even less of the pay, Mr. Berry turning the checks over to Mrs. Berry when they arrive.

Read Twice Daily

The official government thermometers, which are read twice daily for the weather bureau, are housed in a ventilated wood box, about the size of a beer case, and mounted on a post a few feet from the west side of the Berry residence, a short distance west of Owensboro on Highway 60.

One of the thermometers is filled with alcohol and so made that a marker in the tube stops at the day's minimum temperature. The other is filled with mercury. After the day's readings are taken, the thermometers are set for the next recording. The ventilated housing protects the tubes from the direct rays of the sun and from the worst the winter's icy blasts, making possible a more accurate recording of the temperature than would be obtained were they not so protected.

Records Are Kept

During the "corn and wheat" season, Mr. Berry sends a daily wire to the Louisville branch of the weather bureau, giving the previous day's maximum and the night's minimum temperatures along with the rainfall, if any. During the remaining six months, although daily reports are not required at Louisville, a painstaking record is kept so that periodic reports may be mailed in.

During the nearly thirty years he has the weather's ups and downs here, having accepted the assignment in April 1907, Mr. Berry has seen and recorded all types of weather conditions.

The 1936 drouth, which was broken last Tuesday night and Wednesday, was the worst on his records. The only one comparable to it was experienced here in 1881, twenty-six years before he started keeping records. The 1881 drouth, like the one this year, was broken on September 1.

Little Rainfall

The annual average rainfall here is 44 inches. During the first eight months of this year the actual rainfall totaled only 16.68 inches, leaving the remaining four months to supply 27.32 inches if the average is to be reached.

Some years, however, the rainfall has exceeded average as much or more than it has failed to come up to it this year. The wettest year experienced here, Mr. Berry recalls, produced 62 inches of rain.

Not only has 1936 had a record drouth. On July 13 a beaming sun caused the hottest temperature of record here, 107 degrees, to be entered in the weather book.

At the other end of the weather scale, 124 degrees down the thermometer, January 28 of this year came within three degrees of equalling the modern cold record, a temperature of 17 below zero being registered that morning. The coldest weather recorded during the last thirty years was 20 below zero on January 23, 1930.



(Owensboro, KY: Messenger Job Printing Co., 1943) p.20:

THE WEATHER AND RELATED PHENOMENA

In common with most of the great central valley, Owensboro has experienced with the passing years an almost infinite variety of weather. In the course of a few years, certainly of a few decades, one may meet here with almost any kind of weather that men love, hope for, dread, or fear. In the matter of temperature the extremes of heat and cold have shown a variation of at least 129 degrees Fahrenheit, though the average variation in the course of a year is much less than that, perhaps not far from 100 degrees.

For the last thirty-six years, or since 1907, the weather records have been kept by one of our outstanding citizens, Mr. Henry S. Berry, who has kindly furnished valuable data on this subject. The continuous records go back only six years further than that, but Mr. Berry seems to have been interested in the matter still earlier, or to have access to some additional record, as he writes me that on February 14, 1899, the lowest temperature was recorded, being 21° below zero. The highest temperature was reached in July, 1936, when it soared to 108°.



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 12 March 1944, p.3A:

**Official Weather Observers To Retire
After 37 Years of Service In This Section**



MR. AND MRS. HENRY S, BERRY, who have served as weather observers for this section, for 37 years are shown above as they measured the rainfall, following a heavy rain last week. Daily Mr.

and Mrs. Berry take official temperature readings, as well as measure precipitations, and make recordings and reports.

After serving as the official weather observers for this community for 37 years, Mr. and Mrs. Henry S. Berry are about to retire from that post. It was in 1907 when the late E. W. Wood, tobacconist, who had been serving as weather observer planned to go abroad, suggested Mr. Berry's name to the Louisville weather bureau, as a suitable successor. Mr. Berry accepted the duties, and has served as such since that date, though Mrs. Berry has read the thermometer and gauges as frequently probably as her husband.

The task has not been an easy one, for recordings must be made every morning and every evening. Too, from April 1 to October 1, the temperature and precipitation must be telegraphed to the Louisville bureau every morning. For this service from April 1 to October 1, only the nominal fee of 25 cents a day is allowed. This is the only remuneration the post carries, though it entails much public responsibility for there are the shippers, the produce men, and others, who must keep up on temperatures, cold spells and extreme heat, so that proper shipping precautions can be taken. In unusual weather, telephone calls start coming in early, as to the temperature

Daily reports are recorded in a ledger that provides for three carbon copies. The carbons are mailed to the Louisville bureau. At the end of the month, a monthly report must be filed. However, in turn, the weather observer receives daily weather reports, which Mr. Berry has found most interesting.

Seated before an open fireplace, where he had been wont to spend his idle hours for the last 68 years. Mr. Berry reminisced on the weather of this section as he remembered it during his lifetime.

"The year my father purchased this farm was a year very much like this one. He came to Daviess county on the thirteenth day of March and bought this place. Peach trees were in full bloom on that day and vegetation was weeks in advance. We moved down on March 17. The temperature was down and there was ice two inches thick on ponds. Needless to say, there were no peaches that year." Mr. Berry recalled.

"The latest snow I remember," he continued, "was on May 18, 1885. Snow fell all day on that day. Of course, farm crops suffered greatly. The driest year was as I remember, in 1874. This was followed by a great flood in August of the following year, 1875. Coming during the Summer, and overflowing many acres of crops and vegetation, which were left decaying by the receding waters, pestilence and malaria were prevalent here for years after that.

Coldest Weather

"The coldest weather this section ever has experienced was on Feb 14, 1899 when the mercury dipped to 21 below zero. The temperature stayed below zero until March 1, when it came up to exactly zero."

Asked to recount any incidents regarding reporting of the weather, Mrs. Berry replied with an account of one that she said probably irked her husband more than any early morning telephone call ever did.

"It was in 1917, Mr. Berry left on Dec. 4 for Kansas City to purchase some cattle. The temperature was in the fifties. When he returned on Dec. 16 there had been a sudden drop, and the ground was covered with 16 inches of snow. The next morning when the newspapers called to get the temperature, Mr. Berry reported 11 degrees below zero, and he really made the headlines that time for Urey Woodson came out with a streamer in the Messenger that read, 'Henry Berry's Farm Coldest Place This Side of North Pole'"

Mr. Berry admitted he didn't like the streamer, for after all; "it was really 11 degrees below zero," he stated. "And that 16-inch snow was followed in January with an 18-inch snowfall. This stayed on the ground until Feb 1. That eleven degrees below zero was the coldest weather for some weeks that year, and someone asked me why I didn't report any lower temperatures after that streamer in the paper. My answer was that I had put an alcohol lump under the thermometer to keep it from going any lower, as I didn't want to make the headlines again."

Extreme Heat

The hottest weather ever experienced here was 108 degrees, Mr. Berry stated. His unusual memory failed him, for the first time, here as he was unable to recall the date. "However, I do remember, it was hot then, the men on my farm worked at night. It was too hot to work in the daytime."

Mr. and Mrs. Berry were high in their praise of public corporation, and stated they really enjoyed the 37 years of service for the public.



Owensboro Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, Thursday, 10 May 1945, p.1:

Death Comes To Mrs. Henry Berry

Mrs. Bessie Ewing Berry, 79, wife of Henry S. Berry, prominent resident of this section, died at her home on Highway 60, just west of the city limits, at 11:45 a. m. Thursday. Although in failing health for two years, Mrs. Berry was critically ill only since Friday, when she suffered a heart attack. She suffered another attack Wednesday.

Mrs. Berry was born in Daviess county on September 12 1865 and was a daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Ridley Ewing, pioneer residents of this section. She attended early private schools in Owensboro and was married to Mr. Berry at St. Stephen's church on July 9, 1901.

Known for her many charitable and civic interests, Mrs. Berry was one of the organizers in 1916 of the Associated Charities, which later became the Welfare League. She served as treasurer of the parent organization, and the Welfare League since its organization, and was still acting in that capacity at the time of her death, being the only treasurer the organizations ever had. She was active for many years in the work of the Mary Kendall home. She also served as a member of the board of the Daviess County Tuberculosis association, for many years, also serving as president of the organization. Mrs. Berry was also very active in religious organizations. She was an active member of St. Stephen's Cathedral, the Altar Society and the Queens Daughters, having served as president of both of the latter.

For 37 years, Mrs. Berry was associated with her husband in the work of government weather observer, and helped make the daily recordings and reports. Mr. and Mrs. Berry resigned that work a year ago.

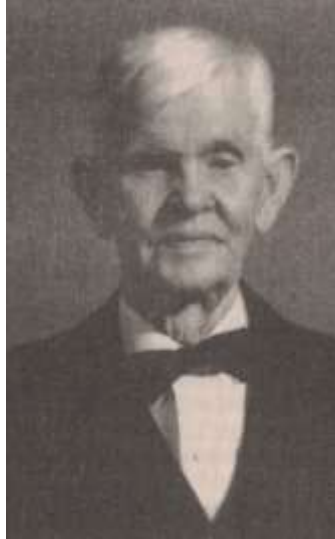
Surviving Mrs. Berry are the husband, two daughters Mrs. Tom Payne and Mrs. T. J. Boldrick, and three grandchildren Henry Berry Payne, who is in the U. S .Naval Reserve and is stationed at Notre Dame university and Thomas Joseph and Michael Boldrick. She leaves no brothers or sisters, being the last surviving member of the Ewing family.

Funeral arrangements have not been completed, but services will be held at St. Stephen's Cathedral, probably Saturday morning.



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, Sunday, 9 May 1948, pp.1A & 12A:

**Henry S. Berry, 84, Prominent
Davieess County Farmer, Dies**



Henry S. Berry

Henry S. Berry, 84, prominent Davieess county farmer and well known throughout this section, died at noon Saturday at his home on Highway 60, west of Owensboro, where he resided for seventy-one years.

Educated in the Owensboro schools and at St. Mary's college, Mr. Berry chose to remain on the farm and was actively identified with various farm organizations. He was president of the Davieess County Farm Bureau, president of the Kentucky State Farm Bureau, and president of the Green River Tobacco Growers association. Mr. Berry fought radicalism in farm organizations, but was a consistent advocate of unity among farmers in solving their problems. He worked for the furtherance and betterment of agriculture, and was instrumental in passage in the Kentucky General Assembly of the ditching law by which farms have been drained.

Mr. Berry also took an active part in organization of the first cooperative tobacco looseleaf floors here, and was leader in obtaining good roads in Davieess county.

For 25 years Mr. Berry was president of the Owensboro Forging Co., and was instrumental in organization, about 1900, of the Glass factory which flourished for a time and which is remembered for the name which it gave to a section of the city.

Mr. Berry took a prominent part in the first Merchants and Manufacturers exposition about 1915, and was chairman of its agricultural section.

Taking an active interest in education, he helped finance, about the turn of the century, a Catholic boys school known as Columbian college. The college was located in the old Dick Monarch home, which later formed the nucleus of the present Davieess County high school.

Mr. Berry and his brother-in-law, S. R. Ewing, were the two incorporators of the Catholic Diocese of Owensboro. At his death, Mr. Ewing was succeeded by R. L. Weldon. Mr. Berry was a trustee of St. Stephen's cathedral. At one time he was a member of the Investigators club.

Local representative of the United States Weather Bureau for 37 years, Mr. Berry spent much time in collecting data on weather records. He had a vast knowledge of the history of Daviess county, including developments in the industrial, agricultural and social life.

While Mr. Berry never sought office, always took an interest in elections and made speeches for tax economy and better government.

Surviving Mr. Berry are two daughters, Mrs. Thomas E. Payne and Mrs. Thomas J. Boldrick, both of Owensboro; two brothers, Edward and George Berry, of Owensboro; a sister, Sister M. Gabriel, of Loretta, Ky.; one granddaughter Sallie McIlvoy Boldrick, and three grandsons, T. J. Boldrick, Jr., and Michael Boldrick, of Owensboro, and Henry Berry Payne, of South Bend, Ind.

Funeral services will be held at St. Stephens cathedral at 10:30 a. m. Monday. Burial will be in the Catholic cemetery here.

Pallbearers will be: Active. William Jagoe, Wathen Medley, Frank Medley, A. H. Williams, S. J. Boone and W. M. O'Bryan, and honorary, H. E. Baumgarten Dr. O. B. Heavrin, Jerome J. Lighton, J. R. Lancaster, James S. Leach, Simon B. Smith, Don Moore, Dr. A. E. Willis, J. E. McClure, Lawrence Lashbrook, C. E. Field, Murray Hagan, John Lyddane, Dr. Dan M. Griffith, Robert Edwin Field, A. V. Clayton, Charles Apel, John Medley, T. B. Birkhead, R. B. Flaherty, C. A. Rogers, Green Crabtree, Spaulding Wathen, George, Cannon and Dr. C. W. Vance.



Grave in the Mater Dolorosa Cemetery, West Ninth Street, Owensboro, KY



Owensboro Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 11 May 1948, p.8 (editorial page):

Henry S. Berry, Leading Citizen

Henry S. Berry was a practical dreamer. He was a partner with elemental things — a farmer whose visions were translated into facts and his fertile acres at the west edge of Owensboro proved

that partnership. He knew the soil and what it would produce, and he knew when and how to plant, till and harvest. And his was a larger vision than the comfortable home in the shade of big trees back from the highway. He enjoyed the modern way of living, but he was not content that others did not enjoy equal comforts. His time and efforts and money were spent generously to acquaint others with the benefits of cooperative thought and planning. He was a man of active, suggestive action that stirred those who observed him to follow.

Had he so chosen his life would have been one of varied activities, but he preferred to be a farmer. His paternal grandfather came from Maryland to Nelson county Kentucky and after the Mexican war invested rather heavily in Daviess county farm lands. His father raised a company in Nelson county for service in Mexico and was first lieutenant, and 100 years ago he located in this county. It was a goodly heritage that Henry S. Berry fell heir to— of sound judgment and indomitable energy and courage. He added to that heritage with an attention to detail and to the end of his 84 years he was busy. A neighbor calling a few weeks before his death found his interest unabated, and his love for the productive acres a consuming passion that was impressive.

Always in comfortable circumstances financially he gave freely of his time— to his church as a consistent Christian who lived his religion; as a farmer who could see ahead and persuaded others to join him in cooperative movements; as a citizen who was willing to use of his means toward making the community more attractive for his own and the & generations that would come after him. An example of his public service was his identification with the federal weather bureau for more than 30 years. He was careful to collect and disseminate dependable information that would guide his neighbors and friends in the many ways their lives and business could be affected by changes in the weather. His help in forming Green River district farmers into a tobacco selling organization is history now.

Mr. Berry was a charming conversationalist. His conversation was filled with references to his young days on the farm, and how he found pleasure in building his land into one of the best farms in the county. He was an intensive farmer, as he did everything intensively. He could discuss markets— tobacco, corn and others— with the understanding of one who had acquired the knowledge by applying himself through the years. Mr. Berry was a leader in so many ways, and so conspicuous, it would be hard to single out any to mention above the others. His partnership with the good earth paid him large dividends which he shared with his neighbors. His unselfishness was a marked trait. He wanted those about him to enjoy life as he enjoyed it— in progressive comforts.



Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 9 December 1990, p.5G:

Bed & Breakfast

... Bill and Susie Tyler are planning to open a new bed and breakfast in Owensboro in April. The Tylers' new home and business will be in the old Berry farm house at 2731 W. Second St. near Ewing Road.

The house was built in 1840 and has been owned by four generations of the Berry family since the 1870s, Susie Tyler said recently. Because the residents collected data for the National Weather Service for 40 years early in the 20th century, she and her husband plan to call their B&B "WeatherBerry."

Their plan is to rent out two bedrooms on a regular basis, but they could give up more if business demands it, Susie Tyler said.

"We envision it as enjoyable and fun," as their own stays in bed and breakfasts have been, Tyler said. "I love to talk. Of course, we enjoy people. We like to have a home that's very warm and receptive. That's why we would get a kick and enjoyment out of doing this.

[**Note:** Susie W. Tyler purchased 2731 West Second Street from Henry Berry Payne & his wife, Eudora, for \$194,000. See "Real Estate Transfers," Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 6 January 1991, p.6D. Henry Berry Payne (1924-2007) was the son of Thomas Edward Payne & Mary Elizabeth Berry (1904-1984); and grandson of Henry Scott Berry (1864-1948) & Bessie Ewing.]



Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 6 February 1996, p.1D:



By Glenn Hodges, Messenger-Inquirer

Henry Scott Berry was about 6 years old during the winter of 1870-71 when he first began keeping records of the weather. He noted that year was one of intense cold with the ground covered for weeks with deep snow and that there was much below-zero weather.

Berry went on to be a prominent farmer and industrial developer in Daviess County and became the official weather observer in the Owensboro district in 1907.

Cold fronts like the one that whizzed through the Owensboro area Jan. 18 of this year and dropped the temperature from 68 degrees to 10 above zero in about 18 hours were nothing unusual for Berry.

He remembered a 90-degree drop in temperature in 1876. At 3 p.m. on Dec. 8 of that year, the temperature stood at 75 degrees. By the next morning, there was a heavy storm and the temp was down to 15 degrees below zero and there was ice in the river.

Berry said it happened again Dec. 6, 1917, when the midafternoon temperature of 75 dropped to 11 degrees below zero overnight. A violent snowstorm began on the morning of Dec. 7 and 16 inches of snow fell.

In about 1876, Berry moved to the west edge of Owensboro into the house that is now the bed and breakfast known as WeatherBerry at 2731 W. Second St. From there he witnessed some of the worst winter weather in Daviess County history, such as the gigantic sleet storm that hit Owensboro Jan. 28-29, 1902, toppling telephone and electrical lines all over town and snapping several dozen utility poles. And that winter of 1917-18 when more than 50 inches of snow fell in this area in December and January.

On Jan. 12, 1918, the government thermometer at Berry's farm registered 16 below zero, and the winter soon was being ranked as the worst since 1880-81.

A newspaper report said the streets of Owensboro looked like "no man's land on the Russian battlefield." The sidewalk pavements became trenches with snow piled 3 to 4 feet deep on the sides where pathways had been cut through the snow.

The Ohio River was frozen solid. Residents of the area ventured out bravely to walk across the ice to the Indiana side and have their pictures taken for the history books.

The coldest temperature Berry ever recorded was the 21 degrees below zero reached Feb. 14, 1899. That was equaled Feb. 2, 1951, and erased Wednesday, Jan. 19, 1994, when the temperature dropped to 23 degrees below zero in Owensboro.

In addition to collecting data on the weather, Berry had a vast knowledge of the history of Daviess County, including developments in industrial, agricultural and social life.

He was president of the Daviess County Farm Bureau, vice president of the Kentucky State Farm Bureau and president of the Green River Tobacco Growers Association. He took part in the organization of the first cooperative tobacco loose leaf floors here and led the effort to obtain good roads in Daviess County.

For 25 years, he was president of the Owensboro Forging Co. and around 1900 was instrumental in organizing the Glass Factory, which flourished for a while and is remembered for the name it gave to a section of the city on the west end.

Around the turn of the century, Berry helped finance a Catholic boys' school known as Columbian College.

It was located on East Fourth Street in the old Dick Monarch home, which later formed the nucleus of Daviess County High School (now the site of Daviess County Middle School). Berry and his brother-in-law Samuel R. Ewing were the two incorporators of the Catholic Diocese of Owensboro, and Berry was a trustee of St. Stephen Cathedral.

Because of ill health, Berry retired as the local weather observer on March 17, 1944, after 37 years of service. Another farmer, Virgil Clark, took the job in May of that year and continued in that role until the late 1970s.

Berry died at noon on May 8, 1948, at the age of 84 in the home that now not only bears his name but also that of his favorite avocation.



Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 17 March 2000, pp.1A & 2A:

Botanical Garden eyes WeatherBerry property

Group might buy bed and breakfast if it can find the money

By Keith Lawrence, Messenger-Inquirer

After nine years, Bill and Susie Tyler are retiring from the bed-and-breakfast trade. And their historic WeatherBerry home at 2731 W. Second St. will go on the auction block June 29 along with the eight acres surrounding it.

For the Western Kentucky Botanical Garden next door, the auction offers a big opportunity - if the organization can find a white knight with enough money.

"The property is zoned commercial," says Betsy Roszel, secretary of the botanical garden association. "And it could be torn down for a gas station or something. We don't want to see that happen. That would be a big loss to Owensboro."

WeatherBerry was built in 1840 and was the home of Henry Scott Berry, Owensboro's official weather observer, from 1876 until his death in 1948. The Tylers christened their bed and breakfast "WeatherBerry" in honor of its former owner.



The WeatherBerry home at 2731 W. Second St. will go on the auction block June 29. Bryan Leazenby, Messenger-Inquirer

Roszel said the botanical garden association doesn't have the money to buy the house or the time to raise it. Members hope to find a benefactor who will buy the property and either donate it to the association or hold it until the group can raise the money.

Roszel said the association hasn't decided if it would continue to operate the bed and breakfast. The house could be used for the association's office, for classroom space, as a visitor center or for parties and meetings, she said.

"We haven't really decided what we would do with it," Roszel said. "But we want to save it."

The Tylers donated 8.5 acres of their property to the city in 1973 to create the botanical garden. And Bill Tyler is the current president of the association.

"We bought another 1.5 acres," Roszel said. "So we have 10 acres now. The WeatherBerry property would give us access off Second Street. Now, our only access is off Carter Road."

The garden is open year round, but "there's not much there in the winter," Roszel said. "This year, we hope to complete our rose garden and our herb garden."

Susie Tyler said she and her husband "wanted to leave (the bed-and-breakfast business) while it was still fun. We're approaching 10 years in the business and we wanted to do something else."

They plan to move to the historic Tyler family farm in western Daviess County.

"We'll be perched on a hill overlooking a lake," Susie Tyler said.

She hasn't decided what she'll do in the future.

"I will be doing something," Tyler said. "I just haven't decided what yet."

WeatherBerry will remain open until the auction, she said. "We have many bookings between now and then."



Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 11 June 2000, p.10G:

AUCTION
"Weather Berry"

An Antebellum Home on 8.1 Acres Selling in Two Tracts
June 29th, 2731 West Second Street (US Highway 60 West)

History – WeatherBerry, Circa 1840, has had only three owners. The Moorman family built the home and lived here only a short time, The Berry family became owners via the settlement of a bad debt and lived here for four generations (115 years). The Tylers rehabilitated the home and gardens and have lived here and operated the Bed and Breakfast approaching ten years. In 1991, the Tylers gave the property the name "WeatherBerry" in recognition of the longtime Berry ownership and the long (nearly 40 years) service of Henry Scott Berry (2nd generation of the Berry family) and his wife Bessie Ewing Berry as weather recorders. The Tylers placed a replica of the original weather station on the grounds at the approximate original site. The Berry's records are on file as the official weather record for this area.

The Tylers pursued and achieved placement of WeatherBerry on the National Register of Historic Places. Its placement is based foremost on its architectural integrity and on the roles played by those who have lived here.

When the Tylers arrived, stories pertaining to the house and its occupants seemed to be in scarce supply. Since then, however, a wide range of stories have come in from individuals who have come to WeatherBerry as guests. Henry Berry Payne (4th generation, and from whom the Tylers purchased the grounds) also has written some of his reminiscences and placed them on file in the Kentucky Room at the Owensboro-Daviess County Public Library.



Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 30 June 2000, pp.1A & 2A:

Historic house brings \$347,500
WeatherBerry property sold; city doesn't offer bid

By Keith Lawrence Messenger-Inquirer

Dick Anderson says he hasn't decided what he plans to do with WeatherBerry, the historic bed-and-breakfast he bought at auction Thursday.

But the 160-year-old house should have a secure future. Anderson's wife, Sally, is a member of the Preservation Alliance of Owensboro-Daviess County.

Anderson, senior vice president and technical director for Hunter Douglas-North America, survived 19 rounds of bidding on the historic home and its 8.2 acres at 2731 W. Second St.

Terry and Linda Dukes dropped out of the bidding at \$347,000, and Anderson won the property with a bid of \$347,500.

Bill and Susie Tyler paid \$194,000 for the property in 1990 and turned it into a bed-and-breakfast that attracted visitors from around the world.

Several of them showed up Thursday to bid on antiques from the house.

"We had at least one out-of-state bidder on the property," auctioneer Bill Kurtz said. "But they dropped out early."

One expected bidder – the city – never showed " up.

Owensboro Mayor Waymond Morris had dis-, cussed the possibility of the city buying the property. The idea was to swap land in the front of the Tylers' ' property to Western Kentucky Botanical Garden next door for property the garden owns near the parking lot at Thompson-Berry Park."

The city needs more parking for its soccer fields, Morris said.

But he said Thursday that "the general consensus '.of the city commission was that that was going to be pretty expensive parking."

Morris said the city wouldn't have bid more than , \$300,000 for the property anyway.

He said the city is still interested in expanding parking for the soccer fields and is exploring other options.

The Dukes – and their Audubon Loans – have bought several high-profile pieces of property in the past two years.

In July 1998, they won the bidding on the Martin Luther King Jr. Plaza Laundry at 419 Maple St. at \$80,000. In April 1999, they got the old Sutherland Elementary School and 7.7 acres on U.S. 431 for \$104,000.

Terry Dukes said he didn't have any plans for WeatherBerry. "I own the property next door," he said.

"It was about the right price," Kurtz said. "The Tylers were happy."

"I paid more than I wanted to," Anderson said.

He said he had hoped to spend about \$20,000 less.

The Tylers are moving to the historic Tyler family farm in western Daviess County.

Rob Kingsolver, president of the botanical garden association, was hoping the city would buy the property so the garden could get an access road to Second Street.

But he said, "We welcome the Andersons as new neighbors. We're glad they got it."

The house was built in 1840 by the Moorman family. They lived there for a short time and then lost the property to the Berry family over a bad debt.

It was the home of Henry Scott and Bessie Ewing Berry, Owensboro's official weather observers from 1876 until 1948. The Tylers christened their business "WeatherBerry" in honor of its former owners.

Auctioneer John Kurtz couldn't resist having a little fun with one of the spectators Thursday.

Betsy Roszel, secretary of the botanical garden association, had said earlier that she feared that WeatherBerry "could be torn down for a gas station or something. We don't want to see that happen. That would be a big loss to Owensboro."

Kurtz walked past Roszel and whispered, "That man over there builds big gas stations."



Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 17 September 2020, pp.1A & 2A:

Botanical garden buys WeatherBerry

By Renee Beasley Jones, Messenger-Inquirer

Western Kentucky Botanical Garden officials have purchased WeatherBerry at 2731 W. Second St.

The 3,848-square-foot Italianate-style farmhouse was built in 1840 and is on the National Register of Historic Places.



The WeatherBerry farmhouse, built in 1840 and on the National Register of Historic Places, has been purchased by the Western Kentucky Botanical Garden. The sale includes nearly 4 acres adjoining the garden property and will provide visibility and accessibility to the garden from Second Street. The historic farmhouse will become the garden's welcome center and gift shop with rooms for rent for parties, special events and business retreats. Photo by Greg Eans, Messenger-Inquirer

The sale, which was finalized Wednesday afternoon, included nearly 4 acres that abut the botanical garden. More importantly, though, the house provides Second Street access and visibility — something WKBG officials have craved for years.

With WeatherBerry's purchase, WKBG now owns a total of more than 17 acres.

Shana and Ed Champion sold WeatherBerry to WKBG for \$475,000, said Lurna Strehl, executive director.

The Champions are pleased WeatherBerry now belongs to the botanical garden and will be open to the community, Ed Champion said.

"It goes with the garden," he said. "We know they will take care of it. ... I can't wait to see what they do with it."

Several years ago, WKBG officials formed a long-range planning committee tasked with exploring the garden's expansion. Future plans included building a visitors center with a gift shop and a pavilion.

Then, WeatherBerry went up for sale about a year ago, Strehl said, but it was priced higher than WKBG officials wanted to spend. Also, they feared the 1840 home would cost more in maintenance over time than two new buildings.

However, the Champions later lowered the price.

"When we got word (the price) had come down ..., it reignited the discussion of buying WeatherBerry," Strehl said.

The historic farmhouse will become the garden's welcome center. It also is expected to include a gift shop and offices.

In addition, rooms will be rented for business retreats, receptions, parties and other events. The potential exists for rentals to take place as early as the upcoming holiday season, Strehl said.

"There are so many things to uncover and explore with this purchase," she said. " ... I feel like it's launching us to the next level."

WKBG officials have not decided how the garden's current office/rental facility will be used in the future, Strehl said. The 2,500-square-foot building on the northwest corner of the garden can still be used to provide rental income and for other purposes.

Strehl wasn't sure how long it may take to turn WeatherBerry into the garden's main entrance and welcome center.

Bill and Susie Tyler bought the historic farmhouse in the early 1990s and ran it as a bed-and-breakfast for a decade.

"We had a wonderful stay at WeatherBerry," Bill Tyler said.

More than 25 years ago, they donated eight acres to the city of Owensboro to be used as a botanical garden. WKBG was the only botanical garden in western Kentucky for many years.

The Tylers named the house WeatherBerry after the Berry family, who owned the property 75 years. Henry Scott Berry was involved in local weather reporting, so the Tylers put the two together and came up with WeatherBerry.

After decades of overseeing and tending the garden, the Tylers have become synonymous with WKBG. Their dreams have come full circle now that WeatherBerry belongs to the garden, Bill Tyler said.

From a financial standpoint, WKBG is in good shape, he said. "This was the time to do it."

He believes the house will be a strong tourist draw on its own.

"It's a gem of the community," Bill Tyler said. "It should be used as a public place, and we're eager to do that."





**WeatherBerry, 2731 West Second Street, Owensboro, KY
Former home of Henry Scott Berry (1864-1948)**



See Also

- Henry Berry & Miss Bessie Ewing were married on 9 July 1901 at St. Stephen's Catholic Church in Owensboro, Owensboro Inquirer, 9 July 1901, p.3; Mr. & Mrs. Henry S. Berry have returned from bridal tour in the west, Owensboro Inquirer, 4 August 1901, p.11
- Henry S. Berry for many years one of the leading gardeners of Owensboro, has abandoned the retail trade and will hereafter raise produce only for the wholesale market, Owensboro Inquirer, 18 January 1904, p.3
- “Good Roads” by Henry S. Berry, Owensboro Inquirer, 15 March 1904, p.6; Owensboro Messenger, 13 March 1904, p.4A
- Henry Berry Discussed Good Roads Proposition, Owensboro Messenger, 12 March 1905, p.3
- “Bond County For Good Roads”, by Henry S. Berry, Owensboro Messenger, 18 June 1905, pp.1B & 13B and Owensboro Inquirer, 21 July 1905, p.4, 17 September 1905, p.4, 24 September 1905, pp.9 & 14
- “Tobacco Acreage Question Discussed by Henry Berry”, Owensboro Messenger, 18 January 1906, p.3
- Henry Berry’s Paper on “Controlled Marketing”, Owensboro Messenger, 3 March 1906, p.1
- “Farmers Adjourn After Two Days... Henry Berry Reads Paper on Good Roads”, Owensboro Messenger, 10 April 1907, pp.1-2

- “Rotation of Farm Crops: Henry S. Berry Reads an Interesting Paper Before the Investigators Club Friday Night”, Owensboro Inquirer, 23 February 1908, p.4A
- “Interesting Letters Written From Mexico By the Late E. C. Berry in 1847-48”, Owensboro Inquirer, 3 August 1908, p.1
- “Henry S. Berry Again Elected President of Green River Tobacco Growers”, Owensboro Messenger, 28 March 1909, p.1B and 2 April 1909, p.1
- “Interesting session of Investigators Club is Held With Henry Berry”, Owensboro Messenger, 18 April 1909, p.
- “A Faithful Servant: Henry S. Berry the retiring president of the Green River Tobacco Growers Association”, Owensboro Inquirer, 10 April 1910, p.4A
- “Henry S. Berry Becomes Purchaser of the Berry Farm”, Owensboro Messenger, 7 September 1915, p.5
- “Farmers Urged To Hold Back Their Tobacco”, Owensboro Messenger, 30 November 1918, p.8
- “Henry S. Berry is New President of Farm Bureau”, Owensboro Messenger, 18 Jun 1919, p.4
- “Situation is Not Beyond Control Says Henry Berry”, Owensboro Inquirer, 21 November 1920, p.2A
- “Farm Bureau is Oldest in State; Has Always Stood First From Standpoint of Accomplishment”, Owensboro Inquirer, 29 May 1924, p.1G
- “Rotation, As Practiced By Daviess Farmer, Is Urged”, Owensboro Inquirer, 3 January 1926, p.3A
- “Henry S. Berry Asks Conference With Poolers”, Owensboro Messenger, 24 June 1926, p.2
- “Berry Calls For Taxpayers’ Meeting”, Owensboro Messenger & Inquirer, 26 March 1933, p.4A
- “Taxpayers Meeting To Be Held Next Saturday”, Owensboro Messenger & Inquirer, 2 April 1933, p.8A
- “Economy League Is Given Birth: Lower Cost of Government Sought By Group Headed By Henry S. Berry”, Owensboro Messenger & Inquirer, 9 April 1933, p.8A
- “Old Time Distilleries of Daviess County Recalled”, by Henry S. Berry, Owensboro Messenger & Inquirer, 10 December 1933, p.5A
- “Henry S. Berry Gives His Reasons For Favoring Repeal Of Dry Amendment”, Owensboro Messenger & Inquirer, 3 November 1935, p.2A
- “Freaks of Weather Man Are Recalled by Henry S. Berry”, Owensboro Messenger & Inquirer, 8 December 1935, pp.1B & 8B
- “Henry Berry Describes Owensboro In Days When Town Was Without Railroad”, by Ida F. Cockriel, Owensboro Messenger, 15 January 1939, p.3B
- “Henry Berry Recalls Period When Roads In Daviess County Resembled Mere Mud Paths”, by Ida F. Cockriel, Owensboro Messenger, 22 January 1939, p.3A
- “Henry Berry Recalls That Ponds Once Covered Large Part Of City, County”, by Ida F. Cockriel, Owensboro Messenger, 29 January 1939, p.5B
- “Henry S. Berry Remembers Building Of The First Railroad In Owensboro”, by Ida F. Cockriel, Owensboro Messenger, 5 February 1939, p.5B

- “Henry Berry Recalls Cannel Coal Formerly Mined In Daviess County”, by Ida F. Cockriel, Owensboro Messenger, 12 February 1939, p.2B
- “Many Private Schools In Early Owensboro, Henry Berry Recalls”, by Ida F. Cockriel, Owensboro Messenger, 19 February 1939, p.3B
- “Henry Berry Recalls Early History Of Making Of Sour Mash Whisky In Daviess County”, by Ida F. Cockriel, Owensboro Messenger, 26 February 1939, p.3B
- “Henry Berry Recalls Early Owensboro Plants”, by Ida F. Cockriel, Owensboro Messenger, 5 March 1939, p.2B
- “Botanical garden, city both interested in WeatherBerry”, by Keith Lawrence, Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer, 8 June 2000, pp.1A & 2A
- “Antebellum Atmosphere” by Elizabeth Johnson, Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer, 29 November 2014, Real Estate Inside Out, pp.14-15
- Henry S. Berry was a member of Owensboro’s Investigator’s Club and as a member penned and presented several papers – one of these a paper entitled “Party Loyalty” was presented at a meeting of 15 October 1909 and is preserved in the collection of Investigator’s Club articles in the Kentucky Room of the Daviess County public Library, Owensboro, KY
- “Henry Scott Berry (1864-1948) Recalls”, by Jerry Long, West-Central Kentucky History & Genealogy, <https://wckyhistory-genealogy.org/daviess-county-ky/> (Daviess County History section) – papers by and recollections of Henry Scott Berry

Note: There are numerous other articles and notices by or about Henry S. Berry that were published in the Owensboro, KY newspapers. They were about local weather, farming, tobacco, business interests and proposed improvements.

