

Sulphur Springs Resort

By Jerry Long
c.2025



Kentucky Place Names, Robert M. Rennick (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 1984), p287:

Sulphur Springs (Ohio County): This was the site of a turn of the century health resort established around both fresh water and white sulphur springs in the vicinity of the present KY 69, 8 miles northeast of Hartford. The post office of Hines Mills, established in 1846 at what is now Dundee, 1 ½ miles north, was moved here and renamed on March 26, 1872, with Jeremiah B. Cannon, postmaster. It was discontinued in 1907.



Sulphur Springs on 1880 map of Ohio County, KY – on Rough Creek northeast of Hartford



Sulphur Springs is plotted on the “Map of Ohio County, Kentucky”, published in 1886 by Jno. J. McHenry, Hartford, KY. Road to its left is what is now Highway 69; Hines Mill to the north is now Dundee.

U.S. Appointments of U. S. Postmasters, National Archives

Sulphur Springs post office established 22 March 1872

Postmaster:	appointed:
Jeremiah B. Canan	22 March 1872
Albert S. Aull	30 June 1879
John W. Tabor	11 November 1884
David Morton	15 December 1885
Albert S. Aull	13 May 1889
Eugene G. Kirby	5 April 1890
Nathaniel P. Boswell	30 September 1893
Jeremiah B. Canan	14 June 1895
Albert S. Aull	18 _?. 1897
Lewis W. Hunt	6 December 1897
Lizzie Hunt	11 January 1898

John D. Johnston	29 December 1900
Redford K. Bean	26 February 1901
John D. Johnston	3 November 1904
James R. Thompson	11 Jul 1905
Gabriel B. Bean	16 July 1906

Sulphur Springs post office closed 30 September 1907
and mail transferred to the Narrows post office



Owensboro Examiner, Owensboro, KY, 10 August 1877, p.8:



Hartford Herald, Hartford, KY, 17 July 1878, p.1:

Sulphur Springs Notes.

Sulphur Springs, July 10, 1878. Editor Herald:

We think it not amiss to drop a few lines to your excellent paper...

We are anticipating quite a number of visitors to the Springs this season, for it is too well known that the water here can not be excelled anywhere. The accommodations will far surpass any that have ever heretofore been made, as Mr. J. C. Bean, the proprietor, has thoroughly repaired the hotel and furnished the rooms well with new furniture. He will, with pleasure, receive guests and give them good rooms and just what they can eat and drink, (fresh and sulphur water as the springs seen inexhaustable) at \$5 per week. Persons wishing to attend a place this summer would do well, we think, to come here.

We have rocks, hills and caves, with many other interesting things, too numerous to mention, for persons to see. With very reasonable accommodations, excellent tables, good water and the beautiful surroundings, we are astonished, that persons do not visit us more than they do.



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 7 August 1878, p.2:

WHITE SULPHUR SPRINGS, August 5, '78.

Editor Messenger. With the desire to give information to your readers who intend, either from habit, or compelled by the fatigue and the exhaustion of business during the greater part of the year, to seek during the summer months watering places wherein to enjoy and pleasantly spend a few weeks, or to recuperate and recreate their debilitated systems, as well as to perform the pleasant duty of keeping up the very agreeable correspondence so long existing between us, am I sending you this.

The springs are situated in Ohio county, 11 miles from Hartford, and 1 ½ miles from the well-known Hines' mill on Rough Creek, and are seven in all, very conveniently located with respect to each other. The principal mineral spring is of white sulphur water, in which iron and carbonic acid gas are very strong, and is the equal of any kindred water for its health promoting properties in the country, and for more than 40 years has been the objective point for health seekers in the adjacent counties. Other springs of iron and chalybeate water as well as the most cool and delightful fresh water are within the enclosure.

The surroundings are charming and full of variety, and nature has been lavish in choice gifts to render the place attractive and beautiful, as well as it is a boon to suffering humanity. Rising within 200 yards of the springs is Sugar Loaf hill, the highest of a line of beautifully wooded and well cultivated hills, running in a circle of 20 miles in circumference, enclosing a valley which for tranquillity, beauty and repose, cannot be surpassed, and of which a most delightful view is obtained from the hilltop. A number of caves are in the chain of hills. Chief among them is one on the western slope of Sugar Loaf hill, a glance at the entrance to which at once recalls the picture of Fingal Cave, in Scotland. The nicely fluted columns appear to have fallen from the original position in which placed by the builder, and the carving along the hallway and roof suggests to the imagination a temple beyond, replete with beauties which nature alone can present. The hill is supposed to be honey combed with caves, centering into one grand chamber, from which issues the cool, pellucid, and sparkling white sulphur water. In the valley in which are the springs, at the base of the Sugar Loaf hill is a grove of magnificent elms, beech and oak, of a size as wonderful as it is shady. One of the largest oaks measures 32 feet in circumference, and is entirely free from branches fall 50 feet from the ground up. Through the grove meanders a stream which is supplied from Blowing spring, so called because from the cavern out of which it and rises a cold breeze is constantly blowing, and might be indeed the winter exit of Eolus, so cold and chilly is the blast. The grove so cool, so shady and so beautiful, is truly a Valambrosa. At a distance of 1 ½ miles over a good road, well-shaded, pleasant and smooth, is a stream for fishing, boating and bathing, as good as any in the State. Wild turkey, deer, and foxes give fine sport for the hunter, while driving, riding, dancing, croquet, and archery are the favorite amusements.

As a whole, White Sulphur Springs presents to the seeker for health; rest, enjoyment, pure pleasure, recuperation and recreation, advantages over many better known, and more extensively advertised resorts. Visitors are not bled by the remorseless mosquito or pestiferous gnat, (both being unknown here,) nor troubled with the cares of existence. 'Tis such a place as Shakespeare described, when in his "As you like it" the Duke is made to say of the place:

"Exempt from busy haunts, we still find tongues in trees, books in the running brooks, sermons in stones, and good in everything."

And indeed, it bears other resemblance, for a lovely Rosalind, whose name is cut on beautiful spots, is here found to complete the pastoral picture so perfectly painted by the bard of Avon.

A word to those who may come, in order to be able to enjoy the place, and get most good, it would be a good plan to bring a hammock and camp stool along, as in the present incomplete condition of the grounds the said articles become essential.

Mr. Julius Bean, the lessee, is indefatigable in his attention to the comfort of his guests and supplies a most bountiful table.

The best route by a public way is via Beaver Dam, on the E. & P. R. R., as the stage carries passengers directly from the depot through Hartford to the springs.

The attendance of visitors has been good during July, and averages about 50 per week. Among them are Mr. Dean, of Breckenridge county, Messrs. McJohnston, Reinhardt, Morton, Osborne, of Owensboro, Hon. H. D. McHenry and family, Z. W. Griffin and family, Mr. McIntyre and family, Mr. Alexander and family, and Miss Barron, Mr. Jarred Brown, Howard Hathaway and family, Chas. Mays and wife, Miss Fannie Thompson, of Daviess, and Miss Jennie Eskridge, of Breckenridge county.

JULIE.



Hartford Herald, Hartford, KY, 7 August 1878, 3:

Messrs J. M. Johnson and A. A. Stuart, assisted by a corpse of engineers from Owensboro, will come to the White Sulphur Springs in this County, to-day to make a topographical survey of the grounds round about. The premises are owned by Hon. H. D. McHenry, of this place, J. C. Bean, who lives on the premises, and D. M. Griffith, of Owensboro. We sincerely hope the owners will erect a commodious hotel, and beautify and adorn the place, and make it regular summer resort. The water is as fine as we ever tasted anywhere.

[Note: By 10 August 1877 Julius Caesar Bean (1819-1878) was acting as proprietor of the Sulphur Springs resort hotel. He was residing on the property when he died on 10 September 1878. According to his will he owned a one-fifth interest in the tract of about 200 acres that was known as "the Sulphur Springs" (Ohio County, KY Will Book D, p.155). Henry D. McHenry, of Hartford, KY and Daniel M. Griffith, of Owensboro, also were co-owners of the Sulphur Springs resort. By 21 August 1878 David Morton was residing at Sulphur Springs and by 25 June 1879 he was proprietor of the Sulphur Springs hotel, where he was residing and renting.]



Hartford Herald, Hartford, KY, 29 January 1879, p.3:

The following is the first verse of the latest and most popular ballad at the Sulphur Springs. The well known poet and song writer, David Morton is the author. It has been set to music. Tune: – Old Blue Hen:

Some body's stole my sugar water,
I wish they'd let it say;
They surely knew they hadn't "orter"
Treat me in such a way,



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 2 July 1879, p.3:

Sulphur Springs Letter.

Sulphur Springs , June 28, 1879.

MR. MESSENGER – Come up here and bring your over-worked fellow mortals away from "the dust and heat," the worry of business and the cares of life and find rest and recuperation for mind and body at this sequestered spot, encircled by "the everlasting hills," and embowered in "the sylvan shade" of the fairest groves.

Here is indeed a haven for the Summer, undisturbed by the nocturnal serenade of the mosquito, (for singular as it may be, it is unknown here,) and with the pure air, sulphur and fresh water, pleasant walks and drives, and all facilities for the most enjoyable out-door recreations such as fishing, hunting, exploring, croquet and archery (for which preparation is being made,) of which the attractions are doubly enhanced by the general and untiring exertions of the proprietor, who, besides being a tip-top landlord for a watering place, is a thorough sportsman. Unlike many other resorts for the Summer, this place does not simply change the locality while all else is as in the city, but gives the visitor at once a realization of his dreams of "Arcadia," and with picnics, dancing, excursions to the caves, blowing spring, or the fern-beds, &c., cannot fail to leave upon the memory a picture which in days to come will be recalled with pleasure.

The hotel and grounds have been very much improved by the remodelling done by Mr. Morton, and with the stylish cottage in Gothic style, erected by Hon. H. D. McHenry for self and family, on the beautiful slope the hill, above the springs, gives the place a picturesque and pleasing air. Sunday is here the most enjoyable day. After services the people for miles around, gather in and with merry laugh and joke, fill the groves with sounds of mirth and cheerfulness. Hammocks are very popular here, and I learn that during the season many of the younger visitors pitch their tents on the hillside, hence it is inferred that a large delegation from the C. F. M. Club of your city is expected. By the way there is a visitor from your city, a Mr. Breck Speed, who, to judge from the many very pleasant things said of him and the satisfaction which is usually experienced from his visit, is the most popular of all the comers.

SIMPSON.



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, Friday, 7 November 1879, p.4:



The hotel at the Ohio County Sulphur Springs was completely destroyed by fire on Wednesday night. About eleven o'clock the flames burst forth in the kitchen, and the stiff breeze then blowing soon wafted them through the entire house. The host, Samuel Morton, and his wife

and two children barely escaped the destruction that came upon the house and nearly all that was therein. The flames were about bursting into Mr. Morton's room before he awoke. He and his wife were too much absorbed with the danger to their children and themselves to think of a few valuables that might have been carried away. Thus all their personal effects were burned, including Mrs. Morton's jewelry and Mr. Morton's watch, which was afterwards found in the ruins with the case melted away. Nothing, not even the clothing of the family, was saved, excepting a sewing machine. The hotel, we understand, was to have been sold on next Monday, by Messrs. Griffith and McHenry, present owners. The exact cause of the fire and the amount of insurance have not been learned.



Hartford Herald, Hartford, KY, Wednesday, 12 November 1879, p.2:

Burning of the Sulphur Springs' Hotel.

On Wednesday night last, the hotel at the Sulphur Springs, occupied by Mr. David Morton, was consumed by fire. The fire was supposed to have been an accidental one. Mr. Morton lost nearly or quite all of his household goods – including the wearing apparel of family. The building was owned by Hon. H. D. McHenry, of this place, and Mr. D. M. Griffith, of Owensboro. Mr. McHenry has been quite unfortunate recently, in the way of fire – having suffered a considerable loss in Owensboro, not long since. The building, we understand, was insured for about \$200, to cover rent, and was worth \$2,000. Mr. Morton keenly feels his loss, as it about cleaned him out.



Ohio County, KY Deed Book 1, p.258 & Deed Book 2, pp.123-125:

[Abstract] – On 13 February 1880 Henry D. McHenry, and wife Jennie T. McHenry, conveyed to J. H. Taylor, Henry C. Herr, David Morton and Silas M. Dean for \$1,800 his one-fifth interest in the Ohio County Sulphur Springs property which is described in a deed from James Fitzhugh to Ann E. Fitzhugh recorded in Deed Book R (?) page 287 Ohio County Court conveying 150 acres “This deed is made subject to the reservations contained in said deed and which is also further described in a Commissioners Deed to McHenry, Griffith & Bean recorded in Commissioners Deed Book C (?) pages 494 & 495 in same office for forty four acres in addition to the 150 making 194 acres in all. This deed conveys the interest of said McHenry in the rent of the property for the year 1880. Deed recorded on 23 February 1880.



Hartford Herald, Hartford, KY, 9 June 1880, p.1:

Correspondence Hawesville Plaindealer

By the way, I liked to have overlooked any mention of the Ohio Sulphur Springs. These Springs have passed into the hands of a new company, to-wit: Messrs. Silas Dean, Dr. J. Taylor,

Henry Herr and David Morton, and they are now erecting a large hotel and are preparing to make their springs an attractive watering and pleasure-seeking place. It is entirely practical for them to do so. The water is of a high order medicinally, and the grounds and surroundings are capable of being converted into all that the most fastidious pleasure-seeker, or the most despondent health-seeker, could desire.

Lest my letter becomes too long, I stop. Yours, R. Y. B. [note - Robert Young Bush]



Hartford Herald, Hartford, KY, 16 June 1880, p.2:

Articles of Incorporation of the OHIO CO. WHITE SULPHUR SPRINGS COMPANY.
To all whom it may concern:

THE undersigned having associated themselves together as they are authorized to do by the General Statutes of Kentucky - see chapter 56, Title "Incorporated Companies," hereby adopt the following ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION.

1st. "The name of the corporators are J. H. TAYLOR, S. M. DEAN, HENRY HERR and DAVID MORTON. The style of the corporation shall be the "OHIO COUNTY WHITE SULPHUR SPRINGS COMPANY," and its principal place of business shall be AT THEIR HOTEL situated on the Springs property IN OHIO COUNTY KENTUCKY.

2nd. The general nature of the business proposed to be transacted shall be to improve the Springs property, build an Hotel and carry on the same, and make it a WATERING PLACE OF PUBLIC and POPULAR RESORT.

3rd. The amount of capital stock of said Company is EIGHT THOUSAND DOLLARS, to be paid in one, two and three years, from the 1st day of March, 1880, but the corporators may increase said capital stock, and fix the valuation of same, and the number of stockholders by future enactment and notice.

4. The corporation commences on the 1st day of April, 1880, and continues indefinitely, or at such a time as a majority of the Stockholders may conclude to terminate same if they hold a majority of the stock of the company.

5. The officers of said company shall consist of a PRESIDENT AND MANAGER; who shall conduct the affairs of the company, and they shall be elected once in every year.

6. The highest amount of liability or indebtness to which the company shall at any time subject itself shall not exceed FOUR HUNDRED DOLLARS.

7. The private property of the corporators and stockholders of said company SHALL BE EXEMPT FROM THE DEBTS OF THE CORPORATION.

J. H. TAYLOR, S. M. DEAN, H. CLAY HERR, DAVID MORTON.

May 10th, 1880.



Messenger and Examiner, Owensboro, KY, 16 June 1880, p.3:

The hotel at Sulphur Springs, Ohio county, has just been completed, and is conveniently and handsomely arranged. It has twenty large, airy rooms. These springs will no doubt be numbered among the most popular in Kentucky in a short time.

.....

Semi-Weekly Messenger and Examiner, Owensboro, KY, 25 June 1880, p.2:

THROUGH TO THE SPRINGS THREE TIMES PER WEEK

—BY—

THE REGULAR STAGE LINE.

As Mail Contractor for the Government I will Run a Stage Line
Through to the

WHITE SULPHUR SPRINGS,

Ohio County, Ky., three times per week, leaving Owensboro Monday's, Wednesday's and Friday's at 7 o'clock a. m., arriving at the Springs the same day.

SINGLE TRIPS, \$2.25. ROUND TRIP, \$4.00.

I will call for passengers in any part of the city. Orders left at J. T. Harrison's will receive prompt attention.

P. W. EIDSON, Contractor.

HO! FOR THE SPRINGS!

HEALTH AND PLEASURE COMBINED.

COMMENCING ON

MONDAY, JULY 5TH, 1880,

I will, during the remainder of the season, run a through Stage Line from
Owensboro to

Sulphur Springs, Ohio County.

Two trips a week will be made, leaving Owensboro every Monday and Thursday mornings at 7 o'clock; the Stage going via Hartford and arriving at the Springs on the evening of the day of starting. Returning will leave the Springs on Tuesday and Friday mornings at 6½ o'clock.

THE SPRINGS have been made more attractive this year than ever before. A new, large and commodious Hotel, with other improvements make it one of the most pleasant resorts in the State.

Single Trip, \$2.25; Round Trip, \$4.00.

Calls will be made for passengers in any part of the city when orders are left at Courtney's Drug Store, or at my residence corner Crittenden and Fifth sts. I am also prepared to take excursionists to Mammoth Cave, in parties of ten or fifteen at very reasonable prices.

J. F. RICE.

**Ohio County, KY 1880 Census, Sulphur Springs Voting Precinct,
Enumerated 26 June 1880, p.621A, household #190-190:**

Morton, David	head	37	KY	hotel keeper
“ Melvina	wife	33	KY	keeping house
“ Lucy	daughter	10	KY	
“ Maggie	daughter	8	KY	
“ David	son	4	KY	
Jewel, Thomas		22	KY	mulatto – laborer
Morton, Samuel	brother	339	KY	single – clerk in store



Hartford Herald, Hartford, KY, 9 July 1884, p.3:

SULPHUR SPRINGS.

Opening of this Favorite Resort for the Season.

The Ohio County White Sulphur Springs was opened for the season of 1884, July 4th, and a more brilliant opening has never marked the history of this noted watering place. The event had been looked forward to with great interest to all pleasure seekers, and the long list of pleasures were far in excess of the most extravagant imagination. Visitors from Hartford, Cromwell, Beaver Dam, Rosine and other places went largely to make up the immense crowd that had gathered to witness the grandest opening of the enterprise that is the pride of every citizen of Ohio county. Mr. and Mrs. Morton, host and hostess, were so perfect in the arrangement of the programme of the day that the dictates of the most fastidious were fully met in some way or the other, and all joined in the unanimous verdict that the day was the most pleasant one ever spent at the "fountain of health."

A fine string band from Owensboro, under the leadership of Prof. George Phillips, of this place, was in attendance, and rendered such irresistible music that the large dancing hall was kept constantly filled with gay and happy dancers, who indulged in their innocent and healthful amusement throughout the day and night.

The various candidates for county offices, were on hand to urge their respective claims, each of whom made short and pointed speeches...



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 28 May 1893, p.8:

Sulphur Springs to Be Reopened.

The Ohio county springs, once so popular with the people of Owensboro, are to be reopened this season on a scale which it is hoped will bring back some of the prestige they once enjoyed as a resort for health and pleasure. Mr. David Morton has made extensive improvements about the place, and will make every arrangement for the entertainment of guests from a distance.

The of Rough railroad now runs within three miles of the springs, and a hack line will be established to meet every train.



Hartford Herald, Hartford, KY, 10 January 1894, p.2:

Mrs. Dave Morton has sold the Sulphur Springs property to Mr. Cate, of Henderson, the consideration being \$5,000. Mrs. Morton reserves 60 acres of land and the Cannon house and lot, all of which is on the South side of the road.



Hartford Republican, Hartford, KY, 27 April 1894, p.3:

To Open Soon.

Mr. Webster Cate, of Henderson, who purchased the Sulphur Springs watering place, of Mrs. D. M. Morton, some time ago, a notice of which appeared in these columns, came up last Friday with his son, Mr. Ernest Cate, to begin various improvements about the Hotel and grounds. The former of the two gentlemen returned on Monday and next week he expects to move his family up. Young Mr. Cate is engaged in the work of improvement. The Hotel has been newly furnished and will soon be ready to open.



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 18 May 1894, p.8:

Mr. David Morton, who has kept Sulphur Springs for several years, will move his family to California in a few days.



Kentucky Places and People, Utica, KY: McDowell Publications, 1988, p.299

(“Kentucky Gazetteer and Business Directory For 1895-1896,”

R. L. Polk & Co. & A. C. Danser, Detroit, MI & Louisville, KY, 1895):

SULPHUR SPRINGS, Ohio county, 10 miles northeast of Hartford, the county seat and bank location, and 7 ½ from Rosine, the shipping point. Population, 50. J. B. Canan, postmaster.

Aull, A. S., drugs and justice.
Bean, H. F., physician.
Cana, J. B., grocer.
Hunt, L.W., coroner.
Johnston, G. L., wagonmaker.

Leach, L. N. & Co., grocers.
Moors, W. N. & Co., saw mill.
Renfrow, Fitzhugh, general store.
Tabor Bros., general store.



Hartford Herald, Hartford, KY, 29 November 1899, p.3:

David Morton Dead.

David Morton died at Bowling Green Thursday morning, after an illness of several weeks. Mr. Morton was a native of Owensboro, having been born there fifty-eight years ago, and most of his life was spent there. He went to Bowling Green a year ago and engaged in the hotel business. He served in the Confederate army, and after the war closed, he was married to Miss Melvina Barron. Mrs. Morton died three years ago, and a daughter, Miss Belle, only survives. For several years he was manager of the hotel at Sulphur Springs, Ohio county, and for several years was proprietor of the Planters house, Owensboro.



Hartford Republican, Hartford, KY, 6 November 1903, p.4:

DUNDEE, KY: Nov. 4. – Mr. T. C. Bean has purchased the hotel and feed stable at Sulphur Springs and moved in. [Note: Tilden Cook Bean (1877-1948) transferred the Sulphur Springs hotel property during 1907-1912.]



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 4 June 1904, p.7:

OHIO COUNTY NEWS

The Sulphur Springs hotel is undergoing many repairs and improvements. A dancing hall is also being built in the grove near the spring. Marvin Bean has charge of the work.



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 29 June 1905, p.3:

HAS MANY ATTRACTIONS.

How An Owensboro Man Fared at Sulphur Springs Hotel.

Sulphur Springs, Ky., June 22. – Editor of Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, Ky. – Dear Sir: I am not a country correspondent with interesting information of the movements of Jim Smith and Bill Jones. I am just a country sojourner with a word of recommendation for the place where I am stopping.

It is useless for me to introduce the Sulphur Springs of Ohio county, for it is remembered by the older citizens of Owensboro as the resort of some fifteen or twenty years ago.

It has recently been remodeled and is now under good management. For those who may be looking about for a quiet, comfortable place to spend a vacation season, I will say that you will find this resort ideal.

The house is well screened, so that there are no insects within, but when I sit out on the front porch all the flies and mosquitoes of the country are there. Can you wonder?

This sweet geranium (?) water is the cure for all ails and the black mud below the drain pipe has long since been accepted as a remedy for every disfigurement which may befall complexion – restores bloom to the cheek and removes same from the nose.

The dance hall is just as ably fitted up for the Saturday night swing and the Sunday night service, with the customary refreshment stand adjacent.

Croquet grounds and hammocks abound while the neighboring highways and byways afford ample jaunts for the restless and romantic strolls for happy lovers.

The ear is gladdened by the note of sweet song birds by day, and at night, we listen to the call of the whip-poor-will and the inquisitive hoot owl until at last we fall asleep to the swamp frog's lullaby.

Come and bring the children. For rates and particulars write T. C. Bean, proprietor.
Sincerely yours, W. F. REINHARDT.



Hartford Herald, Hartford, KY, 15 May 1912, p.8:

SULPHUR SPRINGS

We are expecting a boom at the Sulphur Springs this coming summer, especially if Mr. Thompson, the proprietor of the springs property, will spend a few thousand dollars in the way of improvements. We are sure we have the water. over any other place in Kentucky. All we lack is the right kind of improvements and the people will come.

[Note: Anthony V. Thomson (1862-1927) acquired the Sulphur Springs hotel property from T. C. Bean during 1907-1912.]



Hartford Herald, Hartford, KY, 6 August 1919, p.7:

SULPHUR SPRINGS

J. F. Magan has bought and moved into the hotel at this place and will be prepared to keep boarders during the summer and winter months.



**Hartford Herald, Hartford, KY, 14 June 1922, p.4 and
Hartford Republican, Hartford, KY, 16 June 1922, p.4:**

GRAND OPENING
Picnic and Ball
—AT—
SULPHUR SPRINGS

Old Sulphur Springs, which was for more than a hundred years one of the most famous watering places and health resorts in Western Kentucky, will again echo to the sound of many voices and her ballroom resound to the tripping of the light fantastic toe on

Next Fourth of July.

The proprietor. Mr. J. F. Magan, has, during the past several months, entirely remodeled the hotel, torn down and built anew the famous ball room and improved the well and grounds in every way.

A number of visitors are already stopping at the resort, but on July Fourth, will come the grand opening. On that date there will be given a grand Picnic with the Opening Ball that night.

This place, with its rolling lawns, beautiful groves and best sulphur water in the State, should be inviting enough to prevent anyone from going elsewhere in search of health or recreation.



Ohio County News, Hartford, KY, 30 May 1930, p.4, ad:

Furniture Sale

We will on –

SATURDAY, JUNE 7th

Beginning at 9:00 a. m., at the Hotel in –
SULPHUR SPRINGS

Offer for sale at public auction all our furniture now in the Sulphur Springs Hotel. The hotel property has recently changed hands and for this reason we are offering for sale at your own price the following:

Piano	Living Room Suite
Tables	Dining Room Suite
Chairs	Large Range
Dressers	Rugs
Beds	
Also Many Pieces of Antique Furniture	

J. F. MAGAN





– We will sell the Sulphur Springs Hotel and its properties as outlined herein:

NOW OWNED by J. F. MAGAN

We will sell this hotel property together with the dance hall, filling station and farm, which contains as a whole about 42 acres.

LOCATION

This property is located on the New Grade about 10 miles northeast of Hartford, the county seat of Ohio county. This is also in Ohio county and about 1¼ miles south of Dundee.

DESCRIPTION

This property is well improved except the hotel needs some repairs. The hotel is a 20-room building with 2 large halls, 1 porch and a large basement, 20x50 feet. The hotel has beautiful shade and grass. The dance hall is 42x60 feet, well taken care of with metal roof. It also has side waiting places lunch departments, etc.

The spring is in good condition. Plenty of shade at dance hall and spring.

The gas service station is 24x24 feet with a shed over pumps 14x24 feet. This is a new station, and building in perfect condition. There are about 2 acres of land across the road from the rest of the property, where the station is located. Ground is all level. There is also a stock barn and plenty of outbuildings.

GROUNDS

The hotel, spring and park land contain about 4 acres, the woods contain about 16 acres and then land. there are about 22 acres in crops, all good strong land.

REASON FOR SELLING

The owner, Mr. Magan, is old and not able to run this business and as it is a young man's job it will be sold on the date above mentioned to the highest and best bidder. Good terms will be made on this property. We will offer some of this property, such service station and some lots separate. This is a real opportunity for some young person to get this business now as the new highway will soon be built and then business will be the lucky owners.

Come one and all. We will look for you. Bring out the children and see the free Balloon Ascension and free prizes. Lunch on the grounds.

If you want to sell that store or real estate see us. We can do it. Satisfaction guaranteed.
Free appraisal of your property.

DON'T FORGET the date and Balloon Ascension
more information see large bills

Lincoln Realty and Auction Co. Incorporated

A. R. Shoffner, Mgr. Phone 95, Hodgenville, Ky. 'The oldest, largest and most
successful of its kind south of the Ohio river. Please tell your neighbors. Thanks.



Ohio County News, Hartford, KY, 5 February 1932, p.1:



Perhaps the most important business transaction in Ohio county since the dawning of the new year occurred when the Beaver Dam circuit; of the Methodist Episcopal Church closed a deal Saturday with J .F. Magan for the purchase of the Sulphur Springs property including the hotel, springs, dance hall and surrounding grounds. The church was represented in the deal by Rev. T. B. Ashby, superintendent of the Louisville conference, and Trustees L. T. Davis, of Cromwell; J. T. Embry, of Beaver Dam, and Ernest Cole, of Dundee.

The trustees recently sold the parsonage in Beaver Dam to John H. Barnes and Rev. J. R. Hardison pastor of the circuit, who with his family had been residing there, moved this week to the Sulphur Springs hotel. This building will be improved at once and will be used as a parsonage.

The dance hall near the mineral spring and the Williams Mines church will be razed and the material used in erecting a house of worship on the present site of the dance hall, according to the present plans of the trustees. They also, expect to use the newly acquired property and grounds as a summer resort and camping ground for the young people of the church.

The Beaver Dam circuit embraces the following churches: Beaver Dam, Cedar Grove, Bald Knob, Shiloh and Cromwell.

[Note: James Franklin Magan (1866-1941) also at various times had also operated a grocery store, saw mill and an auto service station in Sulphur Springs.]



Country roads

Ohio spring once resort

By John Maglinger, Messenger-Inquirer

SULPHUR SPRINGS, KY. — The old dance hall isn't what it used to be and the yellow poplar hotel is missing altogether, but if you look hard enough you can find traces of what made this quaint Ohio County settlement a fashionable health resort at the turn of the century.

Tucked away some 200 yards off Kentucky 69 — just south of Dundee — a bone dry sulphur well raises its antique head beneath a cedarwood shelter.

Years ago, its water was hailed as an elixir by persons anxious to ward off certain "constitutional imbalances," that were considered harbingers of failing health.

The surrounding countryside, lined with elm, maple and beech trees, also provided a relaxing backdrop for those interested in escaping the heat of the city.

Since his father operated the summer resort from 1918 until 1931, John Magan has more than a passing acquaintance with the fluxuating fortunes of Sulphur Springs.

"In the horse and buggy era, this was the gathering place for the folks around here," Magan said.

In 1880, a stagecoach from Owensboro traveled the gravel roads to Sulphur Springs jostling passengers over chuckholes and causing one wry gentleman to remark that he needed a taste of something stronger than sulphur water after making the trip.

Others booked passage on the showboats that roamed Rough River, disembarking at Hartford and completing the 10-mile journey to the resort by carriage.

After its initial success, Sulphur Springs fell on hard times and when Magan's father assumed ownership the resort was a ramshackled, overgrown mass of foliage and cracked timbers.

"My father had to have men cut down the bushes, drain off the water in the lowlands, and the dance hall was so rotted, he built a new one," the 72-year-old Magan said.

The dance hall — which is now used as a storage area — once throbbed to the music of an 8-piece band as breathless couples swayed and pivoted across its polished floor to such "hot" numbers as "The Wang Wang Blues" and "Toot Toot Tootsie."

"There also were barbecues and chicken dinners," Magan said, "and people would bring their jugs, tin cups and glasses and fill up at the well."

On a typical Sunday, the gentlemen played croquet while the younger set paired off beneath the shade trees, gossiping noisily and hoping the sun would hurry down so they could hold hands without being rebuked by their parents.

Ever so often, a lady would detach herself from a circle of friends and walk to the sulphur well for another cupful of the restorative liquid.

"The local people used to call it a 'sulphur gum' well," Magan said, "because it was lined with gum tree wood. The wood was later replaced with clay tiles, though."

Not only was the sulphur water renowned for its curative powers, but the rich, black mud that oozed from the base of the well also had its uses.

"The mud was thought to cure foot sores," Charles Conkwright, Magan's great-nephew said, "but the women applied it as a facial treatment."

Although there are only a few homes in Sulphur Springs today, the community once boasted a post office, drug store, two grocery stores, a church and, of course, the 20-room hotel to accommodate out-of-town visitors.

Its rough-sawed beams were constructed in 1873 – and despite a fire six years later – the building was as sturdy as ever when it was razed several years ago, according to Magan’s sister, Jessie Kester.

Mrs. Kester, whose home now rests on the hotel’s former site, recalls the furnishings in the various bedrooms:

“Each had a straw mat rug, an iron bed, a washbone pitcher and a china chamber pot,” she said.

When the property was sold to the Methodist church in the '30's, the dance pavilion was converted into a meeting hall and Magan said that the preachers would sometimes claim “the devil lived under this very floor”.

Whatever the medicinal properties of sulphur water actually were, Mrs. Kester said the bands of gypsies who used to pass through the area considered it something special.

“They would baptize their children in the sulphur water,” she said, “and give it to them to drink. I never saw a little baby refuse it – they’d even cry for more – but the dogs wouldn’t touch it.”

Sounding what was probably the prevailing opinion of the time, Conkwright – who sampled the water before the well went dry – said:

“If you’re thirsty, it tastes good. If not, you had to hold your nose to get it down.”



John Magan, right, and his great-nephew, Charles Conkwright, inspect the old sulphur well at Sulphur Springs – a popular Ohio County health resort at the turn of the century. The well's wooden shelter was built by Magan's father, who operated the resort for 13 years. (Messenger-Inquirer photo)



Ohio County Times-News, Hartford, KY,
12 September 1984, pp.2B, 3B & 4B:

Historic Sulphur Springs

By Dorothy Gentry

Such were delightful occasions when Sulphur Springs was in its heyday back in the eighteen-eighties.

The Hartford Herald reported on August 21, 1880: "The Sulphur Springs, about nine miles from here--a lovely resort, splendid water, grand and varied scenery and beautiful groves. A large house, accommodations of all kinds as well as amusements is now underway and we all hope next summer it will be one of the gayest resorts in the state."

The old dance hall is now gone as is the 20-room yellow poplar hotel, but oldtimers still talk of the fashionable health resort and the polished dance floor that once throbbed to the rhythm of bands blaring such numbers as "The Wang Wang Blues" and "Toot Toot Tootsie" as breathless couples swayed and swooned to the music.

The nearby sulphur springs, once hailed as an elixer capable of prolonging life indefinitely, and a cure-all for every ailment, is now bone dry and the framed structure that surround it, is but a memory.

Not only was the sulphur water renowned for its power of curing what ever ailed, the black mud around the spring was also believed powerful and "would cure foot sores" some thought. Women used the mud as masques for smoothing out wrinkles and facial improvements, and bands of gypsies who sometimes passed through the area, considered it something special.

"They would baptize their children in the sulphur water," Mrs. Lester Kester, a former resident, said, "and give it to them to drink. I never saw a little baby refuse it -- they'd even cry for more -- but the dogs wouldn't touch it."

Charles Conkwright, another resident, said, "If you were thirsty, it tasted good. If not, you had to hold your nose to get it down."

The first hotel, according to Stanley Magan, a former 'Springs' resident, was built and owned by David Morton and was located on the south side of the road, across from the spring on a knoll with several beech trees around. It was near the former Wilbur Johnson house. A fresh water spring was about 300 yards from the original hotel.

The first dance hall near the Sulphur Spring was of hexagon shape with a cupola built on top at the center of the hexagon style roof. A section of the roof extended over an addition that was used by musicians and bands. A baluster railing surrounded the band stand, separated two entrances, and a solid paneled chair-high balustrade continued around the open air dance hall.

The Hartford Herald issue of July 9, 1884 had the following article:

"The Ohio County Sulphur Springs was opened for the season of 1884, July 4th, and a more brilliant opening has never marked the history of this noted watering place.

"The event had been looked forward to with great interest to all pleasure seekers, and the long list of pleasures were far in excess of the most extravagant imagination. Visitors from

Owensboro, Hartford, Cromwell, Beaver Dam, Rosine and other places went largely to make up the immense crowd that had gathered to witness the grandest opening of the enterprise that is the pride of every citizen of Ohio County.

"Mr. and Mrs. Morton, host and hostess, were so perfect in the arrangement of the programme of the day that the dictates of the most fastidious were fully met in some way or the other, and all joined in the unanimous verdict that the day was the most pleasant one ever spent at the 'fountain of health'.

"A fine string band from Owensboro, under the leadership of Prof. George Philips, of this place, was in attendance, and rendered such irresistible music that the large dancing hall was kept constantly filled with gay and happy dancers, who indulged in their innocent and healthful amusement throughout the day and night.

"The various candidates for county offices, were on hand to urge their respective claims, each of whom made short and pointed speeches, after which they were followed by Mr. R.P. Rowe, armed and equipped with Republican campaign 'facts and figures', who addressed the people at length, and who made such ridiculous statements that his great flow of oratory was entirely wasted. "Mr. Rowe was answered by Mr. H.B. Kinsolving, the young Henry Clay of Kentucky, who not only denied in total the statements made by Mr. Rowe, but ventilated them in such a thorough manner as to render them even more ridiculous than at first hearing. Mr. Rowe was so completely snowed under that, in the language of Mr. Kinsolving, we firmly believe it will be many days before he will again 'waive his bloody shirt tails'."

Unusually large crowds turned out for each event scheduled at the Sulphur Springs grove. There were barbecues and chicken dinners and people would bring their jugs, tin cups and glasses and fill up at the well. Dinners were served in an open air dining hall at the rear of the hotel.

The grounds were spacious. Gentlemen in Serge suits sometimes played croquet, bragged about their fox hounds, or dealt with practical subjects such as how to break a dog from sucking eggs, or how to treat a cow for 'hollow tail'.

Many tall tales were told around the spring as another cupful of the restorative liquid was consumed.

Women, wearing ankle-length skirts, wide brim hats and glove-fitting corsets, sat uncomfortably for hours in the shade of the elm, maple and beech trees and talked of emblem-pillow designs, "wash-boiler" canning of acid fruits and tomatoes, the price of white lawn, or tatting designs for gown yokes or hug-me-tights, but ever so often, they too, would detach themselves from a circle of friends and stroll to the spring for another drink of water.

Sulphur Springs was becoming a widely known place and business boomed.

In 1888 Albert Cox announced in the local newspaper: "I will on and after the first day of July, 1888, run a daily stage line from Sulphur Springs to Rosine during the summer. People will find the shortest and most pleasant route. I will meet all day trains at Rosine during the week, Sundays if specially ordered."

The town had a livery stable, a school with eight grades, a post office, two drug stores and even a saloon.

The original Sulphur Springs Hotel later burned and was replaced by a new hotel on the knoll north of the road that remained until recent years. A fire there also caused considerable damage, but no injuries, and repairs were soon made.

The property was sold by Morton and some three other parties owned the Sulphur Springs Hotel and Dance Hall before 1918 when Jim Magan, of Dundee, assumed ownership and operated the facilities for 13 years.

A new dance hall was built by Magan where Marvin Bean and his band would play for the visitors and residents of the area. Other bands also came from Owensboro, Bowling Green, Madisonville and the surrounding area.

Business boomed in Sulphur Springs. Mrs. Sara Smith opened a millinery shop and ladies came from over a wide area to purchase one of her creations. A post office was opened across from Acton's Store, the first "filling station" was built and opened by Jim Magan and operated by his sons, John and Stanley, and there were two drug stores and two other general stores.

Magan's wife, the former Miss Berta Johnston, had written an article in 1961, shortly before her death, November 5, 1961, at age 85, entitled "Reminiscences of Sulphur Springs". The following was her story, courtesy of her son, Stanley, of Hartford.

"Sulphur Springs is one of the oldest towns in Ohio County, but not the largest.

"Well do I remember when the post office was here. It was kept in the building of Jerry Cannon's general store. At that time, the mail was carried on horseback from here to Rosine, three times a week, by W.S. Cole, carrier. A drug store, owned by A.B. Aull, was located where the present Mrs. Donna Moore Marsh residence is. Later, Pard Tabor owned the drug store, located across the road from Aull's old stand. The two-story residence at the rear of the drug store was owned by Pard Tabor. Other business places included a general merchandise store, owned by Jerry Cannon, and a blacksmith shop owned by G.L. and J.D. Johnston.

"Some of the doctors who lived in Sulphur Springs in those days were Dr. Frank Bean, Dr. Tom Wedding, Dr. 'Deck' Wedding and a Dr. Miller.

"The old 20-room hotel, owned by David Morton, was always full of boarders in the summertime with guests who came from a distance to enjoy the healthy sulphur springs water and to enjoy the balls, picnics, barbecues and good music.

"I am now about 85 years old but well do I remember the girls at these balls, all dressed up in their white lace evening gowns and blue or white satin slippers and I would wonder if I would ever get grown so I could wear pretty clothes like they did. (When I was in school I had to wear heavy dresses with sleeve aprons over that.)

"Some of the girls I remember who attended the balls were Ada Aull, Lucy, Mag and Belle Morton, Belle Hamilton and Mary from Hartford and Owensboro. Some of the popular young men were Bird and Sam Wallace and Johnny Ragsdale.

"Sulphur Springs continued to be a resort for several years until the property was sold to Cook Bean and later to Thompsons.

"During this period, several colored people lived around the community and had a church just down the road where they worshipped.

"I must tell you about the fate of 'Uncle' Joel Hamilton's dog. Uncle Joel was old and tottery but he always went to the colored folks church and took his little dog. Many other white people attended because they enjoyed the services. But Uncle Joel's little dog always lay on the floor at his feet. One night when the shouting started and the white people in the rear of the building stood up on their seats made of wide boards layed on blocks, one of the boards broke and mashed Uncle Joel's dog flat as a pancake. Uncle Joel never went back to the services there again.

"In the spring of 1918, Jim Magan, then living in Dundee, decided to buy the Sulphur Springs property, retire in the shade and drink sulphur water the rest of his days, which he did. The Magan family resided there and continued with the picnics, dances and activities until 1931 when the hotel and six acres in the park and the springs were sold to the Methodist church through Dr. T.B. Ashley, Bishop Watkins and other church leaders. (Ashley was the father of Mrs. Hugh Duke, Sr. city.)

"The church then took over and dedicated the dance hall for a tabernacle where many camp meetings, Bible schools and conferences were held. Cottages were built and a worship house was made at the hotel. The building was remodeled , partitions were removed and a large auditorium made. Some of the rooms were made for Sunday School class rooms. The rest of the building was used for a parsonage with modern facilities added.

"The women of the community worked hard and late to make money to furnish the parsonage. Ice cream suppers, pie suppers, quiltings, etc., helped in a large way to cover the expense which has now all been paid for and for which we are all very proud."

During the height of the Sulphur Springs Church Camp, the 1937 flood hit Kentucky. Rough River flooded its banks and streams and Ohio County's lowlands became one large body of water. About five private homes and the old hotel building were on high grounds, and though surrounded by the flood waters, the occupants did not have to move out.

Many stories have been related concerning the flood and Mrs. Earl Russell, whose father, Mack Martin, was a mail carrier at the time, said he pulled a boat to take the mail to Narrows, using telephone wires along the route as his visual guide.

Some residents refused to move out from lowlands and one story of Jim Magan, who then resided in the home also on the north side and in lowland, stated that he bored a hole through the floor of his home so he could reach through with his finger to find out how high the water was reaching.

In 1939, the Conference sold the church property to the Sulphur Springs Methodist Church and it became the sole responsibility of the members to maintain and keep it up.

The Sulphur Springs Methodist Church continued until in 1968 when the congregation united with the Dundee Methodist Church and in the spring of 1970 Mr. and Mrs. Lester Kester purchased the property from the church owners, returning once again the ownership to the daughter of Jim Magan, operator of the old hotel.

The property contained a large white dormitory building used by the Methodist Camp and also a log cabin near the sulphur spring. Mrs. Kester 's daughter, Mrs. Betty Jane May and her husband, Bill, remodeled the dormitory building into a beautiful and spacious two-story white residence.

In the early 70's the hotel was razed and Mrs. Kester's grandson, John Paul May and Mrs. May constructed a very large and efficient log home over the portion containing the basement to the hotel. That property was sold during the past year.

Mr. and Mrs. Kester also constructed a log dwelling out some distance from her grandson's home, and the property of Mr. and Mrs. May is now occupied by her daughter, Polly and husband, Gary Porter. The old log cabin, built and used by members of Methodist Ephworth League, has been torn down.

The residential population remains about the same at Sulphur Springs; some of the family names are still around, and the community is a quiet, peaceful place.

It has been said that Sulphur Springs did not suffer a loss of population, just popularity, yet the colorful days of the "horseless carriage", picnics and large gatherings in the grove of beech, maple and walnut trees are still pleasant memories, and the joyous activities, the grand hotel and its balls, and the open air dance floor remain as colorful and distinct as ever when oldsters reminiscense.



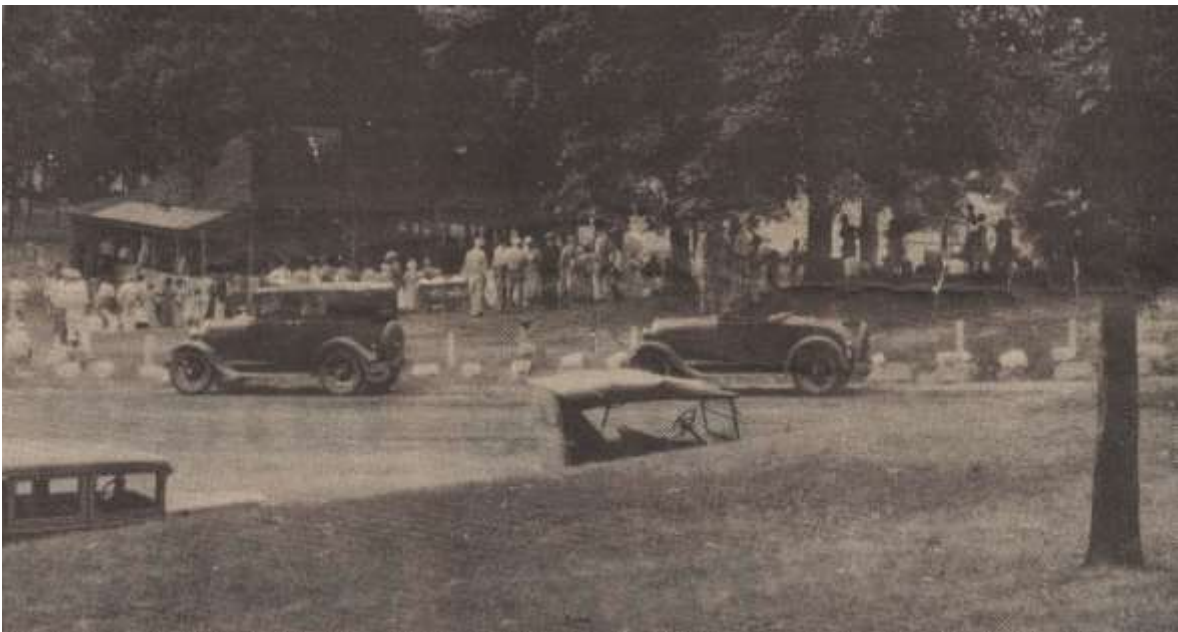
Left – The latticed shelter that surrounded the famous old sulphur water spring has long since gone with the ages and the water, hailed as an elixir that was a cure-all, is no more at the now bone-dry well. The young lady in the picture is the former Miss Rachel Duff, resident of Sulphur Springs, now Mrs. Rachel Kerris, of Daytona Beach. Right – Sulphur Springs Methodist Ephworth League Log Cabin, built by the young people during the days of camping. The cabin has since been torn down.



The old Dance Hall at Sulphur Springs, later converted to a tabernacle when the Methodist Conference purchased the property, was a victim of the 1937 Flood but damages were repaired and it continued to be a meeting place for as many as 5,000 at some of the Methodist Church activities.



Bob Acton, Otis Duff and Roscoe Day, getting ready for a night's fox hunt, one of the major sports at Sulphur Springs over a half century ago. Duff always kept a number of well bred, spirited fox hounds.



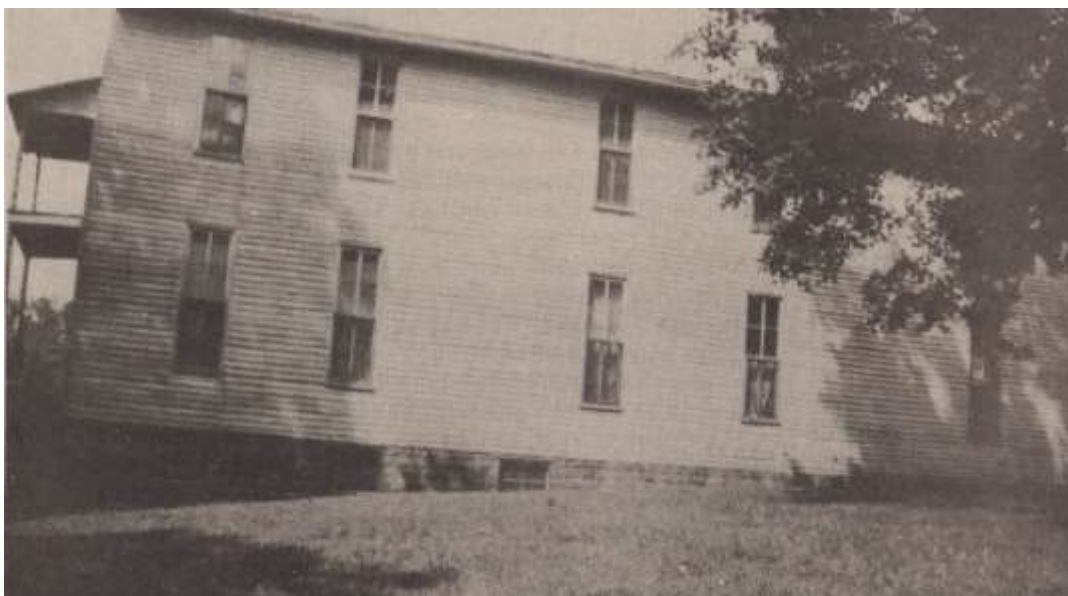
Barbecues, chicken dinners and other special events raised funds for the Sulphur Springs Hotel and brought hundreds of visitors to the community, some nine miles northeast of Hartford after the property was purchased by the Methodist Conference in 1931. The sport model car with the rumble seat belonged to Barney Mitchell and the roadster, at left, belonged to Dr. James A. Duff.



First "filling station" at Sulphur Springs was a popular place. It was at the Y, where a line of Model T's and Model A's could usually be found, and a good spot for visiting. The roofless vehicle, at extreme left, is believed to have been Ivan Magan's and the man in the light suit and hat talking to the lady is believed to be Dr. James A. Duff. The station was built by Jim Magan and operated by his sons, John and Stanley. Walter Harmon also operated the station for a while. The station was later purchased by Mrs. Donnie Moore, and with her husband, Barnet, she operated a grocery store in the front part of the building. Mr. Moore died and she later married Floyd Marsh, who also died, and Mrs. Marsh continues to reside at the old historic building. During the 1937 flood, when it was under operation of Jim Magan, a buried empty gasoline tank was forced from the ground by the water, and the tank tore the front roof from the building. Picture was made in October 1929.



Methodist church property, August 1932 – Touring cars, Sedans and Roadsters back in the days of the Whippet, the Overland, the Starr, the Maxwell, the Ford and Essex. In those days, mud was a chief hazard of driving as most roads were merely strips of dirt that became mud when it rained and the "Get a horse!" advice was often heard when a "horseless carriage" became stuck in mud or broke down.



Famous old Hotel at Sulphur Springs as it looked in the late twenties. Built by David Morton, whose first Sulphur Springs Hotel, located on the south side of the road, burned. The all poplar building had 20 rooms and guests came from many states to the famed Sulphur Springs Resort.



The Methodist Church Camp Hotel at Sulphur Springs in 1954 after remodeling and improvements. Churches of various denominations used the facilities and large groups enjoyed the shady grove adjacent to the "miracle waters" of the Sulphur Springs well. Old friends renewed acquaintances and new friends were made during camp activities held each summer.



The former Mack Martin residence, in foreground, and the famous red oak tree as pictured in 1929. The huge canopy that stretched out over the lawn, made a shaded play area for the children of Mack and Stella York Martin, long time residents of Sulphur Springs. The old tree has been removed and the house is now the home of Sheriff Bobby Martin. The next housed shown was the residence of Mrs. Cora Magan (Brinton) Bean, who also operated the store, later operated by Ed Cook. Straight on down the street were the Woodman Hall and Acton's Store.



Sulphur Springs resort between Hartford and Dundee on what is now Highway 69. Photographed in 1905 by C. B. Shown. Left to right: Sam Ellis, Ethel Bennett, Everett Ellis, and Alberta Greer. Seated: Clara Bennett, Shadrach Greer, and Era Liles,. all of the Beda community. Others are not identified. Sulphur Springs has always been noted as a historic watering place for the medicinal properties of the springs located there. This picture is from Ohio County. Ky. History Facebook website; picture was also published in the Ohio County News, Hartford, KY, 26 December 1974, Centennial Edition, section II, p.7 and Ohio County Times-News, Hartford, KY, 10 February 2005. Previous ten pictures, on pages 19-23, were from the Ohio County Times-News, Hartford, KY, 12 September 1984, pp.2B & 3 B.

