

Biographical Sketch of the Ellis Family

By Jerry Long
c.2025



Notes on Ellis Family

William Perkins Ellis, son of Stephen Ellis & Susannah Smith, was born 25 August 1780 Goochland County, VA. He was the grandson of Joseph Ellis & Elizabeth Perkins. William married his cousin, Rebecca Ellis, 11 March 1805 Shelby County, KY. The daughter of Joseph Ellis & Mary Hughes, she was born 1780-1784 VA and died 31 May 1826 Shelby County, KY. William P. Ellis married 2nd Elizabeth Miller, c1828, they had no children. William died 5 March 1842 and was buried Ellis Cemetery, Ohio County, KY.



“Wm. P. Ellis born 23 August 1780 in Goochland County, VA and died 5 March 1842”; grave in Ellis Cemetery, Ohio County, KY.

William & Rebecca Ellis were the parents of 12 children (as listed by son Joseph Perkins Ellis):

1. Spotswood, born 1805 Shelby County, KY; married Martha Brooks, 23 October 1828 Oldham County, KY; his will was written in 1886 and was probated in Ohio County, KY in October 1894.
2. Mary Ann, born c1807 Shelby County, KY; married Arthur Turner Burk (c1806 – 12 August 1877), 20 November 1827 Shelby County, KY; she died 24 December 1866 Clinton County, IL.
3. Powhatan, born 5 January 1809 Shelby County, KY; married Mildred Catherine Kellam (1 June 1823 – 7 January 1890), 7 January 1841 Daviess County, KY; he died 12 February 1881 Owensboro, Daviess County, KY; he & his wife were buried Elmwood Cemetery, Owensboro, KY.
4. Joseph Perkins, born 18 October 1811 Shelby County, KY; married Jane S. Taylor, 15 September 1835 Ohio County, KY; died 8 May 1892 KY; he & his wife were buried Ellis Cemetery, Ohio County, KY.
5. Hardin Haynes, born 13 April 1813 Shelby County, KY; married Elizabeth Smith (Cottrell) Dulin (15 January 1813 – 13 March 1873), 13 September 1836 Daviess County, KY; he died 22 December 1872 Hancock County, KY; he & his wife were buried Union Baptist Church, Utility, Hancock County, KY.



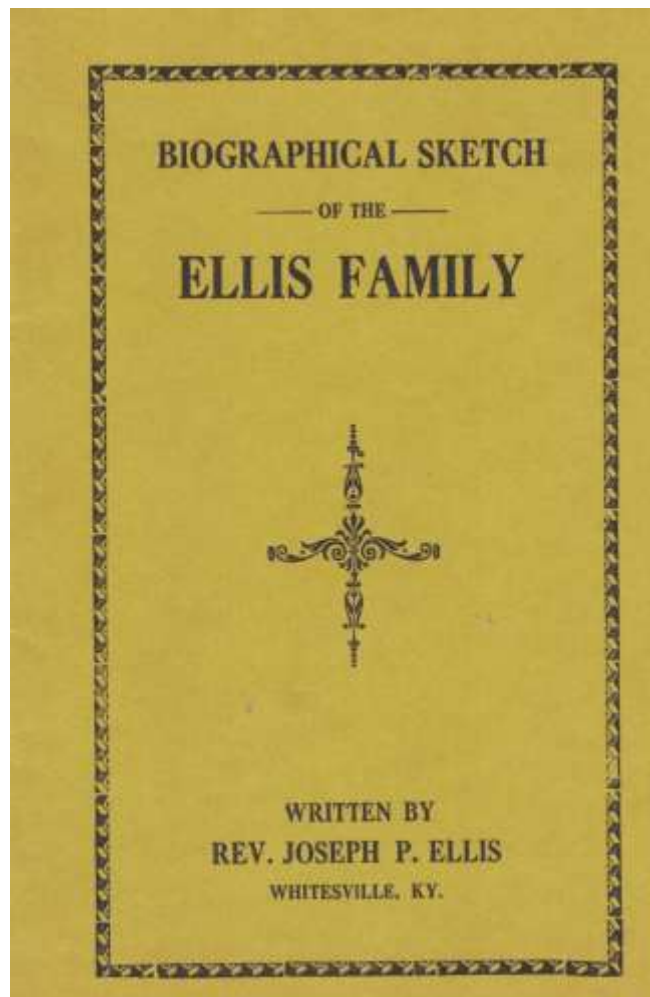
Hardin Haynes Ellis

6. William Keller, born 18 April 1815 Shelby County, KY; married Mary ('Polly') Nichols (28 September 1818 – 30 January 1901), 2 June 1838 Ohio County, KY; he died 12 November 1904 Logan County, IL; he & his wife were buried Lawndale Union Cemetery, Logan County, IL.
7. Susan Sarah, born 1 February 1817 Shelby County, KY; married Jessie W. Chapman (22 February 1812 – 11 June 1865), 28 October 1835 Daviess County, KY; she died 16 June 1896; she & her husband were buried Barnett's Creek Baptist Church Cemetery, Ohio County, KY. She was named as "Sarah" by her brother, Joseph P. Ellis.
8. Luther Rice, c1818 Shelby County, KY; married Mary M. Kellam (c1824 – 26 March 1857), 9 September 1841 Daviess County, KY; he died 1 April 1856 Daviess County, KY; he & his wife were buried Kellam – Ellis Cemetery, Daviess County, KY

9. Hannah H., born 5 March 1822 Shelby County, KY; married Dr. George W. Chapman (c1817 – 17 January 1888), 18 August 1839 Daviess County, KY; she died 11 November 1878 Ohio County, KY; she & her husband were buried Barnett's Creek Baptist Church Cemetery, Ohio County, KY.
10. Elizabeth T., born 13 (?23) November 1823 Shelby County, KY; married Rev. Moses Chapman (14 February 1820 – 17 March 1890), 20 April 1843 Ohio County, KY; she died 23 January 1893 Ohio County, KY; she & her husband were buried Bell's Run Baptist Church Cemetery, Ohio County, KY.
11. Nancy, born November 13 Shelby County, KY, she and Elizabeth were twins; married Thomas R. Wilhite (12 June 1822 – 1 January 1878), 27 March 1845 Ohio County, KY; she died 11 April 1876; she & her husband were buried Bethsaida Cemetery, Posey County, IN.
12. Rebecca, born May 1826 Shelby County, KY; died single c1844.



Rev. Joseph Perkins Ellis (1811-1892) wrote the following 8-page booklet, “Biographical Sketch of the Ellis Family”:



This family is of English and Welsh descent. The earliest account we have of them leads us back in the days of Cromwell of England when Roger Williams in the American wilds first proclaimed liberty of conscience and soul freedom, which up to that time was not enjoyed by many of the known natives of the earth, this was ardently desired by many who were suffering persecution for conscience sake, and among the numbers this ancient family was being a part, although England might boast of her enlightenment, yet she had not reached the point that she recognized the right of all men to worship God according to the dictates of conscience but had prescribed all persons under her dominion to worship God according to the form and ceremonies as laid down by the Church of England. Taxed for its support and a penalty of the confiscation of property, banishment and death for failure to conform thereto. No wonder that persons all over England who desired freedom of soul were now taking deep interest in events transpiring in America, where was those who dared to proclaim the right of all men to worship God as they understood his word, regardless of the dictates of man, though for this Williams was banished from Massachusetts, others were whipped or, scourged and others had all their property confiscated, and they turned out in the wide world, homeless and friendless. Though this was somewhat gloomy, yet the lovers of soul freedom knew of no other spot on the earth where they could hope to find that born of Heaven, they could not look for it under the circumstances in their native land, England and Wales, in vain might look for it—all the dominions of the Pope of Rome, who with the heel of oppression was grinding down the conscience of men under priestly rule. Their sympathies grew stronger and stronger of the pioneers of those principles, and they longed to join them and blend their efforts with theirs to establish among men these Heaven born principles.

After intense deliberation, much consultation and prayer for divine guidance, they resolved that they would make the sacrifice of leaving their homes and native land, braving the perils and dangers of a voyage across Old Ocean which at that time was great, perhaps beyond our comprehension. A noble set of men and women, the Ellises, all leaving their native land to return no more, taking with them none of the luxuries of life, and but a bare supply of its necessities, but as they were going to a land said to be infested with many poisonous serpents they brought with them a stone said to be a sovereign remedy for their bites, mad dogs, etc., which they were careful to keep in the family, so that from that day to this it has been safely kept, and has descended in the family from father to son, and is now (1888) found in the possession of Rev. J. P. Ellis, near Whitesville, Daviess County, Ky.

These emigrants set sail from England for America sometime in the year 1639 and landed on Virginia soil same year. And settled near Jamestown, an English settlement which had been made & few years previous. The newcomers were gladly received, perhaps the more so from the fact the settlement had some troubles, now from the Indians, and needed additional strength, which they found in the newcomers. One of the newcomers by the name of Smith was captured by the Indians and sentenced to death, but Smith's life was saved by the interposition of Pocahontas, daughter of Powhatan, the chief by placing her neck on the block insted of Smith. This circumstance so affected the heart of the Chief, that he pardoned Smith, which had a good effect upon the Indians, as well as the whites.

About the beginning of the 18th century the Ellises were occupying and owning large farms, also large slave holders on the James River, a short distance above the city of Richmond. Here these families stood prominent among the citizens of this historic region for more than a century, and known far and near as firm Baptists and true lovers of soul freedom. They had witnessed much of the spirit of persecution in Virginia, Baptists arrested and put in prison, fined

and taxed for preaching the gospel of the Son of God, and soul freedom. Still they were firm in their principles. And after our Independence was acknowledged by Great Britain, and the Constitution of the United States adopted, these people joined others in memorializing the President to use his power and influence to have an amendment made to the Constitution which should forever forbid the passage of any law infringing upon the rights of conscience. This memorial extract from Gen. Washington brought that memorable reply "That these people he had found to be fine supporters of the American liberty throughout." Thus the first amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

We find in the beginning of the 19th century three brothers, Stephen Ellis, Joseph Ellis and Charles Ellis, living on the James River. Accordingly, Charles, Joseph and two sons of Stephen moved to Kentucky and settled in Shelby County in the year 1804. Here they all procured good farms, began work and became prominent citizens, and all members of the Baptist Church.

Here the two brothers, Joseph and Charles, settled in close proximity to each other, with the two sons of Stephen in the midst. Stephen never came to Kentucky but lived and died on his old homestead in Virginia. He raised five children, four sons and one daughter, viz: DANIEL, SAMUEL, WILLIAM, JOSEPH, and SALLY. DANIEL moved to and settled in North Carolina. SAMUEL and WILLIAM, as before stated came to Kentucky. JOSEPH the youngest son, after the father's death, occupied the old homestead. SALLY married JAMES HOLLOWAY and lived in the same neighborhood, highly respected for her virtue and many excellencies.

CHARLES raised sons and daughters who are scattered out and their descendants are found in almost all of the western states.

JOSEPH raised five children, all daughters, viz: HANNAH, ELIZABETH, REBECCA, MARY and NANCY.

Having traced this ancient family through many long years of the past and reached the beginning of the 19th century, and come to the immediate family of the writer, shall now give some items in their immediate history.

WILLIAM T. ELLIS (our father) was the third (3) son of STEPHEN ELLIS (as named above) born August 25th, 1780, married REBECCA ELLIS, (his cousin) the third (3) child of JOSEPH ELLIS (as named above) early in the year of 1804.

Something remarkable in this marriage, each of them being the 3rd and middle child of their parents.

The maiden name of the mother of WILLIAM T. ELLIS (our father) was SMITH and said to be a relative of Smith who was rescued from death by the interposition of Pocahontas, daughter of the Indian Chief (as named above).

The maiden name of our grandmother on Mother's side was Hughes, an ancient family in Virginia. She raised five daughters (as named above) and a more noble set of women perhaps were never raised by any Mother, they all married and settled not far off from the old homestead, and it is somewhat remarkable that taking the five sisters in the order of their ages (as named above) that the first, the third and, the fifth had large families of children and the second and fourth were childless.

HANNAH married a man by the name of MIL LER.

ELIZABETH married a man by the name of SMITH.

REBECCA was my mother.

MARY married a man by the name of BRODIE.

NANCY married a man by the name of POWERS.

A more particular description of our immediate family will now be given. Our father, WILLIAM T. ELLIS was born in the State of Virginia, August 24th, 1780. His parents were Stephen and Susan (SMITH) Ellis. He was the 3rd child. Here he grew up to manhood obtaining an education such as the limited facilities of the country at that early day afforded. In the year 1804 he married his cousin, REBECCA, 3rd daughter of JOSEPH and MARY (HUGHES) ELLIS and moved with them and others of his relatives to Kentucky in this date. Thus forming a small colony and settled down in Shelby County, procuring good farms and homes. Here they were greatly blessed. William and Rebecca had 12 children born unto them, viz:

SPOTSWOOD, MARY, POWHATTAN, JOSEPH P., HARDIN, WILLIAM, SARAH, LUTHER, HANNAH, ELIZABETH and NANCY. The last two named were twins, and REBECCA.

These twelve, their names given in the order of their birth, there being nearly 20 years difference in their eldest born in the year 1805 and the youngest in 1826. SPOTTSWOOD was named in honor of a prominent man in Virginia. POWHATTAN in honor of the old Indian chief of the state of Virginia. JOSEPH P. after his grandfather. HARDIN H. after Hardin Haynes of Virginia, who was a great uncle by marriage of my father. WILLIAM K. after his father, the Keller in honor of a renowned Baptist preacher of Shelby Co. LUTHER, a name suggested by the old school teacher, after Luther Rice, a celebrated Baptist preacher of England, who came to America and was very successful in stirring up the churches on the subject of Missions. The names of the girls are all family names.

In 1816 Stephen H. Maddox moved from Virginia and settled in this neighborhood, became the school teacher, being considered an educated man, the position he held for about 8 years. And here the first children got their schooling.

In 1826 our mother died, on 31st of May, leaving Rebecca a baby about 2 weeks old. Aunt Elizabeth took the child to raise, having ample means—gave her a good education, she died in her 18th year, was never married.

In 1828 father married his second wife, Miss Elizabeth Miller, a Virginian, by whom he had no children. She was respected by all for her many virtues and as a step-mother was loved by all the children. They dwelt together in harmony and love and appeared a mother indeed to them all. She died in Logan County, in the year 18..... at the advanced age of about ...years. in the year 1829 father sold out in Shelby County and traveled through Indiana, Illinois and Missouri in search of a new home, but not suiting himself returned feeling such a strong attachment to the State of his adoption. He then went to Daviess County, Ky. and bought a large tract of land all in the woods. Desiring to give each of his children a home of 25 acres apiece, quality and quantity considered. In the Fall of the same year (1829) he moved his family and took possession of the land he had bought. His oldest son and daughter married. The son married a MISS BROOKS, a Virginian. The daughter married a man by the name of BURKE. They in a short time moved to Daviess County. Father now having all his children with him except the youngest, which was well provided for. Having decided in his mind upon the exact spot he would build, all hands went to work. He had six regular hands, occasionally eight. In a short time by close application, and hard work, got up necessary buildings in order to shelter through the winter. Before Christmas had all hands in the woods, the axes singing, falling timber, clearing the ground making rails, etc., all acting and working in concert, so that by spring, he had 20 acres inclosed with a good fence 10 rails high. Besides 20 acres for an orchard, and three acres for a meadow. In two years he was able not only to supply the wants of his large family, but had a surplus of farm products on hand. His family had almost uninterrupted good health. In 1831 there being no

school house in all this region, he built one assisted by a few people about 200 yards distant from his dwelling and here he got up the first school ever taught in this vicinity. His son Powhattan was the first teacher. His house was occupied about three months each year by the same teacher. It was also used as a place of meetings. My father and almost all of his family became members of Panther Creek Baptist Church. And at this school house they had many joyful meetings. My father was now comfortably situated in the world, and seemed to be happy, faithful to his church, making his Bible his daily study, and often would take his gun and walk around his farm, and occasionally would kill a deer, or turkey, which up to that time was plentiful. He died with pneumonia fever on March 5th, 1842.

His land was divided among his heirs. Each receiving their portion, but none of them are occupying their portion, except the writer. They all married and raised children (except the youngest as stated before) and seven (1) out of the twelve (12) have died and gone to their reward. Two of his sons, Joseph and Hardin became ministers of the gospel. Also one of Hardin's sons (F. G. Ellis). All of the Baptist Church. Others are occupying honorable, respectful and profitable positions as lawyers, doctors, teachers and literary men. Scattered over this broad land and are now occupying useful positions among their fellow mortals in almost all the States and territories of the American Union.

(Written by J. P. Ellis.)

COPIES:

J. R. ELLIS,

WHITESVILLE, KY.



Hartford Herald, Hartford, KY, Wednesday, 17 May 1882. p.2:

The Owensboro *Messenger's* Whitesville correspondent gives an account of a reunion of the survivors of a family, some of whom live in this county, as follows: "A most happy event occurred at the residence of Mr. Wallace Haynes, on the 5th inst. It was the happy reunion of six brothers and sisters and brother-in-law who took supper together. Their ages aggregate over four hundred years. The names of the party are as follows: Spotswood Ellis, age 77 years; Rev. J. P. Ellis, age 70 years; Mrs. J. P. Ellis, age 70 years; W. K. Ellis, of Logan county, Illinois, age 67, Hiram Chapman, age 65 years; Mrs. Hiram Chapman, age 48. We think it doubtful whether any of our neighboring counties can produce such statistics as these.



Joseph Perkins Ellis
(1811-1892)

Rev. Joseph Perkins Ellis, son of William Ellis & Rebecca Ellis, was born 18 October 1811 Shelby County, KY. He is listed in the 1850, 1860, 1870 & 1880 federal censuses of

Daviess County, KY. In the book, An Illustrated Historical Atlas Map of Daviess County, KY. (Leo McDonough & Co. 1876, page 24) it is recorded that Joseph P. Ellis, of the Boston Precinct, residence 18 miles east of Owensboro; post office at Whitesville; farmer & minister; born Shelby County, KY; came to Daviess County in 1829.

Joseph P. Ellis married Jane S. Taylor in Ohio County, KY on 15 September 1835. She was the daughter of John Peyton Taylor & Mary Davis, who resided at Taylorfield in Ohio County, KY. Jane was born 3 August 1811 in Fairfax County, VA and died 12 November 1889 in Daviess County, KY.

Joseph Perkins Ellis died at home on 8 May 1892 in Daviess County, KY. He and his wife, Jane, were buried in the Ellis family cemetery in view of their house. His home was in Daviess County but the Ellis Cemetery was in Ohio County just across the county line.

On 21 December 1889 Joseph P. Ellis wrote a final will. It was recorded on 16 May 1892 in Daviess County, KY Will Book D (pages 384-385). His will named children – William P. Ellis, Luther C. Ellis, Rebecca A. Haynes (wife of John R. Haynes), Margaret E. Phillips (wife of Charles W. Phillips), and Nannie J. Brown; also named were grandchildren – Clarence T. Haynes, Mabel H. Haynes, Flora E. Haynes and William K. Haynes, who were children of his deceased daughter, Adah P. Haynes.

Joseph P. Ellis in his will wrote: “On my homestead there is a grave yard where my father William Ellis, my wife, and other members of the family and many of my neighbors and others are buried. This is expressly reserved with ingress to egress from which is to be perpetually kept and maintained as a burying ground. The ground so reserved herein is to contain as much as one acre to be measured in all directions from my fathers grave.”

An Illustrated Historical Atlas Map of Daviess County, KY.
Leo McDonough & Co. 1876, page 23:



The farm of Rev. Joseph Perkins Ellis (1811-1892) was on the Old Leitchfield Road in the Boston Precinct in Daviess County, KY, three miles east of Whitesville. It is outlined in red on the right on the above plat. Part of his 130-acre farm lay in Daviess County and part in Ohio County – area above the hyphenated line is in Ohio County. The Ellis Cemetery was in the northeast part of the tract that was in Ohio County. Below the tract of Joseph P. Ellis is the farm of 130 acres owned by his son, Luther C. Ellis.

Map of Ohio County, Kentucky, published in 1886
by Jno. J. McHenry, Hartford, KY:



Northwest corner of Ohio County – the hyphenated line in the lower left corner is the Daviess & Ohio County line; below it is Daviess County and part of the farm of Rev. Joseph Perkins Ellis. Part of his farm extended above the line into Ohio County. North of his farm in Ohio County are plotted on this 1886 map the residences of his son-in-laws, Charles W. Phillips & John R. Haynes and his son, William Ellis. The farm of his other son, Luther C. Ellis, adjoined the southern border of the Joseph Perkins Ellis farm in Daviess County.

**History of Daviess County, Kentucky (Chicago, Inter-State
Publishing Co., 1883, Boston Precinct) pp. 531-534:**

REV. JOSEPH P. ELLIS, third son and fourth child of William and Rebecca Ellis, was born Oct. 18, 1811. His parents were born and reared in the city of Richmond and came to Kentucky early in the present century, buying a farm in Shelby County, near the old Dover Church. They had a family of six sons and six daughters. Old Dover Church was named by his parents and grandparents in honor of the church in Virginia from which they came. Joseph P.'s early education was obtained in the old log school-house. He attended school seven years, twelve months in the year, beginning when seven years old, S.H. Maddox, an old Virginia Baptist, being the teacher. When in his fifteenth year, May 31, 1826, he lost his mother. Before her death she called him to her and made him promise to seek religion and meet her in heaven, but it was not till the 16th of July following that he finally yielded and felt that his sins were forgiven. At that

time he was very desirous of uniting with the church, but not carrying out his desire, he grew weaker in the faith and finally abandoned the idea till he should grow older. His father married Miss Elizabeth Miller, a woman in every way adapted to perform the duties she had assumed, and in the fall of 1829, having sold his farm in Shelby County, removed to Daviess County, and settled in the dense forest, unbroken save by the Litchfield road from Owensboro, which was opened the spring before. They arrived here on Joseph's birthday. All hands went to work and in a short time had the ground ready to erect a building, and by calling help from the nearest neighbors soon after had a home to shelter them. The next season they managed to raise enough to live on, and by dint of hard work improved the land till they were able to live in comfort, Joseph remaining at home till he was twenty-two years of age. In the fall of 1833 he and a sister returned to their native county on a visit and he made arrangements to stay a year and attend to the business of an old acquaintance. In the summer of 1834 he went to work for Daniel Conley in the neighborhood of Buffalo Lick church, of which his employer was a member. In July the church at Bethel held a series of meetings for several days. His employer attended them and on his return would urge him to go, but he would put him off, telling him the wheat needed his attention. One Saturday about one o'clock his employer came riding up and found that the wheat was all in the shock, and the hands lying idle under the shade tree. He ordered them to get ready to go to church with him at four o'clock. When on his way for his horse the questions, Where are you going? and What are you going for? were constantly suggested to Joseph's mind till he was distressed, and he was so impressed with the necessity of prayer that he remembered nothing till he found himself riding up to the house and rejoicing aloud. The family rushed out to see what was the matter. He had no difficulty in telling them as he had had the same happy feelings eight years before. He told the Deacon all his previous experience, beginning with his promise to his dying mother, and that night presented himself for membership in the church and was baptized the next day. In 1840 he was licensed to preach. In 1842 he became the pastor of Bell's Run church, and not long after was called to the pastorate of Mt. Pleasant church, Ohio County, receiving a salary of about \$20 per year. In 1844 he accepted the pastorate of Panther Creek church, remaining with them till 1857 and receiving an average salary of \$18 a year. During this time the membership increased from 90 to 200. In 1873 he returned to this church and served them five years, with a salary of \$100 a year. In 1849 he took charge of Bethabra church and was their pastor eight years, receiving \$36 a year. At this time he was appointed by the Daviess County Mission Board, missionary in her field. From 1873-'75 he was pastor of the Bethabra church, retaining a salary of \$240 a year. From 1867-'70 he was pastor of Zion Church. In 1854 he organized the church at Whitesville and was its pastor several years. During his pastorate of forty-five years he has baptized hundreds, and has seen new churches planted and grow where a few years ago it was a wilderness. Sixteen new churches have been built in the field of his labors and he has laid hands on sixteen young ministers. He was married in September, 1835, to Jane Taylor, of Ohio County. They have had two sons and five daughters. All grew to maturity, and became members of the Baptist church, Mr. Ellis baptizing his wife and the most of his children. His eldest daughter, Sallie M., died June 6, 1870. The rest of his children are married and settled near the old homestead. Mr. Ellis has seventeen grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

LUTHER C. ELLIS was born in Ohio County, Feb. 10, 1838, and is the second son of the Rev. J.P. Ellis. He attended the neighborhood schools during three months in a year, for a few years, and acquired a fair education, considering the advantages offered him. When he was twenty years old he went to Illinois, and remained ten months. He then returned to his home and stayed with his father till the war. In July, 1862, he enlisted in the Tenth Kentucky Cavalry,

commanded by Colonel Johnson, mustered into service at Slaughterville, Webster Co., Ky., and attached to General Morgan's command. The principal engagements he was in were Madisonville, Ky.; Uniontown, where 387 Union prisoners were taken; McMinnville, Tenn.; Snow's Hill, Tenn.; Liberty, Tenn.; Milton, Tenn., together with several skirmishes. At Ashbysburg, Ky., in 1862, he, being in the town, was taken prisoner by a body of soldiers entering the town, and taken to Johnson's Island, Lake Erie, where he was confined three months, when he was exchanged. He then rejoined his regiment and remained with it about eight months. While confined at Johnson's Island he was taken sick, and not recovering, after his exchange, he obtained an unlimited furlough and returned to Kentucky. He went to Hancock County, near Hawesville, where he remained till 1869. He was married Jan. 10, 1865, to Amanda Estes, who was born in Hancock County, daughter of John M. Estes. In the fall of the same year he was married Mr. Estes purchased a farm in Hancock County, where he lived till 1869. His wife died Sept. 15, 1869, leaving one son, John P. Ellis. After the death of his wife, Mr. Ellis sold his farm and came to Daviess and purchased his present place of 150 acres, adjoining that of his father's. He was married again, Feb. 1, 1871, to Sarah E. Stinnet, daughter of Joel Stinnet, of Daviess County. They have two children – Joel R., born May 16, 1873, and Jessie B., born Dec. 15, 1879. In 1878, Mr. Ellis united with the Baptist church, at Whitesville, his wife also being a member of the same church.

A History of Kentucky Baptists: from 1769 to 1885, Vol. II
John H. Spencer (Cincinnati, Ohio, 1886) pp.578-579:

Rev. Joseph Perkins Ellis is among the oldest living ministers of this Association, and has been one of the most active and useful. His parents were Virginians, but settled in Shelby county, Kentucky, about 1803, where J. P. Ellis was born, in October, 1811. In 1819 his parents moved to Daviess county, where he was brought up. He was educated under the tuition of Stephen H. Maddox, whose school he attended seven years. In 1826, he obtained hope in Christ, under the ministry of Samuel Vancleave; but he delayed uniting with a church, till 1834, when he was baptized by John Holland for the fellowship of Bethel church, in Shelby county. This occurred while he was on a visit to his relatives. Four days after his baptism, he delivered an exhortation from the words, "God is love." Returning to his home in Daviess county, he gave his membership to Panther Creek church. In December of the same year, he moved to Ohio county, and united with Bells Run church. On the 15th of September, 1835, he was married to Jane S. Taylor, and was licensed to preach, the following year. Although he had been zealously and usefully engaged in the Master's vineyard, from the time he was baptized, he was not ordained, till October, 1842, when he came under the hands of Reuben Cottrell and H. H. Ellis. He immediately took charge of Bells Run church, and, within the same year, was called to the care of Panther Creek and Mt. Pleasant churches, in Ohio county, and Bethabara, in Daviess. Besides these, he has served, at different periods, Zion church in Ohio county, and Zion, Friendly Grove, Whitesville and Pleasant Ridge, in Daviess. To say that he served these churches faithfully and successfully, according to the custom of the times, would not give an adequate idea of his labor. Like Talbot, Downs and Cottrell, whom he succeeded, he was a voluntary unpaid missionary, seeking out the dark corners, and proclaiming salvation to the destitute. Only one year did he accept a salary for missionary labor. Among the churches of which he laid the foundation, are Whitesville and Zion in Daviess; Zion, in Ohio; Bethel in McLean, and Ohio in Spencer county, Ia. He also gathered the first Missionary Baptist church in Wayne county, Ill. In all, he has aided in the constitution of 16 churches. He has kept no account of the number he has baptized, but it

must be quite large. The war-worn old soldier is no longer able to do the work of a pastor, but is still doing what he can. His residence is three miles east of Whitesville, in Daviess county, where he has resided since 1848.

A History of the Daviess – McLean Baptist Association in Kentucky,
Rev. Wendell H. Rone (Owensboro, KY, 1943) pp.263-266:



This valient pioneer of the Cross in this section of the Green River Country was born in Shelby County, Kentucky, on October 18, 1811. His parents; William and Rebecca Ellis, were of respectable parentage born and reared near the city of Richmond, Virginia. After their marriage they emigrated to Kentucky and settled in Shelby County early in the nineteenth century not far - from old Dover Baptist Church. As to whether they were constituent members of this church we are not informed but early in the history of the church they were members laboring for the spread of the Gospel and for those principles which have ever distinguished, Baptists. On their little farm they were prosperous and happy, raising six sons and six daughters. The subject of our sketch was the third son and fourth child.

Elder Ellis received what scant education he could at a little country school near the home place. His father was a man of prayer and his earliest recollections of religion came from the experiences around the family altar. In his ninth or tenth year he received religious impression that were keen on his mind. His Christian school teacher also talked to him about his soul. His mother died in May, 1826, after suffering for some time. Before she died she called all the children about the bed and told them of her bright prospects of Heaven through a Saviour's love and requested that they all meet her there. In July, following this experience, our brother informs us in his autobiography, that he found peace with God in repentance and Faith while bowed down with his face in the dirt in his father's cornfield.

His father sold the home place in 1829 and bought a tract of land in Daviess County and settled on it. Most of the tract was in woods. Young Ellis remained under his father's watchcare until the year 1833, when he returned to Shelby County and: remained for a year. In July, 1834, he united with the Old Bethel Church, near Shelbyville, in Shelby County, Kentucky, and was

baptized by that man of God, Elder John Holland, under whose pastoral care the church was then enjoying a gracious revival.

Our subject returned to Daviess County in the fall of 1834 and united by letter with the old Panther Creek Church in Ohio County. A few months later he moved his membership to Bell's Run as he had purchased land in that vicinity. Here he served as clerk for a number of years. At this time the inspiration to preach became strong but he strove against these feelings and the urgent requests of the brethren. This state of unrest continued without abatement even after his marriage to Miss Jane S. Taylor, in September, 1835, the daughter of John P. and Mary Taylor, of Ohio County. Finally the urgent need of his preaching the Gospel as God impressed him became stronger and stronger, and, after a sore conflict of over six years, his spirit was broken and the Lord had His way.

The church at Bell's Run immediately licensed him to preach, in the spring of 1841. Under this authority, he labored until October, 1842, when the same church ordained him to the ministry. Elders Reuben Cottrell and H. H. Ellis, his brother, served as the ordaining council.

Elder Ellis was soon called to, the pastoral care of Mt. Pleasant Church in Ohio County (now Fordsville). He served this church for a number of years on a salary of \$18 per year. His labors were blessed of the Lord and the church enjoyed refreshing seasons of revival. Four young men were licensed and ordained to the ministry while he labored there. His labors ceased with this church in 1851.

Old Panther Creek Church invited him to preach for them in 1844. The church was in a very confused condition brought about by an antinomian spirit that existed in the membership. The church finally split over the subject of missions prior to this and the withdrawing faction, with other groups formed at about the same time, organized the Panther Creek Association of United Baptists. In a few months after Brother Ellis entered into the pastorate the storm abated and the membership began to increase and enter into a period of revival. The membership numbered about 90 when he became pastor and later increased until it numbered over 200. Three young men were licensed and ordained here during his ministry. The church paid him an average of about \$15 per year for his labors which closed in February, 1857 after about thirteen years of service. He became pastor a second time in December, 1873, and remained until after the year 1878, thus completing over eighteen years of service with the church.

Bethabara Church, in Daviess County, called for his ministerial labors in 1849. This church had also recently gone through the fires and discord caused by division. A faction had been lettered off to constitute Macedonia Church. The Lord again revived the work under his leadership and at one of the meetings he baptized 48 persons into her fellowship. After eight years of faithful service he declined the offer of the pastorate, resigning in February, 1857. This church paid him an average of about \$35 per year for his services.

Under his labors as a missionary far the Association the Church at Whitesville was organized on August 5, 1854, with 46 members. A new house of worship was built immediately and the work went forward in earnestness. He and his wife became members of this church in 1857 and continued to hold their membership there until their deaths. In the meantime he moved from Ohio County to Daviess County to make his home. The church called him again in 1862 and he served for three years. The church enjoyed his labors also in 1868-1870 and again in 1873-1876 for a total of over fourteen years. His salary for each year was from \$25 to \$30. Brother J. W. Dunn, in his History of the Whitesville Church, published in pamphlet form in 1928, has this to say about Brother Ellis: "He was one of those good old men who labored in the week to support his family, and drove for miles on the Sabbath to preach the Word of God. Early

on Sunday morning before the birds began to fly, he saddled his, old gray mare, threw his saddle bags across his saddle and rode some ten or fifteen miles through bridle paths to preach. He often forded Panther Creek or swam it, and as a result, returned home sometime near, midnight . . . I have heard him preach when he had to take his son-in-law along with him to read the Scriptures, but when I saw him with his blind eyes turned toward Heaven, and heard his trembling voice plead for lost souls, I knew God had called him to preach."

He became pastor of Bethabara Church again in October, 1860, at a salary of \$100 per year. His labors closed in May, 1863. He returned again in January, 1873, and continued until November, 1874, serving the church on three different occasions for a total of over twelve years

The church that ordained him, Bell's Run, called for his services in October, 1842. This happy relation was sustained until December, 1857, when he resigned. He served this church again from March, 1866, to May, 1878, for a total of over twenty-seven years. Bell's Run grew to be one of the largest churches in the Association during his long pastorate there.

Elder Ellis also served Zion Church in Ohio County from 1867 to 1869. He pastored Zion (extinct), Friendly Grove, and Pleasant Ridge (extinct) churches in Daviess County for shorter periods of time. To him belongs the credit for organizing the first Missionary Baptist Church in Wayne County, Illinois. Ohio Church, in Spencer County Indiana, received his pastoral ministrations for a short time.

Like Tolbert, Downs, and Cottrell, whom he succeeded, he was a voluntary and unpaid missionary, seeking out the dark corners and proclaiming salvation to the destitute. During the years 1857-1860 he served Daviess County Association as missionary, on a salary, which was the only time he did this. During that time he traveled over 2,000 miles, preached 203 sermons, baptized 73 persons,. collected \$47.50 for the Board, constituted 2 churches, and ordained 1 preacher.

The following is a list of some of the preachers ordained under his ministry: J. S. Taylor, I. N. Whittinghill, T. L. Brooks, D. J. Phillips, and David Whittinghill. There were others but we do not have their names. During his entire ministry he aided in the constitution of sixteen churches.

We are indebted to him for the Histories of several churches which were published in the minutes of this Association—among them are Bell's Run in 1880 and Bethabara in 1882. We also secured a sketch of Panther Creek Church from the minutes of Blackford Association for 1880, which was written by him.

Failing health forced him to leave the pastorate in 1879, and the remainder of his earthly life was spent on his farm near Whitesville. He died at his home in the month of May, 1892, at the advanced age of eighty. Even though his education was limited he applied himself diligently and became an able expositor of the Scriptures and a sound Theologian. He reared seven children, five daughters and two sons, and had the privilege of seeing them grow into fine Christian men and women. His example of faith is well worthy of emulation. He preached the Annual Sermon before the Association in 1857.

The History of Bells Run Baptist Church, 1820-1990,

Rev. Wendell H. Rone (Utica, KY: McDowell Publications, 1990) pp.49-54:

Joseph Perkins Ellis - The Fifth Pastor - Served Twice in 1842-1857 and in 1866-1878. Joseph Perkins Ellis (b. October 18, 1811 - d. May 8, 1892) was a valiant pioneer of the Gospel of Christ in this section of the Green River country and was a worthy successor of and co-laborer with the Downs brothers, Ancil Hall and Reuben Cottrell. He was born in Shelby County,

Kentucky. His parents were William T. [sic] Ellis (h. August 23, 1780 - d. March 5, 1842) and Rebecca (Ellis) Ellis (b. c. 1784 - d. May 31, 1826) who were cousins. His paternal grandparents were Stephen Ellis and Susan (Smith) Ellis also natives of Virginia as were his parents. The family is of English and Welsh descent. Emigrant ancestors set sail from England for America and landed on Virginia soil in 1639 where, as Brother Ellis tells us in his "Biographical Sketch of the Ellis Family," on pages 3-4 as follows:

"About the beginning of the 18th Century (1700) the Ellises were occupying and owning large farms, also large slave holders on the James River, a short distance from the City of Richmond. Here these families stood prominent among the citizens of this historic region for more than a century, and known far and wide as firm Baptists and true lovers of soul freedom...

"We find in the beginning of the 19th Century (1800) three brothers, Stephen Ellis, Joseph Ellis, and Charles Ellis, living on the James River. Accordingly, Charles, Joseph, and two sons of Stephen moved to Kentucky and settled in Shelby County, in the year 1804. Here they all procured good farms, began work and became prominent citizens, and all members of the Baptist Church Stephen never came to Kentucky but lived and died on his old homestead in Virginia....

"William T. Ellis (our father) was the third (3) son of Stephen Ellis (as named above) born August 25th, 1780, married Rebecca Ellis (his cousin) and the third (3) child of Joseph Ellis (as named above) early in the year 1804."

Brother Ellis' mother was the daughter of Joseph Ellis and Mary (Hughes) Ellis and the third child of her parents as was her husband of his.

William T. Ellis and Rebecca (Ellis) Ellis became the parents of eleven children in the period 1805-1826. They were: Spottswood Ellis, Powhatan Ellis, Joseph Perkins Ellis (our subject), Hardin Haynes Ellis, William Ellis, Sarah Ellis, Luther Ellis, Hannah Ellis, Elizabeth and Nancy Ellis (twins) and Rebecca Ellis. When the mother died on May 31, 1826 she left Rebecca as a two-weeks old baby who was reared by her aunt, Elizabeth Smith. In 1828 William T. Ellis married as second wife . Elizabeth Miller, a Virginian by whom he had no children.

In 1829 William T. Ellis and family moved to Daviess County, Kentucky and bought a large plot of land upon which he erected a substantial house and other necessary buildings and soon became a prosperous farmer. He soon erected a small school house on his place and his son, Powhatan Ellis, became the first teacher. Most of the family became members of the Panther Creek Church (1815) with the father serving as the spiritual patriarch of his "clan." He died of pneumonia fever on March 5, 1842 and his body lies buried in the Ellis Cemetery in Ohio County near Whitesville. His land was divided among his heirs who married well and honored their heritage. Two of his sons became Baptist ministers – Joseph Perkins Ellis and Hardin Haynes Ellis – as did a grandson . Felix Grundy Ellis. Others of the family occupied honorable and respectful positions as lawyers, doctors, teachers and literary persons.

Brother Ellis received what scant education he could at a little country school near his home place. His father being a man of faith and prayer, he received religious impressions quite early in life around the family altar. In his ninth or tenth year he received religious impressions that were keen on his mind. His Christian school teacher also talked to him about his soul and relationship to God. His mother died as noted previously on May 31, 1826 after suffering for some time. Before she died she called all the children about the bed and told them of her bright prospects of Heaven through a Saviour's love and requested that they all meet her there. In July following this experience our brother informs us in his autobiography that he found peace with God in repentance and faith while bowed down with his face in the dirt in his father's cornfield.

This was in his fourteenth year. He remained under his father's watchcare until 1833 when he returned to Shelby County and remained for one year. In July, 1834 he united with the Old Bethel Church near Shelbyville in Shelby County and was immersed into its fellowship by that man of God, Pastor John Holland, under whose watchcare the church was then enjoying a gracious revival.

Brother Ellis returned to Daviess County in the fall of 1834 and united by letter with Panther Creek Church in Ohio County. A few months later he moved his membership to Bells Run Church as he had purchased land in that vicinity. It involved 100 acres on Greasy Camp Creek, purchased from John and Charlotte Midkiff (See Deed Book G - 296, Ohio County Court Clerk's Office, Hartford, Kentucky). From 1835 through 1842 he served as clerk of the church. This was during the latter part of the pastorate of William Downs and that of Ancil Hall and Reuben Cottrell. At this time the inspiration to preach the Gospel of Christ became strong but he strove against these feelings and the urgent requests of his brethren. This state of unrest continued without abatement even after his marriage to Miss June S. Taylor in September, 1835, the daughter of John P. and Mary Taylor. Finally the urgent need of his preaching the Gospel of Christ as God impressed him became stronger and stronger and after a sore conflict of over six years his spirit yielded and the Lord had his way.

The church at Bells Run immediately licensed him to preach in the spring of 1841. Under this authority he labored until October, 1842 when the same church ordained him to the ministry with Baptist Ministers Reuben Cottrell and Hardin Haynes Ellis, his brother, serving as the ordaining council for the church.

Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church (1814), in Ohio County (now Fordsville) soon called for his pastoral ministry. He served the church from 1842 through 1851 on a salary of \$18.00 per year. His labors were blessed of the Lord and the church enjoyed refreshing seasons of revival. Four young men were licensed and ordained to the ministry while he labored there.

Panther Creek Church in Ohio County invited him to preach for them and called him to the pastorate in February, 1845. The church was in a very confused condition brought about by an anti-mission spirit which had existed in the membership. The church finally split over the subject of missions prior to this and the withdrawing faction, with other groups formed at about the same time, organized the Panther Creek Association of United Baptists on the 19th day of June, 1843 at the West Point Baptist Church Meeting house in Hancock County, Kentucky. In a few months after Brother Ellis entered into the pastorate the storm abated and the membership began to increase and enter into a period of revival. The membership numbered about ninety when he became pastor and later increased until it numbered over 200. Three young men, James Baxter Haynes, David Whittinghill and Daniel J. Phillips were licensed to preach in January, 1856. In January of 1857 Brother Haynes was ordained by the church to the ministry by Pastors J. P. Ellis, J. S. Taylor and J. R. Gillespie. In November, 1857, Brethren David Whittinghill and Daniel J. Phillips were ordained by the church through Pastors J. P. Ellis, J. S. Taylor and James M. Dawson. Brother Haynes later became pastor at Bells Run Church. Panther Creek Church paid Brother Ellis an average of \$15.00 per year for his labors which ended in February, 1857 after about thirteen years of service. He became pastor a second time in December, 1873 and remained until after 1878 thus completing over eighteen years of service with the church.

While he served Panther Creek Church, then in the Goshen Association, he led them to leave the association in 1845 and unite with the Daviess County (Daviess-McLean) Association that same year. Again when the churches of northeastern Daviess County, Hancock County, northern Ohio County and western Breckinridge County desired to organize the Blackford

Association in 1877, he led the church to unite with this new body in 1878 to which it still belongs. In July, 1854 Panther Creek Church dismissed 39 members to constitute Whitesville Baptist Church brought about largely by the labors and interest of Brother Ellis.

Bethabara Baptist Church (1825) called for Brother Ellis' labors in 1849. The church had recently gone through the fires of discord and division wherein a faction had been lettered off to constitute Macedonia Church. The Lord again revived the work under his leadership and at one of the meetings he baptized forty-eight persons into her fellowship. After eight years of faithful services he declined the offer to continue in the pastorate there, resigning in February, 1857. The church paid him an average of about \$35.00 per year for his services. He became pastor again of Bethabara Church in October of 1860 at a salary of \$100.00 per year. His labor with them closed in May, 1863. He returned for the third time in January, 1873 and continued for nearly two years through November, 1874. His combined service with the church was twelve years in total duration. The present brick house of worship was erected during his pastorate. It was a 40' by 60' building erected at a cost of \$1,134.19. The clay from which the bricks were made was secured from the same hill on which the church was organized. The building was enlarged and improved in 1885.

Bells Run Baptist Church, the church which licensed and ordained him to the ministry, called for and enjoyed his ministry in October, 1842 as it continued happily through December, 1857 when he resigned, he served the church again from March, 1866 to May, 1878 for a total of twenty-seven years. The membership had dropped from 71 in 1835 to 31 in 1842, brought about after 1838 over the controversy concerning mission methods. But by 1856 it had increased again to 104. During his second pastorate in 1866-1878, the church recovered from the Civil War stalemate and the giving off of members to form and strengthen other churches to become one of the strongest in the association. It was ripe and ready for the great pastorate of Dr. J. S. Coleman in the decade of the 1880's.

Brother Ellis served Zion Church in Ohio County in 1867-1869. The latter became extinct in 1908. He pastored Friendly Grove Church in northeastern Daviess County, dates unknown, as well as Pleasant Ridge Church near Philpot in Daviess County at the Graves School House, dates unknown. It too became extinct, lasting from 1860-1868. He and Pastors I. R. Allen, John G. Howard and J. M. Dawson had founded the church. Ohio Church near Rockport, Spencer County, Indiana received his pastoral services in 1855 while he served as the District Missionary of the Daviess County Baptist Association. To him also belongs the credit for organizing the first Missionary Baptist church in Wayne County, Illinois, the name of which is not known by the writer. (Publisher's note: From History of Wayne County, Illinois 1884, "Pleasant Grove Church was organized September 25, 1853... The ministers composing the presbytery were Elders Joseph P. Ellis, Carter J. Kelley [another Ohio Countian] ..." K.G. Hay was also a pastor of Pleasant Grove Church. The article was submitted by D.K. Felix, a deacon who was probably also from Ohio County.)

Whitesville Baptist Church came into existence during his labors as missionary for the Daviess County Association, being organized on 46 members, 39 of whom came by letter from Panther Creek Church nearby. A new house of worship was built immediately and the work went forward in earnestness. In 1853 a revival was conducted in the log cabin residence of William Bartlett. which resulted in a large number of professions of faith, among them being thirteen men who were heads of families, together with a number of women and children. These converts first united with Panther Creek Church in the edge of Ohio County which was nearest at the time. Shortly after the organization of the church a special revival service was held in the school house

on the farm of Brother Ellis in the fall of 1854. This meeting resulted in the addition of thirty-one more members to the new church.

The church's first house of worship was erected in 1855 in the town of Whitesville as noted above. It was a frame building, 30' by 40', two stories high and was put up by the Baptists and Free Masons together on a two acre lot. The Masons held their meetings upstairs and the Baptists downstairs on the ground floor. It was occupied during 1855-1877 when the present auditorium was erected. The annex in the front was added in 1929.

Brother Ellis served Whitesville Church as pastor on three occasions – 1854-1859, 1861-1870 and 1873-1876 for a total of twenty years. He and his wife became members of the church by letter from Panther Creek Church in 1857 and continued in its fellowship until their respective deaths – hers in 1889 and his in 1892. Both of their remains lie buried in the Ellis Cemetery, located in Ohio County about one mile east of the Ellis Road and Herbert Road Crossing about three miles east of Whitesville. She was born, according to the information on her monument, in Fairfax County, Virginia on August 3, 1811 and departed this life on November 12, 1889 in her seventy-eighth year. His dates of birth and death are given at the beginning of this sketch of his life. He was eighty years of age at his death. Failing health forced him to leave the pastorate in 1879 and he spent the remainder of his life on his farm near Whitesville. While serving the Whitesville pastorate in the early days his salary was from \$25.00 to \$30.00 per year. It was increased later to the sum of \$100.00 per year and more.

Like Tolbert, Downs and Cottrell whom he succeeded he was often a voluntary and unpaid missionary, locating the dark corners and proclaiming salvation to the spiritually destitute. During the years 1857-1860 he served Daviess County Association as a missionary on a salary, the only time he did this. During that time he traveled over 2,000 miles, preached 203 sermons, baptized 73 new converts, collected \$47.50 for the Mission Board, constituted 2 churches and ordained one preacher.

He and his wife became the parents of seven children – five daughters and two sons – and had the privilege of seeing them grow into excellent Christian men and women. They were: William Ellis (b. c. 1836), Luther C. Ellis (b. February 10, 1838 - d. January 29, 1892), Sallie (b. c. 1840), Rebecca (b. c. 1842), Margaret (b. c. 1844), Nancy J. (b. c. 1846) and Pricilla (b. c. 1852). The preceding information was taken from the 1850, 1860 and 1870 Daviess County censuses and the monument of Luther Ellis.

Brother Ellis purchased additional land in 1848 from Thomas R. and Nancy F. Wilhite in Ohio County (Deed Book L - 84 - 210 acres Ohio County Court Clerk's Office), located on Panther Creek. He added 88.5 acres in 1855 from William K. and Poly Ellis on Panther Creek (Deed Book O - 417 - Ohio County Clerk's Office). In 1848 he sold his original land on Greasy Camp Creek near Bells Run Church to James Samples (Deed Book L - 545) and it was recorded in 1850. The 1848 and 1855 purchases located him nearer to Panther Creek Church where he lived until his death. His lands were sold off in tracts in 1863, 1872 and 1889 to John W. Dunn, Clinton Westerfield and Joseph King, probably sons-in-law.

Brother John W. Dunn, in his History of The Whitesville Baptist Church published in pamphlet form in 1928, said this about Brother Ellis:

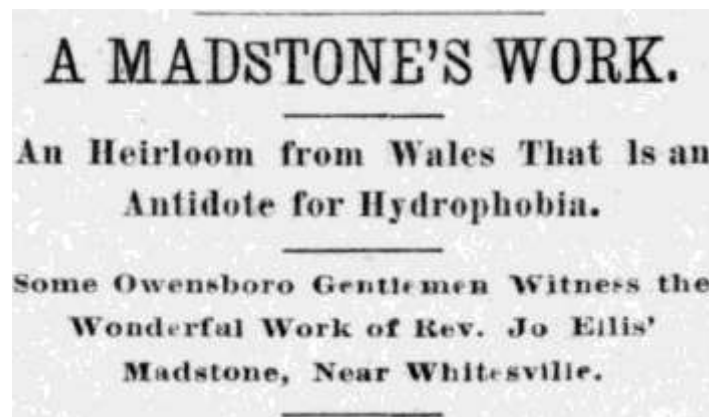
"He was one of those good old men who labored in the week to support his family, and drove for miles on the Sabbath to preach the Word of God. Early on Sunday morning before the birds began to fly, he saddled his old gray mare, threw his saddle bags across the saddle and rode some ten to fifteen miles through bridle paths to preach. He often forded Panther Creek or swam it, and as a result, returned home sometime near midnight... I have heard him preach when he had

to take his son-in-law with him to read the Scriptures; but when I saw him with his blind eyes turned toward heaven, and heard his trembling voice plead for lost souls, I knew God had called him to preach."

In July, 1867 Bells Run Church concluded that the church house was too small to accomodate the growing congregation and passed an order for its enlargement, at the same time granting the Free Masons the privilege of building and occupying the upper story of it. The work was prosecuted with vigor and soon completed. The Masonic group was chartered on October 22, 1868 and given the number 473 Free and Accepted Masons by which it is still known, only it is now the Joe Ellis Lodge, named in his memory. It is now located in the town of Pleasant Ridge in its own building, rebuilt in 1962. A picture of its present building and sign is included in this history.

Brother Ellis rendered signal service to several churches in writing, presenting, and having printed their respective histories in the minutes of the associations where they held membership. The first was the "Historical Sketch of Bell's Run Baptist Church, Ohio County, Kentucky," found on pages 8-11 in the 1880 minutes of the Daviess County (now Daviess-McLean) Baptist Association. The next was that of the "Biographical Sketch of Panther Creek Baptist Church, Ohio County, Kentucky. (1815-1881)," found in the 1881 minutes of the Blackford Baptist Association. The writer has used both of these histories extensively in writing biographical sketches of ministers who served these churches and in writing on items pertaining to the churches themselves. In the place of the "Historical Sketch of Bethabara Church," not written and presented by Pastor J. D. Arnold, the appointee, because of his death; brother Ellis presented a paper on "Extinct Churches of the Association" (Daviess County) in the 1881 minutes of the association. Those churches were: Shiloh (1838-1843), Sardis (1839-1843), Hartford (1840-1849), Fredonia (1841-1855), and Pleasant Ridge (1860-1868) located near the present Philpot, Daviess County, Kentucky. In 1882 he wrote, read and the same was printed in the minutes of the Daviess County Association a "Historical Sketch of Bethabara Baptist Church, Daviess County, Kentucky." This too has been used as a reference work by the writer.

Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, Sunday, 28 April 1889, p.5:



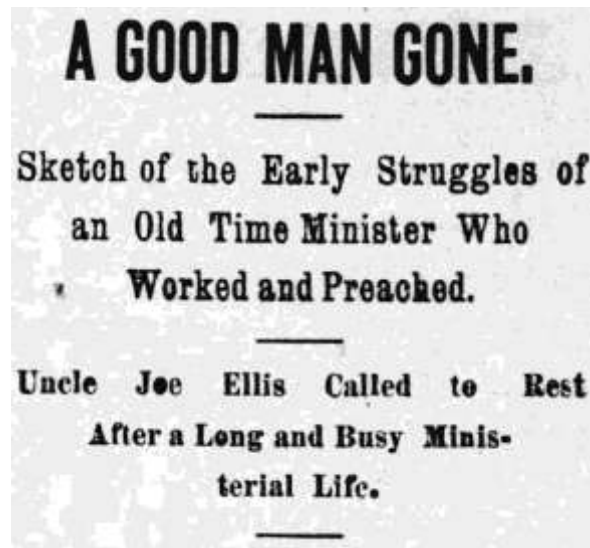
Rev. Joseph Ellis, a resident of Daviess county on the Leitchfield road, two or three miles east of Whitesville, has in his possession a mad stone which has been in his family direct for more than one hundred years. The stone was brought from Wales by the emigrant ancestor of the Ellis family. On returning from a trip to Fordsville Saturday Messrs. Field, Dean, Monarch and Triplett called at the place of Mr. Ellis to see the stone as a curiosity. They found Mr. Lambert, a

citizen of Hancock, formerly of Daviess, there with a grandson who had within a day or so been bitten by a mad dog. The stone was applied to the wound and it was evident that it gave relief to the boy, certainly drawing the poison from the wound. The pores of the stone seemed to fill by suction from the wounded place, drawing from it all the poison and upon the second application refusing to stick. Mr. Dean said he didn't know anything about mad stones and generally wasn't much on faith, but if ever he should be bit by a mad dog he would make a home run for the Ellis mad stone.

Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, Thursday, 14 November 1889, p.4:

The wife of Rev. J. Ellis, of Whitesville, died Tuesday, the 12th inst., of pneumonia and was buried Wednesday.

Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, Tuesday, 10 May 1892 , p.1:



A Preacher Who Labored Fifty Years
In the Moral Vineyard for His Master and His Fellow Man.
BURIED WITH MASONIC HONORS.

Rev. Joseph P. Ellis died Sunday morning at 9 o'clock at his residence three miles east of Whitesville, aged 81 years,

He was born in Shelby county in 1811, and removed with his parents to Ohio county when a very small child. He joined the Baptist church in his youth and in 1840 was ordained to the ministry. His labors and achievements during his long and active life would fill a volume, and would prove far more interesting than many ministerial biographies that have obtained wide circulation. Just fifty years ago, at the May "church meeting" he received his first call to the pastorate, Bell's Run church securing his services. There was no stated salary for this work and the stipend he received was very small, The next year he was called to the care of Mt. Pleasant church, then at Fordsville, but moved during his pastorate to Roberts' spring two miles beyond. His salary was \$20 per year, "to be paid in silver money."

In 1844 he was called to Panther Creek church. He preached one Saturday and Sunday in each month at each of the churches mentioned, putting in the odd Sunday in missionary work,

receiving for all less than \$100 a year. He was called to Bethabara church in 1849, which was the first time he had charge of four churches. He continued an active minister until ten years ago, when his advanced age and ill health forced him to retire. He did a great deal of missionary work and organized a number of churches, among them being Whitesville and Zion, now two of the most prosperous churches in the section where he labored.

He was a man of strong will-power, a ready speaker, earnest, honest and industrious. His small earnings as a minister in his early days made it necessary for him to labor as hard as any of his neighbors, and his sermons were all composed between the plow handles. Consequently they did not have the rhetorical finish of the elegant study nor the softness and grace common to the cushioned pulpit in front of splendid pews and fashionable audiences, but they were forcible and at all times scriptural and no minister ever in the Green river section had a right to point with more pride to the result of his labors.

In 1835 he was married to Miss Jane Taylor, of Ohio county. Seven children, five girls and two boys were born to them, five of the children living to adult age. Mrs. Ellis died several years ago.

The funeral took place yesterday at the family residence. The burial was after the Masonic ritual, the deceased preacher having been a member of that order more than fifty years.

Few men have lived who have done more hard work for their fellow men than "Uncle Joe" Ellis, and none have died more sincerely lamented by the people among whom he labored.

Hartford Republican, Hartford, KY, Friday, 20 May 1892, p.1:

Aetnaville.

May 9th. – Rev. Jo. Ellis died yesterday at 6 a. m., in the 81st year of his age. His funeral was preached to-day by Rev. B. F. Jenkins. His remains were buried in his family graveyard, in view of the house where he has lived nearly all of his life. He was laid by the side of his wife, who preceded him one year ago. He was faithful and zealous christian, having been a Baptist minister for nearly fifty years.

Ellis Cemetery, Ohio County, KY:





Eld. J. P. Ellis born 18 October
1811 Shelby County, KY and
died 8 May 1892

The Ellis Cemetery is on the east side of Whitesville turn east off of Highway 54 onto the Old Litchfield Road. Go about three miles. After passing intersection with the Herbert – Panther Creek Church Road turn into second lane on the left. The cemetery is in Ohio County; on the opposite side of the highway is Daviess County.

The cemetery when I visited in 1993 was well cared for by the family of Mrs. John W. (Margaret Phillips) Aud, who own and reside on the property. Mrs. Aud's parents, James L. & Thelma (Harl) Phillips; grandparents, Charles W. & Margaret (Ellis) Phillips; great-grandparents, Joseph P. & Jane (Taylor) Ellis; and great-great-grandfather, William P. Ellis, are all buried in the cemetery.

Rev. Joseph Perkins Ellis & Jane S. Taylor were the parents of the following seven children:

1. William Peyton, born 6 July 1836 Ohio County, KY; married Sarah Ann Bannon (29 August 1836 – 22 October 1914), 3 November 1857 Ohio County, KY; he died 22 April 1914 Ohio County, KY; he & his wife were buried Panther Creek Baptist Church, Ohio County, KY. Their children: Ida Jane (1858-1948, married John Thomas Hines), James Perkins (1861-1945, married Mary Etta Birkhead), Martha (1862-1892, married Ed F. Ewan), Mary Etta (1866-1959, married Alexander Ayer May), and Margaret (1871-1892, single).
2. Luther C., born 10 February 1838 Ohio County, KY; married Amanda F. Estes (27 August 1847 – 15 September 1869), 10 January 1865 Hancock County, KY & Sarah E.

Stinnett (16 January 1849 – 4 January 1924), 1 February 1872 Daviess County, KY; he died 29 January 1892; he and his 2nd wife were buried Ellis Cemetery, Ohio County, KY. His children: John P. (1865-1916, married Lourena L. Stewart), Joel Robert (1873-1947, single), and Jessie Virginia (1879-1961, married Willis Austin Crowe).

3. Sarah M., 'Sallie', born 17 October 1839 Ohio County, KY; died single of pneumonia, 5 June 1870 Daviess County, KY; buried Ellis Cemetery, Ohio County, KY.
4. Rebecca Ann, born 7 March 1841 Ohio County, KY; married John Randal Haynes (4 May 1832 – 29 September 1925), 26 October 1859 Daviess County, KY; she died 4 January 1917 Daviess County, KY; she & her husband were buried Ellis Cemetery, Ohio County, KY. Their children: Sylvester Ellis (1860-1932, married Mary Lou Dean Haynes), Beatrice (1861-1904, single) and Robert Lee (1865-1902, married Mary Lou Dean).
5. Margaret E., born 30 June 1843 Ohio County, KY; married Charles Willis Phillips (21 October 1836 – 24 March 1918), 19 January 1860 Daviess County, KY; she died 24 May 1920 Ohio County, KY; she & her husband were buried Ellis Cemetery, Ohio County, KY. Their children: infant son (1860-1860), Emma J. (1862-1948, married Robert Milton Miller), Thomas M. (1865-1897, single) and James Leslie (1867-1948, married Thelma E. Harl).
6. Nancy Jane, 'Nannie', born 21 September 1847 KY; married Peter W. Brown (25 August 1844 – 10 January 1882), 2 March 1880 Daviess County, KY; she died 26 September 1928 Daviess County, KY and was buried Ellis Cemetery, Ohio County, KY. She had no children.
7. Ada Priscilla, born 21 August 1852 Ohio County, KY; married Wallace Haynes (12 October 1849 – 18 January 1892), 11 February 1875 Daviess County, KY; she died 17 February 1889; she & her husband were buried Panther Creek Baptist Church Cemetery, Ohio County, KY. Their children: Clarence Thomas (1875-1951, married Rebecca Caroline Baldrige), Mabel Harris (1877-1955, married Byron Chapman Petty), Flora Ellis (1879-1972, married John Leslie Taliaferro) and William Keller (1885-1967, married Loa Lee Jones & Clara Maybelle).

Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, Monday, 25 November 2019, pp.1A: & 2A:

Cherishing the family (mad)stone

Whitesville Historical
Society to display
colonial-period piece
of fossilized coral

By Renee Beasley Jones

Longtime friends Pat Gibson and Charlotte Whittaker were talking a couple of months ago when the conversation took an odd twist to the subject of madstones.

Gibson asked Whittaker if she was familiar with the term.

To his surprise, she knew more than he ever dreamed. As it turned out, her ancestors on the Ellis side of the family brought a madstone from England to America in the 1600s, she told him.

The Ellis family madstone -- a piece of fossilized coral once thought to possess healing powers -- had been passed down in her family for centuries. It eventually made its way to her dad, the Rev. Stewart Hines, who donated it to the Owensboro Museum of Science and History in 1983 for safekeeping.

Whittaker, of Ohio County, is the 13th generation with ties to the Ellis family madstone.

"I about cried the first time I held it," she said. "To think how old it is and how my ancestors believed in it."

According to Gibson's research, the fossil traveled by ship from England to America with David Ellis, who is listed in the 1624 muster rolls on the ship Mary Margaret. Then, family history shows the madstone later made its way to Kentucky.

"You wonder how many times it has been used," said Gibson, also of Ohio County. "And how many lives were saved."

In colonial times, madstones were a home remedy used to treat bites from snakes and mad dogs. Madstones were soaked in warm cow's milk and placed on a bite or other wounds to draw out poison. When the madstone fell off, it was believed to have done its job.

They were so valuable they were passed down in families -- usually father to first son -- like jewelry, land and other highly prized assets.

During Gibson's research, he learned of the Ellis family madstone in the Rev. Joseph P. Ellis' will from the 1800s.

The will reads: "My Grandfather Stephen Ellis gave to my father, William Ellis, about the year 1820 a madstone which has been in the family almost a century. I desire this to be kept as a family relic and memorial."

The will asked that proceeds from the stone be divided among the pastor's heirs. Some people charged \$5 per hour for the stone's use, Gibson said.

"One man was offered \$1,000, a cow and calf for his stone but refused the sale," he wrote in a research paper about the Ellis family madstone.

To today's eye, the fossil doesn't look magical or mystical.

The now gray-and-white agatized coral is an inch or two in length.

Gibson's research indicates it is a piece of Devonian tabulate coral fossil, named after a county in southwestern England. Those fossils are an extinct form of coral known for their tubular chambers.

Gibson, who has been involved in genealogy research since the 1980s, learned about the Ellis family madstone while he was conducting research a couple of months ago for the Whitesville Historical Society's historic church tour. The Rev. Joseph P. Ellis founded Whitesville Baptist Church.

At the time, Gibson had no idea Whittaker was one of the pastor's ancestors.

The madstone is on loan to the Whitesville Historical Society from the Owensboro Museum of Science and History's collection.

"We have plans to display it in our Founders' Room," said Judith Ralph, director of the Whitesville Historical Society.

Because Ellis preached in Whitesville and founded a church there, it seems appropriate to display the madstone in that town, Ralph said.

The public may view the relic between the hours of 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Dec. 9-13. The madstone also will be on display during public events on Dec. 7 and Dec. 14.

During nights and weekends, the museum is open by appointment. For more information or to make an appointment, call 270-233-8035.



Left: Pat Gibson, left, and Charlotte Whittaker hold a colonial-period madstone that Whittaker's ancestors brought from England to America in the 1600s. The madstone, a piece of fossilized coral, was once thought to possess healing powers. Right: According to Pat Gibson's research, the fossil traveled by ship from England to America with David Ellis, who is listed in the 1624 muster rolls on the ship *Mary Margaret*. Then, family history shows the madstone later made its way to Kentucky. The madstone is on loan to the Whitesville Historical Society from the Owensboro Museum of Science and History's collection.

The Ellis Madstone

Joseph P. Ellis in his will wrote: "My grandfather Stephen Ellis gave to my father William Ellis about the year 1820 a madstone which has been in the family almost a century I desire to be kept as a family relic and memorial to be kept and used as heretofore. The proceeds arising from the use of said stone to be equally divided among my heirs. A reasonable recompense being allowed the member of the family who may have it in possession for the trouble in the use of application of said stone."

In 1982 Rev. **Stewart Ralph Hines** (1915-1993) donated the Ellis madstone to the Owensboro Museum of Science and History. Rev. Hines was the son of **James Ellis Hines** (1892-1958) & Flora Catherine Ralph; grandson of John Thomas Hines & **Ida Jane Ellis** (1858-1948); great-grandson of **William Peyton Ellis** (1836-1914) & Sarah Ann Bannon; great-great-grandson of Rev. **Joseph Perkins Ellis** (1811-1892) & Jane S. Taylor.



See also the following articles by Jerry Long on the website, West-Central Kentucky History & Genealogy (<https://wckyhhistory-genealogy.org/>): "Madstones – The Ellis Madstone" (in Kentucky Records section) and "Ellis Cemetery" (in Ohio County section).