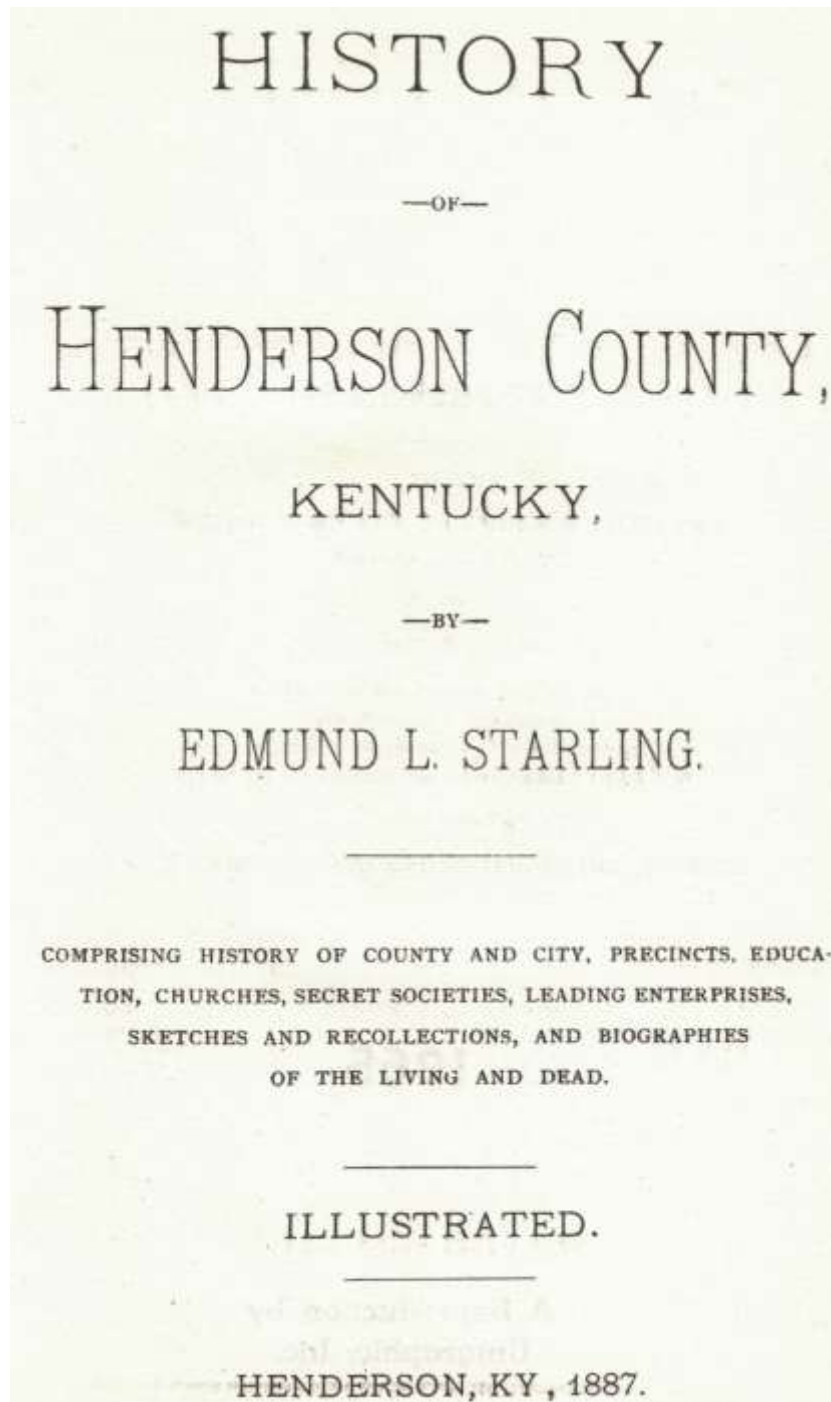


**Negro Entries in
“History of Henderson County, Kentucky”**

By Jerry Long
c.2025





Page 94:

First Emancipation

A certificate of emancipation of a negro woman and a negro man, named respectively, Patience and Scipio, belonging to Joseph Mayes, of Henrico County, Virginia, was filed and ordered to be recorded. The county being without a record book, and also a seal, the following order was made : "Ordered, that the clerk furnish this county with the necessary record book, likewise procure a seal, with a devise of a man standing with a sickle in his hand, with words ' Henderson County,' for the circumspection of the court, and a chest to hold the record books and papers belonging to the county."

Pages 99-100:

Slavery

In 1799, settlers began to import slaves to the county. At the October Court of Quarter Sessions General Samuel Hopkins reported a bill of sale for record, which conveyed the title from John Hopkins, of Mercer County, to General Hopkins, of this county, in and to seven negro slaves, two men, one woman, one boy and four small children, two sorrel horses and one black mare, for and in consideration of two hundred and forty three pounds, eleven shillings and eight pence.

Pages 162-163:

1827

The Commissioners of Tax reported for this year fifteen hundred and sixty-four tithables — sixty less than last year — and laid the levy at 75 cents — 12[^] cents less than last year. The effect of the panic and hard times had not worn away. Many men had fled the State, taking with them their slaves to avoid the levy of executions for debt. It is a fact that many slave-holders left the State with their slave property for this very purpose, and afterwards, by permission of the County Court, returned again. This, perhaps, may explain the discrepancy so noticeable during the years of hard times, as they were known. Political excitement in Kentucky ran high during this year.

Under the law, passed February 23, 1808, free negroes and mulattos were prevented from migrating to Kentucky, unless allowed to do so by a special act. During this year a number of free negroes came to the State, and by special act were freed and exempted from the pains and penalties of the law of 1808. Frank Hogg, one among the first, if not the first, was granted the right to remain in the Commonwealth, and authorized to hold real estate. From this beginning quite a colony of free negroes migrated to the county, and so far as is known, were orderly, well behaved and industrious people.

Page 171:

Slaves Emancipated

The official returns for 1840, place the population of Henderson County at nine thousand five hundred and forty-eight, an increase, since the census of 1830, of two thousand eight hundred and eighty-nine souls. Of this number, six thousand one hundred and eighty-one were whites, three thousand three hundred and nineteen were slaves, and forty-eight were free blacks.

Two thousand five hundred and ninety-five tithables were reported, and the levy fixed at one dollar and fifty cents.

During the year 1825, Elizabeth D. Gwatin, grandmother of Adam and Gwatin Rankin, died. By her will, thirty-eight negroes became the property of Horatio D. Gwatin, for the term of fifteen years, and at the expiration of that time, they were to be given their freedom according to law. At the June term of the County Court this year, the thirty-eight slaves were brought into court, their names entered of record, and they given their freedom.

Pages 174:

1843

Three thousand and forty-six tithables were reported this year, and the county levy fixed at one dollar and twenty-five cents ; of this number fourteen hundred and seventy-three were whites, and fifteen hundred and seventy-three were blacks.

1844

Three thousand and seventy-three tithables were reported this year, and the county levy fixed at seventy-five cents. Of this number fourteen hundred and forty-nine were whites, and sixteen hundred and twenty-four were blacks.

1845

Three thousand one hundred and ninety-seven tithables were reported this year, and the county levy fixed at fifty-five cents. Of this number fifteen hundred and eighteen were whites, and sixteen hundred and seventy-nine were blacks.

Pages 174-175:

Runaway Slaves

In 1843 began, and in 1844-45 was steadily developing the systematic enticing away, or stealing of slaves from Kentucky, and running them off to Canada by a cordon of posts, or relays, which came to be known as the underground railroad. Few were stolen at first, and occasionally cases of recapture on Ohio soil, and restoration to owners occurred. In several cases, Ohio juries, under the just laws enacted to meet the exigencies, gave judgment for damages, to the reasonable value of the slaves rescued, but in no cases were the judgments paid. This semblance of justice continued to grow lax, and men, who, at first, were willing to see stolen, or runaway slaves, restored, soon became indifferent, and in a few years, themselves encouraged this growing interference with the property rights of the people of Kentucky.

Page 175:

1846

Three thousand three hundred and thirty-six tithables were reported this year, and the county levy fixed at ninety cents. Of this number, fifteen hundred and forty-eight were whites, and seventeen hundred and eighty-eight blacks.

Page 176:

1847

Three thousand four hundred and forty-four tithables were reported this year, and the county levy fixed at ninety cents. Of this number fifteen hundred and sixty-one were whites, and eighteen hundred and eighty-three were blacks.

1848

Three thousand four hundred and sixty-eight tithables were reported this year, and the county levy fixed at ninety cents. Of this number, fifteen hundred and forty-one were whites, nineteen hundred and twenty-one were blacks. It will be observed that for several years the black tithables had gained in number over the whites.

Pages 176-177:

1849

Three thousand five hundred and twenty-five tithables were reported this year, and the county levy fixed at one dollar. Of this number, fifteen hundred and fifty were whites, and nineteen hundred and seventy-five were blacks.

Page 179:

1850

Three thousand six hundred and twenty-six tithables were reported this year, and the county levy fixed at one dollar and fifty cents. Of this number sixteen hundred and thirty-four were whites, and nineteen hundred and ninety-two were blacks.

Page 180:

The official count for this year gave Henderson County a population of twelve thousand one hundred and seventy-one souls, an increase of two thousand five hundred and twenty-three since the census of 1840. Of this number seven thousand six hundred and fifty-one were whites, four thousand three hundred and ninety-seven were blacks, and one hundred twenty-three free colored.

1851

Three thousand seven hundred and ninety-two tithables were reported this year, and the county levy fixed at one dollar and fifty cents. Of this number, sixteen hundred and eighty-three were whites, and two thousand one hundred and nine were blacks.

Page 182:

1852

Three thousand eight hundred an twelve tithables were reported this year, and one dollar and fifty cents fixed as the county levy. Of this number, sixteen hundred and eighty-four were whites, and twenty-one hundred and twenty-eight were blacks.

Page 184:

1853

Three thousand eight hundred and twenty tithables were reported this year, and one dollar and fifty cents was fixed as the county levy. Of this number, sixteen hundred and seventy-eight were whites, and twenty-one hundred and forty two were blacks.

1854.

Three thousand nine hundred and forty-eight tithables were reported this year, and one dollar and fifty cents was fixed as the county levy. Of this number, seventeen hundred and twenty-seven were whites, and twenty-two hundred and twenty-one were blacks.

Page 185:

1855

Three thousand eight hundred and thirty tithables were reported this year, and the county levy fixed at one dollar and fifty cents. Of this number, fifteen hundred and fifty-eight were whites, and twenty-two hundred and seventy-two were blacks.

city and county compromise

Before the levy was made by the Court of Claims, the Mayor of the City of Henderson, Martin S. Hancock, appeared before the court according to law, and satisfied that body, that the city was amply able to care for her own streets and paupers, whereupon, an order was entered of record, releasing the city from the county levy of one dollar and fifty cents, deducting from the list of tithables reported, two hundred and ninety-four whites, and two hundred and twenty-six blacks, the estimated number living within the city limits.

Page 193:

1860

The population of Henderson County, by official count, was reported this year, to be fourteen thousand two hundred and sixty-two, an increase of two thousand and ninety-one since the census of 1850. Of this number, eight thousand four hundred and five were whites, five thousand seven hundred and sixty-seven were slaves, ninety-five free colored, and fourteen hundred and forty-two foreigners.

Pages 194-195:

1860

There seemed to be a greater disposition to make money at this time than ever before, and notwithstanding war was inevitable, and as a culminating consequence slavery would be abolished,

very many of the leading planters of the county purchased large numbers of negroes, and extended the magnitude of their crops. Negroes were purchased up to the time of, and even before the first proclamation of Mr. Lincoln, and when all doubt as to the real and true intent of the party in power was settled beyond question, emissaries from the North were cautiously circulating among the negro population, and many bits of Abolition literature had been discovered. There were secret movements of the blacks, and evident dissatisfaction. There was hardly a day or night, but one or more of them did not find safe passage to Indiana. Insurrections became talked of, and for a time great uneasiness was manifestly apparent. Patrols and guards were kept along the entire river front, and yet with all these expensive precautions, many slaves effected a safe and farewell escape. In the latter part of 1859 a fellow named George A. Boyle, who had lived in Henderson for a year or more, and had oftentimes expressed himself in sympathy with Old John Brown, of Harper's Ferry fame, declared that he had a "big Republican heart," and was suspected and accused of having circulated a large number of abolition pamphlets amongst the slaves of the city and county. He was watched and detected in holding Republican council with several negroes, and the City Council, upon learning this fact, voted that he should vacate the town. To this end a committee waited upon the gentleman of Abolition faith, and warned him if he did not depart, and that immediately, he would be furnished a free ride, and a tar suit profusely ornamented with variegated feathers. Boyle, guided by the advice of the committee, took to his heels, and was never again seen in Henderson. He was a blacksmith by trade. There were many more such men as Boyle, but so secret were their movements, and so carefully and judiciously laid were all their plans, they escaped discovery, and continued to do their work unmolested.

Pages 195-196:

1860

About that time, and for some years prior to that time, negro traders made frequent visits to Henderson en route South, and would remain two or three weeks selling, exchanging, or buying negro slaves.

The first day of January of each year, was a great day. Great crowds of men congregated in the town, knowing it to be the day for hiring and selling negroes. A block, or box, was usually placed at the most central point of the principal street, and from this block, or box, negroes — men, women and children — were hired for the ensuing year, or sold outright.

Now that those horrid times have past and gone, many men, who at that time dealt in human life, look back and acknowledge the justice of universal freedom.

Under the law, a slave could be sold under execution just the same as other property, and oftentimes, husband and wife, mother and child were separated, perhaps never to see each other again. Frequently, for the purpose of settling estates, the unity of a happy family of negroes was entirely broken up by sale. It was not an unfrequent occurrence for mother and father to be sold away down in Dixie, while their children were purchased by a resident, or some legatee of the estate. It was the universal custom to sell mean or worthless negroes, and most generally they were sent to the far South. Many a sad parting, a distressing separation has been witnessed on the streets of Henderson. Tears have flown, and distressed manifestations and exclamations have been seen and heard, and yet the great mass would pass on as unconcernedly as though it was the braying of so many dumb brutes. Negroes, who were faithful, and were owned by humane masters, were well treated, and as a general thing were as happy as mankind is ever permitted to be, yet there were instances, where the treatment of these people was cruel in the extreme. As a rule, Henderson

County slave owners were good masters, and were solicitous for the welfare of their negroes, and while some of the stories told by the people of the North concerning the treatment of this race, bore the semblance of truth ; in the main they were base fabrications, at least so far as those stories concerned Kentucky.

Page 211:

1863

[Colonel John W.] Foster's negro order.

May 20, Foster issued his first order concerning the negro race. It was as follows :

“All negroes coming into the district of Western Kentucky from States south of Tennessee, and all negroes who have been employed in the service of rebels in arms, are declared captives of war. It is ordered by the commanding general that all such negroes in the Counties of Hancock, Daviess, McLean, Henderson, Union, Crittenden, Livingston, Lyon, Caldwell, Webster and Hopkins be collected at Henderson and furnished quarters and subsistence. Chaplain James F. St. Clair, Sixty-fifth Regiment, is charged with the execution of this order.”

Page 213:

1864

August 4, the first negro troops landed at the town....

During this month negro thieves were numerous, and frequently forced the slaves to the opposite side of the river.

Page 217:

1864

Friday evening [August 5], about seven o'clock, the whole town was thrown into an intense state of excitement by the arrival and disembarkation of one hundred and sixty negro soldiers, commanded by white officers. Such a sight had never been witnessed before, and not knowing the object of their visit, or apprehending their approach, every citizen was more or less alarmed- These troops took possession of the Court House. Apprehension of an early attack from the rebels was entertained by every one, and on short notice the archives of both clerks' offices were removed from the building. At ten o'clock next morning all of the drays and wagons of the city were pressed into service to remove the plunder, including picks and shovels, from the Court House, to a high^ and isolated bluff on the river bank, directly in front of the present bridge office, at the intersection of Water and Fourth Streets. The soldiers were provided with picks and shovels and set to work throwing up earth works and fortifying the bluff against any attack from the rebels. Here they were engaged until the evening when the officer in command received orders from Louisville to evacuate and proceed to Owensboro. The steamer " Echo," coming up, was made to land and take aboard this sable command and their picks and shovels. It is due to say, that the officers and men of this command were more pleased with the order removing them, than were the citizens, for it was generally believed that an attack would have been made by a large force that night, and, perhaps, half of the colored troops slaughtered.

It was said, and subsequent history affirmed the belief, that Governor Dixon, Mayor Banks, and Mr. W. B. Woodruff were instrumental in having these troops removed. So certain was it that

an attack was to be made Saturday night, very many of the citizens had left for the country during the day. Judge Y. E. Allison notified the public that he had removed the county records to the " City Bank " building, on Main Street, then standing where Johnson's barber shop is now located.

Page 224:

On Sunday night two companies of negro troops arrived and took possession of the Court House. This then superseded the necessity of any further effort at a citizen organization, and hence the initiatory steps toward that object were for the time laid by.

Pages 224-225:

On the twenty-fourth day of September [1864], one hundred negro soldiers were sent to Corydon on a recruiting expedition, when returning were attacked by twenty rebels in ambush, and strange to say, very little, if any damage was done.

Page 225:

On Sunday morning, November 6 [1864], a party of rebels under the command of Jake Bennett, came into the city and fired a few shots at the negro soldiers who were on parade below and in front of the Hancock House.

Pages 237-238:

1866

The War Over

This year dawned upon a peaceful country, and a people determined, by honesty, industry and frugality, to regain their pecuniary losses. The war had scourged them, indeed it had robbed many men of their means of subsistence. They had borne patiently with thieves and scoundrels and foraging parties of both armies, and thanked God that their lives had been spared. Society had greatly changed ; a great deal of that old-fashioned hospitality, for which Kentuckians had been so proverbial, had now to give way to hard business, hard work and scrutinizing economy. Old-time friends had become estranged during the wicked strife, a love for money had taken the place of unrestrained sociability, a Northern idea of living possessed the greater part of the people. Slaves were now as free as the winds, and homes which were once presided over by the mistress, with her half-dozen servants to answer every call, now presented altogether a different scene, for the immediate members of the family were compelled to do that which a few years before, they had ordered done. People learned to live hard and close, and after many years of this great change of life, it is safe to say Henderson County is in a better condition to-day than ever before.

It is due to the colored people to say that, under the circumstances attending the radical change from slavery to freedom, the great change of becoming their own masters, and toiling for their own support, in place of having the cares of life to devolve upon masters, their behavior surprised their most sanguine friends, who had viewed the situation with anxious solicitude. They came into this new life as though they had been drilled and tutored for months; they accepted the situation with a becoming grace, and while some few were disposed to behave unruly, the great majority behaved like men of sense and character, settling down to the realities of life, and going to work to build up themselves and growing families.

January 25, a branch of the Freedman's Bureau had been established in Henderson, and Thomas F. Cheaney appointed Superintendent. This institution was a sort of a stand between the colored man and his employer. Contracts were made for labor, and one of the duties of the Superintendent was to see justice done both parties. Organized at the time it was, and honestly and judiciously managed as it was in Henderson, the system was more of a blessing than otherwise. Worthless colored people were controlled, and vagrant negroes forced to seek and obtain employment.

Page 245:

1870

Henderson County now contained by the Federal census, eleven thousand, seven hundred and seventy-nine natives, and six hundred and eighty-eight foreign whites, and five thousand, nine hundred and ninety blacks, making a total population of eighteen thousand, four hundred and fifty-seven, an increase since the census of 1860, of four thousand, one hundred and ninety-five. From 1860 to 1870 the increase of the negro population was only one hundred and forty-six, while the increase of the whites was four thousand and sixty-two.

Page 249:

1880

The tenth census credits Henderson County with a population of twenty-four thousand five hundred and fifteen souls. Of this number sixteen thousand nine hundred and forty-three were whites, and seven thousand five hundred and seventy-two were blacks. Of the whites, six hundred and forty-four were foreigners.

Comparing the census of 1880, with that of 1870, it will be observed that the increase in population aggregates six thousand and fifty-eight souls, and of this increase, four thousand four hundred and seventy-six were whites, and one thousand five hundred and eighty-two were black.

Page 285:

1829

An order was passed at the June meeting, making it a penalty for any slave to offer for sale any article whatever, without the consent of his or her master or mistress.

Page 289:

For some reason, which the records of 1838 failed to explain, the Trustees became alarmed concerning the carrying or concealing of unlawful weapons by the colored population. They, therefore, at their October meeting, ordered "That James Rouse, W. P. Smith, Fountain Cunningham, William R. Abbott, James W. Clay, Henry L. Taylor, James Williams, William F. Quinn, James H. Green, William H. Cunningham, Robert J. Rouse, Thomas Towles, Jr., Joseph D. Gobin be appointed to search all suspected negro premises for unlawful weapons or stolen property, and that they have power to enter and search all suspected places, that they arrest and bring before the Board all negroes having unlawful weapons, and that they seize the weapons, etc."

Page 290:

1840

The Trustees directed the Collector to collect this year, in addition to the tax levied upon each and every white male over the age of twenty-one years, one dollar from each and every free colored male over the age of sixteen years as a poll-tax. A specific tax was also levied upon the owners and proprietors of grocery stores, farmers' produce and boat stores, varying from \$5 to \$15.

Owing to the increase of grog shops and the manifest determination of that class of dealers to reap a monied harvest, even though contrary to law and good morals, and also the trouble and annoyance experienced by the owners of slaves on that account, at the December meeting the Board of Trustees unanimously passed the following ordinance offered by Lazarus W. Powell :

Be it Ordained by the Trustees of the Town of Henderson:

"That it shall be, and is hereby made, the duty of the Town Sergeant, or either of his assistants, to punish, with any number of lashes not exceeding ten, all or any negro slave or slaves who may be found in any grog shop, grocery, or other place where spirituous liquors are retailed in said town, or who may be found on the streets of said town after ten o'clock at night, unless it shall appear to the said Town Sergeant, or assistant, that said negro slave or slaves, are acting under the orders of his, her, or their master or mistress ; and it shall further be the duty of the Town Sergeant, or either of his assistants, to enter into any grog shop, grocery, or other place where spirituous liquors are retailed, in said town, whenever he shall be informed that any such negro slave or slaves are collected therein. Provided, said Town Sergeant, or assistant, can enter the same peaceably and without force."

Page 292:

1841

Isaac Gayle, a slave of George Gayle, was the leading town contractor at this time. His work in repairing the wharf and grading Main street was received and pronounced well done.

Page 294:

1844

August 12 [1844], it was "Ordered that the Town Sergeant suppress all negro preaching and negro meetings within the limits of the town, of nights in the future."

Page 296:

1847

By an order of the Board of Trustees, the negroes were allowed the privilege of holding a meeting for religious worship every Friday night until ten o'clock, and every Sunday afternoon until sundown.

July 27, the Trustees repealed this order, and passed in lieu thereof, an order prohibiting slaves from preaching or assembling for religious worship at night, but granting them the privilege of holding Sunday afternoon meeting.

1848

Owing, perhaps, to past stringent orders concerning negro worship, the citizens became anxious and interested in their spiritual welfare ; they, therefore, at the February meeting of the Board of Trustees presented a plan of worship, embodied in a petition, which they asked to be adopted. The following is the order of the Board : "Mr. F. Cunningham presented the petition of sundry citizens with regard to instructing the negroes in the way of salvation. Mr. Samuel N. Langley moved to lay said petition on the table. Carried unanimously and so the said petition was laid on the table."

Page 318:

1861

The teaching of negro Sunday Schools was prohibited, and the meeting of that race in the city for public worship when conducted, controlled, or assisted by a slave, or free negro, was declared to be a nuisance. It was made the duty of the Marshal to disperse all such meetings, and to arrest the person or persons by whom the same was conducted, and if the preacher, speaker or exhorter be a slave he was to be punished with any number of lashes not less than ten, nor more than twenty, and if a free negro to be fined not less than twenty, nor more than fifty dollars.

Page 320:

1861

The total valuation of property reported this year [1861], including 37 stores and 141 slaves, amounted to \$1,614,170. White males over 21 years, 431 ; free negroes over 16 years, 9, and 34 dogs, the head tax on all of which amounted to \$8,803.35.

Page 325:

1864

The tax levy showed for this year, value of town lots, \$1,541,490 ; 436 slaves under sixteen years and 401 over sixteen years, value, \$173,775; value of personalty, \$90,250; 38 stores, \$139,850 ; 42 slaves hired per annum and 3? hired for less than one year, \$18,650 ; 402 white males over 21 years of age, 30 free blacks and 32 dogs.

Page 334:

1868

Saturday night, 19th, a demand was made upon Jailer J. W. Williams for the person of one Jack Burle, by an organization called and known as " Kuklux." Upon a positive refusal to comply, an attempt was then made to force an entrance. Judge Cissell, then Circuit Judge, who lived only a short distance from the jail, was notified and in a short time appeared upon the ground, and by the use of good argument succeeded in persuading the mob to retire.

Pages 338-341:

In July, 1868, an organization known as the "Kuklux" appeared upon the streets of the city at night, alarming many citizens of the city, and committing, in one or more instances, acts contrary to law and order. It was said — with how much truth, however, is not known — that many of the

best citizens of the city were members of the clan, and that its organization was intended to assist good government and the enforcement of the laws, that that portion of the organization were as much opposed to anything in the shape of outlawry as any citizen who refused to countenance the movement. Yet the movement was regarded generally as a dangerous one, calculated to do no good, but, on the contrary, to become the source of great evil. The Council regarded it as dangerous to the peace of society, ill-timed, and absolutely unnecessary, unlawful, and uncalled for, and therefore determined, at all hazards, to suppress it, first by persuasion, if possible, if not, then by force, no matter how that force was secured or from whence it came.

On the twenty-seventh day of July the following ordinance was passed :

" Be It ordained by the Mayor and Common Council: First — That it shall be unlawful for any person to appear on the streets, alleys or highways of the city in mask or with his face or person so disguised that he cannot be recognized by casual observation of his acquaintance, and for each offense said person shall be fined not less than fifty nor more than one hundred dollars to be recovered by warrant or other fines,

"Second — It is hereby made the special duty of the Marshal and police to arrest all parties violating this ordinance, and for this purpose they shall have the power to call to their assistance any citizen of the city, and for a failure of the Marshal or police to faithfully discharge their duty, he or they shall be fined twenty-five dollars, and for a failure of such citizen to aid in arresting such person or persons, violating the first section of the ordinance, he or they shall be fined ten dollars

" Be it further ordained, that the Mayor forthwith issue a proclamation calling upon all citizens to desist from appearing in disguise by day or night, disturbing the quiet of the city, and to warn them that if persisted in immediate measures will be taken to punish. them."

Whereupon the Mayor issued the following proclamation : ** To all whom it may concern:

Your attention is called to the above ordinance, passed by the City Council at its meeting of Monday night last. In accordance therewith, you are earnestly requested to desist from any further such exhibitions of masks, guns, weapons and pretenses of authority unknown to and unrecognized by the law, as have attended your frequent appearances in the streets of the city within the past few weeks. The object of your organization and its plans and purposes I do not know, nor do I propose to inquire. That it is calculated in its effects to do great and irremediable injury to the best interests of the community, no right-thinking and prudent person will deny, and it will, if continued, result in mischief, no one who has regarded the rise and progress of similar organizations in other localities, can doubt. If it be said it was organized to reform abuses, which its members imagine exist in the community, I answer the laws are in full force and will be vindicated by a prompt resort to the remedies whenever they are known to be violated, besides the administrators of the law are men of your own choosing. If they fail to do their duty the remedy is in yours and the hands of other citizens, and it is with you and them to apply it. If your organization has for its object nothing beyond the indulgence of what you may regard as a little harmless pleasantry, through the media of masks and horns and howls, I answer, that such exhibitions are unseemly, annoying and mischievous, for they have been accompanied more than once with the display and use of weapons and the utterance of threats against those who are entitled to the protection of the law, and have resulted, too, in terrifying many peaceable and well disposed citizens.

" If, as many persons suppose, this organization was intended to keep in subjection, to order and law, and to enforce habits of industry and a respect for the observance of their contracts for labor, a certain class of our population, I answer, that class is amenable to the law, and is entitled

to the protection of the law as much as any other, and that its members have been generally well-behaved and orderly, and industriously engaged in maintaining themselves and families. This intended or threatened interference with their rights, whether real or imaginary, works a great injustice to that class, and will result in injury and damage to their employer, for some of them have been already, and many more will be, frightened into an abandonment of their contract for labor, leaving numberless fields untitled and crops unharvested. The toleration of such an organization in our midst for any length of time will also have the tendency to induce some of our best citizens to seek more quiet and safer localities, while many who might otherwise be disposed to bring their capital to our growing and prosperous city for investment, will be deterred from doing so by its existence. Certainly its members, who probably have an equal interest with all our citizens in this matter, are not willing to see this result brought about by their agency.

“Then, when it is considered how many outrages may be committed under the color and seeming sanction of this organization it is hoped that the most thoughtless of the members may be induced to abandon and discontinuance it. A band of highwaymen taking advantage of the fact that this organization exhibits itself unmolested in our streets, may any night, disguised as they are generally, penetrate the city and rob the banks and stores and escape unharmed to their hiding places, and a cowardly villian, malignant and thirsting for blood, may safely and surely, under the assumed mask of this organization, take the life of a good citizen, whom he fancies has wronged him

“Viewed in the length of all the consequences which will flow from it the organization is wrong, unnecessary and dangerous and ought to be abandoned, or failing in that, suppressed. I therefore earnestly urge upon all its members, a prompt compliance with the ordinance above cited, lay aside forever your masks, make no more parades upon the streets and alleys of the city, and show yourselves supporters of the laws as they are. But if you will not do this, it will be my imperative duty to see the observance strictly enforced, and I shall certainly do so to the extent of the powers vested in me.

Respectfully, E. L. STARLING.

This proclamation was received in good part so far as the fact could be known, and many of the leading members of the clan determined to abide by the advice given. There were others, though, who preferred to resist the authority of the law, and did turn out again. Mention has been made of the attack upon the county jail* Upon this movement being made the Council appropriated one thousand dollars and passed the following ordinance :

“Be it ordained, that the Mayor is authorized to employ such additional police as he may think necessary, for such length of time as he may see proper, and at a compensation not exceeding that received by the present police.”

It was understood that this force should not be known and that its duties should be to detect members and report their names. The authority of the law began to close around the boys a little closer than they had suspected, and many interviews were held with the Mayor by those suspected of being members One youngster who was going to leave the city to make his home elsewhere, ventured as a friend to confess his connection with the clan and to furnish a full list of the membership.

Whether this young Kuklux told the truth or not has never been known. It is enough to know that the law-abiding portion of the clan saw the folly and danger to come out of such nonsense and were mainly instrumental, and finally succeeded in disbanding the organization. They held their last parade with the distinct understanding that that was to be the last, proceeded

to the lower end of the city, fired off their guns, pistols, etc., made peace with the world and nothing more has ever been heard of them as a military organization.

Good men belonged to the Kuklux beyond question, and upon going into it thought it a good thing just at that time. They soon saw the danger, however, and deserve credit for bringing about its disbandment.

It is due to the city to say that no single member of the Council entertained a desire to do more than his duty, they were opposed to the organization and determined upon its suppression, no matter the cost.

They recognized the fact that friends were in the ranks, and yet if these friends would not consent to be governed by good advice, and abide by the laws, then if they suffered from any source it was their misfortune and not the wish or fault of the Council.

Page 356:

1878

The colored school had grown to such magnitude it was found necessary to have more room, and in order to accommodate the increased number of pupils, July 16th an addition of twenty by thirty feet was ordered made to the school house. Be it said to the credit of the Council, in all of its travails, sight was never lost of the educational interest of the city, but loans and donations were frequently extended to the blacks as well as the whites.

Page 399:

Stealing Negroes

During the latter part of the war, when the draft act was being so rigidly enforced by the Federal authorities, substitutes were in great demand, commanding in many instances as high a price as one thousand dollars. At that time there were a great many likely negro men in the Scuffletown precinct, and strange to say they had been let alone by the army of negro thieves on the border. These negroes were well treated and contented to remain where they were, but the desire for gain and the easy manner in which large sums of money could be accumulated by thieving scoundrels in Indiana, soon unsettled their happy lives and completely disarranged all of their plans. Interlopers from Indiana were continually slipping into Kentucky and whispering in the night time to them stories of a joyous freedom. These scoundrels professed to be their friends and manifested a desire to spirit them away to the land of freedom where they could find employment and be masters of their own labor. The negroes were not much disposed to listen to their glowing stories, and yet hesitated.

Pages 425-426:

Public Schools For Colored Children

On Tuesday, November 21st, 1871, the Common Council of the City of Henderson passed the following ordinance :

"Be it ordained by the Common Council of the City of Henderson, that the following named residents of the City of Henderson, Dr. Pinkney Thompson, H. S. Park, A. F. Parker. Jacob "Held, Jr., and Y. E. Allison, be and they are hereby appointed Trustees of the public school for colored children in the City of Henderson, established by an act of the General Assembly of the

Commonwealth of Kentucky, entitled an act to establish a public school for colored children in the City of Henderson, approved March 10th, 1871, Said Trustees to hold their office for two years and until their successors are qualified."

On the twenty-seventh of the same month the following named persons, being a majority of those named in the above ordinance, to-wit : Jacob Held, Dr. Pinkney Thompson, H. S. Park and Y. E. Allison, met at the dwelling house of Jacob Held, in the City of Henderson, and took the oath required by law and the constitution as such Trustees ; which oath was administered by E. L. Starling, Mayor of said city. Whereupon they organized by unanimously electing Jacob Held President and Y. E. Allison permanent Secretary.

The Trustees purchased a lot at the corner of First and Alves Streets, 75x200 feet, and had erected thereon a frame building with two rooms, each 80x30 feet. The school was opened September 2d, 1872, with Professor Sam'l Harris (white), superintendent and teacher, and Mrs. E. P. Thompson (colored), assistant. The latter served three months and resigned, after which the Board employed Mrs. Mary Letcher who, with Professor Harris, continued in the school to the close of the session in 1874,

After this the Board employed John K. Mason, superintendent and teacher, and Martha J. Mason, his wife, assistant, who still occupy the positions. Mason and his wife were citizens of Louisville, but had for several years been teachers in the Runkle Institute at Paducah, Kentucky.

In 1878 the City Council added another room to the school building and another teacher, Miss Virgie D. Harris, a graduate of the school, was employed as second assistant. Miss Harris held the position to the close of the session June, 1882.

The Board having made other additions to the building, the session of 1882-83 opened with four teachers, as follows : John K. Mason, superintendent and teacher; Mrs. Martha J. Mason, first assistant ; Miss Alice D. Moting, second assistant ; William H. Hall, third assistant.

This school is governed by the same rules and the same text books as are used in the public schools for white children, and its sessions are of the same length, ten months'. This school has three departments, namely : primary, elementary and intermediate, in the latter physiology and book-keeping are taught. The attendance has steadily increased from 145 pupils in 1874 to 368 enrolled in 1882, an increase of 152.4-73 per cent.

In addition to the revenues derived from the sources authorized by the act of the Legislature, approved March 10th, 1871, this school receives its pro rata of the State fund for common school purposes, which, at \$1.30 on each of the 588 persons of school age enrolled in 1883, amounts to \$764.40.

The average cost of maintaining this institution is about \$1,300 per annum. This school has proven a blessing to the children of colored parents, as it is a credit to those who were instrumental in its organization. No bickerings or complaint has marred its peace, and at no time has a demand necessary been denied. Many of our best people have manifested an interest in its good government and blessings, and a commendable spirit of liberality has ever guided the Council in its protecting care.

Page 474:

African M. E. Church

A large and thrifty congregation, have a commodious brick house of worship, built several years ago. Rev. R. W. T. James, pastor.

Pages 475-476:

Fourth Street Colored Baptist

The history of this church is brief ; never the less, it goes to show how much can be accomplished by energy, earnest work, and united purposes.

The church was organized February 15th, 1877, by Elder R. D. Peay, pastor of the White Baptist, assisted by Judge P. H. Lockett. It had a membership at that time of forty-four members, and now numbers three hundred and twenty-five affiliating members.

On February 15th, 1877, the same day of organization Elder Lewis Norris was called to the pastorate and accepted the charge Just here it may be well to go further back in the life of this congregation. Originally, there was but one Colored Baptist Church — the First Baptist. In 1867, Elder Norris was called from Bardstown, Kentucky, to take charge of the First Baptist Congregation. He accepted the same year, coming to Henderson and entering upon the duties of the charge. For ten years, he labored with this congregation, and during the time purchased the lot on the corner of Elm and Washington Streets, and commenced raising money for the purpose of building the two story brick, now standing as a monument to the liberality and industry of the colored people. He procured the plan and had raised over eight hundred dollars for building purposes, when some dissatisfaction arose in the congregation, and he resigned charge of the church He was then called to Bowling Green, but at the instance of several whites, declined the call, and remained in Henderson. About this time forty-four members of the First Baptist secured letters of withdrawal, and immediately rented the Old Cumberland Presbyterian church building, on Fourth Street, and organized what is now known as the Fourth Street Church. Elder Norris was called to this charge, and accepted. He immediately applied his whole time and energies to building up the new church, first buying from Mr. Joseph Adams a lot on the corner of First and Adams Street. The Deacons of the church, Ephraim Marshall, Randall Bibbs, George Towles, Stephen Swope, Elias Cabell, Smith Posey and Thomas Payne, gave him every assistance, and worked with him in harmony and general good will. This and the continued unceasing and untiring labors of the pastor, deacons and members had the effect to very materially increase the membership of the church, and the prospect of soon building for themselves a temple they could call their own, subscribing liberally themselves, and being materially aided by their white friends. Elder Norris and his deacons soon found themselves in a condition — financially as they thought, to undertake the building proposed. In 1879, the house was built and roofed in, and was occupied by the congregation in 1880. The church is a large brick with a towering cupalo, and a deep toned bell to correspond. The congregation have never had but one pastor. They have had many ups and downs, and are yet finacially embarassed, but hope by the blessings of a kind providence, to extricate themselves from all entanglements during this and the coming year.

Note — On the third Sunday of September, 1884, the handsome and imposing church edifice above referred to was burned about eleven o'clock in the morning, and the congregation turned out into the street.

Since the burning of the church, to-wit : on the eighteenth day of June, 1887, Elder Norris died and his congregation scattered to the four winds.

Pages 476-480:

The African Baptist Church

The African Baptist Church of Jesus Christ, in Henderson, Henderson County, State of Kentucky, began in log cabins, corn, and tobacco fields ; the members assembled in barns, and

under shade trees, to worship The Almighty Father. In 1840, they were admitted and received to membership in the " White Baptist Church," and baptised by Rev. H. B. Wiggin, and there provisions were made for them until 1845 ; then a committee of five white brethren was appointed to organize an "African Baptist Church." Seventy members of colored, with white brethren and pastor met in the basement story of the present Baptist Church on the eighth of June, 1845. Rev. G. Matthews preached a sermon from Rev. 3, Ch. 8 vs. " Behold I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it." He explained the commission given the church, and the nature of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. At the close, Rev. Franklin, of the committee suggested Rev. F. Cunningham moderator, and W. H. Cunningham clerk. The articles of Faith and Rules of Decorum were read and explained, the congregation accepted, and agreed to live in accordance with the teachings of the word of God. James Towles and Henry Alves, were chosen deacons, F. Cunningham, moderator, announced to them that you are now an African Baptist Church, to work by the directions of the committee.

Rev. George Matthews, pastor of the White Baptist Church, rose and offered an appropriate prayer to the Almighty God, that he would ratify in Heaven what was done on earth to his Honor and Glory, and then the hand of recognition was extended by the committee.

Rev. Willis Walker, who was a slave, was chosen pastor, and was afterward bought from his owner by the colored church at a cost of five hundred and twenty dollars. Rev. Walker preached as a Freewill Baptist for many years preceding his connection with Missionary Baptist, his labors being crowned with great success.

In October, 1846, the church held a protracted meeting, which resulted in the conversion of fifty persons. In 1849, The Holy Spirit was poured out upon the people and a number of seventy were obedient to the Faith of Jesus Christ.

In 1852 Rev. Walker was joined by Rev. M. Taylor and Major Towles, and when the associational report of 1857 was made up, it was found that " The African Baptist Church " had increased to three hundred and seventy members, the entire membership of Henderson County being centered in this church.

Rev. Walker's last work, he had prayed to his Heavenly Father to permit him to be found at his post when death comes, so he was in the water and was baptising when the angel of death said unto him, "well done, good and faithful servant," and after a period of twenty-four years labor, he returned to his Father's embrace, and many sad hearts mourned the loss. The church finding herself without a pastor, invited Rev. Henry Green, of Danville, Kentucky, to visit here, and he came and pastored three years.

Charles Jenkins was licensed in 1860. In the spring of 1865, Rev. Washington Stander, was called and served two years. On the nineteenth day of August, 1866, thirty-three members were dismissed by letter to constitute the Race Creek Baptist Church, six miles north of the city.

For twenty-one years, the congregation had been worshiping in the basement story of the White Baptist. The great war between the North and South had just closed, and the colored people were thrown upon their own resources, with not a dollar to sustain themselves, and the church finding itself without a house in which to worship God. Suspicion ran high, prejudice and passions were the topics of the day, the thoughts of a dark prospect seem to chill the blood in every vein, but remembering the text of Rev. Matthews, " Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it," a regular meeting for business was held on the twenty-third day of January, 1866, and after much discussion, a committee was appointed consisting of Thomas Gains, Sr., Peter Harris, John Mackey, Henry Smith and Charles Livers, with instructions to secure a place for worship.

At a business meeting February 1st, 1866, the Committee reported success, then the following brethren were chosen Trustees, Charles Livers, Thomas Gains, Sr., and John Mackey, and on the eighth day of February, 1866, entered into contract with E. W. Worsham for the old Methodist Church, corner of Elm and Washington Streets, with a seating capacity of more than four hundred persons, for a consideration of \$3,030.

The first Lord's day in June, 1866, the congregation was asked to remain after preaching for the purpose of organizing a Sabbath School, after explanation given by G. H. Grant, Charles Livers. Paris McBride and others, it was agreed to proceed to the organization of a Sabbath School, and on motion G. H. Grant was chosen Superintendent, Paris McBride, assistant Superintendent; Charles Livers, Secretary ; and George King, Treasurer.

In 1867, the church being without a pastor, G. H. Grant was chosen to supply the pulpit.

On the twenty-third day of October, 1867, Rev. Lewis Norris was called to take pastoral charge of the church, and he served eight years. During his administration, several new churches were organized, and several preachers ordained to the work of the Gospel Ministry. In September, 1867, M. Taylor was ordained to the ministry ; in 1870, on the ninth day of October, G. H. Grant was ordained ; in 1871, March 10th, five members were dismissed to constitute St. Paul's Baptist Church, in Corydon, twelve miles southwest of the city; April 6th. eighteen members were dismissed to constitute the St. John Baptist Church, nine miles west of the city; November 4th, nine members were dismissed to constitute the New Hope Baptist Church, seven miles south of the city ; in 1871, May 1st, thirteen members were dismissed to constitute the Walnut Hill Baptist Church, five miles southeast of the city; in 1872, Joseph Bell and Primus Burris, were ordained to the ministry.

In 1871, Rev. Lewis Norris baptised one hundred and eighty persons, who were added to the church, and it was ascertained that the seating capacity of the house would not accommodate the congregation, and so \$1200 were expended in building an addition, which seated seven or eight hundred persons.

In November, 1876, Elder G. H. Grant was chosen to take pastoral charge of the church. Finding it, and the Sabbath School, retrograding from its previous high standing, the church greatly confused, and Sabbath School numbering from ten to fifteen pupils, it was with reluctance he entered upon the work. The first official act of the church under Elder Grant's administration was the granting of forty-three members letters of dismission, on the ninth day of February, 1877, to constitute the Fourth Street Baptist Church, in this city, giving them \$250.

The members having agreed to erect a brick edifice to the honor of God's name, the officers suggested a plan to raise the money, which was heartily endorsed by all the members, and they raised from \$60 to \$100 per week. The Sabbath School increased to two hundred and thirty scholars. A resolution to purchase an organ was highly approved, and J. K. Mason was appointed to select the organ. A committee of ladies were appointed to solicit means for that purpose. In a few days the amount needed (one hundred and twenty-five dollars) was in hand. Peace and tranquility prevailed in all the departments of the church.

Rev. C. R. Ware was called to the pastoral charge, January 1st, 1879. He found the church in a fine working condition, both spiritually and temporally.

In the spring of 1879, the old frame building was removed from the lot, then the foundation for the new building was laid at once. The building committee were brethren of honesty, wisdom and energy. They were as follows : Junius Sneed, Thomas Gaines, Sr., Henry Glass, Peter Harris, Erasmus McCormick, J. A. Carr, J. E. McBride, B. R. Hughes, Winston Harris, Michael Brown, John K. Mason, and W. F. Gaines, Secretary. The dimensions of the new building is 45x75, two

stories high, the upper story eighteen feet, basement eight feet. The corner stone of the new building was laid on the fourth of July, 1879. The contractors were three or four months building the house, and during that time the congregation was occupying the Benevolent Aid Society's Lodge room in Woodruff Hall. On the fifteenth day of September, 1879, the congregation removed to their new house of worship, which was so far completed at a cost of \$4,900. Rev. P. H. Kennedy was called and entered upon pastoral duty, January 1st, 1881. He found the congregation worshipping in the basement story of the building, the second story to be plastered, windows to be put in, and to be furnished with seats and pulpit. The people, yet led by a working spirit to complete their edifice, responded to every call until it was finished, at a cost of about \$7,050. The following persons are filling the office of deacons: J. E. McBride, H. Glass, J. Sneed, Thomas Gaines, Sr., Peter Harris, R. McCormick and J. A. Carr.

Page 502:

Colored Lodges

St. John's Lodge, No. 4, (Masonic) — Instituted September, 1866.
Camby Lodge, No. 1642, (Independent Order of Odd Fellows) — Instituted 1875.
United Brothers of Friendship — Instituted October, 1871.
Pride of Kentucky Lodge, No. 105 — Organized October, 1880.
Bias Lodge, No. 8 — Organized November, 1879.
Pledies Chamber, (Females), No. 1 — Organized December, 1880.
Sons and Daughters of Zion, Lincoln Lodge, No 1 — Organized June, 1887.

Page 598:

The Masonic body of Henderson, although Governor Powell had never belonged to the order, formed in procession and accompanied his remains to the grave. The procession of citizens on the occasion was the largest ever seen in Henderson [4 July 1867]. In it walked the rich and the poor, women and men, and even little children. One division of the mourners deserves to be specially noticed. This was composed of the newly-created freedmen, his own former slaves and those of his neighbors who had known him, many of them all their lives. They had come, some of them from points ten and fifteen miles distant, trudging on foot in order to pay their tribute of respect and gratitude over the grave of one who had never ceased to be their best friend and counselor. No more, genuine sorrow was exhibited on that mournful day than was evinced by the blacks of whom he had once been the master, and who up to the day of his death had been in the habit of addressing him by that title.

Pages 598-599:

One great source of care to Governor Powell, after the Proclamation of Emancipation of President Lincoln, was a number of helpless blacks, formerly his slaves, who had no one else to look to for support and protection. Had the Government, when it deprived him of his rights of property in those of his slaves, who were capable of performing manual labor, taken upon itself, at the same time, the support of those who were incompetent to earn their own living, there would have been little hardship in his individual case, as there would have been little in thousands of other cases, still more onerous. He might, to be sure, had he been a brute, and no man, have evicted the aged and infants among his former slaves from his plantations, and have suffered them to die

of hunger and exposure on the highway. ^ Had the war bereft him of all his property, as it did hundreds of slave owners in the South, even his well known humanity could not have stood between these poor creatures and destruction. As it was, he never thought of them otherwise than as dependents on his bounty, whom it was his duty to serve and protect. Up to the day of his death they were fed and clothed at his expense, and they are ^ill cared for at the expense of his heirs. Had the unmistakable tokens of profound sorrow that characterized that portion of the mourners at Governor Powell's funeral, which was composed of his former * slaves, been witnessed by those whose fanaticism brought on the late war and all its horrors, they might well have stood in astonishment at a sight so foreign to all their notions of the relations that often existed between master and slave.

Pages 605-606:

Few of our public men possessed a clearer understanding of the causes that led to the late conflict than Governor Powell. In a speech on the "Bill Giving Freedom to the Families of Negro Soldiers," delivered in the Senate on the ninth day of January, 1863, Mr. Powell remarked : "Some call this a war for the negro, but, in my opinion, those who look upon African slavery as the cause of the war are greatly mistaken. This war was not designed by the large slave holders of the South; they did not want the war. It is not war of the negro ; it is not a war of tariffs ; it is not a war of any particular line of policy, but it is a war of politicians who were faithless to their constitutional obligations, and there the responsibility will be placed by the philosophical historian in all after time. If I were to describe it in a sentence. I should say that it was a war of the politicians, both North and South — a war of ambitious, fanatical zealots, and they existed North as well as South. I speak of a class of politicians who are faithless to their oaths of office, and who claim to be governed by a law higher than and above the Constitution."



Henderson County Courthouse, Henderson, Kentucky

