

Hart Family Advance Education in Owensboro

By Jerry Long
c.2025



Henry Peyton Hart (1824-1873)

Henry Peyton Hart during 1853-1872 was a prominent school teacher in Owensboro, KY. In addition to teaching he served as principal of several of Owensboro, Kentucky's premier educational institutions – including the Owensboro Academy and the Owensboro Male and Female Seminary, also referred to as the Hart School. Prof. Hart, his wife, Mary Ellen Hart, their daughter, Susan Peyton Hart Smith, and granddaughter, Miss Ellen Hart Smith, all contributed many years to the advancement of education in Owensboro. Many of their pupils were elevated to great heights due to the family's service.

The Peytons of Virginia Volume Two, by the Peyton Society of Virginia (2004, pp.328-329, 345) record that Henry Peyton Hart was born on 15 November 1824 in Hartford, Ohio County, KY and died on 21 January 1873 in Denton, Denton County, Texas, where he was buried in the Odd Fellows Cemetery. He was the son of Rev. William Hart, a pioneer Methodist minister, and his wife, Susan Peyton. Henry was the grandson of Richard Hart & Nancy Roach and William Peyton & Mary Ross.

Rev. William Hart was born 7 January 1791 in North Carolina. Rev. A. H. Redford in his book, The History of Methodism in Kentucky, Volume II (Nashville, TN: Southern Methodist Publishing House, 1869, pp.174-175), says of Rev. William Hart:

For the time that he was a member of the Conference, no one performed his duties as a preacher with greater fidelity than William Hart. His first appointment was to the Henderson Circuit, at that time spreading over a large tract of country. In 1812, he was appointed to the New Madrid Circuit, in Missouri, where he was eminently useful. At the Conference of 1813, we find him on the Stone's River Circuit; in 1814, on the Clinch, and in 1815, on the Tennessee Valley, all in the State of Tennessee. His health declining, at the next ensuing Conference he was placed on the supernumerary list. Recovering his health, in 1817, he is appointed to the Jefferson Circuit in Kentucky, where he remains for two years. The large circuits he had traveled, together with the exposure to which he was subjected, had already told fearfully upon his constitution, and rendered it imperative that he should retire from a work in which he had been so happily and usefully employed. At the Conference of 1819 he located.

William Hart married Susan Peyton on 15 October 1818 in Bullitt County, KY. He was enumerated in the 1820 federal census of Jefferson County, KY. During 1820-1821 he located his family in Ohio County, KY. He first appears in the annual tax lists of Ohio County in 1821. In the marriage records of Ohio County Robert W. Hart, a great-great grandson of William, located some 130 marriages celebrated by Rev. Hart during the dates of 16 August 1821 and 18 December 1836 (letters of Robert W. Hart, of Bloomington, IN, to Harry D. Tinsley, of Hartford, KY, dated 3 December 1988 and to Jerry Long, of Owensboro, KY, dated 20 September 1989).

William Hart is listed in the 1830 federal census of Ohio County – his household consisted of 8 individuals and 4 slaves. Rev. Hart's wife, Susan (Peyton) Hart, died on 14 May 1833. The grave of Susan and that of a daughter, Mary P. Hart, who died on 23 February 1836 in her 17th year, are in a family plot in Ohio County on what was the Ivin James Nelson (1899-1967) farm in the Concord Community about 1/4 mile north of Highway 69, 4 & 1/2 miles east of Hartford and approximately 100 feet west of the Nelson house (Ohio County, Kentucky Cemetery Records Volume I, Ohio County Historical Society, Owensboro, KY: McDowell Publications, 1981, p.85).

Two sons of William Hart & Susan Peyton were buried in the Oakwood Cemetery in Hartford, Ohio County, KY – Dr. William Peyton Hart died of yellow fever on 16 November 1855 in Columbia, LA at the age of 34 years, 11 months & 1 day; and John Knight Hart died on 13 December 1856 at the age of 27 years, 10 months & 28 days (Ohio County, Kentucky Cemetery Records Volume III, Ohio County Historical Society, Owensboro, KY: McDowell Publications, 1982, p.124).

Rev. William Hart married second Miss Frances Maria Milton (1805-1879) in Ohio County, KY on 6 February 1834 (Ohio County Marriage Book A, p.145). During 1835-1836 Rev. Hart moved to Macoupin County, IL. The 1835 Ohio County tax list shows that William Hart was taxed on 200 acres on Rough Creek, the 1836 list is missing, and in the 1837 Ohio County tax list William Hart is absent. There is a land transaction in 1836 whereby William & Frances Hart of Illinois sold land in Ohio County to James Fitzhugh. William is listed in the 1840 census of Macoupin County. On 12 January 1845 Rev. William Hart died in Macoupin County, IL He was buried in the Keller Cemetery at Chesterfield in Macoupin County, IL

Rev. D. S. Campbell in a paper read at a conference of the Methodist Church, South in Louisville in 1915 said of Rev. William Hart:

In 1819 Rev. Wm. Hart, who had been a successful itinerant preacher for several years located near Hartford and did much by his piety and talents to build up Methodism in all this section of Kentucky. One of his sons, Henry Hart, whom I knew fifty years ago in Owensboro, was a successful teacher and Christian gentleman of the highest order. ("Hartford a Center of Methodist Influence, Subject of Interesting Paper at Conference", by Rev. D. S. Campbell, Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 3 October 1915, pp.1B & 2B and Hartford Herald, Hartford, KY, 6 October 1915, pp.1 & 4)

Rev. William Hart and his first wife, Susan Peyton, were the parents of seven children –

1. Mary Peyton Hart (1819-1836);
2. Dr. William Peyton Hart (1820-1855), married Elizabeth Kincheloe Peyton;
3. Richard Peyton Hart (1822-);
4. Henry Peyton Hart (1824-1873), married Mary Ellen McClarty;
5. Thomas Peyton Hart(1827-1897), married Sarah Elizabeth Lansdale;
6. John Knight Hart (1829-1856), married Lydia E. Woodward;
7. Elizabeth Peyton Hart (1831-1904), married Dr. Elisha Kirksey Davis & John Asbury Fain.

Rev. William Hart and his second wife, Frances Milton, were the parents of six children –

1. Sarah Barnette Hart (1835-1903), married Henry Baker Barton;
2. Mary Frances Hart (1836-1837)
3. Robert Milton Hart (1838-1868), married Narcissus C. Goff;
4. Edwin Roach Hart (1840-1866)
5. Almira Ellen Hart (1842-)
6. Harriet Virginia Hart (1845-), married Thomas Neely.

Henry Peyton Hart appears in the 1850 census of Hardinsburg, Breckinridge County, KY. “Henry Hart, age 30, teacher, born KY” was then a resident of the home of Rev. James Taylor (1790-1867), pastor of the Hardinsburg Methodist Church. The Taylor residence was listed immediately after the home of John McClarty the father of Henry Hart’s future wife, Mary Ellen McClarty. Ellen in 1850 census was listed 9 households from Rev. Taylor. She was then living with her grandfather, Joseph Allen (1774-1862), who was the county court clerk of Breckinridge County. The Louisville Daily Courier of 29 December 1853 (p.3) carried a notice that the first session of the Louisville Conference High School Association in Hardinsburg, KY would commence on the first Monday in February; the school was under the superintendence of Rev. S. D. Akin, teacher of the Classics, and “H. P. Hart, in the Primary department, a man unsurpassed as teacher.”

Henry P. Hart, age 33, teacher, born KY” in the 1860 census of Owensboro, Daviess County, KY was listed as a resident in the home of Joseph Thomas (1822-1911), who in addition to serving as an Owensboro store clerk and bank teller filled the office of Daviess County Circuit Court clerk. In Daviess County on 22 December 1864 Henry P. Hart married Mary Ellen McClarty (Daviess County, KY Marriage Book G, pp.261-262). Their marriage license reported that Henry P. Hart, age 37, was a school master, and was born Ohio County, KY. A native of Hardinsburg, Breckinridge County, KY, Mary Ellen, was born on 24 November 1840. She was a daughter of John McClarty & Jane M. Allen, and moved to Owensboro, KY in 1861 (Kentucky death certificate of Mary Ellen Hart, 1919 - certificate #13100 & obituary of Miss Letitia McClarty, Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 19 January 1919, p.3). Mary Ellen’s family was profiled in the book, Historic Families of Kentucky, by Thomas Marshall Green (Cincinnati, OH: Robert Clarke and Co., 1889, pp.276-278).

The Owensboro Monitor of 2 August 1865 (p.3) wrote: “We direct the attention of our readers to the advertisement of the Owensboro Male and Female Seminary. Professor H. P. Hart, the principal, has had eleven years experience as a teacher in this city, and is well known as one of the best tutors in the Green River country. – His school has always occupied a high position, and we can but wish it increased success.”

The first school building in Owensboro, the Daviess County Seminary, was erected in 1820 on a lot bounded by Second, Third, Lewis & Crittenden Streets (A History of Owensboro and Daviess County, Kentucky, Hugh O. Potter, Daviess County Historical Society, Owensboro, KY (Montgomery, AL: Herff Jones-Paragon Publishing, 1974, p.88). The History of Daviess County, Kentucky (Inter-State Publishing Co., Chicago, IL, 1883, p.359) reports that the Owensboro Academy “was started in the old Daviess County Seminary building about 1853, by Professor H. P. Hart, assisted by Mr. Palmer.”

In 1859 H. P. Hart was still associated with the Owensboro Academy. But by 1862 he left the Owensboro Academy and became the principal of his own private school. Owensboro Monitor of 22 June 1864 (p.3) reported:

St. Francis Academy, and also Prof. Hart's school have closed their labors for the spring and summer term. While we miss the cherry, and cherrupy voices and steps of innocent and merry youth, still we have not the heart to envy the youngsters of both sexes the anticipations of green fields, cool retreats, & c., which, even to the memory of us "old folks," is like "rosy dreams and slumber light." We hope our ears may soon again be regaled by the sight and sound of jovial youth before many a day – "the joy," it certainly is, "of this life."

Prof. Hart's school is identified as the Owensboro Male & Female Seminary in ads that were published in the Owensboro newspapers during 1864-1867. An ad for the Owensboro Male and Female Seminary appeared in the Owensboro Monitor on 10 August 1864 (p.3). The ad stated that "the fourth session of this school will commence on the 1st Monday in September, 1864, under charge of H. P. Hart, Principal and Instructor in Scientific Department" – the ad suggests that this school was organized about 1861. The location of this school was not stated. An article in the Owensboro Monitor on 20 Jun 1866 (p.3) refers to the same school as the "Owensboro High School" which had closed its session on the previous Friday – the article refers to the "accomplished principal, Prof. Hart." H. P. Hart continued to be identified as the principal of the Owensboro Male and Female Seminary in the 20 November 1867 issue of the Owensboro Monitor (p.3). Issues for the Owensboro newspapers are missing for the years of 1868-1874. In subsequent histories the school was referred to as the Hart School and Hart Seminary.

The following article from the Owensboro Monitor of 24 April 1867 (p.3) provides some details about Prof. Hart's school:

Our Schools and Churches

We propose giving in several numbers of our paper a brief history of the different churches and schools in our city, and we would thank any friends of either to furnish us such succinct materials as they may possess concerning these subjects as will prove of interest to the general reader.

OWENSBORO MALE AND FEMALE SEMINARY.

This well-known institution of learning, under the able and satisfactory superintendence of Professor Hart has been in existence twelve years.

The school property was built expressly for the purpose, is large and commodious, was purchased by a stock company of the M. E. Church, South— the church retaining the privilege to redeem it in five years, which it failed to do owing to causes produced by the war. It was then disposed of by sale, the present active and energetic principal being the purchaser, who has recently expended large sums in making other desirable improvements and adding greatly to its convenience and ornamentation.

Under Professor Hart's supervision the first session closed June 25th, 1863 with 65 pupils in attendance, the second session closing with 115, and the five succeeding ones with an average attendance of 145 pupils; its last closing January, 1867, with 171 pupils, and the current one promising a still greater degree of success.

We are gratified to record this growing condition of its history. In every feature, its studies, discipline and management, under the control of Prof. Hart and his able assistants, is all that the friends of education could desire, and we hope will long exist to diffuse its good influence in our midst.

On 16 May 1868 Henry Hart purchased from James L. Johnson & his wife, Harriet, lot of one & one-half acres in Owensboro that contained school building of the Owensboro Male and

Female Seminary (Daviness County Deed Book W, p.123). The Johnsons acquired the lot as the result of a suit in the Daviness County Circuit Court involving the Special School Trustees in trust for the Owensboro Station of the Methodist Episcopal Church South. The lot bordered on Daviness Street (east), Fifth Street (south) and Lewis Street (west, now J. R. Miller Boulevard). Henry P. Hart & his wife, Mary Ellen, transferred one-half interest in what is “known as Hart’s School lot” on 1 February 1871 to Carter R. Bishop (Daviness County, KY Deed Book X, p.481). Hart & Bishop recorded a division between them of the lot on 12 March 1872 (Daviness County, KY Deed Book Y, p.523).

Henry P. Hart, school teacher, age 44, is enumerated in the 1870 census of Owensboro, Daviness County, KY. At his residence was Mary E. Hart (29), Susan P. Hart (age 2) and six other boarders. His real estate was evaluated at \$7,000. The 1871-1872 Owensboro City Directory reported that H. P. Hart, school teacher, residence was on Daviness Street near Fifth Street. His residence at 521 Daviness Street was described as fronting on Daviness Street 75 feet, running back that width 125 feet; said lot adjoins the Methodist Parsonage lot on the south and the Catholic School lot on the north, and being the same lot or parcel of ground upon which the residence of Henry P. Hart stands and being part of the lot of ground conveyed to him by the Commissioner of the Daviness Circuit Court (Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 29 June 2002, p.2C).

In 1872 due to ill health Prof. Hart moved to Denton, Texas, where he was the principal of the Denton Male & Female Institute. He died in Denton on 21 January 1873. The Galveston Daily News (Galveston, TX, 24 January 1873, p.1) reported that “Prof. Henry Peyton Hart, principal of the Denton male and female institute, died in that place on the 1st of January, in the 44th year of his age (the death date is possibly a typo). He was buried in the Odd Fellows Cemetery in Denton. The following broken monument with only the death date of 21 January 1873 in the Odd Fellows Cemetery in section B block 3 grave 9) marks the final resting place of Prof. Henry Peyton Hart.



After the departure of Henry P. Hart from Owensboro several other schools under various names rented and conducted classes in the old Hart School building. On 12 July 1875 Carter R. Bishop, James Thornton & his wife, Fannie Thornton sold lot on Daviness Street to William G. McClosky, Roman Catholic Bishop of the Louisville Diocese. The Owensboro Examiner (Owensboro, KY, 16 July 1875, p.5) stated that James Thornton had sold the former Hart School

property to Louisville parties, who proposed to establish a Catholic male school The Messenger and Examiner (Owensboro, KY, 13 August 1879, p.3) reported that the sisters of Owensboro's St. Francis Academy will open a school for boys at the school house on Daviess street, near Fifth, known as Hart's school house. The school will be under the supervision of Father Dominic F. Crane. The Owensboro City Directories list the school as being on the east side of Daviess Street just south of Fifth Street; the address was reported variously as 511, 513 & 515 Daviess Street. It operated under the name of St. Stephens School for Boys. On 31 August 1914 the trustees of St. Stephens church announced that the property known as the old Hart school that has been conducted as a boys' school by St. Stephens church for many years, with teachers from St. Francis Academy, will be sold (Owensboro Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 3 September 1914, p.2). In December 1918 the Hart School building was razed (Owensboro Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 17 December 1918, p.2). In November 1919 Lee D. Ray purchased the old Hart School lot (Owensboro Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 6 November 1919, p.1). During 1934-1966 the osteopathic clinic of Dr. Clifford H. Robertson was located at 515 Daviess Street on the former site of the old Hart School just north of the Hart family residence at 521 Daviess Street.

Mary Ellen McClarty Hart (1840-1919)

Upon his death Henry P. Hart's widow and their two children returned to reside in Owensboro, KY. Mary E. Hart was appointed administratrix of the estate of H. P. Hart, deceased on 29 April 1873 (Daviess County Administrator Bond Book 6, p.19). By the school term of 1876-1877 Mary E. Hart was a teacher in the Owensboro public schools ("The Election of Teachers", Owensboro Examiner, Owensboro, KY, 7 July 1876, p.1). Mrs. Mary E. Hart, age 39. widowed, was keeping a house in Owensboro, at the time of the 1880 census of Daviess County, KY. In her home were listed an extended family of nine – Susan P. Hart (daughter, age 12), Henry S. Hart (son, 10), Letitia McClarty (sister, 42), Jennie McClarty (niece, 21), Annie McClarty (niece, 19), Charles Boyd (nephew, 19), Allen Boyd (nephew, 27), Henry Boyd (nephew, 17), and Lettie Boyd (niece, 10), Also in the home were two Black servants.

The Owensboro City Directory of 1882-1883 records that Mrs. M. E. Hart, a teacher at the Upper Ward School, was residing on the east side of Daviess Street three doors south of 5th Street. This residence was listed as being 419 Daviess Street in the 1886 Owensboro City Directory. In 1890 the numbering of Owensboro Streets were revised and the home then became 521 Daviess Street. Mrs. Hart was reported at this address in the 1900 and 1910 censuses of Owensboro. In 1900 six relatives were at the home, two of whom in addition to Mrs. Hart were also reported to be school teachers – Misses Lettie Boyd and Susan P. Hart. In 1910 her daughter, Susie Smith; son-in-law, Edward W. Smith; sister, Miss Letitia N. McClarty; and nieces, Misses Jennie A. McClarty & Lettie M. Boyd, were residing at 521 Daviess Street.

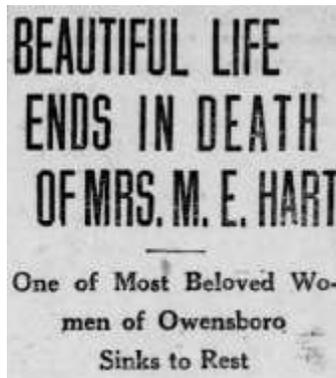
On 1 June 1906 Mrs. Mary E. Hart submitted her resignation as a teacher in the Owensboro public schools. An announcement was published in the Owensboro Messenger on 2 June 1906, p1: "Mrs. Hart, who has been a successful teacher in the schools for thirty years, declined re-appointment... Mrs. M. E. Hart tendered her resignation as teacher in the public schools, which was accepted." The Owensboro Board of Education adopted the following resolutions:

Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 7 July 1906, p.3: Inasmuch as Mrs. Mary E. Hart has decided to discontinue her work in the public schools of the city, in order to enjoy a well earned rest and to devote herself more closely to the duties of home. The board of education would bear testimony to her faithful and efficient service. In her they

recognize that unselfish devotion to public duty which characterizes the true teacher, and gentle spirit which ever leads the children in her care toward higher ideals, and that dignified demeanor which is the attribute of the true Christian woman. May the evening of her life be hallowed by the remembrance of the good she has done.

John C. Frederick, McHenry Rhoads, Committee.

Mary Ellen Hart died at her home at 521 Daviess Street on 30 April 1919 and was buried in section E at Owensboro's Elmwood Cemetery. The following obituary was published in the Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 1 May 1919, p.2:



With the passing of Mrs. Mary Ellen Hart, Owensboro loses one of its best known and best loved women. Mrs. Hart died Wednesday morning at 9:30 o'clock of heart trouble, at her home at 521 Daviess street. Mrs. Hart had been in failing health for the past several years and her condition has been critical for the past few days.

Mrs. Hart has probably been the instructor of more young people of Owensboro than any one teacher. She was the widow of the late Henry P. Hart, who founded the Hart school in Daviess street, which is now the property of St. Stephen's church, and which was recently dismantled.

For more than thirty-five years Mrs. Hart taught school in the public schools of the city. In all her many years of teaching Mrs. Hart was never known to lose her temper regardless of provocation. She has taught pupils in Owensboro who now have children and grandchildren and was beloved by every pupil who ever came under her instruction. Mrs. Hart was the most popular teacher who ever taught school in Owensboro. A student who violated the rules of school while in Mrs. Hart's room was never popular with his classmates. There was always an effort made at the beginning of each new term by the students to enroll in Mrs. Hart's room, notwithstanding the fact that many of them should have enrolled in other wards. It was her uniform kindness, sympathy, and beautiful life that endeared her to the students.

The deceased was a devout member of Settle Memorial church. She is survived by her son, Henry S. Hart, of New York, one grand-daughter, Miss Ellen Hart Smith, two nieces, Miss Lettie Boyd and Jennie McClary, all of Owensboro, and two nephews, Charles Boyd, of Oklahoma, and Henry D. Boyd, of Philadelphia.

The funerals services will be conducted at 10 o'clock Friday morning from the residence, with services by Carl C. Gregory, pastor of Settle Memorial church.

Sixty Years of Owensboro, 1883-1943, William Foster Hayes,
Messenger Job Printing Co., Owensboro, KY, 1944, pp.239-240:

THE OWENSBORO PUBLIC SCHOOLS

On June 21, 1935, Superintendent J. L. Foust of the Owensboro Public Schools read a paper before the Investigators Club, and on July 16, 1937, he read a second paper, the two together constituting a very complete history of the public schools and of the earlier schools preceding them. The first paper dealt with the early schools in Owensboro, coming down to about the year 1871, and the second covered the history of the public school system, which was established that year. The excellence of these papers is such that I suggested to the author that they should be published. He, however, did not care to consider the matter of publication, but kindly gave me permission to make use of them as I wished, and what follows is largely a condensation of his history...

... Mr. H. P. Hart is also mentioned in the History as one of the best of the earlier teachers, and the one who started the Owensboro Academy in the same old Seminary building. Mr. Hart afterwards taught on the south side of Fifth Street between Lewis and Daviess Streets, where he was assisted by Mrs. M. E. Singleton and occasionally by Mrs. Hart. Mr. Henry S. Berry attended that school as a little child, and as he now thinks he is the only surviving pupil of the school. Some of Mr. Berry's lively reminiscences of the school were published in the Owensboro Messenger in the spring of 1939 in an interview with Mrs. J. E. Cockriel.



Mrs. Mary Ellen Hart

After Mr. Hart's death, his widow, Mrs. Mary Ellen Hart, taught in the public schools of Owensboro for many years, and there are many who will have the kindest and most pleasant memories of her stately but lovely and gracious presence, cheerful disposition, and efficiency as a teacher. Before her marriage she was a Miss McClarty, and was reared in Hardinsburg, a girlhood friend of my mother. Her daughter, "Miss Susie," became the wife of our own E. W. Smith, and is survived by a daughter, Miss Ellen Hart Smith. Miss Lettie Boyd, another teacher with a record of long and honorable service, is Mrs. Hart's niece.

Henry Peyton Hart & Mary Ellen McClarty were the parents of four children. The Peytons of Virginia Volume Two, by the Peyton Society of Virginia (2004, p.345) list their children as Letitia (died young), John (died young), Susan (born 1868, married Edward White Smith) and Henry Singleton (born 1870, married Elizabeth Boyd). The 1900 & 1910 censuses record that Mrs. Mary E. Hart was the mother of four children, two of whom were then deceased. John & Letitia ('Lettie') died in childhood. Lettie has a grave marker near her mother in section E, lot 73, at Owensboro's Elmwood Cemetery. The monument's inscription has that Lettie, daughter of H. P.

& M. E. Hart, died 8 May 1868 at age of two years & 8 months. Her age places her birth in the year of 1865. No monument for John Hart child of H. P. & M. E. Hart, was found.

Henry Singleton Hart, son of Henry Peyton Hart & Mary Ellen McClarty, was born in June 1870 in Owensboro, Daviess County, KY. He was named in part in honor of Mrs. Mary Lillian Singleton (1834-1918), who taught under Prof. Henry P. Hart at the old Hart School building on Daviess Street. Henry S. Hart is listed in the 1880 census of Daviess County, KY, 1900 census of Birmingham, Jefferson County, Alabama, 1910 census of Catasauqua, Lehigh County, Pennsylvania and 1920 census of Manhattan, New York County, New York. He married R. Elizabeth Boyd on 29 June 1910 in Reading, Berks County, PA. The daughter of William Harry Boyd & Emma Rebecca Mortimer, Elizabeth, was born 7 September 1876 Pottsville, Schuylkill County, PA. Henry S. Hart died on 11 April 1929 in Manhattan, New York County, NY. He was buried in Reading, PA. In 1889-1897 he was a bookkeeper - teller at the First National Bank in Owensboro, KY. In 1898 he was a bookkeeper in the L. & N. Railroad office at Montgomery, AL. At his death he was treasurer of the Empire Steel & Iron Company and of the Crane Iron Company in Catasauqua, PA. His widow, Elizabeth ('Bessie') Hart died on 5 May 1955 in Reading, Berks County, PA, where she was interred. Henry & Bessie had no children.

Susan Peyton Hart Smith (1868-1912)

Susan Peyton Hart, daughter of Henry Peyton Hart & Mary Ellen McClarty, was born on 24 November 1868 in Owensboro, Daviess County, KY. She was named in honor of her grandmother, Susan (Peyton) Hart. Susan P. is listed in the 1870, 1880, 1900 & 1910 censuses of Owensboro, Daviess County, KY.

On 17 January 1888 Miss Susie Hart commenced teaching a private school at her home. 521 Daviess Street (Owensboro Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 1 January 1888, p.2). The 1889-1890 Owensboro city directory and 1900 census reported that she was a school teacher. The Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 29 August 1889, p.4 ran the following notice:

Miss Susie Hart's School.

Miss Susie Hart will on Monday, September 2, 1889, reopen her select school for boys and girls and in addition to the usual studies will give instruction in music. She solicits a continuance of the very liberal patronage heretofore accorded her,

On 4 September 1893 her school reopened in a new school room built at rear of her home at 521 Daviess Street (Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 3 September 1893, p.8).

Owensboro Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 19 December 1895, p.11:

PROMOTERS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

The private school of Miss Susie Hart and Prof. W. B. Maple, located at the corner of Daviess and Fifth streets, this city, is the institution under notice which is in a most flourishing condition.

The true merit of the school lies in the fact that it affords students the opportunity of obtaining an education of high order. It is an institute where young ladies and gentlemen may acquire that knowledge which is essential to right living amid the surroundings that characterize the influences of a cultivated Christian home. The courses of study are ample and symmetrical and while students are inspired with a desire for advanced college and

university work, the course of study is comprehensive enough to fit the graduate of this institution for any of the duties that are required of a man of ordinary life. There are over fifty pupils in daily attendance in this school.

The course of instruction comprises all the high school and common school branches and there are extra classes in French, German and painting under the able direction of Miss Biart and the department of elocution and physical culture is under the charge of Miss Birdie Calhoun. The music department is a special feature and is under the direct charge of Miss Hart, who is a musician of high order having graduated under the preceptorship of Mr. Albert Ross Parsons. The primary department assistant is Miss Mary Walden, but each and every pupil has individual instruction from the principals. It is the aim of the principals of this worthy institution to guard not only the material but also the moral and religious interests of the pupils placed in their charge.

The principals, Miss Susie Hart and Prof. W. B. Maple are in every way worthy of success. They are highly esteemed by the citizens of Owensboro as invaluable adjuncts to their educational circles.

In the fall of 1896 Susan P. Hart was a charter member of the Saturday Musicales the second oldest musical club organized in Kentucky which has maintained a continuous organization. Miss Hart was a vital member of the organization and served several terms as its president..

Susie P. Hart continued to conduct her select private school at 521 Daviess Street until 1901 when she decided to devote herself to music work alone (Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 8 September 1904, p.5). On 3 September 1901 Susie P. Hart took charge of the music department at the Owensboro College For Young Ladies (Owensboro Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 9 August 1901, p.3). The 1901-02, 1903-04, 1905-06 and 1907 Owensboro City Directories list Susan P. Hart's occupation as music teacher. On 1 September 1902 she resumed music classes at her home on Daviess Street (Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 31 August 1902, p.8). Her classes were conducted during the annual September to June school term. The music recital of her final music class was held on 7 June 1907 at the Settle Memorial Methodist Church (Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 8 June 1907, p.8). Upon her marriage in the fall of 1907 she ceased conducting music classes and subsequent Owensboro City Directories record no occupation with her name.

At her home at 521 Daviess Street in Owensboro Susan P. Hart married Edward White Smith (Jr.) on 5 September 1907. The son of Edward White Smith & Elizabeth Pulliam, he was born 22 March 1863 at Water Valley, Yalobusha County, MS. E. W. Smith married first Ella Lee Mauldin (1862-1900), 1 January 1885 in Yalobusha County, MS; by this marriage he had no children. He moved to Owensboro, KY in 1895 to engage in the furniture business.



Edward W. Smith

In 1915 E. W. Smith was a charter member of the Owensboro Rotary Club and served as its first president (1915-16). In 1917 he was on the committee that organized the Daviess County Chapter of the American Red Cross (Sixty Years of Owensboro, 1883-1943, William Foster Hayes, Messenger Job Printing Co., Owensboro, KY, 1944, pp.326-329, 333-334). Edward W. Smith is recorded as a resident at 521 Daviess Street in Owensboro in the 1910, 1920, 1930, 1940 & 1950 censuses. He died at the residence on 23 July 1950. He was buried with his wife, Susan P., at Owensboro's Elmwood Cemetery.

Susan Hart Smith died at the age of 44 at her home at 521 Daviess Street. The following obituary was published in the Owensboro Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 30 December 1912, p.6:

COMMUNITY WAS SHOCKED
When Told of Sudden Death of Mrs. Susie Hart Smith
HAD BEEN ILL ONLY FIVE DAYS

Was Wife of E. W. Smith, and Had Host of
Friends – Funeral Arrangements Not Made

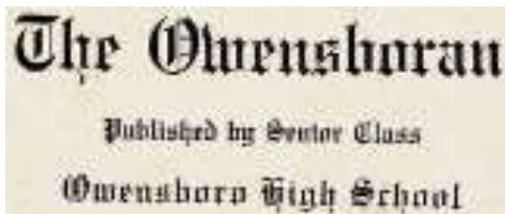
Mrs. Susan Hart Smith, wife of Mr. Edward W. Smith, the well known furniture dealer, died at the family home on Daviess street this morning at 9:30 o'clock after a short illness of pleurisy, followed by heart trouble. The news of Mrs. Smith's sudden death came as a great shock to her many friends, many of whom were not aware she was ill. She was taken sick Christmas day.

Mrs. Smith was the daughter of Mrs. Mary Ellen Hart and Prof. Henry Hart, who has been dead many years and leaves besides her husband, mother, and infant daughter, Ellen Hart, a brother, Mr. Henry Hart of Philadelphia; her aunt, Miss Letitia McClarty; and cousins, Misses Lettie Boyd and Jennie McClarty, and Mr. Henry D. Boyd.

Mrs. Smith was a woman of rare attractiveness of character. Combining fine intellect, an unusual sense of humor and great sympathy, she was generally beloved. She was one of the most cultivated musicians in Owensboro, and for years was one of the leading teachers of the city. She was one of the founders of the Saturday Musicale and its president for many terms. She was a member of Settle Memorial Methodist church, and earnest worker in the Sunday school and all church activities. The arrangements for the funeral have not been made, and the time will depend upon the arrival of Mrs. Smith's mother, Mrs. Hart, who was visiting her son, Mr. Henry Hart, at his home near Philadelphia. Mr. Hart will accompany his mother.

Ellen Hart Smith
(1910-1985)

Susan Peyton Hart & Edward White Smith had one child – Ellen Hart Smith, who was born in Owensboro on 14 July 1910. She spent her entire life at 521 Daviess Street. She never married. She was valedictorian of the 1927 graduating class of the Owensboro High School. She was a member of the school's Rose Curtain Players and was editor-in-chief of "The Voice", the school's student newspaper.



The Owensboran, Owensboro High School annual, 1927, p.21 (student bio) & p.37 (class photos)



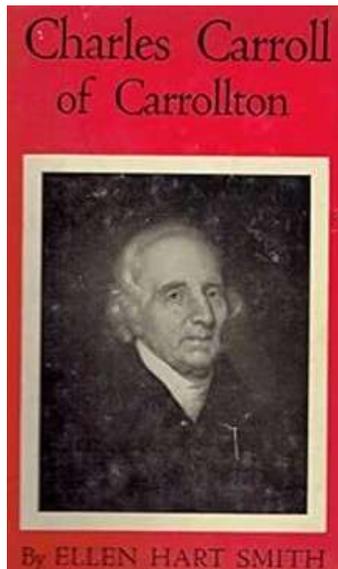
ELLEN HART SMITH
"TIP"

Classical

Valedictorian of Class of '27; Rose Curtain Players; "Sally & Co."; Editor-in-chief Voice; Vice-President Monogram Club; Monogram 4 years; Girls Reserve 2 years; Vice-President French Club; History Club; No Tardiness in 4 years.

Ellen Hart Smith attended the Randolph-Macon Woman's College in Lynchburg, VA, 1927-1928, and the Miami University at Oxford, OH, 1929-1930. In December 1931 she joined the Evan Shelby Chapter of the D.A.R., Owensboro, KY, on the Revolutionary War service of her third-great-grandfather, James Allen.

In 1942 Ellen Hart Smith published the book, Charles Carroll of Carrollton:



The following announcement was published in the Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 8 November 1942, p.4A:

Harvard University Press ,Cambridge, Mass will publish a biography of "Charles Carroll of Carrollton," written by Miss Ellen Hart Smith, of Owensboro, on November 24. Book stores have been notified of the date of publication and provided with a copy of the jacket and the foreward, giving a few pages of front matter. There will be eight illustrations. The publishers refer to the forthcoming volume as a "splendid biography." Miss Smith is a daughter of E. W. Smith, 521 Daviess street.

The book was reviewed in the Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 31 January 1943, p.7B:

Ellen Hart Smith's "Charles Carroll" Is Highly Praised By New York Times

Miss Ellen Hart Smith, daughter of E. W. Smith, of Owensboro, author of "Charles Carroll of Carrollton", recently off the press is given high praise by Nathan G. Goodman, reviewer in the current New York Times Book Review section on her "sprightly and charming style" and "sparkling descriptions of Carroll, his father and a few of his associates." He says: "Delightful sharp pictures of places such as Annapolis in 1765, contribute to the high quality of this work. It is, altogether excellent." The reviewer also states: "This first biography of Charles Carroll of Carrollton to be written in almost half a century is a careful sympathetic study, and although detailed, it is not overburdened with irrelevant facts and questionable background material. It concerns itself largely with a man."

A part of the caption of the story sets forth: Ellen Hart Smith has Written a Distinguished Biography of Charles Carroll of Carrollton." The review in part follows:

"Magnificantly Consistent" "

"In Maryland, when Charles Carroll of Carrollton was a boy in the mid-eighteenth century Catholics might not either vote or hold office. They might not practice law, even though they were trained lawyers. They might not instruct young children, even though they were qualified teachers. Because most of them were violating the law in one way or another, they knew that they were constantly liable to extortionate fines. Other avenues of achievement being closed to them, the Carroll family turned to the accumulation of wealth, their only hope for influence and prestige.

"A Roman Catholic in strong Protestant surroundings, Carroll was faced with a hard struggle, but he stuck to his religious and political principles, and was magnificently consistent in what he believed and wanted and fought for. The story of his lifelong attempts to make prejudiced people change their tune, until he himself became the elected representative of these very people, is important not only as an answer to the current spurious Axis racial theories but also as a bright chapter in the history of the struggle for religious liberty in America. In his old age he asked himself who deserves immortality and he answered: "They who serve God in truth, and they who have rendered great essential and disinterested benefits to their country." Charles Carroll of Carrollton did all that, as Ellen Hart Smith makes clear in her excellent and stimulating biography.

Political Downfall

"The Carrolls, a cultivated family came to Maryland from Ireland in search of a freer way of life. Charles Carroll of Annapolis father of the subject of the present biography, amassed one of the greatest fortunes in all the American colonies. When his son

returned from various schools in Europe in 1765, he was presented with Carrollton Manor, a large tract in Frederick county and from this estate he took the title— Charles Carroll of Carrollton— which he needed to distinguish him from the veritable flock of Charles Carrolls in and around Annapolis. He had grown up an only child in the big brick manor of Donghoregan and at the age of 11 went to France to be educated at Jesuit colleges. Later he crossed the Channel to study law in London until he was 27 years of age.”

The review states young Carroll desired merely to become a "country gentleman" farming and reading most of the time and coming up to Annapolis for the races and the theatre. He disagreed with his father's plan of setting up a new colony, where Catholics might be free.”

In detail the review follows the life of Carroll when he returned from abroad when "immediately he began to work himself into Annapolis life, with all its prejudices and jealousies.” The review follows his political activities until he took his political downfall in the upheaval of 1800 quite bitterly, and thereupon retired from politics, turning much of his time to the denunciation of Jefferson and his disciples.” The reviewer closes his remarks with the statement: "We hope that the author has another biography up her sleeve It will probably be good.”

After publishing Charles Carroll of Carrollton Ellen Hart Smith continued as a writer. The 1950 Owensboro City Directory listed her as a writer. She was a reviewer and critic for the New York Herald-Tribune and was published in several magazines. Her subsequent bibliography of published works were written under pseudonyms. She would not reveal the pen names to anyone except a few of her closest friends.

This writer (Jerry Long) on 28 February 1997 attended the estate sale at 521 Daviess Street of the former home of Ellen Hart Smith. As an employee of the Daviess County Public Library I helped transport several boxes of books that were donated to the Kentucky Room at the library. One of the boxes contained several books that had been penned by Ellen Hart Smith under the pseudonyms of “Louisa Revell” and “John David Hughes”. Under the Hughes name there was one book – War Doctor. The remainder of the books were by Louisa Revell. This collection was stored in the Kentucky Room's special collection storage room on the second floor of the library. They have not been entered into the library's main catalog. Prior to receiving this collection there were two books by Louisa Revell that were previously cataloged and placed on the shelves in the Kentucky Room. They are:

<u>No Pockets In Shrouds</u> , c.1948,	library catalog #KR F Reve
<u>The Kindest Use A Knife</u> , c. 1953,	library catalog #KR F Reve

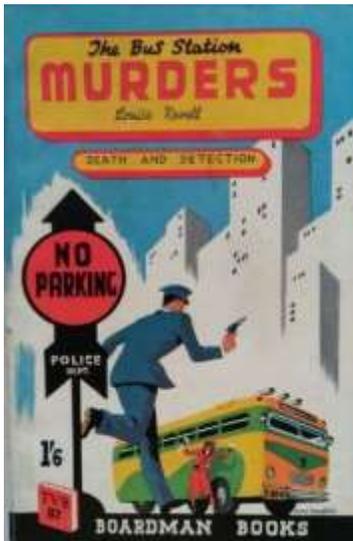
The following entry for Louisa Revell appears on the internet site of the Stark House Press:
<https://starkhousepress.com/revell.php>

Louisa Revell was born Ellen Hart Smith on July 16, 1910 in Owensboro, Kentucky, the only child of a furniture store owner and a schoolteacher. Her mother having died when she was young, she was raised primarily by her father. Smith graduated from Miami University in the early 1930s, then returned to her Owensboro home to live with her father, two maiden cousins and an intimate friend, Margaret Elizabeth Evans. She spent her twenties writing a biography, Charles Carroll of Carrollton, which was published by Harvard University Press in 1942. Smith followed this book up in 1947 with the first of a series of mysteries featuring Miss Julia Tyler. Eschewing any personal publicity, she used the name Louisa Revell, and kept her own a secret, publishing seven Miss Julia mysteries

in all. After the death of her father and cousins, Smith and Miss Evans continued to live together in the family house until her death on April 28, 1985.

In book inventories and catalogs the following titles by Louisa Revell were found:

- The Bus Station Murders, Macmillan & Co., New York, c.1947, 183 pages
- No Pockets In Shrouds, Macmillan & Co., New York, c.1948, 187 pages.
- À l'arrêt de l'autobus, Librairie Des Champs-Élysées c.1949
- A Silver Spade, Macmillan & Co. New York, c.1950, 184 pages
- The Kindest Use a Knife, Macmillan & Co., New York, c.1952, 218 pages
- The Men With Three Eyes (Cock Robin Mystery), Macmillan & Co., New York, c.1955, 188 pages
- See Rome And Die (Cock Robin Mystery), Macmillan & Co., New York, c.1957, 235 pages
- A Party For The Shooting, Macmillan & Co., New York, c.1960, 222 pages



The Louisa Revell mysteries were widely advertised and circulated from coast to coast.

Ellen Hart Smith served twelve years on the board of trustees of the Daviess County Public Library. She was appointed to the board on 22 October 1956 (Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 23 October 1956, p.5). Upon the death of William J. Wigginton in July 1963 she was appointed chairman of the board. She retired from the library board on 9 July 1969 (Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 26 January 1969, p.1A). She was one of the leading proponents for the new library that opened at 450 Griffith Avenue in 1968.

Ellen Hart Smith of 521 Daviess Street, died at the age of 74 on 28 April 1985. She was buried in section E at Elmwood Cemetery in Owensboro.

Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 30 April 1985, p.2C:

Miss Ellen Hart Smith, of 521 Daviess St., Owensboro, died Sunday, April 28, 1985, at Owensboro-Daviess County Hospital. She was born in Owensboro, was a member of Settle Memorial United Methodist Church and served on the board of the Owensboro-Daviess County Library for 13 years, holding the position of chairman during the construction of the present library. During her lifetime, she also was a writer, a book reviewer and critic for the New York Herald-Tribune, and was a volunteer social worker with the Red Cross during World War II.

Survivors include two cousins, Rev. John Qutrer Smith of New York City and Edward White Smith of California.

Services are at 2 p.m. Wednesday at Glenn Funeral Home. Graveside services will be private. Visitation after 4 p.m. today at the funeral home. Expressions of sympathy may take the form of donations to the Owensboro-Daviess County Library.

Local writer dies
Messenger-Inquirer

Ellen Hart Smith, who chaired the Owensboro-Daviess County Public Library Board during the library's move to a new building in the 1960s, died Sunday at Owensboro-Daviess County Hospital. (Obituary, this page.)

Miss Smith of 521 Daviess St. was a former literary critic and book reviewer for the New York Herald-Tribune, according to Alice Gene Lewis, librarian at Owensboro-Daviess County Library.

She was the author of "Charles Carroll of Carrollton" a biography of the Kentucky senator, U.S. senator and signer of the Declaration of Independence. It was published in 1942 by Harvard University Press and has been reprinted several times, the latest in 1971.

She had also written for various magazines under a pseudonym, according to Ms. Lewis and Mrs. William Woolfolk of Owensboro, a friend of Miss Smith.

Miss Smith would not reveal the pen name to anyone because "she just didn't like the notoriety" that accompanied acclaim, Mrs. Woolfolk said.

Mrs. Woolfolk said that after "Charles Carroll of Carrollton" was published and was "quite enthusiastically received," a city official wanted to give her a banquet, and Miss Smith refused. She then started using the pen name to avoid further publicity.

She was appointed to the library board in 1956 by the Owensboro Board of Commissioners. She became chairman of the board in 1963. She was outspoken about financing for the library when the building was located at Ninth and Frederica streets and was in need of considerable repair, and was instrumental in getting a new library constructed in 1968.

The will of Ellen Hart Smith was probated in May 1985 (Daviess County, KY will book 14, p.692). Margaret E. Evans was appointed the executrix of her estate. Miss Smith willed her home, at 521 Daviess Street, to Margaret E. Evans, her longtime friend and companion. Margaret Elizabeth Evans resided with Ellen Hart Smith at 521 Daviess Street for over fifty years. During 1930-1933 she became a resident there. Miss Evans was born 7 October 1908 in Lima, Allen County, Ohio. She was the daughter of Merlin Seymour Evans & Blanche Mabel Ferguson. She graduated magna cum laude from Miami University in Oxford, OH, the alma mater of Ellen Hart Smith. They were members of the same sorority, and were co-volunteers in the local Red Cross chapter and played integral parts in the Owensboro Symphony Orchestra. Ellen Hart Smith following the title page of her book, Charles Carroll of Carrollton, wrote the dedication "This Book is for Margaret."

Margaret Evans was a teacher in the Owensboro schools 1936-1942. In 1942 she accepted a position in the laboratories at Owensboro's Ken-Rad Corporation, which became the General Electric Company in 1945. She was processing engineer analyst at G.E. until she retired in 1971. She was a member of the American Chemical Society (Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 24 January 1997, p.2C).

Margaret E. Evans died on 22 January 1997 at her home, 521 Daviess Street. Miss Evans was buried in the Hart family lot in Elmwood Cemetery (near north end of section E). In the lot

there are four monuments in a straight line. Margaret's grave is on the right side of Ellen Hart Smith; on the left of Ellen is a large monument with three names – marking the graves of Mary E. (McClarty) Hart, her daughter, Susan P. (Hart) Smith and Susan's husband, Edward White Smith. Next on the left is a small marker for Lettie infant of H. P. & M. E. Hart.

This writer (Jerry Long) on 28 February 1997 attended the estate auction of (Miss) Margaret Elizabeth Evans (1908-1997), at 521 Daviess St., in Owensboro. The residence was owned by Ellen Hart Smith, who upon her death in 1985 willed the property to Miss Evans. The residence was previously owned by Miss Smith's parents, Edward White Smith (1863-1950) & Susan Peyton Hart (1868-1912) and grandparents, Henry Peyton Hart (1824-1873) & Mary Ellen McClarty (1840-1919). Miss Smith's mother and grandparents had conducted a private school at the residence. Several hundred attended the auction. Sold at the auction were many old antiques and an extensive book collection.

There were no living descendants of Henry P. & Mary (McClarty) Hart. Diane Evans Keith, of Sylvania, OH, a niece of Margaret Elizabeth Evans and the executor of Miss Evans' estate, at the estate sale gave to Jerry Long several Hart - McClarty family pictures and two boxes of papers of Ellen Hart Smith. Ellen Hart Smith and Jerry Long were distantly related – fourth cousins twice removed. Miss Smith's great-great-grandmother, Margaret (Crawford) Allen, was a sister of his fourth great-grandmother, Jane (Crawford) Pate.

At the estate auction the late Alice Gene Lewis (1929-2013), retired director of the Daviess County Public Library and friend of Ellen Hart Smith, told me that she had heard that Ellen Hart Smith was a runner up for the Pulitzer Prize for her book, Charles Carroll of Carrollton (1942).

In 2007 the house at 521 Daviess Street was sold by the Kentucky Trust Company to the Habitat for Humanity of Owensboro-Daviess County for \$15,000 (“Real Estate Transfers”, Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 22 July 2007, p.6D). In July 2007 the residence was razed. A new Habitat for Humanity house was constructed and dedicated in September 2007 (“A Fresh Start”, Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 25 July 2007, p.1B and “Welcome Home”, Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 31 July 2007, p.1A). No reference to the historic significance of the antiquated house at 521 Daviess Street was mentioned in the local papers when it was replaced.

Family Photos



Ellen Hart Smith
(1910-1985)



Margaret Elizabeth Evans
(1908-1997)



On left, Ellen Hart Smith (1910-1985); on right, her father, Edward White Smith (1863-1950) in living room of home, 521 Daviess Street



Ellen Hart Smith (1910-1985) in arms of her grandmother, Mary Ellen McClarty Hart (1840-1919) in yard of home, 521 Daviess Street. On right, Mary Ellen McClarty Hart (1840-1919), wife of Henry Peyton Hart (1824-1873)



Views in former Hart family home at 521 Daviess Street. In top picture above fireplace mantel is an original framed copy of “graphic map giving a Birdseye view of Owensboro” printed in 1881. In bottom is a part of the extensive book collection in the home; above bookcases are John J. Audubon prints.



Interior views of 521 Daviess Street



Owensboro Examiner, Owensboro, KY, 16 July 1875, p.5:

MR. JAMES THORNTON sold, this week, to Louisville parties, the property known as Hart's school-house, in this city, for the sum of \$3,270. It is proposed by the purchasers to establish a Catholic male school.



Messenger and Examiner, Owensboro, KY, 13 August 1879, p.3:

The Sisters of St. Frances' Academy will open school for boys at the school house on Daviess street, near Fifth, known as Hart's school house. Two more Sisters from Nazareth will be added to the number of teachers at the Academy. The school will be under the supervision of Father Crane.



**History of Daviess County, Kentucky,
Inter-State Publishing Co., Chicago, IL, 1883, pp.359-360:**

Owensboro Academy. — This was started in the old Daviess County Seminary building about 1853, by Professor H. P. Hart, assisted by Mr. Palmer. This was one of the best schools Owensboro ever had. After a few years Professor Hart was succeeded by H. M. Woodruff, who subsequently edited the Owensboro *Monitor*; and in 1857 Malcolm McIntyre was employed as assistant. Professor Burke was instructor of languages; Professor Halbey, of music; and for a time Mrs. Lillie Singleton had charge of the female department. Geo. L. Reinhardt was also assistant for a time. Profs. Hart and Woodruff erected the second brick building joining north of the original one.

The great war put a stop to this school. Many prominent and talented men have been educated at this academy, among them Rice E. Graves, who was afterward educated at West Point, went into the Confederate army and was killed at Chickamauga; John C. Pegram; Amos R. Taylor, a lawyer of St. Louis; E. Rumsey Wing, Minister to Equador; Weir Wing, Lawrence Reid, Lemuel and Estill McHenry, Samuel Morton and others. Professor Hart went to Texas in 1872 or '3 and died there. His widow is now teaching in the public schools of Owensboro. Mr. McIntyre is still here, in the revenue collector's office.



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 24 June 1900, p.5:

SOME IMPROVEMENT NOTES.

The old Hart school building, on Daviess street, now used by the St. Stephen's parochial school, is being reroofed and otherwise repaired and will soon cease to be a disfigurement to the large lot on which it stands in an attractive part of the city. It was recently furnished with elegant new desks.



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 17 June 1906, p.1B:

Amos R. Taylor, One of Daviess County's Sons, Gained Fame In The West

[abstract] – List of 128 pupils attending the Owensboro Academy from an 1859 circular. H. P. Hart was an instructor in the Scientific and English department.



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 21 February 1909, p.1A:



A meeting has been called for Friday night at the city hall for the purpose of making arrangements to hold a home coming and reunion of the people who attended the schools taught by Professor Henry Hart, in the sixties and early seventies.

Some of Owensboro's most prominent citizens were members of this school on East Third street, among them being C. C. Watkins, Phil T. Watkins, R. S. Hughes and City Clerk Isaac

Kenady. The class was about 150 strong, and about half of the members are still alive. The class has representatives in almost every state in the union, besides a number who left for foreign countries. It is the intention of the members still in Owensboro to make the gathering, which will take place in the spring or summer, one of the most notable ever held in Owensboro.

The meeting called for Friday night is for members of the old institute only, but if plans are adopted it is expected that other parties will take up the movement and arrangements will probably be made for a monster home coming of all old Owensboro and Daviess county citizens. This city and county have representatives throughout the world, and a home coming of this kind would cause many to revisit their birthplace.



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 8 September 1909, p.3:

HART SCHOOL CELEBRATION

Has Been Declared Off For the Summer, at Least

The Hart school celebration: and reunion has been declared off at least for the year 1909. Several preliminary meetings were held earlier in the summer and committees were appointed for different features of the celebration but a misunderstanding came up over the raising of funds and the abandonment came as a result of this and the money already collected has been returned.



Owensboro Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, Thursday, 3 September 1914, p.2:

Church Secures His Permission
Bishop O'Donaghue Directs School Property Be Sold

St. Stephen's School Has Been Conducted At A Great Loss
Valuable Property on Daviess Street Be Sold
and New School Building Erected

The school property belonging to St .Stephen's Catholic church, and located on Daviess and Lewis streets between Fifth and Sixth streets, is to be sold. This announcement was made after a meeting of the trustees of the church held on last Sunday afternoon.

The property is known as the old Hart school and has been conducted as a boys' school by St. Stephen's church for many years, with teachers from St. Frances academy.

For the past four or five years the school has been operated at a loss, and the members of the church were called upon to make up any deficit that might exist. The members of the church have been trying for several years to get permission from the bishop at Louisville to sell the property, but Bishop McCloskey, now deceased would never give his consent. However, the matter was presented to present Bishop O'Donaghue, and it was shown that the school could not be carried on except at a loss. There was generally a large attendance of children, but the parents of many were unable to pay for the schooling. Bishop O'Donaghue has granted permission to sell the property, and it will be done as soon as possible.

The property is worth between \$8,000 and \$10,000 and fronts about 84 feet on Daviess and Lewis streets, running through the entire block.

If a successful sale is made, it is said to be the intention of St. Stephen's church and to buy another lot near the church, and will erect a school building in which boys and girls of the church will be expected to enter. It is announced that St. Stephen's school will not reopen this year.



Owensboro Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 17 December 1918, p.2:



One of the oldest landmarks in Owensboro is being dismantled and the material taken from the building is to be used in the construction of a garage on West Ninth-street to be operated by J. E. Appling.

The building being torn down is known as the old Hart school building on Daviess street just beyond Fifth street, which is the property of St. Stephen's Catholic church. This building was erected more than 60 years ago, and until the past few years has been occupied for school purposes.

The first school taught in this building was by Prof. Henry Hart, who conducted it a number of years as a private school. Mrs. M. L. Singleton who recently died was his assistant. The building was later used as a public school, and afterwards was sold to St. Stephens church, which conducted a boy's school under the supervision of the Sisters of St. Frances Academy, but this was abandoned about four years ago.

The first dancing school ever taught in Owensboro was in this building by Prof. Lippard. There are a number of men and women now living in this city, who were pupils of Prof. Lippard's dancing school.

The brick in the building is said to be as good now as when first used and will be used by Mr. Appling in the erection of a garage.

The fact that the old schoolhouse was on the lot has greatly hampered a sale of the property, and St. Stephen's congregation hopes to sell the property at an early date. The ground was successfully used this summer as a war garden.



Owensboro Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, Thursday, 6 November 1919, p.1:

**LEE D. RAY BUYS
SCHOOL PROPERTY**
—
**Four Handsome Residences
Will Likely Be Erected
on Vacant Lots**

Some of the most valuable property in Owensboro was sold to the highest bidder on Thursday morning when four choice lots, two fronting on Daviess street and two on Lewis street near Fifth street and known as the St. Stephen's church property were bid in by Lee D. Ray for \$6,850. The lots on each street were sold separately and then as a whole, when Mr. Ray purchased them at the price mentioned.

This property which fronts on Daviess street, where the old Hart school building was standing, is the most desirable for residence purposes of any vacant lots in this city. It is a most excellent neighborhood and convenient to schools, churches and the shopping district.

Mr. Ray said that he bought the property as an investment, and that if he did not sell it, he would erect modern and up-to-date residences on it. In the event that he sold the lots, they would go to persons who would erect residences and no other character of a building that would be obnoxious to the residents of that neighborhood.

There was a large crowd at the sale, made up of good representative business men of the city. The sale was conducted by Owensboro's popular auctioneer, Chas. A. Payne Jr.



Owensboro Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 7 March 1938, p.7:

New Cathedral Parish Oldest In Owensboro

... "In 1876 the old Hart school building in Daviess street between Fifth and Seventh streets was purchased and conducted as St Stephen's School for Boys. More than 20 years ago this school was abandoned."



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 19 February 1939, p.3B:

**Many Private Schools In Early
Owensboro, Henry Berry Recalls**

By Mrs. J. E. (Ida) Cockriel, Owensboro Messenger staff

Private schools in Owensboro that have been out of existence for many years, were recalled the past week by Henry S Berry, Owensboro, when he was asked to comment on the early institutions of learning in Owensboro

Most of the early schools were private. Of them Mr. Berry says:

“My earliest recollections are of attending Henry Hart school on Fifth street between Lewis and Daviess This was a private school. Hart was known as one of the most outstanding educators in this part of the country. I was seven years old and was the youngest child he taught.

“Mr. Hart taught upstairs. Mrs. M. E. Singleton taught girls on the first floor. This family has now passed on. She had one daughter that married J. J. Sweeney, an attorney. Another married Whit Clarke, tobacconist.

Old Hart School.

“When Latin and other classes came on, the girls came upstairs and joined the boys’ classes. All grades were in the same room upstairs and the girls all in one room downstairs. There were only the two teachers. Mrs. Hart used to aid Mr. Hart and took his place on various occasions.

“The old desks were large enough for a boy to walk under. I was hid from view, being a small boy sitting behind one of those large desks. It was easy for me to slip out and Prof. Hart would be unaware of my absence. I delighted in going down to a grocery on Lewis street adjoining the Hart property. W. B. Cosby owned the store and it was attended by Lewis Dillman who told long tales of the Spokane gold rush that he had weathered. I liked to listen to his stories. One day one of my classes came up when I was out. Professor Hart of course missed me and sent a Fred Hager, father of our present Fred Hager, after me. Hager threw me across his shoulder, and carried me, kicking, to the school where Prof. Hart administered a leather strap while I was on Hager’s back.

“Exhibition time came every June. This was an event in which every class participated. We had a song “Little Johnny Smoker” that I was going to sing at the exhibition. My voice had no tone but plenty of volume. One afternoon when I was running behind the buggy, on my way home—the buggy was too full for me to ride inside, so I ran along behind — I skidded and the buggy ran over my foot mashing it considerably. Came exhibition time and my song. My foot was all wrapped up in bandages and I sang that song, with full volume and bandages. S. T. Kenneday who lived at Fourth and Allen streets, and for many years was mayor and a prominent resident of Owensboro sat in the front row at the program. The combination of song, boy and bandages was to him a huge joke and until I became a grown man every time Mr. Kenneday met me he mocked my singing and my bandages, much to my embarrassment and consternation.

Only Living Pupil

“Of all the boys and girls who attended the old Hart school I am the only living survivor, as far as I know. Prof. Hart died in the 70s. Our E. W. Smith married into this well known old family.

“After several years that old Hart school properly was purchased by St. Stephen’s and converted into a boy’s school. The Sisters of Charity taught there for a number of years. This was followed by St. Frances at the present location.

“There was the old Columbian college, located in the Monarch residence that is now Daviess county high school. In order to get it established help was asked. I was one of eight men that bought that building. Professor John Cooney was head of the school. Lacking support, the school went out of existence after only a few years. The school was attended by both Protestants and Catholics.

“My first recollection of a public school was one located off Main street between Poplar and Elm. This was a two-room building and Prof Otis was teacher. Only a few pupils attended.

We saw sometimes in the late 60s a two-room brick school on the lot that is now the Third street school. The teachers were Miss Rachel Wandling and Mrs. May Ayers. In the early 70s the two-story building was built facing Main street on the same block.

Lower Ward School Built

“About that time the lower ward building was built on Walnut street now Woodrow Wilson school. At this time I was in the fifth grade in this school. Our class was conducted in the basement. Our room had five windows. Outside of these windows, four other pupils and I each had a flower garden, one pupil to each garden outside each window. During the noon hour and recess we took care of our gardens in connection with our classes in botany —botany in the Fifth grade

“Our teacher was Mrs. Viola Moseley, a most beautiful character. We loved that teacher as we did our own mother. After I left Miss Viola’s room I went to Miss Valley Williams’ room, one of three sisters all of them teachers. Their father was a Baptist preacher. This family passed away before the 80s.

“Owensboro always had its share of private schools. In the late 70s Prof. Wines and his daughter taught a private school on the corner of Walnut street. They taught languages. Following him was a Mrs. Phillips. That was her property and she succeeded Prof. Wines. She was followed by a Mrs. Van Rensalaer and daughter, Minnie, and Miss Mollie Howard. This school remained here for long years and was attended by the wealthier families and people from the country. It was the advanced school for the people from the country. The country schools at that time offered only a very meager education.

William Pottinger, who taught for several years in the old Hart school, and an old county teacher, conducted a school for several years in the old Hart building before the Sisters of Charity took possession of it.

Prof. Peay Has School

“Then we had Prof. Peay and wife who taught a select school on Main street between Lewis and Daviess.

“Ben Bransford, father of Mort Bransford, built a building on the ground now occupied by the city hall. In this building was located the Bransford School for Girls, a select private school. This stayed through the 70s as far as I remember. He was mayor of Owensboro for a number of years and was a prominent tobacco man in my father’s early days.

“Prof. W. H. Stuart conducted the Female Academy where the Trade school is now located. This was built by stockholders in the 80’s and 90’s. Other instructors conducted the school after the death of Prof. Stuart. This property was later acquired by the public school system and became the Longfellow school and now the Owensboro Trade High School.

“In the early part of 1900, the Rapier Brothers opened Ellendale College for Boys near Curdsville. It was conducted for two years after which the Rapier’s came to Owensboro and opened their mill and feed establishment.

“The select schools were attended in many cases by boys whom the public schools did not want”.



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 13 September 1942, pp.1B & 8B:

Teachers Tell Happenings of Yesteryears:
Tales of Interest Related By Four Owensboro Veterans

By Ida F. Cockriel, Owensboro Messenger Staff Writer

... Miss [Lettie] Boyd resides in her home, which was also the old Hart residence built by Professor Henry P. Hart, who was the head of the famous Hart school in Daviess street, adjoining the residence. The Robertson clinic is now located on the lot formerly occupied by the Hart school. Mrs. Hart was an aunt of Miss Boyd. In fact Miss Boyd states that this fall is the first fall in more than 75 years when some person has not gone forth from that home to the city schools, either as a pupil or teacher: Miss Boyd insisted that she had only the most pleasant of experiences during her long career and closed with "In fact every class I had kept getting sweeter and sweeter"...



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 17 January 1943, pp.1B & 2B:

River Tragedy Brought Owensboro
Its First Educational Institution:

By Mrs. Ida F. Cockriel, Owensboro Messenger Staff Writer

Owensboro Academy

The Daviess County Seminary discontinued and the Owensboro Academy started in the same building about 1853. Prof. H. P. Hart and a Mr. Palmer had charge of the new school. The Hart school is remembered by many older residents and was classed as one of the best schools Owensboro ever had. After some time Prof. Hart was assisted by H. M. Woodruff, who later edited the Owensboro Monitor.

After several years, Prof. Hart erected a building in Davis street, where the Robertson clinic is now located, and moved his school there. That spot is still referred to by older residents as the site of the old Hart school.

In 1857 Malcolm McInyre was employed as an assistant in the school. Others in the academy included Prof. Burke, instructor of languages, Prof. Halbey, music; and Mrs. Lillie Singleton who had charge of the female department. George L. Reinhardt was also an assistant in this school. During the war the academy was under Col. John H Allen. The trustees were S. B, Wing, W. B. Taylor, D. M. Griffith, Ben Bransford, J. H. Branham, R. M. Hathaway and George Yearman.

Prof. Hart went to Texas in 1872, where he died. Later his widow and two children returned to Owensboro and Mrs. Hart became one of the most beloved teachers in the Owensboro public schools. The daughter, Miss Susie Hart, conducted a successful private school for some years. She became Mrs. E. W. Smith some years later.....



Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 13 March 1960, p.6C:

Know Your Schools: Owensboro Academy

By J. L. Foust, Former Superintendent of Owensboro Schools

It seems that the Daviess County Seminary was discontinued and the Owensboro Academy started in the same building about 1853. Prof. H. P. Hart and a Mr. Palmer (first name not known) had charge of this new school. The historian classifies this as one of the best schools Owensboro ever had. After a few years Prof. Hart was succeeded by H. M. Woodruff who later edited the Owensboro Monitor.

1857 Malcolm McIntyre was employed as an assistant in this school. Mr. Ed Wood remembers him as a very scholarly man and as a very fine instructor. He was in Owensboro for a number of years and was later employed in the Revenue Collector's office. Other teachers in the academy. Were Prof. Burke, instructor in languages; Prof. Halby, teacher of music; and Mrs. Lillie Singleton who had charge of the female department. Mr. George L. Reinhardt was also an assistant in this school. Professors Hart and Woodruff erected the second brick building joining the original one on the north.

Many prominent men attended this Academy. Among them was Rice E. Graves, who was further educated at West Point, went into the Confederate Army and was killed at Chickamauga. Others were Amos R. Taylor, a lawyer of St. Louis; E. Ramsey Wing, Minister to Equador; Weir Wing, Lawrence Reid, Lemuel and Estill McHenry and Samuel Morton who was a crippled man. Prof. Hart after several years during which time he ran a school of his own, went to Texas in 1872 and died there, but his widow later taught in Owensboro Public Schools and his daughter, Miss Susie Hart, became Mrs. E. W. Smith.

During the Civil War this institution flourished under the principalship of Colonel John H. Allen of Maryland, a graduate of West Point Military Academy. He is remembered as a very strong teacher. All the branches of a collegiate course were taught in this Academy including military drill. The trustees were: S. M. Wing, W. B. Taylor, B. Bransford, D. M. Griffith, J. H. Branham, R. M. Hathaway and G. A. Yeaman....



**A History of Owensboro and Daviess County, Kentucky, Hugh O. Potter,
Daviess County Historical Society, Owensboro, KY (Montgomery, AL:
Herff Jones-Paragon Publishing, 1974, p.88:**

Another early dispenser of enlightenment and culture was the Owensboro Academy which began using the old Seminary property in 1853. Prof. H. P. Hart, grandfather of Miss Ellen Hart Smith, long-time Owensboro library board chairman, was its headmaster. Languages, music and mathematics were among the subjects offered. During the Civil War, with Colonel John H. Allen of Maryland at its helm, the academy added all branches of a collegiate course", including military drill.



Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 11 September 1977, p.3C:



Mrs. Mary E. Hart

“The year was 1905. As city schools prepared to open, teachers posed on the steps of old Third Street School for this group portrait of the entire city faculty.” Mrs. Mary E. Hart (1840-1919) is the second from the left in the second row from the top in the group of 42.



Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 23 February 1997, p.11E:

ESTATE
AUCTION
FRIDAY FEBRUARY 28TH 10:00 A.M.
LOCATION: 521 Daviess Street, Owensboro, Kentucky
In order to settle the estate of Margaret Evans, Kurtz Auction & Realty Company has been authorized to sell the following:
**HISTORIC HOME - ANTIQUES - SILVER -
BOOKS - MANUSCRIPTS - APPLIANCES**



521 Daviess Street

[Ad contained listings of antiques, collectibles, books and miscellaneous.]



Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 19 February 1997, pp.1C & 4C:

This Old House

Pre-Civil War home, contents to
be sold during Feb. 28 auction

Greg Kocher; Messenger-Inquirer



During the 1800s, part of the house at 521 Daviess St. served as a one-room private school.

The house is old and showing its age. White paint peels on the outside. Inside, cracked plaster curls near the top of almost 15-foot ceilings. Green shoots of spring flowers peep through the unruly ivy and dead leaves in the side yard.

But the 1850s-era house at 521 Daviess St. is warm. And befitting its former life as an Owensboro school, its many books and bookshelves reflect the intense curiosity of its former inhabitants.

And on Feb. 28, the house will enter a new era when it and its contents are auctioned. The house will be sold to settle the estate of Margaret Elizabeth Evans, who died at 88 on Jan. 22.

Since the 1940s, Evans had lived in the house with Ellen Hart Smith, her former sorority sister from Miami University in Ohio. Evans was a teacher and later an engineer at Owensboro's Ken-Rad (later General Electric) plant, and she played the cello with the Owensboro Symphony Orchestra. Smith was a writer, book reviewer for the New York Herald Tribune and former chairwoman of the library board.

The house was once the site of a school run in the 1800s by Henry P. Hart, according to “Sixty Years in Owensboro” by William Foster Hayes. The classroom is believed to have been in a rear apartment that connects to the house but which has a separate entrance.

When Ellen Hart Smith died in 1985, she willed the house to Evans. Most of Evans’ last three years were spent with a Brittany spaniel named Brit and several home nurses. The dog died one week before Evans.

John Kurtz of Kurtz Auction & Realty Co. said the auction has attracted the interest of collectors from Indiana, Illinois and Ohio.

The reason, he said, is that some of the home’s furnishings are believed to have been there since its early years. The property has not been deeded or sold for more than 100 years but was passed on from generation to generation by wills.

“I think the significance is that many of these items have been in this home since it was built, and that opportunity doesn’t present itself often,” Kurtz said.

“Pieces of furniture have usually been in a family and gone to a dealer and then gone to a family and then another member of the family, and you lose the history,” Kurtz said. “Here you know with some degree of confidence that Ellen Hart Smith’s family had had them probably since they were new.”

For example, there are Victorian beds with tall, massive headboards, and a dresser and washstand with marble tops and mirror.

And there are rose-back chairs and drop-leaf tables and a lyre-style settee. In the corner of the dining room is a French curio cabinet with a curved glass front that Evans bought during the Depression.

Elsewhere lie hints of lives spent in the pursuit of knowledge and travel. Here, on a foyer table, rests a magnifying glass. There, on the fireplace mantle, are little hand bells, such as might have been rung by a schoolteacher years ago. Look at the little Buckingham Palace figurines standing guard up there on the bookshelf. A music stand is empty in the corner. It is no longer needed to hold the sheets full of notes for an orchestra cellist.

And, of course, there are books in the parlor, books in the foyer and books in the bedrooms. Paperback books even fill a walnut armoire with burl-paneled doors.

Kurtz said the books will be grouped into categories by subject or by author at the auction. But, he said, “If someone has a book they want to purchase singularly, we’ll accommodate that.”



The pre-Civil War home of the late Margaret Evans and its contents will be auctioned Feb. 28.



Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 1 March 1997, pp.1C & 3C:

History For Sale

Estate auction draws people looking for a find

Greg Kocher; Messenger-Inquirer

Margaret Evans loved to entertain guests at parties and teas. Friends say she could serve laughter, Sally Lund cakes and good conversation with equal measure.

And though Evans was not present Friday at perhaps the biggest event ever held at her pre-Civil War house, she might have been pleased by the hundreds who were attracted to an auction of her real and personal property.

“I think she would have liked everyone coming in and having an opportunity to see these things,” said Diane Evans Keith of Sylvania, Ohio, a niece of Evans.

Margaret Elizabeth Evans died at age 88 in January, and the auction was held to settle her estate. Many came to bid on collectibles and furniture or to peek inside the house that is a historical footnote in Owensboro history. The house was the site of a school in the 1800s.

Antique dealers from five states were among the 442 registered bidders who came to the sale that auctioneer Bill Kurtz described as “an old estate with furniture from forever and a day. People almost pay for the right to get it out and look at it.”

And pay they did.

A set of books by Charles Dickens fetched \$300. A French curio cabinet with a curved glass front sold for \$2,850. An armoire with walnut burl brought \$2,300. One bed took in \$2,200 and another sold for \$2,800.

The auction was unusual because the personal property sold for nearly twice as much as the house itself. Kurtz said the personal property approached \$43,000 in sales, while the four-bedroom, three-bath house in need of a lot of work brought only \$22,900.

Jerry Price of Owensboro, who successfully bid for the home, said he intends to remodel it and then resell it. He hopes to secure some community-development money from the city of Owensboro to help him restore it.

“I’ve remodeled several in town, and it won’t be too hard to get this thing back in shape and make a showplace of it,” Price said.

Margaret Evans had lived in the house since the 1940s with Ellen Hart Smith, her former sorority sister from Miami University in Ohio.

Evans was a teacher and later an engineer at Owensboro’s Ken-Rad (later General Electric) plant, and she played the cello with the Owensboro Symphony Orchestra. Smith was a writer, book reviewer for the New York Herald Tribune and former chairwoman of the library board.

When Ellen Hart Smith died in 1985, she willed the house to Evans. Prior to that, the house had been in the Hart family for generations.

Keith said she held special memories of the house and the life that her world-traveling aunt brought to it by entertaining.

“I was always fascinated in the idea that it was such an old home because I was used to living in a newer house,” Keith said. Her visits to the house may have piqued her own interest in antiques.

“It was an introduction to these things, and now I enjoy going out and collecting,” she said.

As Keith spoke, bidders stood in the front yard or on the front porch and faced the street, basking in 60-degree sunshine, and listened to the auctioneer’s singsong chant as opera glasses, flatware, silver pieces, Venetian glass and candleholders exchanged hands.

In the back yard, buyers rustled through the dead leaves to scan the books grouped in boxes. A gray-striped cat skulked through the crowd as smiling buyers lugged boxes filled with encyclopedias or tomes on Churchill, Jefferson and other historical figures.

Fred Wilhite, local commander of Sons of Confederate Veterans, Forrest’s Orphans Camp, said he was interested in buying books for a Civil War museum planned in Calhoun.

“I found about 25 or 30 in a box this morning, and I tried to buy them, but they went for \$220, which was more than they were worth, so I had to quit bidding,” Wilhite said. “Most of the boxes are going for \$15 or \$20 for three boxes.”

Keith said proceeds from the sale of books will go to the Daviess County Public Library, but Kurtz did not know Friday afternoon how much that would be.

Watching the auction from Daviess Street was Pat Galloway, one of the nurses who attended to Evans in her final three years.

Galloway successfully bid on a mink, some old hats and a glass celery dish, but she said the day was a little sad for her.

“Like Margaret would say, ‘It’s something that has to be done.’ ”



Daviess County, Kentucky Celebrating Our Heritage, 1815-2015
(Evansville, IN, M. T. Publishing Company, Inc., 2015), pp.14-15::

Daviess County Bicentennial Chronology
200 Historical Events

By Jerry Long

1942 Ellen Hart Smith (1910-1985), publishes book, Charles Carroll of Carrollton. She also wrote a series of seven fiction-mystery novels under the pen name of Louisa Revell and at least one other under the name of John David Hughes. She was a literary critic & book reviewer for the New York Herald-Tribune and New Yorker Magazine. She served as chairman of the board of directors of the Daviess County Public Library, 1963-1969, and was instrumental in getting a new library constructed in 1968.

