Harrison Heritage News

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June 2015 Vol. 16 No. 5

DO YOU REMEMBER AN ARMY TANK'S "WILD RUN" IN CYNTHIANA?

SEE STORY ON P. 4

Elementary School Students Portray Historical Figures - p. 3

Harrison County Historical Society

Don Wagoner, President
Brian Harney, 1st Vice President - hchsky1@gmail.com
Elizabeth Darnell, 2nd Vice President - btdarnell@gmail.com
Marilynn Bell, Secretary - emptybell@bellsouth.net
Virgie Wells, Treasurer
Denny Lipscombe - Acting Historian - dennyL1986@yahoo.com
Bill Penn, editor: pennwma@aol.com

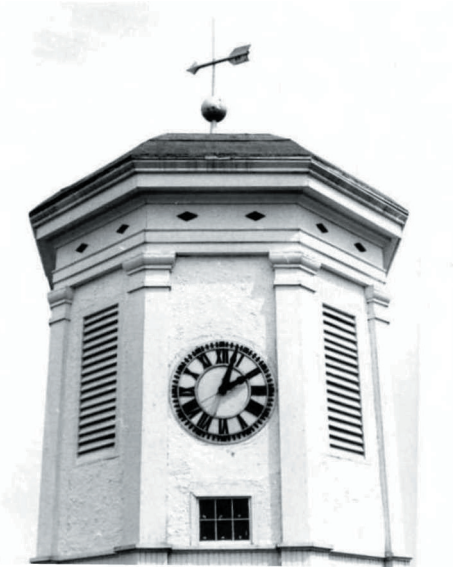
NEW MEMBERS
Debbie Oliver, Nancy, KY

Historical Society Meeting Notes

Marilynn Bell, Secretary
Minutes May 28, 2015

President Don Wagoner called the meeting to order and introduced Jeff Kinney. Children from Jeff's Eastside and Tonya Northcutt's Northside History Clubs portrayed persons in history whom they had chosen, researched and written about. The children were costumed appropriately. Tonya Northcutt's History Club received a grant that allowed them to publish their stories in book form. The club members receive extra grade credit for participating in the Historical Society programs.

Under New Business several motions were made and adopted including:
(1) sending courtesy copies of the newsletter to Pendleton, Nicholas, Robertson and Scott County Public libraries and to Rep. Tom McKee.
(2) the creation of a second vice president position with the vice president becoming First Vice President.
(3) that Elizabeth Darnell be elected Acting Second Vice President until elections in June 2016.
(4) the creation of an Historian Officer position
(5) electing Denny Lipscombe as Acting Historian Officer until elections in 2016. The elected term of this office will be for five years.



Harrison County courthouse clock tower, rear. Photo, 1959, B. Penn.

President's Corner

- Don Wagoner

At the May 28 meeting, three new offices were created by unanimous vote of members present: "The First Vice President," "The Second Vice President," and "The Historian." The Vice President, Brian Harney, became the First Vice President. A special welcome to our two newest officers who were elected as Acting Second Vice President, Elizabeth Darnell, and Acting Historian, Denny Lipscombe. Both officers will serve until the June 2016 elections of officers and both will be eligible for election to office.

On June 6, twelve members took the field trip to Blue Licks Battlefield State Resort Park where we visited the excellent museum and were hosted by Park Ranger Paul Tierney, who presented a very informative lecture about the history of Blue Licks from the days of Daniel Boone, the Battle of Blue Licks, and on up to today. We then adjourned to the Worthington Lodge Cafeteria for lunch, followed by a driving tour of the battlefield. We enjoyed a good day with many good experiences and members' interaction.

On June 13, our members attended the D.A.R. meeting held in the second floor community room of the recently renovated Harrison County courthouse. As expected, Herbert Allen Moore, member of our historical society, unveiled his oil painting of former Harrison County resident, Kentucky Governor Joseph Desha. He served in the War of 1812, was elected a Kentucky representative and senator, then was a member of the U. S. House, 1807-19. Desha was elected governor 1824-1828, then retired to his Harrison County farm, "The Oaks," (Duffy House). He moved to Georgetown in 1841, where he lived until his death in 1842. He was buried in Georgetown Cemetery. The painting was another of Mr. Moore's art masterpieces.

Upcoming Events and Meetings

Meeting time and place: *May-Oct., 4th Thursday, 7 pm; November, 3rd Thurs. 7 pm. Hospice of the Blue Grass on Oddville Avenue, 1317 US HWY 62E. Meeting room is 1st floor rear entrance.*

June 25 - Historical Society meeting - 2015 is the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War and the 30th anniversary of the dedication of the Harrison County Vietnam War Memorial Monument. Eddie Coppage, former Harrison County Clerk, will present a program on these matters. All Vietnam veterans are invited to attend whether or not they are members of the Society.

June 26 - Cynthiana/Harrison Co. Trust, Inc, annual general membership meeting 4:30 at the Museum.

June 27 - CHS Alumni Banquet and reunion at Harrison Co. Extension Office, New Lair Road, 5 pm, $20 each, reservations required: contact Elaine Blackburn for tickets and information (859-234-5689).

July 23 - Historical Society meeting - Bob Ammerman will present a program about his mother, Esther Muller Ammerman, being one of 1,000 U. S. Army Women's Air Force service pilots (WASPS) in WW II chosen from the 16,000 women who volunteered nationwide to be WASPS.

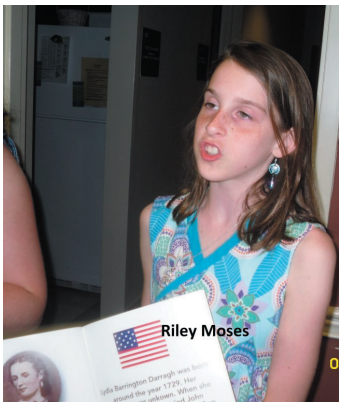
August - 20 - Sam Flora, Morgan's Men Association, will present a program about the 2nd Ky. Cavalry under Gen. John Hunt Morgan at the Battle of Fort Donelson.

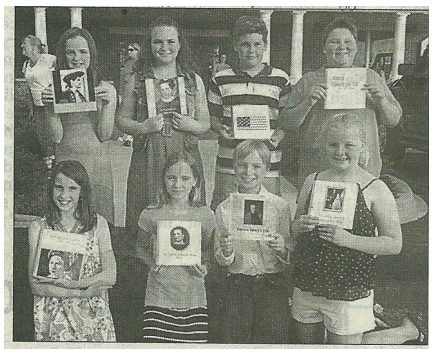
Sept. 19 - Berry Festival - For info, City Hall, 859-234-3185.

On May 28/2015 - 7 Eastside & 8 Northside Elementary fifth graders led the program at the Harrison Co. Historical Society held at the Hospice of the Bluegrass building.

From left: Andrew Fryman as Daniel Boone; Zachary Golden as General George Custer; Isabel Sims as Marie Curie; Sydney McElfresh as Marilyn Monroe; Hannah Carmack as Mary Lou Retton; Jenny Berry as Pocahontas; Cheyenne Cole as Susan B. Anthony.

NORTHSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS


Riley Moses


Northside Elementary students who presented a program to the Harrison County Historical Society are: front row, from left, Riley Moses, Zoe McComas, Zachary McComas, Kaydee Mineer; back row, Madison Case, Blaykelyn Northcutt, Tristin Bradford, JD Rose.

Kaydee Mineer

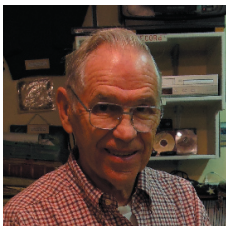
Zachary McComas

Zoe McComas

Blaykelyn Northcutt

Tristin Bardford

JD Rose



CYNTHIANA MUSEUM HARRISON CO.

Kenny Simpson, Curator www.HarrisonCountyKy.US/Museum

AS I REMEMBER MARCH 27, 1960

BY BILL DOAN

March 27, 2015 marked the fifty-fifth anniversary of an event in Cynthiana that not many adults living then and still around today, remember. I had spent two years on active duty in the 1st Armored Division of the U.S. Army and I was in the second year of a two year Army Reserve tour attached to the local unit in Cynthiana. We were having a training session on that Sunday, March 27, 1960, at the unit Armory which was located on Pike Street where the city parking lot, adjacent to Dr. William Faulkner's dental office now exists. The building was then known as the former site of Elmer Cummins Garage, and it was owned by Abe Goldberg.

Captain Paul Burton was the Commanding Officer and Master Sergeant Thorne C. McLoney was the First Sergeant of the Unit. Other officers included Milton Rees, Howard Whitaker, John Milton Caldwell, and William Stewart, First Lieutenants, and Martin L. Carr, Second Lieutenant who later served as Superintendent of Harrison County Schools. Paul Burton was a city mail carrier, the other officers were business men, and Martin was an elementary principal.

The Cynthiana Unit was part of the 100th Division (Reserve) headquartered at the USAR Center on Russell Cave Pike in Lexington. Someone at Headquarters decided the Cynthiana Unit would be well served with a twenty ton Army tank, and it was driven to Cynthiana and housed in the back of the Armory. Paul Burton was the only individual, officer or enlisted, that could drive the tank. The tank was utilized for weekend drills only and was taken to Lebus bottoms beyond the Cynthiana Stockyards in Abdallah Park for training war games. That is a generous description of its mission as most of us thought it wasn't needed. After all, we were an Infantry Unit with no Armored mission. I just remember that a group of us enlisted men had to wash and keep it spiffy should we have a visitor from Lexington such as Colonel Harold Binkley. Some of us doing graduate work at the University of Kentucky in the College of Education knew Dr. Binkley of that faculty.

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From p. 4

Paul Burton returned the tank to downtown after a training session on that fateful Sunday afternoon; it was washed in preparation for its resting place in the Armory. One can imagine the attention a tank on the streets of Cynthiana garnered taking up the full street with

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Below: *Cynthiana Democrat* reported the story.

The Cynthiana Democrat

VOLUME 91 | Single Copy 10 Cents | Cynthiana, Harrison County, Kentucky, Thursday, March 31, 1960 | $3.00 in county; $3.50 elsewhere | NUMBER 32

10-Year Census Count Starts Here On Friday

Rocks Found Here Give Clues To Early History Of Continent

Farm Bureau Directors Hear Lewis Johnson; Study Fire Protection

Eastern Time Begins Sunday

Huge Tank Smashes Through Two Buildings In Wild Run

Lions Radio Auction Here Next Week

Republican Church Host For District Women's Conference

Cancer Drive Opens April 1

Rock Flies, Truck Overturns, Driver Crawls Out Unhurt

Fire Destroys Barn And Bus Near Kolut

Red Cross Lists Additional Workers

National Library Week Set; Reading Program Starts Apr. 4

personnel walking on each side keeping the curious back and also assisting the Captain as he maneuvered the monster. Entering the Armory doors at approximately 3:15 P.M. leading to the rear storage area required driving precision since the opening was barely large enough to accommodate such a vehicle. It was akin to "putting two pounds in a one pound bag". Once inside, there was ample space to turn the track monster around. Having done that, Captain Burton obviously felt that once again this behemoth was finally parked. The idling tank, however, suddenly could not be stopped, and he desperately hollered at Lieutenants Whitaker, Rees and Stewart to get out of the way. When the vehicle eased up to the three brick outside wall, the engines governors opened up and exited the wall like it was paper mache. Next in its path were the North and South Bound L & N Railroad tracks which were no barrier preventing its forward progress. Paul Burton managed to get the engine turned off as it next took aim and trashed the rear of Brooks Market. Coming to a stop, a portion of the left track of the tank was on the northbound track of the railroad. A posted railroad sign next to the track stated "WARNING: UNSAFE SIDE CLEARANCE".

The curious and excited spectators grew substantially. Several of the troops had the presence of mind to go in both directions and flag any oncoming rail traffic. Other troops got Captain Burton out of the tank and took him to Harrison Memorial Hospital because he was bleeding profusely from a head wound, the result of cinder block remnants falling through the open hatch. Actually the affable local mail carrier was not injured badly only requiring a clean-up and band aid before returning to the scene. Storekeeper Brooks came out of the store wiping his hands on his soiled apron exclaiming to any and all that "I am ruint. I have lost thirty dozen cases of eggs".

The gaping hole in the wall of the Armory measured twenty by twenty-five feet. Damage to the two buildings was estimated to be between six and seven thousand dollars. Colonel Binkley arrived in Cynthiana in full military demeanor doing the talking and the troops doing the listening. "These weapons in the Armory must be and will be guarded tonight". I just remember that I was an elementary school principal in Pendleton County at Butler, and I had to be at school the next morning which I was. The tank was loaded by railroad crane on to a rail car on Monday afternoon and parked on a siding near the Cynthiana Depot. After a few weeks the tank left Cynthiana with less fanfare than its arrival.

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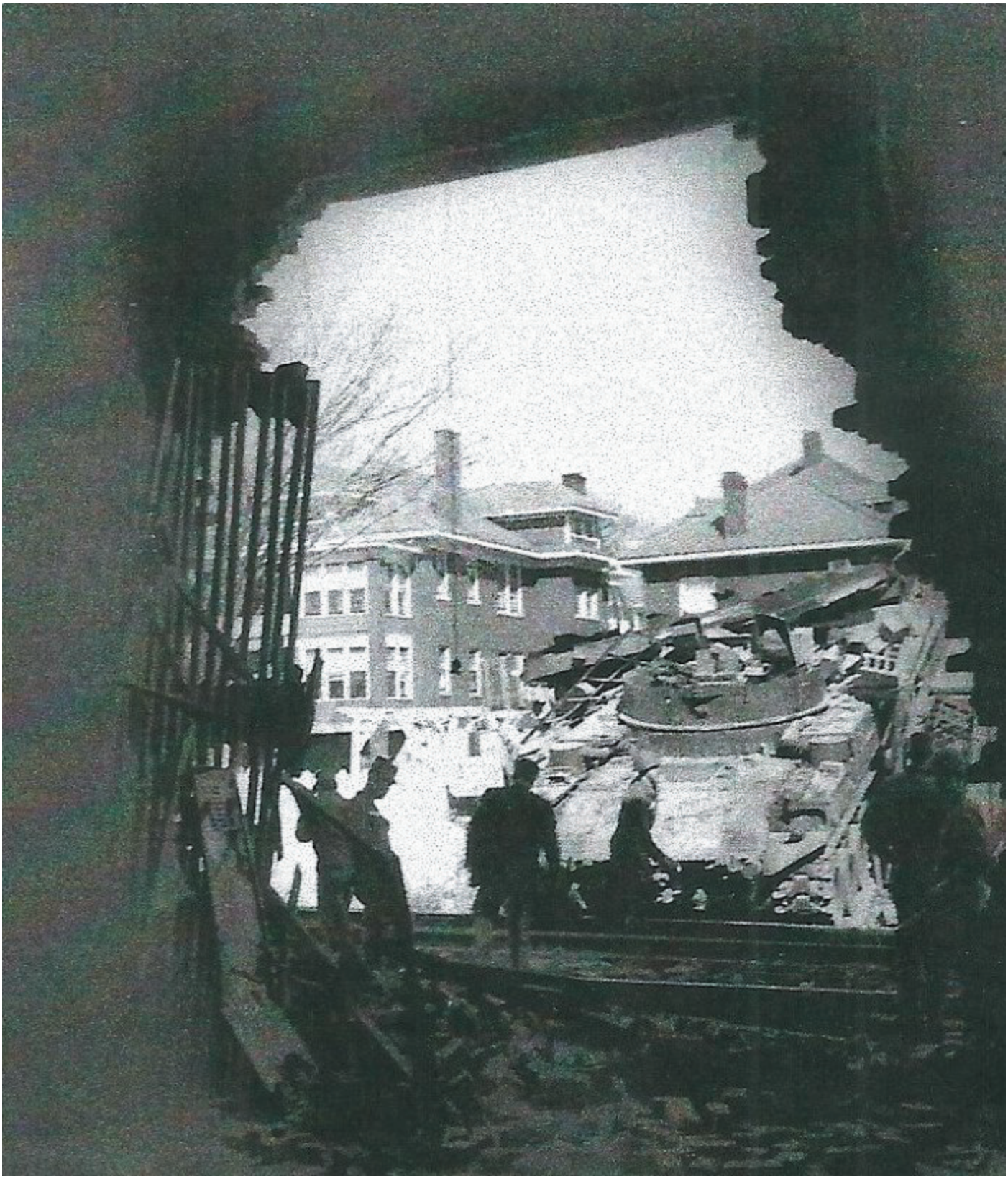


View showing path of the tank through a hole it made in the wall of the Armory, across the L & N Railroad tracks, and into the building on the other side of the railroad. Photo courtesy of Cynthiana-Harrison County Museum.

The official military investigation revealed that a loose bolt rolling around under the floor board of the vehicle prevented Captain Burton from depressing the brake pedal thus stopping the tank. The entire unit was prepared to go to bat for him if the final report claimed otherwise. Many newspapers around the country picked up the Associated Press account of the Cynthiana excitement. A friend stationed in Germany sent me an Army Times account entitled "Angry Monster Goes On Rampage". We were the butt of a lot of jokes such as you "Weekend Warriors" will do anything for a little attention. I finished my reserve tour that summer and separated from the Cynthiana unit. Looking back on that March 27, 1960 incident many times over the years, I am most grateful there was no rail traffic in the area that late afternoon.

The writer acknowledges the assistance of Randy Burton, Terri Harris and John Lee for providing their thoughts, articles and pictures. Randy is the son of Captain Paul Burton; Terri is an employee of the Cynthiana-Harrison County Library, and John Lee is a retired railroad employee.

The tank stopped after hitting Brooks Market. A crane hoisted the tank onto a rail car and moved to a siding near the depot. Photo courtesy of Cynthiana-Harrison County Museum.

May 16, 2015, Fort Ruddle Site Field Trip

By President, Don Wagoner

On May 16, 2015, the 23 Harrison County Historical Society members who took the field trip to the Fort Ruddle Station site were 1) Jayne Whitson Newman, Berry, Ky; 2) Wilma Bonar, Butler, Ky; 3) Bill Overbey, Crescent Springs, Kenton County, Ky; 4) From Cynthiana, Ky: Larry Benson, Logan Bruce, Janice Doan, Hargis Fryman Jr, Reba Fuller, Jane Ann Johnson, Walter Karrick, Sally Kinney, Yvonne Kondelis, Denny Lipscombe, Kenneth and Janet Simpson, Gene Smith, Don Wagoner and Wilbert Winkle; 5) Sandy D. Craddock, Falmouth, Ky; 6) David Clifford, Frankfort, Ky; 7) Earl Wolfe, Maysville, Ky; and 8) Jerry and Sherrell Brown, Nicholasville, Ky.

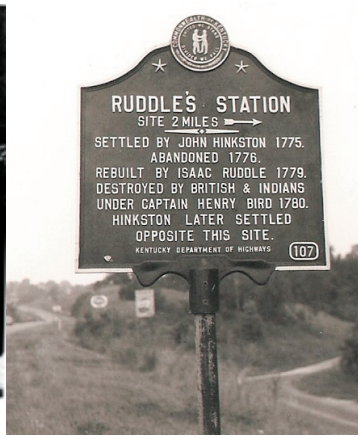
The Fort Ruddle site is on the Henry and Elizabeth Darnell farm off the Old Lair Road, Harrison County, Kentucky, both of whom were grasious hosteses. Mr. Bill Overby, Vice President of the Ruddel And Martin Stations Historical Association (R.A.M.S.H.A.) was our intrepid guide and the remainder of material in this article is taken from Mr. Overby's lecture.

Thr first settlement on the site area was Hinkston Station in 1775 and abandoned in 1776. The second structure to occupy the area was Fort Ruddle Station built in 1779 and attacked on June 24, 1780. The Fort Ruddle Station measured 400 feet by 500 feet or 200,000 square feet for the 490 residents. An ancestor of Mr. Bill Overby who lived there was Joseph Conway. Mr. Conway was scalped in the attack on Fort Ruddle Station and again scalped twice more in his later life. His misfortune is in Ripley's Believe It or Not. We must remember that Fort Ruddle Station is not the same place as Ruddles Mills.

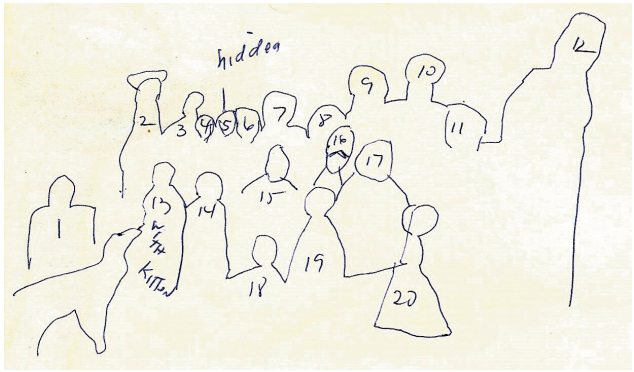
In 1792, John Lair had 1,400 acres of land on either side of the South Licking River that included the Fort Ruddle Station site where the remains of the fallen lay buried beside a barn. In 1845, John's son, Charles Lair built a cliff side burial valut by the South Licking River and placed the fallen settlers remains in it. Also, many of the Lair family were later entombed there.

It was an educational and pleasant visit to the old, Fort Ruddle Station site. Special thanks to Henry and Elizabeth Darnell for inviting us to visit there. Special thanks to Bill Overby for his through lecture at the site. Finally, special thanks to the First Methodist Church and the Baptist Church both of Cynthiana for the use of their vans to transport us to the Darnell farm and back to Cynthiana.

The vault built in 1845 at "The Cedars" by Charles Lair



HARRISON CO. FAMILY ALBUM:
McKee Family - Photo ca. 1875-1880



1. William "Will" Mckee - sheriff
2. James W. McKee - father
3. Anna (wife) 2nd wife was a Talbott
4. Jesse 5. unknown 6. Alice (Swinford)
7. unknown 8. Julia McKee 9 Frank McKee
10. George 11. Lida (Thorn) 12. Charlie
13. Louise Kimbrough 14 Jamie Van Deren
15. Turney McKee 16. Joe Thorn (Lida's husband)
17. Lizzie - Elizabeth Mckee VanDeren
18. George Mckee son of Charles 19. Gene Van Deren (?)
20. Mary Louise Van Deren

These family photos were taken in front of Poplar Hall on the Millersburg Pike, adjacent to Harrison Memorial Hospital. Mrs. Anna Meyers McKee gave me permission to publish it in my 1995 book, *Rattling Spurs and Broad-Brimmed Hats*, although I chose a different photo of the family. The names were provided by Mrs. McKee.

Left - Poplar Hall, former home of William McKee. During the Civil War the farm was owned by John W. Kimbrough. It is now the residence of Dr. William B. Faulkner. Photo, 1961, Bill Penn.