



Harrison Heritage News

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Lincoln's 200th Birthday: His Connections to Cynthiana

Bill Penn and Philip Naff

Although Abraham Lincoln seldom visited Kentucky as an adult, and never visited Harrison County, he had several ties to Cynthiana.

Mattie Dee Todd, Mary Todd Lincoln's Niece

- The first "postmistress" in Cynthiana history was Miss Mattie Dee Todd (1853 - 1909), niece of Mary Todd Lincoln, wife of the former president. Mattie Dee was the only daughter of Dr. George Rogers Clark Todd (1825-1900) and Miss Anna Curry (1828-1901). Mattie Dee's mother was the daughter of a wealthy Cynthiana judge and lawyer, as well as a War of 1812 veteran, Major James Rolland Curry, and his wife, Martha Bracken. Her father was a relative newcomer to the county, having been born in Lexington, where he obtained his medical degree from Transylvania University. Dr. Todd was the seventh and youngest child of Robert S. and Eliza Todd (his mother died at his birth) and thus a brother of Mary Todd Lincoln. Miss Mattie Dee Todd died in 1909 and was buried in Battle Grove Cemetery beside her mother. Their shared marker can be seen from Pike Street as you pass the cemetery from either direction.

Lincoln Read Civil War Dispatches - A quick glance at the index of *Rattling Spurs and Broad-Brimmed Hats* (1995) reveals Lincoln would have read about Cynthiana on several occasions. The first was when Lincoln authorized in May 1861, 5,000 guns to be distributed to Union Home Guards and the train delivering them was turned back by Cynthiana men supporting the Southern cause.

Lincoln would have also read Federal army dispatches about Morgan's Raiders in Cynthiana on July 17, 1862. Two years later, after General Burbridge's defeat of Morgan's troops at the Second Battle of Cynthiana, June 12, 1864, Lincoln sent a congratulatory telegram: "Have just received your dispatch of action at Cynthiana. Please accept my congratulations and thanks for yourself."

W. W. Cleary - Alleged Lincoln Conspirator

- A Cynthiana attorney, W. W. Cleary, was for several months implicated in the plot to assassinate President Lincoln. Cleary was friends with several former Confederates who fled to Canada. In April 1864 President Jefferson Davis appointed a commission of civilian agents to go to Canada with Cleary as their secretary. The commission was supposed to help negotiate the return of Confeder-

ates who had escaped there, secure guns in New York for fueling an insurrection at a Union prison camp, and other mischievous activities. However, the plot was canceled as being unworkable.

Cleary and the commissioners were in Canada when Lincoln was assassinated. Federal spies were aware of their activities and they were seen meeting with Booth, who visited Toronto under the pretense of planning a stage appearance. Cleary and other commission members were indicted for conspiracy to assassinate Lincoln, however President Johnson revoked the rewards for Cleary and three others in 1865. Cleary did not return to Harrison county until April 1869.

Most of the more recent books written on Lincoln's assassination (*Blood on the Moon* is one) mention Cleary's involvement. Some of the authors believe Cleary and the CSA commission were unaware of the Lincoln murder plot, whereas others implicate them, if only on circumstantial evidence.

Lincoln's Mysterious Sighting - An article in The Cynthiana Democrat, February 27, 1936, stated Mrs. Matilda Courtney, 101, living near Boyd, "had spoken of seeing Abraham Lincoln on a train on his way to Cincinnati." This sighting must have been somewhere else, for Lincoln never visited Harrison County so far as can be documented, and was in Kentucky after moving to Illinois on only three occasions. In 1841, while visiting Joshua Speed in Louisville, the two men went to Lexington. And then in October 1847 Lincoln, Mary Todd, and their two children visited Lexington on the way to his serving in Congress. Their route from Louisville to Lexington was on the Lexington and Ohio Railroad. Townsend's *Lincoln and the Bluegrass* further states that Lincoln's family left Lexington by stage to Maysville, and traveled on a steamboat up the Ohio, bypassing Harrison County. In the fall of 1849 Lincoln and his family were in Lexington a few weeks, again, probably via Louisville. The railroad from Cincinnati to Paris was not completed until 1854, so he could not have been seen on a train in Harrison County.

James N. Brown was a Lincoln Pallbearer

- James N. Brown, son of Col. William Brown who built the Handy House, moved with his father from Cynthiana to Illinois in 1832, where he was a friend of Lincoln's and was an honorary pallbearer at his funeral.

Harrison County Historical Society

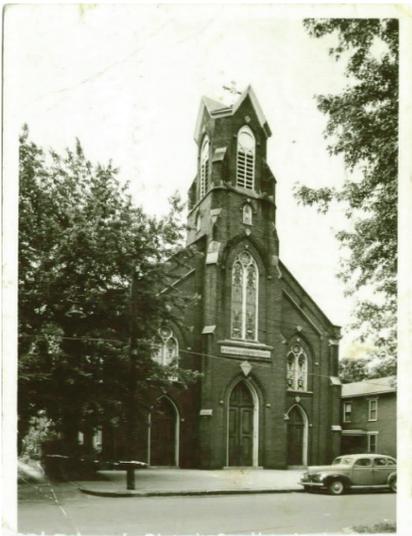
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Harrison County's Lost Buildings

St. Edward Catholic Church (1875)



At our February meeting, Melissa Jurgensen spoke about her recently released, new book, "River Towns of Central Kentucky". She showed pictures from the book and talked about several of the towns along the Kentucky River. While attendance was low, the crowd was enthusiastic and bought copies of the new book. For those who may wish to review the book, a copy was purchased and donated to the library and is available. Information was included in the book as how to order a copy if one wishes.

While the cold weather has kept attendance down over the winter, I hope everyone will try to attend our March meeting to hear Ms. Donna Elkins, presenting a talk titled "Secret Women: Three Civil War Spies and Their Stories". When you come, please bring a friend or three.

As of now we do not have a presenter for April, but do have one for May and June. If anyone has a candidate in mind, please let Billy or me know. We may move our semi-annual show and tell to the April meeting.

The December and January Newsletters had to be mailed out together. Hopefully we are back on track.

The 2009 Membership Dues are payable as soon as possible. Please mail your \$12 dues for 2009 to the Society at PO Box 411, Cynthiaana, KY 41031 as soon as possible.

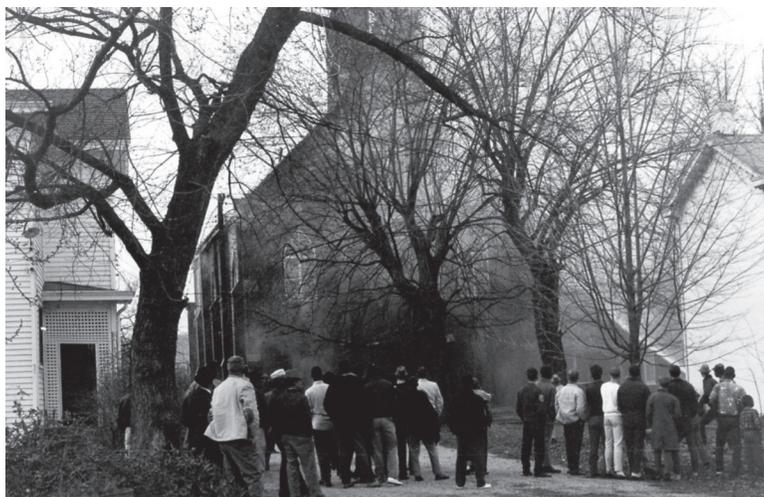
Harrison County History Calendar

Feb. 19 - Melissa Jurgensen will be the speaker in February. She will be discussing her new book, *River Towns of Central Ky.*

Mar. 19 - Donna Elkins will be the speaker in March. She does a program about lady spies in the Civil War.

Apr. 4 - Northern KY University History Day - 9 - 1 pm; Choose from many lectures on historical sites and events in Northern KY. Harrison Co is an associate member and will have a display table with publications, as will about 30 other museums and historical societies. <http://hisgeo.nku.edu/projects/historyday.php>

Apr. 16 - Program presented by Eastside Elementary Fifth Grade History Class.



St. Edward Catholic Church, 107 N. Walnut St., was built in 1875, replacing the first church on the lot, a frame building dedicated in 1864. On December 30, 1965, while the roof was being repaired, workmen accidentally ignited a fire and the historic church went up in flames. Photos of building during the fire by Bill Penn. Above left is a postcard view ca. 1950, (courtesy of www.harrisoncountyky.us; visit this site to see the entire Cynthiaana postcard collection.)

Cynthiana-Harrison County Museum

Martha Barnes, President

FEBRUARY THOUGHTS

During the February 2009 ice storm, we were keeping the grandchildren when we lost our electricity. When it grew dark, we made shadow puppets and played games by candlelight. Please note that playing Old Maid in semi-darkness enables clever eight year old boys to hide the Old Maid card. What a surprise when the game is over - no one has the "old lady" card. Reading by candlelight caused the six year old to exclaim - "Just like Abraham Lincoln!"

Since this year marks the 200th anniversary of Lincoln's birth, we are planning to honor our 16th president during Grist Mill Day (May 23) and the museum's anniversary (July 24-25) as well as throughout the year. Details to follow.

Thanks to Robert Poindexter our museum collection includes several significant Lincoln pieces. An interesting newspaper gives details of the Lincoln assassination and funeral. As well, Neville Haley's impressive log cabin model can be related to our Kentucky President's birth. Our antique Valentine display is a February tradition. Many of the Valentines are dated 1918 and 1921. Truly, they "don't make them like they used to" nor do children seem to care to save the "modern" cards. Our museum collection is heartwarming.

When we were iced/snowed in and reading by candlelight, I spent some time with a Christmas gift - a book by Frank X Walker entitled *When Winter Come - The Ascension of York*. The poems share with us the feelings of those who accompanied Lewis and Clark on their expedition - especially York, the slave, and Sacagawea, a Native American. The author "seeks to validate the voices of African Americans and Native peoples." I often consider our museum collection in relation to all peoples. Do you readers with Harrison County connections remember Dr. Medekle? Anyone have information?

In one of the poems, York compares the river to a snake. "She turn right then left then right again some time circling 'round to almost where we begin. She make us dodge sharp trees and rocks underwater logs and moving sand bottoms. We pushes and pulls the keelboats and big canoes the whole day long just to travel a distance a man can cover on foot in a few minutes. She put me in mind of a long mean snake that swallow a pack of field mice." We often make that snake comparison with our Licking River. One need only to look at the museum's aerial photo of Harrison County.

There is much research to be done. There is much history to collect, preserve, and share. Come join us.

Harrison County, Kentucky, Historical Publications

available from Cynthiana-Harrison County Museum, 124 South Walnut Street, P.O. Box 411, Cynthiana, KY 41031 (859-234-7179);

- Boyd, Lucinda, *Chronicles of Cynthiana*. This is a reprint of the rare 1894 edition, which includes family histories, the famous account of David Sheely and his ghost, and other historical sketches and scattered accounts of persons and events connected with Cynthiana and Harrison County. 262 pp. Hardbound. \$20.00.
- June 1896 *Cynthiana Democrat* reprint. This was a special edition with biographical sketches and photographs of prominent men and women; many photographs of buildings; city/county government, church and school information is included. 24 pp. Paperback, 12"x18". \$5.00
- *Cynthiana Since 1790*. Virgil Peddicord (1986). Mr. Peddicord attempted to list the owners/businesses located on each lot from the founding of the city through the mid-1980s, including subdivisions added through 1923. 171 pp. (See separate index below). Paperback. \$20.00
- *Index - Cynthiana Since 1790* (William A. Penn). Mr. Peddicord did not prepare a comprehensive index for his book. This supplemental index contains about 3,500 names and a reference city street map. 30 pp. Paperback. \$3.00
- *Writings of Colonel William M. Moore, (1837-1927)* compiled by Andrew B. "Andy" Peak (2002). Includes 1921-1922 articles he wrote for the *Cynthiana Democrat* about his life. 10 family photographs; index; paperback, 71 pp. \$10.00/ \$3.00 shipping. Limited supply.
- *This Old House* by Katherine Wilson. Now back in print, this book tells the stories of twenty-six early Harrison Co. houses and the families who have occupied them. 70 pp., new index, paperback. \$15.00 (An index is available for earlier editions, which had no index).
- *Cromwell's Comments*, by John M. Cromwell (1862-1951) is a reprint of Cromwell's 1928-1941 *Cynthiana Democrat* columns on the history of Cynthiana (Harrison Co., KY). William A. Penn and George D. Slade, editors. Paperback; preface; 2 maps; 21 photos; 4 illus.; annotated; index; 200 pp. (*Cynthiana Democrat*, 2002), \$10 plus \$3 shipping.

Shipping/handling for above books: Please include a handling and shipping fee of \$4.00 for first book (unless otherwise noted above), \$2.50 for each additional book; you will be notified if special shipping fees apply. No shipping fee on *Index - Cynthiana Since 1790*, if ordered with the book. Make checks/money orders payable to "Cynthiana-Harrison County Museum." No credit cards. Prices/fees subject to change.

Free at First!: Free African Americans of Antebellum Harrison County

By Philip A. Naff (philnaff@comcast.net)

The 13th Amendment to the Constitution

Section 1. Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

Section 2. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Long before Abe Lincoln ever earned the title of "The Great Emancipator" for his role in helping to end slavery in the United States with the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, which in turn led to the eventual passage and ratification of the Constitution's 13th Amendment in December, 1865, a free population of African Americans already existed in Kentucky.

Kentucky's antebellum population of free blacks never amounted to more than one percent of the state's overall population. Of the 36 states and territories in 1860 only nine had larger populations of free blacks, and three of them would join the Confederacy (Louisiana, North Carolina, and Virginia). Among those six states which remained with the Union were Indiana (11,428 free blacks) and Ohio (36,673). Both were just a short day's journey from Harrison County, and their proximity may explain why the number of freemen in the county was less than the statewide average for many years.

African Americans, free and enslaved, were among the first pioneers in the land that became known as Kentucky, although their status in society didn't always bring them the recognition due them. For instance, African Americans are rarely mentioned at all in W.H. Perrin's *History of Bourbon, Scott, Harrison and Nicholas Counties Kentucky* of 1882. Words or phrases containing "slave" appear twice, and "negro" only appears five times. "Colored" was used 32 times, mostly to describe a church or school. No African American was ever profiled by any of the 250+ biographical sketches or other texts in the nearly 200-page section devoted to the county's history.

Upon arriving in Kentucky, how did they come to be free, if they weren't already? One of those Perrin sketches records the details of the life of Jno. Scott (1773-1860) and notes that he freed "about thirty" of his slaves in 1808. No reason is given for Scott's decision. It could have been out a sense of personal obligation after many years of "service" or perhaps a guilty conscience. Many slaves were freed upon the deaths of their owners (and sometimes the wills were contested by other family members). Some owners developed such a distaste for the institution that they left the state and set their slaves free, such as Dr. Alexander Campbell (1779-1857) did in 1804. He was one of Harrison County's earliest practicing physicians and later came to be called "Ohio's first abolitionist" for helping others to escape via the Underground Railroad from his home in Ripley, Ohio. Some slaves were hired out, were able to earn a little income for themselves, and fortunate to have been able to purchase their own freedom or that of

U.S. Census Statistics Population of African Americans, Free and Slave, in Kentucky (1790-1860)

| Year | Whites | Enslaved African Americans | Free African Americans |
|------|---------|----------------------------|------------------------|
| 1790 | 61,133 | 11,830 | 114 (.2%) |
| 1800 | 179,871 | 40,343 | 741 (.3%) |
| 1810 | 324,237 | 80,561 | 1,713 (.4%) |
| 1820 | 434,644 | 126,732 | 2,759 (.5%) |
| 1830 | 517,787 | 165,213 | 4,917 (.7%) |
| 1840 | 590,253 | 182,258 | 7,317 (.9%) |
| 1850 | 761,413 | 210,981 | 10,011 (1.0%) |
| 1860 | 919,484 | 225,483 | 10,684 (.9%) |

Table 1 –One of the census' "real time" purposes was to determine the number of slaves in each state so that congressional representation of slave states could be apportioned in accordance with the Three-Fifths Compromise, which was written into the Constitution and which gave Southern whites greater voting power in Congress, prolonging slavery's grip on African Americans in the southern U.S.

their family members, but this happened rarely.

No matter how they came by their freedom, the status of the antebellum free black has often been referred to as "a sort of inmate on parole," living as he did in a legal and cultural "twilight zone," never completely free, although not enslaved, but always a potential victim of prejudice and discrimination...or worse.

Much of the slim volume that has been written of the "early" African American history of the county is focused on the lives of those who were enslaved before the Civil War and who went about building new lives as free men and women afterwards. Most of the narratives of the lives and existence of free antebellum blacks have been lost to local memory, leaving it now to descendants and local historians to revive their story through the use historical documents and accounts. The freemen of Harrison County's antebellum past can still be identified using U.S. Census records, marriage, deed, probate, and other county, state, and federal records.

It is the intent that this article will begin the process of identifying the county's free African American population using facts gleaned from some of these records, as well as to tell a little of what it was like to be a free African American living in Harrison County and Northern Kentucky before the Civil War.

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(A.)

Hemphry, W. M. of Harrison County, 1810

Schedule of the whole number of Persons within the division allotted to _____

| NAME OF <i>Town, city, or County.</i> | NAMES OF <i>Head of families</i> | FREE WHITE MALES. | | | | | FREE WHITE FEMALES. | | | | | Of other free persons, except Indians, not taxed. |
|--|---|--------------------------------|---|---|--|--|--------------------------------|---|---|--|--|---|
| | | <i>Under ten years of age.</i> | <i>Of ten years, and under sixteen.</i> | <i>Of sixteen, and under twenty-six, including heads of families.</i> | <i>Of twenty-six, and under forty-five, including heads of families.</i> | <i>Of forty-five and upwards, including heads of families.</i> | <i>Under ten years of age.</i> | <i>Of ten years, and under sixteen.</i> | <i>Of sixteen, and under twenty-six, including heads of families.</i> | <i>Of twenty-six, and under forty-five, including heads of families.</i> | <i>Of forty-five and upwards, including heads of families.</i> | |
| | | <i>to 10.</i> | <i>to 16.</i> | <i>to 26.</i> | <i>to 45.</i> | <i>45 &c.</i> | <i>to 10.</i> | <i>to 16.</i> | <i>to 26.</i> | <i>to 45.</i> | <i>45 &c.</i> | |

Figure 1 - The headings which defined how the 1810 U.S. Census was enumerated. Harrison County's free black population would have been listed in the next to last column, "Of other free persons, except Indians, not taxed"

1793 - 1810 - Annual county tax lists offer the first glimpses of the existence of free blacks in Harrison County beginning in the early 1790s. Probate records in will books and citations in court order books can also help to identify the presence of free blacks in the county, although no index of these records separates free blacks from other residents of the county. It requires a page-by-page search of these records to identify free African Americans of the period. The same is true for U.S. Census records of the county from 1810 through to 1840.

The marriage records of free blacks and were likewise integrated with other court records of the same period. African American marriage records have been indexed, however free blacks were not allowed to marry each other until 1825 in Kentucky.

Statistical abstracts of the **1800** U.S. Census record that there were 19 free blacks in Harrison County. Official statistics for the county in **1810** show a total of 9 free blacks in the county, 4 of them in Cynthiana, although examination of the actual records appears to show a total of 14 (Census takers could count, but that doesn't mean they could add!). Only heads of household were listed by name in 1810, and it appears that none of them were free blacks. Free blacks would have been included in the category of "other free persons, except Indians, not taxed." The names of the heads of households which included these "free persons," followed by their number in each household, were: Jno. Keddleston (3), Samuel Gimmison (4), Samuel Thue (1), Atte World (1), Jacob Martin (1), Lewis Kendle (1), David Wilson (1), and Henry Edger (2).

1820-1840 U.S. Census Records - Although the U.S. Censuses of 1820, 1830, and 1840 still did not list the names of individual family members other than the head of household, the actual names of the heads of free black households can be determined based on the more detailed statistics offered in these censuses, statistics which gave the gender and ages of the individual members of that household according to race. A majority of the names of the heads of households which counted free blacks as members were still the names of white males and females. However, it can be assumed that the name of any head of household which did not include any white members in that household was the name of a free African American and that those who were enumerated with him or her were most likely members of a free black family.

In **1820** Samuel Jourdan was the only free black living in the Cynthiana area. Leander Ayres, Jesse Cotton, Thomas Cotton, and Francis Linum were located on the "East Side of the South Fork of the Licking River," while George Davis, Amy Tucker, and Joseph Wolkins were living on the "South Side of Licking River. Josiah Bell, Cassiah Pickett, and George Robinson were enumerated as citizens of the Marysville district (Marysville is known today as Claysville), as was Leander Ayres, who was apparently counted twice in 1820.

The names of white heads of household whose households included free blacks in 1820 were: Rachel [No surname recorded] (1), Stephen Barton (1), James Browning (1), Abraham Buford (1), Leroy Cole (2), William Cummins (1), John Dailey (1), Ebenezer Filson (1), William L. Fisher (1), Mathew Givens (1), Joseph

Ingles (1), Daniel Isgrigg (1), Zenas Payne (1), Rebecka Penry (4), Thomas Rankin (1), John Sellers (1), Simmons, Adam (1), Enoch M. Wiggans (1), Tomkins Wigglesworth (1), and John Williams (1).

The very same technique of identifying the names of free blacks in the county can be applied to the 1830 and 1840 U.S. Censuses. In **1830**, although the number of households which included free blacks had increased overall, the number of identifiable free black heads of household had decreased somewhat with only a few located in the eastern and western census divisions of the county. Their names, followed by the number of free blacks in their household, were

- Emanuel (No surname recorded) (5)
- Leander Ayres (9)
- Benjamin Berton (2)
- Daniel Bury (2)
- George Davis (9)
- Jarard (or Jaran?) Duncan (4)
- Cyrus Vena (5)

Forty-one other households which included free blacks were counted. Thirty of these included only one free black person each from among a roughly even total number of males and females, suggesting that many of these households had hired these free black men and women as farm laborers or house servants, a fact which seems evident in the 1820 and 1840 censuses of the county, and even more apparent in the 1850 and 1860 censuses which listed individuals by name and recorded their occupations.

Given that there were so many apparently single free black men and women, might this be an indication that they might have been emancipated slaves, or was it perhaps an acknowledgement of the dangers of raising an African American family in a slave state? Might it have been a reflection of how hard it might have been for a free black person to find employment, not being able to earn enough to support oneself, much less a family.

With the **1840** U.S. Census the census taker made the job of identifying the names of free African Americans much easier by simply classifying them as such or simply noting that the head of household was a person "of color:"

- Leander Ayres, man of color (11)
- Ned Banks, man of color (5)
- Joseph Daily, man of color (3)
- Frederick, man of color hiring his time
- Edmund Goins, a man of color (4)
- Kit Hurley, a free man (2)
- Matilda Lemon, free woman (8)
- Jacob Line, man of color (3)
- Samuel Long, man of color (2)
- Lydia, woman of color (3)
- Peter Mahany, man of color (5)
- Nathan Marsh, man of color (4)
- Mingo, a man of color (1)
- Susan, free girl (1)
- Susan, woman of color (3)
- Thomas Wood, a man of color (3)

African Americans Enumerated in Harrison County, Kentucky (1790-1860)

| Year | Population of the County | | |
|-------------|---|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| | Enslaved African Americans | Free African Americans* | Total Population of County |
| 1790 | <i>Harrison County was not created until 1793 and so detailed statistics for the county in 1790 do not exist.</i> | | |
| 1800 | 406 | 19 | 4,350 |
| 1810 | 1,105 | 9 | 7,752 |
| 1820 | 2,137 | 90 | 12,278 |
| 1830 | 2,788 | 104 | 13,324 |
| 1840 | 3,384 | 93 | 12,742 |
| 1850 | 3,185 | 146 | 13,064 |
| 1860 | 3,289 | 149 | 13,779 |

Table 2 – In 2007 the African American population of Harrison County was only 2.5% of an estimated total of 18,552. Many of those who were once enslaved there, and a few who were freemen, left the county during the tumultuous years of the Reconstruction period.

1850-1860 - For census takers, little changed with regards to their count of the resident slaves of the county, only age, gender, and racial makeup (black or mulatto) were recorded under their owner's name. Free African Americans received the same consideration that any white individual received, with more data recorded than ever before, with the added bonus of individual names, specific ages, occupations, and birthplaces.

One of the most interesting facts revealed by the census is the birthplace of each free black person. Of the thirty-nine who were born in 1800 or earlier only seventeen were born in Kentucky. Other birthplaces for the "over-fifty-set" included Virginia (18), Maryland (3), and Delaware (1). The list of birthplaces is not out of line with that of the larger population of the county, but it raises the question of whether these individuals came to Kentucky as free men and women, and if so, how and why did they choose Harrison County given its slave-state status?

In 1850 the free African-American population was recorded as either black or mulatto (meaning "a person of mixed white and black ancestry"). It was left to the judgment of, the census taker, as to how an individual was classified, although he did have some limited instructions to guide him in filling out the census forms.

Color.-- Under heading 6, entitled "Color," in all cases where the person is white leave the space blank; in all cases where the person is black without admixture insert the letter "B;" if a mulatto, or of mixed blood, write "M;" if an Indian, write "Ind." It is very desirable to have these directions carefully observed.

It is interesting to note that in Harrison County four out of every nine free blacks were fifty or over, while there were only seven mulattos of the same age out of a total of 58. As there are no census statistics for earlier decades, it is difficult to say how dramatic or

undramatic a change, if it is a change at all, this might have been. What conditions might have led to there being a large and relatively younger mulatto population among the larger free African American population? Given the legal and societal restrictions against miscegenation, the family stories of "how I met your mother/father" can be quite varied, but not necessarily ominous. The racial identifications can be clues that lead down some unique paths of investigation; only detailed research into the individual families will reveal the individual stories.

With slave labor so plentiful, what did Harrison's free African Americans do for a living? For those forty free blacks for whom an occupation was recorded in 1850, there were, and not surprisingly for a rural county, 28 farmers and two laborers, as well as a stone mason, a brickmaker, a barber, and seven shoemakers, five of whom were Leander Ayers [sic] and his sons, Willis, Leander, Jr., Peter, and Daniel (Dare I say that they were a "well-heeled" family!).

In *A History of Blacks in Kentucky* author Marion B. Lucas writes that "free blacks had to compete with both slave and white labor in Kentucky's work force, and subsequently their wages were less than they might otherwise have been. In those few occupations avoided by whites or where labor shortages existed, their compensation sometimes equaled that of free labor."

By 1860 the occupations of seventy free African Americans were recorded (out of a total population of 149), with ten farm hands, eleven farmers, 25 laborers, ten housekeepers, two barbers, a blacksmith, a cook, a cooper, a gardener, a miller, a plaster, a shoemaker, a smith, a tobacconist, and two washerwomen.

Of the forty working men and women of the 1850 enumeration, sixteen indicated that they owned real property, valued at somewhere between \$100 and \$800, very modest sums compared to the land holdings of whites in Harrison County. (To place the land values in perspective, the 1905 obituary of 101-year-old Nelson Robinson, a former slave, can be offered as evidence; it relates that in 1855 his owner, W.S. Haviland, purchased him for \$700 and his wife, "Aunt Betsy," for \$1,000.)

Of the seventy with occupations recorded in 1860, only twelve, almost all of whom were farmers or laborers, owned any land, which was valued at somewhere between \$60 and \$800. The only non-agricultural laborers among them to own land were the two washerwomen and the barber, Henry Johnson, about whom one can find a little more in the historical record of the county.

Henry Johnson – Henry's \$800 property must have been an indication of a brisk business trimming all those moustaches and beards that were ever-so-stylish in his day! Lucas writes that barbering was a

"highly respected profession because of the potential income. In many towns, free black barbers often made a more than adequate living and frequently invested their surplus capital in property and other businesses. The most successful restricted their visible trade to white patrons." In a column dated August 28, 1930 former Cynthiana mayor and columnist John M. Cromwell (1862-1951) told of "Uncle Henry" Johnson and remembered that "Uncle Henry's shop was located for many years in the basement of an old building which formerly occupied the site of the Citizens Bank building" (presently 122 East Pike Street) and that Henry "dated back to ante-bellum days and was tonsorial artist to the boys of my father's generation, and lived to work on some of their sons."

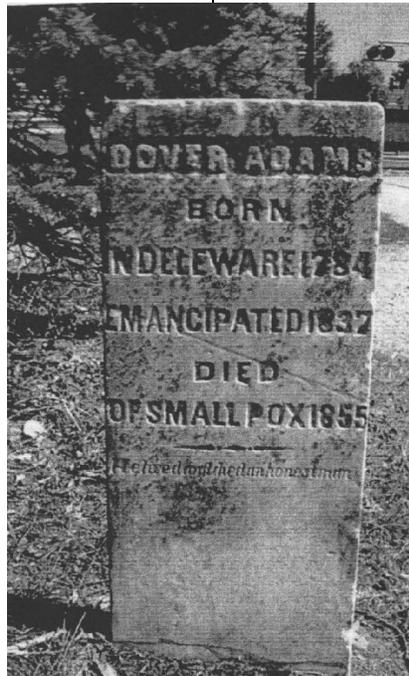
Marriage between free blacks was not permitted until 1825, when Henry was about ten. Apparently, he didn't officially marry before the Civil War, as he and his wife were among several couples who came forward afterwards to have their marriage recorded before the court once marriage between any African Americans became legal in Kentucky (Might this fact suggest that Henry took her to be his wife when she was a slave?). On page 399 in Order Book O of the Harrison County Court Clerk's office it is recorded that on August 26, 1867 "Henry Johnson & R[h]oda, his wife of color, this day came before the clerk of this court and declared that they were married according to the usual forms of persons of color, and had been living together as man and wife for many years, and that they desired to continue to live together until death should part them."

Henry Johnson (ca. 1814-1888) and R(h)oda (ca. 1827-1893) are both buried in Cherry Grove Cemetery, an African American cemetery in Cynthiana, where many former slaves, free blacks, and their descendants are buried today.

Dover Addams – The 1850 U.S. Census is the only one to record the presence of Dover Addams in Harrison County, and were it not for an interesting narrative found in a local history, that record might have been the only record, besides his tombstone, to record any biographical information about him.

Dover and his mother, Hannah, had once been the slaves of the Curry Family of Fayette County, which included Judge James Roland Curry (1789-1880), a war veteran, lawyer, circuit court clerk, and otherwise prominent citizen of Cynthiana in his day (Judge Curry was also the father-in-law of Dr. George R.C. Todd, the brother of Mary (Todd) Lincoln). The interesting story of Dover Addams was published in 1894's *Chronicles of Cynthiana* by Lucinda Rogers Boyd following a "Short Sketch of Judge James R. Curry's Life by Himself" which she included in the volume.

The story goes that one day, when Dover and Judge Curry were little children living near Flournoy's



Station on the Little North Elkhorn in Fayette County, they were under the watchful eye of Dover's mother while the Judge's family was away in Lexington.

Late in the afternoon, Hannah heard the war cry of a band of Indians near the house. She knew that if she hesitated to leave the cabin, that she and the children would be murdered. She tied Judge Curry and Dover together, placed them in a sack with their heads out, and tied the sack securely to her back and watched her opportunity when the war cry was most distant, and slipped out of the cabin and made her way to Flournoy's station or fort. Some time after Mrs. Curry [Judge Curry's mother] returned from Delaware, this faithful negro was on her deathbed. Mrs. Curry promised to rear Dover as her own child, and she kept her word. In the division of the property after Mrs. Curry's death, Dover became Judge Curry's slave. Judge Curry, mindful of the great service Hannah had rendered him, had him taught the trade of a brick-maker, which in those days was a very lucrative business. When Dover would make money, and he made it rapidly, he would place it in Judge Curry's hands for investment.

However, the story of Dover Addam's good fortune didn't end there.

When he, Dover, was twenty-one years of age, Judge Curry said: "You are a free man. I will arrange your emancipation papers." Dover replied "that he was not ready for freedom yet." When he had accumulated \$1,000, he said that he was ready to be free. Judge Curry made him a free man and bought his wife for him, and he lived and died in Cynthiana.

A *Cromwell's Comments* column of September 6, 1928 reminds us that "in the southeast corner of the old cemetery is a stone with the following inscription: Dover Addams, born in Delaware, 1784; emancipated 1837; died of small pox 1855. He lived and died an honest man." Cromwell noted that "here we have the former master erecting the stone to the memory of the slave to whom he had voluntarily granted the priceless boon of freedom; and in dictating the "epitaph," handing down to posterity the high esteem in which he held the man."

Cromwell later commented that one of his last official acts as mayor was to have the then-"tottering" Dover Addams tablet set in concrete. It still stands in the southeast corner where Walnut and Pearl Streets meet.

Freedom's Toll - No doubt the life of Dover Addams was a charmed one by most antebellum standards. However, despite the generosity of his benefactor, he must also have felt the limitations of the legal, cultural, and societal restrictions placed on any African American of the day.

Lucas writes that "success" for the free African American "depended upon a host of variables, but achieving prosperity and maintaining an impeccable reputation were crucial" and that no matter how "they behaved themselves, many never really felt free."

Just as with the general population, there were few if any legal restrictions on the travel of free blacks . . . as long as they had the proper documentation, that is. Maintaining one's "free papers" and keeping them on hand could mean the difference between a free life and enslavement if one was traveling in unfamiliar or unfriendly territory. Although outlawed in 1801, the danger of being kidnapped and sold into slavery was very real. Even with the proper documentation, passage on railroads or travel in stagecoaches could be denied without the word of a respectable white person to authenticate them. Buying a ticket to cross the Ohio River into Indiana or Ohio might be refused outright.

Other restrictions: An 1818 law forbid free African Americans of other states from settling in Kentucky and a fugitive slave law of the late 1840s forced newly emancipated African Americans to leave the state. The death penalty applied to more than twice as many crimes if a free African American committed one. If you were poor, free, and black, you risked arrest and being hired out if they were unemployed and their children could be bound out as apprentices. And the list goes on.

Civil War Times - Annual tax lists record continued to record the presence of free African Americans in Harrison County through the Civil War, although their numbers varied widely from year to year: 1860, 113; 1861, 72; 1862, 27; 1863, 126; and in 1864, 103. It is not clear what may have accounted for the significant fluctuations in their numbers year-to-year, as statistics for free white and slave populations remained fairly stable, but one must wonder what effects the 1862 and 1864 Confederate raids by forces under the command of General John Hunt Morgan might have had on their thinking, for a prolonged Confederate occupation, should one have come to pass, was perhaps the most dangerous to their own circumstances.

Might any of Harrison County's free African Americans have joined the Union Army? When the names of free black males of the 1850 and 1860 U.S. Censuses are compared to a list of African American enlistments from Harrison County in the Union Army, there is only one possible match to any name on that list (See Vol. 7, Issue 2 (Feb., 2006) for the complete list compiled by Charles Feix). Yet, free blacks, like their enslaved brethren, may have fled the state during the war to enlist and so their names are not as readily identifiable as those whites who joined Confederate or Union forces and returned home to Harrison County afterwards.

The story of free African Americans of antebellum Harrison County is but one part of a much larger and interesting one. Much more research needs to be done. African American marriage record indexes are already online. The 1810 through 1860 U.S. Census records of free African Americans in Harrison County have been transcribed in order to develop some of the information in this article; you are invited to visit www.HarrisonCountyKy.US/African-Americans/ to view these records now and even more information about this topic in the future.

Many thanks Sharon Fowler for providing the image of the grave marker of Dover Addams.

"Making Census of Marriage"

While marriage between slaves was not allowed before the Civil War, at least in the eyes of the law. there were a few "free persons of color" whose marriages were recorded in the county clerk's office when it became legal for free African Americans to marry, beginning in 1825. Interestingly enough, African American marriage records were integrated with the rest of the county's marriage record archive until the early 1890s, when their records were segregated and new marriage indexes were compiled. The marriage of Jarrard and Mint, dated Feb. 22, 1825, is the oldest recorded of all the known African American marriages indexed in the Harrison County Court Clerk's office which have a specific marriage date. The following table lists all free African Americans whose marriages were recorded in Harrison County before the Civil War and serves as a census of married free African Americans before the Civil War.

Marriages of Free African Americans in Harrison County before the End of the Civil War

| <i>Doc. No.</i> | <i>Groom</i> | <i>Bride</i> | <i>Marriage Date</i> |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1980* | Jarrard (Of Color) | Mint (Of Color) | February 22, 1825 |
| 3317* | Dyson, Nelson | Matilda (Free Persons) | Dec. 26, 1839 (Bond Date) |
| 3323* | Van Hook, Samuel B. (B. of Color) | Lyman, Martha A. (B. of Color) | January 18, 1840 |
| 169** | Van Hook, Isaac | Lyman, Martha Ann | January 18, 1840 |
| 808 | Ayers, William | Linum, Mary Ann | October 25, 1841 |
| 809 | Dorsey, Samuel | Morton, Mary J. | September 18, 1843 |
| 818 | Berry, Henry | Madkins, Fanny | December 26, 1846 |
| 821 | Peyton, Levi | Moore, Mary Evaline | September 05, 1848 |
| 815 | Mahorney, Peter | Mahorney, Elizabeth | December 01, 1851 |
| 804 | Pritchett, John Willet | Tuck, Martha Ann | September 10, 1851 |
| 805 | Ayers, Peter | Gant, Susan, Mrs. | March 24, 1852 |
| 810 | Sandusky, Stephen | Stephens, Sally | November 9 1853 |
| 816 | Dailey, Joseph | Dailey, Fannie | January 10, 1853 |
| 812 | Ayers, William | Hasteman, Hannah Jane | August 10, 1857 |
| 817 | Jones, Hiram | Ayres, Susan | August 08, 1859 |
| 811 | Haseman, Charles | Lynum, Catharine | July 20, 1859 |
| 813 | Sicle, Richard O. | Burle, Julia A. | January 31, 1859 |
| 807 | Howard, Samuel | Montjoy, Ellen | October 31, 1859 |
| 820 | Savage, John | Lynam, Sarah | September 9, 1863 |
| 806 | Van Hook, Marcus | Ayers, Susan | March 28, 1865 |

* The oldest marriage of African Americans recorded in the records of the Harrison County Court Clerk's Office were indexed in *General Index to Marriages, 1794-1893*, and so the document numbers, when compared to the others of this list, would appear to be higher, and thus recorded later than the rest. However, it would appear to me that the marriages documents of free African Americans were originally on file with those of the larger population. These first three were entered into *General Index to Marriages, 1794-1893* before it was decided to index these marriages in *General Cross Index to Marriages - Colored, 1866-1949*, and so, rather than disturbing the numbering system of *General Index to Marriages, 1794-1893* the clerks of the 1890s left these two marriages in *General Index to Marriages, 1794-1893*.

** It would appear that the Van Hook-Lynam marriage was recorded twice, once in *General Index to Marriages, 1794-1893* and once in *General Cross Index to Marriages - Colored, 1866-1949*, however the difference in the reported grooms' names cannot be accounted for.

It is interesting to note that more than half of these marriages take place in the 1850s, at the same time that several African American churches were established in Cynthiana. According to Perrin, "in 1853, the Colored Methodists found themselves able to build a church of their own . . . a comfortable frame building for church purposes, on the north side of Pleasant street, east of Main. It was conveniently located, and easily seated about 300 persons." In 1857 "the Colored Baptists of Cynthiana bought of J.J. Parish a lot, on the bank of the river, about four hundred yards above the railroad depot, and thereon built a small brick church, costing less than \$700."