



Harrison Heritage News

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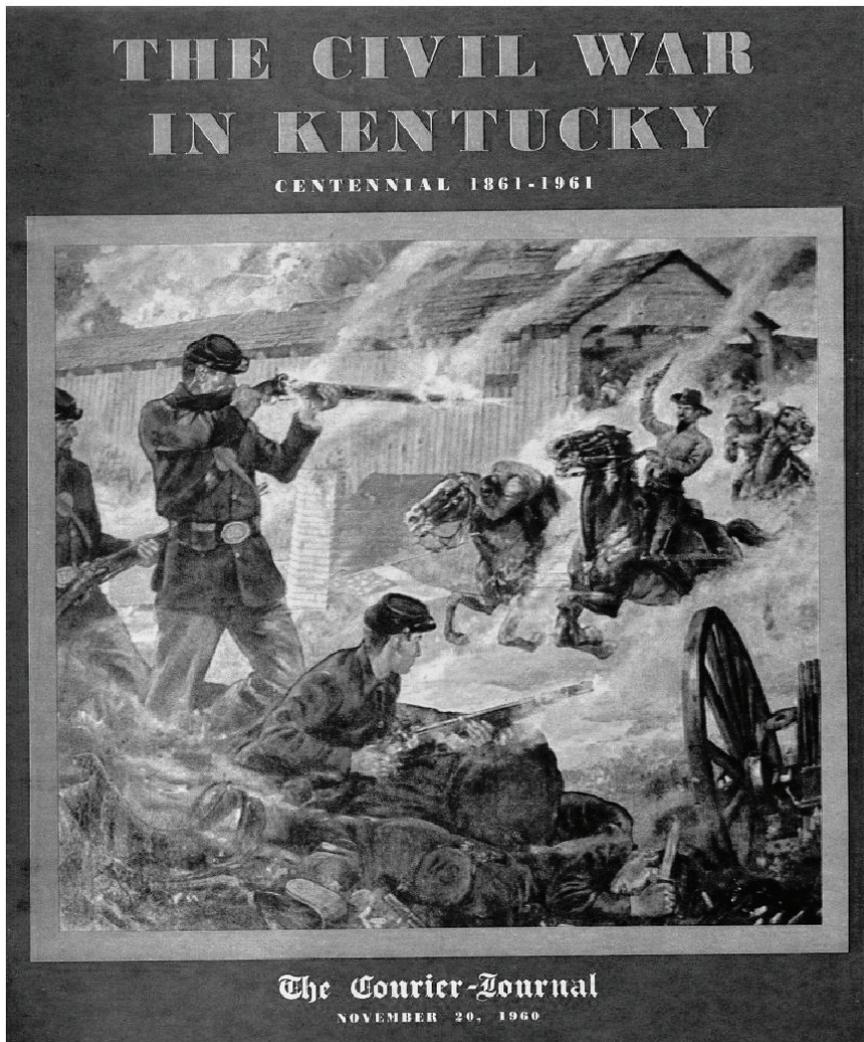
www.harrisoncountky.us/historical-society

July 2012

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Civil War Sesquicentennial: The First Battle of Cynthiana

William A. Penn



The Louisville Courier-Journal published this special section on Nov. 20, 1960, to mark the centennial anniversary of the war. The section contains stories, maps, and illustrations that describe the political landscape of Louisville and Kentucky before and during the war. Featured on the cover is a detail from a 1938 painting by George Gray in the Kentucky Historical Society Collection. Until recently, the painting was on loan to the Harrison County High School where it was displayed in the auditorium. The painting is now in storage at the Kentucky Historical Society. The original illustration was in color. A PDF of this edition is available for a fee online at <http://scr.bi/N00dKC>.

Inside: The original text and map of the First Battle of Cynthiana from the first edition of *Rattling Spurs and Broad-Brimmed Hats: The Civil War in Cynthiana and Harrison County, Kentucky*. (William A. Penn, 1995)

Harrison County Historical Society

Vacant, President
Vacant, Vice President
Marilynn Bell, Secretary
Dorothy Slade, Treasurer
Bill Penn, editor: pennwma@aol.com

Historical Society Meeting Notes - July 19th

The July 19th meeting of the Harrison County Historical Society opened with a report from Bob Owen that the Handy house is presently secured and the police are patrolling at least once a day. The condition of the house and needed repairs were discussed. A vote was taken to allow the Committee to Save the Handy House thirty days until the next meeting to prove that they have enough support to take over responsibility to carry out terms of the five year lease on the house.

Mary Grable enthusiastically described her recent visit to the Rogers House in Richmond, Kentucky, and proposed that our members take a trip there and see what has been accomplished with that house. Members interested in such an outing should call the museum.(234-7179)

Marilynn Bell, Secretary

Amanda Hervey (right) will discuss at our August 16 meeting her new book based on the popular Kentucky Monthly magazine "A-Z" columns where she visited KY towns for one day, including Oddville. Be sure and attend this discussion which should interest Harrison Countians.



Historical Society Program and History Calendar

August 16 - Amanda Hervey will discuss her new book based on her Kentucky Monthly "A-Z" columns where she visited KY towns for one day, including Oddville. <http://kentuckymonthly.com/kentucky-a-z/kentucky-a-z/>

September 8 - Civil War relic show at Old Log House during "Taste of Harrison" weekend.

September 20 - Bill Penn will present a program on the 150th Anniversary of the First Battle of Cynthiana.

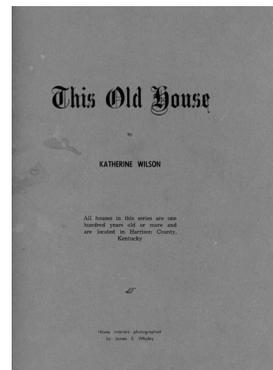
President's Corner

Bob Owen, Former President

HELP!!! The Harrison County Historical Society needs YOUR immediate assistance. Officially the Harrison County Historical Society has no President. This is a bad sign and we must take action to fill the post. MY term as acting President ended on 30 June. I was hoping someone will be willing to step forward and guide the organization through the coming year. I do not want to see the organization die. We need someone to step up and assume the reins and guide the Society. Please come to the meetings and support the Society. Thanks for your support.

JOIN THE HARRISON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

Dues are \$12/year and includes this monthly newsletter. Send check to HCHS, PO 411, Cynthiana, Ky. 41031. Meetings are the third Thursday every month at the Cynthiana-Harrison County Public Library Annex (Charles W. Feix Room) on Pleasant Street behind Biancke's Restaurant, starting at 7 pm. The public is invited.



This Old House by Katherine Wilson, Stories/photos of twenty-six early Harrison Co. houses and the families who have occupied them. 70 pp., new index, paperback. \$17.00 plus \$4 shipping. Available from the Harrison County Historical Society, PO Box 411, Cynthiana, KY 41031.

Cynthiana-Harrison County Museum

Martha Barnes, President www.cynthiana-harrisoncountymuseum.org.



Visit the Museum and see our large collection of Victorian collectibles, all from local Harrison County families.



OLD BULLET—W. H. Lyons of Cynthiana points to one of three bullets in an old locust post, which for 52 years has helped support a grape arbor at his home. Lyons said his brother obtained the post from discarded lumber when repairing a fence at the Battle Grove Cemetery. It is believed the slug was imbedded in the post during a Civil War battle at Battle Grove. (Photo by Herald Correspondent).



Was This Pistol in the First Battle of Cynthiana?

The pictured .44 caliber Starr revolver model 1858 DA (double action), was manufactured c. 1859-1862. The word "Texas" is carved on the wooden grip shown in the photo. The pistol was apparently obtained by Robert H. Renaker of Harrison County during or after the war, and handed down to his daughter, Naomi Renaker Brown, and later, to James Whaley, owner of the former Whaley Funeral Home in Cynthiana. Whaley gave the pistol to A. V. Lynch, whose family still owns it. The current owner speculates that the Starr revolver may have been dropped by a member of Col. Richard M. Gano's Texas Cavalry unit with Morgan at the First Battle of Cynthiana. This pistol was featured in an article, "The Cynthiana Starr" by John W. Walker, in the March 2003 Gun Report magazine. Photo and information courtesy of John W. Walker.

Lexington-Herald, undated newspaper clipping, courtesy of Bill Penn.

Excerpts from *Rattling Spurs and Broad-Brimmed Hats: The Civil War in Cynthiana and Harrison County, Kentucky*
William A. Penn (Battle Grove Press 1995) 70-89.

First Battle of Cynthiana

In July 1862 Colonel John Hunt Morgan led the 2nd Kentucky Cavalry into Kentucky. Prior to this raid Morgan had been commissioned captain and later commanded the Kentucky Squadron of cavalry at Shiloh; he was promoted to colonel on April 4, 1862. In June 1862 he was given command of a regiment, which he led in the Kentucky raid. Morgan's first Kentucky raid began in Knoxville on July 4, 1862, and advanced through Tompkinsville, Glasgow, and Lebanon, arriving in central Kentucky in mid-July.

The news of this raid caused excitement in Louisville, Cincinnati, and Lexington. The newspapers in these towns avidly reported Morgan's movements as they became known. The Union commander in Kentucky, Brigadier General J. T. Boyle, immediately began to organize his scattered units in Kentucky to pursue Morgan. Partially relying on Home Guards, and even convalescing soldiers, Boyle placed Union troops at Frankfort and Harrodsburg and made arrangements for reinforcements from Cincinnati and Louisville. With the possibility of Cincinnati being threatened, Boyle sent Captain William H. Glass with sixteen men, a 12-pounder cannon, and eight fire-engine horses from Cincinnati to help defend Cynthiana. But Morgan expected little threat from these hurriedly assembled troops.

Morgan's regiment reached Georgetown near sundown on Tuesday, July 15, 1862, and paused for two days to rest and recruit in the area. Earlier that day at Midway, George A. Ellsworth sent a number of false telegraph messages to confuse the Union forces. The same day Morgan sent several squads under Col. Richard M. Gano to destroy bridges along the Kentucky Central Railroad around Paris in Bourbon County. This would delay Union reinforcements from reaching Cynthiana by train from Lexington. At 5 P.M. Gano's men attacked and burned the Stoner Creek railroad bridge south of Kiser's Station, about fifteen miles south of Cynthiana between Shawhan and Paris. The Stoner Bridge guards, composed of Pendleton Home Guards and Bate's Light Guards under Captain John J. Wright, had been hastily assigned from Lexington to protect the bridges in the Kiser's Station area.

After the encounter, Col. John J. Landram ordered Wright's unit of twenty-six men to report by train to Cynthiana. Landram was assembling a Union defense in anticipation of Morgan's arrival. Wright returned with the bodies of two Home Guards who died in the skirmish. Captain Wright's soldiers were quartered at the Academy in Cynthiana, a former school on Church Street. Gano's men returned to Georgetown without attacking another objective, the Townsend Bridge, because of delays while searching for a squad who took a wrong road.

On Thursday, July 17, at about 7 A.M., Morgan left Georgetown and started toward Cynthiana, probably using the same route he chose in his June 1864 Cynthiana raid: through Newtown to Leesburg, then following the Leesburg Pike. One of his officers, Capt. John B. Castleman, recalled that "on the morning of our rest

at Georgetown, Morgan's Cavalry was formed into line, and Lt. Col. Duke ordered me to report to Colonel Morgan, who was in front of the troops. It was seven o'clock. We noticed that the regiment moved at once in column out on the Paris road toward Cynthiana."

A number of squads traveled ahead, or parallel on side roads, of the main body of soldiers to guard against surprise attacks and to forage for supplies and fresh horses. There are many stories handed down in Harrison County families describing how farmers along the Confederate's route hid their hams and led valuable horses to remote pastures. Morgan was hoping his movement toward Paris and Cynthiana would confuse Union troops in Lexington as to his intentions, create the impression of an attack on Cincinnati, and give access to the various main roads leading to his planned exit route from the state. He could also expect to capture Federal military supplies at Cynthiana for his men. General Boyle guessed—correctly, as it turned out—that Morgan would probably "escape...between Somerset and Lebanon."

About five miles from Cynthiana, squads of Morgan's Confederates rested near the James Gray house on Mt. Vernon Pike and at the Griffith house, Silver Lake, on the Leesburg Pike near Broadwell. Mr. Gray took his eight older children toward Cynthiana to see the Rebels camped there, and Mrs. Gray took their other two children to see the Confederates camped at the Griffith house. Upon returning to their home, the Grays were surprised to discover a number of Morgan's men in their yard, probably watering their thirsty horses in nearby Grays Run, and served them a meal.

Morgan had with him about 875 men, including the Second Kentucky Cavalry with seven companies, the Texas Cavalry with three companies, and the First Regiment Georgia Partisan Rangers with six companies. Cynthiana's defense consisted of about 345 men from a detachment of Colonel Metcalfe's 18th Kentucky Volunteers under Lt. Col. John J. Landram and a detachment of the 7th Kentucky Cavalry under Major William O. Smith, along with the artillery of Captain Glass. In addition to Captain Wright's men, Landram requested Home Guards from Harrison and Bracken Counties and the cities of Newport and Cincinnati.

About noon, a Union commander at Paris forewarned Landram by telegraph that the Rebel raiders were "moving down the road to Cynthiana." Although many thrilled to the prospect of Morgan's raid, Union supporters feared the arrival of the Confederates. Federal troops and Home Guards had established firm control of the county, keeping "secesh" activity to a minimum; but Morgan's raiders could upset the balance of power and possibly instigate reprisals. The citizens of the town locked their doors and sought refuge in attics and cellars and waited for the shooting to begin. Soon they would hear bugle calls and the clatter of sabers, and feel the hoofs of the horses shaking the ground.

The soldiers had various uniforms and equipment. One member of the 7th Kentucky Cavalry described his uniform as "blue pants, grey army shirt, cavalry jacket with yellow stripes, cavalry cap." This soldier observed that Morgan's men "were dressed variously, mostly grey jeans." Morgan wore a broad-brimmed black hat pinned up on one side with a rosette and with a long black drooping ostrich plume on the other side. Landram reported the majority of his men were "...poorly armed and all totally undisciplined,"

obviously referring to the Home Guards. The men under Captain Wright had only “cheap muskets” and had no uniforms except “a blouse and cap for each man.”

Morgan arrived three miles south of Cynthiana on the Leesburg Pike at 3 P.M., Thursday, July 17, 1862. Here at Cynthiana, according to historian James A. Ramage, Morgan’s raiders engaged in the most significant fight of their first Kentucky raid. On the hills where the Leesburg Pike and Wornall Lane intersect, Morgan divided his men to attack Cynthiana from three sides: from the southeast, Gano’s Texans; from the north, Captain McFarland’s 2nd Kentucky Company G and Nix with his Georgia cavalry; and from the south, Morgan’s main command advanced toward Cynthiana on the Leesburg Pike.

Morgan’s advance guard initiated the fighting when they attacked the Union pickets a mile or two from Cynthiana on the Leesburg Pike and captured several prisoners. 1st Lt. Charles W. Rogers, a native of Cynthiana who knew the lay of the land well, led this group, composed of about twenty-five men who normally traveled about 400 yards ahead of the main body of cavalry. Morgan posted his artillery, under the command of 1st Lt. J. E. Harris, on the Leesburg Pike about 300 yards from the covered bridge on a small hill west of the road and Grays Run. From this vantage point overlooking Desha’s corn fields in the river bend, the Confederates could clearly view the courthouse, bridge, and town defenses along the river.

Morgan had two mountain howitzers from Richmond, Virginia, issued to him before the Kentucky raid. A pair of horses pulled the two “bullpups”—so named because of their barking sound—along with an ammunition limber wagon. This type cannon could fire shells accurately up to 800 yards and canister and grape-shot up to 200–300 yards.

The Confederates began shelling the town as the Second Kentucky Cavalry formed for an attack. The artillery moved to the end of the covered bridge when the charge began. There the battery crew suffered casualties from Union sharpshooters posted in a strong defensive position inside and behind buildings along the opposite bank of the Licking River and the railroad depot a block beyond. The first cannon fire was heard by J. W. Fightmaster, a local farmer, about ten minutes after the initial attack, around 4:10 P.M. He was mowing grass on Lucius Desha’s farm on the Claysville Pike. About this time, a Union soldier, Corporal Allen, while stationed at his picket post one-half mile north of town, heard the sound of muskets in the direction of the covered bridge.

Colonel Landram hurriedly placed one or two companies along the river bank above the bridge; he sent other units to meet the Confederate flanking movements on the town. Due to the strategic importance of the covered bridge, which was the only convenient site except several fords to cross the steep-banked river into the town, Landram ordered his men to hold it “at all hazards.” Captain Glass, with the 12-pounder cannon, moved to the courthouse yard. From that location, only a block north of the covered bridge, the cannon could cover Morgan’s expected point of attack. The single cannon under Glass fired grape shot with great effect, “showing its mark at every shot.”

Morgan placed the Second Kentucky in position along the south shore of the river opposite the town. The Confederates dismounted and deployed along the river bank as follows: Company A and B on the east side of the road; Company E and F on the west side

of the road. Company C remained behind the lines in reserve, on horseback.

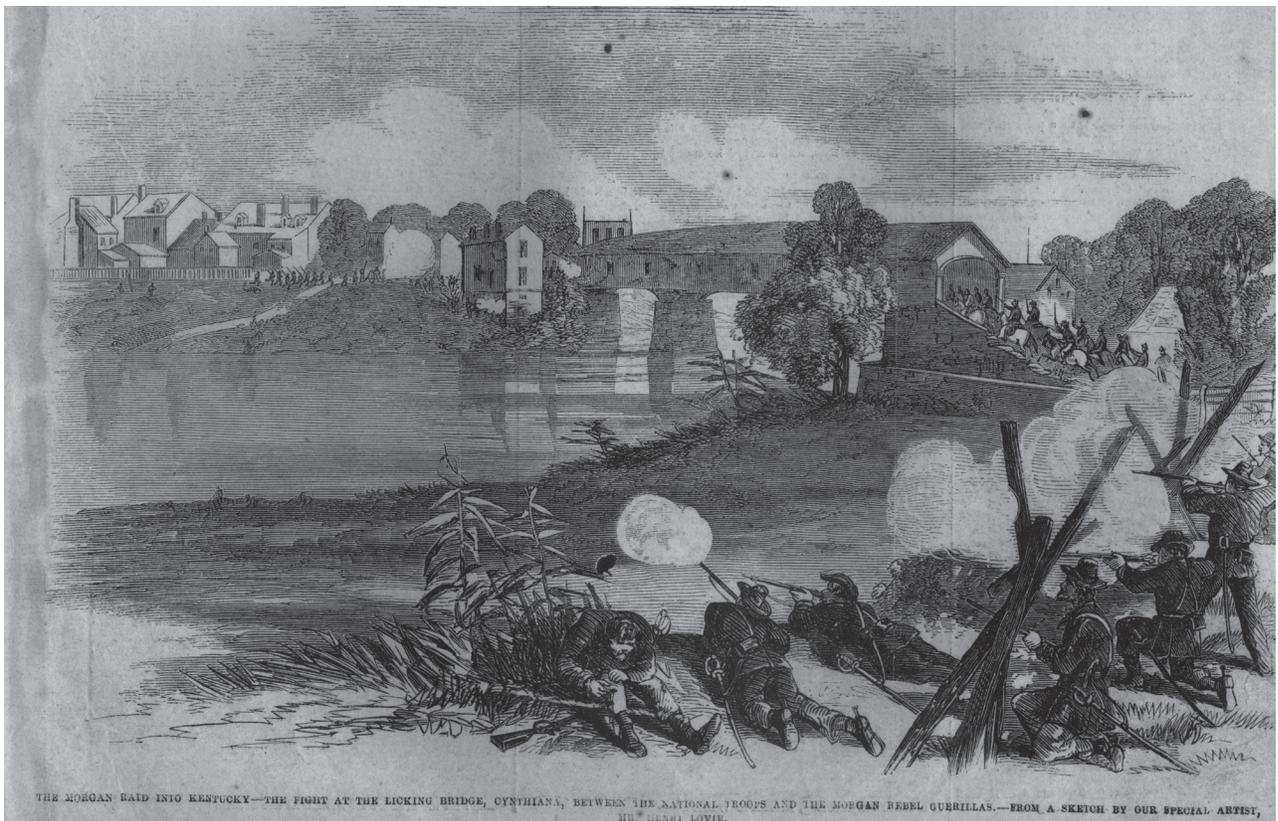
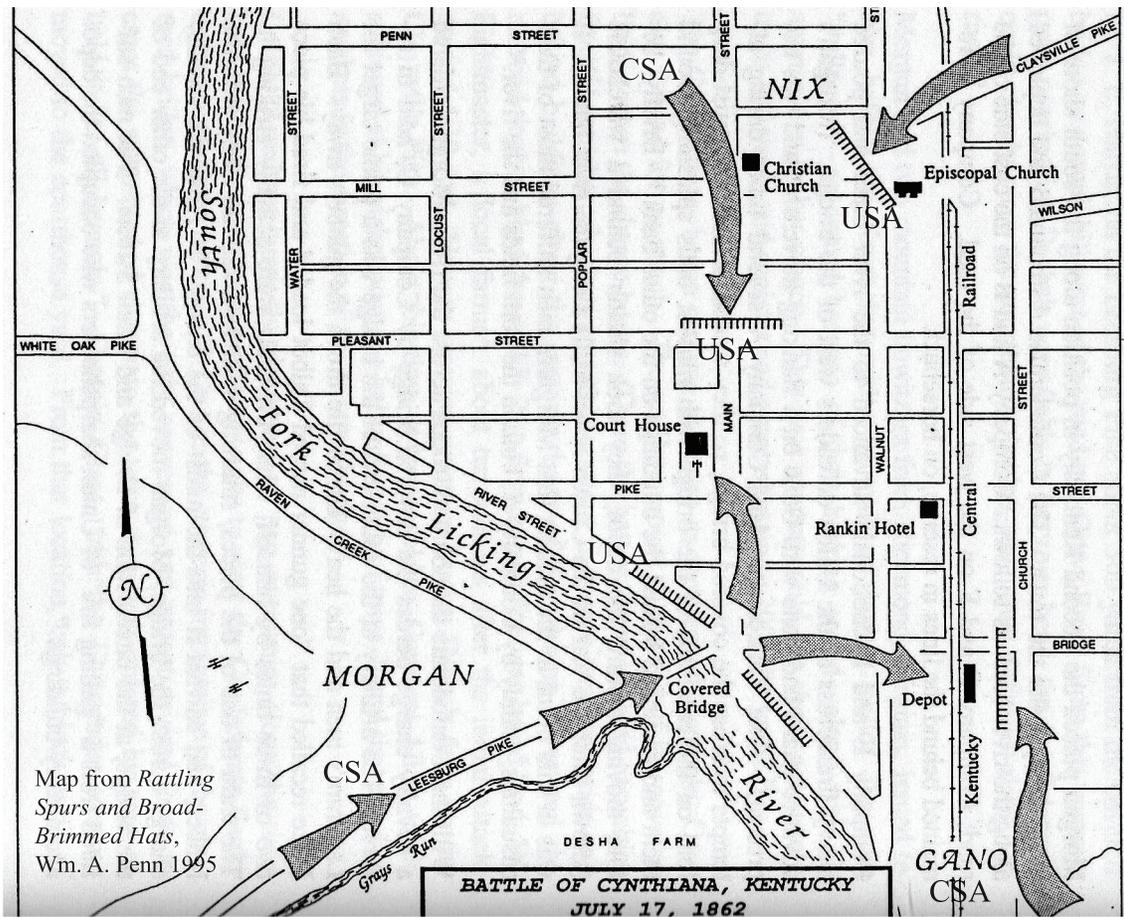
Company E and F cautiously advanced to the river bank and poured heavy fire across at the Union defenders west of the bridge. (Morgan’s advance guard had gone with Gano on a flanking movement and was not present). The Yankees repulsed Company A several times during attempts to cross the covered bridge, so they waded across at a waist-deep ford on the east side of the bridge with musket balls splashing around them and crouched behind the buildings on the other bank. Briefly, before moving toward the depot, they took shelter behind a warehouse (known after the war as the Crown Jewel Mill) along the river bank. It was at this point in the assault that Morgan’s men suffered most of their casualties, mainly by Company A, both in the corn fields and the river.

With the Confederate dismounted troops across the river, Morgan ordered a cavalry charge across the covered bridge by Company C, held in reserve. The artillery at the south end of the bridge was a prime target for Landram’s men and the heavy Union fire drove the gunners away. Basil Duke recalled that “one gunner named Talbot loaded and fired his piece two or three times by himself, while the balls were actually striking it. The team of one of the pieces, smarting with wounds, ran away with the limber, and carried it into the midst of the enemy.” After the cavalry charge across the bridge, Morgan moved the artillery to the other end of the bridge, at the intersection of Bridge and Main Streets. The men suffered from a “galling fire” of Union sharpshooters who occupied the depot and nearby buildings.

A Confederate recalled this charge: “The cannoneers, (with the exception of a sergeant named Talbot, and perhaps a man or two) were driven from their pieces, and we recruits were ordered to supply their places. As I crossed the bridge I saw for the first time Morgan under fire. Strikingly handsome always, in battle he was grand; splendidly mounted, he was near the guns encouraging the few who had remained and trying to rally the others.”

After crossing the long covered bridge, Morgan ordered his companies to charge down both Bridge and Main Streets. As the horses of Company C noisily galloped over the wooden floor of the covered bridge to Main Street, Company B gained a position along the bank of the river and covered for Company A, who could now make their charge. Duke recalled that “in this dash, Sergeant Quirk, out of ammunition, and seeing his friend Drake in imminent peril, knocked down his assailant with a stone.” The Union troops under Landram fell back from positions along the river bank to the block between the bridge and the depot. Private W. Craig, of Company A, first to cross the river, was the first man killed on the other side. After the charge, some of the Confederate cavalry’s horses cluttered the streets, shot dead by Union bullets. Overpowered by Colonel Morgan’s larger force, Landram made a hopeless attempt to regroup some of his men near a cooper’s shop in the area between the bridge and the depot, which stood on the east side of the railroad tracks.

While Morgan’s main force attacked Landram at the covered bridge, Gano and his Texas cavalry flanked the Union troops from the southeast. Gano’s official report was not specific concerning routes and locations from Lair Station to Cynthiana. From Lair Station he reported traveling “across to the Millersburg pike, arresting the guard at the bridge, driving in the pickets and commencing the fight on that side of town.” The more descriptive



John Hunt Morgan's attack at the Cynthiana covered bridge, July 17, 1862. *Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, August 16, 1862. From *Rattling Spurs and Broad-Brimmed Hats* (Penn).

Union reports indicated that Gano's main attack was from the New Lair Road, and possibly from the Claysville Pike, but there was no mention of an attack across the Millersburg Pike. The "bridge" site and "pickets" mentioned in his report were probably at Kimbrough's Bridge, named for Major Kimbrough, who owned the farms on each side of the New Lair Pike north of the river.

From the point where Morgan first divided his command, near the Leesburg Pike–Wornall Lane intersection, Gano followed Wornall Lane and Edgewater Pike to Lair Station. It appears that most, if not all, of Gano's men went north from Lair Station following part of the New Lair Pike to Cynthiana, and continued north to Magee Hill. This hill (called Standpipe Hill today), which overlooks Cynthiana and the countryside south and east, was referred to in several reports as the "Magee Hill Road," for the owner of the adjacent farm and stone house, Henry Clay Magee. The Magee Hill Road was more commonly called the Ruddles Mills Road or Lairs Mill Pike. If in the unlikely event that any of Gano's soldiers circled the town farther east, they could have taken the Old Lair Pike that followed the east side of the Licking River to Cynthiana.

In the 1860s, part of the Lair Road between Lair Station and the Licking River was west of the present-day route, as noted on the Beers 1877 Harrison County map. (Although an early county road, it became known as the "New" Lair Road when that section was re-routed in this century.) North from the Licking River, the original road followed the present route except it went straight up the hill, intersecting a road that still partially exists running generally east and west, along the southern property line of the present-day Harrison County school property. From this intersection the road—known then as the Ruddles Mills Road—went one mile east to where it joined the present Old Lair Road; west of the intersection the original route went through the present-day standpipe site and high school grounds. The present-day Old Lair Pike from Cynthiana to where it intersects the old Ruddles Mills Road in a curve about one mile past the Battle Grove Cemetery was built shortly after the Civil War. This part of the road, first mapped in 1877, was probably an improvement and extension of private roads to the Redmon farm, Elm Wood.

About 3 P.M. a company of Major Smith's pickets engaged Gano on the "McGee [Magee] road" and returned to Cynthiana "giving the alarm that they had been fired upon." These pickets are most likely the ones mentioned in Gano's report, probably stationed near Kimbrough's Bridge on the New Lair Pike. Smith ordered "a company of Home Guards to proceed to the top of McGee's hill and engage the enemy." These Home Guards were apparently Captain Wright's company of Pendleton and Bracken County men.

Wright's description of his position seems to be Magee Hill, for he reported he was "on a hill commanding a pike leading into town with orders to guard that road." After arriving on this hill, Captain Wright quickly drilled his men for the first time. In less than a half-hour another body of Gano's cavalry approached "within about three hundred feet." Wright's men fired at them, killing three men and two horses. Gano reported that the Home Guards "soon returned in a pretty large force, waving their hands." Gano ordered his men to cease firing, thinking the Home Guards wished to surrender; but Wright's men had

mistaken Gano's troops as Home Guards, and "commenced cursing us [Gano] for firing on our own men." Wright's report also alluded to this mistake without actually admitting it when he stated that, as a group of cavalry approached, "we ordered a halt" for "not knowing but that they might possibly be Union forces falling back on the town." The Rebel soldiers ordered them to lay down their arms, but the frightened, inexperienced, and greatly outnumbered Home Guards turned and ran instead to the area around the depot.

[Correction to Gano's movements: Gano first attacked Wright's men on Magee Hill and then entered Cynthiana on the Millersburg Pike and Pike Street. A newspaper (*Louisville Daily Journal*, July 23, 1862) reported that "An alarm now came that a body of Morgan's cavalry was coming in from the Millersburg pike. This was the body that had been driven back on the Gus. McKee [Magee] or Kimbrough road, at the first fire, joined by another squad."]

Major William O. Smith regrouped about sixty of his scattered cavalry and proceeded to defend a Confederate attack he thought was from the Claysville Pike, but more likely was part of Nix's Falmouth Pike offensive. Smith encountered a Confederate force at the Episcopal Church at the intersection of Walnut and Mill Streets and reported that "they being in superior force and hid behind fences...our men were compelled to fall back to the Reformed Church," site of the present Cynthiana Christian Church at the corner of North Main and Mill Streets. The Federal soldiers retreated toward the safety of the brick courthouse, only to find themselves surrounded at the intersection of Main and Pleasant streets.

Concurrent with offensives by Morgan at the covered bridge and Gano from the New Lair Pike, Lt. Col. F. M. Nix attacked Landram's rear. Nix commanded the First Georgia Partisan Rangers, accompanied by Captain McFarland's Company G of the Second Kentucky. From the Leesburg Pike, three miles south of Cynthiana, Nix probably followed Wornall Lane north, crossing the Connersville Pike to Ammerman Lane, then to the White Oak Pike. From there he took back roads to the ford at Keller's Mill and followed the (now abandoned) Keller's Mill Road to where it forked with the Falmouth Pike north of Cynthiana by the present-day St. Edwards Cemetery. Nix later reported that, from the point where Morgan divided his forces into three groups, he had traveled five miles or more through "plantations and over many obstructions not anticipated" to the north edge of Cynthiana.

About 4:30 P.M., a half hour after Morgan's initial attack on the Georgetown Pike, six pickets riding ahead of the main body of Nix's men—numbered by a Union soldier at nearly 100—dispersed three Union pickets at the forks of the Falmouth Pike and Keller's Mill Road. One of the Union pickets was Corporal James A. Allen, the soldier who accused Lucius Desha, the state representative, of firing at him just before the Confederate attack. About this time a train left town, and despite being fired on by Confederate soldiers, escaped and crossed Keller's Bridge just before the Rebel raiders burned it. Several women escaped harm from the shower of bullets striking the departing train by sitting on the floor of the railroad cars against cushions placed there for their protection.

Just before Nix appeared, a crew replacing cross-ties at the

railroad crossing near North Main Street received a warning by some 7th Kentucky soldiers of Morgan's arrival at Cynthiana. Five other Union cavalymen joined them, but after seeing Nix and his men charging down the Falmouth Pike, they "wheeled and went back to town as hard as they could go; they did not fire a gun." The railroad construction crew attempted to hide in a nearby field but was captured. Captain Glass reported that Nix came down the hill beside the former site of Camp Frazer, where a company of Home Guards stood guard. Landram had probably already deployed these men near the depot.

Sometime after hearing the report of a cannon, the signal of Morgan's main attack at the covered bridge, Nix and his dismounted men formed a line south of the railroad crossing at the northern edge of the town. Soon he saw "a body of the enemy's cavalry advancing toward his line." This was probably Metcalfe's 7th Kentucky Cavalry, under Major Smith, or a part of that unit. A volley from Nix's troops repulsed this advance. Nix then positioned his men on each side of North Main Street to prevent the Union soldiers from escaping northward after the attacks of Morgan and Gano. This deployment probably included the Episcopal Church area to close off the Claysville Pike, where Major Smith confronted them. During the 1860s, a bridge was not over the Licking River on West Pleasant Street, and the steep banks there would have made it difficult to cross as a Union escape route going west.

Advancing toward downtown Cynthiana along North Main Street, Nix's Company A attacked Captain Glass and the 12-pounder cannon, which had been wheeled around in the opposite direction of the covered bridge. The Confederates overpowered Glass and captured his cannon. Company A also captured sixty-eight Union prisoners and marched them to Main Street. A Union prisoner convinced a Confederate officer, Captain Jones, that Union reinforcements would soon arrive by railroad from Covington. Jones then ordered Quartermaster Sergeant John C. Allen to take a squad of men and burn Keller's Bridge. Company B of Nix's Georgia Rangers joined Company A and forced a number of Union defenders toward the depot where Landram was desperately attempting to rally his men.

Under pressure from Gano, Wright's Home Guards retreated from Magee Hill into Cynthiana where Landram was hoping these reinforcements could turn back Morgan's attack from the covered bridge. As Captain Wright joined in the heavy fighting near the cooper's shop, he noticed the depot was "crowded with people, soldiers, citizens, Home Guards...who were firing on the bridge." Low on ammunition, Landram and Wright withdrew to the depot. According to Basil Duke, Lt. Col. St. Leger Grenfell bravely led one charge on the depot and received eleven bullets through "his horse, person, and clothes, but was only slightly hurt. A curious little skull cap, which he used to wear, was perforated." Landram had hoped to move his artillery piece,

before it was captured, from the courthouse to the hill on the east edge of town. Without the cannon, his remaining troops found themselves practically defenseless.

Nix attacked with three companies "to dislodge a party of the enemy from a garden" and to "charge the depot and a neighboring brick building" where Landram's men were making a stand. Landram at this point was surrounded and had only about thirty men left, composed of twelve men from Captain Wright's company, a few Home Guards, and some cavalymen on foot. Landram wrote: "...it was here that Jacob Carver, Company E, 18th Kentucky, was killed... and I received a slight wound in the ankle. It was here too that the lamented Thomas Ware, U.S. Commissioner for this county, one of the oldest citizens of Cynthiana, was killed, nobly and bravely doing his duty as a patriot." Landram and about twenty-five men scrambled from the depot north along the railroad tracks. From the top floor of the Rankin Hotel on Pike Street, which was under construction and nearly finished, Landram hoped to get a better view of Morgan's deployment, as well as gain a defensive position. Along the tracks he met one of Morgan's officers who demanded that Landram surrender. Landram replied, "I never surrender," and instantly discharged three shots at him, two which took effect in his breast. He fell from his horse, and I thought him dead, but he is still living. Captain Rogers also discharged a shot at him which took effect."

Landram was on horseback, but the men with him were probably not. They fled from the Rankin Hotel east one mile, probably on the old Ruddles Mills Road, to "Redmond's [Redmon's] pastures," a farm on the south side of the present-day Old Lair Road. Near the Redmon farm Landram's men, including Captain Glass, surrendered after being surrounded by some of Morgan's men who had flanked them when they crossed from the Millersburg road. The Confederates pursued Landram about ten miles, but he escaped traveling southeast toward Ruddles Mills. Among his pursuers was Morgan's young orderly, Billy Peyton, who emptied "two pistols without hitting him." Landram finally reached the safety of Paris about 8 P.M., and quickly spread the news of his battle with Morgan.

The Confederates marched Landram's captured men into town and guarded them in a second floor room of the courthouse. Their parole was made out later that evening. Nix held Major W. O. Smith and the men with him temporarily at Mr. Cuson's home on Main Street. After the fighting had ceased, the Rebels marched Smith and the others across the covered bridge to the 18th Kentucky campground on the Desha farm for the night. There Smith "witnessed the falling of the flag pole, and also the different parties through Desha's cornfield picking up Morgan's dead and wounded."

The next morning, July 18, 1862, the Confederate guards

marched all the prisoners about six miles north on the Falmouth Pike. After being dismissed, the former prisoners made their way to Falmouth where a train carried them to Covington. There they undoubtedly told many tales of the battle to excited listeners who feared that Morgan's famous raiders would threaten Cincinnati next. Major Smith, who was not immediately released, later recalled, "Had it not been for some of the prominent men opposed to me in sentiments I have no doubt but that some miscreants here would have had me shot or hung." Morgan permitted Smith to see his family, and then released him on parole of honor as a prisoner of war.

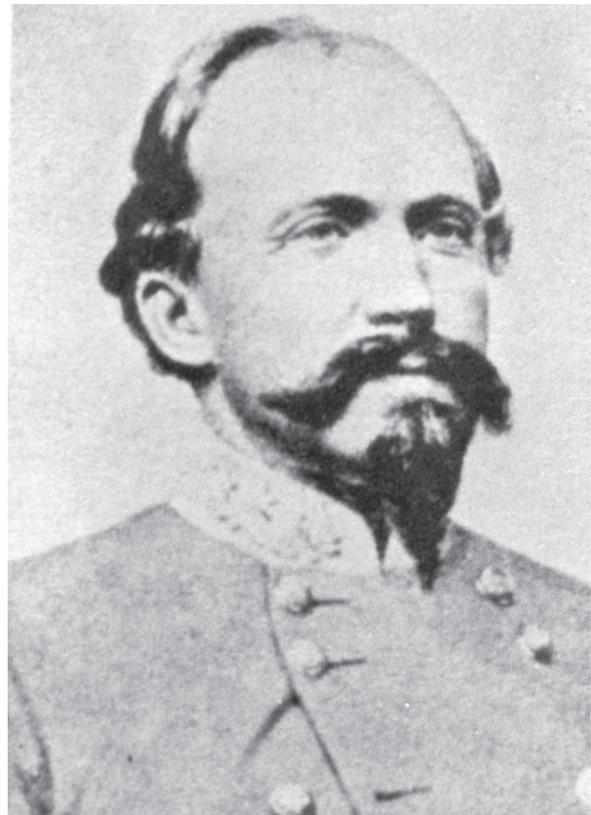
Mrs. L. T. Lafferty of Cynthiana later recalled: "My father, A. H. Ward, was in person here while his father-in-law, Thomas Ware, was dead in his home. Gano went to Morgan and told him this whereupon Col. Morgan wrote: 'I hereby authorize Major R. M. Gano to release Harry Ward on condition that he act as he has always acted heretofore. The opponent of tyranny and oppression. Signed, John Morgan.'"

The battle of Cynthiana on July 17, 1862, started at about 4 P.M. and lasted only about one hour. Morgan's official report listed 420 prisoners, including 70 Home Guards, along with a 12-pounder cannon, small arms, and 300 horses. The Confederates destroyed Camp Frazer and the government supplies there and burned 300 Union muskets at the courthouse after breaking them over the wheels of railroad platform cars. Colonel Landram reported seventeen killed and thirty-five wounded among the Home Guards, the 18th Kentucky, and the 7th Kentucky Cavalry. Seven of the dead were Home Guards, with three from Harrison County: Thomas Ware, Thomas Rankin, and Capt. Lafe Wilson. Another source, apparently excluding the Home Guards, listed eight killed and forty-six wounded. Morgan reported eight killed and twenty-nine wounded. This agrees with Landram's observation that Morgan was seen taking eight burial cases from Cynthiana. The Federal troops buried some of their dead in the public cemetery on North Main Street, and buried others on "Desha's cornfield" across from the covered bridge. The city council authorized paying a black man, Mr. Tomlinson, for burying soldiers, and paid Perry Wherritt for having dead horses removed from the streets. The city also paid R. J. Cummins for furnishing crutches and another black man, James Gray, for aiding the wounded.

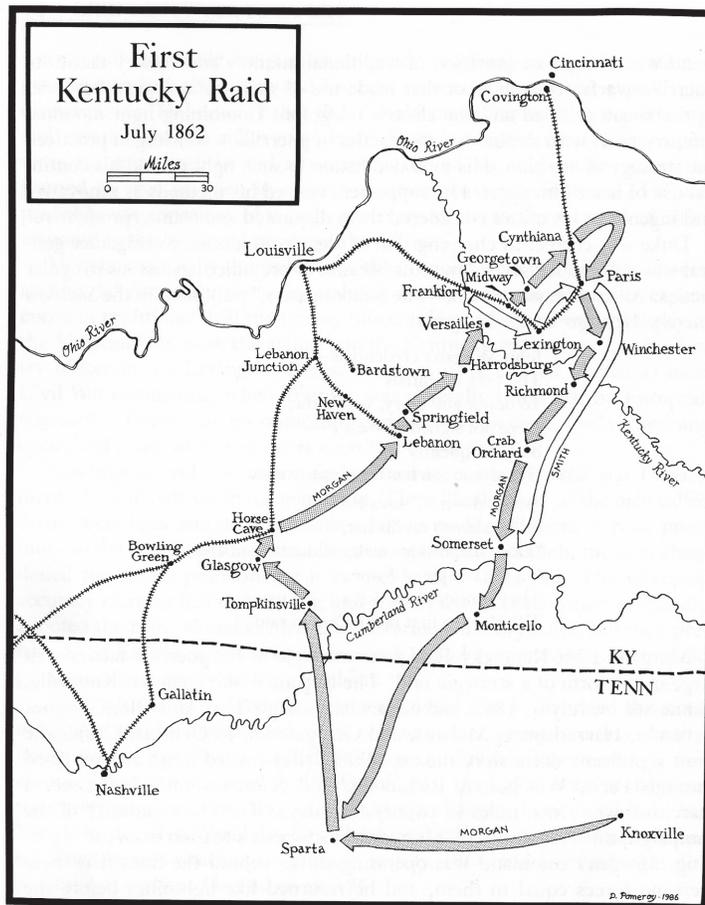
Along with Keller's Bridge, the Confederates "burned the few small railroad buildings and one or two warehouses and dwellings," which included the depot and some railroad cars. Until the completion of bridge repairs on July 31, rail service from Covington ended at Keller's Bridge, and trains from Lexington could not proceed north of Kiser's Station. Omnibuses probably connected rail passengers between the two burned bridges.

About 5 P.M., Morgan led his cavalry from Cynthiana out of Kentucky through Paris, Winchester (where he rejoined Captain Castleman and Company D), Richmond, and Somerset, reaching Tennessee on August 1, 1862. Before leaving Cynthiana, however, the Confederates printed broadsides soliciting recruits which stated that anyone could enlist by visiting the school building next to the courthouse. The next month, after returning to Virginia and ending the twenty-four day Kentucky raid that covered 1,000 miles, Morgan presented a flag captured at Cynthiana to the wife of a Kentucky congressman in Richmond. He may have given the flag to the wife of William E. Simms, who was born near Cynthiana but lived in Bourbon County, and was now a Confederate senator. Colonel Grenfell captured another Union flag during the battle, which some women from Leesburg made for the Home Guards.

From *Rattling Spurs and Broad Brimmed Hats* (William A. Penn) pp 70-89.



John Hunt Morgan. *Photo from Generals in Gray* (Courtesy of LSU Press).



From *Rebel Raider* by James A. Ramage, U. Press of Kentucky, p. 94.



Bill Penn, 2012

THEN & NOW

The U. S. 27 John Hunt Morgan Memorial Bridge replaced the old covered bridge, demolished 1946-1948. This was the significant site of Morgan's initial attacks in the First and Second Battles of Cynthiana. Some citizens have advocated for a small Civil War interpretive park on the corner of the River Road Park, with a pull off space, interpretive signage, replica cannon, and rail fence.



James S. Whaley