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Kentucky Humanities Council, Inc.

Historic Kentucky Treasures:

LOUISVILLE'S MARINE HOSPITAL

Page 13

KENTUCKY'S CONFEDERATE HOME

Page 23



INSIDE: Knox County natives shine on Hollywood's big screen | 29

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9

The Warfields. Their Meadows. Its Legacy

Dr. Elisha Warfield built the Meadows farm in Lexington and was the breeder of one of the state's most famous horses.



23

Kentucky's Confederate Home

Located in Pewee Valley, the home provided lodging and healthcare to many Civil War veterans.

29

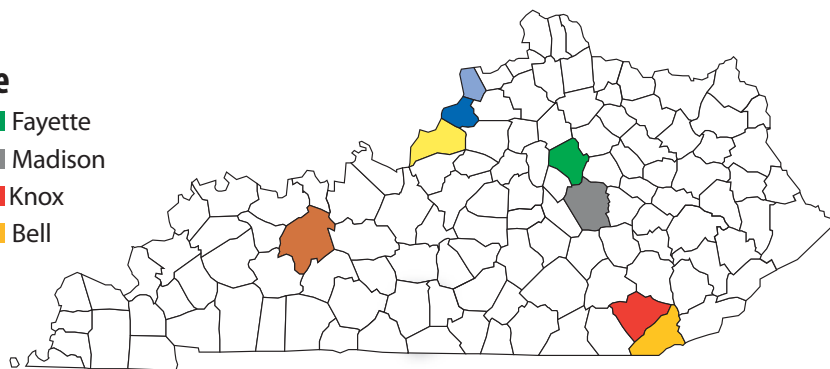
Hollywood Comes to Knox County

Tom Brogan and Silas Miracle appeared in the 1920s picture *Stark Love*.



In this issue

- Trimble
- Fayette
- Oldham
- Madison
- Jefferson
- Knox
- Ohio
- Bell



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On the cover: The Louisville Marine Hospital. Photo by Quadrant, Inc., courtesy of JMA.

All Eyes on the Commonwealth

For many in the Bluegrass state, springtime heralds the excitement of Thoroughbred racing, Derby hopefuls, and parties galore. This spring, as Kentucky completes preparations to host the first-ever in North America 2010 Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games™, we look forward to sharing not only our love of horses, but our considerable hospitality with visitors and athletes from around the world. We are confident that our guests will discover what Kentuckians already know — the Commonwealth is a unique paradise, rich in culture and history, good food, good music, and very good stories.

The strong connections between Kentucky and fine horses are not limited to central Kentucky, but Lexington does have a special Thoroughbred namesake. In this issue of *Kentucky Humanities* you will read about Lexington's early connections to the horse industry and the famous horse, also named Lexington, who inspired the city's Convention and Visitor's Bureau's blue horse logo, designed to welcome thousands to the World Equestrian Games. Dr. Elisha Warfield built the Meadows farm and developed a breeding operation that turned out one of the most famous Thoroughbreds of the time.

Also in this issue you will discover historic Kentucky treasures. Opened in 1822, the Louisville Marine Hospital provided much needed healthcare to boatmen traveling up and down the Ohio River. With Louisville serving as an essential center of maritime commerce, healthy crews were vital to the nation's economy. The storied place was a foundation for the Public Health Service and a model for affordable healthcare in the 1820s.

Next, we invite you to Pewee Valley, where Kentucky's Confederate Home provided hundreds of Kentucky's ex-Confederates with comfortable, respectable living arrangements in gratitude for their service to the South.

And long before George Clooney represented Kentucky on Hollywood's big screen, Knox County's Tom Brogan and Silas Miracle made their mark on the movie industry. Released in the theater in February of 1927, director Karl Brown's photoplay *Stark Love* features two Knox County residents. Scripted by Horace Kephart, many considered *Stark Love* to be among the masterpieces of the silent theater.

It's a privilege to share these Kentucky stories with you. Our eyes are always on the Commonwealth.

We always appreciate feedback from our readers. If you have a story idea or know of a Kentucky story that might be shared in *Kentucky Humanities*, please contact our editor, Marianne Stoess, at marianne.stoess@uky.edu.



Virginia G. Carter
Executive Director
Kentucky Humanities Council

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Virginia G. Carter".

The Kentucky Humanities Council offers businesses the opportunity to invest in Kentucky's greatest resource — ***ITS PEOPLE.***

An educated, literate community strengthens Kentucky's workforce.

Educated, well-rounded individuals contribute to a stronger workforce and a more desirable location for businesses. The Kentucky Humanities Council works with scholars and educators throughout the state to develop programs with these goals in mind. We have invested \$14 million in the Commonwealth's communities helping them build a stronger Kentucky.



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Two new members join Kentucky Humanities Council Board of Directors

Two Kentuckians were recently added to the Kentucky Humanities Council board of directors.

Harry K. Herren of Louisville was appointed to the board by Gov. Steven Beshear. Herren will serve a two-year term on the board. Aaron Thompson of Richmond was elected to the board and will serve a three-year term, with a second three-year term optional. As members of the twenty-three-person volunteer board, they will help set council policies, award project grants to community organizations and participate in fund-raising to help the council meet the growing demand for its programs.



Harry K. Herren

Herren, a retired partner of Woodward, Hobson & Fulton, LLP graduated from Union College and earned a juris doctor from the University of Louisville. His law practice is devoted to the defense of civil litigation with emphasis in the areas of the defense of catastrophic injury cases, trucking industry litigation, the defense of product liability and mass toxic tort actions. With more than three decades of litigation experience, he has tried in excess of one hundred civil jury cases to a verdict.

Herren is a past president of the Louisville Orchestra board of directors. He is a member of the Historic Homes Foundation, Inc. board of directors, the Family and Children's Agency board of directors and the Union College Board of Trustees. He served on the Jefferson College Advisory Board for ten years, and serves on the Committee for Access to Artistic Excellence and the Arts and American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Application Committee — both committees of the National Endowment for the Arts.



Dr. Aaron Thompson

Thompson is currently serving as the interim vice president for academic affairs of the Council on Postsecondary Education. He earned a Ph.D. in sociology from the University of Kentucky, specializing in organizational behavior and gender and race relations. His research includes building culturally relevant models for student success, transition to college from high school, and persistence to graduation. He is nationally recognized in the areas of educational attainment, human diversity, motivation, and academic success.

Prior to his work with the Council on Postsecondary Education, Thompson worked at Eastern Kentucky University, where he was the associate vice president for academic affairs and a professor of sociology. He previously served as the executive director of the Student Success Institute, associate vice president of academic affairs and university programs, and associate vice president of enrollment management.

Dr. Thompson has worked with the Kentucky Humanities Council for many years and is a popular speaker in the Council's Speaker's Bureau.

Marianne Stoess joins Council staff

Marianne Stoess joined the Kentucky Humanities Council, Inc. January 25, 2010 as the assistant director for marketing and public relations and editor of *Kentucky Humanities* magazine.

Marianne comes to the council following a ten-year stint at IMG College (formerly Host Communications, Inc.). Serving in a project management role, her clients included the National Collegiate Athletic Association, the University of Kentucky, Florida State University, Boston College, and the Southeastern Conference.

During her last five years with IMG College, Marianne served as NCAA coordinator, annually producing one hundred and fifty NCAA championship publications.

In collaboration with UK Athletics, her production of the 2001 Kentucky men's basketball program was named the "Best in the Nation," by the College Sports Information Directors Association (CoSIDA).

A native of Pewee Valley, Kentucky, Marianne received a bachelor of science degree in journalism from the University of Kentucky.

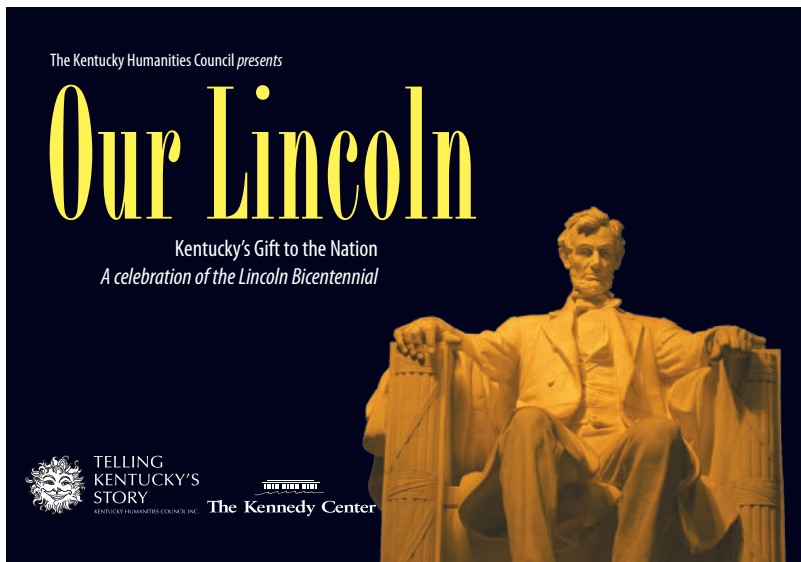
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Telling Kentucky's Story
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Our Lincoln DVD available

It's not too late to purchase your copy of *Our Lincoln*. If you were unable to attend the Kentucky Humanities Council's musical, historical, and theatrical performance celebrating the Abraham Lincoln bicentennial in Washington, D.C., sharing it at home is the next best thing. With the assistance and talent of Michael Breeding MEDIA, the Kentucky Humanities Council has produced a DVD of the Kennedy Center performance, and it is available for purchase.

The *Our Lincoln* DVD is \$20 plus tax, shipping and handling. Visit kyhumanities.org to place your order, or call the Kentucky Humanities Council at 859/257.5932.

Don't miss this opportunity to see a performance that showcases true Kentucky talent and pride in celebration of our Kentucky-born president, Abraham Lincoln.



Photo courtesy of LEH

2010 Public Humanities Program Award

Kentucky Humanities Council Executive Director Virginia Carter and Associate Director Kathleen Pool were in Darrow, Louisiana, on March 6th to accept the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities' recognition of the Kentucky Humanities Council's leadership and excellence in Prime Time Family Reading Time.

Prime Time was originated by the Louisiana Endowment. The Kentucky Humanities Council has partnered with the Kentucky Department of Libraries and Archives to implement eighty-five successful and highly diverse programs. As a result of their hard work, more than three thousand Kentuckians have participated in Kentucky Humanities Council Prime Time programs.

Thanks to Kathleen's efforts, the Kentucky Humanities Council is second only to Louisiana in the number and reach of the program.

The Kentucky Humanities Council currently has selected eighteen sites to host Prime Time Family Reading Time programs this year.

For more information about the award and Prime Time Family Reading Time, please visit kyhumanities.org.

Corrections

We would like to make note of a couple of corrections to items published in the October 2009 issue of *Kentucky Humanities*.

On page 13, in the article titled "Being Daniel Boone," the article stated that Fort Boonesborough was the "first English-speaking settlement beyond the Appalachian Mountains." In fact, Fort Harrod became the first permanent white settlement in Kentucky on June 6, 1774. Boonesborough was not established until the spring of 1775.

A similar error appears on page 16 in the article entitled, "The father of Boone research: Lyman Draper." The article states, "As the state observes the 275th birthday this month of the man who blazed Wilderness Road and built the first English-speaking settlement east of the Appalachian Mountains..." The settlement, Fort Boonesborough, was west of the Appalachian mountains and was not the first English-speaking settlement. As previously mentioned, that distinction belongs to Fort Harrod.

Yes, they too were Kentuckians

A look at some well-known, and not-so-well-known, people in Kentucky history

Bill Monroe, bluegrass musician

1913-1996 • Ohio County

By James C. Claypool

William Smith Monroe grew up in Rosine, Kentucky, the youngest of eight children born to James “Buck” and Malissa Monroe. Bill experienced hard times growing up on the family farm in Kentucky. His mother died when Bill was ten and his father, who died six years later, had to travel to make a living. Bill was essentially raised by the older children and by his mother’s brother, Pendleton Vandiver (“Uncle Pen”), a talented fiddle player. In fact, the entire Monroe family was talented musically. Bill’s mother played the harmonica and guitar and his father was a capable step dancer. Bill’s sisters danced and sang, and his brothers danced and played instruments. This proved to be a problem for Monroe, who wanted to play guitar but who, as the youngest child, had to learn to play the instrument his brothers disliked and shunned, the mandolin.

The hard times that the Monroe family encountered caused Bill’s siblings to leave home and to take work in factories near Chicago, Illinois. Bill’s musical talents were developed with his Uncle Pen when they performed together at dances throughout the western Kentucky region. Bill, who, like his brothers, was a good baseball player, was recruited to join them working and playing baseball at a factory near Gary, Indiana. Soon Bill and his brothers, Birch and Charlie, were singing and dancing with their girlfriends on a barn dance show broadcast live over Chicago radio station WLS. Encouraged to strike out on their own, Charlie and Bill Monroe traveled to the Carolinas in 1936, where from 1936 to 1938 they became one of the top country and gospel singing duos in the region. The brothers, however, did not get along with each other, so in 1938 Bill left and struck out on a career of his own.

After brief stays in Arkansas and Georgia, Bill took a job at a radio station in Asheville, North Carolina, and, while performing there, formed his first band, which he named the Blue Grass Boys. In 1939, Monroe and his band were hired as regulars on the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville, Tennessee, and from the Opry’s stage, where he performed for fifty years, Bill Monroe, the “Father of Bluegrass Music,” defined and spread what came to be known as bluegrass music. In 1946, Monroe added Earl Scruggs, a three-finger-style banjo prodigy, and talented guitarist Lester Flatt to his band, thereby completing the composition of what many regarded as the greatest bluegrass band ever assembled. Monroe and this

band recorded sixty songs over the next two years, many of which are still bluegrass classics.

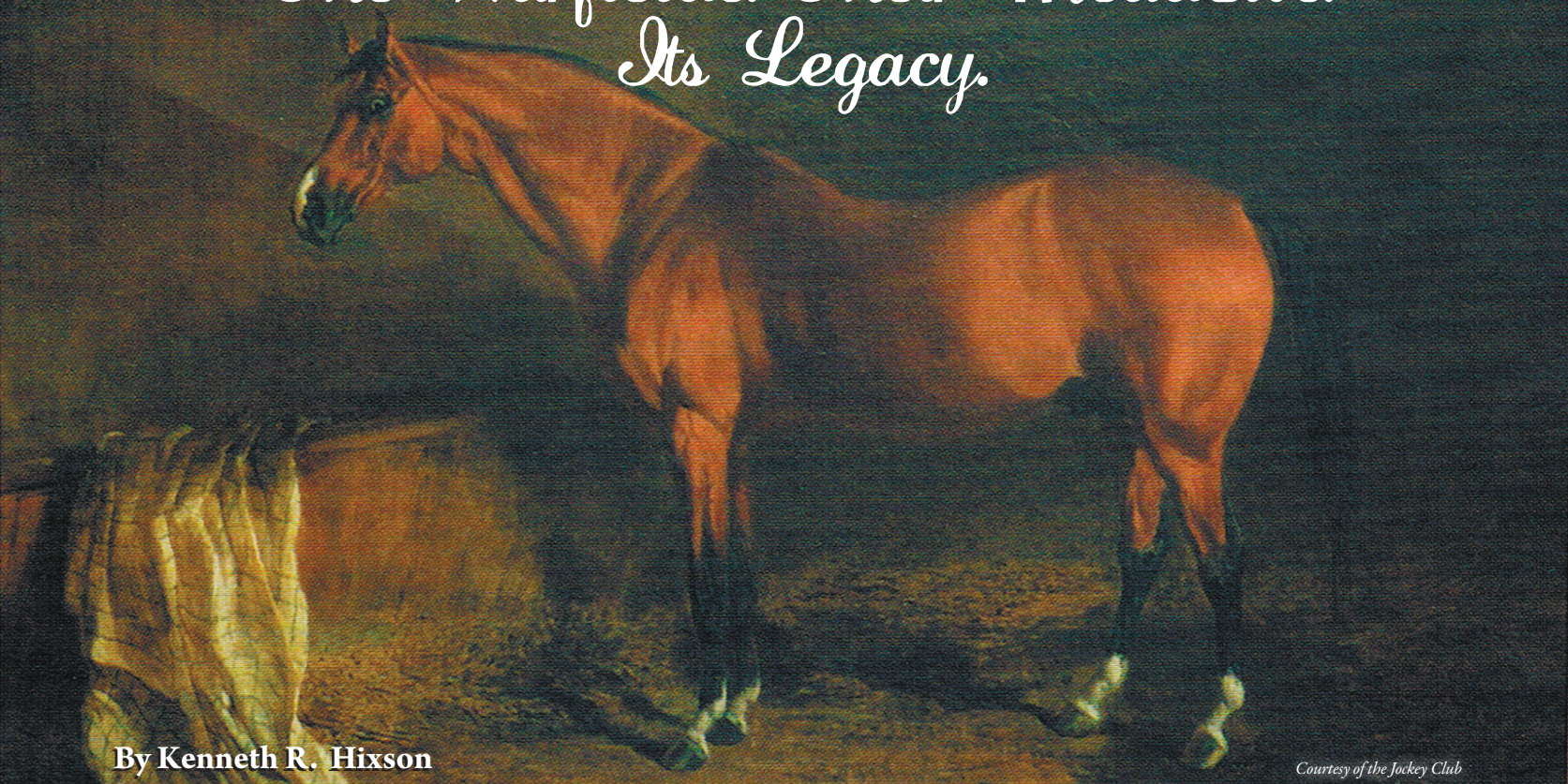
Monroe also published a songbook in 1946 entitled *Country Music Bluegrass*, which some regard as the event that led others to begin referring to the music that Monroe and his band were playing as bluegrass music. Sometimes referred to as “folk music in overdrive,” bluegrass music, which uses tempos much faster than country music, is acoustical music played generally by an ensemble consisting of four, five or six musicians. The standard stringed instruments in a bluegrass band are the mandolin, fiddle, upright bass, banjo and one or two guitars, one of which is sometimes the Dobro. The lead singer, most often a tenor, usually sings the verses and members of the band join in to harmonize on the chorus.

Monroe was a perfectionist who considered any deviations from bluegrass music as he had defined it somewhat akin to high treason. Flatt and Scruggs left Monroe in 1948 to become bluegrass stars in their own right, as later did a parade of other talented musicians; in all, over 250 musicians performed with Bill Monroe and his band. The changing musical tastes of the 1950s and 1960s almost made bluegrass music seem passé, but Monroe stuck with it, and during the 1970s and 1980s bluegrass music made a comeback, partly because it allowed musicians to showcase their instrumental talents when performing breakaway solos on stringed instruments.

Monroe continued to tour and play music on the Opry’s stage until his death in 1996. By then, he was a music legend, and bluegrass music had spread out from its base among the peoples of Appalachia and was reaching a worldwide audience. Monroe was cantankerous to the end, smarting every time an innovation came to bluegrass music. Today, bluegrass music is played nationwide and worldwide; over eight hundred radio stations in America include bluegrass in their regular programming as do over fifty stations in Europe. In Japan alone, there are more than five hundred bluegrass bands. Bill Monroe, the father of bluegrass music, created a new blend of music totally American in its origins, the only such musical category that can be so characterized.

Adapted from James C. Claypool’s book, *Our Fellow Kentuckians: Rascals, Heroes and Just Plain Uncommon Folk*, which is also a talk offered by Claypool through the Kentucky Humanities Council Speakers Bureau.

The Warfields. Their Meadows. Its Legacy.



By Kenneth R. Hixson

Courtesy of the Jockey Club

As Lexington prepares to be the first North American host of the Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games in September, the city is renewing its long ties to the champion Thoroughbred named for it and the people in his life who played a role in assuring that horses would be an important part of the Bluegrass legacy.

When the horse Lexington — nee Darley — was foaled in 1850, Dr. Elisha Warfield's Meadows Farm was already a well-established Thoroughbred breeding operation. The Meadows, located on what is now the city of Lexington's north side, and the Warfield family who owned it, were also involved with the early development of the city, its prominent citizens, and the area's equine industry.

By the time Lexington passed at age twenty-five, he had sired more good horses than any stallion, before or since. In 1955, he was among the first group of horses to be inducted into the National Museum of Racing and Hall of Fame.

Renowned artist Edward Troye's painting of Lexington was the inspiration for the Lexington Convention and Visitor's Bureau's "Big Lex," the blue horse logo adopted in advance of welcoming thousands to the Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games in September, 2010. Lexington's bones, now in storage at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. will be exhibited at the Kentucky Horse Park this year.

History was not so kind to the Meadows. Despite a noble, early twentieth century effort to revive the farm's former glory, it passed into the hands of developers. Its legacy is the subdivision street names reminiscent of horses and individuals once intertwined with the operation.

The City of Lexington, to which Elisha and Ruth Burgess Warfield moved their family in 1790, was far different from the sophisticated, genteel central Maryland area from which they departed. Lexington, by contrast, was still considered a frontier town. Granted a 1779 charter from the Virginia Assembly to establish a settlement one mile square, by 1784 the community could count only thirty cabins scattered around the outside of the original blockhouse. (*The History of Pioneer Lexington*, C.R. Staples)

Yet change was taking place — and quickly — caused in great part by easterners anxious to begin a post-Revolutionary War life in the West. Now ten years after its charter, Lexington could boast of having a Masonic Lodge, a jail, a fire company, a newspaper, and more than one tavern and one dry goods store. Transylvania Seminary, the first institution of higher learning in the West, was located there. Trade with population centers such as New Orleans was flourishing, and Indian raids were diminishing. It was clear that safe, thriving urban potential lay on the banks of Town Branch.

Unlike many in Maryland escaping from the depressing financial aftermath of the war, Elisha Warfield was the owner and apparently successful manager of a significant amount of farmland. In his fiftieth year, however, Warfield left friends and kin and relocated to Kentucky. Here, from Fayette County landowner Henry Bartlett he purchased six hundred acres of prime acreage on Strode's Road (Winchester Pike), built a home, settled his family, and established a farming operation.

Warfield was likely to have soon made the acquaintance of Robert Barr, owner of the neighboring farm to the southeast. Barr, who had moved to Lexington from Philadelphia in 1784, had opened a dry goods store on what would become West Main Street. Robert Barr apparently ran a profitable operation, and three years later was in a position to purchase a significant amount of Fayette County farmland from John Craig.

Craig, like Henry Bartlett, was a very early Lexington-area pioneer and land speculator. He began acquiring Virginia Treasury Warrants in 1779, eventually owning some forty-one thousand acres. This "Craig's Survey" began on the north side of Strode's Road opposite the headwaters of the Elkhorn and Hickman creeks, and stretching northwest to include

the fort at Bryant's Station. A deal was struck. In May 1789, Craig and his wife, Sarah, deeded to Robert and Rebecca Barr eight hundred and seventy-four acres adjacent to the limits of the town. The acreage was virgin, sparsely wooded pastureland to which Barr gave the name Sychamore [sic] Hill.

The extent of Barr's farming activities aren't documented, but in 1803 he advertised that "Montezuma, a fine large Jackass, will stand at my farm 1½ miles from Lexington and will be let to mares at \$10 the season" (*Old Houses of Lexington*, C. Frank Dunn), evidence of a breeding operation in place. Quite possibly there were structures, including a Barr "country" dwelling, likely a home from which their daughter, Maria, could observe the comings and goings of her neighbors, including those of tall, handsome Elisha Warfield, Jr.

Elisha Jr. was the second oldest child of Elisha and Ruth, nine years old when the family moved to Kentucky. As a young man, he enjoyed the organized horse races on Main Street and on the unimproved track along Elkhorn Creek. After completing some undergraduate studies at Transylvania University, he was sent to Philadelphia to study medicine under the former general physician to the Continental Army. Returning to Lexington in 1804, Elisha, Jr. — now Dr. Elisha — established his private practice, specializing in obstetrics. In January of the following year he and Maria Barr married. The first of the Warfields' children was born in 1806. That same year the couple purchased property from Transylvania Medical College founder Dr. Frederick Ridgley and built a home nearby. By now Dr. Warfield was not only a private practitioner, he also was the first chair of surgery and obstetrics at Transylvania.

Medicine, however, was not Warfield's sole preoccupation. Horses continued to pique his interest. A record from 1805 lists his entry of a stallion in a two-mile heat. (*Our Kentucky Pioneer Ancestry*, June Kinkead) Then, beginning in 1809, he bred and brought forward "at least fifteen fine horses" (Kentucky Live-Stock Record 3/5/1875, #17). In 1826 he became a prime mover in forming the Kentucky Association for the Improvement of the Breeds of Stock. The association track and grandstand, the construction of which Warfield also had

input, was erected soon thereafter, located less than one-half mile from Robert Barr's farm.

In 1830, Dr. Warfield gave up medicine to devote time to his many business interests and to his Thoroughbreds. His earlier purchase of 174 acres of Sychamore Hill from the Barr estate afforded him the base for a full-time breeding operation. It was the site he chose to build a fine residence to accommodate his growing family.

Architect Matthew Kennedy had arrived on the Lexington scene early in the century and was practicing his profession there shortly thereafter. One of his earliest and most important commissions was to design an academic building for Transylvania Seminary (now University). Elements of that plan were then used to create his own Federal style residence at Mulberry (Limestone) and Constitution Streets. With pilasters to segregate the five bays, a glazed lunette in the pediment, and a tall arched doorway (*Vestiges of the Venerable City*, Clay Lancaster), the Kennedy House façade remains a classic example for which the architect became well known. Kennedy repeated this same basic design, if not the scale, for several area homes, including Major Thomas Shelby's Grassland in southern Fayette County.

In seeking a design for the manor, which they would name The Meadows, Elisha and Maria Warfield opted to pattern it after the handsome Shelby structure. Kennedy likely received instructions from Dr. Warfield to duplicate Grassland's façade, but with a hipped roof and balustrade and an elongated ell extending back from the left side of the main block; a 9,000 square-foot edifice. It was staked out on a slight rise at the head of a newly built entrance, seven hundred feet from Buckeye Lane which ran west from Strodes Road to Bryant's Station Pike. Work began in 1830 and was completed in early 1833.

By the time the mansion was ready for occupancy, Dr. Warfield's reputation as a Thoroughbred breeder was well established. The previous year he had purchased several quality horses in Virginia, including the outstanding stallion Snow Storm. According to a *Turf Register* article of the time, "Dr. Warfield has taken great pains to select the purest blood and he is now in possession of a very valuable stock."



Elisha Warfield, Jr., M.D.

Photo courtesy of Lexington Public Library Kentucky Room

He was also building a reputation as being a virtual catalog of bloodstock knowledge, and his opinion was sought by many on questions concerning racing, breeding, and pedigrees.

In 1836, what would become Elisha Warfield's favorite broodmare was foaled at the Meadows. He named her Alice Carneal, after his son Thomas's wife. No horse, however — from the establishment of the farm to the time of his death — afforded the breeder more prestige or more success than Alice Carneal's 1850 foal, the get of the stallion Boston. When Warfield saw this bay colt with white stockings, he recognized the resemblance to the Arabian Thoroughbred foundation sire that Thomas Darley had brought to England a century earlier. Thus it was in Darley's honor that the new colt was named. Dr. Warfield is also reported to have remarked to a friend at the time: "Hereafter breeders will trace their finest stock to Warfield's Darley." (Kentucky Live-Stock Record 3/5/1875, #17)

Darley, who was raised and trained at the Meadows, was not raced until he was three years old. Now seventy-two years old, Dr. Warfield was barred from the turf by his wife Maria and his physician, who were concerned for his health. Refusing to give up racing completely, Dr. Warfield leased Darley's racing qualities to Henry Brown, his African American trainer. Since black men were not permitted to race horses in their own names at that time, Dr. Warfield put up half the entrance fee for Darley's first start on May 23, 1853, and the horse raced in Dr. Warfield's colors (white jacket, light blue cap).

At his first outing on the Kentucky Association track, Darley won the Association Stakes and then another stakes race a week later. Taking notice of the colt's potential, breeder Richard Ten Broeck formed a syndicate and proposed to purchase Darley from Warfield. The offer was five thousand dollars, with the stipulation that the horse would win his next time out. He did. And after some wrangling over who was entitled to the purse (Dr. Warfield prevailed), the sale was consummated. Darley was then sent to Mississippi in the care of a well-known trainer in that state and was renamed Lexington. He started five more times, winning all except a match race with



The Meadows

Photo courtesy of Ken Hixson

his half-brother Lecomte, whom he beat in a rematch, besting Lecomte's world record for a two-heat four-mile race.

Lexington's track career was cut short by the onset of blindness. He was retired from racing and sent to stand at a farm near Midway, Kentucky. Two years later the Ten Broeck syndicate sold him and Lexington was moved to nearby Woodburn Stud.

Known as the birthplace of Kentucky's thoroughbred industry, Woodburn was under the second-generation ownership of the Alexander family. Although ridiculed by some for his fifteen thousand dollar purchase price of a blind stallion, time proved Robert Aitcheson Alexander to be a wise buyer. Lexington was named sire of the year a record sixteen times. He and his progeny sired multiple Preakness, Derby, and stakes race winners.

Lexington was temporarily moved from Woodburn Stud to Illinois in the latter stages of the Civil War, thus spared the possibility of being confiscated by the Confederate Cavalry. He was returned shortly after the war concluded and in 1866 this "Blind Hero of Woodburn" posed for the well-known painting by Edward Troye. This portrait, adopted in blue, is now the logo to welcome visitors to Lexington. Soon after his death in 1875, Lexington's bones were disinterred, reassembled, and displayed for many years at the Smithsonian Museum.

When Elisha Warfield died in 1859, the will of this "Father of the Kentucky Turf" directed his executors to divide the Meadows

into tracts for sale, with the home, located on 139 acres, continuing as the residence of his widow. An auction dispersed the livestock and parcels of land were sold to Joseph Bondurant, John Hunt Morgan, and Dr. Elisha's nephew Dr. William Warfield. Dr. William Warfield established an adjacent, well-known short-horn cattle breeding farm.

Upon Maria Warfield's death in 1866, the main Meadows tract was purchased by Jesse H. Talbutt. Vague history surrounds Talbutt and Robert S. Henderson, who bought the farm from Talbutt ten years later. But the subsequent owner — the 1888 purchaser from Henderson — was currently residing in the neighboring Loudoun House and was quite well known in Lexington and beyond. William Cassius Goodloe was a great-nephew of Cassius Marcellus Clay. (Clay had married a Warfield daughter, Mary Jane, in a ceremony in the then-new Meadows home). When Clay was appointed Ambassador to Russia, Goodloe accompanied his uncle as his private secretary. He was later minister to Belgium, and once chairman of the National Republican Party. Apparently he also inherited some of Uncle Cash's impetuosity. In 1889 he encountered and became involved in an altercation with a fellow Republican official at the Lexington Post Office. Armed only with a knife, Goodloe inflicted several slashes on his opponent while receiving at least two gunshot wounds. The incident left his adversary dead and Goodloe himself dying. And, as one story goes, a proud Cassius Clay proclaimed shortly

thereafter that he himself could not have done a better job.

In 1889, Beriah Magoffin, son of Kentucky's Civil War Governor, became the newest Meadows owner. It appears that Magoffin's primary intent was to subdivide the farm into smaller plots for resale, as he had done with the property on the south side of Loudoun Avenue (formerly Buckeye Lane). Partitioning of the Meadows, however, did not take place. After three years of residency, Magoffin sold the farm intact.

Brothers A.J. and G.M. Asher, to whom ownership of the Meadows next fell, were well-established Eastern Kentucky entrepreneurs. Their stay at the Lexington farm is best remembered by the continuation of the "modernization" of the manor, including the addition of contemporary mantels, pressed metal ceilings, two-over-two windows to replace the twelve-pane sashes, a rusticated stonework portico, and exterior painting of the brick. In spite of their expenditures, few considered these updates as improvements upon Kennedy's classic Federal details.

Farming the Meadows acreage apparently did not interest the Ashers. Eventually they, like Magoffin, concluded that subdividing the farm offered the best return on their investment. Through their agent John Esten Keller, earlier the developer of Woodland Park, they advertised for sale 180 Meadows acres to be divided into ten-acre plots. For whatever reason — possibly a lack of buyer interest — this parceling did not take place. Two years later Keller introduced another development plan for the farm, which he called Highland Park. Details called for a one-mile-long, one-hundred-foot-wide semicircular boulevard flanked by sidewalks, grass, and trees starting and ending on Loudon Avenue. Once again his plan failed to materialize, and within two months the farm was advertised for sale, all or in part, at public auction. The Ashers left the Lexington area as the Meadows thus passed, intact, to a well-known Lexingtonian, James S. Stoll.

Stoll seemed equal to the task of reviving the glory of the previous century. He was an established businessman, president of both the Lexington City National Bank and of a hold-

ing company that included the William Tarr Distillery. Once he took possession in 1903, he set about making a number of physical improvements including new barns, fencing, and water supplied through the city's mains. Unfortunately, Stoll died while still in the process of rebuilding his Meadows operation. His widow held onto the farm until 1918.

The newest buyer was Ulysses G. Saunders. Along with his brother M.C., these former Fleming County farmers and businessmen owned more than 2,100 acres of Fayette County land on which they raised 200 acres of tobacco, 300 acres of corn, 18,000 bushels of wheat, 100 head of registered Hereford cattle, along with some trotting and saddle horses. The Meadows comprised only about ten percent of the Saunders holdings.

Saunders did not reside at the Meadows, and he died within a year of its purchase. His widow, daughter, and son-in-law Lucian Lee continued to own and to oversee the farm, by then encroached upon by single-family residences to the front and alongside the property lines. In 1922 this author's grandparents, also Fleming Countians, took up occupancy in the manor and became the farm's operators.

For the next twenty-plus years the Meadows functioned as a tobacco, dairy, corn, and grain enterprise. Little was done to the home during this time other than absolutely necessary maintenance. Still, even in its "working clothes" the Meadows was a welcome, temporary home during the Depression years to kith and kin that migrated to Lexington to work or to attend the university. During World War II, the old farm also meant a home-cooked meal, prepared by Lona Hixson, for many servicemen travelling through town on orders. During these years the Meadow's fields and barns also hosted crews of German prisoners-of-war, utilized to offset the dearth of available local farm hands.

The War in the Pacific ended in August 1945, and in less than one month the now-358-acre Meadows farm was sold once again, this time to Clyde E. Buckley and W. Paul Little, and this time for the actual subdividing that had so often been aborted. Farming operations ceased immediately and the house was placed in the hands of George Caudill for caretaking. After platting the surrounding farmland, the

developers began a unique system of selling the modest residential lots on site, individually, from the bed of a farm wagon. Most lots were sold quickly and home construction began shortly thereafter. The streets were given names familiar to those who were aware of the farm's history: Warfield Place, Carneal Road, Darley Drive and Marcellus (Cassius Clay's middle name) Drive. Other streets named were the identifying Meadow Lane, and Emerson (Clyde Buckley's middle name) Drive. Lots on the north side of the property were laid out for commercial use, and land from Bryant's Station Pike eastward to the L&N Railroad right-of-way was donated to the county for what was to be the first link of a high-speed, limited access beltline around Lexington that, unfortunately, did not measure up to its intent.

George Caudill vacated the Meadows home in the late 1950s. Sitting empty for months, the former mansion was often vandalized as it deteriorated further. In 1960, it was razed. In its place a cul-de-sac was laid out with additional houses lining the street, thus completing the residential and most of the commercial development of the former farm. From John Craig's 1779 Virginia Treasury Warrants to the original subdivision homeowners, the land had undergone a minimum of twelve title changes.

In 2008 the Meadows neighborhood received a welcome update with the widening of Loudo(u)n Avenue. The retaining walls and grass median that are a part of this rebuilding provide tasteful entrances to the subdivision streets that Loudon intersects. The stone pillars with "Meadows" finials that once flanked the farm entrance lane (now Warfield Place) are now being relocated a short distance away and will stand as stately reminders of the area's storied past, its people, and the birthplace of one of the grandest horses ever, Lexington.

About the Author

Ken Hixson is a former Kentucky Humanities Council Board member and lives in Lexington. He is the author of two books on local public transportation, *Pick of the Litter: Greyhound's Once Finest Bus Line*, and *Forty Miles, Forty Bridges: The Story of the Frankfort & Cincinnati Railroad*. As a young child he lived in the Meadows home.



Postcard courtesy of U.S. Marine Hospital Foundation

Kentucky's Marine Hospital

Louisville hospital was at the forefront in addressing the health needs of boatmen

By Rick Bell

"the steamboatman, who, in addition to those causes of disease, is subjected to frequent and dangerous casualties, instead of being thrown upon the charity of strangers, would then have an asylum where skill and attention would unite to restore him to renovated health, and enable him to return with gladness to his expecting friends.

The steady and rapidly increasing commerce of the west is, perhaps, without parallel in the history of the world."

Report of the Medical Board on Marine Hospitals — November 17, 1837

Kentucky is the only state bordered on three sides by rivers, with the eastern boundary defined by the Big Sandy and the western by the Mississippi. The entire northern border, six hundred and sixty-four miles, is delineated by the Ohio River, and during the nineteenth century it carried a huge proportion of America's inland maritime traffic. In the eras when keelboats and steamboats ruled the nation's commerce, Kentucky boasted many of America's busiest inland ports.

Public health and maritime service have been joined since America's earliest history. Colonial Americans recognized that diseases arrived on their shores brought by foreign ships and sailors. In response to a severe outbreak of yellow fever, in 1798 President John Adams signed the first Federal health law, "An Act for the relief of sick and disabled Seamen." From this act grew the Marine Hospital Service and the birth of modern American medical care.

In the early days of the American Republic, the Federal Government had only three executive departments to administer all programs — State, Treasury, and War. In 1798, the Marine Hospital Service was established and placed under the Revenue Marine Division of the Treasury Department. Funds to pay physicians and build

marine hospitals were collected by deducting twenty cents a month from the salary of every American mariner. This was one of the first direct taxes enacted by the new republic and the first hospital insurance program in American history.

Louisville was such an essential center of maritime commerce that it was declared a U.S. Port of Entry in 1799. By 1814, thousands of passengers and enormous cargoes of freight were traveling from Pittsburgh to New Orleans and back. At the center of the two-thousand-nautical-mile journey lay the Falls of the Ohio, the only natural navigational barrier on the western rivers systems.

Louisville's economy boomed from the revenues generated by drayage, storage, commission merchants, agricultural products, and maritime services. Hotels, taverns, bakeries, and warehouses served the vast numbers of Americans moving westward on the steamboats.

All of this economic progress depended upon healthy crews to maintain and operate the modern mechanical wonders that were the great "Floating Palaces" of the Steamboat Era. Prior to the establishment of a national income tax, most revenues used to finance governments were derived from custom fees placed on articles of trade. Port wardens and Treasury Department revenue agents collected these fees: and if the steamboats lacked healthy crews, the nation's economy suffered.

A Marine Hospital for Louisville

By 1817, the rapid development of steamboats and increased maritime traffic on the Ohio River presented the citizens of Louisville with a crisis of healthcare. Growing numbers of boatmen were arriving at the busy Louisville, Shippingport, and Portland wharves, and many needed medical treatment. Prominent Louisville citizens began a movement to provide a hospital for "the relief of persons who might, owing to the fatigue and exposure of long voyages, become sick or languish at the port of Louisville." (Acts of the Kentucky General Assembly, 1817)

The Louisville Marine Hospital opened its doors in 1822. At that time Louisville had a reputation as an unhealthy community due to the many standing ponds and periodic bouts of yellow fever, malaria, small pox, and typhoid. Cincinnati, Louisville's economic rival at the time, routinely referred to the Falls Cities as "the Graveyard of the West." Civic pride as well as public health benefited from the establishment of the new medical facility.

Local businessmen donated seven acres of land at the corner of Chestnut and Preston streets to house the city's first hospital. Funding for the hospital came from the state legislature and a tax upon all auction sales. The original building stood until 1914 when it was replaced by a facility still used today as an integral part of the University of Louisville Hospital. By the 1830s, however, the rapidly growing number of steamboats required a national, rather than local, solution to a growing healthcare challenge.

In 1837, Congress authorized the construction of the U.S. Marine Hospital in Louisville "for the benefit of sick seamen, boatmen, and other navigators on the western rivers and lakes." (Committee on Commerce, 1837) In the parlance of the

A jaunty Portlander strides past the north front of the Marine Hospital around the turn of the twentieth century. Old High Street, today known as Northwestern Parkway, was a main thoroughfare for shipping between the wharves of Louisville and Portland.

Photo courtesy of U.S. Marine Hospital Foundation





day, “western rivers and lakes” referred to the Ohio and Mississippi River systems and the Great Lakes. By the 1840s, steamboats dominated river traffic and were the major factor in the growth and development of industry and interstate transportation. The Marine Hospital’s site, midway between the busy Louisville and Portland wharves, was selected for the “beneficial effect of a view of the water, and the impressions and associations it would naturally awake in the minds of men whose occupations were so intimately connected with it.” (Report of Medical Board on Marine Hospitals, 1837)

The boatmen served by the hospital worked difficult and dangerous jobs. Injuries due to engine or boiler explosions, wrecks, collisions with river snags, and freight handling were common. Exposure to extremes of temperature, from the sub-tropic heat of the Mississippi delta to the frigid Great Lakes, claimed victims. They were routinely exposed to yellow fever, malaria, cholera, and small pox. While docked in the rough port towns of the time, violence, alcoholism, and venereal infections sent many boatmen to the marine hospitals.

In the early days, twenty cents a month was withheld from their salaries to pay the boatmen’s share of their healthcare in marine hospitals, with the federal government also providing support. All classifications of river workers were eligible for treatment. Any mariner, including pilots, captains, pursers, engineers, cooks, stevedores, roustabouts, and deckhands, was provided with up to four months of care and treatment. Free African

Following World War I, ill and injured American service men were sent to Marine Hospitals. Within two years the Veteran’s Bureau was created to operate and administer healthcare services for those in need.

Photo courtesy of U.S. Marine Hospital Foundation

Americans, but not slaves or minors, were eligible for admission in the integrated hospitals with segregated wards.

Louisville’s hospital was the prototype for seven U.S. Marine Hospital Service buildings funded by Congress to address the pressing health needs of boatmen on the Western rivers and lakes. Other hospitals built at this time were in Natchez, Mississippi; Paducah, Kentucky; St. Louis, Missouri; Napoleon, Arkansas; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; and Cleveland, Ohio. Almost entirely intact, Louisville’s U.S. Marine Hospital is the sole surviving original inland marine hospital structure in the nation.

Kentucky was the only state to boast two federal marine hospitals, but the building in Paducah had a relatively short history. During the Civil War it was converted into Fort Anderson, named for the Kentuckian who surrendered Ft. Sumter, Robert Anderson. In 1864 it repulsed a concentrated attack from Confederate General Nathan Bedford Forrest. The building burned in 1868 and is barely remembered.

Innovations in Hospital Architecture

“In arranging these plans, reference has been made to several essential points connected with the hospitals: ample space, free ventilation,

separation of patients by classes into distinct wards, and extensive galleries on the level of each floor, as well as shelter and exercise.”

— Robert Mills, Architect, 1836

These inland river healthcare facilities were the first American buildings designed to be hospitals. The basic design was created so the building could be built at any eligible location. Building materials and interior details could vary, but the form of the Marine Hospital would remain the basis of all federal hospitals for the next forty years.

Robert Mills (1781-1855) was the first native-born American to be trained as an architect. Born in Charleston, South Carolina, Mills was educated at the College of Charleston and studied architecture in the personal library of Thomas Jefferson and with James Hoban, the architect of the White House. In 1808 he began working with Benjamin Latrobe, who impressed upon Mills his devotion to classic Greek design, principles of professional practice, and science-based engineering.

After opening his own professional office, Robert Mills designed some of America’s premier architectural creations. His work included houses, churches, college buildings, bridges, hospitals, and government offices. He is best remembered as the designer of

the Washington Monument, the U.S. Patent Office, the old Post Office in Washington (the current site of the National Endowment for the Humanities headquarters), and the U.S. Treasury Building. In 1830 he was appointed by President Andrew Jackson to the newly created position of “Architect and Engineer” to the Federal Government. Mills maintained this position until his death in 1855.

During his tenure, Mills designed ten marine hospitals for the federal government, including Louisville’s facility. In 1837, he prepared two different designs. The larger building, to house and care for one hundred boatmen, was selected for the Louisville site. A smaller version, housing fifty patients, was built downriver in Paducah.

Surgeon General Thomas Lawson (1789-1861), was the chief medical officer of the U.S. Army. His influence on the design of the marine hospitals was profound. The design concepts of Robert Mills and Thomas Lawson were blended to provide the design concept used in the Louisville U.S. Marine Hospital.

Colonel Stephen Harriman Long (1784-1864), western explorer and topographical engineer, supervised the construction of the United States Marine Hospitals of Kentucky. In 1845, Colonel Long was assigned to the Treasury Department with orders to build marine hospitals in Louisville and Paducah. Construction of the U.S.

Marine Hospital began in 1845, but was suspended for the duration of the Mexican War. Construction resumed in 1847, and the hospital opened for service on April 1, 1852.

The U.S. Marine Hospital was built at 22nd and Northwestern Parkway (formerly High Street), in the independent town of Portland, Kentucky. Shortly after the building was open for patients in April 1852, Portland was permanently annexed as a part of the city of Louisville.

Louisville’s Marine Hospital is a three-story brick structure built in a modified Greek Revival style. The central portion of the building has four square piers from which galleries, or piazzas, open on each floor. These galleries were used for ventilation and provided enclosed areas for patients to exercise. The galleries have elaborate wrought iron railings with stylized acanthus leaf motif. An observation cupola allowed an expansive view of the Ohio River and the Falls for recuperating boatmen.

The cupola helped control the building’s ventilation system, an elaborate series of interior controls that were used to rid the building of contagious influences. While the germ the-

ory would not be defined for decades, physicians did recognize that foul air contributed to ill health. In addition, a central heating system was added for comfort and safety. One of the first known systems of internal plumbing was utilized, and water closets were placed on all floors of the building. This revolutionary system of sanitary plumbing was nearly unheard of during this era.

“The managers extend a welcome to all “marines,” whether they are black or white, foreign or domestic, Federal or Confederate.”

— *Louisville Courier-Journal*,
February 17, 1872

By the outbreak of the Civil War, the Marine Hospital Service was a large Federal enterprise, operating twenty-seven hospitals. By comparison, the U.S. Army had ninety-eight medical officers, twenty thermometers, six stethoscopes and a few medical text books. By 1862 only eight USMHS hospitals were in operation; the others being taken over for military operations.

Kentucky played an integral part in the Civil War. As the largest city in a slave

In the hospital’s first-floor exhibit area is a typical iron bedstead from the early 1900s made up with original linen from the site. An 1822 pharmaceutical compounding table was donated by a Portland drug store. Typically, five or six beds would have filled the twenty-by-twenty-foot room.

Photo by Virginia G. Carter



state that did not secede from the Union, Louisville felt the full range of contradictions created by the nation's great crisis. Louisville served as the Union Medical Center for the Western Theater of the War and an active center for the humanitarian work of the U.S. Sanitary Commission.

At the outbreak of the Civil War, the U.S. Marine Hospital was emptied of its boatmen patients and given over to the care of ill and injured Union soldiers. A local order of Catholic nuns, the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth, volunteered to staff the Marine Hospital and provide nursing care.

In May 1863, President Lincoln appointed Rabbi B.H. Gotthelf, to serve as chaplain for the Louisville military hospitals. Rabbi Gotthelf, the nation's second Jewish chaplain, served in close cooperation with the Catholic sisters. It is known that wounded soldiers from the battles of Shiloh and Perryville were treated at the Louisville hospital. Later in 1863, the U.S. Marine Hospital was closed to patients when it became impractical to assign casualties to the relatively small one hundred-bed facility. By war's end, the Falls area hosted seventeen temporary hospitals caring for thousands of Union soldiers and officers as well as Confederate prisoners.

In 1869, the administration of President Ulysses S. Grant completely modernized the healthcare service when he created the Bureau of U.S. Marine Hospitals and raised monthly fees for sailors to sixty cents a day. Operated as a military department, the Bureau adopted strict standards of hygiene, decontamination procedures, standardized medications, and nutrition.

Mother Mary Ignatius Walker and five companion Sisters of Mercy came to Louisville to operate the U.S. Marine Hospital on a contract basis. In 1869, the hospital in Portland reopened with only eight patients, but within two years it would be the largest marine hospital west of the Alleghenies. By 1871, the Sisters of Mercy were serving over one hundred patients, more than the combined patient populations of the St. Louis and New Orleans hospitals.

Also by 1871, seventeen Sisters of Mercy provided all administrative services at the



The building's original cupola had been removed in the 1950s, but was beautifully restored during the Exterior Restoration Phase of the project. The small roof-top room provides an unparalleled view of the Falls of the Ohio, the nearby Portland Canal and traces of the former riverboat town of Shippingport.

Photo courtesy of Rick Bell

hospital. Dr. Thomas J. Griffiths served as surgeon-in-charge, with the Sisters providing all nursing, management, and food services to the patients. During the Civil War, Thomas J. Griffiths' brother, Dr. David J. Griffiths served as medical director for General Philip Sheridan and the Army of the Cumberland. Dr. David Griffiths was appointed surgeon-in-charge of the U.S. Marine Hospital, but only served three months before being stricken by paralysis. David's brother, Dr. Thomas J. Griffiths was his replacement. Another brother, Dr. George Washington Griffiths succeeded him. A nephew, Dr. William M. Griffiths, later served as a surgeon at the hospital.

Originally the U.S. Government paid the Sisters a per diem of seventy-five cents for each of the boatmen receiving care, with Dr. Thomas Griffiths receiving a salary of one thousand dollars a year from the government. The operation of the U.S. Marine Hospital remained in the hands of the Sisters of Mercy for seven years. In 1875, control of the hospital was reclaimed by the Marine Hospital Service.

Since its inception, the U.S. Marine Hospital Service admitted free African American boatmen to their hospitals. One of Louisville's three large wards (capacity thirty-three patients each) was dedicated to care of African American patients. While the wards were segregated, equal medical treatment was extended to both black and white patients. Records indicate that Mary Jane Grant, an African American woman who served as a chambermaid on a steamboat, was admitted for care.

The 1870 reorganization changed the character of the Service. It became national in scope and military in outlook. Medical officers, given the rank of Surgeon, were required to pass entrance examinations and wear uniforms. In 1889, when the Commissioned Corps was formally recognized by legislative action, the medical officers were given titles and pay corresponding to Army and Navy grades. The goal was to create a professional, mobile, health corps, as free as possible from political favoritism and patronage, and able to deal with the new health needs of a rapidly industrializing nation.

To help diagnose infectious diseases among passengers of incoming ships, the MHS established, in 1887, a small bacteriology laboratory, called the Hygienic Laboratory, at the Staten Island Marine Hospital. The laboratory moved to Washington, D.C., and became the National Institutes of Health, the largest biomedical research organization in the world.

Dr. Joseph J. Kinyoun, America's first expert bacteriologist, stressed the importance of hygiene in fighting and preventing disease. Because the Marine Health Service was a federal agency, they mandated strict compliance in all federal hospitals. One of the first disinfecting machines, designed by Dr. Kinyoun, was placed in the basement of Louisville's Marine Hospital.

In 1912, the name Public Health and Marine Hospital Service was changed to the U.S. Public Health Service. The research program was expanded to include other-than-communicable diseases, field investigations, navigable stream pollution, and information dissemination.

Over time, the hospital began admitting Coast Guard lifesavers, lighthouse personnel, and other uniformed federal employees. Following World War I, the facility also was used to care for Veteran's Administration patients. In 1933, a new medical facility, Louisville Memorial Hospital (now the Portland Family Health Center) was built

adjacent to the original building.

When the new facility was being built in 1933, the decision was made to place the boiler operation for the new hospital in the old U.S. Marine Hospital. This practical decision probably saved the old building from destruction and allowed its survival. Hospital personnel, staff, and resident doctors and their families were housed in the old hospital building until 1974. Since that time the building has been used for storage and very limited visitation.

Louisville's U.S. Marine Hospital is a national and local treasure. The three-story Greek Revival building is the only Robert Mills building in Kentucky. Louisville's Marine Hospital was listed as a National Historic Landmark in 1997, with landmark status based on the areas of maritime history and public health.

In 2003, due to its severe state of deterioration and decay, the Marine Hospital was named to the "National Trust for Historic Preservation's 11 Most Endangered Places" list and was awarded "Save America's Treasures" status by the National Park Service.

Because of its high level of intact historic

fabric and its status as a National Historic Landmark, the building is being restored, rather than merely rehabilitated or renovated. In 2004, the United States Marine Hospital Foundation was founded to raise funds and plan the building's future. The following year, the Exterior Restoration Phase of the Marine Hospital project began to make the building safe for the future. The exterior of the building has now been restored to reflect its appearance in the year 1899. That year was selected because it is the time period when architectural historians and preservationists can document the earliest actual appearance of the federal hospital. With the removal of the old smokestack, boiler room, fire escapes, side porch and carport, this phase began by eliminating anything that had been added since 1900. The addition of a new roof, skylight, cornices, and the cupola has restored original historic components.

To complete the interior restoration of the building, the Marine Hospital Foundation is preparing plans for a \$7.5 million fund drive. They are working with state and local governments to secure funding, and will seek support from private individuals, foun-

The staff of the U.S. Marine Hospital in 1924, with the building in the background. The officers are surgeons in the Commissioned Corps of the U.S. Public Health Service, the descendent of the Marine Hospital Service. Corps nurses in white uniforms are joined by civilian female clerical workers.

Photo courtesy of U.S. Marine Hospital Foundation



Timeline

1798

- President John Adams signed the first Federal health law, leading to the growth of the Marine Hospital Service and the birth of modern American medical care Marine Hospital Fund established by Congress to serve mariners.
- Funds to compensate physicians and build marine hospitals were gathered by deducting twenty cents a month from the salary of American mariners, marking one of the first direct taxes enacted by the new republic and the first hospital insurance program in American history.

1817

- Kentucky Legislature charters Louisville Marine Hospital.

1822

- Louisville's first hospital opens for boatmen and yellow fever victims.

1837

- Congress authorizes seven inland hospitals, including two in Kentucky.

1845

- Col. Stephen Long begins construction of Louisville and Paducah hospitals, with project suspended during duration of the Mexican War

1852

- U.S. Marine Hospital at Louisville opens for patients.

1861

- At outbreak of Civil War, boatmen are removed and facility is used for Federal troops.

1863

- Marine Hospital closes, as 17 other medical facilities are opened at the Falls of the Ohio.

1869

- Louisville's U.S. Marine Hospital reopened under the direction of the Sisters of Mercy.

1870

- Marine Hospital Service reorganized as federally operated healthcare system.

1875

- U.S. Government assumes control of hospital from Sisters of Mercy.

1912

- Marine Hospital Service changes its name to U.S. Public Health Service.

1918

- Building is taken over for use as Louisville's first Veteran's Hospital.

1933

- Replacement building next to original opens to serve veterans and public.

1954-74

- Old Marine Hospital used as housing for University of Louisville medical students and families.

1997

- U.S. Marine Hospital named National Historic Landmark.

2004

- USMH Foundation formed to plan restoration of facility.

For Further Reading

Plagues and Politics: The Story of the United States Public Health Service, by Fitzhugh Mullan, M.D., Basic Books, Inc., New York.

dations, corporations and the Friends of the Marine Hospital. The first floor will contain the Marine Hospital Heritage Center, exploring the building's history and contributions to public health. Officials hope to rehabilitate the upper two floors to serve as the Center for Community Health and Education and are working with the University of Louisville to provide health sciences education to young people in Louisville's West and Portland neighborhood.

The original seal of the Bureau of Marine Hospital Services, still found today on the front gates of the Marine Hospital, displays the organization's goals. The design is of a fouled anchor, crossed at right angles with the Caduceus of Mercury with two serpents entwined on staff. The latter is the sign of the pacifier, carried by ancient ambassadors as a sign of truce and peace. This seal continues to serve today as the flag of the U.S. Surgeon General, and every member of the Commissioned Corps proudly wears the device on their sleeves.

About the Author

A native of Louisville, Rick Bell is an author specializing in local history, especially focusing on old Portland, Shippingport, and Ohio River heritage. He is currently working on a book-length study of Louisville's historical wharf area and its current renaissance as the Waterfront Park.

Bell previously served as executive director of the U.S. Marine Hospital Foundation of Louisville, Kentucky. The foundation is dedicated to preserving and restoring the last remaining inland hospital, established to provide healthcare for Ohio River boatmen, built by the federal government in 1852.

Bell is the former assistant to the director of The Filson Club, where he supervised the design and installation of the Carriage House Museum.

In 2007, Bell was the author of *The Great Flood of 1937 — Rising Waters, Soaring Spirits*, in conjunction with the University of Louisville Photo Archives and Butler Books of Louisville.



The California Gold Rush enriched careers of two famous Kentuckians

By Joseph Woodson Oglesby

The California Gold Rush played a major role in the lives of two famous Kentuckians — Illinois Governor and U.S. Senator Richard James Oglesby (1824-1899) and Civil War hero and Kentucky State Legislator Jacob Wark Griffith (1819-1885).

When they joined the Gold Rush, Oglesby was a twenty-four-year-old Decatur, Illinois, lawyer, and Griffith was a thirty-year-old Floydsburg, Kentucky, physician. Neither had prospered in his chosen profession.

Oglesby and Griffith and the hundred thousand others who trekked west to prospect for gold became known as the Forty-Niners, in recognition of the year the Gold Rush got underway in earnest.

“Gold Fever” reached its zenith in the months following President James Knox Polk’s announcement, in his opening message to the second session of the 30th Congress on December 5, 1848, of the discovery of gold at Sutter’s Mill in Coloma, California, in January 1848. Men sold their businesses, quit their farms, walked off their jobs, borrowed money, pawned their belongings, studied maps and guide books, and took off by land and sea for the gold fields. Those going by land usually traveled in wagons pulled by mules or oxen,

while those traveling by sea departed from Atlantic or Gulf ports to Panama (before the canal was built), crossed the isthmus, or rounded the tip of South America and headed up the Pacific Coast to California.

According to one account, a “general air of excitement prevailed at Independence, St. Joseph, and Council Bluffs,” common takeoff points for overland voyagers. “The gathering from afar of a large, miscellaneous crowd, the incessant gambling, the constant selling, the breaking of animals, and the accidents bound to occur when almost every man, even a novice, went armed — all added to the anticipation of the trek and of the treasures to be found.”

The mule-wagon trains that Oglesby and Griffith organized, in their separate quests for gold, crossed Indian country, hazardous rivers, vast desert regions, the formidable Rocky Mountains, and finally the treacherous Sierra Nevadas. Gold-seekers who didn’t provision themselves sufficiently, especially with ample supplies of water, ran into serious problems in the desert. Many died. Oglesby and Griffith chose mules, which enabled their wagons to travel faster than those pulled by oxen, thus reducing their expenses.

In the company of his brother-in-law Henry Prather and seven other men from Decatur, and Macon County, Illinois, Richard

Oglesby embarked on May 5, 1849, from St. Joseph, Missouri. The group had three wagons, each pulled by a team of six mules. They reached Fort Laramie, Wyoming, a distance of about five hundred miles, in about a month. They passed nine hundred wagons, Oglesby wrote, mostly drawn by oxen.

Following the Platte River, they arrived at Fort Hall, on the Snake River (in present southern Idaho), then traveled southwest to the Humboldt River area, where many wagons were stalled in the desert sand. Oglesby recorded seeing the bodies of many mules and oxen.

The group, after traveling ninety-five days and covering one thousand nine hundred and sixty miles, reached Fort Sacramento on August 10, 1849.

Jacob Wark Griffith and his group left Kentucky on May 2, 1850, traveling with four wagons. Less is known about this party, but Griffith and Dr. Richard Speer shared a claim in the vicinity of Nevada City, California. It provided about sixteen dollars a day in gold, considered an average return. However, food and supplies were very expensive: pork was 50 cents per pound; brown sugar, 62 ½ cents per pound; flour, 40 cents per pound; and molasses, \$1 for 1 ½ pints.

The Griffith party returned to Kentucky in 1852.

Richard Oglesby, who had borrowed two hundred and fifty dollars to finance his trip, was among the few who greatly benefitted from the trek west. After more than two years of prospecting, he returned to Decatur with almost five thousand dollars, making him one of the richest young men in town.

Orphaned at nine when both parents died of cholera, young Richard left Brownsboro, Kentucky, to live with relatives in Decatur but returned to his native state to learn carpentry. Having little success in carpentry or farming, he studied law at Louisville Law School and was admitted to the bar in 1845. He then started a practice in Sullivan, Illinois.

Wisely, Oglesby invested much of his California fortune in real estate and used the balance to extend his education. Instead of college courses, however, he embarked on an eighteen-month tour of Europe, Egypt, Africa, and Palestine. Returning from his tour, he lectured on his observations abroad. His lectures were extremely popular and well attended.

After speaking on Egypt and the Holy Land at Bloomington, Illinois, he was congratulated by his friend, Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln reportedly said, “Dick, I don’t know that I have heard anything which pleased me better. A great work of man, like the pyramids, seems to me to shorten the distance between the days of the old fathers and those of our own.”

This public-speaking experience helped Oglesby in his future political campaigns. In 1860 he was elected to the Illinois State Senate but served only one term, resigning at the outbreak of the Civil War to become colonel of the 8th Illinois Volunteers. Colonel Oglesby led the right wing of General Ulysses S. Grant’s advance upon Fort Donelson. In the battle, the Union Army captured fourteen thousand prisoners, and President Lincoln promoted Oglesby to brigadier general on April 1, 1862, in recognition of his gallantry.

The following autumn, during the Battle of Corinth, General Oglesby was severely wounded, forcing a return to his home in



Men sold their businesses, quit their farms, walked off their jobs, and borrowed money to travel west, dreaming of finding gold in the fields of California.

Photo courtesy of Jennifer Oglesby



Richard James Oglesby and a team of eight men left St. Joseph, Missouri, on May 5, 1849 headed for the gold fields of California. After more than two years of prospecting, Oglesby returned to Decatur with nearly five thousand dollars, making him one of the richest young men in town.

Photo courtesy of Jennifer Oglesby

Decatur. For his meritorious service, Lincoln promoted him to major general effective November 29, 1862. After six months of convalescence, Oglesby returned to the Army, serving as president of a general court martial, which sat in Washington, D.C., from December 1863 to May 1864, trying some of the most important cases then pending in the military service.

Physical problems forced him to resign from the Army in May 1864. That November, backed by his close friend and strong supporter, Abraham Lincoln, Oglesby was elected governor of Illinois on the Republican ticket.

On the evening of Friday, April 14, 1865, shortly before President and Mrs. Lincoln were to leave for Ford's Theater, Governor Oglesby arrived at the White House for business and a personal visit. Tired from his trip from Illinois, he turned down the president's invitation to the theatre. After Lincoln was shot that night, Oglesby was summoned to his bedside, where he remained until Lincoln died at 7:22 the following morning. (*Macon County History*, Macon County Historical Society)

During Governor Oglesby's first administration, Illinois ratified the 13th and 14th Amendments and repealed its Black Laws. At the end of this term he returned to his law practice, but in 1872 he was again the Republican nominee for governor and won the election.

On January 13, 1873, he was inaugurated, but resigned eight days later to succeed Lyman Trumbull in the U.S. Senate, where he served as chairman of the Committee on Public Lands and on the Committees of Indian Affairs, Pensions, and Civil Service. In 1884, he was elected to an unprecedented third term as governor of Illinois.

Jacob Wark Griffith, who didn't fare as well in the California gold fields, capitalized on his travels by giving public lectures about his western adventures. Griffith, too, was a powerful orator, and the rural audiences packed churches and schoolhouses to hear his accounts of the Gold Rush. His popularity also led to his election to the 1853-1854 term of the Kentucky Legislature as representative of Oldham and Trimble Counties.

Although a native Virginian, Griffith spent most of his life in the Bluegrass State. When the Civil War broke out, he enlisted in the 1st Kentucky Cavalry on the side of the Confederacy. His regiment helped cover General Albert Sidney Johnston's retreat from Bowling Green toward Nashville in early 1862. He fought in the bloody Battle of Shiloh and in the Sesquatchie Valley engagement, in which he was wounded and promoted to captain. In March 1863 he was promoted to colonel and assisted in the Confederate retreat from Missionary Ridge.

Jacob Griffith's name and exploits, less grand than Richard Oglesby's, perhaps would have been lost in the mists of history had it not been for his son, David Wark Griffith, the pioneer film director. Such was the director's fame and influence in the 1910s and 1920s, when his *Birth of a Nation* and *Intolerance* were major films of their day, that the military exploits of the father were revived and came into public notice.

Both Oglesby and Griffith fought in the Mexican War. Oglesby served as first lieutenant in the 4th Illinois Volunteers, participating in the battles of Vera Cruz and Cerro Gordo. Griffith, whose medical practice had not provided enough income, served as a sergeant assigned medical duties in Company G, 1st Regiment, Kentucky Cavalry; he saw duty in the battles of Buena Vista and Sattillo.

Even more intriguing is that Griffith's wife, Mary Perkins Oglesby, was a cousin of Richard Oglesby. Yet, there is no surviving record that these two Forty-Niners even knew each other.

About the Author

Both Richard James Oglesby and Jacob Wark Griffith were relatives of the author, Joseph Woodson Oglesby. Twice a Pulitzer Prize nominee, Joseph Woodson Oglesby is a novelist, playwright, and journalist who lives in Louisville. His memoir, *Dinner with D.W. Griffith* (Borgo Press) was published in 2005.

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Located in Pewee Valley, the Kentucky Confederate Home housed many Civil War veterans and was supported by the Daughters of the Confederacy.

Photo courtesy of the Oldham County Historical Society

Kentucky Confederate Home

By Rusty Williams

In April 1905, Green R. Keller, editor and publisher of the *Carlisle Mercury* and adjutant of the Peter Bramblett Camp of the United Confederate Veterans, wrote the board of trustees of the Kentucky Confederate Home.

“I write you in the interest of Comrade Joseph Norvell,” Keller told the board. Norvell was a Confederate veteran, sixty-three years old, once a successful Nicholas County businessman and elected official. But cumulative health problems left Norvell unable to earn a living. Keller and other Carlisle Confederate veterans had taken up a collection to send Norvell to Muncie, Indiana, to stay temporarily with his son.

“He was almost helpless,” Keller explained to the board, “and we had no place to keep him here.”

Keller was seeking a place for Norvell in the Kentucky Confederate Home, and he enclosed a completed application for admission. “He was one of the bravest of the brave and always at his post,” Keller said of Norvell. “I trust you will be able to get him a comfortable place for his few remaining days.”

Joseph Norvell would be one of almost a thousand men who lived out their final days in the Kentucky Confederate Home. The home was unique in Kentucky’s history, a benevolent institution built and managed by Confederate veterans and sympathizers. For more than three decades its operating costs were paid by a generous state government that had never been part of the Southern Confederacy. Largely forgotten today, the Kentucky Confederate Home operated well into the twentieth century.

In the wake of America's Civil War more than 40,000 Kentucky men who had worn Confederate gray straggled back to the Bluegrass. Most of these veterans returned home to live quiet, productive lives, but some — due to lingering war wounds, illness, mental confusion, disability, infirmity, age, or just plain bad luck — were unable to cope with postwar life. For Kentucky's ex-Confederates there was no institutional support, no pension, no veterans' benefits. By the 1880s, disabled and homeless Confederate veterans grew more visible on the streets and alleys of Louisville, Frankfort, and Lexington. Most small towns knew of at least one veteran unable to feed himself or his family.

Other states grappled with the same problem. Ex-Confederates in Virginia, assisted by the business community and their former Union foemen, launched a national fundraising effort to open the Lee Camp Soldiers' Home in the former Confederate capitol in 1885. Confederate veterans in Austin, Texas, raised enough money to buy and equip a seven-room house on fifteen acres there in 1886. Veterans in Louisiana, Tennessee, Arkansas, and South Carolina had built (or were well into planning) their own institutions by 1890.

Informally at first, then as part of organized groups, Kentucky's Confederate veterans began organizing to care for their own. Sixty-eight ex-Confederates met in Louisville in 1888 to form an association whose membership swore to aid, honor and support their less-fortunate comrades. A group of Lexington men formed the Confederate Veteran Association of Kentucky two years later and began organizing other groups throughout the state. By the turn of the century, Kentucky's ex-Confederates had groups (or "camps") in forty Kentucky towns, a statewide membership of more than thirty-five hundred and a national affiliation with the United Confederate Veterans.

After the war, Kentucky's women — the mothers, wives, sisters, and daughters of Confederate veterans — took an active role in honoring the Confederate dead, forming associations that financed and erected memorials throughout the state. A new national organization, the United Daughters of the Confederacy,

drew these disparate women's groups together under "one name, one badge" and thousands strong. By 1900, more than four thousand Kentucky women would hold active membership in the United Daughters of the Confederacy.

Ex-Confederates in other states had learned, however, that financing and operating a benevolent institution for their less-fortunate comrades required more than an enthusiastic veterans' group. A successful home would also require a sympathetic public and a generous state government.

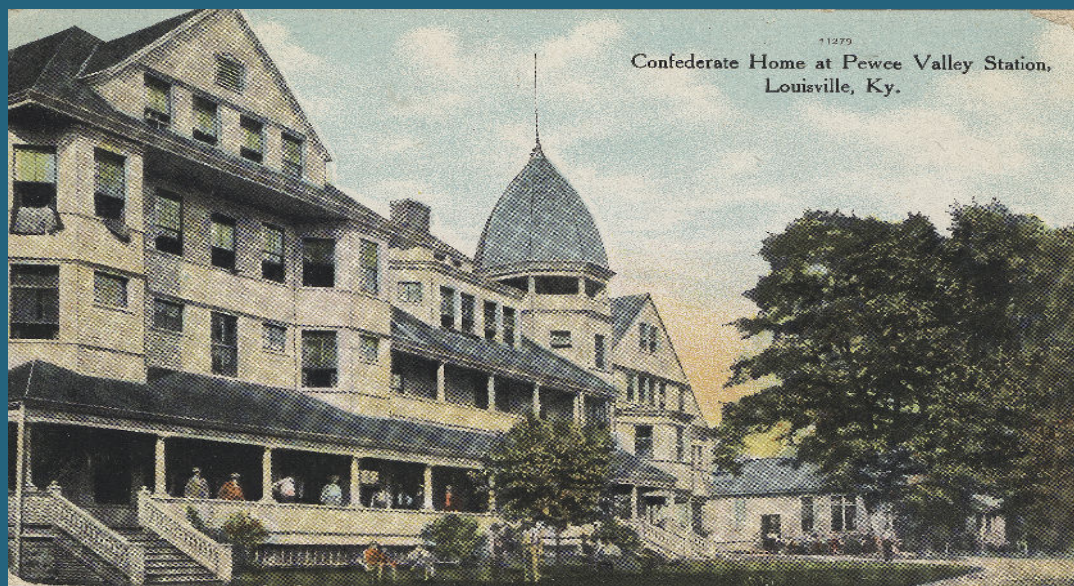
Despite its not-quite-Union-not-quite-Confederate status during the Civil War, Kentucky's memory of often oppressive Union occupation resulted in the commonwealth becoming more "Southern" in the postwar years than it had ever been during the conflict. Traditional political alliances were in turmoil following the elections of 1896 and 1900, and Kentucky politicians recognized the public's sympathy for their Confederate veterans and spotted the potential for a solid bloc of Democratic votes.

At the dawn of the new century, Kentucky's ex-Confederate announced plans to finance a benevolent home for their comrades.

Delegates representing thirty-five hundred ex-Confederates from Kentucky's United Confederate Veterans camps gathered in Louisville in October 1901 to discuss plans for making the home a reality. They chose Louisville attorney and capitalist Bennett H. Young to spearhead their effort to establish a Confederate soldiers' home. A former Confederate cavalryman and raider, Young had lobbied in Frankfort on behalf of railroad interests and he was a civic booster. He proposed that the veterans raise twenty-five thousand dollars to build and equip a home, then ask the state for funds to maintain it.

"Why shouldn't we ask Kentucky for this appropriation?" he asked the crowd. "Does not Kentucky owe much to the soldiery she furnished the South?"

Of course she does, the crowd responded. Camp after camp endorsed Young's plan, and a steering committee was appointed.



A postcard featuring the Kentucky Confederate Home, located in Pewee Valley, Kentucky.

Photo courtesy of Rusty Williams

Bennett Young and other prominent ex-Confederates lobbied state legislators while newspapers announced their support of the plan and urged the General Assembly to act. Legislation providing for the establishment and maintenance of the Kentucky Confederate Home — if the ex-Confederates would build and furnish it — passed with only one dissenting vote, and Governor Beckham signed the bill into law on March 27, 1902.

A board of trustees, appointed by the governor and headed by Young, sifted through more than forty proposals before deciding to purchase a former resort hotel, the Villa Ridge Inn, in Pewee Valley. The site was only thirty minutes by train from the busy Louisville railway hub, so it was accessible to visitors. Villa Ridge Inn could house up to a hundred residents in a building meant for institutional use, and, with just a bit of sprucing up, it was ready for immediate occupancy.

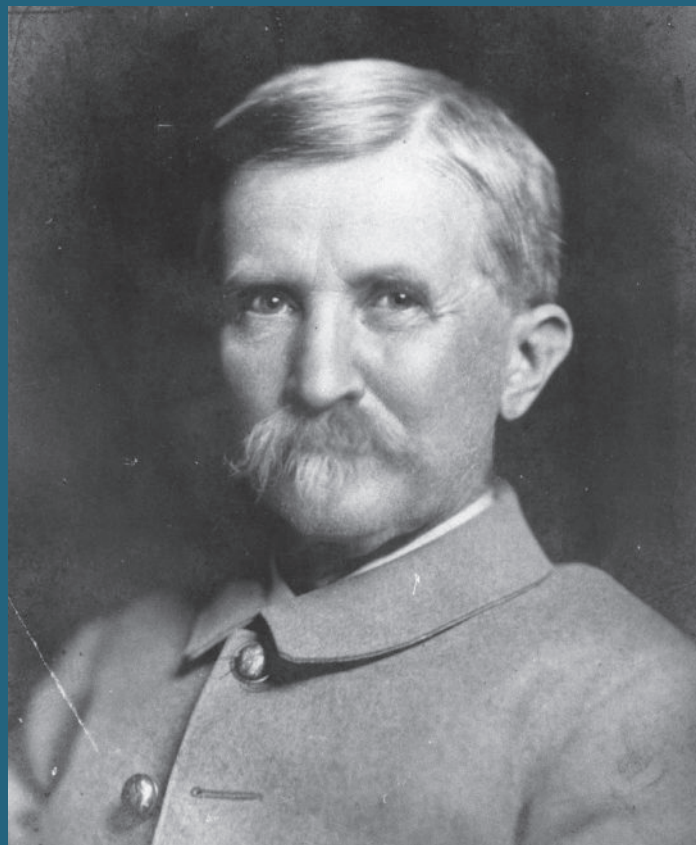
Located on the crest of a gentle slope just a few hundred yards from the Pewee Valley train depot, the old Villa Ridge Inn stood four stories high, sixty feet deep and as long as seven rail cars. A wide veranda, furnished with comfortable rocking chairs and wooden gliders, surrounded the building on three sides, and it was said residents could enjoy a mile-long covered stroll. Second-story balconies and generous windows on every floor provided splendid views of area homes and churches as well as natural cross-ventilation. Atop the frame building was an octagonal cupola and, atop the cupola, eighty feet above neat flower beds, was a flagpole from which, for the next two decades, would fly the United States and Confederate flags.

The old hotel needed some work before it was ready for occupancy by dozens of old men, and volunteers lined up to help. Most of the hotel guest rooms had been closed for several years, and the facility required scraping, patching, repainting, and wallpapering throughout. Donated furniture, linens, cookware, books, plants, and more arrived daily.

By October 23, 1902, just twelve months after their first organizational meeting, Kentucky's Confederate veterans were ready to fulfill their promise of building "a comfortable, luxurious home for the honored ex-soldiers who are invalid."

There had never been — nor would there ever be again — such a gathering of Kentucky Confederates, their families, and their friends as on that October day in Pewee Valley. Ten thousand men and women from all sections of Kentucky would gather for a day of bands, bunting, Lost Cause oratory and celebration. After lunch on the ground from picnic hampers provided by the Daughters of the Confederacy and local churchwomen, Bennett Young stepped to the podium for an emotional speech that symbolically opened the doors of the new Kentucky Confederate Home. He handed a symbolic key to Governor J.C.W. Beckham.

Young and the youthful governor basked in the warmth of the crowd. Beckham had championed the cause of the Kentucky Confederate Home, helped Young push the enabling legislation, then signed the bill that led to the creation of the it. (A year later Beckham would



A native of Carlisle, Joseph Norvell enlisted in the Confederate service at the age of nineteen.

Norvell Family Photograph

win a close reelection campaign, his margin of victory ensured by the near unanimous support of Kentucky's ex-Confederates.)

Among the dedication speakers that afternoon was W.T. Ellis, former Confederate cavalryman and popular U.S. Congressman from Owensboro. The crowd interrupted Ellis time after time with thunderous applause during his hour-long oration, but he earned the greatest roars of approval when he spoke of the debt his audience owed men of the Confederate generation:

"The young men Kentucky gave to the Confederate army rendered their state some service," he bellowed from the podium, "and are, as they and their friends believe, entitled to a respectable place in its history."

When it opened in October 1902, the Kentucky Confederate Home was at last ready to provide a respectable place for the veterans who needed it.

Meanwhile, Joseph Norvell was falling on hard times.

No one questioned Norvell's energy and vitality when the nineteen-year-old prep school student and Carlisle native enlisted in the Confederate service. Elected lieutenant of Company A, Second Kentucky Cavalry (and, later, the Ninth Kentucky) he spent four brutal years leading men toward the sound of the cannon, interrupted only by a several short stays in federal prison camps.

After the war, Norvell tried his hand in the mercantile business before standing for election as clerk of the circuit court. In the 1870s he began building a successful career as a hotel manager, but by the turn of the century he was all used up.

Modern studies have documented the shortened lifespan of men who survived the Civil War. The effects of nights spent on cold ground, poor rations, old wounds, or the unrelenting stress of combat caught up with men later in life, leaving many vulnerable to disease and general debility.

Whatever the cause, by 1902 Joseph A. Norvell was unable to earn a living and was dependent on the charity of his Carlisle comrades and the support of his children.

Though the board estimated that only about fifty veterans would apply for residence in the Kentucky Confederate Home, three times that many applications arrived in the mail. Initially, forty-eight veterans were granted admission. After just three months of operation, however, eighty-six residents — called “inmates” by the custom of the time — were living there.

Needful veterans with their letters of admission arrived from every part of the state to live at the Kentucky Confederate Home, and most inmates found it the comfortable, respectable place that was promised. Nevertheless, it was an institution for the aged and infirm, and it was filled to overcrowding with men who needed an increasing amount of medical care.

By mid-1904, only eighteen months after opening its doors, the Kentucky Confederate Home had admitted one hundred and ninety-eight veterans to a facility meant for no more than one hundred and twenty-five. According to a Kentucky United Daughters of the Confederacy magazine, three-fourths of the inmates were unable to care for themselves. “The first and greatest necessity of the home is a modern, up-to-date, well-arranged infirmary,” the editor wrote.

Bennett Young spent most of 1903 lobbying legislators for increased funding and money to build an infirmary. On the last day of February 1904, the Kentucky legislature



Nationally known vaudeville acts would visit Pewee Valley to play for the residents of the Kentucky Confederate Home. One of the most popular was “John Pattee’s Old Soldier Fiddlers.”

Photo courtesy of Linda Walcroft

appropriated fifty-seven thousand six hundred dollars for improvements to the Kentucky Confederate Home, an amount that included twenty thousand dollars to build and equip an infirmary.

When completed in November, the fully staffed infirmary had thirty-seven patient rooms, a surgical suite and a sitting room.

Every improvement made to the Kentucky Confederate Home, however, created a new influx of applications. For the remainder of its first decade of operation it would remain overcrowded, and management would have to deal with the particular difficulties of caring for two hundred old men.

An executive committee of the Kentucky Confederate Home’s board met in Pewee Valley on June 2, 1905. Among other business, the committee members reviewed Joseph Norvell’s application for admission. The examination was a cursory one; Norvell had an unblemished service record, the recommendation of his Nicholas County comrades and an obvious need. The board’s secretary sent a letter of acceptance the following day.

When Norvell arrived in Pewee Valley a week later he was immediately placed in the infirmary. His mental condition was charted as “good,” but his physical condition on arrival was “bad.” Later medical records would indicate that Norvell suffered from chronic, painful enteritis and “general debility.”

For many veterans, the Kentucky Confederate Home provided their first access to regular, professional medical care. A full-time physician and round-the-clock nurses enforced cleanliness and modern medical practices in the up-to-date facility, extending the lives of some men who had depended on the intermittent care of a rural physician.

Within two months, Norvell had been released from the infirmary, assigned a room in the main building, issued a uniform, and was taking his meals with the rest of the inmates.

Visitors to the Kentucky Confederate Home often described the dignity, nobility, grace, and charm of the men housed there. In truth, however, the inmates were ordinary men with an average age of seventy-two years — all living in close confines day after day with little to do to fill their hours.

These were old men living away from their homes and relatives, each inmate with his share of irritating habits, chronic pain, meanness, and outright craziness. Like inmates of institutions everywhere, some found ways to break the rules.

Alcohol was forbidden at the Kentucky Confederate Home, but when inmates or visitors smuggled it through the doors, the result was often bad behavior, arguments, or destruction of property. Whether fueled by alcohol or escalating from minor personal grievances, violence between inmates was another major issue the management was forced to deal with.

To ensure discipline, the “Rules and Regulations for the Government of the Kentucky Confederate Home” required the commandant of the Kentucky Confederate Home to operate it in the style of a military camp. All serious breaches of discipline came before the board of trustees at their monthly meeting; they would hold summary courts martial, calling witnesses, determining guilt and meting out punishment.

The Kentucky Confederate Home was a military home for old men whose martial experience was fifty years in the past. Some thrived in the environment, others resisted to the point of expulsion.

There’s no indication that Joseph Norvell ever posed a disciplinary problem at the home; he likely appreciated how lucky he was to be living there.

His day began with a cannon shot, roll call, inspection by the commandant, and a hearty breakfast. There was plenty of time to stroll the grounds, visit the well-stocked library, get up a game of checkers, or nap in his room. One inmate of the time gloated to the editor of his hometown newspaper about the weight he had gained due to excellent meals and pleasant surroundings. “The inmates have plenty to eat and wear,” he told the newspaperman, “and little to do but eat and drink and lay around in the shade.”

The leisurely lifestyle and care suited Joseph Norvell. He arrived at the Kentucky Confederate Home in June 1905 to live out “his few remaining days.” Instead, he lived there for four years before he died in September 1909, following a short illness. He was buried in his Kentucky Confederate Home uniform.

“These old men need entertainment, free lectures, and concerts,” Bennett Young wrote in his 1905 annual report to the state legislature. “Some kind of amusement is essential to the happiness of the inmates.”

Amusement was in short supply during the earliest years of the Kentucky Confederate Home. Some men pursued hobbies or handicrafts, but there was little to occupy the inmates’ leisure hours. A program of activities and entertainment, might reduce some of the tensions and discipline problems that festered during the earliest years by making the crowded Kentucky Confederate Home more pleasant for veterans and staff alike.

Help came from an unlikely source: Lizzie Z. Duke, a wealthy New York widow with Kentucky roots, donated twenty-two hundred dollars to build an assembly hall on the grounds of the home. Kentucky’s ex-Confederates dedicated L.Z. Duke Hall on October 31, 1907. It was a freestanding building designed to serve as a site for meetings, religious services, lectures and other amusements for inmates and visitors.

Immediately the home seemed less crowded.

Though there were as many inmates in residence as ever before (and the hall provided no additional living space), the new building gave veterans some elbow room for their religious services,

lectures, holiday gatherings, and other assemblies. Home management arranged for shows in the new hall — singers, ventriloquists, elocutionists, magicians, folklorists, bird callers, dialecticians, even touring vaudeville acts — and invited Pewee Valley neighbors to attend.

The new assembly hall also served to open the institutional gates of the Kentucky Confederate Home. Nearby clubs and organizations were invited to use the hall for meetings, concerts and dances. Local churches held their revivals in the hall and provided ministers for regular Sunday services.

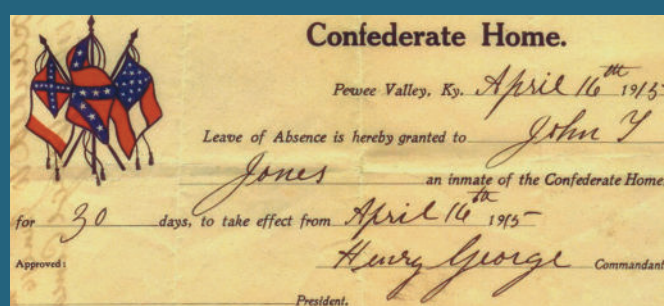
In 1911 the nation marked the fiftieth anniversary of the beginning of its Civil War, and interest in the old veterans blossomed. The increasing use of motorcars (and road improvements) allowed tourists to visit the Kentucky Confederate Home for an afternoon, strolling its park-like grounds or studying the wartime flags, firearms, swords, and photos mounted on the walls of Duke Hall.

The Kentucky Confederate Home became a living museum of sorts, a twentieth century repository of animate Lost Cause relics. Parents brought young children to shake the hands of men who had charged the valley of Stone’s River, ridden with Morgan’s Raiders or dug trenches in defense of Atlanta a half century before. Most inmates were thrilled to interact with tourists, to earn a few dimes posing for snapshots, to sell their woodcarvings or to recount their wartime exploits to a fresh audience. They thrived on the activity and attention.

These were the Kentucky Confederate Home’s salad days. All too soon, other soldiers would turn the nation’s attention away from the old men of the Confederate generation.

For fifty years, Kentuckians could refer to “The War” with assurance that other Kentuckians knew the reference was to America’s War Between the States. But by 1915, with fighting in Europe and the possibility of American involvement, public attention shifted from America’s past armed conflict to the coming war “Over There.”

Kentucky’s United Daughters of the Confederacy chapters increasingly turned their hands to war relief and overseas charities, placing on hiatus the socials and entertainment events they once scheduled at Pewee Valley. Meanwhile, involvement by UCV camps — camps that once built and supported the Kentucky Confederate



Any resident wanting to remain away from the Home overnight was required to obtain a signed furlough slip from the commandant.

Photo courtesy of Susan Reedy

Home — dwindled as active members aged and passed away.

Population of the Kentucky Confederate Home reached a watershed mark during this period of world war; for the first time more died there than were admitted, and the number of inmates began an inevitable decline.

It would take a near tragedy to rekindle interest in the old men remaining at the Kentucky Confederate Home.

Gusty March winds. A forty-year-old frame structure built of lumber now dry as kindling. Wood-burning stoves. Flammable fuel oil drums stacked in the basement. One hundred and eighty old men — many bedridden — living in close quarters.

It was a recipe for disaster.

A lighted match, dropped through floorboards of a porch to the dry grass below, probably sparked the blaze that destroyed the Kentucky Confederate Home on March 25, 1920. Despite the efforts of local bucket brigades, volunteer fire teams from nearby towns and the latest pumper trucks dispatched from Louisville, the elegant main building was reduced to ashes, several outbuildings were burnt to a shell and part of the infirmary crushed by a falling 50,000-gallon water cistern. L.Z. Duke Hall was water-soaked, but not seriously damaged.

Miraculously, no one was killed but the fire destroyed something that could never exist again. The original building — the old Villa Ridge Inn — had resisted entry into the twentieth century. Its wide verandahs, furnished with comfortable rocking chairs and wooden gliders, spoke of the sociability and leisure of nineteenth century life. The hand-carved millwork and intricate trim were lost remnants of a time before the age of assembly lines and mass production.

The Kentucky Confederate Home — rebuilt following the fire in a coarse style favorable to the lowest bidder and subject to the same bureaucratic oversight as every other state-run prison or asylum — became a twentieth century warehouse for nineteenth century artifacts.

No crowds assembled, no bunting was raised, no bands played to mark completion of the rebuilt Kentucky Confederate Home. And some supporters began to question whether the it should continue to exist at all.

By the late 1920s the underpinnings of support for the Kentucky Confederate Home for twenty-five years — energetic Confederate veterans groups, a sympathetic public and a generous state government — had collapsed. Only Kentucky's United Daughters of the Confederacy chapters — still a political force to be reckoned with — argued for an expanded role for the Kentucky Confederate Home.

As the number of inmates fell from seventy-two in 1926, to forty-six in 1928, to twenty-seven in 1930 and to twelve in 1931, however, it was glaringly apparent that the life of the Kentucky Confederate Home was nearing its end.

The board of trustees fought a losing battle against rising costs and public opinion while lobbying an increasingly chilly legislature for increased funding. The legislature passed several temporary funding

ills, but a state auditor delivered the coup de grace in 1932 when he recommended to Governor Laffoon that the home be abandoned and the remaining veterans sent for care elsewhere.

The Kentucky Confederate Home served as a respectable dwelling place for veterans of America's Civil War. Now it was time for the it to enter its own respectable place in Kentucky history.

On July 20, 1934, attendants escorted five old men — two on cots, one in a rolling chair and all five dressed in fresh gray uniforms — out the door of the Kentucky Confederate Home and into ambulances that would take them to new quarters at the Pewee Valley Sanitarium.

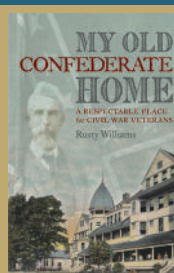
Visit Pewee Valley today and there's little evidence of the Kentucky Confederate Home.

Several state agencies vied to take over the Pewee Valley property, but a non-profit group bought the dilapidated structures and fallow acreage in 1938 with the intention of building a hospital there. The hospital never materialized, and the property was eventually cleared and subdivided for residential use.

A state historical marker, located across the highway from where the home stood, was recently vandalized and has yet to be replaced.

Only the Confederate burial section of the Pewee Valley Cemetery — 310 identical gray-white stones in perfect rank — mark the presence of the Kentucky Confederate Home, where nearly a thousand men found comfortable refuge from 1902 to 1934, a time when acceptance of public assistance was seen by some as an act of moral insufficiency. They had once been young men — farmers, factory workers, trainers, traders, politicians, and professionals — who left homes and families to fight for a cause that was lost before the first battle was joined.

In the end, however, Joseph Norvell and the others found a respectable place.



About the Author

Rusty Williams is author of *My Old Confederate Home: A Respectable Place for Civil War Veterans*, published in by University Press of Kentucky, available June 2010 from all booksellers.

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HOLLYWOOD

Comes to Knox County

By John White, Ed. D.

In the spring of 1926, twenty-nine-year-old Karl Brown stepped off the train at Barbourville, Kentucky. He was a young man on a mission. Having worked in the movie business since his early teens, Brown had been given a tremendous break — to direct his first feature film for Famous Players-Lasky Corporation (later Paramount Pictures, Inc.). His experience to this point included a foundational stint as film developer for the early color film studio Kinemacolor; formative years progressing from assistant cameraman to cameraman for D.W. Griffith's company; then, most recently, five years as exclusive cinematographer for the colorful and prolific James Cruze. Together Cruze and Brown had made twenty-one pictures, including the phenomenally successful western *The Covered Wagon* (1923).

The Covered Wagon was filmed on the desolate prairie of Snake Valley, Nevada, with a movie crew numbering more than one hundred twenty, one thousand extras to play Western settlers, seven hundred Indians, and four hundred Conestoga wagons. The result was a starkly realistic depiction of life on the frontier.

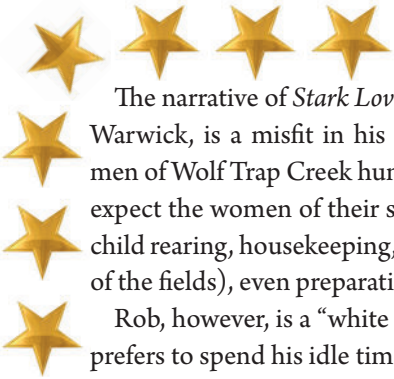
Karl Brown's camera work was widely lauded by critics and, according to film historians, the movie "set a visual standard," heralding the arrival of the "epic western." The film, which cost less than \$800,000 to make, grossed nearly \$4 million.

The success of *The Covered Wagon* enabled Brown to convince Paramount vice president Jesse Lasky and general manager of production Walter Wanger that a movie about real-life mountaineers could be successful. He made the case that *The Covered Wagon* was about the exterior lives of American pioneers — the big vistas of the West. He wanted to make a movie about the interior lives of pioneers — "what happens inside those cabins."

Eventually he was given \$50,000 to make a movie, entitled by the studio *Stark Love*. To help realize his quest for authenticity, he wisely enlisted the legendary outdoor writer Horace Kephart who suggested he film in the Unicoi Mountains of Robbinsville, North Carolina. At the time, the Tallassee Power Company was building the Santeetlah Dam on the nearby Cheoah River. In the course of construction, property had been bought to accommodate the resultant lake, thereby leaving dozens of empty cabins which could be used for a movie set.

Also through Kephart, Brown came up with a storyline for his previously unscripted photoplay. *Stark Love* is heavily influenced by the "Blood Feud" chapter of Kephart's *Our Southern Highlanders*. Indeed, the photo plates from the original edition of *Highlanders* come to life in Brown's movie.





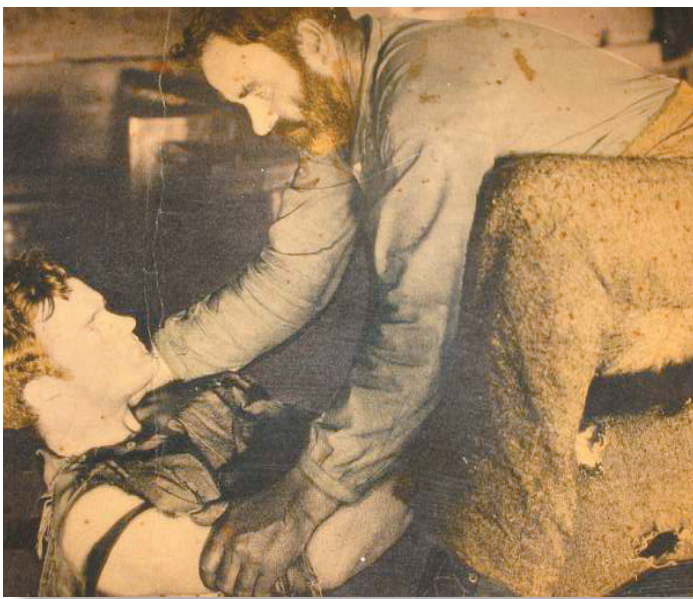
The narrative of *Stark Love* is a simple one. A young man, Rob Warwick, is a misfit in his mountain community. Most of the men of Wolf Trap Creek hunt, fish, make whiskey, and loaf. They expect the women of their society to perform the hard work — child rearing, housekeeping, gardening (which includes plowing of the fields), even preparation of game.

Rob, however, is a “white sheep among mountain wolves.” He prefers to spend his idle time reading books. Also, he recognizes the plight of women in the mountains. He witnesses the decline of his beloved mother and is determined that his friend, Barbara Allen, will not suffer the same fate. He devises a plan to travel to the college far away in the valley and secure a place for Barbara.

While Rob is away on his journey, his mother dies. Rob’s father, Jason, is confounded by the challenges of caring for a household of young children. He needs a new wife. Unaware of his son’s affection for Barbara, he bargains with her father for her hand in marriage.

The spring rains have come and the creek by the cabin is near flooding when Rob returns from his journey. Upon his arrival to Wolf Trap, he not only finds that his mother has passed away but his father has taken Barbara as his wife. Rob tries to reason with his father to let Barbara go. After talking fails, a mighty brawl ensues. Rob is thrown from the cabin as the flooding creek rages. Since Rob’s defense of her honor falls short, Barbara grabs an axe by the fireplace and defends herself. She backs Jason away as she leaves the cabin and rescues Rob just as the floodwaters reach their crest. They are washed downstream by the powerful rapids. Rob and Barbara survive the tide to walk into the valley, and start their new life.

In the hands of a less capable director, *Stark Love* would have been the worst sort of melodrama. But under Karl Brown’s care, it remains a stunning record of early twentieth century Appalachia, considered by many to be a masterpiece of the silent cinema.



The fight between Rob and his father, Jason, is one of the movie’s most memorable images.

Photo courtesy of John White, Ed.D.

Knox County

After casting the lead roles of Barbara Allen and Rob Warwick, Karl Brown still had not found actors to portray the key roles of Quill Allen and Jason Warwick. Brown does not record in his memoirs why he chose Knox County, Kentucky, as a place to look for actors. Perhaps Kephart, who mentions feuds in Eastern Kentucky in *Our Southern Highlanders*, also knew about Knox County and recommended it to Brown. Yet one may speculate that another Kentucky writer, Charles Neville Buck, may have played a part in the decision.

Buck was a popular writer of action-packed novels featuring feuding Kentucky mountaineers. His novel, *The Flight to the Hills*, was being made into a Clara Bow vehicle at Paramount about the same time Brown was filming *Stark Love*. The Clara Bow movie was renamed *The Runaway* and released in 1926.

Historian Charles Reed Mitchell notes that *A Pagan of the Hills* was another Buck novel adapted for Hollywood. Pearl White chose the story as the basis for her 1921 Fox movie, *The Mountain Woman*, which was filmed in Knox County, Kentucky.

Buck had been an unofficial advisor regarding Kentucky film locations, so it may have been that Jesse Lasky passed word on to Brown about Knox County, or Brown consulted Buck himself, or Brown on his own simply decided to look on the north side of the Cumberland Mountains. Regardless, in 1926 he found himself in Barbourville.

Silas Miracle’s grandson, Coolidge Smith, recalls that a man named Mayes was approached by Karl Brown on the courthouse square. Brown told him that he was looking for actors to be in a movie he was making.

“Well, Tom Brogan and Silas Miracle are the two you’ll be wanting,” said Mayes.

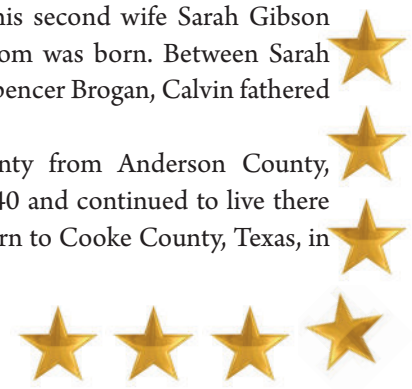
Silas and Tom were familiar figures on the square. Silas didn’t drink whiskey but he enjoyed making it behind his house near Bryant’s Store. He would load a few jars in saddlebags, sling them across his mule and go to town to deliver his wares to a few preferred customers. Tom Brogan was at the top of the list.

Tom Brogan

In the credits for *Stark Love*, you will see Helen Monday’s named spelled “Mundy,” and you won’t see Tom Brogan’s name at all. He was renamed “Reb Grogan” for the screen. Such were the ways of show business in the 1920s.

Tom was of Irish descent, born in Knox County on July 12, 1875, the youngest son of Calvin Brogan, a wagon maker. Calvin was sixty years old and his second wife Sarah Gibson Brogan was thirty-three when Tom was born. Between Sarah and his first wife Mahala Payne Spencer Brogan, Calvin fathered at least eleven children.

Calvin moved to Knox County from Anderson County, Tennessee, some time before 1840 and continued to live there most of his life except for a sojourn to Cooke County, Texas, in the 1880s.



Tom Brogan was a cabinet maker and by all accounts a very smart man. He was a “whiz with numbers” according to his great-granddaughter Carmen Gregg. He also was a “character,” a well-known storyteller and “election philosopher” in Barbourville who would saunter over to the courthouse steps, let out a shrill whistle and all who wanted to hear a good story would come running. This is evidenced in an article published in Barbourville’s *Mountain Advocate* in 1949, near the end of Tom’s life:

The Chamber of Commerce dinner featured bear steaks. Donor of this main item was John Brogan, who’s now located in North Carolina, not far from good bear country. He’s a marksman who’ll take second place to none, not even his father Tom, who established his reputation as a bear hunter many years ago. You don’t have to be too old to recall Tom’s exploits when he was a star in the silent picture, Stark Love, produced in the North Carolina mountains nearly thirty years ago by the Lasky Famous Players, who later produced Covered Wagon and other hits. Brogan and a fellow Knox countian, Silas Miracle, stole the show with their exploits. In the picture one of Tom’s stunts, if you can call it, was a winning fight with a full grown and vicious bear, not of the zoo variety but flushed from his den in the Graham county mountains. Tom, in recalling his experience, stated locale of this scene was only eight miles from where his son is now stationed. Brogan made personal appearances at a number of large cities in connection with the showing of Stark Love and recalls that it showed continuously in New York for four months, a record up to that time. At the end of this period he was glad to escape the lights of Broadway and get back to the Kentucky mountains.

Like many great storytellers, Tom was prone to exaggeration. For instance, there is no documentation of a bear fight in Karl Brown’s or anyone else’s memoirs. It certainly is not a scene from the movie as Tom recounted. Also, the movie’s run at the Cameo theatre began February 27, 1927, and ended four weeks — not four months — later. Whether or not that was a record is debatable.

Additionally, it is doubtful that Silas and he had an opportunity to invest in the film as he told the same newspaper reporter on another occasion. However, Tom may have made public appearances at “a number of large cities” on behalf of the movie. John Montoux of the *Knoxville News-Sentinel*, in a review of the film, mentions a “long-bearded Abraham” who mounted the stage, introduced himself as a mountaineer, and delivered a speech before the picture ran.

Regardless of the validity of Tom’s tales, they made for interesting copy in the *Mountain Advocate*, which were their purpose.

His portrayal of Quill Allen in *Stark Love* also was an exaggeration — of himself. For one thing, he dressed better, as did all the key actors. His wife Elisabeth Johnston Brogan was upset that he would portray a ragged mountaineer on screen. She was from Lexington, well-read, and prim and proper.

The Brogans stressed education in their household. They did not allow their six children to miss school at harvest time like most young people of that time and place. Tom’s brother John

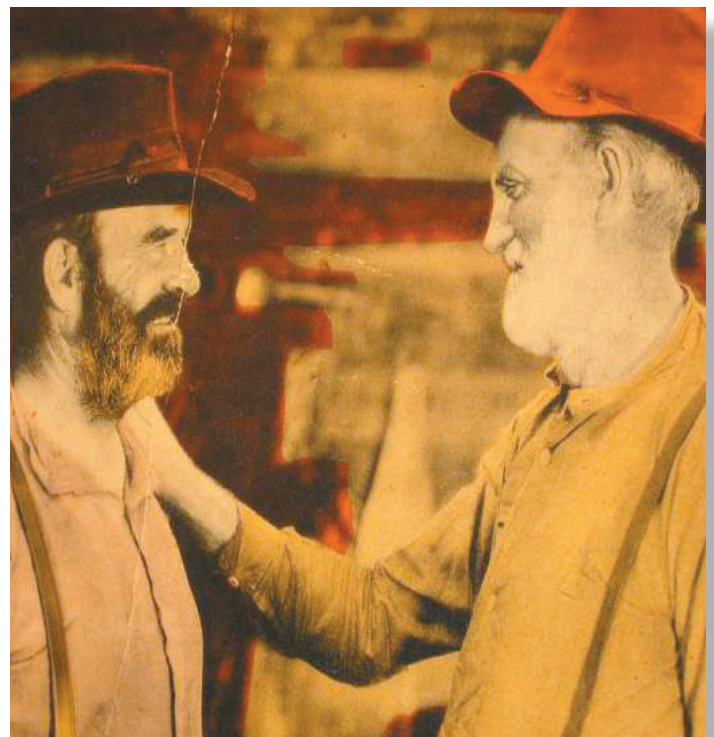
was a founding stockholder in the corporation of citizens that established Union College in Barbourville. At least three of Tom’s children — William Greene, Virginia, and John — and a grandchild he raised, Ponjola Smith Carlisle, attended Union.

Despite his wife’s protests, Tom was born to play the role of Quill Allen. “I’m a star,” he said. “Aw, you’re just playing yourself,” was her reply. To her point, although his costume was Hollywood-issue, the twenty-gauge Ithaca shotgun that he carried in the movie was probably his own.

Brown was very pleased with Tom. He considered him “a white-haired stubbly white-bearded natural comedian.”

However, Tom Brogan was not all mirth and light. Once during a property line dispute with a neighbor, he crawled over the fence and slit the man’s throat with a corn knife. For this he was obliged to spend a year in jail. The light sentence may have been due to the harsh words the neighbor had directed at Tom’s wife. Violence in the mountains was considered justified if it meant defending your family honor. Kephart called this “the law of the wilderness.”

According to Carmen Gregg, “Tom Brogan always seemed larger-than-life as seen through my mother’s eyes. He seemed to live life to the fullest and was a jack of all trades: farming, carpentry, medicine making, hunting, whittling, playing harmonica, and of course story telling. I think he took part in the movie, not for monetary gain, but as an adventure and to further his story-telling. He never seemed to care that much for material things as long as he had a roof over his head, a good shotgun, a good knife, good whiskey, enough food for his family, a good woman to stand beside him, and of course a good story to tell.”



Knox County’s Silas Miracle and Tom Brogan appear in *Stark Love*.

Photo courtesy of John White, Ed.D.



Silas Miracle

Silas was most always bare-foot. A huge, burly man, he was known as very fleet of foot. Coolidge Smith says, “There was never a cow that could outrun him.”

Although Silas was known as a kind, soft-hearted man, he had a familial connection to one of the most brutal murders in Knox County history.

Silas’s father Henry Calvin had four brothers, two of whom were his son’s namesakes. Reverend Silas Miracle was a highly respected man in Bell County, known for his genuine religiosity and for his powerful oratory. Reverend Miracle preached at the Cannon Creek Primitive Baptist Church where Henry Calvin was an elder.

Calvin had been a revered name, handed down for several generations of the Miracle family. Henry Calvin was a local magistrate and went by “Calvin.” The Bell County, Kentucky, town of Calvin, is named for him. Silas had named his own youngest son Henry Calvin. But after cousin Calvin Miracle was electrocuted following his arrest for murder, Silas’s son forevermore went by “H.C.”

Silas Miracle’s lineage can be traced to Heinrich Felix Merckel born in 1643 in Germany. Silas’s great-great-great grandfather Lorentz Merckel migrated from Germany to New York sometime before 1721. He eventually moved to Pennsylvania. Lorentz’s son Frederick anglicized the surname to “Miracle,” and he, along with three sons, eventually settled in modern-day Bell County, Kentucky. Frederick was a prosperous man. On his trek south, he recorded deeds for large tracts of land in North Carolina and paid taxes on property in Tennessee.

Henry Calvin was born on Little Clear Creek, Knox County, and moved from there to Bell County where Silas was born in 1874. Silas eventually moved to Poplar Creek in Knox County and lived there his entire life.

Silas was a subsistence farmer. He and his wife Polly Jane Foley grew corn and hay which they used to feed mules, cows, and hogs.



Polly Jane Miracle

Photo courtesy of John White, Ed.D.

They also grew beans, potatoes, and a garden. They bought very little. They used a fireplace for heat and there was no indoor plumbing.

Silas was not a hard worker. He had a sense of adventure and liked to wander. Accordingly, he was not a prosperous man. Still, he was considered by his friends to be “savvy.” Unlike his father, he was an indifferent church-goer, yet he was a sympathetic and soft-hearted sort.

Pete Davis was a crippled Cherokee man who helped Silas make medicine from herbs and whiskey from corn. When Silas was dying, he made clear that he wanted provision made for Pete. Pete lived with the Miracles until his death in 1956 and is buried near Silas.

Although, Silas was generally a peace-loving man, he did carry a revolver — a .32 caliber American Eagle Luger in a shoulder holster — and, on at least one occasion, he resolved to use it. Like his friend Tom Brogan, he had a property line dispute with a neighbor and, if forced, he was prepared to settle the quarrel with his gun.

Myphrey Bennett had earned a reputation as an overbearing man. On occasion, he was known to threaten a neighbor when kinder words seemed inadequate.

On August 1, 1913, Silas walked out the door with a loaded pistol. As he left, he turned to Polly Jane and said, “If I see Myphrey Bennett today I will have to kill him.” Polly pleaded with him not to take his gun but he kept walking to the barn where he saddled his horse and rode off. Later that day Polly was standing in her kitchen when she heard a gun shot. She looked out the window across the valley less than a quarter of a mile away and she saw a man staggering in the county road. Another shot and she saw him fall to the ground. Polly recognized the man as Myphrey Bennett. He was being shot from ambush and she could not see his assassin. She fainted in her kitchen convinced that Silas had killed a man.

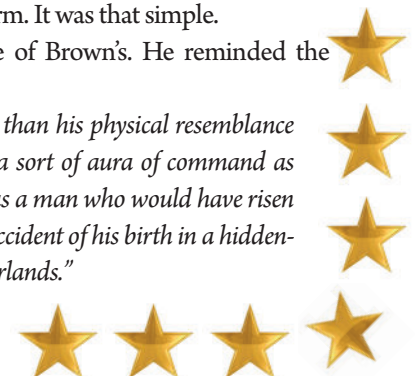
When Polly Jane regained consciousness she saw Myphrey’s killer who was now in the road. She recognized him and realized that Silas was not the assassin. She also knew, and it was well known in the community, that Myphrey Bennett had killed the man’s dog. The dog had been trying to dig out a groundhog on Myphrey’s property and Bennett had shot him.

The avenging dog lover, who had saved Silas from a violent confrontation, after being arrested, was not convicted by a jury of his peers. They regarded the murder as justifiable homicide.

Polly was just fifty and Silas was fifty-two when Karl Brown rode up to their farm in 1926. The story passed down is that Brown came to Barbourville by train then rode the nine miles to Silas’s farm on horseback, the only way into Poplar Creek. Brown then talked Silas into going back to North Carolina with him. Silas left for a period of time, then returned to life on the farm. It was that simple.

Silas became a personal favorite of Brown’s. He reminded the director of Ulysses S. Grant:

“There was more to Silas Miracle than his physical resemblance to General Grant. He emanated a sort of aura of command as part of his inner makeup. Here was a man who would have risen to high command, except for the accident of his birth in a hidden-away corner in the nearby Cumberlands.”



Epilogue

Tom Brogan and his wife Elisabeth Johnston Brogan stressed to their children the importance of education. Accordingly, three of their family became respected teachers and two were war heroes. Their daughter Virginia, an Army surgical tech in World War II, taught English and special reading internationally for more than thirty years. A son, William, was highly decorated for his service in the 325th Glider Infantry of the 82nd Airborne Division during WWII. He received a Purple Heart and three Battle Stars during service in Sicily, Italy, Normandy, and France. While convalescing in an Italian hospital, he was exposed to Italian opera, especially the coloratura soprano, Amelita Galli-Curci. This inspired him to enroll in Union College on his return to Kentucky and to major in music education. William Greene had a long career as choir director at Everett High School in Maryville, Tennessee.

Tom Brogan died a year before William's graduation from Union, on March 5, 1950 at age seventy-four.

Silas Miracle's family engraved upon his gravestone, "He Was a Kind Father and a Friend to All." He died of cancer in June, 1939. He was sixty-three years old.

Nearby in Croley Cemetery stands the marker of his son H.C. H.C., like Tom Brogan's children, graduated from Union College and became a school teacher, as well as a successful country storekeeper. H.C. married Mary Zelma Hopper, whose mother, Nannie Belle Bennett Hopper, was Myphrey Bennett's niece. H.C. and Mary had three sons: Chester, Harold, and H.C. Jr.

Harold was a state police detective in Harlan County, Kentucky, for many years. He brought over 300 capital cases to trial.

H.C. Jr. attended the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music then opted for a career in the United States Air Force. He was also a scratch golfer who won the 1966 World Wide Air Force golf tournament.

Chester Miracle enrolled at Berea and graduated in 1954 with a degree in math and physics. He then was accepted at Auburn University where, in 1956, he earned his master's degree.

Chester then attended the University of Kentucky where, in 1959, he graduated with a Ph.D. Dr. Miracle has taught mathematics at the University of Minnesota for nearly fifty years.

Horace Kephart remains a revered writer among outdoorsmen and lovers of Appalachia. Three of his books: *Our Southern Highlanders*, *Camping and Woodcraft*, and *Camp Cookery* are still in print. A recently uncovered adventure novel, *Smoky Mountain Magic* was released in September during the same week that Kephart was featured in Ken Burns' series on our National Parks. Kephart was a key figure in the establishment of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Mount Kephart is named in his honor.

The best source to find out more about the writer is Western Carolina University's Hunter Library. Along with the Mountain Heritage Center, they co-sponsor an extensive on-line exhibit dedicated to Kephart's life and works.

Karl Brown won the respect of Paramount executives after the critical acclaim of *Stark Love*. Cecil B. DeMille himself requested Brown to direct a very special project, a film that would star his long-time mistress, Julia Faye. The name of the picture was *His Dog*. And it was. It ruined Brown's career as a director. He turned to writing, first for the screen, then for television. Late in life, Karl Brown won fame and respect as a memoirist. He made a living in a hard town for eighty years. He died at the age of ninety-four.

Stark Love. When Brown returned to Hollywood, he found that Jesse Lasky himself had recommended the film be shelved. The studio boss couldn't see spending money to promote a film he believed would do no business. How was a film about mountaineers going to compete with Clara Bow in *The Fleet's In?*

Again, the intrepid Karl Brown stood up for himself. He challenged Lasky to allow him to find a theatre and premiere the movie at his own expense. Lasky was incredulous. He asked, "How can you do so foolish a thing?"

Brown explained that he had spent the last twelve months of his life making a picture he believed in and he wouldn't "let it die without first giving it a fighting chance to prove itself one way or another."

Brown was talking to a man, Lasky, who as a youngster had lost his inheritance prospecting gold in the Yukon. A man who, afterwards, worked his way up from a clarinet act in saloons and vaudeville to become founder of a motion picture company. Lasky was impressed.

"All right. If that's the way you want it. Good Luck." Lasky let him pay.



Tom Brogan and Silas Miracle

Photo courtesy of John White, Ed.D.



Brown secured the Cameo Theatre at 42nd Street and Broadway for his premiere on February 27, 1927. The film opened to great critical success and a four-week run. *The New York Times* proclaimed it, “The most unique motion picture ever made!” Their critic, Mordaunt Hall, extolled the “ethnographic value” of the movie. *The News* called it, “An almost perfect picture!” *The Sun* implored, “See it at all costs!”

Stark Love went on to make the lists for *The New York Times*’ and the National Board of Review’s top 10 films for 1927, in the company of Cecil B. DeMille’s *King of Kings*, Victor Fleming’s *The Way of All Flesh*, Josef von Sternberg’s *Underworld*, and William Wellman’s *Wings*.

Karl Brown had defied the Paramount studio system and had won an audience for his film.

Although critically successful, it did not play well in Middle America. It didn’t help that Paramount mounted a rather tepid publicity campaign. “It gumshoed into an intimate theatre on rubber heels,” wrote Motion Picture Classic.

Another strike against the film’s commercial success was the dawning of the talking picture. By the time of the film’s release, in a sense, it already was out of fashion. Brown lamented his movie’s fate:



Karl Brown and Tom Brogan

Photo courtesy of John White, Ed.D.

“Many of my friends such as Laurence Stallings, Ben Hecht and Robert Sherwood, expressed regret that I could not have waited a few years to get the sound of the mountaineers’ voices, who spoke Elizabethan English, and the magnificent colours of the mountains in spring, when the mountains are solid masses of azaleas and rhododendrons in full bloom — a sight of breathtaking beauty not to be found elsewhere.

The real cause for genuine regret is that I made the picture at a time when the screen was heavily censored and that some of the more powerful scenes were banned by the censors. I regard the picture as a pallid ghost.”

Shortly after its last run, Paramount likely burned the film, as it burned all but thirty-seven of its one thousand and fourteen silent feature films for their silver content. For many years the film was considered lost.

Then in 1968, Kevin Brownlow met Myrtil Frida who introduced him to the movie *Stark Love*.

After the film’s re-discovery, Brownlow sought out the film’s director. By this time, Karl Brown had totally disappeared from the Hollywood scene and was believed by many to be dead. After a hunt worthy of a pulp detective novel, George J. Mitchell, an amateur film historian, cinematographer and ex-Army intelligence officer, found Brown living in North Hollywood with his invalid wife, the former aviatrix and actress, Edna Mae Cooper.

Brownlow began visiting Brown and through his encouragement, the elderly director decided to pen his memoirs, *Adventures with D.W. Griffith*, which became quite popular, especially among film enthusiasts.

Additionally, Brown wrote an account about the making of *Stark Love*, *The Paramount Adventure*. Although it remained unpublished during his lifetime, he circulated the story through lecture appearances and through interviews with film historians.

Due to the intellectual curiosity and compassion of Kevin Brownlow, Karl Brown’s silent masterpiece found a new audience and, thankfully, *Stark Love* is not forgotten.

Forty years ago, Brownlow wrote these words as the last paragraph in his article about *Stark Love*:

“The fate of this picture was the fate of so many unusual films since — it was pushed out and quickly forgotten. But such films have a habit of returning — even after forty years. Perhaps Hollywood destroys its past to prevent such returns? Perhaps it fears its ghosts?”

About the Author

Dr. John White is a writer, historian, and filmmaker who has written extensively about the 1927 Paramount film *Stark Love*. His articles have appeared in historical journals such as *The Journal of Military History*, *Film History*, and *Alabama Heritage*. He is a Visiting Research Professor at Tennessee Technological University.

He has completed a documentary about *Stark Love* and is preproduction for a film about Paramount founder Jesse Lasky and Tennessee war hero Sergeant Alvin York.

A graduate of Auburn University, he now lives in Atlanta with his wife, playwright and civic leader Melita Easters.



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Kentucky Native Katie Pickard Fawcett Releases Book

Katie Pickard Fawcett grew up in Kentucky, graduated from Union College, and spent time as a social worker in Knox County. For the past thirty-plus years she has lived in Washington, D.C., working as a writer/ editor and has been published in a number of magazines, journals, and newspapers. Her first novel was released on February 9, 2010. *To Come and Go Like Magic* was published by Knopf Books for Young Readers/ Random House Children's Books. The story is set in eastern Kentucky in the mid-1970s. The book has received excellent early reviews from *Publishers Weekly*, *School Library Journal*, *READ Magazine*, *Booklist*, and the *Washington Times*.

In April Katie attended the Red Bud and Quilt Festival at Union College. Later in the month, a book launch party was held for her in the Washington, D.C., suburbs at a shop that sells handcrafted gift items from across the United States. Katie participated in a book signing along with another local author, and the shop owner donated a portion of the proceeds from the sale of all gift items in the shop, as well as the regular monthly donations for gift wrapping, to the Kentucky Humanities Council upon Katie's request.

