

Green Castle Memories

by Mr. Charles Davenport

Dear Editor:

Your editorial on Swans Creek or Green Castle was read and its memories cherished as I was a mighty little boy and a long long time ago when I was first there. And as the old place may pass into oblivion you were old enough to have said more about it. So what I may say will be in memory of the old mill and old Mt. Zion Church and the noble people that lived there and near there. The locks and dam were built about 1845 by Jas. Ford and Thomas L. Stephens, Jr.¹ The mill was built before the sixties by Wm Brown.² At that time it was the only mill North and West of L & N Railroad and many people came there to do their milling from Butler and Edmonson Co.

Wm. Brown was a business man of his day, Christian and a Mason. He came to this county in early sixties.³ After the Civil War he celebrated the 4 July by having what they called Muster Day and he would beat the drum⁴ and great crowds of people would attend. The old mill fell in river a few yrs ago. Mr. Brown died 1874 and the old Colonial home burned some 30 yrs ago when Wm Bolton owned it and was Mr. Browns miller.....

When I could first remember Rev. Levy Morgan was Pastor of the Church.⁵ He had 12 daughters and one son. A large no. of people in the Fork Country are his decendants--and all good people. Those daughters and son were his choir and much talk of their singing as if John McCormack were to sing. But it was a live Church and many people worshiped there until the organ split the Church. Rev. Ed Smith was also pastor in the early days of the Church. The old Church like many other country churches and the little villages has about passed into oblivion.

The first houses and store was built by Robt Alexander succeeded by Thomas Roup father of the Editor. John Thacker ran a store at that time. Commodore Burchfield ran the Hotel and Saloon on the bank of Swan Creek. Thomas Threlkell was the blacksmith. John Wetzel was lock-keeper for many yrs. Gorg Shields was our only (sutler).⁶ Proff Ben Ellis was the teacher of the school. Dr. S.B. Johnson was the only Dr in the village. Tom Johnson, Miss Lou Madison, Mrs. Allie Roup Taylor were teachers that laid the foundation for noble characters of good men and women.

Many things happen in the little villages.....Many fights and sometimes a killing occurred in or near the village but Prohibition took the little village and for many years it has been a quiet place and many good and noble people live in that community.

Among the early settlers of that Community--Terry Tarrants, Allen Taylor, Sr., Warner Hudnell, Jim Reeves, Wesley Hudnell, Alfred & Wm, Robt & Jim Taylor, Thomas Richards⁷, G.E. Speck, Thomas & Pete Davenport, Wash Runner, Ben Miller, Hezkiah White, Jim Hudnell, James Lum & Cass Cole, Ab Upton, George Cherry, John Stahl, Clay Stahl, Dave Stephens, Wm. Miller, John Shields. The Morgans, Elkins, Alfords were the early settlers of the little Village and Community--many of their decendants live in the Community now. All have gone to their reward but a few. As they were men of noble character may we long cherish their memory.

Mr. Charles Davenport

Barren River

(1862-1937)

date of letter unknown⁸

1. William Brown's letter dated May 1, 1840 makes reference to the "Lock No. 1 Barren river". Actual date or year lock was built is unknown, but not later than 1840.
2. Brown's Mill Road was officially opened by order of the Warren County Court in 1846, so the the mill must have been built either just prior to or just after the opening of the road. (*Sketches of Some Early Warren Countians*, by T.C. Cherry, March 19, 1926.)
3. According to an article in the *Owensboro Messenger & Inquirer* dated November 3, 1940, William Brown "built there a handsome home, water mill and store" "after completing the Spottsville dam", which he built in 1840.
4. According to the book *Warren County Kentucky Families*, 1991, page 94, 'Billy Brown' and Haydon Neighbors were called to the home of Robert Craddock when he was near death. They were asked to beat the drum and play the fife "in a soldierly manner" while marching around his house. Though they were refered to as 'musicians', this event seems to corroborate Brown's beating of the drum. Note: Mr. Craddock died April 1837.
5. Levi Morgan, along with William Brown, were charter members of Mt. Zion Church of Christ, then called Swan Creek Christian Church.
6. Webster's New International Dictionary, Second Edition, Unabridged, 1950, defines a sutler as "one who follows an army and sells to the troops provisions, liquors, and the like." or one who does "dirty work."
7. Thomas Richards, from Evansville, IN, was contracted to move to the area to set up shop as a blacksmith. The town of Richardsville was named in his honor.
8. Although the actual date of Mr. Davenport's letter is unknown, clues taken in context, like his reference to "Prohibition" in the past tense, place his letter sometime after 1920. His phrase "for many years it has been a quiet place..." implies that some time had passed since Prohibition, and since he himself died in 1937, we can place his letter at about 1932, give or take five years. BKE