



Biographies of Frances-area Citizens

L.F. Bennett

L.F. Bennett, Crittenden County, was born in Henry County, Tenn., October 17, 1848. His parents, Larkin and Harriet (Wheeler) Bennett died when our subject was quite young, and he was placed under the care of an elder brother. At the age of fifteen he enlisted in the Confederate service or army in Company H, Seventh Kentucky Mounted Infantry. Owing to his extreme youth, he was not required to do active service, and acted as orderly for his colonel. He remained in the war one year, and on his return went to Caldwell County, near Fredonia, and worked as a farm laborer for about a year. Since then he has been more or less engaged in merchandising, either as a clerk or proprietor. He has been engaged in business at Fredonia, Dycusburg, Crittenden Springs and Paducah. He was married May 21, 1872 to Annie P. Yancey, who was born May 26, 1851. Four children have resulted from this union: Leon, born November 11, 1874, died February 20, 1877; Clifton, born April 12, 1880, and Cron., born February 7, 1885. Mr. Bennett was a member of the I.O.O.F. and K. of the G.R., until they ceased to have a lodge at Dycusburg.

Source: Kentucky: A History of the State, Battle, Perrin, Kniffin 2nd ed., 1885 Crittenden Co.

G.L. Boaz

G.L. Boaz, one of the oldest citizens of Crittenden County, was born near Lexington, Ky., July 12, 1817, and therefore, nearing his 83rd milestone. His parents were Virginians and noted for longevity, his father dying at the advanced age of nine-one [sic], his mother at 86. He lived in Fayette county, Ky., till he was six years of age, when his father, John Boaz, moved to Livingston county, and settled on a farm two and one half miles from Salem. Here G.L. Boaz grew to manhood. He obtained a very limited education. He has been remarkably healthy all his life. He attributes his sound physical and mental condition to correct habits and simple living - never having exposed himself, even when a boy. His great grandfather had seven sons, five of whom served through the Revolution. He was a Whig before the dissolution of that party - having cast his first vote for president for W.H. Harrison. Since the death of the Whigs he has been a staunch democrat, being a great admirer of W.J. Bryan. He has been a member of the Baptist church for sixty years. "Uncle George," as his young friends call him, has been married twice, first to Sarah Owen, Dec. 14, 1841. To them were born four sons and four daughters - all of whom are living except two. His second marriage was to Mrs. Sarah Travis, March 5, 1865. She is still living. No children were born of this union. "Uncle George" bids fair to live several years yet. He is kind and pleasant, sociably and entertains his friends with cordial hospitality.

Source: *The Crittenden Press*, 5 April 1900

Victoria B. Harpending

Mrs. Victoria B. Harpending was born February 10, 1844 and is perhaps the oldest person in the western part of the county. She is the daughter of Blakely and Emily Brown Travis, who came to Kentucky from North Carolina with the early settlers. Her grandfather, Col. Travis, was in command of the American troops during the massacre by the notorious Santa Ana at the Alamo. Mrs. Harpending is most interesting in her conversation, her brain being very alert for one of her age. Her recitals of happenings of 60 and 70 years ago holds the attention of her listeners, especially when she recites conditions during the Civil War. A most interesting event of that period was, when by ruse and a bit of strategy, she saved the life of one of Crittenden county's most distinguished citizens during the battle of Salem. Her recitals and comparisons of her early years with those of today, the crude manner of farming, marketing, the slow and tedious method of transportation, when children had to walk from four to six miles to school with only one or two books in which to study, the moral and social conditions are very interesting. When you ask her a question along these lines her eyes begin to kindle, a smile comes to her lips and face as she tells you how the girls of the early sixties dressed, danced and were courted. She says that girls were vain then as they are today and as they will ever be, that boys were dashing, daring and full of adventure. Mrs. Harpending is the widow of the late Thomas A. Harpending. She is the mother of six children: Emma, who died 1901; Carrie, wife of W.H. LaRue; Lorena B., widow of B. Hopkins; Harry T., J.L. and E.L. Harpending. Mrs. Harpending has all her life been greatly interested in politics. She is a republican of the old school and was a great Union sympathizer during the Civil War, having two brothers in the Union army. One brother, William L. Travis, was a lieutenant.

Source: *The Crittenden Press*, 30 Mar 1928.

Collin Hodge

C. Hodge was born on the banks of the Cumberland near Pinckneyville, Livingston County, Ky., Oct 3, 1870. His parents, Octavus and Ella E. Hodge, both trace an unadulterated Anglo-Saxon lineage. His father's people came from N.C., to what was then Livingston County, and settled near Levias. On his mother's side, he boasts of a direct descent from the first governor of Kentucky: Isaac Shelby. He was raised on the farm and attended the public schools until 18 years of age. When 14, he spent three months with his father in Florida. In 1888, he entered the college at South Carrollton, Ky., and lacked but six weeks of taking the degree of B.S. In August 1890 he went to Searcy, Ark., and took a four months business course, and then traveled over Missouri, Iowa and Kansas for a St. Louis drug co. Returning to his native state, he taught three terms in the public schools of old Livingston with marked success. During the interim, he clerked five months for S.D. Hodge at Salem and Marion. Amid all the changes, the desire to preach, which was implanted in conversion at South Carrollton never left him, and Jan. 1, 1893, he was licensed by the Pinckneyville church to preach. On a call by Dunn Spring church, Crittenden County, he was ordained to full work of the ministry, Jan. 8, 1894. He now has the further care of Dyer's Hill and Sexton Spring churches. He will enter Bethel in the fall for a three years course and from there to the Baptist Theological Seminary.

Source: *The Crittenden Press* Illustrated Edition Part Third, 9 August 1894; Dycusburg: A Glance at Her History and the People who Built the Town.

A. Koon

A. Koon was born in Virginia July 10, 1816. His father, Jacob E. Koon, was a native of Virginia, born in 1790, and came to Kentucky in 1824, locating near where our subject now lives. He departed this life September 29, 1882; his mother, Sarah Koon, was born in Virginia in 1794, and died March 13, 1877. They were the parents of six children, of whom our subject is the third. A. Koon, who has been a tiller of the soil all his life, was married February 1, 1842, to Nancy Boaz, who was born November 20, 1823, and died July 18, 1881. This union was crowned by the birth of the following children: Jacob, A., born November 29, 1842, died June 21, 1884; Martha, born April 9, 1844; Mary, April 17, 1846, died December 15, 1876; John, born March 31, 1848; Benj. F., born January 24, 1850, died January 15, 1876; Sarah S., born July 17, 1852; George D., June 5, 1854; W.G., January 1, 1859, and N.J., March 15, 1863. All the children reached their majority except George D. The subject is grandfather of eleven living children, and he and his family are members of the Baptist Church.

Source: Kentucky: A History of the State, Battle, Perrin, Kniffin 2nd ed., 1885.

W.H. Koon

Kentucky: A History of the State, Battle, Perrin, Kniffin 2nd ed., 1885. Crittenden Co.

W.H. Koon was born in Crittenden County, Ky., July 22, 1849. His father, Henson Koon, was a native of Virginia, born January 4, 1819, and came to Kentucky when about six years old; his mother, Margaret (Glenn) Koon, was a native of Kentucky. W.H. Koon has spent his life in farming on the place where he now lives. He speculates in live stock, and owns one of the finest farms in this region, consisting of 320 acres. He was married, November 12, 1873, to Fannie A. Jackson, who was born March 5, 1853. She has borne four children: Collin H., born November 8, 1874; Sarah J., born November 14, 1876; Ida B., June 7, 1878; John J., March 25, 1880. Mr. Koon is a member of the Baptist Church, of the K. of H., and of the Democratic party.

Source: *The Crittenden Press* Illustrated Edition Part Third 9 August 1894; Dycusburg A Glance at Her History and the People who Built the Town

Redd Family

William Redd II family came from a long line that came from Virginia to Kentucky and settled in Trigg County. He came to Crittenden County about 1840 (age 18) as manager for the Cobb Foundry Company, of Cobb's Furnace which was located about one and one-half miles below Dycusburg near the Cumberland River. This was at that time a thriving center of industry and commerce. The town, dwellings, stores and offices are now gone but at that time the furnace alone employed more than fifty white men and over 200 negroes.

William Redd II was born May 27, 1822 and died July 24, 1872. He married Eliza Waddell, who was born in Virginia and came to Kentucky when about seven years old, her parents having located in Trigg County. The graves, side by side, of William Redd II and Eliza Waddell Redd are in a field close to the home of Calvin Brown in Crittenden County. The inscriptions on the tombstones are much faded now by the weather but I (Doyle Polk, Jr) was able to read the following. His stone has an "eye" on it and a Masonic symbol. It reads: "Amiable and beloved husband, far excell thy years were few but thy virtues were many, they are recorded, not on this perishing stone but in the book of life, and in the hearts (of) thy

affected friends." He was only 50 years old when he died. Eliza (Waddell) Redd was born April 15, 1827 and died in April 1902 at the age of 74. One can barely see what seems to be a star on her tombstone. Could it be an Eastern Star symbol, I wonder? Her inscription reads: "She was kind and affectionate (wife), a fond mother and a friend to all."

W.L. Travis (obituary)

W.L. Travis, an aged and highly respected citizen of the Emmaus vicinity, died last Saturday morning, December 30th, 1905 at 4:30 o'clock. He was in his 66th year, having been born in April 1837. He is survived by his wife, who was Miss. Frances Redd, a sister of our townsman, William Redd III, and by eight children, seven daughters, being Mrs. T.J. Wring of this city, Mrs. Etta Stubblefield, Mrs. Mose Patton, Mrs. Ed Peek, Misses Nellie, May and Miriam Travis and one son Phil Travis, all of this county. Mr. Travis was a Baptist of long standing and member of the church at Emmaus. The funeral was preached there Sunday by the Rev. James W. Oliver of Kuttawa. The interment took place at Owen School house under the auspices of Liberty Lodge No. 580, of Frances, Ky., of which he was a member of high standing.

Source: *The Crittenden Press*, January 4, 1906

Fannie (Redd) Travis

Mrs. Fannie (Redd) Travis was born February 13, 1884 [sic], in the home of her father, William Redd, which was then located on the Dycusburg and Salem road. Her mother, Elizabeth Waddell Redd, was born in Virginia and came to Kentucky when about seven years old, her parents having located in Trigg county. Mrs. Travis' paternal grandfather, also named Wm. Redd, came of a long line of distinguished ancestors famous in both English and American history, located in Trigg county about 1800. He built a large brick home which still stands near Cadiz. His son, Wm. Redd, Mrs. Travis' father, came to Crittenden county about 1840 as manager for the Cobb Foundry Company, of Cobb's Furnace, which was located about one and one-half miles below Dycusburg near the Cumberland river. This was at that time a thriving center of industry and commerce. The town, dwellings, stores and offices are now gone but at that time the furnaces alone employed more than fifty white men and over 200 negroes. Mrs. Travis remembers very vividly this hustling, bustling town now vanished from the map.

She was married in 1866 to Lt. Wm. L. Travis, who was born in Livingston county, son of Blake Travis and who organized Company K of the 17th Kentucky Cavalry at Dycusburg following the robbery by confederate forces of his store at Canton, Kentucky (also on the Cumberland river). After serving one year and six months he was mustered out at Louisville because of ill health and arrived in Dycusburg October 20, 1863.

Mrs. Travis had ten children. The following named eight are still living: Mrs. Tom Wring, Mrs. Etta Stubblefield, Mrs. Pollie Patton, Mrs. Birdie Peek, Mrs. Nellie McKinney, Mrs. Maye Perkins, Mrs. Miriam Simpkins, all of Crittenden, and Mr. P.S. Travis, of Salem. She had twenty-nine grandchildren and ten great grandchildren. Her only brother, Wm. Redd, III, also resides in Marion.

Mrs. Travis did not witness any action during the Civil War but was near the fight at Salem. Her stories of the early days of Crittenden county are very interesting and historically valuable. In spite of her eighty years she is very active and more alert mentally and physically than many people half her age. Her friends say that they have never seen her angry nor heard her say an unkind word of any one.

Source: *The Crittenden Press*, Marion, KY undated, 1928.

Kitty B. (Asbridge) Simpkins

Mrs. Simpkins died Monday, July 20, 1939 at her home near Frances. Funeral rites Tuesday afternoon at Frances Presbyterian Church. Mrs. Kitty Asbridge Simpkins died after an illness of about a month. The daughter of the late William and Alzary Asbridge, born near Frances October 18, 1866, her entire lifetime was spent in Crittenden County and within a short distance of the home she maintained for many years.

Early in life Mrs. Simpkins affiliated with Emmaus Baptist Church and remained a faithful member until death. She was active in church and community affairs until advanced age proved to be an insurmountable handicap.

She was married to John J. Simpkins October 27, 1886 and to the union was born eight children, seven of whom survive. Survivors are her husband: three sons; Floyd, Henry and Linon, all of this county: four

daughters, Mrs. Shelby Brasher, Mrs. Ollie Campbell, Mrs. Leon Oliver, all of Crittenden and Mrs. M.O. Lewis, Kevil, Ky.

Funeral services were conducted Tuesday afternoon from Frances Presbyterian Church with Rev. J.C. Asbridge, to who the deceased was an aunt, officiating. Burial was in the cemetery adjacent. Pall-bearers: Randle Riley, Leon Oliver, Elzie and Austin Brasher, Sylvan and W.L. Simpkins. Flower girls: Fannie B. Simpkins, Dorothy Brasher, Mary L. Whitt, Lorene Simpkins, Mrs. Ogle Davenport, and Mrs. Austin Brasher.

Source: Provided by R. Stanley Simpkins.

Simpkins Family

William Simpkins was born Feb 1827 in Davidson County, Tn. He was a son of Thomas Simpkins and Sarah Coon Simpkins. He married Emily J. Harp Dec 29, 1846 in Davidson County, Tn. She was born about 1824 in Tn. I can't remember the date they showed up in Crittenden County, Ky., census. They had seven children all born in Crittenden County, Ky. (There old home place was on what is now the Yandell Mines Road between Frances and Seven Springs). One of their sons was John J. Simpkins.

John J. Simpkins was born July 1861 in Crittenden County, Ky. He married Kitty Asbridge Oct 27, 1886 in Crittenden County, Ky. She was the daughter of William M. Asbridge and Alazara A. Young Asbridge. Kitty died July 18, 1939 and John died in 1946. They are buried in the Frances Cemetery. One of their sons was William Floyd Simpkins.

William Floyd Simpkins was born Aug 17, 1889 in Crittenden County, Ky. He married Miriam G. Travis on Sept 11, 1911. Miriam G. Travis was born March 26, 1888 in Crittenden County, Ky. Her parents were Lt William L. Travis and Fanny Redd Travis. William Floyd Simpkins and Miriam G. Travis Simpkins are buried at the Frances Cemetery. One of their son's was Sylvan E. (Booker) Simpkins.

Sylvan E. (Booker) Simpkins was born March 6, 1913 in Crittenden County, Ky. He married Mary Florence Krone Feb 4, 1937. She was the daughter of Sanford Krone and Tennie E. Robertson Krone. She was born Sept 25, 1918 in Crittenden County, Ky. They had two children both born in Crittenden County, Ky. Patsy Jo Simpkins born Dec 12, 1941 and Ronald Stanley Simpkins born June 13, 1943. Sylvan and Mary Florence at buried in the Salem Cemetery, Salem, Ky.

Source: R. Stanley Simpkins