

Northern Kentucky Views Presents:

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# Historical Sketch of Dover

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## Part 3

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## HISTORICAL SKETCH OF DOVER AND IT'S FOUNDERS

From historical collection of Mason County Museum,  
The Public, Dover, Ky., Sat., August 16, 1902  
(Continued from vol. IX, no. 4, page 70)

Probably the most prominent and successful people who ever located in Dover and vicinity, were the Tabbs.

The first of that name to settle in this county, were John and his wife, Frances Elgin Tabb, who came from Amelia County Virginia about 1780, and lived near Washington. Frances Tabb was a lineal descendant of Lord Elgin of England. John Tabb was also a surveyor and located for George Evans of Virginia a tract of 18,000 acres of land on both sides of Beasley and Lawrence Creeks, and bordering Fox's land on the East. The Howard farm at South Ripley formed a portion of the Evans land and was at one time the property of Major Valentine Peers of Maysville, a gallant Revolutionary officer who was with Washington at Valley Forge.

Major Peers sold the land composing the present Howard Rolnert and Hanna farms, to Robert Courtney and Jane Courtney his wife in 1833. Robert Courtney sold it to Captain John Rice who build the two brick dwellings on the farm one of which is known as the old Hanna homestead, a halfmile above Dover, and is now owned by Misses Sue and Bettie A. Hanna, great grandchildren of Robert and Jane Courtney, and also granddaughters of Captain John Rice.

The other members of the Tabb family who were descendants or relatives of John and Frances Tabb were:

-Langhorne Tabb Sr. who was born in 1800, on Tuckahoe Ridge, and died in Dover in 1894, aged 94 years. He was the most prominent, wealthy and progressive citizen of the town and was very liberal. He was a member of the firm of Tabb and Lyon, (Gen. Anderson Lyon) the largest purchasers of leaf tobacco in Kentucky in the 40's. At that time Dover was the principal leaf tobacco market in the world. Sometimes there were 150 wagons waiting at once to be unloaded. The tobacco was shipped to New Orleans and Boston. Tabb and Lyon purchased 3,000,000 lbs. a year. L. Tabb left a large family.

-Jack Tabb was also a brother of L. Tabb.

-W. E. Tabb was another prominent and wealthy citizen. He died at 12 \_\_\_\_\_ the private bank of W. E. Tabb & Co., at Dover in 1860 and he and L. Tabb Sr., H. G. Tabb his brother and S. T. Evans, built the large Wooden Mill at Dover in 1863, which burned in 1875, with a loss of \$100,000. The woolen and flouring mills, which were unequalled in the South, were never rebuilt.

Vincent Tabb St., a brother of Langhorne -Tabb and a great deal like him in every way, was born on Tuckahoe Aug. 7, 1798 and died in Dover Nov. 14, 1866, aged 68 years.

-Henry G. Tabb died in 1880, and Robert A. Tabb in 1879. Both were leading citizens.

-Edward Tabb and Erasmus and John Tabb were also old and prominent citizens and were highly esteemed for their many virtues.

Another family who came here at an early day and took active part in the settlement, of not only Dover, but the entire county, was the Hanna family. Edward H. Hanna, the first of that name to locate in Dover, arrived near here in 1815. He was a contractor and builder and assisted in erecting the first brick houses build in Dover. He was the father of Edward H. Hanna, Jr., George Hanna, James Hanna and Alexander Hanna, all of who were contractors; and three-fourths of the older houses in this vicinity were erected by them.

E. H. Hanna, Jr., who died in 1892, aged 69, married Jane Rice a daughter of Captain John Rice, who was born in 1803, and became a celebrated steamboat Captain in the early days of navigation on the Ohio. Capt. Rice was a man of undoubted integrity. His father Wm. Rice was with Henderson's company in the first settlement of Kentucky at Boonesboro.

He was Captain on the steamer "Phoebus" one of the first steamboats to run on the Ohio river. He married a daughter of Robert Courtney, and settled on what is now the Hanna farm, in 1828, where he died May 16, 1858.

Samuel Viers was another old citizen who left a large family. He was born in 1800 and died in 1872. Captain Rice and Mr. Viers are buried in the old Rice graveyard on the farm.

George Washington Creekbaum, who is the oldest surviving citizen of Dover, now resides at Mentor, Ky. He was the son of John and Rebecca (Cahall) Creekbaum and was

born in Ohio on June 11, 1808. John Creekbaum build a log house on lot No 1, in Dover in May 1818, when the family first settled in Dover. Arthur Fox Jr., gave Mr. Creekbaum the first lot in the newly laid out town for making a clearing so that a dinner could be spread for the crowd that was present.

George W. Creekbaum, although now in his 95th year, is still hale and hearty; is very active and has remarkably good eyesight. He resides with his children at Mentor on the C. & O. His son T. C. Creekbaum resides on Front street in Dover within 100 feet of where John Creekbaum built his log house in 1818. Ralph, another son, makes his home with his father.

G. W. Creekbaum is a remarkable man, and is the only living person except L. H. Long, who is familiar with the early history of Dover. Mr. Creekbaum resided in Dover from 1818 until 1880; about 62 years. He was a great friend and companion of L. Tabb. He was a cooper and made many thousand tobacco hogsheads for Tabb & Lyon and other dealers.

Lewis Hoskins Long was born just below South Ripley, Jan. 11, 1818, and was the son of Edmond Long, and Rosa (Lea) Long, Virginians. Edmond died June 15, 1870 aged 84 years and is buried beside his wife Rosetta, in the Long graveyard in Dover.

Lewis moved to Dover with his parents in 1822. From a poor boy he became very wealthy and is living today near Clark's Station, this county at the ripe age of 84 years.

Another son of Edmond Long, was the late Captain William Long. Mrs. Emily Wilson and Mrs. Edward F. Cleveland of Covington are daughters of Edmond Long.

Lewis Hoskins was a Frenchman. He and Edmond Long were great friends, and he named his son Lewis Hoskins Long in his honor.

Hoskins, was drowned about 1824 in the river in front of Dover while ferrying a load of brick across the river. Two men named Calahan and Belchambers, were also in the boat which sank with the brick and all three lost their lives just opposite the lower grade.

The True and the Nower families were among the very earliest comers to Mason County.

Captain Jas. True was born in Virginia September 13, 1789, and died at the old True homestead on the hill near Dover Dec. 7,

1843. His widow Mrs. Phoebe True was born near Dover Feb. 28, 1797, and died in 1884, aged 87 years. She was probably the first white child born in this vicinity.

They reared a very large family, among their children were Henry F., Thomas, James, Samuel S., and Mrs. Mary Berry.

Henry F. True was the most prominent of the family and at one time was quite wealthy. He died Nov. 7, 1898, aged 80 years.

Peter S. Anderson was born on Tuckahoe Ridge in 1803, and died at his home in Dover in 1888, aged 85 years. He was prominent and wealthy and from his marriage with Miss Mary Patton, sprang a large family of our leading residents.

The late Col. Arthur Fox Dobyns of Dover was a nephew of Arthur Fox Jr. Colonel Dobyns was a leading citizen in his day.

Then there were James Patton, James Henry Anderson, Benjamin Moore, Samuel and Joseph Nower, John S. Goff, Jacob C. Hess, John and W. B. Jacobs, R. W. Stubblefield, Mort and J. W. Reynolds, Stokes Anderson, Jack Craig, the Collins' the Jennings' the Mastersols' the Ringos' and hundreds of others.

Captain Peter Preston deceased made twenty round trips to New Orleans on flat boats. Gen. Soward carried on the flourmill business and Vincent Tabb owned the sawmill. Chris. Hiles, C. T. Sullivan, Hill and Flannagan, Robt. Ingram, John French, Frederick Adams, John Lloyd, the Reynolds; and many other prominent business men whom lack of space only prevents us from mentioning at length.

The most distinguished of Dover's citizens, was appointed United States Circuit Judge for the Illinois District by President Cleveland in 1895. He was an eminent jurist and stood at the head of the Chicago bar where he died in 1898. His father, Mr. Freeman Benoni Showalter, and mother, Mrs. Margaret Whipps Showalter, resided in Dover for years and moved from here to Scott County Ky., where the family now reside. Mr. Showalter is now in his 93rd year and is quite hearty as is also his wife. He is worth half a million dollars. His two living sons, Watterson, and Jackson, reside with their parents. All three of the Showalter boys were born near Dover. The Judge was born in 1844.

Jack Showalter has attained great prominence as the champion chess player of

the United States. He has been to Europe six times and has traveled extensively. He was formerly Captain of the Dover Base Ball club.

Augustine Hargett, was another of our old citizens now dead, was prominent in his day. His son-in-law T. C. Westfall, now of Covington, was a leading tobacco merchant.

Dr. Johnson, long since dead, was the father of Thomas Chapman Johnson of Cleveland, O.

James McMillan who married Miss Nancy Claybrook was also a prominent citizen, and left a large family. He died about 20 years ago at an advanced age.

George W. Bennett was born in New England in 1819 and died in Dover in 1890, aged 71 years. He was a man who all highly respected and he passed away beloved by all.

"Uncle" David Peck was another old resident of pleasant memory.

James Earnshaw, the father of the numerous family of that name in Dover, settled here in 1868, and died in 1895.

David Frazee, J. D. and H. B. Cushman were prominent tobacco dealers.

William Cleveland and his brother S. W. Cleveland, came to Dover from Virginia in 1868.

Mason county was named after George Mason, the eminent Virginia statesman, and was established in 1788.

Kentucky was admitted as a commonwealth into the United States, June 1, 1792. One hundred years ago.

Washington was the County Seat of Mason County until 1847, when Maysville became the capital.

"Charlestown," now Broshears, was the second town laid out in Mason county. It was laid out in 1787 by Ignatius Mitchell, from whom sprang the numerous Mitchell family of Dover and vicinity. Coburn Mitchell once a prominent Dover merchant, was a grandson of Ignatius Mitchell.

Maysville was the third town laid out in the county and was established by and named in honor of Captain John May who was killed by the Indians on March 20, 1790, while coming down the river with a party of settlers.

In 1786 Boone, Kenton, Robert Hunter and Ignatius Mitchell, were at Washburn blockhouse and on Lees Creek hunting.

The first water mill and distillery in Mason county was built on the North Fork by John Nichols in 1787.

In 1790 Washington had 462 people and 119 houses. It is about the same size now.

The old mackoy mill, a picture of which is printed elsewhere in this issue, was erected by Whitfield Craig about 1800, and was known for years as the Craig mill and distillery. The mill, distillery and 200 acres, was deeded to Whitfield Craig in 1812 by Gen. Lee and Mary his wife for \$400. Craig afterwards sold it to David Childs, who sold it in 1822 to Captain James Mackoy of Dover, and one of the most highly esteemed citizens of this county. He was the father of Miss Mary Mackoy of pleasant memory and the great grandfather of Deputy Sheriff W. H. Mackoy who now owns the farm and mill. The late Captain Mackoy was the grand father of Miss Bettie Mackoy a very intelligent young lady who wrote the beautiful poem entitled "My Grandfather's Mill;" having for her subject, this antiquated old structure, which still remains, a grim and dark old reminder of early times. None of the Mackoy family reside at the old place now. Captain John Mackoy and others of the family are no prominent and prosperous residents of the Western country.

We have a receipt from Charles Doyle, given to Craig and Mackoy, for \$350, dated 1817 for a pair of millstones.

But there was a mill for grinding corn built at Dover before the Craig mill.

The Dover mill was an ox-power mill and stood on the river bank about a mile below Lees Creek. Its exact location was just below the new Brick yard where the old log house stood. It was built by Arthur Fox, Sr., about 1792 or 3. It was operated for 20 years, and at last it was demolished and the mill stones fell over the river bank. (The Editor of the Messenger has one of these huge mill stones from this old ox-power mill, in his yard in Dover. The other stone is now buried in the sand on the river shore just below Dover. These stones each weigh over 1,000 pounds each and are old French burr millstones.)

After 1792, and up to 1812, there were some 20 or 30 log houses built on the Dover bottom near the river where Market and Second or Hall street lie.

These log cabins were built on almost precisely the same plan, varying only in size.

They were built of logs and covered with clap-boards; all of the lumber used in their construction was whipsawed, there being at that time no other kind of lumber obtainable. They were usually 20 x 30 feet and 1 1/2 stories high; the lower part was divided by a partition, leaving the front room 20 x 20 feet, in which was a large fire place, usually wide enough to admit a 5-foot back log. The remaining 10 x 20 was divided into two small bed rooms, with a stairway between them. Along one side was an open porch and at the end of the porch another log room which was used for a kitchen and dining room.

They had "cat and clay" chimneys. These primitive houses were built in a scattering manner through the woods where ever small clearings were made.

There were two log houses built by Ambrose Fields in 1818, on the McMillan corner.

George Butcher a Mr. Baker and Saul Cahall, also erected log houses on the river bank near Market street. These men also operated the ox-power mill below town.

Several of these houses or cabins, stood right in the center of Market and Hall streets, and one where The Messenger building now stands.

The oldest house now standing in Dover is the old Blades house, which stands on the East side of Duke street corner of the alley, and now occupied by C. Johnson. This house was erected in 1818 by Alexander Shelby Blades. It was owned by George Roehm who reared a large family of children there.

The second oldest house now standing, is the old Bryant house a two story log house erected by Wm. Henry in about 1820. Lewis Bryant, an old citizen of Dover reared a large family of children in the house.

The third oldest house in Dover is the old Dr. Johnson residence on the West side of Market street, now occupied by L. W. Anderson. This dwelling, a 2 1/2 story log house, was built about 1823, by John Thompson who had a blacksmith shop in front of where the house stands. Thompson died in Ripley a few years ago.

Samuel Mefford built two log houses in 1823 below Market street.

Bill Bowling was another old\*settler.

#### ATTORNEY'S RESEARCH TURNS INTO BIG FIND

The Ledger-Independent, January 16, 1992

What might have been some workaday research by a Maysville attorney turned into a historical find for the city last week.

Bob Zweigart was researching some documents at the Bourbon County Courthouse recently when he came across an interesting document dated Sept. 27, 1788. The handwritten document lists Maysville as a part of Bourbon County and listed the trustees as Daniel Boone (spelled Boon), Henry Lee, Arthur Fox, Thomas Brooks and George Mefford. Zweigart, who is also Maysville City Attorney, showed the document to City Manager Dennis Redmond.

"I think this is one of the earliest documents that refers to Maysville as Maysville," Redmond said. "People were under the assumption that it was always called Limestone."

According to local historian Jean Calvert, the town of Maysville was established in 1787 by the Virginia legislature. It was established as a city in 1833, she said. For 10-12 years before the town was called Maysville, people referred to the town as Limestone.

Redmond also felt the document was important because it listed Boone as a trustee.

Another historian, John Klee, acknowledged that Boone was an original trustee of the town and that the years he spent here were some of his happiest.

At that time, Klee said, Boone helped his cousin, Jacob Boone, run a tavern in downtown Maysville. The recently discovered document may record the sale of land for that tavern, said Calvert.

Jacob Boone had to buy the land through the trustees and paid four pounds and four shillings for a half-acre of land bounded on one side by Water Street.

The tavern was on Front Street between Water and Limestone streets.

Maysville was a part of Bourbon County until 1788 and Mrs. Calvert believed the records from two years prior were moved to the Mason County Courthouse.