

*Released by
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OF FIRES, FIREFIGHTERS, AND ENGINES

HOPKINSVILLE, LONG BEFORE IT BECAME AN INCORPORATED CITY HAD AN ORGANIZED COMPANY OF VOLUNTEER FIRE FIGHTERS. ACCORDING TO THE RECORDS, THE GOVERNING BODY OF CHRISTIAN COUNTY ON DECEMBER 2, 1832, APPROVED THE APPOINTING OF A FORTY (40) MEMBER FIRE COMPANY TO BE KNOWN AS THE HOPKINSVILLE UNION FIRE COMPANY AND IT WAS GRANTED ALL OF THE POWERS POSSIBLE UNDER THE THEN EXISTING LAWS. NOT MUCH ELSE IS KNOWN OF THIS EARLY EFFORT TO SUPPLY FIRE PROTECTION TO HOPKINSVILLE AND WE MENTION IT IN THE BEGINNING OF OUR PAPER TONIGHT ONLY TO ANCHOR THE START OF ORGANIZED FIRE FIGHTER GROUPS IN HOPKINSVILLE.

THE HOPKINSVILLE FIRE DEPARTMENT AS WE KNOW IT TODAY HAD ITS BEGINNING IN 1870 WHEN THE THEN VILLAGE OF HOPKINSVILLE RECIEVED A STATE CHARTER CREATING THE CITY OF HOPKINSVILLE. THE COMPANY FORMED AT THAT TIME WAS NAMED THE PEERLESS FIRE COMPANY. IN APRIL OF 1870, H. D. McQUGG WAS CHOSEN CAPTAIN OF THE COMPANY, WITH TOBIAS FLORE AS THE FIRE ENGINEER IN CHARGE OF THE STEAM ENGINE AND THE HORSES. ACCORDING TO THE EARLY RECORDS, THESE TWO WERE THE ONLY PAID PERSONNEL: EACH DRAWING THE HANDSOME SALARY OF TEN DOLLARS A MONTH. THE CITY AT THIS TIME BEGAN TO BUY STEAM-POWERED FIRE WAGONS FOR THE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT'S USE. SINCE THERE WAS NO CITY WATER SYSTEM UNTIL 1896, WATER TO FIGHT FIRES WAS OBTAINED FROM FIRE CISTERNS WHICH WERE DUG IN STRATEGIC PLACES WITHIN THE CITY.

WHATEVER FIRE PROTECTION HOPKINSVILLE HAD WAS STRICTLY VOLUNTEER FOR THE FIRST TWENTY (20) YEARS OF THE CITY. THEN, IN 1889, A MUNICIPAL FIRE DEPARTMENT WAS ESTABLISHED KNOWN AS PEARLESS FIRE COMPANY NO. 2 OF THE CITY OF HOPKINSVILLE, KENTUCKY. ACCORDING TO THE MINUTES OF THE COMPANY UNDER DATE OF JANUARY 26, 1889, JOHN A. TWYMAN WAS APPOINTED CHIEF BY THE CITY COUNCIL AND GEORGE E. RANDLE WAS THE FIRST FIRE CAPTAIN. THE COMPANY'S AUTHORIZED STRENGTH WAS SET AT 10 MEN IN ADDITION TO THE CHIEF, THE ENGINEER, AND THE DRIVER.

THE FIRST ALARM THAT WAS SOUNDED AND ANSWERED BY THE PEARLESS FIRE COMPANY NO. 2 WAS LOGGED IN ON MARCH 12, 1889, AT 6:30 P.M. THIS PROVED TO BE A SMALL FIRE IN THE RESIDENCE OF NAT GAITHER ON NINTH STREET. IT IS OF NO HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE EXCEPT THAT IT IS THE FIRST FIRE OF RECORD IN THE LOG BOOK OF WHAT IS NOW THE HOPKINSVILLE FIRE DEPARTMENT.

THE SECOND ALARM ANSWERED BY THE NEWLY CREATED MUNICIPAL FIRE FIGHTING UNIT WAS SOUNDED AT 2:50 A.M. ON MARCH 18, 1889. THE COMPANY RESPONDED TO A BLAZE AT THE BROOM FACTORY OF JOHN MORGAN ON NINTH STREET AND AT A MRS. RODGER'S MILINERY STORE. THE TWO ESTABLISHMENTS WERE A TOTAL LOSS. THE SECRETARY OF THE PEARLESS FIRE COMPANY ADDED THAT THE CAUSE OF THE FIRE WAS THOUGHT TO BE "TOO MUCH INSURANCE".

~~THE FIRST PEARLESS~~

THE FIRST PEERLESS FIRE COMPANY WAS HOUSED IN THE OLD MARKET HOUSE ON WEST FIFTH STREET, BACK OF THE PRESENT SHERIFF'S OFFICE AND ON THE EXACT SPOT WHERE THE PRESENT JAIL IS LOCATED. IN DECEMBER OF 1890, THIS LOCATION WAS REMODELED AND MADE INTO AN ENGINE HOUSE WITH A ROOM FOR THE ENGINEER. DURING THIS TIME THE CITY CONTINUED TO BE SERVED BY VOLUNTEER FIREMEN AND THE TOWN WAS DIVIDED INTO FIVE FIRE DISTRICTS. WHEN AN ALARM WAS SOUNDED THE VOLUNTEERS WERE ALERTED TO THE SECTION OF TOWN WHERE THE FIRE WAS LOCATED BY THE NUMBER OF RINGS OF THE BELL CORRESPONDING TO THE FIRE ZONE IN WHICH THE FIRE WAS REPORTED.

THE BELL REFERRED TO ABOVE HAD ^{BEEN} PURCHASED PRIOR TO 1887 BY THE CITY FOR THE PRINCELY SUM OF \$225.00. PRIOR TO 1887, THIS BELL WAS HUNG IN THE CITY HALL OVER THE FIRE DEPARTMENT; HOWEVER, IN 1887, THE FISCAL COURT OF CHRISTIAN COUNTY GRANTED THE CITY THE RIGHT TO CONSTRUCT A CLOCK IN THE TOWER OF THE COURT HOUSE. THE CITY COUNCIL APPROPRIATED \$500 FOR THAT PURPOSE, AND WITH \$100 RECEIVED BY PUBLIC SUBSCRIPTION THE CLOCK WAS PLACED IN THE COURT HOUSE TOWER. THE BELL WAS THEN MOVED FROM CITY HALL AND INSTALLED IN THE TOWER WHERE IT DID DOUBLE DUTY IN SOUNDING THE FIRE ALARM AND IN STRIKING THE HOUR. FOR NEARLY 15 YEARS THE CLOCK AND BELL WERE HOUSED IN THE COURT HOUSE TOWER. WHEN IT WAS DISCOVERED THAT THE WEIGHT OF THE BELL WAS WEAKENING THE TOWER, THE CLOCK WAS DISMANTLED AND THE BELL WAS REMOVED.

IN 1904, WORK WAS BEGUN ON A NEW BUILDING TO HOUSE THE EQUIPMENT AND PROVIDE QUARTERS FOR THE FIREMEN. ON MAY 20, 1905, THE DEPARTMENT MOVED FROM ITS FIRST HOME ON FIFTH STREET TO THE NEW NINTH STREET LOCATION. THE TOWN CLOCK, FORMERLY INSTALLED IN THE COURT HOUSE TOWER AND THE BELL WERE MOUNTED IN THE NEW 85-FOOT TOWER OF THE NEW FIRE STATION. ONE OF MY EARLIEST RECOLLECTIONS IS HEARING THE FIRE BELL PEAL ALERTING THE CITIZENRY TO THE DANGER OF A FIRE AND CALLING THE PART-TIME FIREMEN ... THEN CALLED RUNNERS ... TO THEIR FIRE DUTIES.

**Show picture of fire station & personnel on May 20, 1905.

ON OCTOBER 3, 1924, AN ALARM WAS SOUNDED AT 11:45 P.M. GUESS WHAT WAS ON FIRE? ... THE STATION ITSELF! THE FIRE WAS BELIEVED TO HAVE STARTED FROM AN OVER-HEATED LIGHT FIXTURE IN THE BATHROOM. THE BUILDING WAS A TOTAL LOSS BUT THE EQUIPMENT WAS SAVED WITH THE EXCEPTION OF 1500 FEET OF HOSE. THE FIRE STATION BLAZE PUT HOPKINSVILLE IN NEARLY EVERY METROPOLITAN DAILY IN THE UNITED STATES AND MUCH FUN WAS POKED AT THE TOWN WHOSE FIRE STATION BURNED. DURING THE TIME THAT IT TOOK TO REBUILD THE STATION THE EQUIPMENT WAS KEPT IN LEAVELL'S LIVERY STABLE NEXT DOOR TO THE BURNED STATION. SHORTLY AFTER THE FIRE STARTED THE CLOCK TOWER FELL, THE CLOCK ITSELF WAS TOTALLY DESTROYED, BUT THE OLD BELL WAS MIRACULOUSLY NOT DAMAGED IN ITS 75-FOOT FALL TO THE GROUND. IT WAS REINSTALLED IN THE NEW TOWER OF THE REBUILT STATION WHERE IT HANGS TO THIS DAY.

THE DEPARTMENT CONTINUED TO OCCUPY THIS BUILDING UNTIL MAY 17, 1964, WHEN IT MOVED TO ITS PRESENT LOCATION ON EAST FIRST STREET IN THE BASSETT URBAN RENEWAL

PROJECT.

THERE HAVE BEEN THREE SUB-STATION LOCATIONS, TWO OF WHICH ARE PRESENTLY UTILIZED, THE ONE ON SKYLINE DRIVE AND THE ONE IN INDIAN HILLS. THE FIRST SUB-STATION WAS LOCATED ON FORT CAMPBELL BOULEVARD JUST SOUTH OF THE INTERSECTION OF WALNUT AND 21st STREETS. IT WAS ABANDONED AND SOLD WHEN THE NEW SKYLINE FACILITY WAS COMPLETED AND IS NOW OCCUPIED BY FARM AND GARDEN SUPPLY'S LAWN MOWER DIVISION.

UP UNTIL NOW, WE HAVE SAID LITTLE ABOUT THE TYPE OF EQUIPMENT WHICH WAS USED IN THE VARIOUS PERIODS OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE PRESENT HOPKINSVILLE FIRE DEPARTMENT. FROM 1870 UNTIL 1907, STEAM PUMPERS PULLED BY FIRE HORSES WERE USED. HORSES WERE USED FOR MOVING THE EQUIPMENT UNTIL 1919 WHEN THE FIRST MOTOR TRUCKS WERE PURCHASED. ON OCTOBER 8, 1907, THE FIRST CHEMICAL AND HOSE WAGON WAS DELIVERED AND ON DECEMBER 4 OF THE SAME YEAR THE FIRST HOOK AND LADDER WAGON EQUIPPED WITH A 50-foot, 30-foot and 15-foot LADDER AND TWO 12-foot ROOF LADDERS WAS DELIVERED. THE LAST STEAM PUMPER WAS SOLD IN 1907, ABOUT TWO WEEKS PRIOR TO THE RAID BY THE NIGHT RIDERS. IN 1919, THE FIRST MOTORIZED VEHICLES WERE BOUGHT. THEY WERE TWO ACME-BOYER HOOK, LADDER AND HOSE UNITS PURCHASED FROM OPEN CHAIN BOYER COMPANY OF LOGANSPOET, INDIANA, AT A DELIVERY PRICE OF \$11,300 for both.**

IN 1927, THE OLD CHEVROLET PUMPER WHICH USED TO SIT, UNTIL RECENTLY, IN FRONT OF THE FIREHOUSE BARGAIN STORE ON NINTH STREET WAS PURCHASED. IN 1928, THE CITY PURCHASED ANOTHER PUMPER. THIS WAS AN AMERICAN-LA FRANCE PUMPER WHICH IN THOSE

**Show
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DAYS WAS SOLD BY THE POUND. IT WEIGHED 13,000 POUNDS AND COST THE CITY \$13,000.

IT IS INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT TWELVE YEARS LATER IN 1940 THIS PIECE OF EQUIPMENT WAS STILL NOT PAID FOR. THIS OLD 1928 AMERICAN-LA FRANCE PUMPER IS NOW OWNED BY WOODY WINFREE, WHO HAS RESTORED IT AND WHOM YOU OCCASIONALLY SEE DRIVING IT AROUND TOWN OR IN PARADES. IN 1940, THE CITY PURCHASED A DODGE PUMPER WHICH IT RECENTLY SOLD TO WOODY WINFREE. THE ONLY COOPERATIVE EFFORT OF CITY AND COUNTY GOVERNMENT TO PROVIDE FIRE PROTECTION TO AN EXPANDING SUBURBAN POPULACE WAS IN 1947 WHEN THE FISCAL COURT AND THE THEN CITY COMMISSIONERS BOUGHT A BIG SEAGRAVE PUMPER. THIS EQUIPMENT WAS TO BE USED ON CITY FIRES AND ALSO WAS ON CALL FOR THOSE FIRES OUTSIDE THE CITY LIMITS WITHIN A SPECIFIED RADIUS OF THE COURT HOUSE. IT WAS THEN 1953 BEFORE ANOTHER PIECE OF EQUIPMENT WAS PURCHASED. THIS WAS A FORD PUMPER WHICH IS STILL IN USE. IN THE LATE 1950's, ANOTHER SEAGRAVE PUMPER WAS PURCHASED. THROUGHOUT THE 1960's and 1970's ALL THE EQUIPMENT PURCHASED HAS BEEN AMERICAN-LA FRANCE. THE FIRST AERIAL HOOK AND LADDER TRUCK WAS PURCHASED IN 1960. THIS PIECE OF EQUIPMENT HAS RECENTLY BEEN COMPLETELY OVERHAULED AND RECONDITIONED AT A COST OF SOME 80 to 90 THOUSAND DOLLARS. IT IS INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT IN THE RECORDED HISTORY OF THE HOPKINSVILLE FIRE DEPARTMENT THE EQUIPMENT HAS ALWAYS BEEN RED. THERE WAS AN EFFORT MADE SEVERAL YEARS AGO TO CHANGE THE COLOR TO LIME GREEN BUT THIS EFFORT CAME TO AN ABRUPT END WHEN THE CITY COUNCIL DECREED THAT ALL THE EQUIPMENT WOULD REMAIN THE TRADITIONAL RED.

**Show
picture
of 1932
scene

NOW I THINK THAT IT IS TIME THAT WE CONSIDER SOME OF THE IMPORTANT FIRES THAT HAVE OCCURED IN HOPKINSVILLE AND CHRISTIAN COUNTY IN THE SCOPE OF RECORDED HISTORY. THE FIRST MAJOR FIRE THAT HISTORY RECORDS WAS THE ONE ON THE AFTERNOON OF NOVEMBER 30, 1860, WHICH COMPLETELY GUTTED THE WESTERN KENTUCKY LUNATIC ASYLUM NOW KNOWN AS WESTERN STATE HOSPITAL. ACCORDING TO MEACHAM'S HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN COUNTY, SPARKS FROM THE CHIMNEY LANDED ON THE WOOD SHINGLES AND CAUSED THE FIRE. WITH NOTHING MORE THAN LEATHER BUCKETS WITH WHICH TO FORM A BUCKET BRIGADE, THE BUILDING BURNED TO THE GROUND. ACCORDING TO AVAILABLE RECORDS ONLY ONE PATIENT DIED AS A RESULT OF THE FIRE AND HE OR SHE LOCKED HIMSELF IN HIS ROOM AND THE ATTENDANTS WERE UNABLE TO REACH HIM. THIS WAS A REMARKABLE FEAT -- THAT THERE WAS NO MORE LOSS OF LIFE THAN THIS. THE POPULATION OF THE MAIN BUILDING AT THE TIME WAS THOUGHT TO BE ABOUT 210 PATIENTS. AS NOTED ABOVE, THE FIRE STARTED IN THE EARLY AFTERNOON AND THIS CERTAINLY HELPED TO CURTAIL THE LOSS OF LIFE. THE PATIENTS WERE IMMEDIATELY TAKEN TO THE COURT HOUSE WHERE THEY WERE HOUSED TEMPORARILY. SOON LOG CABINS WERE BUILT ON THE HOSPITAL GROUNDS AND THE PATIENTS WERE HOUSED IN THEM UNTIL THE PRESENT BUILDING WAS COMPLETED IN 1867, SOME SEVEN YEARS LATER. **Show picture THE BUILDING YOU SEE HERE, PLUS THE BUILDING WHICH WAS DESTROYED BY FIRE REPRESENTED AN EXPENDITURE OF \$500,000 WHICH WAS A TREMENDOUS SUM FOR THOSE DAYS.

THE FRONT AS YOU SEE FROM THE PICTURE WAS RECONSTRUCTED WITHIN THE

WALLS OF THE FIRST BUILDING WHICH WAS CONSTRUCTED BETWEEN 1849 and 1854. THE COLUMNS SURVIVED THE FIRE AND DATE BACK TO THE ORIGINAL STRUCTURE. THE COLUMNS ARE CONSTRUCTED OF PIE-SHAPED BRICK. WHEN FIRST CONSTRUCTED THE BRICK WERE TRANSPORTED FROM HENDERSON BY WAGON -- SINCE RAILROADS HAD NOT YET BEEN ESTABLISHED BETWEEN HOPKINSVILLE AND HENDERSON. IT IS INTERESTING TO NOTE HOW MUCH THE BUILDING TODAY RESEMBLES THIS PICTURE TAKEN IN 1867.

ON DECEMBER 12, 1864, CONFEDERATE GENERAL HYLAN LYON AND HIS TROOPS BURNED THE CHRISTIAN COUNTY COURT HOUSE. ** HERE YOU SEE THE RUINS OF THE **Show picture STRUCTURE AFTER GENERAL LYON'S VISIT. THIS WAS THE THIRD OF THE FOUR STRUCTURES WHICH HAVE BEEN BUILT FOR THE CHRISTIAN COUNTY GOVERNMENT. ALL FOUR STRUCTURES HAVE BEEN LOCATED ON THE SAME SITE. THE FIRST COURT HOUSE BUILT IN 1798 WAS LOG. IT WAS REPLACED BY A SMALL BRICK BUILDING ABOUT 1808. THIS EDIFICE GAVE WAY TO THE ONE YOU SEE HERE IN RUINS WHICH WAS BUILT IN 1836-38. I THINK THAT IT IS INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT GENERAL LYON WAS THE GRANDSON OF MATTHEW LYON FOR WHOM LYON COUNTY WAS NAMED. MATTHEW LYON WAS A COLLABORATOR WITH AARON BURR IN THE SO-CALLED BURR CONSPIRACY. AS A FURTHER NOTE OF LOCAL INTEREST, GENERAL HYLAN LYON WAS THE FATHER-IN-LAW OF LAWSON FAXON WHO WOULD BE GABE AND FAXON PAYNE'S UNCLE. WHY DID GENERAL LYON BURN THE CHRISTIAN COUNTY COURTHOUSE, ALONG WITH ABOUT A DOZEN OTHER COURTHOUSES IN KENTUCKY, AMONG THEM BEING THE COURTHOUSES IN MADISONVILLE, CADIZ, FRANKLIN AND PRINCETON? HE BECAME FAMOUS FOR HIS COURTHOUSE BURNINGS ON THE GROUNDS THAT THERE WAS METHODIST PREACHER TURNED UNION COLONEL NAMED SAM JOHNSON WHO HAD BECOME RUTHLESS IN HIS TREATMENT OF REBELS. IT WAS COLONEL JOHNSON'S PRACTICE TO TAKE A

TOWN AND QUARTER HIS TROOPS INCLUDING BLACKS, IN THE COURTHOUSE. COLONEL JOHNSON'S TREATMENT OF SO-CALLED REBELS UNITED WESTERN KENTUCKY LED BY GENERAL LYON IN THE CAUSE OF THE CONFEDERACY, ALTHOUGH KENTUCKY AS A STATE WAS DIVIDED IN ITS LOYALTIES AND NEVER OFFICIALLY WAS EITHER UNION OR CONFEDERATE. IT IS SAID THAT KENTUCKY FOUGHT THE CIVIL WAR AFTER APPOMATOX, NOT WITH ARMS BUT WITH EMOTIONS. HOWEVER, AS WAS HIS CUSTOM, GENERAL LYON LET THE COUNTY COURT CLERK, A MR. POWELL, KNOW OF HIS IMPENDING ARRIVAL AND HIS INTENTION OF BURNING THE COURTHOUSE. AS SOON AS THE FIRE COOLED THE COUNTY MOVED INTO THE OLD CLERK'S BUILDING, A SMALL TWO-STORY BRICK BUILDING LOCATED ON THE SITE WHERE THE ALHAMBRA THEATER IS NOW. THIS BUILDING SERVED AS A COURTHOUSE FOR SOME FIVE YEARS UNTIL THE PRESENT COURTHOUSE WAS COMPLETED AROUND 1869.

BY FAR THE LARGEST FIRE EVER TO STRIKE HOPKINSVILLE WAS SUFFERED BY THE COMMERCIAL INTERESTS OF DOWNTOWN HOPKINSVILLE ON OCTOBER 25, 1882. THE FIRE BEGAN ABOUT 8:30 p.m. AND BEFORE MIDNIGHT, IN LESS THAN TWO-AND-A-HALF HOURS, IT WAS OVER. EVERYTHING FROM SPRING STREET (NOW 8th STREET) TO MARKET STREET (NOW 5th STREET) ON THE EAST SIDE OF MAIN AND ALL THE WAY TO LIBERTY STREET TO THE EAST, LAY IN RUINS. SEVEN CITY BLOCKS INCLUDING SEVENTY-ONE BUILDINGS WERE DESTROYED WITH ONLY ONE BUILDING SURVIVING THE INFERNO. THIS WAS A NEW (STONE) BANK BUILDING ON THE NORTH-EAST CORNER OF 7th AND MAIN WHERE HOPKINSVILLE FEDERAL NOW IS. AMONG THE 71 STRUCTURES DESTROYED WERE 45 BUSINESS HOUSES, 15 LAWYER'S AND DOCTOR'S OFFICES, THREE LIVERY STABLES, THE HOPKINSVILLE POST OFFICE, THE BANK OF HOPKINSVILLE (THEN LOCATED ON THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF 7th AND MAIN), CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH ON RUSSELLVILLE STREET NOT 7th STREET (LOCATED WHERE THE PLANTER'S BANK PARKING LOT AND DRIVE-IN FACILITIES NOW ARE), MOZART HALL AND THE CENTRAL HOTEL WHICH ALONG WITH THE POST OFFICE WAS ON THE EAST SIDE OF VIRGINIA BETWEEN 6th AND 7th STREETS. IN ADDITION TO THESE BUILDINGS, TWO OF THE CITY'S THREE NEWSPAPER PLANTS WERE DESTROYED.

THE FIRE WAS STARTED BY AN ARSONIST IN THE LIVERY STABLES OF TOBE SMITH ON THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF 8th AND VIRGINIA, ANOTHER PORTION OF PLANTER'S PARKING LOT TODAY. THE COURTHOUSE, WHICH WAS THEN ONLY 13 YEARS OLD, WAS SAVED THIS TIME BECAUSE

MEN WERE STATIONED ON THE ROOF TO KNOCK THE FLYING FIRE BRANDS OFF AS THEY LANDED AND TO APPLY WET SACKS TO THE ROOF. AS WOULD HAVE BEEN THE CASE TODAY, MUCH WAS SAID ABOUT THE FIRE-PROOF CONSTRUCTION OF THE CITY BANK BUILDING (BUILT IN 1880) WHICH SURVIVED THE HOLOCAUST, ESPECIALLY SINCE ITS FRIENDLY COMPETITOR, THE BANK OF HOPKINSVILLE, WHICH HAD ALSO BEEN BUILT IN 1880, LOST THEIR STRUCTURE.

OTHER SPECIFIC STRUCTURES WHICH WERE LOST INCLUDE THE NEW ERA'S BRAND NEW FACILITY ON 6th STREET. THIS INCLUDED A STEAM DRIVEN PRINTING PRESS, WHICH WAS A MARVEL TO THE LOCAL POPULACE, AND WAS ONLY THREE YEARS OLD AT THE TIME. MR. HUNTER WOOD HAD JUST COMPLETED HIS PURCHASE OF THE PAPER. HE HAD ACQUIRED IT IN THIRDS BETWEEN 1873 and 1882. IT IS ALSO NOTED THAT THE NEW ERA'S LOSS WAS \$6,000 WITH INSURANCE OF \$4,800.

IN ADDITION, R. M. ANDERSON'S GROCERY ON 6th STREET (THEN THE LARGEST GROCERY IN TOWN) WAS LOST. MR. ANDERSON WAS MARSHALL BUTLER'S GREAT-GRANDFATHER AND MARSHALL IS HIS NAMESAKE.

IN ADDITION, TO THE NEW ERA, THE HOPKINSVILLE NEWS, A SMALL WEEKLY NEWS-PAPER WAS LOST.

THE FIRE LOSS WAS VARIOUSLY ESTIMATED AT BETWEEN \$250,000 and \$400,000, A NOT INCONSEQUENTIAL SUM FOR THOSE DAYS. FROM THE COOLING, HOWEVER, ^{AROSE} ~~AROUSED~~ THE BIGGEST COMMERCIAL BUILDING BOOM IN THE HISTORY OF DOWNTOWN HOPKINSVILLE. IT WAS PROOF OF THE VITALITY AND INDUSTRY OF THE COMMUNITY. EVERY AVAILABLE BUILDING IN THE AREA NOT BURNED WAS SOON OCCUPIED. BOTH BRICK YARDS, STARLING' AND DALTON'S AND ALL CONTRACTORS WERE DELUGED WITH WORK.

AS AN AFTERMATH THE FOLLOWING BUILDINGS WERE CONSTRUCTED:

1. THE CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (SINCE TORN DOWN) ON 7th STREET BETWEEN VIRGINIA AND LIBERTY STREETS.
2. THE BANK OF HOPKINSVILLE WHICH IS NOW ONE OF THE BUILDINGS OCCUPIED BY CORNETTE'S OFFICE SUPPLY.
3. THE THOMPSON BUILDING IN THE SAME BLOCK FACING MAIN, BUILT BY FRANK BASSETT'S GREAT-GRANDFATHER, GEORGE O. THOMPSON.

4. JAMES M. HOWE, THE JEWELER, BUILT THE OLD PLANTER'S BANK BUILDING AT 8th AND MAIN. THIS BUILDING REMAINED MUCH THE SAME FROM 1903, WHEN THE PLANTER'S OCCUPIED IT AS A BANK UNTIL 1956 WHEN IT WAS EXTENSIVELY REMODELED AND ENLARGED. THE OLD BUILDING REMAINS BUT ITS ORIGINAL LOOK HAS LONG SINCE BEEN DESTROYED.
5. THE ^{Row} ~~ROW~~ OF BUILDINGS FROM HOPKINSVILLE FEDERAL TO 6th STREET WERE BUILT IN THIS ERA. AMONG THE ORIGINAL OCCUPANTS WERE E. W. HENDERSON'S GROCERY, AND R. E. COOPER'S GROCERY.
6. ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF 6th STREET R. M. ANDERSON BUILT HIS NEW GROCERY.
7. THE BUILDING ON THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF 6th AND VIRGINIA STREETS WAS BUILT IN THIS PERIOD BY PETER POSTELL, THE PREMIER NEGRO MERCHANT IN OUR HISTORY. HE OPERATED A GROCERY STORE AND A SALOON IN THE BUILDING NOW OCCUPIED BY EDNA'S FURNITURE STORE.
8. THE LOT ACROSS VIRGINIA STREET WHERE THE POST OFFICE, MOZART HALL AND THE CENTRAL HOTEL HAD STOOD REMAINED VACANT FROM 1882 UNTIL THE LATHAM HOTEL WAS BUILT IN 1894.

ONE MORE NOTE OF THE RESOURCEFULNESS AND ENERGY OF OUR BUSINESSMEN OF THIS PERIOD AND WE WILL LEAVE THE FIRE OF 1882. MR. HUNTER WOOD, THE OWNER AND PUBLISHER OF THE NEW ERA BOARDED THE TRAIN THE MORNING AFTER THE FIRE AND WENT TO CINCINNATI AND BOUGHT A BRAND NEW PRINTING PRESS AND OTHER EQUIPMENT TO RUN A NEWSPAPER. IT WAS INSTALLED IN A BUILDING ON WEST 7th STREET AND THE PAPER WAS BACK IN BUSINESS IN THREE WEEKS, FROM A FIRE THAT HAD TOTALLY DESTROYED ITS OPERATION. IN THE PROCESS OF RELOCATING THEY DID NOT MISS AN ISSUE SINCE THE THIRD PAPER OF THAT DAY, THE KENTUCKIAN, ALLOWED THEM TO PUBLISH ON THEIR PRESS.

THERE HAVE BEEN FOUR FIRES ON BELMONT HILL. IN 1849, THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH ORGANIZED SOUTH KENTUCKY COLLEGE. FOR THE FIRST TEN YEARS THE COLLEGE WAS OPERATED IN SOME OF THE ROOMS OF THE OLD NINTH STREET CHRISTIAN CHURCH, WHERE THE FOUNTAIN BLEAU'S PARKING AREA IS NOW LOCATED. IN 1858, THE CHURCH BOUGHT 9 ACRES ON BELMONT HILL FOR SOMETHING LESS THAN \$2,000. HERE THEY BUILT THIS BUILDING DEPICTED BY THIS

SKETCH. ON FEBRUARY 24, 1884, SOUTH KENTUCKY COLLEGE BURNED TO THE GROUND. THIS BUILDING WAS CONSTRUCTED WITHIN THE WALLS OF THE OLD AND STOOD UNTIL IT, TOO, BURNED ON NOVEMBER 2, 1905. AGAIN, THE CHURCH REBUILT THE COLLEGE. IN 1908, THE NAME WAS CHANGED TO McCLEAN COLLEGE. (BOTH MY MOTHER AND FATHER GRADUATED FROM McCLEAN COLLEGE). ON FEBRUARY 2, 1912, at 8:30 p.m. THE ALARM SOUNDED AGAIN AND THE McCLEAN COLLEGE BURNED TO THE GROUND. THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH THEN MOVED WHAT WAS LEFT OF THE COLLEGE TO LEXINGTON WHERE IT JOINED THE TRANSYLVANIA COLLEGE. ACCORDING THE FIRE DEPARTMENT RECORDS THE BUILDING WAS VALUED AT \$25,000 WITH INSURANCE OF ONLY \$6,000. THE FIRE DEPARTMENT STAYED AT THE SITE FOR 16 HOURS. THE OLD WALLS WERE THEN TORN DOWN, AND IN THE SAME YEAR, 1912, BELMONT GRADE SCHOOL WAS BUILT ON THE SITE OF THE FORMER COLLEGE. ON MARCH 4, 1959, AT 12:20 a.m. THE ALARM SOUNDED FOR THE FOURTH TIME FOR BELMONT HILL. BELMONT GRADE SCHOOL, GYM AND AUDITORIUM WERE ENGULFED WHEN THE FIRE DEPARTMENT ARRIVED. THE THEN HOPKINSVILLE BOARD OF EDUCATION REBUILT BELMONT SCHOOL AS YOU SEE IT TODAY.

PROBABLY THE FIRE THAT WAS MOST WIDELY PUBLICIZED WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE BURNING OF THE FIRE STATION ITSELF, WAS THE NIGHT RIDER'S FIRE OF DECEMBER 7, 1907, SEVENTY-TWO YEARS AGO TOMORROW MORNING. MUCH HAS BEEN WRITTEN ABOUT THIS PERIOD OF OUR HISTORY, WHEN DISSATISFIED TOBACCO GROWERS BURNED WAREHOUSES ALL OVER SOUTH KENTUCKY IN PROTEST OF LOW TOBACCO PRICES. ACCORDING TO THE RECORDS OF THE FIRE DEPARTMENT THE NIGHT RIDERS CAME TO TOWN ABOUT 1:45 a.m. THEY PARADED THE STREETS SHOOTING OUT THE LIGHTS. THEY THEN PROCEEDED TO SET FIRE TO THE WAREHOUSE AT 9th and CAMPBELL OWNED BY JOHN C. LATHAM AND OCCUPIED BY H. M. TANDY. THE WAREHOUSE NEXT TO THE FIRST ON ON 9th AT THE RAILROAD CAUGHT AND WAS A TOTAL LOSS. IT WAS OPERATED BY R. M. WOOLDRIDGE. THEY THEN PROCEEDED TO 14th AND CAMPBELL AND SET FIRE TO A WAREHOUSE KNOWN AS THE REGEA OWNED BY W. T. TANDY AND OCCUPIED BY TANDY AND FAIRLEIGH. SO MUCH FOR THE NIGHT RIDERS WHOSE TRIP TO HOPKINSVILLE IN DECEMBER, 1907, WILL FOREVER REMAIN ONE OF THE MOST WRITTEN ABOUT FIRES IN OUR HISTORY.

CHRISTIAN COUNTY OUTSIDE OF HOPKINSVILLE HAS HAD A NUMBER OF FIRES. MANY FINE OLD HOMES THAT ONCE WERE GRACIOUS HOSTS HAVE LONG SINCE BEEN CONSUMED BY FIRES

WHICH, ONCE STARTED, THERE WAS NEVER MUCH CHANCE TO STOP. I HAVE HERE A PICTURE OF ONE OF THESE OLD HOUSES. THIS HOUSE KNOWN AS "RICHLAND" WAS LOCATED ON THE CLARKSVILLE PIKE BUILT BETWEEN 1851 - 1852 FOR DR. JAMES WHEELER. IT BURNED MAY 21, 1926, AND WAS REPLACED BY THE HOUSE WHERE MICKEY TOMS LIVES NOW ON WHAT WAS KNOWN AS THE MINTY FARM, MORE RECENTLY THE RAMSEY FARM.

ANOTHER PART OF OUR HISTORY WHICH HAS BEEN DESTROYED BY FIRES WAS THE OLD SALUBRIA SPRINGS HOTEL, A HEALTH SPA, BUILT IN 1908. IT HAD VARIOUS USES AFTER ITS DAYS AS A HOTEL WERE OVER AND STOOD UNTIL DESTROYED BY FIRE IN DECEMBER, 1976.

NO HISTORY OF ^{FIRE} ~~FIRST~~ IN CHRISTIAN COUNTY WOULD EVER BE COMPLETE WITHOUT MENTION OF SOME OF THOSE WHICH DESTROYED THE GRIST MILLS WHICH WERE SCATTERED STRATEGICALLY OVER THE COUNTY, AND WERE FORERUNNERS OF TODAY'S MODERN MILLING INDUSTRY AS EPITOMIZED BY SUCH INDUSTRIES AS HOPKINSVILLE MILLING COMPANY. TO QUICKLY SHOW YOU HOW IMPORTANT THIS INDUSTRY WAS TO OUR COUNTY, HERE ARE PICTURES OF FOUR SUCH STRUCTURES. FIRST IS GATE'S MILL LOCATED WHERE CHESTNUT AND ANDERSON NOW IS. THIS MILL WAS BUILT IN 1879 BY EUGENE WOOD, HENCE THE NAME WOOD'S MILL ROAD WHICH RUNS PARALLEL WITH THE RIVER BESIDE CHESTNUT ANDERSON. THIS STRUCTURE BURNED ON SEPTEMBER 2, 1918, AFTER BEING STRUCK BY LIGHTENING. IT WAS REBUILT AND BURNED AGAIN IN 1947. THEN, THERE WAS "LITTLE RIVER MILLS", BETTER KNOWN AS EDWARD'S MILL ^{ON} MILL ROAD. ^{EDWARD'S} IT WAS BUILT IN 1837 BY JAMES EDWARDS AND WAS LATER OPERATED BY HIS SON. IT BURNED ON SEPTEMBER 14, 1922. THEN THERE WAS BINN'S MILL NEAR PEE DEE, A SOUTH CHRISTIAN LANDMARK, BUILT IN 1853-55 WHICH BURNED MARCH 15, 1950. THE LAST OF THE OLD MILLS MENTIONED HERE WAS J. S. LYCAN AND SON MILL BUILT AT LAFAYETTE IN 1900. IT WAS DESTROYED BY FIRE ON NOVEMBER 11, 1924.

SHOWN HERE IS A LITHOGRAPH OF THE MOGUL WAGON WORKS. THIS FACTORY WAS LOCATED ON HARRISON STREET BETWEEN 18th AND ²¹ 12th ~~STREETS~~ AND COVERED THE ^{WHOLE} WHOLE AREA TO THE RAILROAD. IT WAS HOPKINSVILLE'S LARGEST INDUSTRY AND EMPLOYER. ITS CHIEF PRODUCT WAS THE MOGUL WAGON. THIS PLANT WAS BUILT IN 1906 AND BURNED DECEMBER 29, 1925. IT STARTED FROM AN OVER-HEATED MOTOR ABOUT 2:30 IN THE AFTERNOON. SINCE WE WERE

LIVING IN HOPPER COURT AT THE TIME, I HAVE A LIMITED RECOLLECTION OF THE FIRE. IT WAS A GREAT ECONOMIC LOSS TO THE COMMUNITY AND ALTHOUGH THE FORBES REBUILT THE FACILITY, WHICH STILL STANDS ON THE CORNER OF 21st AND HARRISON, THE FAST ADVENT OF THE TRACTOR, AUTOMOBILES AND TRUCKS SOON CAUSED THE DEMAND FOR WAGONS TO DIMINSH TO THE POINT WHERE IT WAS NO LONGER ECONOMICALLY FEASIBLE TO CONTINUE THE OPERATION.

THE PICTURE YOU SEE NOW DEPICTS THE RESULTS OF THE FIRE OF NOVEMBER 6, 1927, COMMONLY KNOWN AS THE PLANTER'S HARDWARE FIRE. THE BLOCK YOU SEE IN RUINS IS NOW OCCUPIED BY FERREL'S, SAVE-RITE, TERRY'S FINE FURNITURE AND HOWARD D. HAPPY. THE FOUR STORY SHELL YOU SEE TO THE LEFT OF THE PICTURE HOUSED ~~AND~~ ^{THE} PENNYROYAL APARTMENTS. THE BUILDING IN THE BACKGROUND IS THE PRESENT CITY-COUNTY LIBRARY BUILDING. THE FIRE STARTED IN THE BACK PART OF THE THREE STORY SECTION OF THE RAGSDALE-COOPER BUILDING. IT BURNED IN BITTER COLD WEATHER, FOR 24 HOURS. THIS WAS THE FIRST TIME ON RECORD, SINCE THE FIRE OF 1882, THAT AN OUT-OF-TOWN FIRE DEPARTMENT CAME TO HELP. CLARKSVILLE SENT A PUMPER. IT WAS SO COLD THAT UPON ARRIVING IN HOPKINSVILLE THE DRIVER'S GLOVES WERE FROZEN ^{TO} ~~THE~~ THE WHEEL. DESTROYED IN THIS BLAZE WERE THE POTATO HOUSE ON THE BACK OF THE BLOCK FACING BETHEL STREET, PLANTER'S HARDWARE COMPANY, THE LARGEST HARDWARE ESTABLISHMENT IN TOWN AT THAT TIME, R. E. COOPER'S OFFICE, TOM BAUGH'S ELECTRIC SHOP AND McLAUGHLIN'S MUSIC STORE. IN THE AFTERNOON, THE WIND CHANGED AND LEAPED ACROSS 11th STREET, BROKE OUT THE WINDOWS OF THE PENNYROYAL APARTMENTS, THE TALLEST BUILDING IN DOWNTOWN HOPKINSVILLE. THE TOP THREE FLOORS WERE APARTMENTS AND THE LOWER FLOOR WAS OCCUPIED BY DR. AUSTIN BELL'S OFFICE, AND A MILLINERY SHOP OPERATED BY MISS ANNIE CAYCE, EDGAR CAYCE'S ~~SISTER~~. THE FIRE OCCURED ON A SUNDAY MORNING AND OUR STORE WAS THEN LOCATED WHERE JIM NOLANDS IS NOW. WE HAD JUST REMODELED THAT YEAR, AND THE FRONT LOOKED MUCH AS IT DOES TODAY SINCE JIM HAS REMOVED THE COVERING FROM THE FRONT WINDOWS ON THE BALCONY LEVEL. FLAMES LEAPED THE STREETS THREATENING THE ENTIRE TOWN. THE ONLY THING THAT KEPT THE FIRE FROM MOVING NORTH WAS THE SPRINKLED EXTERIOR OF E. P. BARNES DEPARTMENT STORE (NOW P. N. HIRSCH). I REMEMBER MR. BARNES AND MAJOR TERRY, THE JANITOR AND DELIVERY MAN, HANGING RUGS OVER THE PIPES SO THE SPRINKLER HEADS COULD SATURATE THEM AND KEEP THE

FIRE FROM MOVING INTO THAT BLOCK ALSO. ACROSS THE STREET WINDOWS WERE CRACKED AND PAINT BLISTERED BUT THE COMBINED EFFORTS OF THE PAID FIRE FIGHTERS AND THOSE WHO VOLUNTEERED KEPT THIS FIRE FROM BECOMING A RIVAL TO THE FIRE OF 1882 IN ITS SCOPE. ACCORDING TO THE FIRE DEPARTMENT'S RECORDS THE LOSS WAS \$204,995.00.

ANOTHER LOCAL FIRE, ABOUT WHICH MUCH HAS BEEN WRITTEN WAS THE HOTEL LATHAM FIRE OF AUGUST 4, 1940. THE LATHAM HOTEL WAS BUILT IN 1894 BY A GROUP HEADED BY JOHN C. LATHAM. I FOUND RECORDS OF TEN FIRE RUNS TO THE LATHAM DURING ITS 46-YEAR HISTORY, THE FIRST ONE BEING IN 1896. A FAMOUS LANDMARK SINCE ITS FOUNDING, KNOWN FAR AND WIDE FOR ITS HOSPITALITY AND GOOD FOOD, THE LATHAM WAS A MECCA FOR TRAVELING MEN. WITH ITS LOSS ENDED THE GREAT HOTEL ERA IN HOPKINSVILLE. THE PICTURES HERE SHOW THE FIRE IN ITS EARLY STAGES. HOPKINSVILLE HAD NO AERIAL LADDER TRUCK AT THE TIME AND IT WAS DIFFICULT TO GET A HOSE TO THE ATTIC WHERE THE FIRE STARTED. CLARKSVILLE AND MADISONVILLE BOTH SENT PUMPERS TO OUR AID BUT IN SPITE OF THAT THE LATHAM WENT UP IN SMOKE AND FLAME. THE RECORDED FIRE LOSS WAS \$250,000 AND ACCORDING ^{TO} ~~THE~~ THE FIRE DEPARTMENT ^{170,000} ~~500,000~~ GALLONS OF WATER WERE USED IN FIGHTING THIS FIRE AND THE FOURTEEN FIRES WHICH WERE STARTED AS A RESULT OF THE LATHAM FIRE.

THERE HAVE BEEN A NUMBER OF MODERN-DAY FIRES IN HOPKINSVILLE; CAYCE-MILL SUPPLY, JANUARY 2, 1958, AND JORDAN FURNITURE COMPANY ON FEBRUARY 25, 1959. ALL HONEST FIRES RESULT IN GREAT ECONOMIC LOSS AND HOPKINSVILLE AND CHRISTIAN COUNTY HAVE BOTH SUFFERED GREATLY IN THE PAST FROM GREAT FIRES. WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN FIRE-FIGHTING EQUIPMENT, EARLY WARNING DEVICES AND ADVANCED TRAINING OF PERSONNEL IT IS HOPED THAT NO FUTURE ATHENAEUM MEMBER WILL HAVE SUFFICIENT MATERIAL TO WRITE A SECOND CHAPTER TO THIS PAPER.