

Northern Kentucky Views Presents:

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## An Historical Sketch of Germantown

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historical collection of the Mason County Museum

To the Mason County Historical Society:

Your correspondent J. F. H. is contributing some short sketches of events and history of persons and families in and about the old long town of Washington. I thought it might be of interest to save from oblivion some recollections about another old and long Town. How or when it received the name of Germantown, I have never been able to learn, but I ascertain it was called by that name as early as the beginning of the century, being then a village of a few log houses and it has not improved enough to become a city in seventy-five years. It is now a town too large, however, to belong to one county, half is in Mason and the other half in Bracken. Of course it has not the remarkable history of the great old County seat, Washington, yet there were men and women and families of strong characteristics who were remarkable in some respects at an early day in that locality. Fifty or sixty years ago there were three men who were the most prominent citizens of that village. Dr. A. Doniphan, Wm. Currens, and Major Jno. D. Morford. It will not be necessary to say anything in regard to the first named, as you have already published a sketch of this pioneer physician; but Mr. Currens was a remarkable pioneer tanner, a much better business at that day. I have no date as to the time he settled there, but suppose it was about the year 1800, having been raised in Pennsylvania. He married a Miss Thompson, of a large and clever family in the neighborhood of Germantown. I think her father was a pioneer Baptist preacher. The Thompson family were quite numerous fifty years ago, most of them moving afterwards to

Indiana, several of whom were preachers. As far back as 1820, Mr. Currens was doing a large business and had accumulated quite a good property. He had always a large number of apprentices and one or two Journey men, and doing business for forty or fifty years the list of young men who learned their trade with him would be a very long one. For the farmers of substance sought this situation for their sons, and afterwards started them in the business which was very profitable.

My first recollections in Germantown were of Mr. Curren's tanner boys, for they had the credit of doing all the mischief in that vicinity. When a small boy going to school, the road passed through the tan yard and the old man spent his time going to and from his tan yard to his residence off a little hill above, with his faithful white dog just ahead, which enabled the boys to tell when he was coming and he would find them all very busy. His hired labour cost him but little except the board of his apprentices. Leather was in demand every where and his profits were great. He bought land in Ohio and Indiana with his surplus and when he died had the largest estate in that part of the country. He lived to old age, his wife died several years before him. He had four children who lived to mature age, two still living. His three daughters married young men who had lived or were living in his family learning the tanner's trade. Messrs. Jno. Gregg, James Savage and Robert Dimmitt. After their marriage all of these gentlemen became successful merchants, all of Germantown, but Mr. Gregg removed early to Rush County, Indiana, and died a very wealthy land owner of that State. Messrs Savage and Dimmitt were merchants in Germantown for forty or fifty years, both dying not many years since and each having large families and estates. Mrs. Dimmitt still lives in her old homestead, but Mrs. Gregg and Savage have been dead many years, all most estimable women. Mr. Currens youngest child was a son, Elijah T. Currens, about the age of your correspondent, who since his father's death has not remained settled at one place or in one kind of business for any length of time. Speculating, merchandizing, farming, etc., etc. I think he now resides in Texas. Our citizens recollect him as a hardware merchant on Market Street, always an intelligent, clever gentleman, but fond of change and adventure. He was my school mate and friend, and some of my most pleasant recollections are connected with Elijah T. Currens. I would like to meet him again. Mr. Wm. Currens and wife were Baptist, the pioneer Church in Kentucky, and most of their descendants identified themselves with some branch of the Protestant Church.