

*Augusta Census*  
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Description and History of  
Old Bedford Springs  
Trimble County

The Bedford Springs once the scene of elaborate balls and festivities is located about one-half mile south of Bedford just off of Highway No. 42.

One Sunday evening in April 1836, Noah Parker, the owner, and his wife started on a hunt for a turkeys nest, the hunt being one of their evening works. Growing tired of walking they sat down at the foot of a hill where a little stream of water was seething out. Digging a hole with their hands and making acup of pawpaw leaves they drank some of the water and noticed it had a strange mineral taste. After having some of this water analyzed, they found it medicinal. The water is said to be colleviate in nature and especially helpful for ailments of the kidneys. The Parkers then opened the Bedford Springs to the public. Year by year the buildings sprang up till in 1848 the place was at the height of its glory.

Major Nathan Parker, who fell in the Civil War at Wytheville, Virginia, in 1864 was then actively in charge of the place and its one hundred acres ofland.

The grounds were then very beautiful with every foot carpeted with blue grass.

In the summer this would be worn to the bare earth by the many who fling from New Orleans and the south from the yellow fever there, come and loitered on it in the shade to drink the exhilarating water.

Only a few years ago was the cottage torn away in which Lazarus W. Powell spent his vacation in 1851 just before he was elected Governor, and some believe that it was here that his political plans for the coming days were formed as at that time the twilight of the lowering Civil War darkness was fast falling. Below this cottage in a small ravine was the Club house where wines were dispensed that had all the colors of that famous coat and where men drank ~~xxxxxx~~ to conviviality only - above where the club house stood and a little to the west on a small hill stands the old hotel where a few of the many hundreds lodged and all ate in the great ball room which was also used as the dining room.

At the present time this old hotel has been converted into a dwelling house for tenants, who lived there to cultivate the farm which is now in possession of D. L. Bell heirs and Col. C. A. Bell.

The cottages where the vacationists lived with their families have long since disappeared.

It is a good fourth mile from the hotel to the back of the place where the spring house stood.

The building has decayed and been destroyed, but the invigorating waters of the springs still contain its original medicinal qualities.

Tradition says that one night in August 1851, while the ball was in progress and several hundred guests were looking on, the word was brought that cholera had broken out on the grounds. In a few minutes chaos reigned and the morning found those who were not stricken gone.

The grove of beautiful tall trees which surrounds the old hotel offers an ideal location to those who are seeking a choice picnic grounds as well as being able to enjoy the famed water of the Springs.

#### Bibliography

Col. C. A. Bell, druggist and prominent citizen of Bedford, Kentucky  
Dr. W. P. Bell, Bedford, Kentucky  
History of the old Bedford Springs written by Byron Bacon Black for  
Bedford High School Journal, 1916.