The Offices of Fleming County

Kentucky's twenty-sixth county, Fleming, was taken from part of Mason County by legislative act on February 10, 1798. Its original 3,060 square mile territory included part or all of nine other counties. Its biggest loss, 2,540 square miles, came in the winter of 1799/1800 with the formation of Floyd County. Another 180 square miles were ceded to the new Rowan County in 1856. Fleming assumed its current 351 square mile area in 1888 by gaining some additional land from Mason. The 1990 Census counted 12,300 county residents.

Fleming is roughly divided into two geographic sections. The area west of the Pottsville Escarpment is part of the gently rolling Outer Bluegrass, while to the east are the higher and steeper elevations of the Appalachian foothills. The county is drained exclusively by the Licking River, which forms most of its western border with Nicholas and Bath counties, and several key tributaries—Johnson, Fleming, Locust, and Fox creeks and their branches—on which most of Fleming's earlier settlements were located. The county's seat, Flemingsburg, is fifty-seven road miles northeast of downtown Lexington and seventeen miles south of downtown Maysville.

The stream, the town, and the county, in that order, were named for the pioneer surveyor and developer John Fleming (1735-1791). It was on one of his surveys, in June 1784, that Fleming Creek was given his name. Twelve years later, Fleming's half-brother George Stockton laid out the town that was to become the county's seat, and out of affection also named it for Fleming. Michael Cassiday, Stockton's colleague, who was then representing Mason County in the state legislature, is said to have suggested Fleming's name for
the new county as well. It is doubtful that Fleming ever spent more than a few months in the county, though with his establishment in 1788 of a station 3½ miles west of the county seat, it's likely that he would have moved there permanently if he had not died in the spring of 1791.¹

The forty nine post offices within the present boundaries of Fleming County will be located by road miles from the court house in downtown Flemingsburg.

The county's largest community, the fourth class city of Flemingsburg, is centered at the junction of Ky 11, 32, and 57. It was founded by George Stockton who, some ten years before, had built and settled a station half a mile north. In September 1799 Stockton's new town was selected as the county's seat. On or about September 16, 1800 John Faris was appointed the postmaster of what was first called Fleming Court House but was renamed Flemingsburgh in 1815 and Flemingsburg in 1894. Today, what little industry is found in this primarily agricultural county is in Flemingsburg--noteably a U.S. Shoe Corporation plant; Randall-Texton, makers of auto and appliance trim; and Fleming Homes, a builder of pre-fabricated houses. Since its completion in the late 1980s, the Ky 11/32 bypass has attracted commercial development from Flemingsburg's downtown. The city's 1990 population was just under 3,100.

Major John Finley² and several others, while participants in the Thompson Survey Expedition of 1773, discovered and named the Upper Blue Licks on the south side of the Licking River, near the present Ky 57. Finley later claimed and received a Virginia pre-emption to 1,000 acres on both sides of the river to which he
brought his family for permanent settlement in 1796. In 1805 he initiated salt production on the Nicholas County (or south) side of the river and established a small village to serve his work force. On October 8 of that year he opened the Upper Blue Licks post office on the Fleming side, a mile and a half south of the future Battle Run-Sapp post office, and eleven miles southwest of Flemingsburg, which operated till mid June 1835. It was re-established by John F. Clark in Nicholas County on January 20, 1864, but in February 1866 Clark's successor Abraham Shrout moved it back to Fleming County where it remained till it closed for good in June 1873.

Little remains of the once thriving town of Sherburne [sh~r/b~n] on Ky 11 and the Licking River, 11 1/2 miles ssw of Flemingsburg. This site, part of the 9,000 acre John Fowler grant, was acquired in 1802 by Robert Andrews, a native of Sherburne, New York, who, by 1807, had built there a water-powered grist mill. This was joined later by a sawmill, a carding factory, and other businesses so that when the local post office was established on March 5, 1814 it was called Sherburne Mills. John Andrews, who succeeded his father in the family businesses, was the first postmaster and is credited with founding the town for his employees. Shortly after its incorporation on February 17, 1847, the town began to enjoy considerable prosperity with hotels, stores, shops, and a furniture factory. In 1879 the post office became simply Sherburne and closed in late April 1858.

Elizaville, which still has its post office, along with several stores and churches, was an early nineteenth century settlement centering at the junction of the present Ky 32 and 170, 5 1/4 miles
west of Flemingsburg. Its post office may have been established on March 2, 1819 with John St. Clair, postmaster, and is said to have been named for the wife or daughter of an early settler.\(^3\) The town that grew up around the local tavern and post office was laid off in the late spring of 1819 but was not chartered till February 27, 1835.

Sometime before 1792, William Pearce and his family may have settled in the vicinity of the junction of the present Ky 111 and 156, 5 3/4 miles southeast of Flemingsburg. They would have named the town they established there Pearceville but for their neighbors who favored The Poplar Plains, later shortened to Poplar Plains, for its situation in a grove of yellow poplars on a level stretch of land. The local post office opened as Poplar Plains in 1823 with William Pearce (a son?) as postmaster. The town, chartered on January 14, 1831, soon became an important trade center with a woolen factory, tannery, bank, hotel, at least four general stores, several shops, schools, and churches. The post office closed in August 1926, and only the churches and a store or two remain.

Several shortlived ante-bellum post offices have not been located.

One or more descendants of pioneer landowner William Alexander may have had a mill somewhere on Locust Creek, on part of the 700 acre tract William had acquired before his death in 1810. An Alexander Mills post office operated between December 11, 1823 and September 1833 with James Blair and Bennet E. Davis, postmasters.

One of the post offices known to have served communities on Fox Creek was actually called Fox Creek. Though its site remains unknown, it operated between December 23, 1845 and August 1847 with Reason Plummer its only postmaster.
The creek, which heads just northeast of the Fleming-Lewis-Rowan county juncture, is said to have been named for one or more Fox families. We may even be reminded of Arthur Fox, the Mason County surveyor and founder of Washington, who, according to tradition, once fell in the creek, prompting his friend Simon Kenton to suggest that it be named for him on that account. The stream later powered a number of early nineteenth century mills, while the medicinal springs on its upper reaches gave rise to several resorts, each served by some of the post offices discussed below.

The Pine Flat post office, operated by William B. Ham from February 20, 1846 till August 1847, may have been in what became Rowan County in 1856. A number of Hams, including fifty four year old W.B. Ham, are listed in the 1860 Rowan County census.

A post office, unlocated, unexplained, and unknown except for its appearance in the Fleming County Post Office Registers, was Abel. James W. Johnson and Jacob Fulkerson were postmasters during its brief tenure between January 4, 1855 and early September 1857.

The village of Mount Carmel, extending half a mile along Ky 57, centers some 7½ miles northeast of Flemingsburg. Its first settlers, sometime before 1820, are said to have been reminded of the Biblical Mount Carmel. The town was chartered by the legislature in December 1825, and the local post office was established by John B. Clark in 1829. At various times during the nineteenth century the place had a tannery, carding and flour mills, tobacco warehouses, stores, hotels, a tavern, cigar, coffin, and shoe factories, and watch repair and other shops, along with its schools and churches. The post office closed in late July 1915 but was reopened ten years later by Earl
B. Wallingford and closed for good in July 1932. The school, two churches, three stores, and a volunteer fire department still serve the northeast corner of the county.

Around 1820 William Derrick Foudray, the Philadelphia-born son of Samuel who had brought his family to Fleming County in 1806, purchased and settled on some land south of Poplar Plains. He called his settlement Poudrysville [foo/dreez/viuhl] and started its first business, a hatmaker's shop, while his brother Sacheverell opened the local tavern. Later arriving residents changed the community's name to Hillsboro for its site at the western edge of the escarpment.

As Hillsboro the local post office was established on September 19, 1833, with Stephen L. Filson, postmaster, but the town was chartered as Hillsborough on February 18, 1839. The post office name soon adopted the later spelling. Though the town was incorporated as Hillsboro in 1846, it was not until 1893 that the post office name assumed this spelling. By the 1870s the place had become a wholesale center for the region. In 1878 railroad tracks were completed from Johnson (or Flemingsburg) Junction, through Flemingsburg, to Hillsboro as one stage of the projected (but never realized) Covington Flemingsburg and Pound Gap Railroad. Though the town was disincorporated in 1960, it retains its post office, a couple of stores and churches, and a school and is centered at the junction of Ky 111 and 158, 10 3/4 miles sse of Flemingsburg.

About a mile south of John Fleming's Station on the creek bearing his name, the post office of Martha Mills was established on March 2, 1836 with H.T. Pearce, postmaster. This was a misnomer—for there was but one mill there, a grist mill on
Fleming Creek, probably first operated by Robert Andrews, and thus also known as Andrews' Mill. He is said to have named the mill for his wife, the former Martha Dougherty (1766-1816).

In December 1851 this post office was moved 1 1/2 miles south to serve a stage stop and store on the main road between Maysville, Flemingsburg, and Mount Sterling, roughly the route of the present Ky 11. It was renamed Pinhook, a term describing the sharp practices of pioneer storekeepers, and James C. Sousley became its new postmaster. It was renamed Tilton on January 4, 1855 for by then the town, 5 3/4 miles south of Flemingsburg, had been chartered in the name of Dr. Robert Tilton, (ca. 1800-1834), an area physician. The community has survived the post office's closing in May 1905 with a store and a couple of churches. Nothing remains at the Martha Mills site.

The Fleming County community long--and now exclusively--known as Fairview had a post office first called Oak Woods and then (by 1894) Oakwood. At the junction of the present US 68 (the old Maysville-Lexington Turnpike following the main buffalo trace) and Ky 165, 6 3/4 miles west of Elizaville, the post office served this mill town and trade center from August 21, 1846 through June 1918. Hiram B. Burriss was its first postmaster. Local people early remarked on the fair view enjoyed from that site and its many large oak trees. A grocery and two churches remain.

The next post office known to have served a section of the Fox Creek valley was established on February 28, 1849 as Plummer's Mill. Benjamin Plummer (ne 1793), its first postmaster, had acquired the local grist mill from his father-in-law, Henry Severs, and operated
it in his name till his death in January 1866. On January 3, 1862 Samuel Maguire moved this post office about three miles northeast to a site a mile up Stockton’s Creek, a Fox Creek tributary, where he was developing a resort to exploit the local mineral waters. He called his new post office Belle Grove (recorded incorrectly as Bell Grove on the postal register). A month later he changed it to the more appropriate Belle Grove Springs. The following September, for an unknown reason, this post office was again moved, back to Fox Creek, to the site of the old Plummer’s Landing, a short distance below the mouth of Stockton’s where, except for several years following the Civil War, it has remained as Plummers Landing till the present.

On March 25, 1865 Samuel R. Phelps established the Crane Creek post office at or near the mouth of this Fox Creek tributary. In July 1867 his successor, James R. Plummer, moved the post office two miles up Fox Creek, back to the site of Plummer’s Mill where, as Plummers Mills, it operated till July 1877.

Another post office served the Plummers Mills vicinity from March 16, 1904 through February 1907. Hoping to call it Elmo, but finding that name in use in Christian County, postmaster Thomas E. Cooper called it Namo. This small community on the present Ky 32, just east of Fox Creek, and thirteen miles southeast of Flemingsburg, is still officially Plummers Mills but has also been called Butler for a local school (gone) and sometimes Watson’s Store. Whence Elmo and Namo is not known.

Plummers Landing, about 1½ miles above Plummers Mills, was named for the landing and stopping place for drovers maintained there in
the early nineteenth century by Robert Plummer, a brother of Benjamin's. This, the larger of the Plummer communities, also had at least three saw mills, a flour mill or two, and several factories and stores before the turn of the present century. Shortly after the Belle Grove Springs hotel burned in 1876, the resort was abandoned and not a trace of it remains.

White Oak Hill was another little remembered post office. Lloyd's 1863 map shows it on the Rowan County line, on the road that comes down Crane Creek (the present Ky 32). It would thus have been 4½ miles south of Plummer's Mills. The post office operated here from June 2, 1849 through February 1862 with Benjamin Johnson and George W. Littleton, postmasters. Area trees of that variety are the probable source of its name.

Austin R. Saunders and Squire A. Day who co-owned Day's Mill on the Licking River, about 1½ miles south of Locust, and 12½ miles south of Flemingsburg, also ran the local post office known as Pleasant Grove Mills between September 25, 1849 and mid December 1864. Some twenty years later J.B. Day had a store there and continued to operate the mill into the early twentieth century. Nothing marks the site now.

Descendants of Albertis Ringo, a New Jersey-born, Virginia-based Revolutionary War veteran, who brought his family to Kentucky around 1798, built another early Fox Creek mill at what, by the Civil War, was called Farmville. To serve the mill and the small community growing up around it, James Gilmore established the Orange post office on July 26, 1871 which he operated through January 1874. On February 11, 1878 Oliver P. Maxey re-established the post office
about about a mile south and named it Ringo's Mills for by then the Ringo family had added another mill or two to their holdings. The post office closed in late August 1958. Today the small hamlet of Ringo's Mills with its two churches and a small store is best known for its ninety foot long covered bridge where Ky 158 crosses the creek 14\( \frac{1}{2} \) miles sse of Flemingsburg.

Four Fleming County post offices served villages that developed in direct response to the arrival of the Maysville and Lexington (later the Kentucky Central and Louisville and Nashville) Railroad in 1869/70. The first of these, Johnson Junction, served Johnson's Station on land deeded by James Threlkeld Johnson to the railroad which then built the depot and hired him as its first rail and express agent. In the depot Johnson also maintained the community's store and its post office. The office operated from May 9, 1872 till mid December 1919 and from February 13, 1930 through August 1944. From 1877 through 1955 this junction also provided a rail outlet for Flemingsburg by way of the the narrow gauge Cincinnati Flemingsburg and Pound Gap Railroad. Thus this place has since been identified as Flemingsburg Junction. Little remains at this site; the depot at the junction of the present Ky 161 and 170, 5\( \frac{1}{2} \) miles northwest of Flemingsburg, now lies in ruins.

The small village of Cowan still extends for over a mile west along Ky 32 from the L&N tracks, some 8\( \frac{1}{2} \) miles west of Flemingsburg. It and its station and post office, established on June 13, 1872, were named for John Henry Cowan, on whose land the station was located. Frank M. Allan was the first postmaster. The post office closed in late April 1958.
Ewing, Fleming's only other incorporated place, has one of the county's five extant post offices. It too began as a station on the Maysville and Lexington Railroad, two rail miles northeast of Cowan, and 7½ miles west of Flemingsburg. In May 1871 Robert J. Ewing, Jr. (1815-1884) who had acquired his father's holdings, donated land to the railroad for the depot and right-of-way. On November 10, 1873 he established the local post office which he named for his family. The town, chartered on March 27, 1880, is now a sixth class city with a 1990 population of 390 and the trade center for northwest Fleming County.

The last of the stations to be established on what became the Kentucky Central (L&N) started as Elizaville Station for the town it served, 1½ miles southeast. When the railroad's local agent, Thomas W. Slicer, petitioned for a post office he successfully submitted the name Nepton for Neppie (or Penelope), his recently deceased infant daughter. The Nepton post office, with Thomas J. Dillon, its first postmaster, operated from April 13, 1881 through April 1958. The station too took this name as did the community, incorporated in March 1886 around its bank, hotel, several stores, three flour mills, tobacco warehouse, school, and churches. The place survives with some homes and a couple of churches just south of where Ky 367 crosses the tracks, 6½ miles west of Flemingsburg.

From June 23, 1874 through 1891 the post office of Franklin's Mills served Henry B. Franklin's saw and grist mills and his spoke and axehandle factory on the west side of Sand Lick Fork of Fox Creek, 7½ miles southeast of Flemingsburg. James Kidwell, the local store-keeper, was the first postmaster. Nothing remains of this once import-
ant settlement but some homes off Ky 32, on the road to the Mt. Vernon Cemetery.

The 2½ mile long Licking River tributary identified on current maps as Sap Branch (sic) has always been called, locally, Battle Run. It was on its banks that, in 1791, a battle was fought between a band of Indians and some Bourbon County settlers under John Fleming in which Fleming was seriously wounded. On December 14, 1874, J. Fleming McCall established the Battle Run post office where the present Ky 57 crosses the creek, 1½ miles north of the Upper Blue Licks, and 9½ miles southwest of Flemingsburg. It lasted but five months, and was re-established on August 15, 1882 as Sapp for one or more local families (perhaps George Sapp's), with Benjamin F. Summers, postmaster. From March 30, 1908 through December 2, 1920, when it closed for good, the post office was again Battle Run. A church and some homes survive.

Another of the Fox Creek mills to give rise to a settlement and post office was Muses Mills where Rt. 1013 crosses the creek, 15½ miles ese of Flemingsburg. The post office was established on May 4, 1876 with George M. Manchester, postmaster, and named for the local grain and sawmills which were run by descendants of George Muse, Sr., a Revolutionary War veteran, who died there in 1827. Most of Manchester's successors as postmaster-storekeepers were members of the Muse family. The post office still operates in Compton's grocery.

The American agrarian movement known as the National Grange of the Patrons of Husbandry, founded in 1867, may or may not have been the name source of Grange City now at the junction of Ky 111
and 211, 14 3/4 miles ese of Flemingsburg. According to some historians, the local settlement had that name at least by 1865, and a Mr. Grange had been instrumental in its establishment. But no such family has been identified in nineteenth century county records. The first postmaster of this office, in operation from June 27, 1876 through November 1959, was Oliver B. Denton. The place became an actual city when it was incorporated on April 28, 1886. At its peak, before 1900, the town had at least two stores, a flour mill, wagonworks, a tobacco warehouse, and a hotel.

The shortlived Royse post office (between February 11, 1878 and early March 1879) was named by the first of its three postmasters, Basil R. Hargett, for his wife Mary's family. Before the end of 1878 he was succeeded by John R. Royse and, in mid February 1879, by Thomas U. Likes. It is thus very likely that the office was on Rock Lick Creek, just north and east of Tar Branch and the present Ky 158, one mile east of Fox Creek, and a mile south of the Ringo Mills post office.

In the summer of 1880 a local storekeeper, Pleasant E. Million, petitioned for a post office to be named Sugar Loaf for the hill, one mile west, or Foxport for the landing on the nearby North Fork of the Licking River. Foxport it became, and operated from September 20, 1880 through July 1915. By the end of the nineteenth century, Foxport, which may have been named for the Mason County family (not for the stream which is several miles south) had at least three stores, a grain and lumber dealer, and a tobacco house. The viable hamlet now lies at the junction of Ky 344 and 1902, 2 3/4 miles southeast of Mt. Carmel, and less than a quarter of a mile from
the North Fork which forms the Lewis County line.

The community now called Goddard had many names. It was based on a Methodist church organized around 1810 by the Virginia-born pioneers John and Joseph Goddard that was always known as Goddard's Chapel. Little is known of the early history of the community. By the early 1880s it was identified on records and maps as Hamburg, for a local Ham or Hamm family, and may also have been called Hammond's Store. On October 27, 1881 John T. Hammond, the storekeeper, opened the local post office as Sandford. This office (and later the community itself) took the Goddard name on April 14, 1902. The office closed in late April 1958. Briefly, before the First World War, the community may also have borne the nickname Tuffy for the "rough and tough" character of some of its residents.

Sandford is said to have been named for some Fleming County families, though one can't rule out its location some six miles up Sand Lick Fork of Fox Creek. The community, also on Ky 32, eight miles southeast of Flemingsburg, once had as many as three stores and two flour mills at one time but is now notable only for its church, a store, and the sixty-six foot long covered bridge across the creek that one must travel through to get to the church.

Fleming County's famed nineteenth century resort, Fox Springs, was at the head of Brushy Fork (now Park Lake), another Fox Creek branch. More precisely, it was just south of the lake, on or near the present Rt. 1013, a mile south of Ky 559, and 11½ miles east of Flemingsburg. The chalybeate springs and a sixty room hotel and several nearby cottages attracted visitors from the entire upper south and Ohio valley for much of the century. On March 13, 1882
Otho Estill opened the local post office and named it Otho (probably pronounced ohth/oh) for himself. The office closed in June of the following year when Estill moved to the new settlement of Wallingford where he opened a grocery store. The Otho post office was reopened on March 15, 1890 by James T. Bowman, a storekeeper and blacksmith, to serve two local sawmills, his store, and some other businesses till he closed it for good in late January 1897. By then the resort had also closed.

The settlement to which Otho Estill moved in the summer of 1883 was at the head of Sand Lick Fork, on the present Ky 559, 6 1/2 miles east of Flemingsburg. This vicinity is said to have been settled by several related families of Carpenter and may have been known before and during the Civil War as Oak Grove for the many local oak trees. In 1879 Richard Carpenter built what he called Carpenters Chapel Methodist Church on the site of the present Wallingford Methodist Church. On April 19, 1883 John S. Carpenter opened the local post office. His first proposed name Sylvania was replaced by Wallingford for one or more of the descendants of the four Wallingford brothers who had pioneered much of the Fleming, Mason, and Lewis county border country. M.P. Wallingford was a justice of the peace in nearby Mt. Carmel. While Otho Estill was postmaster from October 1893 to June 1897 the community had two general stores, Otho's grocery, and several other businesses. The post office still serves most of eastern Fleming County.

Sunset was the name given to a settlement on a ridge from which a beautiful sunset could be seen. By February 10, 1890, when William W. Evans opened its post office, it was already an established commu-
nity with a mill, school, and Graham's store. The office closed in mid February 1908, and only some homes now mark the site on Ky 158, two miles southwest of Hillsboro.

The Crains post office served the small community of Craintown on the present Ky 57, four miles southwest of Flemingsburg. It operated between May 7, 1890 (with John W. Shockley, the first postmaster) and June 1904, and was named for one or more nearby Crain families, perhaps John L's.

When George W. Hutton set about to establish a post office in his store across from the mouth of Mudlick Branch of Fox Creek, three miles northeast of Muses Mills, he proposed to call it Hutton. Instead it operated as Ryan from June 6, 1890 through February 1939. The Ryans were the family of Irish-born John M. Ryan who arrived in Fleming County in 1865 and became a prominent Flemingsburg and county official and businessman. Among his fourteen children were James H. (ne 1866) who later ran a Flemingsburg grocery, livery stable, and seed business.

The aptly named Hilltop post office was located at the junction of the present Ky 57 and 170, nine miles southwest of Flemingsburg. According to postmaster-designate Charles Grant Callahan's Site Location Report at least four names were proposed--Central, Hilltop, Sylvan, and Cable, but as Hilltop the office operated from March 3, 1892 through April 1905. Now a store and Christian church serve the area between Sherburne and Cowan.12

Postmaster-designate Thomas J. Call's proposed name Callville for a crossroads office three miles south of Mt. Carmel, was replaced by Beechburg for the local trees. The office operated from October
31, 1892 through April 1906. Only the local church now marks the site.

Mason and Fleming county pioneer Daniel Peck (1753-1820) early brought his family to the ridge, some 7½ miles southwest of Flemingsburg, that has since borne his name. The rural post office of Peck's Ridge, established by John W. Borders on August 25, 1893, served a store (gone) at the junction of the present Rts. 1123 and 1325 through June 1904. There is nothing there now.

Just east of Anderson Branch (of Brush Fork of Fox Creek) and four miles north of Muses Mills, was the Limerick post office, established by and named for its first postmaster Albert Limerick (1841-1898). It operated from March 3, 1894 through August 1903.

A family of Dales (probably John's) most likely gave its name to the Dalesburg post office on the present Ky 57, 4 3/4 miles northeast of Flemingsburg. This office served a store, church, and school from May 9, 1894 through July 1915. James H. Morrison was the first postmaster. Only the church survives.

Two relatively shortlived post offices between Pea Ridge and the Licking River's North Fork have not been precisely located. One, Bowman, operated by James T. and John S. Bowman from July 14, 1898 through April 1906, may have been in the vicinity of what's given on current maps as Bowman's Springs. According to James T.'s Site Location Report, it was four miles from Foxport and five miles from Wallingford.

The other, the inexplicably named Tacana, served first postmaster Thomas R. Stevens' store from November 9, 1903 through April 1906. His Site Location Report located the office two miles southwest of
Tharp (in Lewis County). It may have been in the vicinity of Fox Springs, and thus could have been a successor of the Otho post office.

When the once crossroads village of Concord, on the present Ky 11, three miles north of Sherburne, applied for a post office, its only postmaster Fletcher M. Hopkins proposed to name it Threemile for its location at the head of Three Mile Run. (Concord was then in use by a Lewis County post office.) Instead the office operated between April 7, 1899 and mid July 1904 as Balm. Why this name is not known. Perhaps, like Concord, it had a scriptural reference. One recalls the "balm of Gilead", several varieties of a resinous substance with medicinal and cosmetic applications much valued and traded in Old Testament times. The local school and several stores are gone and only the Concord Church remains.

Sometime in the late nineteenth century, Lee Cooper opened a store and sawmill on Crane Creek, a mile or so from the Rowan County line. One of his sons, George Cooper, established the local post office on April 28, 1899. He would call it Cooper (then in use in Wayne County) or Nishi, but it operated, at several vicinity sites, through 1933 as Nisi [naː/seɪ]. County historians have never come to terms with Nishi. From the date of its establishment, one could wonder if the office was named for the Japanese foreign minister who, the preceding April, had negotiated with Russia's minister to Japan an agreement to recognize Korea's independence while reaffirming Japan's interest in that country's economic development. But who knows why that would have appealed to Mr. Cooper.

Where the present Ky 559 (the Fox Springs Road) is joined by the McCann Road, nearly four mile east of Flemingsburg, was the Sutton
post office. With Miles H. Doyle and Frank P. Carpenter, its only two postmasters, it was probably named for Thomas P. Sutton (1814-1900), who lived nearby, and served a rural settlement between June 7, 1901 and mid March 1905. The local store and school are also gone.

According to tradition, residents of a community on the present Ky 211, a mile and a half north of the Rowan County line, were seeking a home for their new post office when a stranger named Coldfax (sic) entered upon the discussion and suggested his own name. Thus the office, established on June 12, 1901, with Allen Henderson, post­master, was called Colfax. In 1903 his successor, James S. Davis, had the office moved some two hundred yards south to serve the community of Spring Hill (whose name then in use by a Hickman County post office). Over the years, the pronunciation of the name shifted inexplicably from kohl/faex to Kahl/faex. After several more moves, the most recent at a point 18 1/4 miles sse of Flemingsburg, this office closed in late May 1958. Could the office, though, have honored President Grant's first vice president, Schuyler Colfax of Indiana (1823-1885), for whom a number of other communities and several counties in our country were also named?

Luther A. Weir, learning that his family's name was already in use by a Muhlenberg County post office, named his new office Acme. He alone operated it at the junction of the present Rts. 597 (the Cherry Grove Road) and 3299, four miles north of Flemingsburg, from March 25, 1903 through April 1906. The name's derivation is not known.

The shortlived (January 19, 1910 through October 1911) Big Run post office was named for a Fox Creek tributary. It was probably located at or just below the mouth of Henderson Branch of the Run,
in the vicinity of the Big Run School and the Hedger Chapel Church, 3\(\frac{1}{2}\) miles north of Plummers Landing. Frank P. Henderson was its only postmaster.

Sharkey, Fleming's last named post office, occupied several sites in Fleming and Rowan counties between July 10, 1913 and August 1958. It was established by Lewis S. Ratliff at or near the junction of the present Ky 158 and 801, some fifty feet north of the county line. It was discontinued in mid February 1927 but re-established on March 16, 1928 by Samuel N. Sorrell on the Rowan County side of 801, one mile south. On December 9, 1939, for the greater convenience of its patrons, the office was returned by Hiram C. Eldridge to its earlier site where it closed on August 31, 1958, the same day as its neighbor, Ringo Mills, 2\(\frac{3}{4}\) miles north.

The Sharkey name has long puzzled historians in both counties. According to local tradition, it may have been named for a resident, a professional boxer, who had fought under the name St. Ratliff Sharkey. This was probably an assumed name, they say, since there is no record of a Sharkey family in those parts. Some Rowan County people once came up with the unlikely tale that the place was named for a champion rooster.

Five of Fleming's forty nine post offices (Flemingsburg, Ewing, Hillsboro, Wallingford, and Elizaville) still operate. The first two continue to serve incorporated places. Twenty three offices served towns or villages at some time, while most of the others centered on at least a local store, church, and/or mill. Eleven offices bore names that were not those first intended for them. Seven served
places with other names. Seven had name-changes.

Twenty one offices bore the names of local or area persons or families. Eight were named for their locations or situations, or referred to geographic features in their vicinity. Two were named for distant places, while to four were given the names of local or nearby features (two streams, a ridge, and the Upper Blue Licks). Local mills gave their names to six offices. One (Grange City) was probably named for a local organization (though its name might have been a local person's). Eight name derivations are as yet unknown. Four offices (Alexander's Mills, Fox Creek, Pine Flat, and Abel) have not been precisely located.

FOOTNOTES

1. R. S. Cotterill, "John Fleming, Pioneer of Fleming County"
   Register of the Kentucky Historical Society, Vol. 49, July 1951, Pp. 193-201

2. Major John Finley (1748-1837), a surveyor and Revolutionary War veteran, was Judge Advocate of the Northwest Territory in 1792 and represented Fleming County in the Kentucky legislature from 1800 to 1804. He is not to be confused with Daniel Boone's friend, the Indian trader John Findley, who maintained a store at Eskippakithiki in 1752-53.

3. Some say Eliza was the wife of pioneer James Chochan, Sr. (1783-1854), but biographical records indicate that his two wives were Jane and Sophia. Others contend that Eliza was the daughter of the early Fleming County house carpenter John Cochran (1784-1863) who did have a daughter named Eliza.
4. cf Robert M. Rennick, "Pinhook As A Place Name in Indiana and Kentucky" *Midwestern Journal of Language and Folklore*, XII, Spring 1986, Pp. 38-42

5. This family's name is given as Seaver, Seevers, and even Secors in other historical records.

6. Crain Creek is said to have been named for a local family of which nothing more is known.

7. The Orange post office name remains a puzzle. Though no families named Orange are listed in Fleming County's 1860 Census, early records show that a John Orange, son of William, was bound to William Goddard in 1806.

8. Cincinnati Flemingsburg and Pound Gap was the first of several names that a series of owners gave to this rail line that also operated from Hillsboro to the Junction till 1907.

9. Penelope Slicer, nicknamed Neppie, was born on October 22, 1872 and died on October 12 of the following year.

10. The hill called Sugar Loaf was named for its resemblance to a loaf of concentrated sugar.

11. Otho Estill was called "Oath" by his kin and neighbors.

12. According to Martha Royse, the Fleming County historian, this community may also have been named for an area family of Hills.

REFERENCES


3. Cotterill, Robert S. History of Fleming County, Kentucky: The First One Hundred Years, 1780-1880, undated manuscript in the Fleming County Public Library


5. Dickey, Rev. John J. "History of Fleming County" columns in the Fleming Gazette, ca. early 1930, bound in the Library of the Kentucky Historical Society

6. Fischer, Daniel T. Condensed History of Fleming County, Kentucky, Flemingsburg, 1908


8. Ibid. July 11, 1974, Second Section


11. Royse, Martha of Poplar Plains, Ky., interviewed by the writer on September 26, 1977

12. United States Post Office Department: Site Location Reports--Fleming County Post Offices, National Archives (Washington, D.C.)

13. "William Derrick Foudray", The Fleming Democrat, April 4, 1876
FLEMING COUNTY, KY. POST OFFICES

1. FLEMINGSBURGH (C.H.)- established 7/1/1801 as Fleming C.H., John Faris; 1/1/1802, Wm. Robinson... (By 1829, if not sooner, it had become Flemingsburgh C.H.)...

2. UPPER BLUE LICK- 10/1/1805, John Finley; 4/1/1814, Fielding Belt... 3/3/1829, David L. Finley; Disc. 6/13/1835; Re-est. 2/5/1866, Abraham L. Shroout; 3/11/1872, A.M. Ryan; 4/21/1873, John Templeman; Disc. 6/20/1873;

3. SHERBURN MILLS- 4/1/1815, John Andrews... 12/16/1818, John Andrews... 1/20/1876, Wm. C. Newcomb; Disc. 7/6/1876; Re-est. 8/4/1876, Saunders E. Ringo; name changed to Sherburne, 8/19/1879, Saunders E. Ringo; 5/18/1883, Wm. B. Trumbo...

4. POPULAR PLAINS- 10/31/1826, Wm. Pearce; 10/11/1833, H.T. Pearce... 2/18/1914, Elizabeth B. Dearing; Disc. effective 8/5/1926 (mail to Flemingsburg);

5. ELIZAVILLE- 1/31/1831, Morton Greene; 7/26/1837, Garrett Chorde (sic).

6. ALEXANDER'S MILLS- 7/8/1831, Bennet E. Davis; Disc. 9/19/1833;

7. MOUNT CARMEL- 11/24/1833, John B. Clark; 12/20/1834, Charles G. Nutt... 1/16/1915, Wm. F. Byron; Disc. 7/31/1915 (mail to Flemingsburg); Re-est. 8/22/1925, Earl B. Wallingford;

8. HILLSBORO- 9/19/1833, Stephen L. Filson; 4/21/1837, Lacheverall (T) Pourdrey (T); 3/2/1842, Henry Pickrel (sic)... (by the 1850s, it was known as Hillsborough)... 1/16/1890, John H. Hawkins; name changed to Hillsboro, 4/5/1893, Humphrey A. Day; 5/20/1897, John H. Hawkins...
9. MARTHA MILLS- 3/2/1836, H.T. Pearce; 4/24/1839, Simpson C. Duty; ... 5/17/1849, Wm. T. Howe; name changed to Pin Hook, 12/19/1851, James C. Sousley; name changed to Tilton, 1/4/1855, Wm. C. Sousley; 6/19/1861, Isaac F. Burgess.... 5/14/1897, Isaac F. Burgess; Disc. 5/9/1905, effective 5/31/1905 (mail to Flemingsburg);

10. LICKING- 1/5/1837, James Hunt; Disc. 4/4/1839;

11. (late RICE'S CROSS ROADS in Bath Co.) Changed to Licking in Fleming Co., 4/2/1840, Robert M. Elliott; 8/16/1842, John C. McGlasson; Disc. 4/28/1843; Re-est. 12/10/1844, Washington McIntire; Disc. 8/23/1845; could this also be Rowan Co?

12. FOX CREEK- 12/23/1845, Reason Plummer; Disc. 8/19/1847;

13. PINE FLAT- 2/20/1846, Wm. B. Ham; Disc. 8/19/1847;

14. OAK WOODS- 8/21/1846, Hiram B. Burriss; 4/8/1847, Alfred G. Ross... 4/27/1876, Mrs. Clemy (sic) F. Throckmorton; Disc. 8/17/1876; Re-est. 9/12/1876, Wm. H. Payne; 3/24/1882, George L. Carter; name changed to Oakwood, 12/7/1894, James T. Jackson; 6/28/1897, Wm. D. Harvin.... 12/27/1917, Omar B. Sousley; Disc. 6/29/1918 (mail to Ewing);

15. PLUMMER'S MILL- 2/8/1849, Benjamin Plummer; name changed to Bell Grove, 1/3/1862, Samuel Maguire; name changed to Bell Grove Springs, 3/19/1862, Samuel Maguire; name changed to Plummer's Landing, 9/10/1862, James W. Lansdown; Disc. 11/8/1865; Re-est. 5/4/1869, Jacob Overly (?); 6/21/1871, Thompson W. Cooper....

16. WHITE OAK HILL- 6/2/1849, Benjamin Johnson; 2/2/1855, Geo. W. Littleton; 10/17/1855, Benjamin G. Johnson; Disc. 2/26/1862;

17. PLEASANT GROVE MILLS- 9/25/1849, Austin R. Saunders; 3/7/1860, Squire A. Day; Disc. 12/15/1864;

18. ABEL- 1/4/1855, James W. Johnson; 9/25/185?, Jacob D. Fulkerson; Disc. 9/8/1857;
FLEMING COUNTY, KY. POST OFFICES (3)


20. ORANGE- 7/26/1871, James Gilmore; Disc. 2/3/1874;

21. JOHNSON JUNCTION- 5/9/1872, James T. Johnson; 3/19/1887, Elsie C. Hawkins... 2/1/1916, Wm. D. Harvin; Disc. 12/15/1919 (mail to Flemingsburg); Re-est. 2/13/1930, John T. Johnson; Disc. 8/31/1944 (mail to Flemingsburg);

22. COWAN- 6/13/1872, Frank M. Allan; 9/9/1874, Coleman Buchanan; 12/17/1875, John H. Cowan...

23. EWING- 11/10/1873, Robert Ewing; 9/18/1884, Wm. B. Sherwood...

24. FRANKLIN'S MILLS- 6/23/1874, James Kidwell; 1/11/1875, Charles L. Dudley; 2/24/1876, Henry B. Franklin; 3/28/1878, John S. Plummer; 11/7/1879, Wm. H. Hinton; Disc. 12/31/1891 (mail to Plummer's Landing);

25. BATTLE RUN- 12/14/1874, J. Fleming McCall; 2/17/1875, Geo. W. Alexander; Disc. 5/24/1875; ⇒ #34 (sapp)


27. GRANGE CITY- 6/27/1876, Oliver B. Dent (s); 12/11/1879, Simpson R. Newman... Disc. 11/30/1959
FLEMING COUNTY, KY. POST OFFICES (4)


Disc. 8/31/1958


30. FOXPORT- 9/20/1880, Pleasant E. Million; 5/22/1893, John W. Martin; 6/12/1897, Pleasant E. Million; 3/9/1914, Wm. L. Markwell; Disc. 7/31/1915 (mail to Flemingsburg);

31. NEPTON- 4/13/1881, Thomas J. Dillon; 3/24/1887, James W. Myall...

Disc. 4/30/1958


Disc. 4/30/1958

33. OTHO- 3/13/1882, Otho W. Estill; Disc. 7/26/1883 (papers to Wallingford); Re-est. 5/15/1890, James T. Bowman; 10/26/1894, Charles W. Bowman, appointment rescinded 6/11/1895; 3/25/1896, Wm. B. Salmon, appointment rescinded 5/9/1896; Disc. 1/30/1897 (mail to Wallingford);

34. SAPP- 8/15/1882, Benjamin F. Summers; 6/7(?)/1883, Geo. P. Dudley... 7/26/1907, Thomas C. Boone; name changed to Battle Run, 3/30/1908, Thomas C. Boone; 2/28/1916, John C. McMullough; Disc. 12/31/1920 (mail to Ewing);

35. WALLINGFORD- 4/19/1883, John S. Carpenter; 3/7/1888, Joseph Plummer... 10/7/1893, Otho W. Estill; 6/4/1897, Geo. S. Ross....
FLEMING COUNTY, KY. POST OFFICES (5)

36. SUNSET- 2/10/1890, Wm. W. Evans; 2/28/1898, George W. Sousley; Disc. 1/27/1908, effective 2/15/1908 (mail to Hillsboro);

37. CHAINS- 5/7/1890, John W. Shockley; 8/6/1892, Leslie E. Swetnam (?); 5/3/1893, John W. Shockley; 7/8/1899, Andrew J.H. Lewis; Disc. 5/31/1904, effective 6/18/1904 (mail to Flemingsburg);

38. RYAN- 6/6/1890, George W. Hutton; 3/12/1894, Wm. R. Hull; Disc. 2/28/1939 (m. to Muses Mills);

39. HILLTOP- 3/3/1892, Charles G. Callahan; 5/6/1895, Leslie E. Swetnam; 5/17/1901, John D. Sousley; Disc. 3/25/1905, effective 4/29/1905 (mail to Ewing);

40. BEECHBURG- 10/31/1892, Thomas J. Call; 11/17/1898, Alfred H. Ferren; 6/3/1901, Thomas H. Elrod; Disc. 4/10/1906, effective 4/30/1906 (mail to Wallingford);

41. PECKS RIDGE- 8/25/1893, John W. Borders; 7/9/1897, James A. Glass; 5/1/1903, John M. House; Disc. 6/6/1904, effective 6/30/1904 (mail to Flemingsburg);

42. LIMERICK- 3/3/1894, Albert Limerick; 4/12/1899, Calvin Hester; 3/6/1903, Joseph P. Webb; Disc. 8/14/1903, effect. 8/31/1903 (papers to Muses Mills);

43. DALESBURG- 5/9/1894, James H. Morrison; 12/16/1895, James L. Markwell; 3/20/1905, Foster W. Strode; Disc. 7/31/1915 (mail to Flemingsburg);

44. BOWMAN- 7/14/1898, James T. Bowman; 12/31/1902, John S. Bowman; Disc. 4/10/1906, effective 4/30/1906 (mail to Wallingford);

45. BALM- 4/7/1899, Fletcher M. Hopkins; Disc. 7/7/1904, effect. 7/15/1904 (mail to Flemingsburg);

46. MISI- 4/28/1899, George Cooper; 5/1/1907, Newton P. Richardson; Disc. 12/30/1923 (m. to Sime).
FLEMING COUNTY, KY. POST OFFICES (6)

47. SUTTON- 6/7/1901, Miles H. Doyle; 9/20/1902, Frank P. Carpenter; Disc. 2/24/1905, effective 3/15/1905 (mail to Flemingsburg);


49. NAMO- 3/16/1903, Thomas E. Cooper; 5/31/1904, Lizzie Plummer; 10/12/1904, Wilford N. Bishop; Disc. 1/30/1907, effective 2/28/1907 (mail to Plummers Landing);

50. ACME- 3/25/1903, Luther A. Weir; Disc. 4/14/1906, effective 4/30/1906 (mail to Flemingsburg);

51. TACOMA- 11/9/1903, Thomas R. Stevens; 3/9/1906, Edgar W. Bowman; Disc. 4/10/1906, effective 4/30/1906 (mail to Wallingford);

52. BIG RUN- 1/19/1910, Frank B. Henderson; Disc. 10/31/1911 (mail to Goddard);

53. SHARKEY- 7/10/1913, Lewis H. Ratliff; 3/18/1922, (though assumed acting position on 12/28/1921), Jennie L. Ratliff; Disc. effective 2/15/1927 (mail to Ringo's Mills); Re-est. 3/16/1928, Samuel N. Sorrell (in Rowan Co.)

To Flem Co. 12/19/1939; Roscoe E. Pennington
A. change 2/25/1946; Disc. 8/31/1956 (m to Hillsboro)
Fayette County, Kentucky Post Offices

1. Lexington C.H.- Post 10/11/1994, James Ninth Brand...
   Joseph Ficklin; 7/22/1841, Thomas L. Redd;
   3/29/1843, Joseph Ficklin...

2. Donnerail- (as an office)
   3/10/1826, James Hutchison; 10/11/1834, Alexander
   Campbell; to Scott Co. on or before 9/9/1835, Jeremiah
   Delph; back to Fayette Co. as Carrollton, 3/13/1838.
   Jeremiah Delph; name changed to Delphoton, 8/9/1838.
   Jeremiah Delph; Disc. 3/23/1844; Re-est. 2/12/1850,
   Dudley Nunnelley; Disc. 8/28/1851;

3. Athens- 1826 (cross Plains (1819-1826)
   Hervey Bledsoe; 8/14/1833, Samuel B. Todd;
   9/6/1837, George W. Wyatt.... 10/9/1908, James H.
   Moores; Disc. 7/31/1909 (Mail to Lexington);

4. Yarnallton- 2/14/1844, Isaac N. Yarnall; Disc. 3/11/1850;
   Re-est. 11/14/1879, Patrick H. Harkins; 3/2/1881, George
   H. Buford.... 1/30/1915, John Lawvill; Disc. 10/15/1917,
   (mail to Paynes Depot);

5. Marble Creek- 2/21/1848, John M. Taul; (in Jessamine Co.)
   Disc. 11/30/1848; Re-est. 2/22/1849, John M. Taul;
   6/19/1849, Benjamin M. Taul; 10/29/1853, John M. Taul;
   Disc. 1/4/1859; back to Fayette Co. about this time or
   by 2/8/1860 when re-est. with Wm. S. Johnson as post-
   master; Disc. 2/6/1865;

6. Walnut Hill- 12/7/1850, Alexander A. Patteson (sic-?)
   Disc. 5/9/1855; Re-est. 9/6/1855, George W. Cunningham;
   Disc. 9/12/1856; Re-est. 10/9/1856, Thomas Lavin;
   Disc. 11/8/1865; Re-est. 11/22/1870, Claude C. Chinn;
   2/7/1871, James F. Downing.... 2/23/1900, Wm. L. Land;
   Disc. 5/14/1901, effective 5/31/1901 (papers to Lexington);

7. Cleaveland- 8/27/1853, Benjamin F. Matts (?); Disc. 12/17/
   1857; Re-est. 3/23/1858, Green B. Igo; 1/4/1860, Julius
   Hacker; Disc. 2/21/1862; Re-est. 5/9/1863, Abijah B.
   Gilbert.... 12/15/1865, John B. Green (at this time it
   was in Madison Co. but back in Fayette Co. by 1/27/1866
   when James Roberts became postmaster; (also around this time
   the office was spelled Cleaveland); 5/8/1867, Julius Hacker;
   3/26/1869, John P. Gun; Disc. 6/7/1871; Re-est. 1/29/1872,
   T.G. Hacker; 2/19/1874, Thomas Sewell.... 11/15/1919,
   James S. Kelley; Disc. 11/20/1928, effective 11/30/1928
   (mail to Lexington);