HANCOCK COUNTY
District 1

SCENIC VIEWS
(Data given by Judge G. W. Newman and others).

County Judge G. W. Newman has worked out a road beautification pro-
gram for Highway U.S. 460 east of Hawesville. He expects work to begin by
the first of June. These "lookouts" are each to be 225 ft. long, 100 ft.
wide with a 40 foot parking space for automobiles, with a wall of masonry
on the river side four ft. high and two and half wide. Improved forestry
methods will be used in clearing the space overlooking the Ohio at the
three observation points as 60 of the 100 ft. in width will be outside the
wall. One lookout will be placed about two miles east of Hawesville on a
crest of a hill known as "dug" hill in the vicinity of Indian Lake. The
lover of scenic beauty will linger long after the first glance. Across the
Ohio is Indiana, a level-land bordering the river and spreading fan-like
towards the hills that more than half encircle it. At the feet of the
observer is the broad river and at the water's edge hidden by the trees,
the tracks of the L & N R. straight before one, the river points towards
a high promontory six miles upstream where Lafayette's boat was wrecked in
1824 which bears the name of Rock Island from the rough passage of steamers
around the point, and Lafayette Spring from the spring that gushes out from
under an overhanging rock.

Tradition has fixed the illustrious Frenchman there on his tour of
the country a half a century after he came to join Washington, and a tablet
marks the spot of the farmer's cabin where Lafayette was entertained.

To the left there is a longer view of the Ohio, with Cannelton and
Tell City & Troy within vision, a full 15 miles of the river and surround-
ing country seen without moving from the "lookout" and the stranger than
realizes why Judge Newman calls them "lookouts" instead of just observation platforms. And all this picture hung before one within a mile or two of Hawesville. Mrs. Newman is the possessor of many acres of Hancock county land. Farther east towards Cloverport she owns the Jeffery Cliff, a bold rocky headland that rises toward the river, jutting from the surrounding lower lands to stand far above the country round-about, one massive rock of 140 acres on the top an ancient Indian fort where red man built their wigwams when danger neared. This huge rock is formed in the shape of a hand with five large jutting fingers. The jagged side of these fingers are literally covered with beautiful wild flowers and ferns. Hepatica, Shooting stars, cactus, trilliums, and Indian pinks, a perfect rainbow of color. In the palm of the hand of this marvelous formation is a large natural amphitheatre with lovely little streams winding their way in and out of the rocks and undergrowth. On the hottest day in summer the picnicker will always find this a delightfully cool spot. This cliff was named for an eccentric Englishman who came here in 1870 and lived atop the rock for many years. A beautiful bathing beach within a half mile from this cliff invites to water sport the shelving slope of such gentle grade that danger is reduced to a minimum. When the forestry experts have finished the "lookouts" alongside the highway, with the Kentucky hills a background for a wide picture, a conveniently arranged assortment of beauty spots will lure many to pause, to stay longer and probably to establish summer homes.
Hawesville's birth is co-incident with the establishment of the County in 1829 and throughout the century in which it has been a seat of government life has been unusually tranquil, and industry that has built no smoke stacks but drawn its wealth from the soil, has made its appearance there.

It was once a great mining center. Ninety-six years ago an English company sent representatives to Hawesville to open coal mines, and for the next several decades the product was barged to river ports. This industry has practically ceased with the passing of the River Traffic.

Now Hawesville has found her greatest commercial distinction in another field. To understand why Postmaster Ed. Salms requires a postoffice building surprisingly large for the size of the town isn't hard if one stays long enough to hear about the mail order business that has advertised Hawesville far and wide. For Hawesville is a typical old-fashioned Southern County seat with life centering about its court house. It hasn't a single factory to employ labor and no manufacturing plant. But in the mail order business it has an unique industry and one that within less than a decade grew to large proportions.

Before you are in Hawesville very long some one mentions the "Clements place." three miles south on the Pellville road, where Elmer Clements' 50 acre farm is annually returning several times the cost of the land, through growing Sweet Potatoes plants and a visit to it is a revelation.

At the outskirts of Hawesville the road to the Clements Farm turns sharply to the right off the Louisville Highway U.S.#60 and the remainder of the trip is over dirt road. The prospects are not at all inviting. There are bluffs hedging the narrow fields and scraggly undergrowth marches across the hills and one used to good farming sections is about to despair.

Then a turn in the winding road and a country store is seen. That is the end of the quest but it has few indications of hidden wealth. You leave the machine and with Mr. Clements' caretaker (for the owner is still at Quitman, Ga., his winter home
and southern plant farm) and stroll through the barn lot toward the slope that rises sharply back from the road, and just over the crest are orderly plots in which 600 bushels of Nancy Hall sweet potatoes were bedded in March. The tender plants are about ready for shipment. Soon packers will be busy drawing the plants from the 35 beds and preparing them for delivery by parcel post to all parts of the Union.

Mr. Clements employs from fifteen to twenty hands in his busy season, that is in the few weeks while his plants are being shipped, for it is something that must be done at the right time. He usually has about 15,000 square feet in potatoe beds with a furnace at the end and pipes extending full length through which heat is forced to keep the proper temperature. Last year more than 3,000,000 sweet potatoe plants were shipped. He had two car loads or about 1,000 bushels of potatoes in beds that year, having pruned down his production this season more than one half. To heat the beds for the 1,000 bushel crop Mr. Clements cleared the wood from six acres of ground more than 125 cords being used. What Mr. Clements has done, three miles away is being duplicated by C.G. Brown further out in the county, his place being near Utility, an inland village. In addition to growing sweet potatoes he has pepper, cabbage, and tomato plants, having sown 50 pounds of tomato seed. And the story of the Clements plants is the story of Browns, though the latter entered the business after Mr. Clements. Mr. Brown, Mr. Williams, and Rosenblat, also are shippers of tobacco though not as extensively as a few years ago.

These plants are shipped into practically every state, into Alaska, and Greenland, as well as several provinces of Canada.

Aside from its big mail order business, Hawesville has other things to attract among which is its fine high school, "Beechmont." They call it from the Beech forest that clusters about it, which County Supt. H.I. Glover proudly shows as one factor in its life for which none need apologize.
Lover's Leap (Hancock Co.) on the top of a high hill (opposite the south side of the Courthouse in Hawesville, county seat of Hancock is Lover's Leap) are seven huge boulders carved with hundreds of names and dates. Local legend explains the names by not one but several Indian maidens who died for love in the traditional fashion.

Ref. W. J. Quin. Collins Vol. II
With the discovery of a vein of cannel coal lying along the borders of<br>Hancock and Hancock counties the only coal of its kind then in existence,<br>in 1845 oil was made from this coal and was the first illuminant then known to<br>supersede the tallow-candle. The discovery of this coal was made by accident. Some<br>hunters took shelter under shelving rock in a revine while there they noticed it had<br>a peculiar blackish glassy look, they broke some off to take home for closer<br>examination. Some of the pieces were thrown into the fire and the flames leaped<br>several feet high.<br>

The news soon spread and some specimens were sent to several larger cities.<br>Some reached New York and attracted the attention of some English capitalist<br>interested in coal mining. Experts were sent to Cloverport to investigate the<br>find and amount of this coal. Their reports immediately drew more experts and soon<br>leases were being made all over that area by this English Company. The discovery<br>of the coal had led chemist to discover that this was solidified oil aged by years.<br>The company soon began to sell stock to build a plant where the oil could be ex­<br>tracted. The newspapers were full of the accounts of the new process by which oil<br>was to be burned instead of the old tallow candle.<br>

A large acreage of land was purchased by the company just below Cloverport and<br>Cloverport was on such a boom that the natives had to rub their eyes to see if it<br>were all a dream.<br>

Every steamboat from around Pittsburg brought loads of people and materials.<br>Work was started in the mines and as if by magic a town sprung up among the hills<br>and hollows and was called Bennettsville.<br>

Boat after boat brought men who were to start building a railroad out of the<br>mines. The farm boy who was plowing on the hillside left the plow in the field,<br>left the "backer patch" and old Pete was left to browse on the greens. He hiked<br>his way to get a job at $1.25 to $1.50 a day. It was so much better than 50¢ a<br>day, just like picking money off a tree. In the meantime kilns were started for<br>the purpose of burning brick and as soon as the brick were ready, brick layers and
stone masons began working to erect the plant in which the process of making oil was to be carried out, this oil to take the place of tallow candles.

CASTLE WAS BUILT

Buildings were put up around the grounds of the plant to house employees as native help was scarce. Up on the hill overlooking the plant was erected a large building which resembled a castle with underground passages some were guarded by great iron doors. It was here the manager lived, and lived like a king. The railroad having been completed the mines were opened and with the final placing of machinery for the making of oil was completed, the press of the day was devoting pages to this new and interesting venture.

Among the machinery to be used were great iron kettles made of cast iron. They weighed tons, no boat could handle them and they were rolled up the river at Pittsburg where they were lashed together and crew of men floated them down the river to their destination.

When the plant was started, those who had predicted a failure were surprised to see the clear white liquid come from coal. The demand for this oil taxed the capacity of the plant and it sold readily for $1.50 per gallon. The plant flourished from the start, but after a few years it caught fire and so terrific were the flames that even some of the heavy machinery was melted or so badly twisted that the plant was never reopened again as oil had been discovered which would under sell this oil made by machinery, consequently the plant was abandoned and wrecked. The locomotive was loaded on a large barge and shipped away.

A caretaker was left to look after the mines. The town at the mines was wrecked, the lumber sold off. For a period of 30 years the mines were closed down. The only sale for the coal was to steamboats which used it to burn in their torches at night.

MINES REOPEN

In the meantime the owners of this vast holding had gotten into court. It seemed that stock sold was about equally divided among English and American
stockholders and first one and another would win. Later at London and Liverpool England massive chunks of this coal weighing thousands of pounds had been taken from the mines squared and polished and put in public places so it could be seen and other stock was placed on the market. Even the Prince of Wales bought a big lot of stock on its wonderful merits and finally the English got hold of the stock in (1832? 1922).

Another company was formed and rebuilt the railroad and reopened the mines. A new town was built where old Bennettsville had stood and it was called Victoria.

Here again Cloverport experienced another big boom, only to see it fall away as the first had done.

When this new company decided to operate the abandoned mines they had conceived the idea of using this coal in the making of gas. The plan was to mine the coal and ship by barge to New Orleans, be loaded on vessels for ballast to Liverpool England and then used in the making of artificial gas.

The new English Company sent Col. Farley over to take charge of this new venture. He was a retired army officer, bull headed as the rest of the English. He undertook at the expense of the stockholders, a reign of wasteful spending which resulted in his recall after a few years of living and extravagant waste of funds.

One of his ventures of wastefulness and extravagance was the building of a coal tipple for loading the coal into the barges. In order to build it a big cut had to be made in the old road bed to lower the truck. The dirt was piled out extending almost to the lower water mark then piling was driven and a great structure was built up on piles level with the road bed. Old rivermen who know the river told him a barge could not be held in the self water of the structure which extended a 100 yards out into the water, besides a piling had been driven up the river to form an ice break and keep off the drift. The result a swift current was created around the head of this coal tipple and no boat could stand the current when the water was above the normal stage.

Victoria had been complete. It had been given a coat of red; the old Diamon
house, one time the first engine house, was turned in to a hotel, old man Robinson had
charge of it; Lewis Lightfoot a negro was head cook. The men who boarded there were
fed mutton which they protested with out any results, but every morning noon and night
just before meals, if you happened along at that time you would have thought it was a
sheep ranch for from every bunk you could hear Bah! Bah! In protes of the meat.

Great stocks of coal had been mined and were waiting to be shipped. Zero hours
arrived when Col. Farley expected to see his name go on the book of fame. The
got stood on the track with George Harris at the throttle, Chris Klein chucked in
some coal. When Col. Farley was dressed in his Irish linen with his white helmet put
over his white hair he was feeling good. Several sips from his Scotch had made him
step lively. He visioned from his majesty a Peer - Knight hood in honor of his
achievements.

Floating from a pole at his office waved an English flag, and below it the
Stars and Stripes. Old soldiers of the Civil War protested the Stars and Stripes
are first they said, but he told them plainly England rules the world, she lowers
her flag to no one. The locomotive rings her bell, the cars are pushed up to go down
the long steel line decline fully 100 feet long into the barge. The big barge is
moored to her moonings and Col. Farley radiant in all his glory and surrounded
by many of his friends, who had pantaken of his refreshments stepped forward as the
first car loaded with this jagged coll - edges like steel and at his signal the lever
released it pulled down this long steel chute to the waiting barge. It never stopped -
it went on through the bottom of the barge to the Ohio River.

The next morning Col. Farley Woke up - he said he had spent a restless night. He
reached for his call bell, a double dose of scotch with ice. Feeling better and with
a hearty breakfast he doned his white linen suit, put on his white helmet hat, he
took heart and stepped out into his well kept yard. The birds were singing in the trees,
just like old England, the sun was shining brightly in old Kentucky. He lifted his
hat to salute his old English flag. He stood as if paralyzed - drawing out his old
bandanna handkerchief he wiped his glasses, where was his beloved flag? During the night the flag pole and flag had disappeared. Amazed he stood; then he looked at a stake near-by a note was pinned upon it. It only said "The English flag may try to rule the world, but here in Cloverport it don't mean anything. To hell with you and your flag. Col. Farley left next day for old England.

Then the American interest won in this contest for legal right. Col. Malcolm Bullett representing the American stockholders took hold. Drastic changes were made, but in a few years of trying to pull over the poop in the mines were let go, tracks torn up and every think passed away. It was the passing of a million dollars interest gobbled up by shrewd lawyers and grafters at the expense of thousands of stockholders who never got a cent out of their investment.
Hancock Co. communities

1. Hawesville (co. seat)
2. North Panther (dpo)
3. Lewisport (po and com)
4. Pellyville (po and com) had been Blackford
5. Bonnétaville (dpo)
6. Huff's Creek (dpo)
7. Patesville (dpo and com)
8. Hancock Mines (dpo)
9. Lyonia (dpo and com) aka Roseville
10. Chambers (dpo) (com)
11. Haliburgh (dpo)
12. Utility (dpo) (com)
13. Victoria (dpo) Victoria Crossroads (com) (ext) ≤ Bennettsville
14. Ayers Landing (dpo)
15. Skillman (dpo) (com)
16. Petri Station (dpo) Petrie (com)
17. Floral (dpo) (com)
18. Adair (dpo) had been New Chapel (com) (ext) ≤ Falcon (rr sta)
19. Easton (dpo) (com)
20. Free (dpo) (com)
21. Gladys (p.o. est. but never in op.)
22. Dukes (dpo) (com)
23. Tribune (p.o. est. but never in op.)
24. Weberstown (dpo) (com)
25. Waitman (dpo and com) ≤ Swamp Dale
26. Cabot (dpo) (com)
27. Martindale (dpo) (com)
28. Weber (dpo)
29. Goering (dpo) (com)
32. Cullen Nebr.
33. Gestville (com)
34. Goose Pond Nebr.
36. Hilldale Nebr.
37. Indian Hill Nebr.
38. Indian Lake (com) x
39. Little Tar Springs (com)
40. Midway Nebr.
41. Mt. Eden (com)
42. Richard (ngbr.) Richards (com)
43. Troy Bend Nebr.
44. Tywhapita Nebr.
45. Free (com)
46. Windward Hts. (com) Nebr = 11
47. Scuffletown (com ext) P2 26+2
48. Sample Reserve NT = 32