Morgan County, on a well dissected plateau in the northern part of the Eastern Kentucky Coal Field, was established by the legislature on December 7, 1822. Taken from sections of Bath and Floyd Counties, its original 780 square mile territory yielded parts of five other counties. By early April 1886 it had assumed its present 382 square mile area. The county was named for General Daniel Morgan (1736-1802), a Revolutionary War officer and U.S. Congressman (1797-1799).

The meandering Licking River and its branches (especially North Fork, Blackwater, Grassy, Caney, Elk Fork, and White Oak Creeks) drain most of the county and serve as reference points for many of its settlements and post offices. Morgan's southern edge is drained by branches of the Red River (which joins the Kentucky River in Clark County). The head streams of Paint Creek (in the Big Sandy watershed), especially Open Fork, drain the northeastern fringe of the county.

Typical of eastern Kentucky, Morgan's economy has been primarily agricultural and extractive. In recent years, though, some industrial and institutional activities have expanded its employment base. These include factories making industrial rainwear, pallets and skids, and ready-mixed concrete, along with commercial printing, an extension center of Morehead State University, a hospital, and a medium security state prison. The most recent census counted nearly 12,000 county residents.

This chapter will deal with only the ninety five post offices contained within Morgan's present boundaries. Most will be located by road miles from downtown West Liberty, the centrally located county seat on the Licking River, eighty seven road miles east of downtown
Lexington (via US 460).

The fourth class city of West Liberty, the county's only currently incorporated place, centers just south of the junction of US 460 and Ky 7. The townsite may first have been settled between 1804 and 1809 by Daniel Williams, a North Carolina-born Baptist preacher, or James Lacy who had acquired the 500 acre tract including the site. Here in 1816 Edmund Wells (ca. 1775-1846) opened a mill, and the settlement growing up around it was soon known as Wells' Mill. On March 10, 1823 Wells, then a local magistrate, offered his tavern for the first session of the new county's court. In December of that year, having just acquired from Lacy's heirs possession of their local holdings, Wells officially deeded thirty nine acres for the county's permanent seat. A town was soon laid out and chartered as West Liberty. Sometime in 1824 Edmund's son Benjamin F. became the town's first postmaster.

According to tradition, the town was named in this fashion: A delegation was petitioning the parent Floyd County for a separate county when another group came from the east to request the establishment of Pike County. As the Pike Countians stated they would name their seat Liberty, their Morgan counterparts decided to name theirs West Liberty since it was sixty miles west and north of the proposed Pike County seat. Liberty, however, was never established; Pike's seat was located at a site ten miles north.¹

Morgan's second post office was given the name of the county. According to Burr's postal map of 1839, it was thirteen miles northwest of West Liberty on the old road between that town and Mt. Sterling, probably on Yocum Creek. John Utterback alone served as
its postmaster from December 22, 1836 through March 1838.

The county's name was again given to a post office on February 3, 1848 to serve what would become an important milltown at the head of Blackwater Creek. In June of the following year, however, John P. Osborne, its first postmaster, had the name changed to Blackwater. This name it retained through an intermittent existence until in 1882 Elijah B. May, then postmaster and storekeeper, had it changed again, to Maytown for his family.

By March 1884, when Maytown was incorporated, it had several mills, at least three stores, a carding factory, furniture and wagon making factories, a hotel, and other businesses. Until the office closed in 1983 it served a three county area from the junction of Ky 946 and 1010, 15½ miles wsw of West Liberty. It was in the thirty square mile section of Morgan County that was a part of Wolfe County from 1878 to 1882. The small community is now but half a mile from the Wolfe County line. For the record, Blackwater Creek, which joins the Licking River at the northeastern edge of the Daniel Boone National Forest, is said to have been named for the dark appearance of the water made by leaves in the fall and winter of the year.

Another early Morgan County post office -known as Head of Paint- has not been located. Its name suggests that it might have been where Open Fork and Little Paint join to form the main Paint Creek at the Johnson County line. Since many of its later postmasters were Browns² it might have been further up Open Fork, perhaps at or near the mouth of Brown's Branch, and would thus have been the forerunner of the Relief post office. County historian Lynn Nickell believes it was a forerunner of Moon, closer to the head of Open Fork. In any case,
the office operated from April 12, 1837 through October 1858 with David Hamilton, its first postmaster.

In the extreme northern part of Morgan County, somewhere near where this county joins Rowan and Elliott Counties, was one of the region's several Christy's Forks that were named for branches of this large Licking Valley family. This stream was not shown on any published maps but, presumably on its banks, was the Christy's Fork post office. This was established on January 18, 1849, with John P. Kendall, postmaster, and extended to late February 1862. Landowner John A. Christy was its second postmaster, from June 1849 till 1852. According to Lynn Nickell, it was on the present Ky 711, near the Elliott county line.

John J. Cassity owned a mill on the Licking River's North Fork, about a mile above the future Paragon post office (and thus about fifteen miles northwest of West Liberty.) Here, intermittently between July 7, 1849 and late April 1872 Samuel Myers and others operated the Cassity's Mills post office. One of the others, William W. Phillips (in 1855 and again in 1868) was later to run Paragon's direct predecessor, the Popping Hill post office, on the Rowan County side of the Fork.

Two more unlocated antebellum post offices must be cited for the record. Taylorsburg, which Edward E. Duke alone operated between August 11, 1849 and mid March of the following year, may have been named for then U.S. President Zachary Taylor. According to Lynn Nickell, it could have been just east of West Liberty where Duke owned land.
Saltillo, undoubtedly named for the Mexican city occupied by U.S. troops between 1846 and 1848, was established on September 16, 1850 by Samuel McGuire. It closed in early 1852, and was re-established two years later by William S. Pierce, but closed for good after only five months. It might not have been within Morgan's present boundaries though it is listed in that county's postal records at its time of operation.

A second post office serving a water-powered grist mill was Hampton's Mills. Both mill and post office were operated by their name source George M. Hampton on the Licking River, at the Mussel Shoals. He alone ran the office between July 6, 1855 and March 1862 when he went to Frankfort to represent the county in the state legislature.

The post office serving the community long known as Relief was at a number of locations along Open Fork of Paint Creek. It was established on June 29, 1859 by Wallace W. Brown, one of the family of Browns that had also run the Head of Paint post office earlier in that decade. The community, on the old route between Paintsville and West Liberty, was allegedly named by early travelers who felt relieved to reach this point roughly halfway on their arduous journey. Or it might have been named by post office patrons who were relieved to again have their own post office. ³

In July 1863 the Relief post office closed, not to reopen till February 1878 when Wallace's son Edward W. Brown set it up in his store at the mouth of Brown's Branch. By the 1890s it was serving a couple of flour mills and four stores, a cooperage, and several other businesses. By the turn of the century the office may have
been at the mouth of Smiths Creek, half a mile up the Fork from Brown's. By the first World War it was back at Brown's, and by the late 1920s was serving the so-called Brown's Branch community. In the 1930s that place may also have been known as Paint Valley. In 1939 the office was at the mouth of Patoker Branch, half a mile the other side of Brown's, but by 1943 it was back at Brown's, on Ky 17, a mile from the Johnson County line and twenty miles east of West Liberty. Here it remained till it closed in late June 1980 when that site and much of its service area were appropriated for the new Paintsville Reservoir.

The oldest of the extant communities in Morgan County's Caney Creek valley was Walnut Grove, whose post office was Caney. This grew up around the original Walnut Grove Baptist Church organized by the pioneer preacher and extensive landowner Daniel Williams at the mouth of Brushy Creek, and named for its site in a grove of walnut trees.

Though the community remained Walnut Grove till the turn of the century, its post office, established on August 2, 1854 by David Isaac Lykins (Elder Williams' grandson) was always Caney, a name most likely derived from the creek. The creek, in turn, like over a hundred other Kentucky streams with the same or similar names, was probably named for its original undergrowth.

As it was with so many other Kentucky post offices, Caney failed to survive the early months of the Civil War and closed in March 1862. It was not reopened until July 1874 with Joshua W. and William Lykins (the latter a local millowner) as its postmasters. By the time the office closed for good in the mid 1990s, it was just east
of the junction of Ky 191 and 1000, 10 3/4 miles south of West Liberty.

With the development of the area's lumber and cannel coal industries and the arrival in 1901 of the Ohio and Kentucky Railroad, the town, as Caney, boomed with lumberyards, at least a dozen stores, several hotels, a bank, and other businesses, and became the trade center for the upper half of the valley. But its prosperity was shortlived. The mines closed in 1931 and the railroad was abandoned two years later, forcing businesses to close and residents to look elsewhere for employment. Most of the land has since reverted to farms. Only one store remains.

The hamlet and one time milltown of Grassy Creek lies at the junction of US 460 and 705, seven miles southwest of West Liberty. It was named for the Licking River tributary that runs through it and that is said to have been named by Thomas Goodwin, a Methodist preacher, for his Ashe County, N.C. home. He organized the local church which was long referred to as Goodwin's Chapel, by which name the community, though officially Grassy Creek, was also known. On February 19, 1858 Goodwin also established the Grassy Creek post office which closed in March 1909. Though the church is gone, old-timers still call the place The Chapel.

The shortlived (September 13, 1860 to January 24, 1861) Bell post office may have been on the old road (the former Ky 205) between Buskirk and Daysboro. Samuel Wilson and Morrison Nichols shared postmastering duties. Its name source is not known. Only one Bell family, that of Benjamin and Louisa, are listed in Morgan County's 1860 Census. Could the office have honored John Bell (1797-1869),
the Tennessean who ran for the U.S. presidency in 1860 on the Constitutional Union Party ticket, winning the electoral votes of Kentucky, Tennessee, and Virginia?.

Equally unheralded was Devil Fork, a post office run by G.S. Stamper between January 1863 and January 1864 near the creek for which it was named. Lynn Nickell located this office on the Winding Stairs Road, 2½ miles northwest of Wrigley, (suggesting that it was somewhere at the head of that road, about 1½ miles up the Fork.) This stream, which joins the Licking's North Fork at Leisure, is one of those streams that tradition says was home to the Devil.7

White Oak Creek, undoubtedly named for the local trees, is said to have been early settled and owned by May, Nickell, and Hammond families. In 1832 Isaac Nickell gave some land for the local church around which the small village of White Oak was founded some time before the Civil War. But the White Oak post office did not open till November 17, 1874 with John Henry, the first postmaster. Within a few years the community it served, where the present US 460 crosses the creek, a mile south of the Licking River, and eight miles southeast of West Liberty, had one or more stores, a flour mill, tannery, hotel, cooperage, and shoe and wagon makers. The office, which closed in early 1993, is survived by a store and church. The community is said to have once had a most curious and inexplicable nickname. According to James P. Oney's 1915 Site Location Report, it was then also referred to as Grab Nickell.

Ezel [ee/zehl], one of the county's six extant post offices, serves a village on US 460, just west of Blackwater Creek, and fourteen miles west of West Liberty. It was settled early by a family
of Pieratts whose progenitor John had come to Morgan from Bath County around 1825. On March 18, 1875 John’s son Eli established the post office and named it, for reasons now unknown, for the stone by which the Biblical David had sought refuge from King Saul and from which he and his friend Jonathan had parted (I Samuel 20:19). By the time of its incorporation, on March 6, 1882, the new town of Ezel was home to several stores and mills, all owned by Eli’s sons. On some late nineteenth century maps the name is mistakenly spelled Ezell and even Ezell.

Somewhere near the head of Pleasant Run, a Licking River tributary, was the first site of the Yocum post office. This office was established on August 23, 1875 by William H. "Red Head" Lewis, a local lumberman, to serve several mills and other businesses. It is said to have been named for a local resident, perhaps the 51 year old William Yocum listed in the 1870 Census, of whom nothing else seems to be known. Sometime before 1900 the post office was moved down the Run to a site just north of the present Ky 519, 6½ miles northwest of West Liberty, in which vicinity it remained till it closed in July 1981. For years the local community has been better known as Pleasant Run.

On August 18, 1876 Cyrus Perry, Jr. opened the Blairs Mills post office to serve the Blair family’s water-powered grist mill on Elam Branch of Devils Fork. The mill may first have been operated by William L. Blair (1805-1866) and was later owned and run by his son David Caskey Blair (1829-1901). In 1949 the office was moved one road mile west from its site in the vicinity of the West Union (or Blairs Mills) Church at the head of Elam Branch to Perry’s Grocery
on Ky 711, 15½ miles north of West Liberty, where it closed in 1986. Blairs Mills is to be distinguished from Blairs Mills Station on the Morehead and North Fork Railroad, just below the old Leisure post office.

The extant post office of Elkfork has had a curious history. It was established on February 11, 1878 just over the Elliott County line, in Henry M. Hutchinson's store at the head of Fannins Fork. On October 1885 then postmaster-storekeeper David C. Hutchinson had the office moved down the Fork to a site two hundred yards within Morgan County. By the late 1890s it was again moved, to the mouth of Muddy Branch, five miles further down Fannins where it served at least four stores and a mill. According to postal records, by 1928 the office was on the west bank of one of the Laurel Forks (of Fannins), at least a mile north of Muddy Branch. Then, in December 1941, it was moved to more or less its present site on Ky 172, just above the mouth of Muddy Branch, some eleven miles east of West Liberty.

Now, since Fannins Fork joins Middle Fork, half a mile south of the post office, to form the sixteen mile long Elk Fork of the Licking River, the name applied to the office can be misleading. Yet, historians assure us that in the nineteenth century a stream's name was often applied to its entire watershed. But why this office wasn't called Fannin's Fork is not known. The Fork is said to have been named for several brothers who, in the 1820s, had settled upon it. One of their many descendants was later to establish the Crockett post office, 3½ miles up the Fork from the present Elkfork post office. According to tradition, the pattern of the main stream and
several of its branches may have reminded early travelers of the prongs of an elk's horns. 10

The Bonny post office operated at several sites on and near the Lower Long Branch of Grassy Creek between September 15, 1879 and April 1954. Most recently it was at the junction of Rt. 3345 and the Tabernacle Road, half a mile west of the creek, four miles north of the old Grassy Creek post office, and 10½ miles west of West Liberty. By the turn of the twentieth century this office was serving a store, two sawmills, and a grist mill. There was no one in the first postmaster James Kash's immediate family or among his neighbors to account for the office's name, so its origin remains unknown to this day.

The area between a sharp bend in the Licking River and Straight Creek, a branch of lower Caney, has often aptly been known as The Flatwoods (and possibly even Bearwallow.) At a point a mile and a half up the creek William Powell Henry established a post office. Instead of by his preferred name Flatwoods, the office operated between January 5, 1880 and December 1913 as Henry. On December 14, 1920 the office was re-established in John B(en) May's store south of the bend, about a mile and a half west of the Henry site, as Woodsbend. May's wife Zona was named its first postmaster. When this office closed in February 1976 it was on the present Ky 705, five miles north of the Grassy Creek community. 11

Sellars, probably named for an area family, was established by John B. Amyx on June 20, 1881 just off the present Ky 205, half a mile from the Wolfe County line and 10½ miles ssw of West Liberty. Gapton was his first name choice. The office closed in June 1958.
It is believed that the Mize post office, just east of the junction of US 460 and Ky 203, was named for William Oldham Mize (ne 1844), a Hazel Green storekeeper, who was then representing that area in the Kentucky Senate. The office, established by John A. Oldfield, operated between May 18, 1882 and September 1963. The Oldfield General Store on US 460, eight miles southwest of West Liberty, now marks the site.

Ophir [oh/fer], another extant post office, was established on June 21, 1882 in postmaster James M. Pendleton's store at the mouth of the Open Fork of Paint Creek on the Johnson County line. No one knows why it was named for the Biblical source of King Solomon's gold. However, it could, for an equally obscure reason, have been named for one of the five California gold rush towns so named. In September 1887 J.M. Cantrell moved the office to his store 1½ miles up the Fork at a point just above the mouth of Lower Sand Lick. Now, after several more area moves, the office is a mile and a half up Lower Sand Lick, on the present Rt. 1260.

William B. Redwine, member of a large and influential family of Elliott County lawyers and public officials, opened a post office on the Licking's North Fork on January 15, 1883 and, notwithstanding his first preference for Rice, named it for his family. This office was soon serving two sawmills, as many lumber dealers, a flour mill, furniture store, distillery, cooperage, and saloon. The office closed in November 1895 and was re-established, also as Redwine, the following January by William W. Hall. It is not sure whether at this time or later (certainly by 1909) the office was moved to a site about a mile north of Road Fork (a North Fork branch) and 2½ miles north
of the future Wrigley. Here it operated through February 1914.

By September 1908 the Morehead and North Fork Railroad had been extended three miles east from Wrigley (see below) to the old Redwine post office site, and a station with that name was built there to ship area lumber to the C&O station near Morehead. On January 22, 1909 Mrs. Mary C. Love Collins re-opened the local post office and called it Loveland. In 1909, since by then the relocated Redwine office had closed, the Loveland post office was renamed Redwine. Though little of the community survived the depletion of the area's timber resources and the closing of the railroad in the early 1930s, the Redwine post office lasted till June 1976. Today there are only some homes at the end of Ky 711, 11½ miles nee of West Liberty (via Wrigley).

Charles B. Dingus came from Virginia with his brother William and settled on upper Williams Creek, a branch of Elk Fork. On April 4, 1883 he established, probably at the mouth of Grays Branch, a post office to which he gave his family's name. Over a period of time, till it closed in 1992, the Dingus post office occupied several sites along Williams Creek. By the turn of the century it was serving Rice's store at the mouth of Coffee Creek. For much of the twentieth century it was about half a mile west of Coffee Creek, at the mouth of Paulina Branch (which was probably named for Dingus's long time postmaster Paulina Williams.) The office was most recently located at the mouth of White Oak Branch, on Ky 437, about fourteen miles east of West Liberty. In recent years the upper end of Williams Creek has been known as Burkes(es) Fork (which, though, is identified on current maps as Birch).
Swetnam, one of Kentucky's shortest lived post offices, served Williams Mill, which was Leslie E. Swetnam's first name choice. The mill owned by John T. Williams, was on Caney Creek, just north of the future Lemon and Liberty Road post offices. The Swetnam office operated only from August 29, 1883 till mid December of that year, and Swetnam was its only postmaster.

Two distantly related Elam families gave their name to two Morgan County post offices. The first, Elamton, was established on August 29, 1883 by local storekeeper James S. Elam about a mile up War Creek, a Licking River tributary. Elam's first name preference was Clack, but on instructions from the postal authorities to find another name, he chose his family's instead. In September 1912 John W. Pelphrey moved the office to his store on Williams Creek, at the mouth of Pelphrey Branch (given as Pelfrey on current maps), a mile above Elk Fork. From here it was later moved to its last location, three-fourths of a mile further up Williams Creek (and Ky 487), 10 1/4 miles east of West Liberty, where it closed in 1982.

The other office was operated as Elam by Leander C. Elam and his family between April 12, 1901 and mid April 1914. This was on the Licking River, at the mouth of Griffitts Branch, just above and across from the mouth of Lacy Creek. Leander was the son of Jeremiah Elam, a mid nineteenth century magistrate, and the grandson of Walter Elam, a Virginian who had settled in that section around 1818. Lola, Leander's daughter, is listed as Elam's first postmaster-of-record.

The late nineteenth century post office of Steele remains an enigma. According to Jesse Meek Adkins' Site Location Report, this
office, which opened on June 4, 1886, was on the North Fork of the Licking River and Mordica Creek, four miles southeast of the Redwine post office (sic), and seven miles north of West Liberty. Yet, recent maps would place Adkins' location at the present Redwine site. In March 1891 Frank Steele became postmaster, suggesting that his family may have been the name source. In the mid nineteenth century several Steeles had acquired land on various streams in the northern part of the county.

Sometime after 1898 and before it closed in September 1901, the Steele post office may have moved southeast to Straight Creek, for both Lynn Nickell's 1992 book on Morgan's post offices and the most recent county highway maps place Steele on this stream and Ky 650, just north of and opposite the mouth of Big Mandy Creek, and 1.8 miles from Ky 172. However, no historic nor even recent topographic maps locate the post office at any site. In short, I don't know where the office was, nor whether it had more than one location. When it closed, its papers were sent to the Goodsey post office which, at that time, was five miles away.

The Omer post office had several locations on the present Ky 772, between its establishment on July 21, 1886 and its closing in 1953. John M. and Bernard M. McGuire had it first at the head of Tom's Branch of the Licking River's Grassy Creek, more precisely at the junction of the present Ky 772 and 705, where it served a store and two mills. After several moves it ended its days at a store, half a mile west on Ky 772, 13½ miles west of West Liberty. The small community it then served may also have been called Tom's Branch. The origin of Omer's name is not known.
Then there were the two Cox family post offices--Elder and Kellacey. The first was established by James Franklin Cox on May 19, 1888 probably in the vicinity of the Cox family cemetery for, according to James' Site Location Report, it was half a mile south of the Licking River, half a mile east of Blackwater Creek, and five miles north of Omer. His proposed name Cox, however, was replaced by the inexplicable Elder.

On May 22, 1922 James' daughter-in-law Ada (Mrs. Tom) opened another post office which she would call Volney for one of Tom's brothers (ne 1896). Instead, for some reason, she named it Kellacey [kehl/see] for Tom's other brothers Kelly (called Kel) (ne 1893) and Asa (1900-1924). The office was 100 feet south of the river, 300 feet northeast of the creek, and two miles north of Elder which, according to the Site Location Report of Elder's then postmaster Will S. McKinney, was two miles south of the river and one mile southeast of the creek.

Elder was discontinued in August 1932, and the following summer Ada Cox moved her Kellacey post office three-fourths of a mile south to its last location, three-fourths of a mile up Tarklin Branch of the Licking and Ky 985, a site 2½ miles from the junction of 985 and 772, and 15 3/4 miles wnw of West Liberty, where it continued as an independent office through August 1959, and then as a rural branch till August 1973.

One of the several personal nicknames borne by Kentucky post offices was given to Morgan County's Pomp. This office on the present Ky 7, at the mouth of Lick Fork of Elk Fork, four miles nwnw of West Liberty, was named for Walter "Pomp"
Kendall, a local resident. Established by John Milton Perry, it operated at several vicinal sites from December 23, 1891 till 1956.

At the southwestern edge of West Liberty, centering at the junction of US 460 and Ky 191 (two miles from West Liberty's downtown) is one of Kentucky's most oddly named communities. According to Mary Meadows, a former postmaster, the application for its post office was sent to Washington on the back side of a book's index. Hence, for some reason known only to the postal officials, it became Index. This office, with Joseph Cottle Elam, its first postmaster, operated from December 28, 1892 through January 1982. In 1910 the nearby Index Station of the newly completed Caney Valley (O&K) Railroad, began serving West Liberty to which it was connected by horsedrawn hack. The community and post office survived the closing of the railroad in 1933 with suburban development, especially, in recent years, by the location there of the county's high, middle, and vocational schools, an auto dealership, bank, discount house, churches, groceries, several restaurants, and other businesses. It's still growing.

A shortlived post office somewhere on Johnsons Creek, in the Wheelrim area, would have been named for its only postmaster William S. Williams. But it operated from November 28, 1893 through June 1894 as the inexplicable Thyra.

Black Pine, the preferred name for Rufus M. Smith's Middle Fork (of Elk Fork) post office, gave way to Jeptha. Whence Jeptha is also not known, though a Biblical origin cannot be
ruled out. It operated between December 21, 1893 and March 1969 at the mouth of Gilliam Branch, thirteen miles one of West Liberty.

On February 29, 1896 Louisa McGuire Brown established the Matthew post office just north of Rockhouse Creek, near its confluence with the Licking River. The name is said to have been chosen from the Bible by Mrs. Brown's husband, the Rev. James Monroe Brown. In 1904 the office was moved half a mile north to the Tarkiln Branch of Licking where, at several vicinal sites, it served a community called Tarkiln. By the mid 1920s it was back on Rockhouse, on the present Ky 364, some four miles southeast of US 460 at Cottle, where it closed in July 1976.

To serve the Rockhouse Creek neighborhood after the Matthew post office was moved to Tarkiln, William F. Lykins, between September 24, 1910 and mid November 1912, operated the Luster post office. This was on the north bank of the creek, a mile from the river, probably in the vicinity of the Brown Cemetery on the present Ky 364. According to Lykins' Site Location Report, this location may also have been called Posterville. Neither that name nor Luster has been explained.

The Caney Creek hamlet of Malone on Ky 191, 4½ miles south of West Liberty, is said to have been first called Mudville for the condition of its roads in wet weather. Its still active post office was established on March 20, 1896, with Lula M. Lykins, postmaster. It was named for Malone Lykins, the son of David J. Lykins, a local gristmill owner, and the grandson
of William Lykins, Morgan's first county judge.

The day after the Malone post office was established, Goldman Castle (ne ca. 1827) opened his Castle post office, probably at the mouth of Caney's Castle Branch, two miles south of Malone. On Goldman's death in 1902 his son George T. became postmaster. In 1907, when George moved to Oklahoma, the office was closed. Early twentieth century maps suggest that by this time the office may have been moved a mile up the creek to the mouth of Stacy Fork where, with the coming of the O&K Railroad, it was re-established on May 6, 1913. It was then called Stacy Fork, and Hezekiah Gullett, the railroad's local agent, was its new postmaster. According to Gullett's Site Location Report, the community his post office would serve was also known as The Forks of Caney.

The stream that gave its name to the Stacy Fork post office was well populated by the descendants of Tennessee-born pioneer Meshac Stacy, an early neighbor of Goldman Castle's. For years the Stacy Fork post office was at the junction of Ky 191 and 844, but shortly before it closed in 1985 it had been moved a mile up the Fork.

Another Caney Valley post office generated by the O&K Railroad was Wells, midway between Stacy Fork and Malone. This served Wells Station between January 23, 1925 and January 1937. Henry C. Franklin was its first postmaster. J. Wells, a late nineteenth century resident, or at least his family, was the probable name source.
At the head of Yocum Creek was the Blaze post office. This was established on November 11, 1896 with Asberry Donohew, postmaster, and, according to local tradition, was named for Bi Blankenship's horse. The community it served may have been early nicknamed Gritter for the local practice of gritting corn. It was later aptly called Head of Yocum. The office closed in September 1987, but there is still a Blaze community with Black's grocery and several homes on Rt. 1002, three miles north of Ky 519 (near Yocum), and 9½ miles northwest of West Liberty.

Andrew J. Fyffe (1860-1931) gave his family's name to the post office he established on September 27, 1897, half a mile up Splitwood Branch near the head of Paint Creek's Open Fork. In October 1916 his successor, Lee Skaggs, moved the office to the north bank of the Fork, 1½ miles east of Crockett, where it closed in November of the following year.

The Forest post office, maintained by the Davises from January 29, 1898 through February 1935, was on Jones Creek, a mile or so south of the Licking River, and some six miles southeast of West Liberty. Maggie Davis, the first postmaster, had first proposed calling it Forest Hill which might suggest the name's origin. Yet there was a Forest Davis (ne 1882), son of Sanford (1838-1921) and Matilda Davis of West Liberty, and we are still inquiring how he's related to the family Maggie married into.

The post office called Silverhill, at the head of Coffee Creek, three miles east of Dingus, closed in early 1993. It began operations as Ret on July 29, 1898 with Henry Montgomery, postmaster. Why Ret is not known; Montgomery's first name choice was Dewey for Admiral
George Dewey, the hero of the Battle of Manilla (May 1, 1898). After several short distance moves, Samuel D. Hamilton, in May 1909, had the office name changed to Silverhill, presumably for the silver tint of the clay on the side of a local hill.

The Goodsey post office, which operated from December 21, 1898 through October 1912, has not been precisely located. According to its only postmaster Lou Walsh's Site Location Report, it would serve a store and school one mile north of Elk Fork, four road miles east of Pomp, five miles south of Steele, and five miles north of West Liberty. Small scale maps of the early twentieth century place it east of Mordica Branch, but on the road between West Liberty and Lenox, six miles west of the latter. From this I think it might have been the predecessor of the Lick Branch post office. In any case, it was probably named for Samuel Goodsey (1831?-1923), an area farmer who had come from Pulaski County.

We know that the Lick Branch post office was located on the present Ky 172, just north of where this road crosses Elk Fork, a mile southwest of the most recent site of the Lenox post office, and probably half a mile south of Goodsey. Between November 5, 1924 and mid November 1933, it served the shortlived Evans-Thompson stave mill and later a school and some homes. Amelia S. Walsh was its first postmaster. Its name source was the two mile long branch joining the Fork across from the post office.

On the present Ky 437, at the head of Smith Creek, a branch of Paint Creek's Open Fork, was the Mina post office. Named for local resident Mina (Mrs. John) Lemaster, the daughter of Elijah and Mary Elizabeth Smith, it operated between December 2, 1898 and 1992.
Wiley B. Hill was its first postmaster.

On September 16, 1899 William Thomas Caskey opened the Lenox post office at his store on Elk Fork, just below the mouth of Straight Creek. His first choice Etta gave way to the name of a brand of laundry soap said to have been suggested by a fellow storekeeper-postmaster David Davis of Bascom (in Elliott County).15

In 1908 the Roper-Reese Lumber County opened a band saw mill near the Lenox post office and began construction of a rail line up Straight Creek and Big Mandy that would connect with the newly completed Morehead and North Fork Railroad at Redwine. In 1916 this company sold out to the American Lumber and Manufacturing Company of Pittsburgh, Pa. whose local subsidiary, the Lenox Saw Mill Company, completed the six mile rail line, and founded the town of Lenox at the Roper-Reese site to house its nearly 500 employees and their families. Lenox with commissary, hotel, club house, hospital, and the other institutions of a company town, lasted little more than a decade. By the mid 1920s, with the depletion of the area's timber and the company's deteriorating financial condition, the mill and railroad closed, and the town was all but abandoned. The few buildings that weren't sold and moved away by 1939 were nearly wholly destroyed by a flash flood. But the post office survived at several locations along Elk Fork and Ky 172, serving a scattered population below the mouth of Williams Creek. When it closed for good in 1993, it was above and across from the mouth of Cow Branch.

Crockett, one of the county's surviving post offices, is on Ky 172 and Fannin Fork of Elk Fork, fourteen miles northeast of West Liberty. Its vicinity was first settled by Fannins, Hutchinsons,
Fyffes, and Barkers, later joined by Wheelers, and for a while the local settlement was called Wheeler Town. The post office was established on April 1, 1900 and named by its first postmaster Peter Fannin for his ten year old son David Crockett Fannin. One of Morgan's five elementary schools was in this hamlet until it was recently replaced by the modern East Valley School, seven miles down the Fork.

One of the descendants of the pioneer Nickell family was the first postmaster and probable name source of the Nickell post office. On August 10, 1900 Holly B. Nickell established this post office on what was then the Gevedon Fork of Grassy Creek (and is now Payton Fork). In 1949 the office was moved nearly a mile down the fork to a point just south of the junction of Ky 205 and 705, 6 3/4 miles ssw of West Liberty, where it closed in 1958.

Kentucky had four post offices named for the Chinese capital, but no one knows why. One of these Pekins served farms and homes at three sites along the Upper Long Branch of Grassy Creek from August 16, 1900 through March 1954. James G. Yocum was its first postmaster. When it closed it was two miles east of the Pekin Pentecostal Church, and about eleven miles west of West Liberty.

The inexplicably named Wilcox post office was probably on Coon Creek, near its confluence with Broke Leg Creek, and two air miles north of Ezel. Washington C. Dehaven was its first postmaster, and it operated between September 11, 1900 and mid May 1915.

Somewhere between the Laurel and Little Laurel Branches of the Licking and half a mile east of the river was a small turn-of-the-century lumber camp with a post office called Wellford. Willard T.
McGlone, alone, ran the office from October 1, 1900 through November 1904. Its name source is unknown.

Pennsylvania-born Major William J. Seitz, a Morgan County debt collector, is said to have had a daughter named Florress for whom the Florress [fləˈrɛs] post office was named. This office was established about 2½ miles up Lacy Creek from the Licking River on June 7, 1901, with George Winston Rice, postmaster. In 1931, for the convenience of its patrons, the office was moved 1½ miles down the creek to the mouth of Sugar Camp Branch, 8½ miles southeast of West Liberty, where it closed in 1975. Its service area is now called Lacy's Creek for the stream that was probably named for pioneer settler John Lacy.

At the upper end of Straight Creek, just south of the Elliott County line, John Hensley operated the Manker post office between July 16, 1901 and mid September of the following year. More precisely, this may have been about half a mile above Rockhouse Branch, 1½ miles above what may have been the Steele post office's last location (and thus eight miles northeast of West Liberty). It was most likely named for an Ohio-born family of Millers who lived in West Liberty in 1880. The Rev. William W. Manker (ne 1826) later owned and operated a saw and flour mill in Maytown. His son William H. Manker (1859-1941) is listed in the 1900 Census as a traveling salesman.

John S. Rittenhouse is said to have come to Morgan County with the Ohio and Kentucky Railroad. On November 16, 1901 he established the Rittenhouse post office on upper Caney Creek, probably at the mouth of Big Staff Branch, midway between the developing Cannel City and Adele. Early the following August, Myrtle L. Keyser had
the post office name changed to Biggstaff (sic) for the less-than-a-mile long creek that heads near the Magoffin County line. The office closed at the end of June 1905.

For the first third of the twentieth century Cannel City was a prosperous company town of some 1,500 residents centering at the mouth of Stone Coal Fork of Caney Creek and extending for 1½ miles along the present Ky 191, some twelve miles south of West Liberty. It developed around the offices of the Kentucky Block Cannel Coal Company located there around 1900, and was named for the area's cannel coal mines. Also located there were the offices and shops of the affiliated Ohio and Kentucky Railroad which first extended from its junction with the Lexington and Eastern Railroad, just west of Jackson, to this point, twenty six rail miles north, and after 1910, to the O&K's northern terminus on the Licking River. A dwindling coal supply, but mostly the closing of the rail line for financial reasons in 1933, led to the closing of the mines and the company's abandonment of the town. Little remains but some homes, one of the county's five elementary schools, and the local post office, in operation since January 27, 1902. Harvey H. Hager was the first postmaster.

Just south of John Williams' mill and the shortlived (1883) Swetnam post office on lower Caney Creek were the Lemon and Liberty Road post offices. Lemon was established on May 29, 1902 with Ida M. Elam, postmaster, on the west side of the creek, 2½ miles south of the Licking River. Its name source is not known.

In 1912, on the arrival of the Caney Valley (which became the O&K) Railroad on the east side of Caney, a station was established
called Liberty Road. It was named for its being at the railroad's junction with an old wagon road between the Bluegrass and West Liberty. On November 28, 1913 Minnie Phillips moved her Lemon post office to this site where it took the Liberty Road name. When it closed in 1956 the post office was one mile north of Index.

Adele, on the State Road Fork of Red River, was established as a station on the O&K when the line was built between Jackson and Cannel City. It is said to have been named for the daughter of the railroad's first president William Delancey Walbridge. An effort to name its new post office for the station was probably precluded by an Adela post office having been established in Clay County the year before. So, with John M. Stricklin as its first postmaster, the Morgan County office opened on February 18, 1903 as Insko. After several local moves, the office arrived at the junction of Ky 134 and 191, 3½ miles southwest of Cannel City, where it closed in the mid 1990s. Whence the name Insko is still in dispute. According to his niece, it was named for a turn-of-the-century postal inspector. Residents think there was a local family of that name whose descendants now live in Michigan. Lynn Nickell, a county historian, recalled a lumberman named Dan Insko. Some Lexington Inskos believe it was named for a relative of theirs who ran another post office in the region.

From June 13, 1903 through October 1937 the inexplicably named Demund post office operated on the east bank of Salem Fork of Grassy Creek, on the present Ky 205, three-fourths of a mile southwest of the Nickell post office's last site. Postmaster-designate Napoleon P. Graham's first name preference was Lacy, for his wife's family.
Equally inexplicable was the name applied to the Ebon [ehb/ən] post office established by Ben F. McGuire on June 20, 1904. His first preferred name may have been Oval (already in use, as ovil, in Christian County.) The office was half a mile west of Blackwater Creek, on or near the present Rt. 1950, about a mile north of its junction with Ky 772, and sixteen miles west of West Liberty. After several short distance moves, in 1922 and 1929, Ollie J. Bailey moved it two miles northwest to a point on the Higgins Cemetery Road, half a mile east of the Menifee County line, where it closed in September 1955.

The Caney and West Liberty Railroad Company, organized in 1904, built a line between Cannel City and Caney that soon extended up the present Spring Branch (which then may have been called Watson’s Branch), over the hill, and down to the head of White Oak Creek’s Right Fork. Here, 1½ miles east of Caney, a town was established to house the workers of the Piedmont Coal Company whose product, along with area timber processed at a local mill, would be shipped by the C&WL to distant markets. In 1906 the railroad was re-organized as the Caney Piedmont and Morehead Company, and the following year it became a part of the O&K. But in less than a year the mill and station had closed and the town was abandoned. It had its own post office, as Piedmont, from March 20, 1905 through September 1906, with Charles Andrew McQuay, its only postmaster.

According to local tradition, James F. Wallin, whose first choice Olga had just been pre-empted for a Russell County post office, was then inspired by a moonlit night to name his new office Moon. This office, on Ky 172, 17½ miles east of West Liberty, served the upper
end of Paint Creek's Open Fork between April 14, 1905 and mid May 1993.

On Greasy Fork of Blackwater and Rt. 946 were the two sites of the Nannie post office. It was established on May 9, 1905 with Kelcy H. Murphy, postmaster. After his death, his widow Nannie A. (1869-1923), for whom the office was probably named, took it over. In 1916 she married George S. Frost. In 1923 her successor Mrs. Grace Murphy moved the office three-fourths of a mile northwest where it closed in January 1938.

William C. Nickell's post office would be called Little Caney for its site at the head of this Caney Creek branch, two miles south of the present US 460 at Greear, and 5½ miles sse of West Liberty. In his Site Location Report he wrote that if this name was not acceptable the Post Office Department could select the name itself. Panama, probably for the canal, was the name chosen, and the office, with William C. and Martha Nickell, among its postmasters, operated between June 14, 1905 and September 1955.

Jeff D. Rose first submitted his family's name for a post office that would serve a store on Sinking Creek, two miles north of the Licking River. Not able to call it this, he then submitted Jeston for his wife Victoria's mother Jeston Testerman Gevedon (1851-1959) of the Grasssy Creek area. Rose and several others operated the office at three sites in the Sinking Creek area from August 28, 1905 through 1913.

On September 23, 1915 Jeff D. Cox had the Jeston office reopened just south of the creek. He would call it Wick. The local story goes that when this name and seventeen others submitted to the Post Office Department were not acceptable, they selected Panama.
Office Department were rejected, Cox's daughter Pearl sent in two words Zig and Zag. The second was accepted, and the Zag post office operated at six area sites till it closed in 1965 when it was serving a store on Ky 976, half a mile west of 519, and 8 3/4 miles northwest of West Liberty.

Samuel L. and Charles V. Reed, local storekeepers, ran a post office called Lamar from July 12, 1906 through September 1917. It began at a point on White Oak Creek's Right Fork, 2½ miles below (north of) Piedmont. In 1911 Charles had it moved one mile up the Fork, and three years later he moved it half a mile further up the Fork. County historians do not know the origin of the Lamar name. I'll venture a guess. Could it have honored the late Lucius Quintus Cincinnatus Lamar (1825-1893), the Georgia-born, Mississippi lawyer who served in the U.S. Senate (1877-1885) and as Cleveland's Interior Secretary (1885-1888) before he was appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court? His post Civil War efforts at regional conciliation had a wide appeal in both the North and the South.

On January 6, 1920, in the vicinity of Lamar's last site, Harrison H. Holliday, a twenty two year old school teacher, reopened that office as Holiday. Here it continued to serve the upper end of the Fork, 2½ miles east of Caney, till 1957.

According to Charley D. Arnett's Site Location Reports, his Arnett post office, established on July 19, 1907, was just north of the mouth of Blackwater Creek, at the terminus of the Licking River Railroad whose station was called Blackwater. By 1911 the station and the small village developing around it had taken the post office name. Arnett alone operated the office till it closed in January
1913. The station and village were soon abandoned. Current county highway maps have erroneously placed the office on the present Rt. 985, 1½ miles north of Ky 772.

In addition to Nannie, above, Morgan County's Murphys were involved with two other post offices. The first, simply Murphy, was probably named for the first of its two postmasters, Jerre M. Murphy, and was just south of Ezel and one fourth of a mile west of Blackwater Creek, in the vicinity of the junction of US 460 and Rt. 1010. The office operated between October 15, 1907 and mid December 1918. This section may now be known as Jericho, though it is really a part of the larger Ezel community.

The other office is Murphy Fork, 2½ miles up the stream of that name that joins the Oldfield Fork of Grassy Creek, just southwest of the Mize Church. It operated between January 27, 1926 and July 1953. Its first two postmasters, the local storekeepers Benjamin Sherman Murphy and his son Courtney, were descendants of the stream's early owners, settlers, and probable name sources, John and Nancy Murphy, who had acquired it in the 1830s.

The Alice post office was probably at or near the mouth of Williams Creek, in the vicinity of the junction of Ky 172 and 437, for, according to its only postmaster, Noah C. Day, it was nearly three miles southwest of the Elk Fork post office, three miles north of the then site of Elamton, and three miles from Lenox—in short, about 7½ miles northeast of West Liberty. His proposed name Taft was then in use in Owsley County, so he named the office for his fourteen month old daughter Alice Faye Day. He alone operated it between December 26, 1907 and mid October 1918.
In 1905 John W. Wrigley of the Clearfield Lumber Company of Pennsylvania bought J.W. Buchwalter's land with its timber and coal holdings on the upper end of the Licking River's North Fork. To exploit that area's resources he built a railroad from his company's mill at Clearfield, near Morehead, to Loveland, that was eventually extended to Lenox and Rush Branch. At Buchwalter's, three miles west of Loveland, where two stores had already been located, he founded a town called Wrigley. Its post office was established on June 9, 1908, with Joseph F. Reed, postmaster, just prior to the opening of the local rail station. The latter soon became the rail shipping point for an important coal and timber producing area in northern Morgan County. With the depletion of the area's resources came the abandonment of the railroad in the early 1930s, and the beginning of the community's present status as a crossroads hamlet with store, school, post office, and coal depot at the junction of Ky 7 and 711, 8½ miles north of West Liberty. The post office lost its independent status in the early 1990s and is now a community post office.

Morgan County's easternmost post office was Elna. In fact, it was established, on August 4, 1908, just within the Johnson County line, on the north bank of Big Paint Creek. Haden Williams, the first postmaster, is said to have named it for his daughter Ida Elna (nee 1884) who had married Williams' successor Polk Pendleton. On February 21, 1924 Pendleton's successor, Mr. Rosslyn Williams, moved the office three-fourths of a mile to a site just within Morgan County. By 1929 and till it closed in October 1980, the office was on Rt. 3214, the county line, and one mile north of Big Paint.
Guy Williams gave his family name to the Williams post office on the present US 460, one-fourth of a mile east of White Oak Creek's Left Fork, and 1 3/4 miles south of the White Oak Post Office. Established on March 6, 1909, it lasted till 1942.

From August 17, 1909 to mid September 1913 Loutisha (or Lauticia) Elam operated the Dorsie post office which her husband David Preston Elam had applied for. It was probably on Wheelrim Fork of Johnson Creek for, according to Elam's Site Location Report, it was to be three miles northeast of the Bellknap post office in Wolfe County, three miles northwest of Magoffin County's Elmore post office, and four miles west of the Netty post office. Nothing has been learned of its name.

The Dehart post office, named for the family of its first postmaster David Boone Dehart, operated between October 5, 1909 and late July 1963 at three sites a mile up Greasy Creek from the Licking River. It was most recently on Ky 772, 2 1/2 miles from 519, and seven miles northwest of West Liberty.

Two Morgan County post offices were undoubtedly named for Lizzies whose specific identities are not known. The earlier, simply Lizzie, was established on April 1, 1910 on Straight Creek, three miles southeast of Loveland-Redwine Station, and as many miles north of Lenox. It thus probably served the area earlier served by the Steele and Manker post offices. David N. Trimble, its first postmaster and the local storekeeper, found his family's name already in use in Pulaski County, so he chose Lizzie instead. Some say he named it for a daughter, but there is no record of his having a daughter by this name. However, his brother Marion G. did then have a five year...
old daughter named Lizzie. And an older Elizabeth C. Trimble (1853-1933) is listed in county records. In any event, the office closed in November 1919, but was re-opened on March 12, 1930 with Marion as postmaster, and closed for good in November 1934.

The other office was Lizzieland. It was established on April 5, 1916 with Mattie (Mrs. William) Burton, postmaster, on the upper end of Stacy Fork. When, in 1919, Lula F. Nickell moved the office one-fourth of a mile southwest to a store probably in the vicinity of Nickell School, it was 1½ miles southwest of the first Payton post office. A slim possibility was that Mrs. Burton had named her office for a neighbor and in-law Lizzie Deboard (Mrs. Robert H.) Nickell (nee ca. 1878). Whence Lane is not known. The office closed in May 1927.

The Payton post office which also served the upper Stacy Fork area from March 30, 1921 through October 1964 was established by Mack K. Peyton and named for his family. The post office Department apparently misread his application, recording the name as Payton, and it was never corrected. Curiously, neither was the spelling of the name of nearby Payton Fork, also named for the descendants of Morgan County pioneer magistrate Daniel Peyton. In 1932 the Payton post office was moved 200 yards south, and in December 1933 it was re-located two-thirds of a mile north at the site on Rt. 844 shown on contemporary maps.

When the O&K Railroad reached the Licking River in 1912 it established there the Licking River Station. This was just east of the mouth of Caney Creek. In a building owned by the railroad, half a mile from the tracks, and three miles north of the Liberty Road post
office, the Licking River post office was opened on May 14, 1912, with Dr. Charles C. Burton, postmaster. When the railroad was discontinued in 1933, most of the area businesses dependent on it were closed and a number of buildings were torn down. One of these was the building housing the local post office which, in October 1934, was relocated one-fourth of a mile east. Four years later the office was moved back to a site close to its original location where it closed in July 1956.

On Little Caney Creek and the present US 460, two miles south of Index, William Bolton Greear (1868-1958) established the Greear post office on April 2, 1915. In 1922 Pearlie Greear moved the office half a mile west, and in 1935 J. Eugene Halsey moved it three-fourths of a mile east where it closed in March 1957.

Somewhere on Vance Fork was the shortlived (May 26, 1915 through January 1916) post office of Wise. Since Jane Salyer Vance, its only postmaster, was unable to name it for the 2½ mile long stream, she suggested Wise for her husband Henry Wise Vance (1877-1961). Henry was a son of Alexander W. and Almarinda Elam Vance and a descendant of John Clay Vance, for whom this branch of White Oak Creek's Right Fork was named.

Rexville was another post office that was given someone's middle name. This office, a mile up Nickell Fork of Caskey (a Grassy Creek tributary), and 11½ miles southwest of West Liberty, was named for Alvin Rex Childers, the seven year old son of Zepha and Ethel Childers, neighbors of the first postmaster George W. Brewer. It operated from May 23, 1924 through February 1959.
The settlement of Wheelrim had a post office called Burg. This was established on October 6, 1924 by Kelson H. Risner, postmaster, whose family name and something like Burgentender were first suggested for its name. Risner was already in use in Floyd County; the other, too long, was shortened to Burg. The office operated through June 1955. The settlement was named for its location two miles up the Wheelrim Fork of Johnson Creek, at the mouth of Elam Branch, and a mile north of the junction of Morgan, Wolfe, and Magoffin Counties.

According to tradition, Wheelrim Fork was named when some early settlers spied the rim of an old wagon wheel that someone had thrown up in the branches of a tree on its banks. For years the community was also officially known as Burg until in 1965 the U.S. Board on Geographic Names decided in favor of the local preference for Wheelrim. But, for some reason, the Board saw fit to spell the name of both settlement and stream as Wheel Rim. Now Burg as a name is all but forgotten.

Buskirk was another post office serving a community with a different name. The community of Salem and the Grassy Creek fork at whose head forks it is located, were named for the local Christian church established around 1884 by Richard Phipps. But since Salem was already the name of a Livingston County post office, Thomas J. Buskirk, the postmaster-designate, gave his own family's name to the Morgan County office established on March 9, 1925. The two names continue to be used interchangeably to identify the community at the junction of Ky 705 and 844, one-fourth of a mile east of the new Ky 205, and 9½ miles ssw of West Liberty. The post office closed in 1993.
The inexplicably named Apple post office was operated by Richard M. Hamilton from August 9, 1926 through February 1931 on the present Ky 772, just north of the Lower Long Branch Road (Rt. 3345), 2½ miles northeast of Ezel. Hamilton's preferred name Noah is equally inexplicable.

Another unusually named post office actually bore a number written out as Twenty Six. From May 3, 1927 through November 1956 it served the Perry Bend neighborhood, sometimes called Mussel Shoals, just west of the Licking River and north of the mouth of Grassy Creek. The office was on the present Ky 772, 7½ miles northeast of Ezel and five miles southwest of Ky 519. Its first postmaster Mrs. Martha Rowland is said to have submitted a list of twenty five names to the Post Office Department and then added a twenty sixth, the year she applied for the post office.

On May 4, 1927 Charley Rudd established the New Cummer post office just west of Grassy Creek, two miles north of the Grassy Creek post office, and 8½ miles wsw of West Liberty. It closed in March 1941. Its name source has never been learned.

Cottle, the recently closed post office just north of the junction of US 460 (Ky 7) and Ky 364, and just east of the Licking River, was established on March 11, 1931 with Herbert Hammonds, postmaster. It was named for the descendants of pioneer settler Joseph Cottle.

On Ky 711, at the mouth of Devils Fork of the Licking River's North Fork, was the Blairs Mills Station on the Morehead and North Fork Railroad. In 1932, just before the railroad's cessation, Otis Cassity established the local post office and called it Leisure. According to local tradition, the men who loafed at John Cassity's
store were considered to be of the "leisure class." The office closed in August 1941.21

Morgan's last post office to be established was Gordon Ford on the south bank of the Licking, four miles south of West Liberty. This was just below the site of a natural fording place on the river at low tide and a ferry operated by Joe Gordon who had settled there in the 1830s. Cora Keeton was the first postmaster of the office that operated from 1946 through March 1957.

Seven of Morgan's ninety five post offices (West Liberty, Ezel, Cannel City, Crockett, Malone, Elk Fork, and Ophir) are still active. Wrigley remains a community post office served by West Liberty.

Five offices were established but their authorizations were later rescinded and they were never in operation.

On February 2, 1894 Jerome Oakley was appointed postmaster of the Ollie post office that would have been located in the Pleasant Run area.

Somewhere on Ky 172, between the Elk Fork and Crockett offices, would have been the O'Rear post office, established in April 1902 and probably named for Edward C. O'Rear, then a twenty nine year old West Liberty lawyer who later became Chief Justice of the Kentucky Court of Appeals.

The noted Easterling family of the Cottle-Florress-White Oak area (or one or more of its members) may have given their name to an unlocated post office established on November 8, 1904 with David Allen, postmaster.
Alwilda was established on March 26, 1906 by Sarah J. (Mrs. John W.) Fyffe and may have been named for Alwilda Fyffe, the twenty year old daughter of Mary Fyffe. According to Lynn Nickell, this office was probably in the Paint Creek area of the county.

Mrs. Pearl Fairchild's order of April 15, 1923 for the Medowlawn post office could have anticipated by a year the Lick Branch office for, according to Lynn Nickell, it would have been on Elk Fork between Mordica and Indian Creeks.

Forty Morgan post offices were named for local or county residents. One may have been named for a U.S. president. Four had geographic or locational references. Two were named for the county itself though one of these was later to be better known by another name. Six were named for distant places (two from the Bible). Sixteen were derived from other named features in their immediate area (eleven of these were streams, three were mills, one was a local road, and one was a ford. Seven of these other features also bore the names of local persons or families.) The Biblical Matthew may have given his name to one office. Three names reflected the area's economy--one was the name of a local mining company; another was a product of local mining operations; and a third was the name of a product found on a store shelf. One office may have been named for a local horse. Three names could be considered symbolic or have what some might call imaginative or figurative derivations. Two names are said to have been influenced by the application for the offices themselves. For seventeen post offices, however, name derivations have not yet been learned. And seven offices have not been precisely located.
Twenty six post office names were not those first proposed for them. Twelve offices had names different from those of the communities they served. Four offices had name changes.

FOOTNOTES


2. Nathan, Wallace, Francis, and William Brown, postmasters of Head of Paint, are not to be confused with the Browns of Rockhouse on the Licking River.

3. The only other post office called Relief in the U.S. is in Mitchell County, North Carolina. It is said to have gotten its name this way: a man was walking to the local store to pick up a bottle of Heart's Relief, a medicinal tonic with a high alcohol content. On his way he told a friend that he was going to pick up some Relief. The friend thought he heard him say he was going to Relief to pick up some medicine, and from that local people began to say that they too were going to Relief. So the post office took that name. (From Donald L. McCourry, Us Poor Folks and the Things of Dog Flat Hollow, Winston-Salem: John F. Blair, 1975, P. 71)

4. The Walnut Grove Baptist Church was later moved down the creek to the mouth of Stacy Fork but retained its name.

5. According to local tradition, Walnut Grove was, for a time, nick-named Pinhook for the bent pins residents often used for fishing.
6. Caney seems unlikely to have been named, as is locally believed, for one Eloane Lykins, the son of Caleb and Polly Lykins, for he was not born until several years after the post office was established and given that name.

7. The creek has always been Devil's Fork and, indeed, Stamper's petition called for the possessive, but postal records officially list it without one.

8. According to the Postal Route Map of 1884 the original Yocum post office was five road miles southeast of Paragon (on the North Fork) and 9 1/2 road miles northwest of West Liberty.

9. A post office called simply Fannin was established in Elliott County in 1900.

10. The same account has been given for the Elkhorn Creek in the Bluegrass. See Robert M. Rennick, Kentucky's Bluegrass: A Survey of the Post Offices, Lake Grove, Or: The Depot, 1993, P. 91


12. The Biblical Ophir, referred to several times in the Old Testament, is believed to have been within the borders of the present Yemen.

13. W. Lynn Nickell, compiler, U.S. Postal Service--Morgan County, Ky, 1822-1990, Updated 1992--Offices and Postmasters, at the Kennedy Library in West Liberty, P. 55. Index, however, is hardly a unique American place name. Several western elevations (in
South Dakota, Washington and Wyoming) were so named for their resemblance to a pointing index finger. (cf George R. Stewart, *American Place Names*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1970, P. 219.) At least one other American post office has borne this name; an office in Snohomish County, Washington was named for the nearby mountain.

14. According to Harlan R. Brown's *Brief History of Our Early Life and Morgan County, Kentucky*, Ashland, 1950. P. 30, Tarkiln Branch was named for a pioneer kiln that burned pine knots to make grease for wagon axles.


16. In 1910 the Lexington and Eastern Railroad was acquired by the Louisville and Nashville Railroad.

17. Cannel Coal, the term applied to the compact and readily burning coal, may have been corrupted from "candle coal", describing its propensity to burn like a bright flame. (cf W. Lynn Nickell, *The Last Train to Jackson*, West Liberty, 1991, P. 3)


19. No Inskos are listed in Morgan County's 1900 Census.

20. Could Cox's preferred name Wick have honored the late Kentucky Congressman John "Wick" Kendall, a Morgan County native?

21. The Leisure post office established in Madison County, Indiana in 1888 was named for a local family.

22. Henry, one of the earliest of the Easterlings (ca. 1799-1876), is buried at the old White Oak Cemetery below the Allen Cemetery.
William T. Easterling (1857-1940) lived on Lacy Creek and is buried in his family's cemetery just south of the Florress post office.

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5. Johnson, Arthur, Early Morgan County, Ashland, 1974


7. Nickell, Joe F. Morgan County: The Earliest Years, West Liberty, 1986

8. Nickell, W. Lynn, West Liberty, interviewed by the writer on December 1, 1978

9. Ibid., The Last Train to Jackson: A Pictorial History of Cannel City, West Liberty, 1991

10. Ibid., Riding the Blue Goose, West Liberty, 1993

11. Ibid., compiler, U.S. Postal Service--Morgan County, Kentucky,

copy at the Kennedy Library, West Liberty


14. Rowland, Mrs. Bertha, West Liberty, in a letter to the writer, September 6, 1980

15. Sorrell, Mrs. Charlotte W. of Morgan County, a student of Prof. Leonard Roberts, Morehead State University. From her, in 1960, Prof. Roberts collected an account of the naming of Blackwater Creek.

16. Taylor, Georgia F. compiler, Morgan County Scrapbook, Clippings from the Licking Valley Courier, copy in the Library of the Kentucky Historical Society

17. U.S. Post Office Department: Site Location Reports--Morgan County Post Offices, National Archives (Washington, D.C.)
Morgan Co. communities

1. West Liberty (co. seat)
2. White Oak (po and com)
3. Ezel (po and com)
4. Head of Paint (dpo)
5. Christy's Fork (dpo)
6. Cassity’s Mills (dpo)
7. Layalillo (dpo)
8. Woodlawn (dpo)
9. Caney (po and com)
10. Hampton’s Mills (dpo)
11. Grassy Creek (dpo) (po and com)
12. Relief (po and com)
13. Bell (dpo)
14. Blairs Mills (dpo)
15. Henry (dpo)
16. Elkfork (dpo)
17. Sellars (dpo)
18. Maytown (dpo)
19. Mize (po and com)
20. Redwine (po and com)
21. Dingus (po and com)
22. Elamtown (dpo)
23. Swetnam (dpo)
24. Steele (dpo)
25. Omer (dpo)
26. Pomp (dpo and com)
27. Index (po and com)
28. Thyra (dpo)
29. Jeptha (dpo)
30. Ollie (po, est. but never in op.)
31. Matthew (dpo)
32. Malone (po and com)
33. Castle (dpo)
34. Blaze (po and com)
35. Pyffe (dpo)
36. Wells (dpo)
37. Forest (dpo)
38. Silverhill (dpo)
39. Mima (po and com)
40. Goodsey (dpo)
41. Murphy Fork (dpo)
42. Lenox (po and com)
43. Crockett (po and com)
44. Nickell (dpo)
45. Pekin (dpo)
46. Wilson (dpo)
47. Wellford (dpo)
48. Florress (po and com)
49. Manker (dpo)
50. Biggstaff (dpo)
51. Canavel (po and com)
52. O’Rear (p.o. est. but never in op.)
56. Insko (po) aka Adele (com)
57. Demund (dpo)
58. Elna (po) (com)
59. Malbone (dpo)
60. Buskirk (po and com) Selom (com) = Indiana
61. Bander (po) (com)
62. Easterling (po est. but never in op.)
63. Alwilda (ibid.)
64. Burg (dpo) Wheeling (com)
65. Moore (dpo)
66. Nannie (dpo) (com)
67. Panama (dpo) (com)
68. Jestion (dpo)
69. Logville (dpo) (com) map of one coal
70. Liberty Road (dpo) (com) = Lemon (dpo)
71. Lamar (dpo) (com)
72. Rexville (dpo) (com)
73. Arnett (dpo)
74. Dehart (dpo) (com)
75. Alice (dpo)
76. Woodsbend (po) (com)
77. Warren (dpo) (com)
78. Payton (dpo) (com)
79. New Cummer (po) (dpo) (com)
80. Wrigley (po and com)
81. Burkhart (dpo) (com)
82. Dorsie (dpo)
83. Licking River (dpo) (com)
84. Lizzie (dpo) (com)
85. Rusk (dpo)
86. Luster (dpo)
87. Williams (dpo) (com)
88. Stacy Fork (po and com)
89. Pick Branch (dpo) (com)
90. Grear (dpo) (com)
91. Wise (dpo)
92. Kellragy (dpo and com)
93. Apple (dpo) (com)
94. Cottle (po and com)
95. Holliday (dpo) (com)
96. U Long (dpo)
97. Toms Branch (com)
98. Good Ridge (dpo)
99. Pannin (dpo)
100. Twenty Six (dpo) (com)
101. Ditney (dpo)
102. Greenie (dpo)
103. Hickory Grove (dpo)
104. Wells Sta. (dpo)
105. Casky Fork (dpo)
106. Headof Stacy Fork (dpo)
107. Greasy Fork (dpo)
108. Lewis (com)
109. Right Fork (dpo)
110. Road Fork (dpo)
111. Rockhouse (dpo)
112. Upper White Oak (dpo)
113. Vance Fork (dpo)
117. Cindas Creek Ngbr.
118. Cow Branch Ngbr.
119. Gordon Ford (com) (PO) x
120. Hollow Poplar Ngbr.
121. Jones Creek Ngbr.
122. Laurel Fork Ngbr.
123. Leisure (com) PO
124. Lacy Creek (com)
125. Liberty Rd. Lick Fork Ngbr.
126. Lost Creek Ngbr.
127. Lower Sandlick Creek Ngbr.
128. Lucky Ngbr.
129. Long Branch Ngbr. and Whitleville (com)
130. Middle Fork Ngbr.
131. Moon (dio) (com) (PO) o
132. Mordica Ngbr.
133. Neal Valley Ngbr.
134. Oak Hill Ngbr.
135. Pine Grove Ngbr.
137. Smith Creek Ngbr.
138. Spaws Creek Ngbr.
139. Splitwood Ngbr.
140. Straight Creek Ngbr.
141. Upper Sandlick Creek Ngbr.
142. Williams Creek Ngbr.
143. Zax (com) — Teaster (PO) x
144. Minefork (dpo) (com) and map PO (CO)
145. Yocum (com) o
146. Flat Woods (sic) (com)
147. Buckett (com)
148. Lime Kiln (sic) (com)
149. McClain (com)
150. Murphyville (?)(com) FO
151. Elder (com) (CO) — Kellyville PO (CO)
152. Trimble (com)
153. Preese (com)
154. Lizzievale (PO + com)
155. Doche Creek (ngbr)
156. Indian Creek (ngbr)
157. Middle Fork (ngbr)
158. Eustace (com)
159. Bayston (com) — Barfor (PO or CO)
160. Kawlesburg (com ext.)
161. Whitleville (com)

\[ \text{Nghbr} = 35 \]
\[ P_{est} = Y \]
\[ \theta = (\frac{1}{11}) \]
**BROKE LEG FALLS**

The Broke Leg Falls are located on Highway 40 on the line between Menifee and Morgan County, about 35 miles South East of Mt. Sterling, Ky. Broke Leg Creek flows over the falls and drops vertically more than 100 feet. The region is a depression more than 100 feet lower than the surrounding area. Ages of erosion have worn down the valley which contains about 300 acres.

The entire region is a primeval forest covered with oak, beech, laurel, and Rhododendron which make it a most beautiful spot. The exposed rocks shows streaks of iron. Magnesium, sulphate and silica forms of the rocks. At the entrance is a clear spring of water which flows continually.

This spot is within 2 hours drive of the heart of the Blue Grass of Kentucky. Where the tired business men can bring his family, spend the day refresh in a cool, quiet, silent, secluded spot and return rested after living one day close to primeval nature.

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**MILE CREEK CAVE**

This cave is located near Donhue in the northern part of the county. The cave has three or four rooms and the first room you go into is a large room. In places the ceiling of the cave is high enough to stand straight in, but there are low places. There are large and small stalactites and stalagmites. There is a county road that goes within three miles of the cave. This cave is not very well known by many people of the county because it is isolated part of the county.

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**SITES**

Yocum Falls are about 100 feet high. They are located near Blaze. This is a very beautiful spot in the County especially during the freeze in winter. During the summer there is not much water flowing over the falls. There are trees all around the falls and the tops of tall trees do not come to the top of the falls. There is a large place under the falls where it has
been washed out by the large amount of water which flows over the falls. It is one of the spots of the county that is not known by very many people because it is rather isolated. Lowell Donhue.

RIPE SPRINGS

The spring was named after Peter Rife about 1900. Peter Rife was the father of Mrs. L. B. Reed who now lives in West Liberty.

The spring is a round basin cut out in solid rock it will contain about four gallons of water and is a continual flow. It is walled in with stone and is a very sanitary place. The water in the spring never freezes.

There was a man stayed at Mr. Rifes from Los Angeles, California and he had heard that this water out of the springs would cure stomach trouble so he went to Mr. Rife's place and stayed a short time and was cured. He took some of the water home with him and had it tested and they found a number of medicinal properties in the water, to cure stomach trouble, brights disease, and rheumatism.

There was a hotel at the time with eighteen rooms and they were filled all the time with people from every place coming to be cured of some disease. There was one man came that had rheumatism and stomach trouble and was walking with crutches. He stayed about six months and sent his crutches home and went back without them.

At this time the nearest railroad was at Morehead and they came in buggies from there to the springs which was about 25 miles. On Sundays there would be two or three hundred people that lived near enough around so they could get back in a day and they would bring their dinner and spend the day.

The building was burned about 20 years ago and there isn't any place for people to stay so there isn't anyone from long distances that come there.

Mrs. L. B. Reed
THE PEDDLER ROCK
By Myself

Local Legends

The story I am thinking about is tragic and true, and has been a local legend as far back as any of my folks can remember.

About eight miles from the place where I was reared is a huge rock which seems to be just teetering on the tip-top of the hill.

I myself have never been to the rock but it can be seen from the road that winds around the hill.

The rock seems to be shelly and hollow and it is said to have the skeleton of a man in it.

Years ago, a pack peddler was seen in this section one evening late, and was never seen again.

Folks said that a certain man was also seen on this road and pretty soon after the disappearance of the "old peddler". This man was showing money around and not too long after this moved away.

The story always seemed so "horrid" that people stayed away from the rock, but it has been confirmed as true by some who have investigated.

There was at that time a general idea that the peddlers were rich and some people did not care to murder if they thought they wouldn't be caught.

I do know the "rock" is still called the "Peddler Rock".
HOW PEDDLERS GAP KENTUCKY, MORGAN COUNTY, WAS NAMED

In earlier days when it was not as convenient for people to do their shopping in town, men known as peddlers traveled through the country, carrying a large pack on their back, and peddling this merchandise.

There was one peddler traveling through Morgan County and a man named Bill Brown had plotted to kill him. Brown had a "flint rock rifle", he loaded his rifle and sat down on the path by which the peddler had to travel. While sitting there he went to sleep, but was awakened by a pheasant that was disturbed by the peddlers approach. On waking up, he shot and killed the peddler, then took his pack and went to Elliot County and began peddling the merchandise himself. There's where he was caught.

As a trial, he was to hang for ten minutes. If he lived during this ten minutes he would be a free man.

He was allowed to choose his own men to hang him. He chose Bill Walsh, who was considered an excellent teamster. Brown stood on the wagon, under a walnut tree, with the rope around his neck. Walsh was told to drive slow and Brown would hang on to the wagon with his toes for several minutes and then swing off easy, but as the wagon started rolling, the rope began spinning and Brown immediately died.

The Walnut tree from which he was hung later died.

The three men involved in this tragedy were all named Bill. There was Bill Brown, the killer.
Bill Walsh, the driver of the wagon.
Bill Walsh's grandson, Tom Walsh of Malone Kentucky, Morgan County.
CANEY (Morgan Co., Ky.)

Daniel Williams, ne 1763. Acc. to trad., he traveled thru what later became Morgan Co. with Dan'l. Boone in 1775. Married Violet Couch at Boonsboro when he was age 17 and lived for a while at the site of Winchester. Son of Thos. Edward Williams. Later moved to Morgan Co. Built first log cabin in the W. Liberty area. (from interview by Hilda L. Benton with Rev. Wardie Craft, min. of Bapt. Church at Caney 6/20/1972.) "In 1805, Daniel Williams claimed the Caney valley land from the Adele hill to the Jack Burton farm about one mile above Stacy Fork and all the watershed therein."

Est. 2 churches in that area in 1808: the South Fork church at Malone and the Walnut Grove Church in the upper end of Caney "behind the present church building." log houses. Both Prim. Baptist. The first of these churches is on its orig. site though"log cabin replaced by frame building." (info. from Licking Vall. Courier, 6/15/72.)

The Walnut Grove Church named for the grove of walnut trees at the site. The church was later moved to Stacy Fork but kept the name.

Other lore about Williams....

Caney p.o. est. 8/2/1854 with David Isaac Lykins, grandson of Daniel Williams and son of Nancy Williams Lykins and David R. Lykins, as the 1st pm. He served till 3/20/1862 when the p.o. was disc. Re-est. 7/7/1874 with Joshua W. Lykins; 10/14/1875, Wm. Lykins.....(for a complete list of pm, see this article, last page....)

Isaac's brother, Wm. was Morgan Co's first judge. Isaac, Wm., and Green Stacy, Mike Watson, and Wilburn Blankenship were the founders of Caney. Caney first known as Pinhook "because fish were plentiful in her waters and the people used bent pins to catch fish. Later when it was incorporated, it was named Caney for a well respected man, Elkaney Lykins."

First noted for chestnut tree logging--timber used for fence posts and house foundations and rail fences....Coal plentiful in the caney area: cannel coal....

First school erected across from site of present p.o., against the hill in the place where later train rails were laid. 1856 est. of first school....The United Bapt. Church erected c. 3/4 mi. from center of town across from Kash Lykins' home, 1897. Rev. Leaburn Lykins=first pastor.....In 1927, church moved to Magoffin Co. Then a church was built on Brushy Fork for this congregation, and later moved into bldg. formerly housing the Walnut Grove Church in Caney. Methodist church built in the bottom across from the Caney School.

Saints Bottom=nickname given to the bottom in which the first Church of God was located by persons who resented the est. of this church and its doctrine of monopoly of truth....Located just over the line from Caney into Cannel City. Since replaced by modern structure.....

Three hotels, bank, dentist. Prosperous town by turn of present century. Many stores. Trading center for the area. Mail came from White Oak 3 x a week on horseback....RR came thru and depot built. Two lawyers. Five MDs.
Spring Branch of Brushy Fork was the site of the shortlived Pearsite Oil Company's effort to extract coal tar products to make aniline dyes from cannel coal during WWI... (W.F. Johnston, "Memories of Youth Spent in Cannel City, Kentucky" article in Licking Valley Courier, date=?)

Two teacher school at Caney and over 100 pupils.

Railroads followed the opening of the cannel coal mines at Caney and Cannel City. Logs floated down the creek from Caney to Licking R.... RR from Licking River depot thru Caney, Cannel City, on to Jackson. Mines closed in 1931. Passenger trains ceased in 1933. People began to leave for jobs elsewhere. Stores closed, businesses abandoned. School bldg. burned 1945, not replaced. Children went thenceforth to Cannel City school. Today: only 2 stores and p.o. One store owned by Luther Reed who came to town in 1910 and the other by Earnest Craft who started his grocery there in 1946. Carl Benton=pm, c1972. Only 2 churches active: United Baptist Church=Rev. B.T. Morris, pastor; Redeemed Baptist=Rev. Wardie Craft, pastor. He was also former prin. of Cannel City school. Pop. now 225. Farming and commuting to jobs in surrounding towns.....

Much other history and lore.... Biblio. and complete list of postmasters......