THE POST OFFICES OF RUSSELL COUNTY, KENTUCKY

The 254 square mile Russell is a well-watered county on a moderate to well dissected plateau in the eastern end of South Central Kentucky.

The eighty first of the state's counties was established on December 14, 1825 from sections of Adair, Wayne, and Cumberland Counties and named for Col. William Russell. Russell (1758-1825), a veteran of the Revolutionary War, the Indian campaigns of the 1790s, and the Battle of Tippecanoe (1811), succeeded William Henry Harrison as the commander of American forces on the frontier, and later served in the Kentucky legislature.

The county's original 270 square mile area was increased by ten from Pulaski County in 1840, but several small losses brought it to its present size by 1876.

The southern and eastern sections of the county are drained by the Cumberland River and its main branches (Wolf and its Caney Fork, McFarland, and Alligator, the "Roaring" Lily, Greasy, Indian and Little Indian, Blackfish, and Miller Creeks), while the north is drained by Russell and Goose Creeks in the Green River system.

Until the Second World War the county's economy was primarily agricultural, limited mostly to the level and reasonably fertile bottoms of its main streams. Early industries included an iron furnace (1830s), several antebellum cotton and woolen mills in the Cumberland valley, relatively unprofitable oil drilling from the opening, in 1865, of the Gabbart Wells, mostly in the Creelsboro area and near the Cumberland County line, and some open quarry limestone mining for road construction.

With the absence of railroads through the county and few all-weather passable roads till well into the twentieth century, the Cumberland

River was the only means of transporting goods and people in and through the county. But the construction of the north-south Ky 35 (now a part of US 127), the east-west Ky 80, paralleled by the recently opened, limited access Cumberland Parkway, and the much improved secondary roads have opened the county to the rest of the state. By World War II river traffic had been all but abandoned.

The greatest beneficiaries of road construction have been the new industrial development and, especially, tourism. Industrial development began in earnest in the 1950s with wood products, including furniture, augmented in the 1960s and 70s by mens and womens clothing, undergarments, houseboats, chainlink fences, and hayfeeders. Tourism with roots in the antebellum's Big Boiling Springs spa and resort, may now be the county's leading income producer. Contributing substantially to this is Lake Cumberland with its vacation and retirement homes and the 3,000 acre state resort park off US 127, fourteen miles southwest of Jamestown, the county seat.

Lake Cumberland was created by the 1952 impoundment of the river following the completion in 1950 of Wolf Creek Dam. This 240 foot high and 5,736 foot long combination earth and concrete gravity-type dam, ten miles southwest of Jamestown, had been authorized by the Federal Flood Control Act of 1938 and the River and Harbor Act of 1946 for flood control and hydro-electric power generation. Though the dam is two miles below the mouth of Indian Creek, it was named for the first site considered at the mouth of Wolf Creek, 16½ miles above. Its construction began with groundbreaking on September 1, 1941, was suspended in 1943, and resumed in August 1946.

Russell's population in 2003 was an estimated 16,600, an increase of some 57 per cent from 1970.

The county's fifty seven operating post offices will be described below by their locations in the main stream valleys and along key highways. Precise locations will be by road miles from the court house in downtown Jamestown (the county's centrally located seat, ninety one road miles ssw of downtown Lexington) or from other offices in the same area.

POST OFFICES SERVING RUSSELL COUNTY'S TWO CITIES

Jamestown and Russell Springs, with the county's two active post offices, were once traditional rivals, some five miles apart, but now meet at a site appropriately called Middletown.

The fifth class city of Jamestown, with a 2000 population of 1,624, centers at the junction of US 127 (formerly Ky 35), Ky 619, and Ky 92. It was established as Russell's seat on May 3, 1826 on 110 acres donated by the brothers James and John Wooldridge, but was initially called Jacksonville for General Andrew Jackson. A very short time later, when the Whigs came to power in Kentucky it was renamed for Virginia-born James (1762-1845), son of pioneer Russell County settler Richard Wooldridge, Sr. (1740-1828). The Jamestown post office was established on November 4, 1826 with James G. Patterson, postmaster, and the town was incorporated on December 23, 1827.[1]

Russell Springs, on 127, Ky 80, and the Cumberland Parkway, just north of Jamestown, had a long history as a health resort. Known as Big Boiling Springs by 1850 the resort is said to have been founded by pioneer settler Sam Patterson around one of several area springs whose chalybeate content seemingly "bubbled or boiled out of the ground." The spring attracted visitors to Patterson's tavern and a twelve cabin "Long Row" by the mid 1850s. In 1898 the "Long Row" was replaced by a hotel that burned in 1942, and the spring, since capped as a well, is now the site of a local park.

The post office established by Timoleon Bradshaw as Russell Springs on May 17, 1855 was discontinued on November 30, 1865. It was re-established on April 28, 1888 as Kimble with Daniel Wilson, postmaster, honoring George A. Kimble, then the town's leading businessman.[2] On June 3, 1901 the office was renamed Russell Springs to conform to the name the town had officially adopted two years before.

Russell Springs is now a fifth class city with a 2000 population of about 2,400 (a fifty four per cent increase over 1970). By 1990 it had become the county's "factory town" with nineteen of its twenty four plants, including branches of Cudahy and Emerson Electric.

POST OFFICES ESTABLISHED IN ADJACENT COUNTIES AND EITHER INCORPORATED INTO RUSSELL COUNTY OR WERE MOVED TO IT

Russell County's first post office and the only one established before its formation was Horse Shoe Bottom. This office, some 4½ miles sse of the future Jamestown, opened on June 6, 1822, with William Green, its first postmaster, and served a prosperous Wayne County farming area within a seven mile long horseshoe-shaped bend or loop of the Cumberland River. By the 1860s the office was across from the loop, just above the mouth of Greasy Creek, and for the rest of the century served a landing (also known as Dunbars for a prominent local family) and a village on both sides of the river. In 1916 the office was moved across the river to a site half a mile within the loop,[3] at or near the site of William Neal Stokes' Stokes post office (August 1, 1890 to August 15, 1907) and store.[4] When the Horse Shoe Bottom post office closed on April 15, 1948 it was one mile south of the river, on the road between Jamestown and Monticello. Its closing undoubtedly anticipated the river's impoundment, and now all the post office sites and much of the loop itself are in the lake.

Another Russell County post office established in Wayne County was Rowena. This opened on May 14, 1847 with Robert Tarpley, postmaster, to serve two new river towns. One was Lairsville founded on March 1 of that year by William D. Lair on land owned by him and John Beck on the north side of the river, just above the mouth of Rock Run.[5] Directly across the river was Rowena which had been founded on February 10, 1845 and probably named for the Virginia-born wife (nee ca. 1800) of the local storekeeper John A. Leveridge.[6]

In 1850, when Leveridge became postmaster, the Wayne-Russell line was shifted and the office was in Russell County, just below the mouth of what later became Leveridge Branch. Through the 1880s the post office served the two towns, a steamboat landing, several stores and mills, and other businesses. By 1893 it had been moved across the river to the Lairsville site, and in 1948 it was moved 3½ miles north-west to a point on US 127, two miles north of the river, where it closed on November 3, 1967.

From February 20, 1902 through July 1903 Martin L. Owens ran a post office close to the old Rowena site and called it Wildgoose for the nearby Wild Goose Shoals of the Cumberland River. A second and even shorter (March 27 through September 1923) attempt at a south bank office was Lewis A. York's (underived) Della.[7]

The Clyde post office, named for Clyde Decker, a local resident, was established by Isaac Frealy on March 30, 1887 to serve the Coffey Springs (later Bugwood, Decker, and Kennett) locality, one fourth of a mile within Wayne County and some five miles south of Horse Shoe Bottom.[8] Some-tome between 1909 and 1911 the office was moved to a site one fourth of a mile within Russell County where it closed at the end of 1913.

To serve the lower end of Ganns Bottom and what's now called Toler Ridge on the Wayne County side of the Cumberland, storekeeper Reuben Simpson (later known as "Uncle Simp") Ramsey and his brother James E. operated the Bart post office 100 yards south of the river and two miles below the mouth of Harmon Creek from July 25, 1890 through 1913. According to "Simp" it was named for Barton William Stone Huffaker (1825-1895), son of Christopher and Mary (Lowe) Huffaker, who had represented Wayne County in the state legislature from 1865 to 1877. On July 8, 1914 Flora G. Ramsey (later Mrs. Chesney) re-established the office, but on September 30, 1918 Miss Millia Norfleet may have had it moved half a mile down the river. In October 1919 Bryant Stephens had the office moved another three fourths of a mile down the river but onto the Russell County side, at the upper end of Herriford Bottom.[9] The Ramsey and Stephens sites have since been distinguished as Old Bart and New Bart, respectively. Each served for a time as a steamboat landing. In August 1936 Sophia Popplewell had the office moved again three miles northwest to a site on Cave Springs Ridge, south of Wolf Creek, and eight miles from Jamestown, where it closed in mid July 1940.[10]

A Miller family gave its name to the Millersville post office established on June 3, 1845 on Crocus Creek just over the Adair County line. Archelaus A. Strange, Jr., its first postmaster, was succeeded in mid July 1851 by James A. Miller. Sometime in 1863 Cyrus Wheat had it moved to a Russell County site on the creek, ten miles west of Jamestown, where it served several area mills till it closed in January 1879.

Another Adair County post office was the inexplicably named Santo, established on September 28, 1894 by William S. Rexroat. It was 1½ miles north of the head forks of Russell Creek, within yards of the Russell County line, and five miles north of Russell Springs. It closed on

August 20, 1898 but was reopened by William Luther Brockman, on January 29, 1902, as Sano, an obvious error, never corrected. Sometime in the early 1920s the office was moved just over the Russell County line where it survived through June 1966.

On December 23, 1908 storekeeper John Wesley Eads established the Catherine post office which he named for his wife Mary (called Polly) Catherine, in Casey County, less than half a mile from the Russell line. In May 1917 Polly herself became postmaster. In the summer of 1926 the office was moved over 1½ miles south to new postmaster Joe H. Dause's store on Russell County's Pine Top Road, where it closed on June 30, 1943.

OTHER POST OFFICES IN THE CUMBERLAND RIVER BOTTOMS

In 1809 the brothers Elza and Elijah Creel opened a tavern and trading post on the north bank of the river at or near William Campbell's ferry. This may have been tha site of one of the oldest communities in what was then Cumberland County and may first have been called Campbells-burg. 8ut the town established here by legislative act on February 9, 1819 was called Creelsburgh. By 1840 it had become one of the river's main landings and, to avoid treacherous shoals, a "break in transporta-tion" for freight passing between north and south bound steamers. It had become the main trade center for that stretch of the river and its three county hinterland, especially after James O. Irvin, Jr's purchase in 1885 of one of the region's largest and most influential stores.

The post office serving this town was established on January 17, 1828 as Creelsburgh with Thomas C. Graves, its first postmaster. It became Creelsborough in 1864 and Creelsboro in 1893. Before the end of the nineteenth century it had been moved three fourths of a mile

north of the river, onto the present Ky 379, one fourth of a mile west of Millers Creek, and some thirteen miles southwest of Jamestown. When it closed on August 31, 1962 it was at the junction of 379 and 1058.

One seems to have a choice of pre-school age Lulas to account for the name Lula applied to a Smiths Bottom post office.[11] It could have been named for Lula A. Dowell (1884-1949); Lular F. Hall (1888-1960) who later married 8enjamin H. Hall, a 1920s-era postmaster; or Lula J. Smith (1887-1952). The office was established on May 7, 1890 nearly one mile south of the river, half a mile above Beaver Creek, and four miles above Rowena. William G. Smith was its first postmaster. It closed on May 31, 1948 when its site (including the local school and Smiths Chapel Church) were acquired for the new lake.

At several sites by the mouth of the Cumberland River's Little Indian Creek, about 1½ miles below (north of) Wolf Creek Dam, were the Kendall and Long Bottom post offices. Kendall, whose name source is unknown, served a steamboat landing and James Milton Lester's store from June 30, 1890 through November 1912. James F. Carnes and Lester were its first postmasters. From June 21, 1939 through January 1955 Huldah B. Mann ran the local office a mile below Rowena as Long Bottom for its site on the stretch along the river named for a local family. The vicinity has sometimes been known as 8eech Grove for the local school and church (both gone).

Also unknown was the name source of Ucum [yū/kəm], a landing and post office at the mouth of (Big) Indian Creek, a south side tributary of the river, midway between Kendall and Rowena. With Harvey T. Denney, its first postmaster, the office operated between February 28, 1898 and mid October 1915.

From April 20, 1899 through April 1900 William B. McFall, a drygoods merchant, ran the McFall post office at the mouth of Wolf Creek.

Just above the mouth of Coe Creek, at Helms Landing, at the head of Jackman Bottom[12], storekeeper Henry B. Helm established a post office. His preferred Helms Landing was replaced by Helm. It operated here from June 20, 1905 till it was moved, in the early 1920s (if not earlier), to the road half a mile up from the river, where it closed in 1935.

To serve his store 300 feet west of Lesters Creek in the Rockhouse Loop of the Cumberland, Larkin A. Hadley established a post office on August 24, 1920. His preferred Rockhouse gave way to the inexplicable Ribbon.[13] After his death in 1935 the office was moved by Mrs. Trixie Back to (the present) Ky 379, on Lester's east bank, and maintained by her till it closed in 1962.

POST OFFICES IN THE SEVERAL CUMBERLAND TRIBUTARY VALLEYS

The shortlived Hughes' Store, maintained between February 24 and October 13, 1864 by the Rev. Cyrenus W. Hughes (ne ca. 1833), may have been on the lower end of Wolf Creek but its precise location and everything else about it are not known.

Two offices, established but nine days apart, served Wolf Creek's Alligator watershed. Brady was established on June 14, 1905 by Thomas Johnson, three fourths of a mile west of the East Fork of Alligator, some two miles east of Irvins Store. In August 1921 it was moved 1½ miles east to Gosser Ridge, half a mile east of the East Fork and about half a mile from the Pulaski County line, in the vicinity of the Free Union School and Pine Grove Baptist Church. Neither Brady nor Johnson's first proposed name Verna (then in use in Metcalfe County) have been derived. The office closed at the end of November 1935.

On Floyd Ridge, on the Harristown Road, between the two Alligator Forks (ca. twelve miles northeast of Jamestown), was Sylvester Harris' <u>Avis</u> post office. Named for his wife Avis T. (nee November 1871) it operated from June 23, 1905 through April 1914.

Five post offices served the Lily Creeks watershed.[14] The first, about one miles east of the Big and Little Lily confluence and 2½ miles ene of Jamestown, was <u>Wesley</u>. As Wesley Wilson's first proposed name <u>Lilly</u> was then in use (as <u>Lily</u>) in Laurel County, he established the office in his name on July 21, 1890.[15] In 1900 a successor Edker M. Whittle had the office moved three miles south, probably to the Pleasant Hill Ridge, between the Lily and Caney Creeks, two miles north of the river. Here it closed on October 13, 1906.

On February 15, 1910 this office was re-established, but instead of <u>Wesley</u>, her preference, its postmaster-designate Mary Effie Dunbar (later Mrs. Hart) named it <u>Effie</u>.[16] In 1912 William H. Bernard had the office moved 3½ miles north, back to the vicinity of the first <u>Wesley</u> office, where it closed in mid May 1913. On June 25, 1915 Bernard re-established this office to serve what was also known by then as <u>Concord</u> for the ridge, and called it <u>Karlus</u> (for reasons unknown). When it closed in 1933 it was just south of the junction of (the present) Ky 619 and 1680.

Could Felix B. Simmons, trustee of the local school, have been the name source of the <u>Felix</u> post office on the east bank of Big Lily, 2½ miles nne of Jamestown? The office was established on March 25, 1898 with Lawrence M. Wilson, its first postmaster. When Simmons himself became postmaster in 1908 it was moved half a mile north, but lasted only through November 1909.

The Eller post office, established on December 12, 1905 and named by local storekeeper and postmaster Marcus H. Bernard, Jr. for his eighteen year old wife Eller (1887-1931), was on the Bernard Ridge and (the present) Ky 619, half a mile east of Little Lily Creek and 2½ miles northeast of Jamestown. From 1914 to 1918 it was on the Clear Spring Ridge, some two miles north, but was returned by Bernard to the vicinity of its first site where it was discontinued in September 1925.

Another Cumberland River branch is the 13½ mile long Greasy Creek. Heading in Russell Springs it extends for 7½ miles to the site of the old Greasy Creek (Farmers) Mill at the mouth of Moores Fork, where it becomes a Cumberland embayment, finally joining the river at the Lake Cumberland State Resort Park. The stream may first have been called Wolf Creek but by the late eighteenth century it had become Greasy Creek (so identified on Elihu Barker's 1792 Kentucky map) for oil seepages at several sites. It was home to several of the county's major antebellum water mills, and at its mouth was the Greasy Creek Landing, the main shipping and receiving point for Jamestown and Russell Springs. Two post offices may have served the Greasy Creek watershed, but the location of only one is known.

On the east side of Greasy, 3½ miles west of Jamestown, was Esto, a post office established on August 21, 1877 by Stanton P. Collins, a lawyer. By the turn of the century it was serving a village with school, church, grist and saw mills, shop, Barger's Store, and at least a dozen homes. It's said that Esto may have been named for the four year old son of Lanis and Josephine Barger, once slaves of a prominent area family, but this hasn't been confirmed.[17] By the early 1920s, at what would become the junction of Ky 92 and 379, three fourths of a mile west of Esto was Esto Crossroads, now known as New Esto, with two stores. The Esto Po closed in 1935.

The nineteenth century Bryan family[18] may have given its name to Joseph Menden Barnes' post office just south of the head of Powder Mill Creek, a 1½ mile long branch of Crocus Creek.[19] According to Barnes' Site Location Report it would be serving the Alva locality (about which nothing further is known). It operated first only from July 19, 1907 through January 1911, was re-established on May 21, 1924, with Charles Monroe Brown, postmaster, but lasted only through February 1926, and was re-established again, with Arthur B. Guffey, postmaster, on December 1, 1930. Until October 23, 1964, when it became a rural branch for a year, it was at (the present) Rte. 1058 elbow, two miles west of Old Olga.

POST OFFICES IN THE GREEN RIVER WATERSHED

Decatur occupied several sites on the west side of Goose Creek, less than one mile from the Casey County line.[20] It was established on October 1, 1900 and named by its first postmaster Cyrenius Wade for his eleven month old son Cyrenius Decatur.[21] It ceased operation in 1960.

From June 18, 1910 to early July 1911 William A. Miller operated the Dent post office (name derivation unknown) a mile north of Reynolds Creek (a Russell Creek tributary) on (the present) Rte. 3280, one mile from Adair County and 4½ miles southwest of Russell Springs. It was re-established on August 23, 1913 by Samuel B. Hudson, and with Maud Hudson postmaster, served that area till mid March 1922.

POST OFFICES ON US 127

At their store by the junction of (the present) US 127 and Ky 76, nine miles north of Jamestown, John Webb (ne ca. 1817) and his son John A. (ne ca. 1847) maintained the Webbs Cross Roads post office from April 21, 1878 to September 23, 1896 and from January 11, 1904

till it was acquired by Wilford Cunningham in 1929. The cross roads "Country Store" survived the office's suspension on July 20, 1976.

Two miles south of Webbs Cross Roads, at the junction of 127 and Ky 1545, was the Humble [uhm/bəl] post office. Since postmaster William L. Simmons' proposed name Red Hill for the locality was in use in Christian County, he named the office for the family that still lives in that vicinity. It was established on December 13, 1906, discontinued on November 15, 1922, re-established on March 12, 1928, but closed for good at the end of that year.

The aptly named Bigoak post office was established by storekeeper William E. Foley at the junction of (the present) 127 and the Pattie Ridge Road, 1.6 miles nne of Webbs Cross Roads. Mrs. Magnolia Foley operated it from August 24, 1920 till November 15, 1935.

Sewellton, named for its first postmaster P. Montford Sewell, occupied several sites on what became US 127 from May 14, 1894 through June 1958. Most recently it was the site of the Amaranth Gate Factory, one mile north of Ky 55 (at Freedom) and 4½ miles ssw of Jamestown.

POST OFFICES ON KY 76

Four Russell County post offices (including Webbs Cross Roads) served homes and businesses (centering) on Ky 76, a road extending between Ky 70, southeast of Taylor County's Campbellsville, and the mouth of Russell County's Alligator Creek.

The earliest was Fonthill. This office was established on August 26, 1887 with Samuel M. Humble, postmaster, to serve a locality that may have been called Leo, the first name proposed for it. Whence Leo or Fonthill itself is not known. It was on a fairly steep hill on 76, just south of Ky 80 (and ten miles nne of Jamestown) where there may have been a natural fountain or spring. In any event, the vicinity centered at a mill and store built by John Hardin Smith. After his

death in 1910 a son Egbert acquired the steam-powered flour mill which operated till 1947, while another son Hollis M. took over the store and ran the post office from 1912 till he retired in 1962. The office closed in 1964 and the store closed in 1977.

Three miles southeast of Fonthill, on the east end of the Clear Fork Ridge, at a place first called McKinleytown for the area's first settler and the local storekeeper, was the first site of Eli [ee/leye]. Since Colfax, James M. Russell's first name choice, was in use in Fleming County, he named his office, which opened on July 15, 1905, for either Eli Tarter, a Pulaski County native, or a local McBeath. In 1934 Elmer Flanagan had the office moved three fourths of a mile east to the vicinity of the Coffeys Chapel Methodist Church on what became Ky 76 where he operated it till his retirement in 1963 when it closed.

Edker M. Whittle, who was involved with several Russell County post offices, established one, on June 27, 1927, to serve the cross-roads (the junction of the present Ky 76 and 910, half a mile south of the Cumberland Parkway and 2½ miles northwest of Eli) hamlet of Salem. Salem was named for the local Baptist church (organized in 1869) while the post office was called Dallo for local storekeeper and Whittle's nextdoor neighbor Dallo Wilson (1890-1946). The post office lasted only till mid November 1928 since it was such a short distance from at least three other offices. Salem now has one of the county's four consolidated elementary schools.

POST OFFICES ON KY 1611

The six mile long Ky 1611 extends between Ky 76, less than a mile south of Eli, and a boat ramp on Caney Creek, one mile above the latter's Wolf Creek confluence.

Nothing is known of the intermittently operated (from March 15, 1888 through 1894) Jay post office which may have been the antecedent of Ono. James Bryan Popplewell, who established the office, had first proposed to call it Spratt for a local family, but for whom or what its replacement was remains unexplained.

Ono [oh/noh] was at several sites on what's now the four mile long Ono Ridge between Wolf Creek and the McFarland-Caney confluence. For most of its tenure it was at the junction of Ky 1611 and the old Jamestown-Square Oak Road, three miles south of Ky 76 (and seven pre-impoundment miles east of Jamestown). Ono, which replaced postmaster William Wilson's preferred Jay, was undoubtedly derived from the biblical Plains of Ono (1st Chronicles 8:12 and Nehemiah 6:2), perhaps for the level country around its site.[22] The office operated from May 5, 1899, and a local store and two area churches survived its December 1948 closing.

The "itinerant" storekeeper-postmaster Edker M. Whittle (ne April 1871), after serving briefly (from May 25, 1900) at Wesley, established another post office, 2½ miles nne of Ono and half a mile from (the present) 76, which he called Sunshine. It operated from September 25, 1905 through August 1914 and was re-established by Whittle on November 7, 1921 in his own family name. He operated Whittle till April 1926 when he presumably moved to Salem. The office, though, continued through February 1950.

FIVE POST OFFICES ON OR JUST OFF KY 910

From its junction with Ky 501 at Phil in Casey County, this seventenn mile long road enters Russell County just north of Hammond Store, parallels the Cumberland Parkway on the south for almost six miles and crosses it to join Ky 80 at the Longstreet site, 1½ miles southwest of Fonthill.

Somewhere in the northeast corner of the county, near the Casey-Russell-Pulaski convergence, was the site of the planned town of Buena Vista that was incorporated on February 28, 1848. Nothing much materialized here though the name survived for the small community that, on February 19, 1857 secured a post office called Royalton. It's merely assumed that this honored several area Roy families. Until it closed at the end of November 1903 this office, thirteen miles northeast of Jamestown, was maintained by the storekeepers Lewis Hammonds and his son Lewis, Jr. The probable post office site was identified on the 1924 Kentucky Geological Survey map as Hammond Store (sic), about half a mile south of the Casey County line.

John D. Irvin (1840-1911), a lawyer, had a store, probably on Irvin Branch of Goose Creek, some nine miles north of Jamestown. Here, on January 27, 1876, he established the Irvin's Store post office. In 1882 he was succeeded by another storekeeper Samuel M. Humble who, five years later, was to establish the Fonthill post office. By now the office was serving several businesses including a store and mill. In 1921 the office was moved three fourths of a mile up 910 to a site now half a mile south of the Cumberland Parkway and Goose Creek, and two miles south of Hammonds Store (Royalton). Here it closed on June 30, 1941.

Half a mile east of 910 and Irvins Store, in the vicinity of the Union Church, and at the head of Roy Branch of Alligator's East Fork, John Harrison Gosser established a post office on January 29, 1903. Since Boone County already had a Union post office he named his Ouly, but it's not known why. It only lasted through November 1905.

Somewhere in the vicinity of the future Ky 80, one mile south of
Little Goose Creek and 2½ miles east of the Russell Springs post office, James
W. Bradley established the Longstreet post office on May, 1, 1905. Neither this name
nor his first proposed name China have been explained. In November
1922 this office was moved 1½ miles northeast to Elmer Wade's store,
one fourth of a mile west of the Fairview Church, where Ky 80 and 910
meet, just north of the Cumberland Parkway and 1½ miles west of Font-
hill. Several area businesses survived its closing in 1933.

Oallo, above, was also on Ky 910.

POST OFFICES ON OR JUST OFF KY 196

The eighteen mile long Ky 196 extends between Ky 80 (at Nancy in
Pulaski County) through Jabez (in Russell County) and through Wayne
County's Union Ridge to Lake Cumberland.

The crossroads hamlet of Jabez [now at the junction of Ky 196,
the Wolf Creek Road (the pre-impoundment route of 76), and the Cave
Springs Road (now Rte. 3277)] is roughly midway between Wolf Creek
and the Wayne County line. John S. Johnson established the post
office on July 14, 1881 at his store somewhere in that vicinity.
Since his preferred name Hamlin would soon be in use in Calloway
County, he is said to have accepted the suggestion of a traveling
salesman that it be named for the biblical town of Jabesh-Gilead,
east of the Jordan (with several Old Testament references). Several
moves brought it to the crossroads where it remained till its sus-
pension on December 31, 1983.

Until the creation of Lake Cumberland Jabez area residents had
easy access by road, eight, then twelve miles to Jamestown. Now the
driving distance is over forty miles, through a section of Pulaski

County. Recent efforts to transfer the area to Pulaski, to whose seat, only twenty two miles northeast, it is now economically tied, or to build a bridge across the Wolf Creek embayment (reconnecting Ky 76 and the Wolf Creek Road) have not been successful.

Vinnie was another post office serving two counties. It was established on January 5, 1898 by Grene M.McKinley, local storekeeper, who is said to have named it for his then girl friend Vinnie McClendon.[23] According to his Site Location Report it would be three miles northeast of Jabez, perhaps half a mile from the Pulaski County line. On October 31, 1914 the office closed, but was re-established by McKinley on September 10, 1923 somewhere north of his first location. For an undetermined time thereafter the office was at one or more sites within Pulaski County, but by October 1938 it had returned to Russell, almost to where it had been when it first opened. When it closed on June 30, 1958 it was on (the present) Ben Roy Road, half a mile off 196, and less than half a mile from the Pulaski County line.

A little over half a year after Vinnie's first closing an attempt was made to re-establish it in that name either at its site or slightly east. But on March 18, 1916 it was opened by storekeeper Edgar Johnson as the as yet undetermined Kavito [kə/vee/toh]. By 1923, when Vinnie was re-established, until Kavito was closed on October 15, 1936, the latter was on 196, in the vicinity of the Sandy Hollow School, half a mile from Pulaski County.

POST OFFICES ON KY 379

Ky. 379 extends from US 127 in the northeastern section of Russell Springs for about twenty miles in a roughly ssw direction to Winfreys Ferry. Across the river from this point, at the south end of Irish

Bottom, it continues for some 8½ miles down eastern Cumberland County to Ky 90, east of Burkesville. In addition to Russell Springs and Creelsboro, its Russell County section was served by two post offices.

On October 25, 1877 William P. Payne established the aptly named Helm's Mill post office on (or near) the present Ky 379, at a site then 8½ miles southwest of Jamestown. On March 19, 1883 he renamed it Denmark (for reasons unknown). Apparently the road had improved by the turn of the century and thereafter for when it closed in mid January 1927 the office was on the road, but only six miles from the court house.

Storekeeper Elias Antle (1859-1936) was unsuccessful in his 1904 and 1905 attempts to establish the Antle post office just below the head of Crocus Creek.[24] His authorizations were rescinded but only, it seems, to "make way" for the establishment of Olga on April 6, 1905 at postmaster Joseph Barnes' store at the junction of (the present) 379 and 1058. Olga was the eighteen year old daughter of friends Logan and Eliza J. Kimbler. In July 1922 the office was moved by Loren Helm a little over a mile north to a point about three fourths of a mile south of the Fairview Church. Its first site has since come to be known as Old Olga. When it closed in June 1941 the Olga post office was at the junction of Ky 379 and 55, two miles north of Old Olga and less than a mile south of Denmark.

UNLOCATED RUSSELL COUNTY POST OFFICES

From July 18, 1854 to June 11, 1855 Elijah Roy (ca. 1830-1886) operated the Roy's Store post office possibly somewhere on Gosser Ridge. Nothing is known of it.

I still need to confirm that the Owensby post office was on (the present) Ky 619 (The Moores Schoolhouse Road) near this school and a Methodist church. According to Martin L. Owens' Site Location Report it was

four miles southwest of Jamestown, three miles northeast of Denmark, and

three miles south of Esto, which would probably place it at that site.

At any rate, Martin and Edna M. Owens operated that office from October

30, 1907 to mid August 1914. Could it have been named for them or their

family?

Somewhere three miles west of Jabez and three miles south of Sunshine

(Whittle) was the shortlived (December 22, 1908 through October 1909)

Vern (derivation also unknown). Mit (Milton A.-?) Popplewell was its

only postmaster.

The Kells Shop post office which may refer to a blacksmith shop

operated by Vallis Kell (1886-1967) may have been somewhere between the

Clifty Creeks, on or close to the Adair County line. Its first post-

master Harrison E. Simpson located it on his Site Location Report two

miles east of Russell Creek, 2 3/4 miles from Oent, and 4½ miles west of

the Russell Springs post office. It offically opened on January 15,

1916. In the late spring of 1917 Jesse E. Humble had it moved three

fourths of a mile east to serve the Maple locality, one mile east of the

Adair line and 2½ miles west of the Russell Springs post office, but it

closed in mid August of 1918. Neither Kells Shop nor Maple have been

shown on published maps.

Two other unlocated post offices had their authorizations rescinded

and thus never operated. Larkin J. Floyd (on February 24, 1905) and B.A.

Coffey (on April 24, 1905) sought unsuccessfully to establish the post

office of Jehu, while C.E. Grider's attempt to establish Crabtree on

June 21, 1907 went nowhere.

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Only two of Russell County's fifty seven post offices are still

active. These serve the county's two cities Jamestown and Russell

Springs. Thirty three offices were named for local or area persons or families. Four bore geographic, descriptive, or locative names. Three were named for distant places and two were given the names of local or
and
nearby features (a shoals/a river bottom). The two Russell Springs offices were named for the county and a local spring. Thirteen names are yet underived and four offices have not been precisely located. Fourteen post offices bore names that were not the first proposed for them, while fourteen served communities, neighborhoods, rail stations, and localities with other names. The names of four offices were changed over their respective lifespans.

FOOTNOTES

1. Jamestown has affectionately been called J'Town and Jimtown.

2. George A. Kimble, ne 1850, son of Henry and Margaret A. (Wooldridge) Kimble, was still operating his store by 1910.

3. The Horse Shoe Bottom loop is identified on the 1863 Lloyds Civil War map as Greens Bottom for a local family.

4. According to his Site Location Report of 1890, William Neal (1840-1909), son of Joel Allen Stokes, Jr., had his store one mile south of the river and the then site of the Horse Shoe Bottom post office, and half a mile south of the mouth of Greasy Creek.

5. Pioneer William Lair, ne ca. 1775, sat on Russell County's first court in 1826 and represented the county in the state legislature ca. 1840.

6. According to J.B. Stone, county historian (ca. 1891). But a local tradition tells of its having been named for the first child born at this site. The story goes that a family of Lefflers were on their way west when their child was delivered at the site by a friendly Indian woman who suggested the name Rowena. The Lefflers (and others of their party) decided to settle here and raise their daughter.

She was later to marry Wesley H. Owens (1822-1913) and by 1885 had
move to Humansville (Polk County), Missouri. (According to letters
from Mary [Mrs. Glen A.] Owens of Humansville, March 28 and April
2B, 1951 to R.P. Story, a Rowena merchant from the 1930s to 1967
and passed on to me in 1971). Rowena, however, was not a particu-
larly "Indian" name, as is often suggested by the tradition for
it's known to have been borne in the Middle Ages by persons of
Welsh-Celtic descent. Meaning literally "long white hair" it may
have been coined by the twelfth century writer Geoffrey of
Monmouth for the legendary princess who always rode a white maned
horse. It was later popularized on both sides of the Atlantic by
Sir Walter Scott's Ivanhoe.

7. Della replaced York's first proposed name Long which may have
   honored the Samuel Long family of nearby Smith Bottom.

B. Clyde and several other Deckers who served as postmasters and
   storekeepers were descendants of pioneer settler George Decker, a
   native Virginian and Revolutionary War veteran.

9. This neighborhood was named for area descendants of Jacob
   Herriford [hir/fᵊrd].

10. According to postal records, "Simp", on January 9, 1890, estab-
    lished another post office in Ganns Bottom which he called Bombay
    but it was "discontinued" on December 3 of that year with no papers
    sent to another office. Was it intended for what he did open in
    July as Bart? Did it ever operate? No one in either county has
    ever heard of it.

11. Smith(s) Bottom, which may earlier have been called Scotts Bottom
    for another local family, was on the south side of the river,
    above the mouth of Beaver Creek.

12. Named for the families of Thomas, Elijah, and William Jackman who had settled there in the late 1790s.

13. Rockhouse refers to a 125 foot wide natural arch through a narrow (100 feet deep) limestone ridge, half a mile north of the post office, formed by the river's Jim Creek. Used early by Indians and white visitors as a shelter and more recently for outings and religious activities, it was first called simply The Great Arch, but had become Rockhouse by 1912. It was given "landmark status" by the National Park Service in 1987 and is now sometimes referred to as the Creelsboro Bridge, though it's some 2½ miles below that old community site.

14. Lily Creek, early spelled Lilly and Lilley, was also called the Roaring Lilly Creek for the sound it made. Its lower section just south of the confluence of its two head forks, Big and Little Lily, is a three mile long Cumberland River embayment. The 6 3/4 mile long Big Lily heads just east of Russell Springs. Little Lily heads just south of the Spring Ridge and extends for four miles between Half Acre and Bernard/Concord Ridges.

15. Wesley (June 1844 to 1915) was the son of William J. and Ann (Flanagan) Wilson.

16. Effie Dunbar was the daughter of Moore and Elizabeth (Alcorn) Dunbar of Pleasant Hill.

17. By 1910 Esto was a not uncommon male given name in Russell County.

18. William H. Bryan was a Jamestown postmaster from June 1866 to August 1868.

19. On current maps Powder Mill Creek is given simply as Mill Creek. Crocus heads about one mile southeast of Old Olga, at Union Chapel, and joins the Cumberland River in Cumberland County.

20. The 15½ mile long Goose Creek, which joins the Green River just east of Dunnville in Casey County, heads in Russell County's northeast corner. Decatur's sites were roughly halfway up.

21. According to Wade's Site Location Report his first proposed name was Dickens.

22. The obvious folk etymology offered for the several onos in the U.S. has also been suggested for this one. A public meeting was held to choose the name of the new post office. To every suggestion made there would be an "Oh, no!" from the assembly. Finally, in desperation, it was decided to name it Ono because that seemed to be all the assemblers could agree on.

23. Vinnie McClendon, nee ca. 1880, later married John Barlow and moved to Ohio. Actually, McKinley submitted several other names for his new office, including Alma and Ida.

24. Elias was one of a large southwest Russell County family descended from pioneers Henry, a Revolutionary War veteran, and Mary.

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