

## Mahala Perry (1804-1865), Ancestor 43

By her great great great (3x great) granddaughter, Linda R. Horton, 21 December 2021<sup>1</sup>

Complementary shades of the primary colors—red, yellow, and blue—contribute to the loveliness of this portrait of Mahala Perry Pepper (1804-1865). The cornflower blue of the collar's frilly trim commands the viewer's attention. It matches our ancestor's eyes and frames her jaw line. It also mirrors an arc formed by her crocheted cap, while the shape of the metallic frame matches that of her oval face.

The artist, who is unknown, had the skill to capture through shading the slight asymmetry of Mahala's jaw line, a subtle indentation of the right side of her chin. The hair style was severe but did not undermine Mahala's fine, classic features. The honeyed warmth of her skin was amplified by the painted background's amber cloudiness. The frame, along with the maroon velvet on which the portrait was mounted, complete a remarkable preservation of the image of an ancestor who lived two centuries ago.

Mahala was what sometimes is called a handsome woman, which always sounds like a back-handed compliment. If she had smiled, she might have been called beautiful, especially if the smile alighted her eyes. But smiling was an uncommon practice when people of her era were having their portraits painted, or when people a few decades later were being photographed.<sup>1</sup>

Despite Mahala's fine, unwrinkled skin, she looked older than her 19 years, due to part to a natural gravitas that radiates from the portrait, and due in part to her choice of clothing. The austere garment may have been mourning dress. Her father had died two years before the painting, yet two years was a rather long time for a daughter to wear such dress.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps she chose mourning dress as homage to her father, while selecting a collar trimmed in a vibrant blue to convey the happiness she expected with matrimony. We do not know whether the selection of blue trim had any significance. The tradition that a bride should wear "something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue" was first recorded in an English short story in



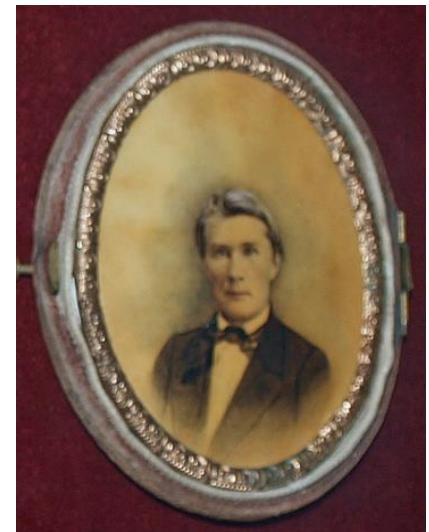
<sup>1</sup> © 2021, Linda R. Horton, Rockville, Maryland, lrhorton@comcast.net. All rights reserved.

1871,<sup>3</sup> many decades later. Perhaps Mahala knew that the choice of blue for the ruffled trim on her collar would become her, as it would match her eyes. Or perhaps the artist added the blue.

### Mahala's life

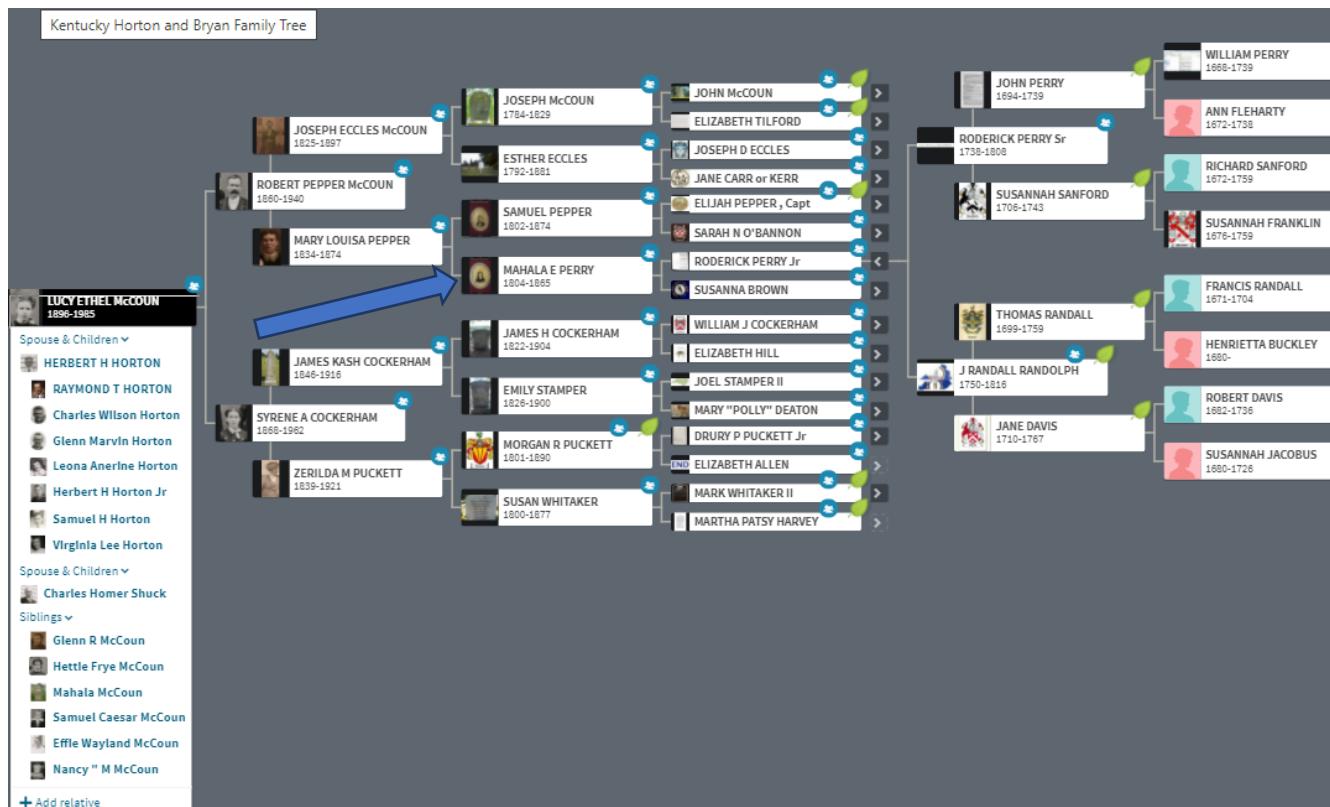
Mahala E. Perry was born on 22 February 1804, in Woodford County, Kentucky, the eldest child of Roderick Perry II (1776-1821) and Susanna Brown (1785-1853). The name Mahala is of Hebrew origin, meaning "tenderness." A woman named Mahala was mentioned in the Old Testament Book of Numbers at 26:33. Mahala or a variant, Mahalia, is seldom heard today but was more popular as a given name during the nineteenth century in the United States and the United Kingdom.<sup>4</sup> Our ancestor's middle name is unknown; it began with the letter E.

With her three younger brothers and two younger sisters, Mahala grew up in a large home overlooking Glenns Creek, near the home of Elijah Pepper.<sup>5</sup> She married Elijah's son, Samuel (1802-1874), on 5 February 1824. Because Mahala and Samuel were neighbors, they probably had known each other since childhood. Her portrait and that of Samuel, shown above, were painted in the month in which they were married.



Mahala and Samuel had one son and three daughters who lived to adulthood, including Mary Louise Pepper (1834-1874), nicknamed "Luta," our great great grandmother. They lived in a beautiful home called Sweet Lawn. Mahala was 61 when she died on 4 March 1865.

### Placing Mahala on the family tree



Mahala, our great great great (3x great) grandmother, is part of the McCoun quartile of our family tree (the other quartiles being Horton, Bryan, and Sprowl). Biographies of her parents, Roderick Perry II and Susanna Brown, provide details about Mahala's ancestry, which is believed to be almost entirely English.

### **Mahala's early years and her father's death**

In the 1810 census, the Roderick Perry household consisted of 16 individuals. Roderick was one of two white males between 26 and 44; the other man's identity is not known. Susanna was the one female between 26 and 44. The children were: three males and three females under age 10 (one of them Mahala); two males between 10 and 15; three males and two females between 16 and 25. As far as we know, at the time of the census Roderick and Susan had four children—Mahala, age six, and three of her younger siblings—meaning that there were people in the household other than the couple and their children. Perhaps relatives were living with Roderick and Susanna. Both Roderick and Susanna had many brothers and sisters who may have moved in with them, a common practice in the 19th century.

In the 1820 census, enumerated one year before Roderick's untimely death at age 44, his household consisted of 28 persons. Eight were white family members, and 20 were enslaved blacks. Six of the 28 were engaged in agriculture.

Mahala Perry's father died on 9 August 1821<sup>6</sup> when he was 44 and she was 17. Roderick Perry II had written a will on 28 July 1821.<sup>7</sup> The will gave Susanna, during her life or widowhood, the tract of land on which Roderick lived. Susanna was named one of the executors. The will also bequeathed a black colt to Mahala. There is something touching about a father leaving his daughter a horse he described so particularly. Perhaps she was a girl who loved horses, or the legacy may simply have been a practical one:

*"To daughter Mahala E. Perry, one black whip horse colt"*



### **What caused Roderick Perry's death?**

The cause of his death is unknown, and Kentucky did not collect vital records until 1911. Roderick Perry wrote a will 12 days before he died, indicating that he knew to put his affairs in order. In 1821, cholera was not yet in Kentucky, but typhoid fever was prevalent then and for years to come, especially during the summer months. A message from Governor John Adair to the Kentucky Senate<sup>8</sup> one year after Roderick died includes this statement:

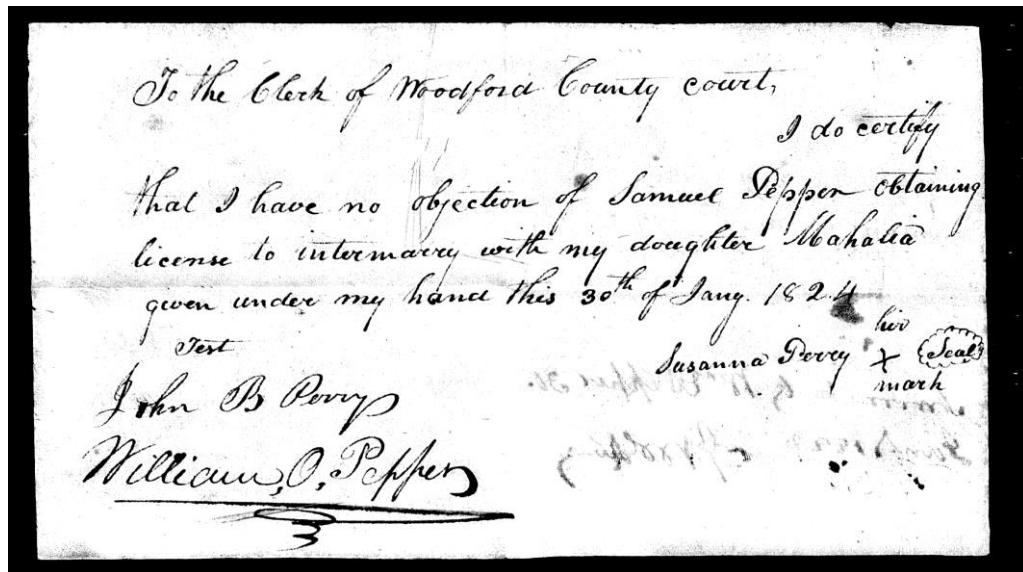
the sudden incursions of sickness and death, have cast an unexampled gloom over different portions of our beautiful state. In common with several of her sister states, Kentucky, during short periods of the summer and autumn, experienced an unusual visitation of disease. When we look back on the sufferings inflicted by the prevalence of a general malady, and remember—who can forget it? ...we have been deprived of some of our most valuable and respected citizens...

The governor did not identify the maladies in question, and, like his contemporaries, he would not have known their cause. Only toward the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century did people grasp the

connection between poor sanitation practices and transmission of disease. The Kentucky River and its tributaries such as Glenns Creek were, by Roderick's time, far from pristine. Runoff from livestock, channeling of human waste directly from privies into streams, and disposal of waste from industrial activities such as the Perry family's grist mill and the Peppers' nearby distillery created conditions in which bacteria thrived. Contaminated water was then drawn from waterways and wells for consumption and agricultural use.<sup>9</sup>

### Mahala's marriage and family

Mahala's marriage to Samuel Pepper occurred on 5 February 1824, two and a half years after the death of her father. Her mother, Susanna Brown Perry, signed the declaration, shown below, that she had no objection to Samuel's obtaining a license to marry Mahala. The witnesses were the bride's brother, John Brown Perry, and the groom's brother, William O'Bannon Pepper.



The children of Mahala and Samuel who reached adulthood were:

- Susan Matilda Pepper (1824-1851).
- Sarah Elizabeth Pepper (1827-1898).
- Robert Perry "Bob" Pepper (1832-1895).
- Mary Louise "Luta" Pepper (1834-1874).

Some family historians have written that Mahala and Samuel had two sons who died young, one named Elijah and the other Samuel.<sup>10</sup> One died as a boy and the other in infancy. Their birth and death dates are unknown. In the 1830 census, discussed below, there was an unknown male under age five who might have been a son; likewise, the 1840 census for the household identified an unknown boy between 10 and 14, possibly the same lad a decade later. He might have been a son who died before the 1850 census.

In 1829, Mahala's mother, Susanna Brown Perry, married James Edwards (1777-1839), a widower with nine children, some very young. It appears that he and Susanna combined their households, as discussed in the box below concerning James Edwards' household in 1830.

We do not find in the 1830 census reports for Woodford County any listing for Samuel Pepper as head of household. Rather, it appears likely that, after his 1824 marriage to Mahala, Samuel moved into the home in which Mahala lived with her mother Susanna and her younger siblings, joined in 1829 by James Edwards and his children. This living arrangement was only temporary, because in 1831 Samuel and Mahala moved into a home of their own,<sup>11</sup> shown on the next page in a recent photo.

James	Edwards	1	3	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	1
-------	---------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

### Deceiphering pre-1850 U.S. census reports

Until the U.S. census reports for 1850, only heads of household were listed in the decennial census reports by name while only counts were provided of how many individuals were in each household of each gender, age group, and race. The earlier census reports are difficult to interpret. For example, the 1830 census report for the household of James Edwards in Woodford County included:

- one free white male between 50 and 59 (James Edwards, age 53)
- one free white female between 40 and 49 (Susanna Brown Perry Edwards, age 45)
- one free white male between 20 and 29 (Samuel Pepper, age 28)
- two free white females between 20 and 29 (Mahala Perry Pepper, age 26, and either Lucy Edwards, 28, or Amarillis Edwards, 22)
- one free male under five (unknown; likely Mahala and Samuel's son who would die young)
- two free white females under five (Sarah Elizabeth Pepper, age three, and Nancy Edwards, age three; James' youngest child Nancy would later marry Samuel's brother, Oscar Pepper)
- three white males between five and nine (James Anderson Edwards, age seven, and probably Cornelius Edwards; the unknown boy might have been the other son of Mahala and Samuel who died before the 1850 census).
- one white female between five and nine (Susan Matilda Pepper, age six).
- one white female between 10 and 14 (Martha Edwards, age 14).
- one white male between 15 and 19 (Martin Edwards, age 19).

There also were 14 enslaved black persons in the household, 11 under the age of 23.

Seven years after their marriage, in 1831 Mahala and Samuel moved into their new home, known as "Sweet Lawn" (some sources say "Sweet Home"). In the same year in which the house was completed, Elijah Pepper passed away. After Elijah's death, his widow Sarah O'Bannon Pepper—mother of Samuel—ran the distillery for several years. Eventually, Elijah and Sarah's youngest son, Oscar, took over the operation of the distillery.

It may seem strange that the youngest son, rather than his older brother, Samuel, took charge of the distillery so associated with the Pepper family. Apparently Samuel was more interested in farming than running the distillery.<sup>12</sup> Samuel preferred to produce the corn, barley and rye needed, in large quantities, to produce high-quality bourbon.<sup>13</sup>



The current owners of Sweet Lawn operate a horse farm known as Sun Valley Farm. Its website includes the above photo and this information:<sup>14</sup>

The Samuel Pepper homestead on Sun Valley Farm was built in 1831. The son of pioneer master distiller, Elijah Pepper, who constructed his distillery just across the lane on the banks of Glenn's Creek. Today, this extremely proud bourbon tradition is carefully preserved by the Woodford Reserve Distillery.

Samuel and his wife raised five children on their ancestral home named “Sweet Lawn,” spending their entire lives tending their family, livestock and crops. They are buried in a garden graveyard on the farm.

Mahala and Samuel’s son, Robert Perry Pepper, and youngest daughter, Mary Louise Pepper, were born at Sweet Lawn, in 1832 and 1834, respectively.

In the 1840 census, three white males and nine white females were living in the household of Samuel and Mahala. The one male between 30 and 39 was Samuel, and the male between ages five and nine was their son, Robert, called “Bob.” There also was a male between 10 and 14 whose identity is uncertain, probably the fifth child referred to on the Sun Valley Farm website, the boy named Elijah or Samuel who was born in the late 1820s and died before the 1850 census.

NAME OF HEADS OF FAMILIES	FREE WHITE PERSONS, INCLUDING HEADS OF FAMILIES.																			
	MALES										FEMALES									
Under 5	5 to 10	10 to 15	15 to 20	20 to 30	30 to 40	40 to 50	50 to 60	60 to 70	70 to 80	80 to 90	90 to 100	100 and upwards	Under 5	5 to 10	10 to 15	15 to 20	20 to 30	30 to 40	40 to 50	50 to 60

Samuel Pepper	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	3	2	1	1	1
---------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

One of the two females between 30 and 39 in the 1840 census was Mahala, while the identity of the other woman is unknown. Also, there were two girls under age five whose identity is unknown. Luta was one of the two females between five and nine, but the other girl is unknown. Daughters Susan and Sarah were two of the three females between 10 and 14, while the third girl is unknown. Perhaps a widowed relative, a woman in her thirties with children, had joined the household.

The 1850 census, below, was more helpful than earlier ones, providing the names of the (white) persons enumerated, not merely the heads of household. Mahala was 46 and Samuel was 47, while other family members were recorded as follows: Sarah age 22, Robert Perry Pepper, age 20, Mary Louise age 17, and Susan Edwards age 65. Susan was Mahala's mother, Susanna Brown Perry Edwards, widowed a second time. The eldest child of Mahala and Samuel, 25-year-old Susan, had married and left to form a household with her husband, William F. Patterson. Samuel was a farmer, and his real property had an estimated value of \$12,000, worth \$418,000 in 2021.

Samuel Pepper	47	W	Farmer	12000
Mahala E	"	46	S	
Sarah E	"	22	"	
Robert P	"	20	W	
Mary L	"	17	S	
Susan Edwards	"	65	W	

Between the 1850 and the 1860 census reports, several family milestones took place in the family of Mahala and Samuel. Their eldest daughter, Susan Pepper Patterson, and her husband William both died on 8 May 1851, not long after the birth of their one child, a daughter whom they also named Susan. We know from the 1860 census that this daughter came to live with Mahala and Samuel.

During the 1850s, all three of Mahala and Samuel's younger children got married. In a wedding ceremony at Sweet Lawn, their youngest daughter, Luta, married Joseph Eccles "Joe" McCoun on 2 December 1856. A few months later, their remaining children married. On 7 July 1857, Sarah married Aaron Darnell, and on 8 October 1857, Bob married Anna Kinkead.

In the 1860 census, Samuel and Mahala's Woodford County household included Samuel, Mahala, their granddaughter, Susan Patterson, and a 21 year old man named Thomas Darr. Interestingly, Darr's occupation was horse trainer, suggesting that Mahala and Samuel raised horses. Samuel reported that value of his real property as \$14,250 (\$470,000 in 2021) and the value of his personal property as \$14,000 (\$461,000 in 2021). The biography of Samuel Pepper

discusses his ownership of enslaved persons as reported in the 1840, 1850, and 1860 census reports.

### **The move to Frankfort, and Mahala's death**

In 1864, Mahala and Samuel moved to nearby Frankfort, Kentucky's state capital. I suspect that she was ill at the time, for she died on 4 March 1865 at the age of 61. It is not known whether the couple moved in with their son Bob and his family. If so, that was likely where Mahala died.

Samuel lived another nine years before dying at Bob's home on 16 October 1874, as described in an obituary one week later.<sup>15</sup> Yet Samuel was not listed as one of the people living in Bob's house when the census was counted there in 1870. Although no record has been found of Samuel in that census, we know he was alive in 1870 because the obituary proves he lived until his 16 October 1874 death in his son's house.

Mahala was buried in a garden cemetery at Sweet Lawn.<sup>16</sup> Her headstone and footstone both still are standing. The headstone has become separated from its base and is resting at a tilted angle.<sup>17</sup>



Mahala's footstone<sup>18</sup> is a few feet away; it is shown on the next page.



### Civil War's end, and emancipation

The six decades of Mahala's life saw the United States mature from an infant country to one that was at last beginning to reckon with the stain of slavery. Her final months coincided with the finale of the U.S. Civil War. One month after her death, on 9 April 1865 the war ended when the Confederate General Robert E. Lee surrendered to the Union General Ulysses S Grant at Appomattox, Virginia. Tragically, later in April a Confederate sympathizer assassinated President Lincoln in a Washington, DC theater, a monumental loss of leadership just when the country desperately needed healing.

Before we leave the momentous year, 1865, let us note that on 6 December enslaved persons in Kentucky achieved freedom at last. The 1863 Emancipation Proclamation, issued under the President's war powers, had applied only to states in rebellion. Because Kentucky never seceded from the Union—and had, since the days when Kentucky was part of Virginia, been a place where slavery was permitted—enslaved Kentuckians were free only when the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution took effect on 6 December 1865. Unfortunately, armistice was followed by repressive statutes and court decisions. Only with the civil rights movement in the 1960s did emancipation's promise of freedom begin to be realized. The process is ongoing.

\*\*\*

Although it saddens me that ancestors in this branch of the family tree owned slaves, I cannot help but see the humanity in ancestors such as Mahala Perry Pepper and her husband Samuel. It was my great pleasure to visit their home, Sweet Lawn, during a recent trip to Kentucky.

Linda Horton, [lhorton@comcast.net](mailto:lhorton@comcast.net), 21 December 2021

## Appendix A: Visit to Sweet Lawn



*Above: Colleen and a new friend.*

On 9 November 2021, four family members had the opportunity to tour Sweet Lawn: Linda Horton, Colleen Horton, Carol Jean Horton Sidebottom Graf, and her husband Rudi Graf.

The owner, Jan Butzer, kindly offered the group a tour despite the fact that the Keeneland Breeding Stock Sale was beginning the very next day. The sale is hugely important for a horse farm such as Sun Valley, which specializes in mares and foals.



*Above: Rudi and Carol Graf with Jan Butzer, owner of Sweet Lawn and Sun Valley Farm.*



From left: Carol, Rudi, Linda and Colleen in front of Sweet Lawn.

Because a professional photographer had recently taken numerous high-quality photos of the farm, I took only a few. As of 21 December 2021, the professional photographs (which I have downloaded) and even a 3D tour of the house may be viewed on the internet.<sup>19</sup>

We are so grateful to Jan and Barry Butzer for so graciously allowing us the chance to visit where our ancestors once lived.

#### Appendix B: The Children of Mahala Perry and Samuel Pepper

Brief biographical sketches of the four children are provided below, along with details about Bob Perry's daughters, *The Pepper Sisters of Petticoat Lane*.

##### **Mary Louise Pepper (1834-1874).** See her biography.

- On 13 April 1834, born in the plantation home known as Sweet Lawn in near Glenns Creek in Woodford County.
- Married Joseph Eccles “Joe” McCoun (1825-1897) in her home on 2 December 1856.
- With Joe had eight children, six of whom lived to adulthood; her eldest son, Robert Pepper McCoun (1860-1940), was our great grandfather.
- With Joe, on 18 March 1865, bought the home in which she was born and grew up (shown above in a recent photo), only to lose it a few years later.
- In 1873, moved with Joe and children to Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas.
- Died there of typhoid fever on 27 December 1874.

### Susan Matilda Pepper (1824-1851)

- Born in Woodford County on 14 November 1824.
- Married William F. Patterson, 25 October 1846; C. J. Smith officiated; authorization, signed by Samuel Pepper on 2 October, is set forth below.
- With him, had one daughter, Susan Patterson, born in 1851 in Woodford County.
- Died on 8 May 1851; her husband, William F. Patterson, died the same day. A headstone in the family cemetery at Sweet Lawn has his name but not hers; it is reasonable to speculate that her headstone had at some point been mislaid, and that she also is buried there.



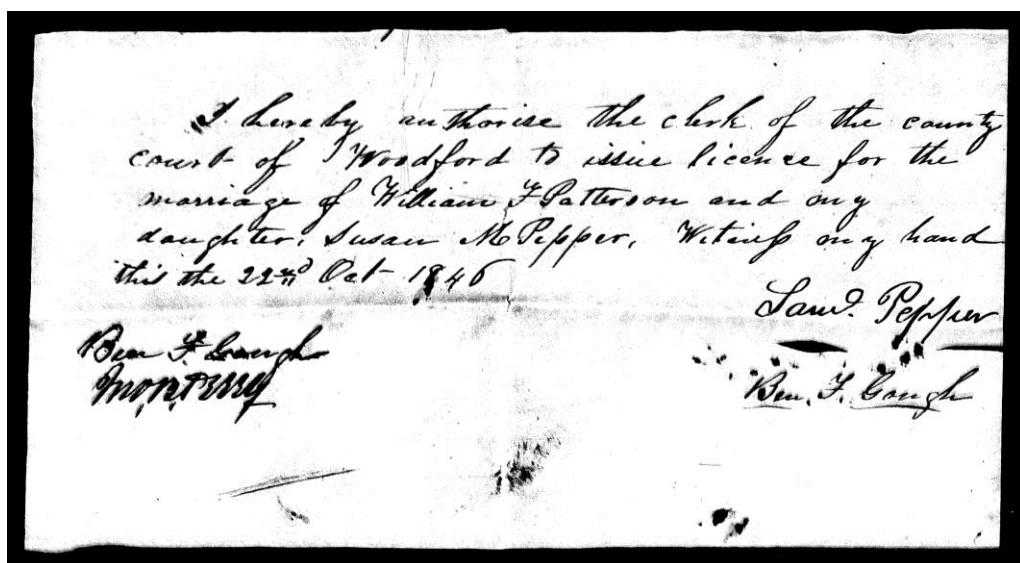
- The 1860 census recorded Susan Pepper's daughter, Susan Patterson, age nine, living with Mahala and Samuel Pepper at Sweet Lawn.
- Susan Pepper's daughter, Susan Patterson, married a McCoun! On 20 December 1872, Susan married William Ernest McCoun<sup>20</sup> (1845-1905), son of the William McCoun executed in 1857 by a Mexican firing squad, as discussed in the biographies of Esther Eccles McCoun and Joseph Eccles McCoun.

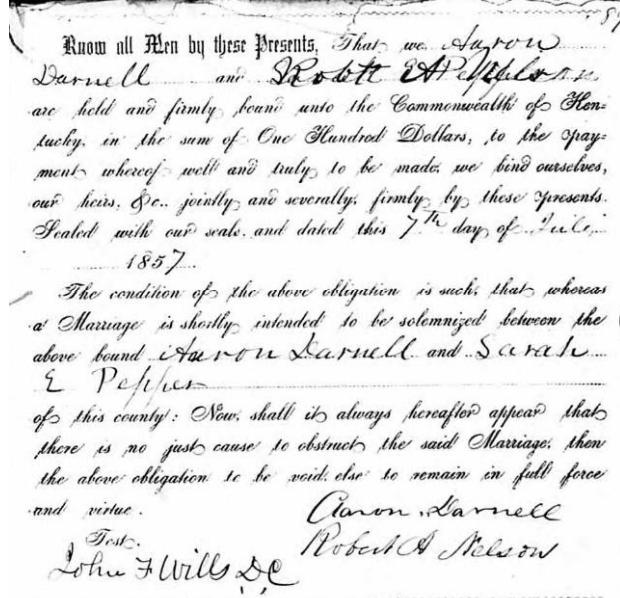
A rolling stone like his father, records show 29-year-old William, three years after marrying Susan returning from a trip to Europe in the company of a 66-year-old woman identified as Sally McCoun. He was identified as a merchant.

On 12 June 1898, William was living in Colorado, where he married a woman named Marie Grubb who had three sons from a previous marriage.

Susan Patterson McCoun died in Frankfort on 12 March 1915. There are no records indicating that she and William ever got a divorce or that the couple had any children together.

This couple seemed ill-fated from the start. Susan was orphaned as an infant; when William was 11 years old he accidentally shot his little brother Frank when they were playing in their father's gun shop.<sup>21</sup> The following year their father was executed by a Mexican firing squad.<sup>22</sup>



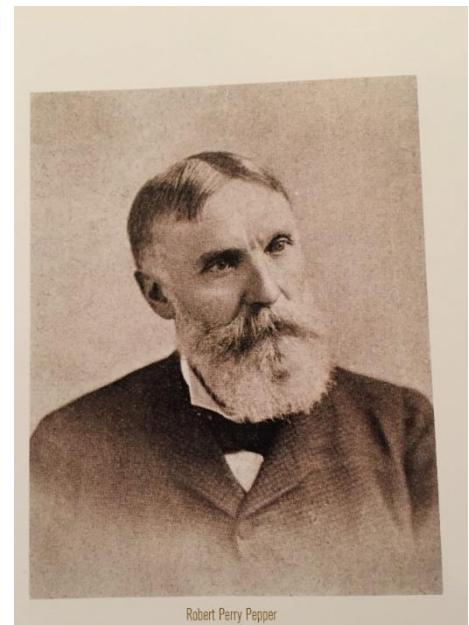


Buffington Island, Ohio, Aaron was one of 71 Confederates captured.<sup>23</sup> From 19 July to 28 December 1863, he was a prisoner of war in a Union camp near Chicago.

- The 3 July 1865 Illinois census enumerated the family in Rantoul, Champaign, Illinois, 120 miles south of Illinois. (Aaron must have been favorably impressed by Illinois.)
- On 29 November 1869, Aaron and Sarah sold land on Glenn's Creek to Joe and Luta.
- In 1870 and 1880, Aaron, Sarah and the children were living in Rantoul, Champaign, Illinois. In 1870, Aaron was a farmer and in 1880 an auctioneer.
- By 1885, Sarah and Aaron were living in Abilene, Texas, where they were founding members of the First Christian Church Disciples of Christ there.<sup>24</sup>
- Died in Abilene, Taylor County, Texas on 25 January 1898.

### Robert Perry Pepper (1832-1895)

- Born in Woodford County 19 November 1832.
- Married, first, Anna Kincaid (1838-1863) on 8 October 1857; with her had one daughter, Pauline "Lena" Culbertson Pepper (1858-1938).
- In the 1860 census, was age 28 and living in Frankfort, Franklin County, with Anna, age 22, and daughter Lena age 2; mother-in-law Paulina Kinkead and Anna's brother William age 17 also were in the home.
- In 1862, moved to Frankfort.
- In 1863, Anna Kinkead Pepper died at age 25.
- Volunteered to serve in the Union Army in 1863.
- Enlisted in the Union Army in 1864; served in the twenty-sixth infantry:<sup>25</sup>
- Started a distillery business in Frankfort sometime after the Civil War.
- Married, second, on 6 December 1865, Elizabeth Starling (1841-1924); with her had one son and six



Robert Perry Pepper

daughters; see stories about Robert Perry Pepper Jr, page 18, and *The Pepper Sisters of Petticoat Lane*, page 20.

- In late 1860s, started a company to build a turnpike in Woodford County from Versailles to the McCoun's Ferry crossing on the Woodford side of the Kentucky River. Persuaded brother-in-law Joseph Eccles "Joe" McCoun to put up own his real and personal property as collateral. Failed to build turnpike, causing Joe and Luta, Bob's sister, to lose their home and move to Texas. See biographies of Mary Louise Pepper and Joseph Eccles McCoun.
- In the 1870 census was 38 years old, living in Frankfort, and working as a farmer. See below.

30	30	Pepper Robert P.	38	m	m	Farmers	1100
—	Lizzie	29	f	w	Working house		
—	Robert Jr	3	m	w			
—	Laura	1	f	w			
—	Mariah	1/2	f	w			
—	Lena	11	f	w	Attending School		
Kinkaid Paulina 39 f. w at home							
Stockley Libbie 35 f. w domestic Servant							
—	Jane	29	f	b	do	do	
Merton Thomas 20 m b do do							
Warming Jane 18 f b do do							
Adams Susan 21 f b do do							

- With Robert were his wife Elizabeth (Lizzie), age 29, his first wife's mother Paulina Kinkaid, his daughter Lena, and the eldest three children from his second marriage, Robert Jr, Laura, and Mariah.
- Also living in the household were five black domestic servants. Formerly enslaved individuals were listed by name by name in the 1870 census, in contrast to earlier census reports which counted slaves by gender and age, not providing names.
- In 1873, sold his interest in distillery after his warehouse and its contents burned.
- Thereafter, gave full attention to horse breeding;<sup>26</sup> on page 19 is an image of a flyer for his South Elkhorn Stock Farm.<sup>27</sup>
- As shown in the 1880 census, below, the Robert Pepper family continued to grow. The three eldest children of Bob and his second wife had been joined by four more little girls. Altogether Bob had one son and seven daughters. His first wife's mother continued to live with the family, and Elizabeth's 23-year-old sister had joined the household. Bob's oldest daughter Lena had married Clay Harlan Hatchett and moved to their own home.

Pepper, Robert P.	W	M	48				Retired Distiller
— Elizabeth	W	F	39	Wife	1.		Working house
— Robert P. Jr.	W	M	13	son	1.		at school
— Laura S.	W	F	11	daughter	1.		at school
— Maria	W	F	10	daughter	1.		at school
— Lizzie	W	F	8	daughter	1.		
— May	W	F	6	daughter	1.		
— Louise	W	F	5	daughter	1.		
— Syre	W	F	3	daughter	1.		
Kinkaid, Pauline	W	F	68	mother-in-law	1.		at home
Starling, Laura	W	F	23	sister-in-law	1.		at home
White, Eliza	B	F	20	servant	1.		servant

- Few records of the 1890 census exist, due to a 1921 fire in the U.S. Commerce Department.
- Bob Pepper died on 19 February 1895 in Frankfort, Franklin, Kentucky and is buried in Frankfort Cemetery. Pepper-surnamed family members buried in this cemetery are listed below along with the dates (in the three right columns) of burial, birth, and death:<sup>28</sup>

PEPPER	ELIZABETH	P	G	169	4	11/28/1924	05/22/1841	11/26/1924
PEPPER	ELIZABETH		G	169	1	7/15/1942	11/12/1871	7/13/1942
PEPPER	LAURA	STARLING	G	169	11	7/25/1958	07/22/1868	7/24/1958
PEPPER	ROBERT	P	G	169	3	02/21/1895	11/19/1832	02/19/1895
PEPPER	LOUISE		G	169	2	05/20/1897	02/12/1875	05/18/1897
PEPPER, JR	ROBERT	P	G	169	5	02/10/1896	01/04/1867	02/08/1896

*Col. R.P. Pepper Dead:<sup>29</sup> Bright's Disease Carries Off the Wealthy Breeder of Blooded Horses*  
 Frankfort, Feb. 19—(Special)—Col. R.P. Pepper, one of the best-known men in Kentucky, particularly in whisky and horse-breeding circles, died at his home here at 11 o'clock this morning of Bright's disease. He had long suffered from the malady but had been confined to his bed for only about two weeks.

Col. Pepper was born and raised in Woodford County and was sixty-one years old at the time of his death. He was a farmer and stock-raiser before the war, and after the war became the manufacturer of the brand of whisky which bore his name. In 1873 his warehouse with [its contents] was destroyed and Col. Pepper sold his interest to the George C. Buchanan Distillery Company of Louisville and retired from the whisky business to give his entire attention to his horse-breeding interests. At the time of his death, he was worth perhaps a half million dollars. He carried insurance on his life in the amount of \$186,000, taking out the policy only a few years ago.

Col. Pepper was twice married, his first wife being Miss Kincaid of Woodford, by whom he had one child, Mrs. Clay H. Hatchitt of Newtown, Scott County. His second wife was Miss Lizzie Starling, who together with one son, Robt. P. Jr., and four daughters, survive him.

The funeral of Col. Pepper will take place in the Presbyterian church in this city at 11 o'clock Thursday morning. The pall bearers have not yet been named. Col. Pepper was a man of very positive character and had an active part in local and state politics. He always contributed liberally of his wealth to charity and to all worthy enterprises.

A biography of Robert Perry Pepper appeared in an 1887 book about Kentucky history:<sup>30</sup>

COL. ROBERT P. PEPPER, a native of Woodford County, Ky., was born November 19, 1833, a son of Samuel and Mahala E. (Perry) Pepper, also natives of Woodford County and descendants of Virginia ancestry. Col. R. P. Pepper was reared on a farm and educated at a private school in Versailles. In 1874 he abandoned the farm and engaged in the breeding of trotters, but in the meantime moved to Frankfort in 1862, and engaged in the distillery business near Frankfort, but was superseded by Newcome, Buchanan & Co., of Louisville. "Onward," "Madrid," "Code" stallions are his leading stock, and he has over 100 brood mares. He was married December 6, 1865, to Miss Elizabeth T. Starling, a native of Columbus, Ohio, and educated in New York. She has borne him seven children: Robert P., Jr., Laura P., Maria S., Elizabeth P., Mahala E., Louise and Lina.

From Find a Grave and a book about the Frankfort Cemetery.<sup>31</sup>

Robert was a breeder and racer of fine Kentucky trotting horses and a distiller of fine bourbon whiskey. When his distillery burned down, Pepper yielded to his wife's entreaties and the demands of the temperance movement - he did not rebuild but went into the trotting horse business.

Exceptionally successful, Pepper's stable became famous for the sires Norval, Madrid, Acolyte and Onward. Mares were shipped from across the globe to breed with Pepper stallions.

The Pepper residence at 415 West Main was, before its demolition, a meeting place for the Frankfort gentry. [See page 23 for a photograph]. Although a Union sympathizer who set out kettles of soup for Yankee soldiers garrisoning Frankfort during the Civil War, Mrs. Pepper carried on the traditions of old-style Southern hospitality in a grand manner.

From a *History of Kentucky* published in 1922:<sup>32</sup>

ROBERT PERRY PEPPER. A complete history of the Kentucky thoroughbred would give frequent credit to the great horses and influence of the stables maintained for many years by the late Robert P. Pepper, a horseman of national distinction and one of the well remembered citizens of Woodford County.

He was born at "Sweet Home" near Grassy Springs Church, Woodford County, in 1830, son of Samuel and Mahala Pepper. In the early part of his married life he owned a distillery near Frankfort until the plant burned, and thereafter his interests were concentrated in Woodford and Scott counties, where he owned several farms, the most noted of these being the well known South Elkhorn Stock Farm in Scott County. He also maintained a home at Frankfort. He continued active in the breeding of trotting horses until his death in 1895. He is buried in the Frankfort Cemetery.

The head of his stables was the great Onward, said to have held the world's record as the sire of the largest number of horses in the 2:30 class. Of the noted sires owned by him were Norval, Madrid and Acolyte. Many of his horses were sold at Tattersalls in New York.

The breeding stables were sold at the death of his only son, Robert Pepper, Jr., about a year after the death of Robert Pepper himself. His farms were likewise sold, and the horse Onward, then retired, was purchased by Mrs. Stokes.

A pen picture of Colonel Pepper shows a very handsome man, six feet two inches tall, with broad shoulders, ruddy complexion, blue eyes, perfect teeth and noted everywhere for his distinguished address and bearing.

---

He was given the title of Colonel by courtesy. Colonel Pepper was twice married. His first wife was Miss Annie Kinkead, of Versailles, Kentucky. By her he had one daughter, Pauline, now Mrs. Clay Hatchitt, of Frankfort. The second wife of Colonel Pepper was Miss Elizabeth Starling, daughter of Colonel Lyne and Maria (Hensley) Starling. She was reared and lived in New York until as a young woman she came to Frankfort, where she was married, and she still maintains the old home at Frankfort, to which she came as a bride nearly fifty-eight years ago. To this union were born seven children. The oldest, Robert P. Pepper, Jr., is deceased. The second, Miss Laura Startling Pepper, resides in Frankfort. The third is Mrs. Charles D. Clay, wife of Col. Charles D. Clay, U. S. A., at Lexington. The next daughter is Miss Elizabeth Pepper. Mrs. Frederick Goedecke, was the wife of Lieutenant Colonel Frederick Goedecke, U. S. A. Louise M. Pepper is deceased. The youngest is Mrs. Thomas Lee Smith, wife of a colonel in the United States Army.

Miss Elizabeth Pepper was born and reared in Frank-

### **Robert Perry Pepper Jr (1867-1896)**

- Born in Frankfort on 4 January 1867, the eldest child of Bob Pepper's second marriage to Elizabeth Starling and their only son.
- Never married, no children.
- Worked in his father's horse breeding business, as shown on the flyer on page 19.<sup>33</sup>
- Died at age 25 of spinal meningitis on 8 February 1896, a year after his father's death.
- Above: obituary that appeared in a publication called *The Review*.<sup>34</sup>

### DEATH OF R. P. PEPPER, JR.

It is with extreme regret that the REVIEW announces the death of Mr. R. P. Pepper, Jr., the manager of South Elkhorn Farm, and the only son of the late C. L. R. P. Pepper. Mr. Pepper died at Frankfort, Ky., Saturday evening last of spinal meningitis. He was about twenty-one years of age and before his late illness had every promise of a long and useful career. Mr. Pepper was a great favorite among those who knew him, and was loved and respected by all. He was an excellent man of business and his father had given him special training to succeed him.



In the management of his large estate. When taken sick he was in the active control of the largest horse business in Kentucky. Profound sympathy is tendered to Mr. Pepper's relatives to whom his removal will be a terrible affliction.

It develops that Mr. Pepper held the largest amount of life insurance of any man of his years in Kentucky. He had one policy in the New York Life for \$50,000, and had \$35,000 more scattered in other companies, making \$85,000. His father, the late Col. R. P. Pepper, carried insurance amounting to \$115,000, the two having taken out \$200,000.



## The Pepper Sisters of Petticoat Lane

In 1919, an ambitious and highly intelligent young man from eastern Kentucky got a job working as a guard in the state penitentiary, which in those days was in Frankfort. Glenn Reynolds McCoun (1891-1985) had no intention of following in his ancestors' footsteps to become a farmer. According to his son Robert, Glenn was bitter when his parents told him they wouldn't send him to college. Glenn figured he would need to go into business if he ever was to get ahead, and so he did.

Glenn's father, Rob McCoun, told his son that, since he was working in Frankfort, he should look up their Pepper cousins. Surely it was mentioned that this was the family of Bob Pepper, brother of Rob's mother Mary Louise "Luta" Pepper McCoun—the Bob Pepper whose turnpike project was not completed, bringing ruin to Rob's father Joe, who had staked his own property on the completion of the turnpike. Bob's default caused the loss of that property and his family's move to Texas, where Luta died. The Frankfort cousins were the daughters of Bob Pepper. They lived in a magnificent 22-room house on Main Street and were wealthy.



Glenn dropped by the home of Bob Pepper's widow and the cousins, who welcomed their handsome and earnest kinsman into the family fold. The friendships Glenn formed with his Pepper cousins lifted his economic status and transformed his life. In fact, those of us who descend from his nephew, my father Raymond Horton, may owe our very existence to Glenn's ability to assist Raymond financially when he was in trouble. Glenn's ability to help family was the direct result of the Pepper cousins' cash gifts to him.

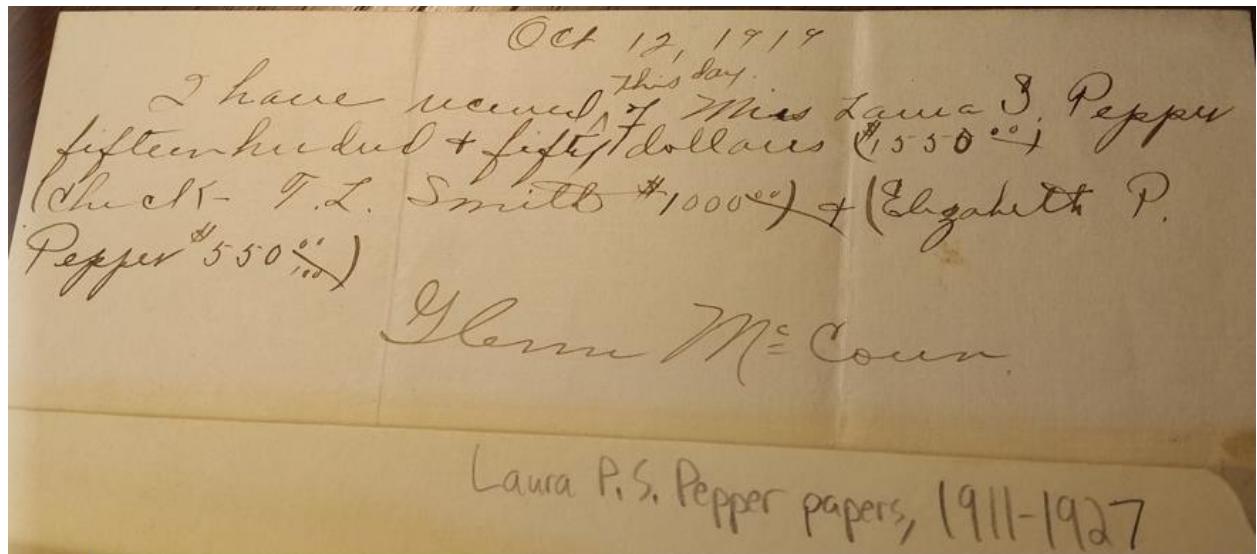
Glenn became especially close to the eldest cousin, Paulina "Lena" Pepper Hatchitt (1858-1938), who lived with her husband Clay Harlan Hatchitt in a smart bungalow (see photo on page 24) two blocks from the mansion where her stepmother and half-sisters lived (see photo on page 23). Lena, who had no children, declared that Glenn would be her honorary son. He probably stayed at their home on weeknights while working at the penitentiary, returning on weekends to the family farm in Vortex. After Glenn married Grace Coldiron, she and Lena became close. Glenn and Grace named their firstborn Glenn Hatchett McCoun (1924-1945) in honor of Lena. Glenn instructed their four children to call Lena "Grandma."

A pivotal event took place in 1919, early in Glenn's friendship with Lena and her half-sisters. In that year Glenn heard that new oil fields had been discovered in eastern Kentucky. Already two of his brothers-in-law, Eugene and Herbert Horton, were working for the Pyramid Oil Company in Lee County, not far from their native Wolfe County. Glenn figured his path to success was to establish an oil drilling business. That, of course, required money.

According to Glenn's son, Robert, Lena gave Glenn the funds needed to start an oil business. Some of Lena's half-sisters also gave Glenn money, as memorialized in the 12 October 1919 receipt shown on the next page, which is in the Pepper Family Papers at the University of Kentucky library.<sup>35</sup> This document was not a promissory note, as it includes no promise to repay. Rather, it memorialized either a gift or an investment.

I have received this day of Miss Laura S. Pepper fifteen hundred + fifty dollars (\$1550.00)--  
(check—T. L. Smith, \$1000) + (Elizabeth P. Pepper \$550.00)

Glenn McCoun



The total amount given Glenn and memorialized by the note was \$1550, which is worth almost \$25,000 in 2021. It seems that Laura—the oldest daughter of Elizabeth Starling Pepper, Bob's second wife—wanted to give Glenn the money but didn't have it on hand the day he needed it. So, her sister Elizabeth agreed to put up \$550 in cash, and her sister Lyne's husband, T.L. Smith agreed to write a check for the \$1000 balance, with the understanding that Laura would repay Elizabeth and the brother-in-law. Such a transaction enabled the Pepper cousins to give Glenn the money he needed right away. He likely was leaving Frankfort immediately to start the oil business.

The infusion of cash from Glenn's cousins enabled him to start several businesses, including oil drilling. Glenn's brother-in-law Herbert Horton went to work for him, as did Glenn's younger brother, Caesar, until he could start his own oil business. Glenn also bought and planned to renovate Swango Springs,<sup>36</sup> a one-time hot-springs tourist attraction in Wolfe County that had belonged to Caesar's wife's family but fallen into disrepair. Glenn also founded the McCoun Motor Company, a car sales and garage business in Campton.

On at least two occasions, Glenn was able to help his nephew, Raymond Horton, when he was in a jam due to his dealings with young women. In 1939, Glenn hired Raymond to run his McCoun Motor Company in Campton. Raymond apparently wanted to be somewhere other than Louisville where, in 1938, he had gone out with a co-worker at the Kentucky Macaroni Factory, and the young woman got pregnant. She brought against Raymond a paternity case that was dismissed or filed away. However, considering that he was actually the father of the baby (whom we have known since 2017 as our DNA-proven half-sister Carol), the dismissal of the case may not have been the end of the matter for the young woman and her parents. A 1943 letter to Raymond from his mother, when he was in the Army, suggests there had earlier been telephone calls to Raymond's mother seeking to locate Raymond.

After Raymond's move to Campton, there was another incident involving a different young woman and, in that case, I believe that my father was innocent. In April 1940, a woman he had taken to a movie accused him of breaking into her room later that night. He was charged under a

crime defined in a Kentucky statute known as unlawful detention of a female with the intention of unconsented carnal knowledge. Raymond had to put up bail to avoid being jailed while awaiting trial. Who but Uncle Glenn could put up the bail money, and who but Uncle Glenn could pay a defense lawyer and cover court costs, until his nephew had the funds to repay him? (From Raymond's letters to his wife Marcia and his Uncle Glenn, it is evident that Raymond was dragging his feet on the repayment: the second World War began and ended before Raymond repaid his uncle!) Glenn's relative affluence enabled him to help his nephew.

I suspect that, after these incidents, Glenn told Raymond, for gosh sake, find a nice woman to marry. And Raymond did. The jury trial in *Commonwealth of Kentucky vs. Raymond Horton* was held the very week in which a 23-year-old college graduate named Marcia Bryan arrived in Campton to work in a New Deal agency's home economics program. Attracted by the crowds at the courthouse, gathered to witness the most exciting trial in Campton in a long time, Marcia watched part of the trial, thinking the defendant handsome. Raymond was acquitted by the jury.

Soon after the acquittal, she and Raymond began dating and they married on 26 September 1940. If he had been unable to post bail and hire a lawyer, he may have been convicted of a crime that he didn't commit. If convicted, he would have been in no position to court and marry Marcia.

Is it possible that Glenn's overtures to his cousins for cash handouts had been motivated in any way by a desire to right the wrong done by Bob Pepper to our branch of the family, when Bob failed to complete the turnpike and our great great grandparents Joe and Luta were the ones who suffered the loss of home and wealth? We will never know with certainty whether Glenn had any such agenda, or whether the Pepper cousins were aware of their father's transgression—as the turnpike project wasn't mentioned in any of the Bob Pepper biographies or obituaries—but financial reparation seems intriguing as a motive for Glenn's outreach to the cousins.

I would never have learned about the Pepper sisters, and the special relationship that my great uncle Glenn had with them, were it not for my friendship starting in 2013 with Glenn's son, my first cousin once removed, Robert Coldiron McCoun (1928-2019). During a visit to Robert's sunny flat in New York City, we were exchanging stories about family members, with Robert doing most of the talking because he was a human genealogy archive. He could recite accurately not only events during his lifetime that he personally witnessed or heard about at the time they occurred, but he also knew about events that took place many years earlier that he had heard about from a family member, such as a grandparent or his father, had described them to him. Robert said that, as a child, he liked nothing more than to sit and listen to the grownups talk. He had no interest in sports and, as he was dyslexic, he struggled with reading and schoolwork. His interest in the family stories, and extraordinary memory, enabled him to take over from his father the role as family griot. And I was the willing recipient of the family lore.

During the visit in question, Robert suddenly was describing in detail a bunch of women with cutesy nicknames—Lena, Mimi, Ria, Lizzie, May, Pinney, Tootie, and Teetie. Confused, I interrupted and implored him to tell me who these people were. I wasn't at all sure that I cared to hear about women with such silly names. Robert explained they were the Pepper cousins in Frankfort. "Do you remember the stories about Bob Pepper, who was supposed to build that turnpike in Woodford County, but never did, causing Joe and Mary Louise McCoun to lose their house and move to Texas?" Of course, I did. "Well, these women were his widow and daughters." Robert went on to describe the 22-room house in Frankfort where Bob's widow, Elizabeth Starling Pepper, lived with several daughters and other relatives. [See undated photo on the next page]



Robert's central theme was that this was a household of gracious and lively women, headed by Elizabeth, who generously shared her home with Paulina Kincaid, the mother of her late husband's first wife, and who treated Lena, Bob's one child from the first marriage, as if she were her own daughter. The kindness shown to Robert's father Glenn, by Elizabeth and her daughters, was typical of the family's generosity to people in general

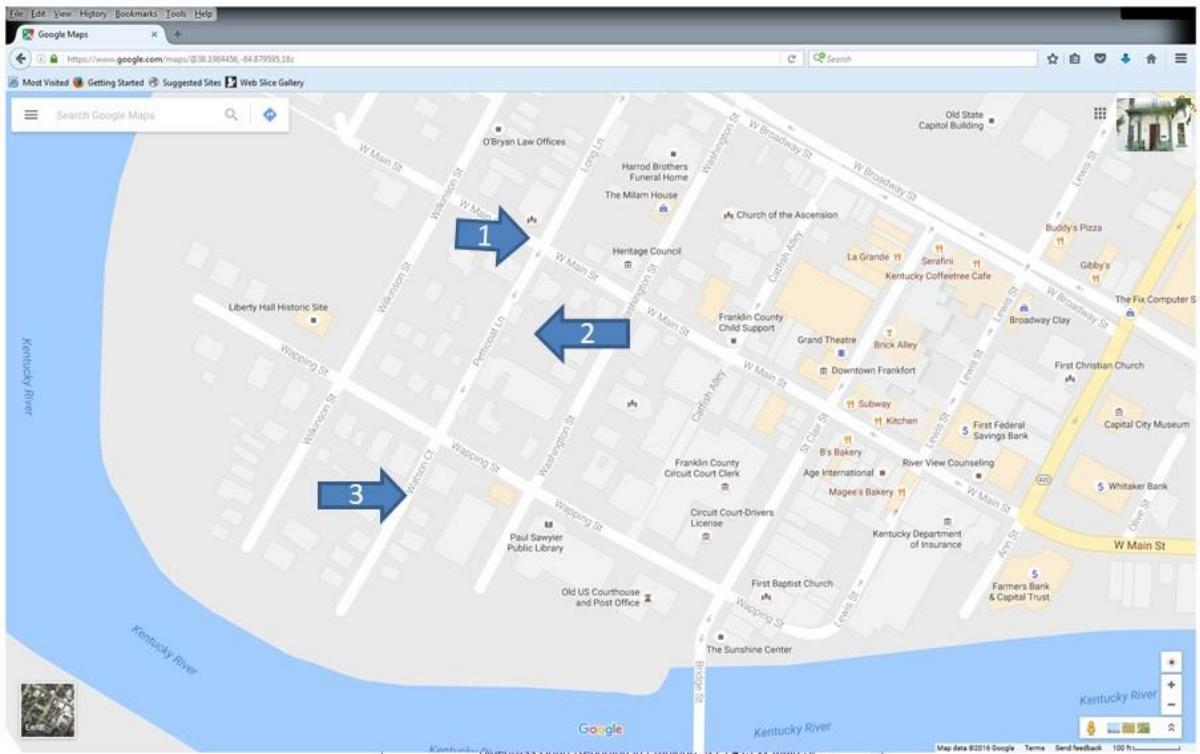
The Pepper cousins are referred to as the Pepper sisters of Petticoat Lane because, according to cousin Robert, they were constantly visiting back and forth between the Pepper mansion on Main Street (picture above) and the Watson Court bungalow where Lena lived. Robert said they were so "often seen sashaying up and down the alley" that connected the two homes, swishing their billowy skirts, that the alley was named Petticoat Lane in their honor. Indeed, a history of Frankfort confirms this tale: "Some folks insist that the name comes from the practice of local girls hiking up their skirts to avoid street mud and dirt, thus showing their petticoats." Below right is an image from Google maps showing a current street view of Petticoat Lane.

After Robert told me about these cousins, I researched them and found that this branch of the family includes interesting people. Review of the Pepper Family Papers among the special collections of the University of Kentucky library piqued my interest further. The papers include not only records from Bob's cattle and horse farms but also the personal correspondence of many of his daughters.

On the next page is a modern map of a section of the historic section of Frankfort showing at (1) the location on Main Street of the Pepper mansion, which no longer is standing; (2) Petticoat Lane; and (3) the still-standing home that once belonged to Lena and Clay Hatchitt.



1.  Main St. 1920 Home of Elizabeth Pepper, age 78, widowed 2<sup>nd</sup> wife of Robert Perry Pepper, unmarried daughters Laura age 51 and Elizabeth age 48 & grandson Lyne Goedecke, 9



2. Petticoat Ln, so-named because of Pepper women going back and forth on street. 3. 111 Watson Ct where Lena Pepper Hatchett (half sister of Laura & Elizabeth) lived w/ husband Clay.

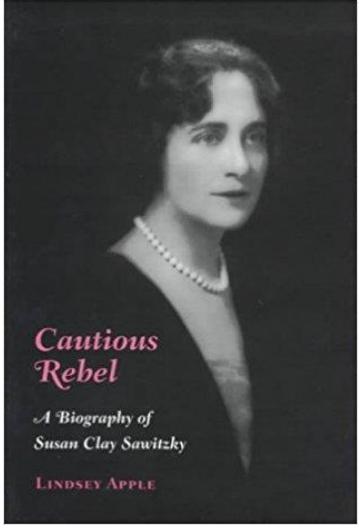
Below is a recent photograph of 111 Watson Court, once home of cousin Lena Pepper Hatchett.

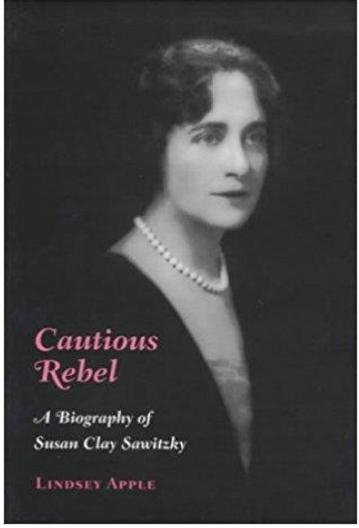


### Brief sketches of the Pepper Sisters of Petticoat Lane

Of the seven Pepper sisters, listed below in birth order: one died as a young woman (Louise); two never married (Laura and Elizabeth); one married but had no children (Lena); three married and had children (Mariah, Lyne, and Mahala).

Name	
Paulina Culbert- son Pepper (1858- 1938), “Lena”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Born 17 September 1858 in Woodford County, only child of Robert Perry Pepper’s first wife, Anna Kinkaid (1838-1863).</li> <li>• Lena was married to Clay Harlan Hatchitt, whose mother’s brother was John Marshall Harlan, a Kentucky lawyer and politician who served as a Justice on the U.S. Supreme Court from 1877-1911.</li> <li>• A story anchored to the biography of Samuel Pepper discusses a legend (told by family storyteller Glenn Reynolds McCoun) claiming that certain dining room chairs that he owned for many years—and that upon Glenn’s death became the property of his son Robert—may once have belonged to Harlan. If the legend is true, it would be because the chairs were owned by Lena and Clay after Harlan’s ownership of them and before they became Glenn’s. The trajectory of ownership that I have postulated is plausible but impossible to prove or disprove.</li> <li>• From about 1891-about 1915, Lena and Clay lived in Scott County, adjacent to Franklin County, managing a horse farm.</li> <li>• In 1915, moved into new bungalow at 111 Watson Court (#3 on map).</li> <li>• By 1919, became friends with Glenn Reynolds McCoun and gave him money for an oil drilling business.</li> <li>• Died in Frankfort on 25 May 1938; buried in the Versailles Cemetery</li> </ul>
Laura Starling Pepper (1868- 1958); “Mimi”	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Was probably one of the three unidentified young women in this photograph of four of the Pepper siblings, part of the Pepper Family Papers in the University of Kentucky library.</li> <li>• Born in Frankfort on 22 July 1868; never married.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lived at the mansion at 415 Main Street her entire life. After her mother's death in 1924, became head of household.</li> <li>• No children but helped raise her nephew Lyne Goedecke, whose mother Mahala Edwards Pepper died when Lyne was a week old.</li> <li>• In the 1920, 1930, and 1940 census reports, was living in the house at 415 Main Street; the 1940 report showed Lyne's wife and daughter also lived there.</li> <li>• Died 24 July 1958, age 90; buried in the Frankfort Cemetery.</li> </ul>
Mariah Hensley Pepper (1870-1939); "Ria"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Born in Frankfort 5 April 1870.</li> <li>• Married Lieutenant Colonel Charles Donald Clay (1857-1935), a grandson of the statesman, Henry Clay; photo<sup>37</sup> was before the wedding.</li> <li>• Lived in Lexington.</li> <li>• Her correspondence with her mother, archived in the Pepper Family Papers, suggests that Ria and her husband had serious financial problems but were unwilling to curb their spending; her mother could not afford to help.</li> <li>• Died in Lexington 17 May 1939.</li> <li>• Four children:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Susan Jacob Clay (1897-1935); Subject of <i>Cautious Rebel: A Biography of Susan Clay Sawitzky</i>, by Lindsey Apple, Kent State University Press, 1997.<sup>38</sup> This review praised the book:</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;">  <div style="margin-left: 10px;"> <p><i>Lindsey Apple employs nearly seventy years of Susan Clay Sawitzky's (great-granddaughter of Henry Clay) personal letters and poetry to reconstruct the world of a woman seeking modernity with "the millstone of tradition" upon her shoulders. Women's studies has been inclined, unintentionally, to create a new elite. Historians have preferred to emphasize progress, particularly when created by women themselves, and biographers have chosen strong, successful women. But the vast majority of women were not activists. Susan Clay Sawitzky's life shows that tradition and modernity can and did exist simultaneously, creating tremendous complexity in the lives of individuals. Her experiences suggest that compromise may result as much from fatigue as from lack of desire or courage</i><sup>39</sup> [Emphasis is added: so many women have felt that way!].</p> <p>--Grew up on father's horse farm near Lexington and in her grandmothers' homes.</p> <p>--Chafed at the constrictions on women of her era and social class.</p> <p>--In 1920s was reporter for <i>Louisville Herald</i>.</p> <p>--Shocked family by eloping with a much-older divorced Russian immigrant named</p> </div> </div>



	<p>Vassili Sawitzky, a leading art historian; helped with his research; became an expert in her own right. One child with him was stillborn.</p> <p>--Wrote poetry for more than 60 years; a book of her poetry was published in 1920. Also, her unpublished poems were published by the Kentucky Poetry Review in 1984 (The Encircling Thread).</p> <p>--Died 11 July 1981.</p> <p>2) Charles Donald Clay Jr (1899-1922)—Died of a gun shot wound;<sup>40</sup> buried in Lexington Cemetery.</p> <p>3) Army Col. Robert Pepper Clay (1903-1977); graduated from West Point (yearbook photo at right); served in World War II and Korea; two daughters, Lucy and Susan; retired in Greenville, Mississippi, where he died; buried Lexington Cemetery.</p> <p>4) Elizabeth Starling Clay (1904-1999); graduated from the University of Kentucky, where she was president of the botany club and was in graduate school in 1930 (at left, yearbook photo); at age 44 married William Blanford; died in Massachusetts; buried Lexington Cemetery.</p>
<p>Elizabeth Pepper (1871-1942), "Lizzie"</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Born in Frankfort 12 Nov 1871; never married.</li> <li>• Graduated from the Ogontz School of Pennsylvania, a renowned female boarding school.</li> <li>• Was a feminist leader, peace advocate, and political activist, as described in a biography quoted below in italics.</li> <li>• Managed a Jersey cow dairy farm in Woodford County and the South Elkhorn horse farm in Frankfort County</li> <li>• Was the subject of a romantic novel written in 1900 by Robert Burns Wilson, <i>Until the Day Break</i>.</li> <li>• Died 13 July 1942 in Frankfort; buried in the Frankfort Cemetery.<sup>41</sup></li> </ul> <p><i>Elizabeth Starling Pepper (12 November 1871 - 13 June 1942) was the corresponding secretary for the Kentucky Equal Rights Association in 1915 and was likely the author of the report from the Franklin County Equal Rights Association that year. She was also active in the Peace Association of Franklin County - giving a speech at Fort Smith on "Constructive Peace." In September 1915, she attended the <a href="#">Women Voters Convention in Chicago</a>, led by a group of activists that would eventually form the National Woman's Party. That year the Franklin County ERA reported a very active club of over two hundred members. They hosted a cotton ball fundraiser which garnered \$100 for the Kentucky Equal Rights Association as well as for the war effort. Their garden party that year earned \$10; and they promoted the campaign for three women to run for the county school board - all Democrats, but the women still lost.</i></p>

*Elizabeth Pepper, about whom local artist [Robert Burns Wilson](#) wrote in his romantic novel ([Until the Day Break](#), 1900), never married. Her 1897 passport application described her as 5'5" with grey eyes and brown hair. She was the third eldest daughter of Elizabeth Prudence Starling - the second wife of Robert Perry Pepper. She lived most of her life in the family's two homes: the 22-room [brick mansion](#) at 415 West Main Street and in summertime they entertained guests at their Adirondack-style bungalow "[The Cliffs](#)" off the Wilkinson Highway on a bluff overlooking Frankfort (both houses no longer standing). In the 1920 census she is listed as the manager of their horse farm, [The South Elkhorn Stock Farm](#). She moved out of the family home by 1940 (living by herself at 111 Watson Court) and died on 13 June 1942. She is buried in the [Frankfort Cemetery](#) near her parents and siblings in Section G, Lot 169, Grave 1.<sup>42</sup>*



Figure 1 Pepper Family Papers, UK Library.

The excerpt below from a 1922 *History of Kentucky* summarizes Elizabeth's success running a dairy farm.<sup>43</sup> When the historian wrote that, "for the past seven years she has owned and lived on the old Edwards place in Woodford County, on the McCracken Pike, three miles west of Versailles," was he describing the Roderick Perry property? The sketch's last sentence, quoted in the excerpt below, states that, "The home, an old brick residence built by the original owner, Edwards, stands back on a fine elevation a quarter of a mile from the Pike, and is located in one of the most charming spots of Woodford County."

The reference to "Edwards" as the original owner suggests that the property in which Elizabeth lived may once have belonged to her great grandfather Roderick Perry. Following his 1821

death, the home belonged to his widow, Susanna Brown Perry who in 1829 married a widower named James Edwards. The 1840 census taker found their large, blended family sharing a home. It is possible that what had been known as the "Roderick Perry property" then became known as the "Edwards property"

Miss Elizabeth Pepper was born and reared in Frankfort, and is a graduate of Ogontz School of Pennsylvania. Her love for the country life led her to participate in practical agriculture, and for the past seven years she has owned and lived on the old Edwards place in Woodford County, on the McCracken Pike, three miles west of Versailles. This farm comprises 125 acres, and Miss Pepper has been successful in the handling and operation of a choice dairy of Jersey cows. The home, an old brick residence built by the original owner, Edwards, stands back on a fine elevation a quarter of a mile from the Pike, and is located in one of the charming spots of Woodford County.

Louise  
McCoun  
Pepper  
(1875-  
1897)

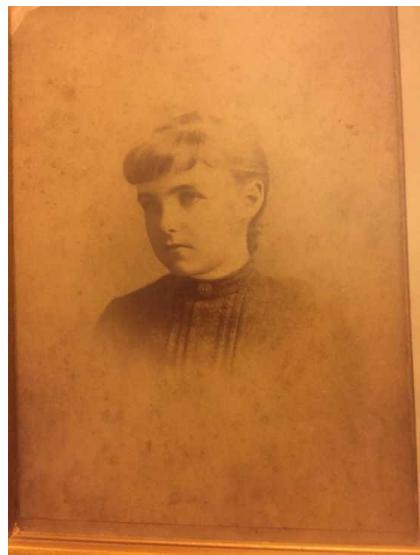
te of  
Wed-  
e M.  
Col.  
per,  
uth-  
this  
ago  
stal-  
in a  
rim  
er a  
pert  
n of  
fell  
of  
the  
ing  
ith  
d,  
nd  
in  
w  
ur  
y-  
id  
v.  
er  
e  
d

**O**H dearest dead, we saw thy white soul shining  
Behind the face,  
Bright with the beauty and celestial glory  
Of an immortal grace.  
What wonder that we stumble, faint and weeping,  
And sick with fears,  
Since thou hast left us—all alone with sorrow,  
And blind with tears?



**G**AN it be possible no words shall welcome  
Our coming feet?  
How will it look, that face that we have cherished  
When next we meet?  
Will it be changed, so glorified and saintly,  
That we shall know it not?  
Will there be nothing that will say, "I love thee,  
And I have not forgot?"

- Born 12 February 1875 in Frankfort.
- Named for her Aunt Mary Louise Pepper McCoun. Never married.
- Died of appendicitis at age 22 on 18 May 1897.

<p>Lyne Starling Pepper (1876- 1947), “Pinney ”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Born 6 December 1876 in Frankfort.</li> <li>• Shown at right as a child.</li> <li>• Married Col. Thomas Lee Smith (1871-1922), a Yale graduate, 27 December 1898.</li> <li>• Died 16 August 1947 in Frankfort.</li> <li>• Five children:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-- Elizabeth “Teetie” (1901-1980); married John Crutcher, four children.</li> <li>--Lyne Starling, shown left (1904-1989); married Victor Williams, children.</li> <li>--Robert Pepper (1906-1945); married; one child who died soon after birth.</li> <li>--Thomas Lee (1907-1954).</li> <li>--Laura “Tootie.” (1915-2000); married Edward Bruce Patrick Kennedy, Sr; four children.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	  <p>at two</p>
<p>Mahala Edwards Pepper (1878- 1910), “May”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Born 11 July 1878 in Frankfort.</li> <li>• In 1903, traveled to England with Clay and Lena Pepper Hatchitt.</li> <li>• Married Frederick “Fritz” Goedecke (1873-1932) on 29 January 1908.</li> <li>• With Fritz had one son, Lyne Starling Goedecke (1910-1982).</li> <li>• Died in New York, 31 May 1910; buried in Frankfort Cemetery.</li> </ul> <p>Lyne was only a week old when May died. Obituaries are on the next page. Fritz brought Baby Lyne to Frankfort when he (and May’s coffin) traveled to Frankfort for the funeral and burial. A military officer, Fritz was probably relieved when the baby’s aunts offered to take the baby in. The census reports for 1920, 1930, and 1940 showed Lyne living with his aunts in the family mansion in Frankfort.</p> <p>Documents in the Pepper Family Papers in the University of Kentucky Library indicate that Fritz attempted to reclaim Lyne from the aunts.<sup>44</sup> He was unsuccessful: a custody battle ensued in which the Pepper women prevailed. By the 1940 census, Lyne, had married. He, his wife, and their daughter also were living with in the 415 West Main Street house.</p>	

Fldg      —Mrs. Frederick Goedecke, died  
 Ave      Tuesday at Fort Wadsworth, N. Y.,  
 .842      after an illness of a few days. Mrs.  
 .983      Goedecke as Miss May Pepper, of  
 .888      Frankfort, daughter of the late Col.  
 .933      R. P. Pepper. She was married to  
 .920      Lieutenant Goedecke of the regular  
 .889      army and they went to Salt City to  
 .889      live. Last summer Lieutenant Goedecke  
 .865      as transferred to Fort Wadsworth,  
 .895      N. Y.  
 .000      Mrs Goedecke is survived by her  
 .886      husband, her mother, Mrs R. P. Pepper,  
 .935      a half sister, Mrs Clay Hatchett,  
 L.000      Miss Laura Pepper of Frankfort, Mrs  
 .875      Charles Clay, of Fayette county, and  
 .864      Mrs. Tom Smith, of Fort Macpherson.  
 .979      Mrs. Pepper and Miss Laura Pepper  
 .900      are with Mrs. Smith at Atlanta, and  
 .000      Miss Elizabeth Pepper is in Europe  
 L.000      here she had expected to spend a year.  
 .929      Mrs. Goedecke was well known in  
 this city and county and before her  
 marriage frequently visited here.

### Young Mother Dead.

be      to S  
at M  
June  
will  
 mic      Relatives and friends in Frankfort were  
 uis-      greatly shocked this morning when a tel-  
 t in      egram from Fort Wadsworth, N. Y., was  
 ing.      received announcing the serious illness of  
 cord      Mrs. Frederick Goedecke and shortly after  
 illie,      this was followed by another message  
 sca-      stating that Mrs. Goedecke had died about  
 ph-      10 o'clock. She leaves a baby only a few  
 evi-      days old. None of her family were with  
 In-      her at the time of her death. No funeral  
 ling.      arrangements have been made, but the  
 tea-      burial probably will be in Frankfort.

Mrs. Goedecke was Miss May Pepper, of  
 Frankfort, and was known to all of the  
 older residents of this city. She was a  
 young woman of attractive personality  
 and appearance and was very popular  
 here. She was married two years ago  
 last January to Lieut. Frederick Goedecke,  
 of the regular army, and they  
 went to Salt Lake City to live. Last sum-  
 mer Lieut. Goedecke was transferred to  
 Fort Wadsworth, New York. The happy  
 young couple were in Frankfort for sev-  
 eral days while on their way to the East,  
 spending the time with Mrs. Goedecke's  
 mother, Mrs. Pepper.

A charming story is told about  
 young Lyne and the Peppers'  
 home on Main Street, pictured in a  
 photograph on page 23:  
 The home stood on Main Street in  
 Frankfort, directly across from the  
 First Presbyterian Church. As it  
 turned out, the house actually had  
 22 [rather than 21] rooms. Lyne  
 Goedecke, climbing on the roof,  
 found a trap door. He opened the  
 door and discovered a small room.  
 In it was a little rocking chair and  
 a little old-fashioned side-buttoned  
 child's shoe. There was no door  
 into the interior of the house. The  
 family speculates that the room  
 might have been used by the  
 underground railroad.<sup>45</sup>

That is the end of the stories about the Pepper sisters of Petticoat Lane. I hope you found them interesting.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2013/09/why-didnt-people-smile-in-old-portraits/279880/>

<sup>2</sup> Although in the 19<sup>th</sup> century many widows wore mourning dress for two years, children generally observed shorter periods wearing such dress.

<https://www.tchevalier.com/fallingangels/bckgrnd/mourning/>  
<https://bellatory.com/fashion-industry/FashionHistoryMourningDressBlackClothingWornDuringBereavement>

<sup>3</sup> "Marriage Superstitions, and the Miseries of a Bride Elect" in *St. James Magazine*, London: Sampson Low VII:572, cited at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Something\\_old](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Something_old)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.british-genealogy.com/forum/archive/index.php/t-55354.html>  
<https://www.rootschat.com/forum/index.php?topic=133982.0>

<sup>5</sup> Railey, William Edward, *History of Woodford County, Kentucky*, Part II, Frankfort 1928, at 42.

<sup>6</sup> Kentucky Obituaries 1787-1854, compiled by G. Glenn Clift, 1821. In Kentucky Reporter, Lexington: "Roderick Perry, of Woodford County," cited on Kentucky Kindred Genealogy, 29 April 2020 <https://kentuckykindredgenealogy.com/2020/04/29/1821-deaths-from-the-kentucky-reporter/>

<sup>7</sup> Abstract from Woodford County Will Book F, pages 269, 270, 271); produced in court and proven, October 1821. Kentucky County, District and Probate Courts. *Administrator and Executor Bonds, 1802-1856, of Woodford County [Kentucky]*; Author: Kentucky. County Court (Woodford County); Probate Place: Woodford, Kentucky. Details about the will are found in Roderick's and Susanna's biographies.

<sup>8</sup> Journal of the Senate of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, begun and held in the town of Frankfort, on Monday the Twenty first day of October 1822, at 6.

[https://uknowledge.uky.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1057&context=ky\\_state\\_journals](https://uknowledge.uky.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1057&context=ky_state_journals)

<sup>9</sup> Demaree, Nancy, "Place, Disease and Mortality: Trimble County, Kentucky 1849-1894" (2000) at 5. *Masters Theses & Specialist Projects*. <http://digitalcommons.wku.edu/theses/716> Many people believed that "miasma" transmitted disease, a theory later-debunked. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miasma\\_theory](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miasma_theory)

<sup>10</sup> Ned, 29 May 2005, <http://www.genealogy.com/forum/surnames/topics/pepper/981/> The lack of birth and death records in Kentucky in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and the lack of detail in the U.S. census reports prior to 1850, make it difficult to learn more about the two little sons who died. Relevant church records from early Baptist congregations in Shelby or Woodford County are non-existent. We know that Mahala Perry's father Roderick Perry II was raised in the Baptist church. His father, Roderick Perry I, had in 1805 been a founder of the Buffalo Lick Baptist Church in Shelby County, Kentucky. Willis, Geo. L., *History of Shelby County, Kentucky*, C.T. Dearing Printing Company, Inc., Louisville, Kentucky, 1929, at 68. Few church registries from Virginia or Kentucky churches have survived. Family history researchers elsewhere are more apt to find useful parish records, e.g., in Maryland, and this is true whether or not the family belonged to the Church of England. The "Free State" of Maryland had no established church. In Pennsylvania, useful records survive from Quakers, Methodists, and Moravians.

<sup>11</sup> "Distiller Built Home of Five Little Peppers," *Lexington Herald Leader*, 8 September 1963.

<sup>12</sup> Telephone conversation with owner of Sun Valley Farm, 16 September 2021.

---

<sup>13</sup> Reigler, Susan, Kentucky *Bourbon Country: The Essential Travel Guide*, University Press of Kentucky, Lexington, 2013, at 10-12.

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.visitsunvalleymares.com/amenities> Sun Valley Farm, 556 New Cut Road, Versailles, Kentucky 40383, 859-533-5377.

<sup>15</sup> *Woodford Weekly*, Versailles, Kentucky, 23 October 1874. On microfilm accessed by author at the Woodford County Historical Society on 11 November 2021. See biography of Samuel Pepper for an image of the obituary.

<sup>16</sup> “Distiller Built Home of Five Little Peppers,” *supra* note 15. Sun Valley Farm, 556 New Cut Road, Versailles, Kentucky 40383 <https://www.visitsunvalleymares.com/amenities>

<sup>17</sup> Photographs of Mahala’s headstone and footstone were taken by Linda Horton, 9 November 2021.

<sup>18</sup> This website provides an interesting glossary of terms associated with burials in the American South. <https://www.tngenweb.org/darkside/typology.html>

<sup>19</sup> [https://www.realtor.com/realestateandhomes-detail/5876-McCracken-Pike\\_Versailles\\_KY\\_40383\\_M95590-54656](https://www.realtor.com/realestateandhomes-detail/5876-McCracken-Pike_Versailles_KY_40383_M95590-54656)

<sup>20</sup> Clay County archives: “Married in Versailles, Kentucky on December 20, 1872, by Rev. William Stanley, Mr. William H. McCoun of Louisville and formerly of Liberty to Miss Susie Patterson of Woodford County, Kentucky.”

<sup>21</sup> The incident was reported in the *Liberty Tribune* on 26 September 1856. Cited in Klimcheck, Maurie McCoun, James McCoun & Margaret Walker & Their Descendants, Vol. II, at 229.

<sup>22</sup> See biography of Esther Eccles at pages 11 and 15.

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.ohiohistory.org/visit/museum-and-site-locator/buffington-island-park>

<sup>24</sup> “Church History Goes Back to 1885,” The Abilene Reporter, Abilene, Texas, 2 November 1975 at 12D.

<sup>25</sup> This may have been the 26th Kentucky Volunteer Infantry. Union Soldiers Compiled Service Records, 1861-1865. 26th Kentucky Infantry.

[https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/26th\\_Regiment,\\_Kentucky\\_Infantry\\_\(Union\)](https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/26th_Regiment,_Kentucky_Infantry_(Union)). There was, however, a Robert Pepper in the 26th Regiment, Missouri Infantry, Union side, who joined as a private and left as sergeant. M390 Roll 37 <https://www.nps.gov/civilwar/search-soldiers-detail.htm?soldierId=5BAD4EC2-DC7A-DF11-BF36-B8AC6F5D926A>

<sup>26</sup> From *Kentucky: A History of the State*, Battle, Perrin, and Kniffin 5<sup>th</sup> Edition, 1887, Franklin Company. <http://www.rootsweb.com/~kygenweb/kybiog/franklin/pepper.rp.txt>

<sup>27</sup> Source: Patrick Kennedy, a descendant of Robert Perry Pepper Sr. and Elizabeth Starling and their daughter Lyne Pepper Smith.

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.frankfortcemetery.org/Burial-Lists/Burial-Index-19.pdf>

<sup>29</sup> A similar obituary appeared after the funeral in *The Frankfort Roundabout*, Frankfort, Kentucky, 23 February 1895 at page four.

---

<sup>30</sup> *Kentucky: A History of the State*, Battle, Perrin, & Kniffin, 5th ed., 1887, Franklin Company.  
<http://www.rootsweb.com/~kygenweb/kybiog/franklin/pepper.rp.txt>  
<https://wc.rootsweb.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=GET&db=rheyduck&id=I33137>

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/98393765/robert-perry-pepper> Information taken from Hatter, Russell, et al., *Frankfort Cemetery--The Westminster Abbey of Kentucky*, Frankfort Heritage Press, 2007.

<sup>32</sup> Connelly, William Elsey, and Coulter, Ellis, *History of Kentucky*, Volume 5, American Historical Society, 1922, at 642.

<sup>33</sup> See note 27.

<sup>34</sup> Another obituary appeared in an unknown publication. This clipping, like the one shown in the accompanying text, was found in the Pepper Family Papers at the University of Kentucky library:

**R. P. Pepper, aged 25 years, died at Frankfort to-day of spinal meningitis. He was probably the best known young sportsman in Kentucky. He leaves an estate valued at several hundred thousand dollars.**

<sup>35</sup> Laura P.S. Pepper papers, 1911-1927, Pepper family papers, University of Kentucky library.

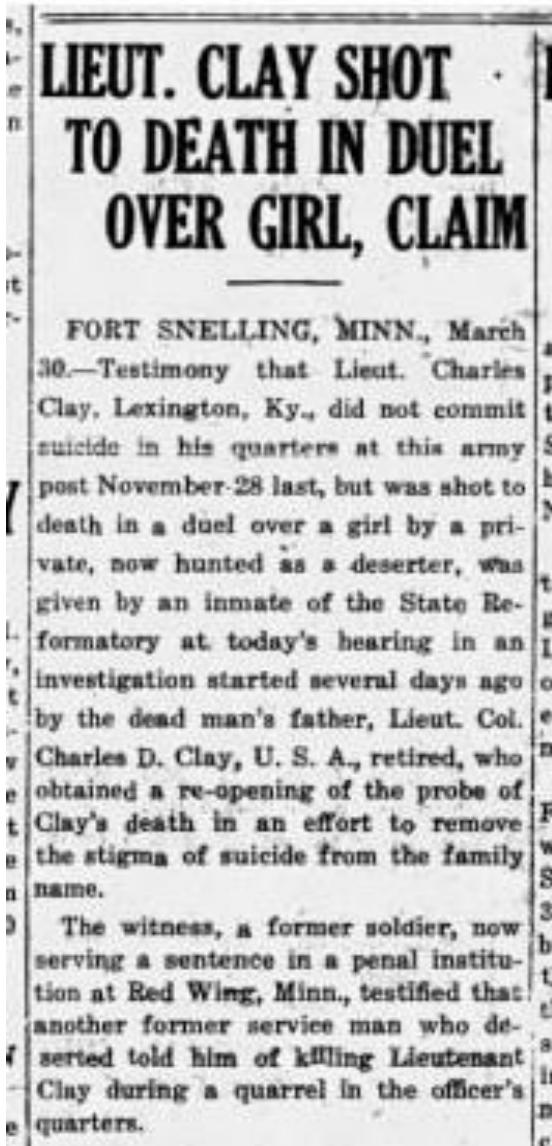
<sup>36</sup> "Swango Springs—a resort before 1900, *Red River Recreation Guide*, Spring 1978, at 13.

<sup>37</sup> Source: Billy Hensley, Hensley Family Tree on Ancestry.com

<sup>38</sup> <https://henryclay.org/product/cautious-rebel-a-biography-of-susan-clay-sawitzky/>

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.powells.com/book/-9780873385794/1-0>

<sup>40</sup> See clipping on the next page.



<sup>41</sup> The website of Frankfort Cemetery includes Elizabeth Pepper as one of several suffragists buried there. <https://www.frankfortcemetery.org/History/Suffragists-Remembered/suffragists-remembered.html>

<sup>42</sup> <https://networks.h-net.org/elizabeth-s-pepper> Reference source of Information: Report of the Twenty-Sixth Annual Convention of the Kentucky Equal Rights Association Held at Lexington, Kentucky, November 8, 9 and 10, 1915. <https://exploreuk.uky.edu/catalog/xt74mw28cr50#page/10/mode/1up> ; Willard Rouse Jillson, "Romance and Reality: Notes and Identifications of Locale and Characters in Robert Burns Wilson's Novel, Until the Day Break," (Frankfort, Ky.: Roberts Pub. Co. 1953). ; 64m40: Elizabeth S. "Lizzie" Pepper, 1890-1935, Box 8, Folder 6, Pepper Family Papers, University of Kentucky Special Collections, Lexington, Ky. [Elizabeth Pepper memorial, FindAGrave](#)

<sup>43</sup> Connelly, William Elsey, and Coulter, Ellis, History of Kentucky, Volume 5, American Historical Society, 1922, at 642.

<sup>44</sup> <https://exploreuk.uky.edu/fa/findingaid/?id=xt7mcv4bph5d>

<sup>45</sup> Ned, 29 May 2005, <http://www.genealogy.com/forum/surnames/topics/pepper/981/>