

BRACKEN COUNTY

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Charge of Murder against Samuel Meranda

In April of 1806 a special session of the Bracken County Court was convened for the purpose of trying Samuel Meranda, Jr., son of James and Susanah Meranda, and nephew of Samuel Meranda, Sr., who stood accused of murdering his brother Isaac Meranda. In September of 1802 James and Susanah sold to their son Samuel Meranda, Jr. 69 acres of land from their landholding along the Ohio River east of Bracken Creek. He paid them \$400 for the 69 acres. On the 7th day of April 1806, 3 days following the murder of Isaac Meranda, in the Bracken County Deed Books is a deed in trust for the 69 acres from Samuel Meranda, Jr. to James Newland directing Newland to manage the property for the benefit of his wife Sally Newland Meranda, and for their children. From this it appears that Samuel Meranda, Jr. expected to be convicted of murdering his brother and was making arrangements for his wife and children to be taken care of by one of her relatives. In fact, as you will see, he managed to escape from the jail in Bracken County and fled to Clark County, Ohio where it appears he resided for the rest of his life. There is no evidence that he ever set foot in Kentucky, at least not in Bracken County, after his escape. James Meranda's will was proved in the Bracken County Court at the March term in 1818.

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Capt. George W. Edgington by J.W. Crumbaugh

(taken from an article in the Bracken County News 1937)

We, who followed the river, and knew Capt. George W. Edgington, admired him for his many good traits and deeds of kindness. He was one of those rough and ready characters of the days when steam boating was a desired calling and one in which you had to be a strong character to withstand long hours and hard knocks and could not afford to be a softie and survive. It called for a ready fist and a commanding disposition or else you were likely to land in Davy Jones locker. Capt. Edgington was born in Manchester, Ohio, and his wife who was Miss Nannie Scott was also born in this city.

Manchester contributed more than her share of these who made river life a profession in the days of the palatial steamers that plied the Ohio. Capt. Edgington, as a boy, ran away from home at the age of fourteen, fearing that he would be drafted as a soldier in the Civil War. He rowed across the river hiding until a boat came along and swam out to it and asked to be taken aboard as a deck sweep and was given the job. From that time on he followed the river and a livelihood.

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In his will he left a part of his land to his wife Susanah with the instruction that, after her death, part of the land he left her was to be sold, and from the proceeds of the sale \$100 was to be paid to Samuel, Jr., \$200 dollars to his son James and the remainder to be divided among his other heirs including “the children of my deceased son Isaac”.

In November of 1818 Samuel Meranda, Jr. and his wife Sarah Meranda of Clark County, Ohio sold the 69 acres he had purchased from his father in 1802 to his brother Jonathan Meranda for \$640. The following is the record of the trial of Samuel Meranda, Jr. in April 1806.

AT A SPECIAL SESSION OF THE BRACKEN CO. COURT APRIL 16, 1806

“A court held for the examination of Samuel Meranda who stands committed to the jail of this County charged with having feloniously murdered one Isaac Meranda on the fourth day of April 1806 in the County aforesaid on the sixteenth day of April 1806.

Present

P. Hedges the --?--, Isaac Day, Rudolph Black, John McDowell, John Thomas & Samuel P. Hedges, the prisoner being brought to the bar in custody of the Jailor of the County aforesaid and apprised and arained (sic) of the felony aforesaid, and being asked whether he was guilty or not guilty of said charges, entered a plea to the Jurisdiction of the Court which was overruled and the prisoner therefore tendered to the Court the following bill of exceptions.

Viz.

Commonwealth

vs } Exception

Samuel Meranda

Be it remembered that at the trial of this cause the defendant was arraigned (sic) and thereupon tendered to the Court the following file as to the Jurisdiction of the Court viz.

Commonwealth vs. Samuel Meranda plea, and the said deft. comes & says that he is not bound nor will he answer to the charges aforesaid because he says he stands committed to the custody of the Jailor of the said County of Bracken on the following commitment from the Circuit Court of the said circuit attested by the Jailor viz. Samuel Meranda being brought into court upon a writ of habeus corpus together with his cause of detention and it appearing to the Court from witnesses upon which he is detained that the said Samuel Meranda was committed by a Justice of the peace for this County for the murder of one Isaac Meranda on the fourth day of April 1806 within this County and that the said witnesses is defective and insufficient to justify further detention of the said Samuel Meranda, thereupon but in pursuance of an act of the general assembly passed in the year 1805 the Court do order & secure the said Samuel Meranda touching the said offence according to Law and until he shall be discharged by due course of the Law and that he was not nor had at any time since been out of the prison aforesaid or had any notice of further proceedings having been had against him the commitment was produced in Court by the Jailor which is in the following records to wit. The Commonwealth of Kentucky Bracken County Circuit. To the keeper of the Jail in the said County Greetings, I John Sells a Justice of the peace acting in and for the said County do send you herewith the body of Samuel Meranda late of the County aforesaid, laborer, with having on the fourth day of April 1806 feloniously killed and murdered one Isaac Meranda in the said County and I John Sells being of the opinion from the testimony that the said Samuel Meranda is guilty of the said offence therefore in the behalf of the said commonwealth I command you that you receive the said Samuel Meranda into your custody in the said Jail of your County there to remain till he be delivered from your custody by due course of Law. Given under my hand and seal as Justice of the peace in and for said County this 10th day of April 1806 in the 14th year of the Commonwealth.

John Sells (seal)

Capt. George W. Edgington continued from page 1

He was the son of Morris Edgington, a potter, who was murdered in his pottery, and Capt. George was an apprentice in the pottery and made trips selling pottery. He related to the writer some years ago of a trip he made to Augusta, in the interest of the business.

He related that when he started for Augusta that his father instructed him to call on James W. Armstrong and if he sold him not to call on W.J. Rankins. Mr. Armstrong being an ardent rebel and Democrat and the Rankins were Republicans. After the sale was made Mr. Armstrong and Captain Edgington had a real hot political argument, but it proved to end good naturedly and Mr. Armstrong advised him to go and sell the Rankin store if he could as they were his kind politically, which he did. He was only a boy at the time, but he managed to make a friend of Mr. Armstrong.

When he got back to Manchester and handed in his orders his father said: "George, Armstrong will not take the pottery," remarking that he would not tell how it was that he secured both orders.

The Edgingtons were among the early settlers of Adams County, Ohio as tradition has handed it down that the early days the Indians surrounded a store on Island Creek at a settlement called Washington, John Edgington ran and escaped. Indians remarking that white man run fast. He was ambushed and killed crossing over a foot log on this creek.

TO BE CONTINUED

Some info about the Wiley family of Locust Creek Bracken Co., Ky. and allied families.

JOHN WILEY SR. is the most remote ancestor we have been able to learn about on this line. For his early history we have to take the diary of one LeRoy Wiley, born March 14, 1827, Paris, Illinois and died there Feb. 5, 1910. In 1848 he went from his home in Illinois, with his cousin Nichols S. Wiley back to Bracken County, Ky. to visit relatives. His father was James Wiley, who married in Bracken Co., Ky. Rebecca Parker, March 13, 1822. She was the daughter of Abraham Parker, a Revolutionary War Soldier from Pennsylvania, who first settled in Bracken County, then removed to Campbell Co. Ky., where he and his wife died. James Wiley died April 14, 1865, Charleston, IL., where he and his wife were buried in Mound cemetery.

James Wiley was the second son of Eli Wiley and his wife Elizabeth Seals. More about them later.

Leroy Wiley was an honest Christian man whose veracity was never questioned by those who knew him. In 1850 he went to Campbell County to teach school and while there started a diary, which consisted mainly of family history. In 1848 while in Bracken County he visited many of the elders of the family who knew John Wiley, Sr. and his wife. All this information he kept in a ledger and added to it as the years passed. This ledger was lost in Pais, IL when moving. After a number of years, it not having turned up he began another from memory, and that copy is now in the possession of this writer.

In 1850, when he was at the age of twenty-two years he was teaching

a school in a log building of two stories near "Twelve Mile," and near the residence of Mr. Tom F. Garvan, which was about one mile from Carthage across the Ohio River from New Richmond, Ohio. We quote from his diary: "The Wiley family of whom our family descended are first well known in Bracken Co., Ky., having settled on Locust Creek some two miles up from its mouth. In what year the family came to Ky is not known, but a settlement was made on Locust Creek about four miles from Augusta.

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