

The Man in the Balloon:
Harvey Joiner's Wondrous 1877



Steven Key Meyers

Copyright © 2013 Steven Key Meyers
Published by The Educational Publisher, Inc.
Biblio Publishing
1313 Chesapeake Ave
Columbus, OH 43212
www.BiblioPublishing.com
ISBN: 978-1-62249-101-8
Library of Congress Control Number: 2103942520

for Steven Cornwell

"I think art is the only thing there is, don't you?"

Table of Contents

[The Man in the Balloon](#)

[Endnotes](#)

[List of Illustrations](#)

[A Note on Sources](#)

[Acknowledgements](#)

[About the Author](#)



Fig. 1

Interior, Church of Christ, Utica, Indiana, looking towards Harvey Joiner's *Ruth Gleaning in the Fields of Boaz* (1877) (Photo: JSM)

The Man in the Balloon

HARVEY JOINER died a well-known American painter. His death at 80 on May 30, 1932, after two day's illness that followed a sprint for the trolley near his home in Clarksville, Indiana, was front-page news in nearby Louisville, reported throughout his state and Kentucky, and recorded by the *New York Times* in an obituary of six paragraphs.¹ The notices were testament to a lifetime's self-promotion – to a career spent creating and pleasing a public over more than *sixty years*. No matter that since before the turn of the century he had mostly been turning out variations on one characteristic style of landscape, what might be called *The Joiner* – an energetic, enigmatic little oblong of color depicting aspects of the region's beech woods as filtered through an active id (see, e.g., [fig. 2](#)) – Harvey Joiner at his death was almost famous.

But that fame has vanished. In the more than eighty years since his death, not a single article about Joiner has been published, no Joiner retrospective has been mounted, not more than a handful of his works hung in museums. Surveys of regional painting grudge him a few pages at most. The masterpiece of his youth, *Ruth Gleaning in the Fields of Boaz*, a remarkable document by any measure, has never been reproduced in a book and remains little known and endangered by its own obscurity.



Fig. 2

The Joiner

Harvey Joiner, title and date unknown, oil on canvas, 4½" x 11"

Collection of Steven Cornwell

Yet the man deserves to be known, for at least two reasons. First is that antic and exuberant career of his. Son of a backwoods cooper, Joiner while still a teenager engraved in wood advertising images of wild inventiveness, founded and performed in touring minstrel shows (sometimes in blackface *and* drag), tended steam aboard riverboats and fire engines. When, in his early 20s, he turned painter, he did so with a passion, turning out landscapes and portraits without number, promoting himself unremittingly, and earning prominence and prosperity. Though many American painters since Joiner have decided (to the detriment of American art, be it said) that art is less the point than the promotion, in Joiner's day that was a new notion. But if he helped pioneer it, he did so in an innocent spirit, and he offered plenty of work to back it up.



Fig. 3

The Joiner (detail of [Fig. 2](#))
Collection of Steven Cornwell

That work is the other, better reason why Harvey Joiner deserves appreciation. Joiner's response to the landscape of forests and meadows he was raised amidst was sensitive and sincere. His pictures, however awkward they can sometimes be, are truthful, personal and full of feeling, and to this day help define the landscape of Southern Indiana and Kentucky.

Take *The Joiner*. The erotically-charged little woodland scene in oil on panel or canvas represents an accommodation between talent and the marketplace. Instantly recognizable, sturdily constructed, always alluring and often beautiful, *The Joiner* is a rectangle of fetishized landscape, of woods and water veiled in light that teases the eye towards some object of desire ever around the next bend. Giving off, when properly lit, an extraordinary glow, framed in the cheap odds and ends Joiner bought in bulk, garnished (or not) with a brass plate bearing his name, and painted in its hundreds and its thousands – but with every variant displaying a fresh idea – *The Joiner* always sold, perhaps most frequently as a wedding present. And although its meaning might be filtered through a private realm of the artist's own, *The Joiner* begins as a response to the mysteries of the region's forests, particularly to the weird presence stalking through them of bright, peeling beech trees with prehensile limbs.

Harvey Joiner, an artist of accomplishment and historical interest, deserves to reclaim his lost fame.^{[2](#)}



Fig. 3A
The Joiner (detail of [Fig. 2](#))
Collection of Steven Cornwell

* * *



Fig. 4

Harvey Joiner, ca. 1925

Collection of Ruth Emily

THE NEXT DAY everybody was asking, "*Did you see the balloon?*"³ The sight of it astonished Louisville, Kentucky on the calm and balmy afternoon of December 20, 1877: a hot-air balloon sailing in over the wharves and warehouses that lined the Ohio River from no one knew where, a giant teardrop soaring far higher than even the cathedral's twenty-story steeple as it vanished into the west.⁴ And a *man* was riding the basket slung beneath it:

One of the corps of officers in the City Engineer's office examined the balloon through a large field-glass, and perceived a man in it. He says

it was then fully a mile high and three miles distant. No one knows whence the balloon came, and there have been no ascensions in this neighborhood. The man in the balloon could not be seen by the naked eye.⁵

But some of those who rushed into the streets to gawk skyward must have recognized the apparition as the “boss balloon”⁶ promised for months by the two pranksters across the river in Jeffersonville, Indiana. Since the previous summer the irresistibly lively painter Harvey Joiner, 25 years old, and his year-older friend Ed Lott, the “accommodating compounder of pills”⁷ at Parks’ Drug Store,⁸ had been on the balloon racket.⁹ But which one was the intrepid aeronaut? Lott? Or was that Joiner’s slender figure, fair hair flung to the wind, gray eyes flashing as he grasped the shrouds and surveyed the landscape passing far below?

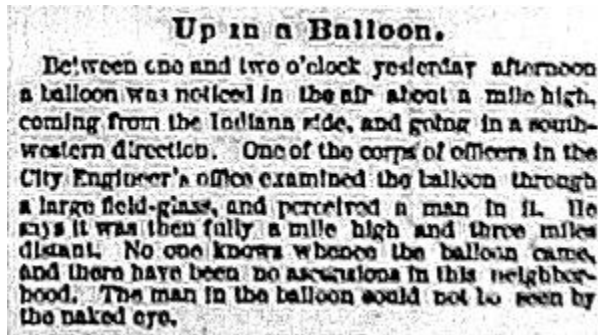


Fig. 5

"Up in a Balloon," *Louisville Courier-Journal*, December 21, 1877, p4, c2

THE YEAR THEN nearing its end was Harvey Joiner’s *annus mirabilis*. In the course of 1877 he finally abandoned a long effort to sell wood-engraved advertising images to concentrate instead on painting in oils. Moreover, with the aid of virtually a community-wide intervention he overcame the drinking problem that threatened to derail his career before it properly got going and, handed the commission of a lifetime, painted his enormous, complex, deeply personal masterpiece, *Ruth Gleaning in the Fields of Boaz*.

No wonder if in the course of such a year balloons had to fly.



Fig. 6

Harvey Joiner at 19 (1871) (detail of [fig. 57](#))

Courtesy Garry J. Nokes/Collection of Jeffersonville Fire Department

* *

BUT IN 1877, the first news from Joiner was a threat to move where he would be better appreciated. On January 10, the Jeffersonville *Evening News* scolded its readers:

Harvey Joiner, our skillful artist, expects to locate at Owensboro, Ky.
We shall be sorry to lose him. Jeffersonville ought to furnish a
gentleman of Mr. Joiner's talents a good living.^{[10](#)}

Joiner was still a bachelor, probably living with his widowed mother,^{[11](#)} his housepainter younger brother (who became the California landscape painter Oscar De Joiner^{[12](#)}), their widowed seamstress sister^{[13](#)} and her son^{[14](#)} over a store in a vaguely Italianate three-story brick tenement at 17 Spring Street^{[15](#)} ([fig. 7](#)) in Jeffersonville's raucous, saloon-lined, traffic-clogged commercial heart, half a block from the ferry landing where laden teams were whipped screaming up the steep bank while boat whistles blasted.^{[16](#)}



Fig. 7

Jeff's Lower Spring Street, looking north during 1884 flood (arrow points to 17 Spring Street)¹⁷

Collection of Jeffersonville Township Public Library

Industry was in full cry in Jeff, to an extent amazing for a town where goats and pigs shared the streets with fewer than 10,000 residents.¹⁸ It boasted the Howard Brothers' shipyard¹⁹—builder of fabled steamboats like the second *Robert E. Lee* in 1876—as well as the rival Barmore's;²⁰ the Ohio Falls Car Works, manufacturer of locomotives and finely crafted passenger cars;²¹ the Army's vast Quartermaster Depot²²—a major employer of women stitching uniforms on their home sewing machines²³—plus foundries, a railroad yard, several carriage makers, slaughterhouses, cooperages, a whetstone factory and, close by, the quarries and mills of a major new cement industry—not to mention the pioneering Ford Plate Glass Company²⁴ or the Indiana State Prison South, where zebra-striped convicts worked in on-site contract factories.²⁵

Joiner himself captured Jeff's *push* in his 1880 drawing of its riverfront for the *Evening News* masthead²⁶ ([fig. 8](#) & [fig. 9](#)). Looking northward from an elevation over the Louisville wharf, it shows the Ohio River roiled with boats—stern-paddler to the left, side-wheeler, ferry and sailboat on the right—against the Indiana shore sweeping

(beneath wreaths of smoke) from the mighty 1870 railroad bridge past foundry, prison, Car Works, riverfront mansions and ferry landing up to Barmore's and Howards'.²⁷ The Quartermaster Depot's hundred-foot campanile²⁸ pokes up (over the *w* of *News*) against the profile of distant knobs.



Fig. 8

Joiner's *Daily Evening News* masthead, Teusday [sic], September 20, 1881
Collection of Thomas J. Lindley III



Fig. 9

Detail of Fig. 8
Collection of Thomas J. Lindley III

But in 1877 things were slow; the decade's recurring panics and five-year recession threatened every enterprise in town, not least the young artist's career. Hence Joiner's Owensboro rumblings likely resulted from his receiving an offer – if probably a vague one – about providing graphics for the newspaper, the *Messenger*, that Col. James A. Munday²⁹ was soon to launch there.³⁰

It had been a while since Joiner's graphics were in demand. He had started producing wood-engraved images for advertising as a teenager. Almost certainly he

learned the technique of carving the grain-end of boxwood – the interim technology that preceded mechanical photoengraving – from German-born Carl Christian Brenner,³¹ the accomplished older painter who was one of the father figures Joiner sought out after his father died when Joiner was eleven or twelve.³² Brenner, himself the untutored master of many arts – painter, etcher, glazier – was also a paint-store proprietor who advertised his store, as well as his exhibitions, with wood-engraved ads ([fig. 10](#), [fig. 11](#), [fig. 12](#) & [fig. 13](#)), like the beautifully limned depictions of a billposter on a ladder³³ or the artist poking an easel up the nose of a passer-by.³⁴

Wood Engravings by Carl Brenner



Fig. 10

Brenner's Original Sign Shop store ad, *Louisville Courier-Journal*, Jan. 27, 1870, p2, c5



Fig. 11

Brenner's Original Sign Shop store ad, *Louisville Courier-Journal*, Feb. 1, 1870, p2, c5



Fig. 12

Carl C. Brenner exhibition ad, *Courier-Journal*, Dec. 19, 1887, p8, c5-6



Fig. 13

Charles C. Brenner store ad, *Edwards' 1867-8 Louisville Directory* (p125 of *Historical and Commercial Review*)

Joiner provided at least one image to the *Jeffersonville National Democrat* in 1872 or earlier ([fig. 24³⁵](#)), and a single surviving piece of stationery discovered by Jeanne M. Burke—an envelope, ca. 1871³⁶ ([fig. 14](#))—suggests that he might also have freelanced through the newspaper's job printing department. The envelope's return address corner bears an expertly engraved scene showing a young fisherman—slingshot poking out of his pocket—taunted by a fish cavorting next to his hook, beneath a standard nineteenth-century stationery legend:

IF YOU DONT CATCH HIM IN 10 DAYS: RETURN TO

Its sense of expanded horizons — the two sailing vessels might as well be on an ocean — relates this scene to Joiner's 1868-69 steamboating in the South.³⁷

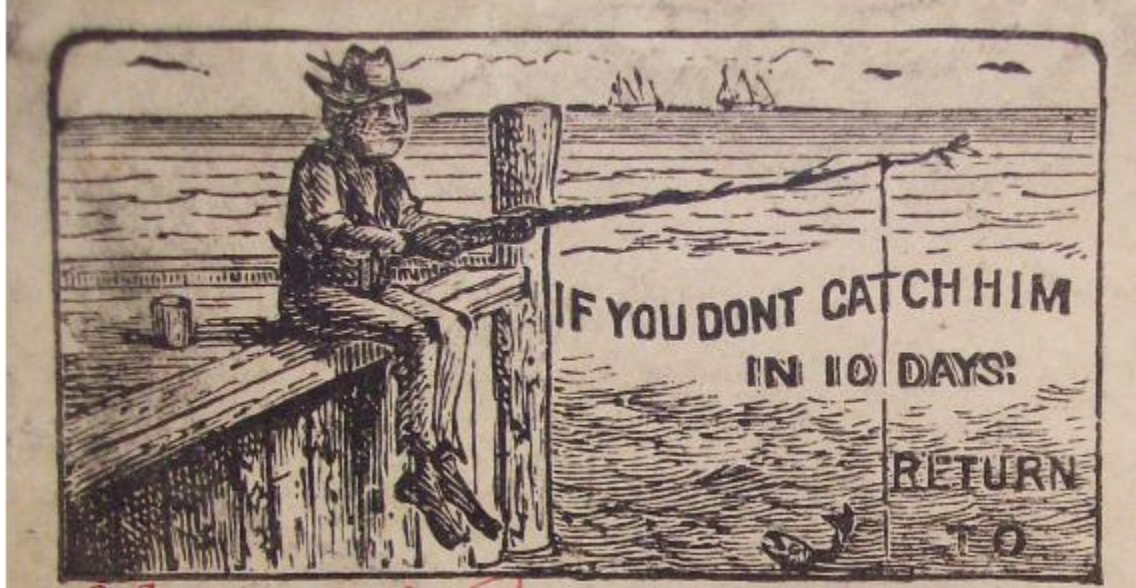


Fig. 14

Joiner's ca. 1871 wood-engraved envelope (detail; original image approx. 1-1/8" x 2-1/8")

Collection of Jeanne M. Burke

But clients for Joiner's graphics had lately been few and far between. At the start of 1877 his most recent such sale appears to have come more than six months earlier, with an ad in *Caron's Louisville Directory for 1876* for the Preuser and Wellenvoss Caps and Furs store ([fig. 15](#) & [fig. 16](#)).³⁸ Its vision of a giant, wheeled, upside-down top hat brimming over with headgear while a goose and dog tangle, mules kick, a postilion loses his footing — and a watching boy takes it all in — is incised with the whimsy and bravura of Tenniel's *Alice in Wonderland* illustrations.³⁹



Fig. 15

Joiner's 1876 wood-engraved ad for *Preuser & Wellenvoss, Caps and Furs* (original approx. 4½" x 5"), *Caron's Louisville Directory for 1876*, p747



Fig 16
Detail of *Fig. 15*

But within days of uttering his Owensboro threat, Joiner did sell an image. Hunt's Hotel and Dining-Rooms in Cincinnati⁴⁰ placed a two-column ad ([fig. 17](#)) in the *Louisville Courier-Journal* on Monday, January 22, 1877 – and every Monday for the next year – illustrated by the most extravagant wood engraving Joiner ever published. Cross-hatched to a fare-thee-well, it shows two gnome-like creatures wearing turbans and precious little else: loincloths, possibly notional shirts – and *angel wings*.⁴¹ One bears a steaming turkey on a platter, the other, dangling a “Bill of Fare” that appears to offer turtle soup, hoists what appears to be a tortoise. Crossing before a third winged figure busy shucking oysters at a counter beneath a *Restaurant* sign, the outlandish duo exchange merry and satisfied looks.⁴²



Fig. 17

Joiner's wood-engraving for 1877 Hunt's Hotel and Dining-Rooms ad

The image's action seems nonsensical until one realizes that this image had first appeared eight years earlier, in Edwards' 1869 Louisville Directory ([fig. 17](#) & [fig. 18](#)) — Joiner was a precocious *sixteen years old* when it came out early that year — advertising Kohlhepp's Exchange and Restaurant, located below the Louisville Hotel on Main Street, and that Kohlhepp's was not merely a restaurant, but a turf exchange or off-track horse-betting parlor — a place where even customers who lost their shirts on the ponies could eat well.⁴³



Fig. 18

Joiner's wood-engraving for Kohlhepp's Exchange and Restaurant ad, *Edwards' 1869 Louisville Directory*, p422



Fig. 19
(detail of *fig. 18*) (original image approx. 2½" x 1¼")

The real target of Joiner's threat to relocate to Owensboro was his own early patron, publisher of the very newspaper that printed it, Reuben Dailey ([fig. 20](#)).



Fig. 20
Reuben Dailey, ca. 1882
History of the Ohio Falls Cities, Vol. II, opp. p483

Dailey (1844-1906), born near London, England, immigrated to the United States in 1848 and fought with Ohio's 5th Regiment in the Civil War. In 1865, recovered from his war wounds, he became river reporter for the *Memphis Argus*, and in 1869 took over the *Courier Journal's* *Jeffersonville* column. Three years later, in May 1872, Dailey bought Jeff's weekly newspaper, the *National Democrat*,⁴⁴ and soon afterwards founded the *Jeffersonville Evening News*, at first publishing it five days a week, later daily (it is still in existence).

Both were lively journals, "Newsy, Reliable, Pure in Tone."⁴⁵ They reflected Dailey's cantankerous and aggressive personality, his boosterism and Democratic Party zeal – and his vicious racism.⁴⁶ Dailey stayed at the forefront of southern Indiana affairs until his death, lecturing on temperance and his agnosticism (even as it evolved into Presbyterianism), while keeping up numerous joyous feuds and, after 1892, serving in the Indiana General Assembly.⁴⁷

Dailey championed Joiner's career – especially before Joiner moved his studio from Jeff to Louisville in 1880 – and early on had been his most encouraging buyer of graphics. But not recently.



Fig. 21
Joiner's wood-engraved bugler (1874)

Early in 1874 Dailey had introduced an entire set of Joiner's one-column advertising "cuts," each 3½" tall by 2¼" wide, some of which were used by Dailey's advertisers for years. Their high spirits and manic intensity bear a Germanic stamp, probably derived from Joiner's admiration of Thomas Nast,⁴⁸ the German-born, New York-based artist whose wood-engraved caricatures made him famous, as well as from his association with Brenner and exposure to Jeff's own growing German population.⁴⁹ His characters – sharing a general beakiness of profile perhaps inspired by a glance in the mirror – ingeniously frame white space reserved for advertising text.



Fig. 22
Joiner's wood-engraved porter (1874)



Fig. 23
Four-legged variant detail of Fig. 22 (see [n.51](#))

The first to appear ([fig. 21](#)) portrays a one-armed bugler in Union Army cape and cap, wearing shoes but no pants, his one visible leg nubby with hair, blasting at the reader text emblazoned on the fringed banner hanging from his trumpet (in this case, “Advertise in the NEWS!”).⁵⁰ A few days later, another vigorous image – a gaping, bug-eyed, jug-eared, tattooed porter hauling up a box, his arms bulging – makes his appearance on behalf of William Guy’s furniture shop ([fig. 22](#)).⁵¹

FIRST GUN

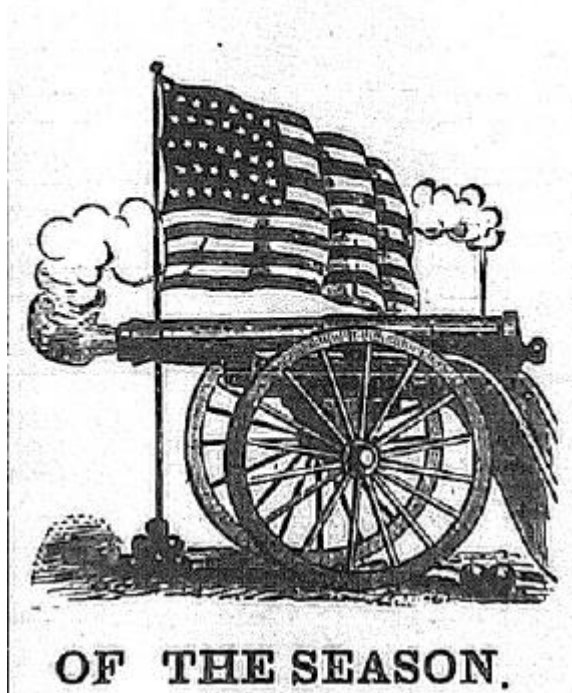


Fig. 24

Joiner's wood-engraved cannon (1874)

Soon a smoking cannon ([fig. 24](#)) – a bronze “Napoleon,” 12-pounder mainstay of the Union Army – rolls out for service beneath the 34-star flag of 1861-1863.⁵² Days later comes Joiner’s essay in the *Commedia dell’Arte*: Harlequin taunts his boxed prisoner, heedless of the stick poised to hit him in the rear ([fig. 25](#)).⁵³ In yet another image – the one used the longest, advertising local political candidates into the late 1880s – a raging oversized head sprouting two crazy topknots kicks and punches through the very sheet in the reader’s hands ([fig. 26](#)).⁵⁴

But no sooner had the *Evening News* begun publishing these images than Joiner in May 1874 suddenly left Jeff for “a position as landscape and decorative painter” with an unnamed “large painting firm” in St. Louis, Missouri.⁵⁵

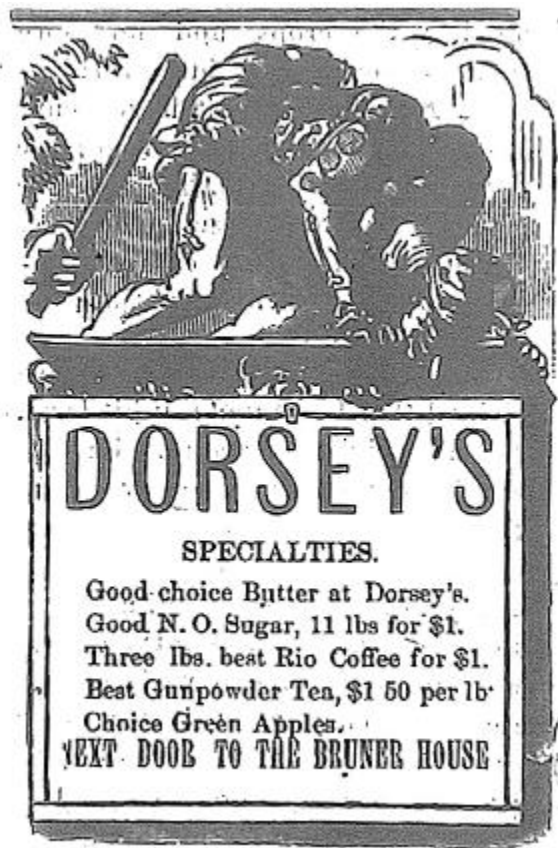


Fig. 25
Joiner's wood-engraved Harlequin (1874)

There Joiner worked for the artist David Hoffman (1826-1905).⁵⁶ Hoffman, born in Munich, immigrated to the United States in 1833 and before the Civil War founded a glass-painting business in St. Louis. Known for his portraits also, he was a "painter of church windows, panels, friezes, etc.,"⁵⁷ including the prized windows of St. Stanislaus Kostka and sixteen panels in fresco, each 8½ feet by 17 feet, for St. Nicholas Church.⁵⁸

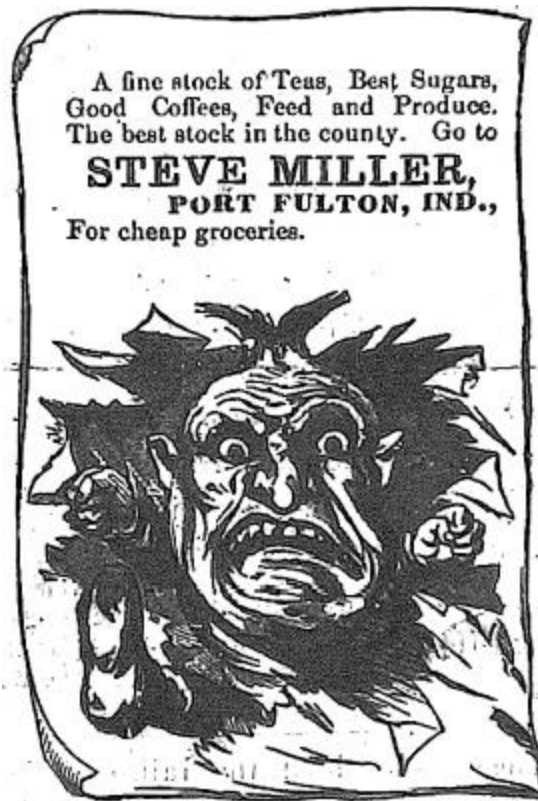


Fig. 26
Joiner's wood-engraved raging head (1874)

During his absence the *Evening News* published two new Joiner images. The first, in August, was an elaborate miniature rendering of his friend Ira Dorsey's⁵⁹ grocery store⁶⁰ ([fig. 27](#) & [fig. 29](#)) over the heading, *Angel of Mercy and Charity* ("a nice fellow too"). Harking back in style to the Kohlhepp's image ([fig. 19](#)), it shows our amiable grocer, arms spread in welcome, sugar scoop in his right hand, as he displays his wares, which include items labeled (*à la Nast*) *Raisins, Soap, Flour, Tea and Sugar*. (Another label helpfully reads *Grocer*.) Stocky like the Kohlhepp gnomes – but his face resembling the oyster-shucker's – he is garbed in similarly contingent fashion, in something like a vest, apron – and, inevitably, *angel wings*.



Fig. 27

Angel of Mercy and Charity, first publication, Jeffersonville Evening News, August 11, 1874, p1, c1



Fig. 28

*J. Ira Dorsey, ca. 1897
Jeffersonville Journal, p13*



Fig. 29

Angel of Mercy and Charity (detail from its second publication, *Jeffersonville Evening News*, August 12, 1874, p1, c1; original image approx. 2¼" x 1½")

The other new image ([fig. 30](#)) advertises Morris Rosenthal's men's store. It depicts an open-mouthed, toffee-nosed nob carefully adjusting his pince-nez over monstrous twin mustachios that frame space for advertising text.⁶¹



Fig. 30

Joiner's wood-engraved toff (1874)

In mid-November 1874 the *Evening News* reported Joiner's imminent homecoming from "the portrait-painting business" in St. Louis⁶² – and from the experience that comprised, aside from Brenner's crucial if probably informal instruction, all the art training Harvey Joiner received. Anticipating his return, the *National Democrat* reprinted his "cuts" – blank of ad copy – in successive issues under the heading "*Our Picture Gallery*,"⁶³ adding two new ones, a mustachioed figure resting his chin on a clockface, hands spread wide ([fig. 31](#)), and a slippered fellow reclining like a pasha of the East (he even wears a sort of fez) ([fig. 32](#)) who puffs at an enormous pipe while he reads his *Evening News*.⁶⁴ "*Our Picture Gallery*" also offers the "cuts" for purchase separately, apparently as postcards, just one year after the postcard's invention:

We will forward any of the following cuts to any address for 85 cents, postage to be paid by purchaser.

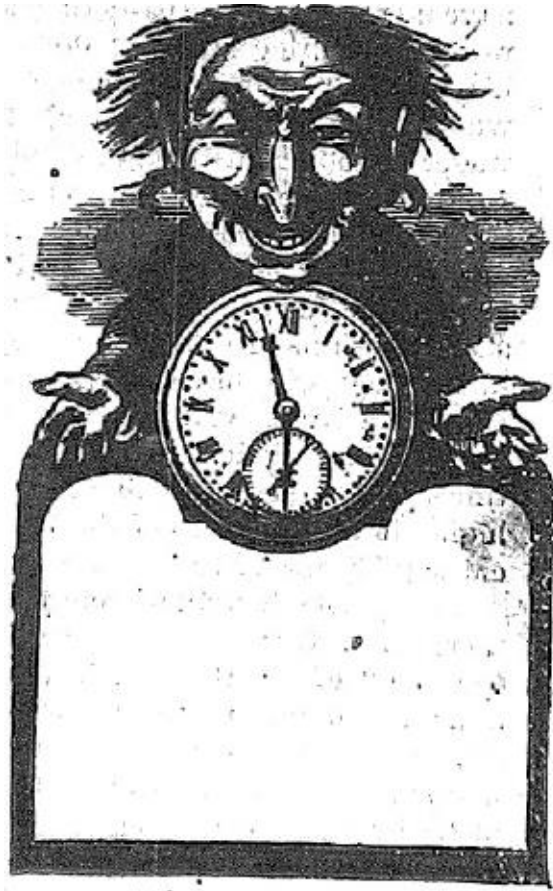


Fig. 31
 Joiner's wood-engraved timekeeper (1874)

Joiner made more caricatures after his return from St. Louis, but Dailey, although praising them, did not publish them. One was "a crayon sketch, showing 'What Johnny Knows About Running a Saloon'" and the other, also in a satirical vein, an oil "composed of the portraits of those concerned in 'the great scandal' . . . arranged in the shape of a large bouquet [*sic*]." ⁶⁵ But with the exception of a drum major with flying coattails and bearskin shako ([fig. 33](#)) that appeared in the *Evening News* the following Christmas season,⁶⁶ no new Joiner wood engravings were published for five years.

Then, in March of 1879, it was announced with some fanfare that:

Mr. Harvey J. Joiner has added another branch to his business, and will hereafter get up wood cuts for the [*Jeffersonville Evening*] *News*. Mr. J. bids fair to be a Nast-y artist.⁶⁷

The *Evening News* for the next month unfortunately is not extant, but two images survive from late April and early May 1879. Both in appearance more closely resemble

actual wood-cuts than Joiner's previous efforts, being silhouettes with subtle internal indications of limbs and garments. *The Negro Exodus*⁶⁸ (fig. 34) appears over Dailey's text, which oozes faux compassion for what he styles victims of a Republican plot to settle Kansas with ex-slaves. That ooze, however, laps up against, and is repelled by, the solid dignity of Joiner's image. Playing with the runaway-slave icon familiar to readers of pre-war Southern newspapers (fig. 35), he shows a man marching confidently forward, his livelihood – an ax – on his shoulder and his possessions in a carpetbag. This is the first representation of an African American in a newspaper of the region that is not demeaning, and remains the only known caricature by Joiner with nothing of the caricature about it.⁶⁹

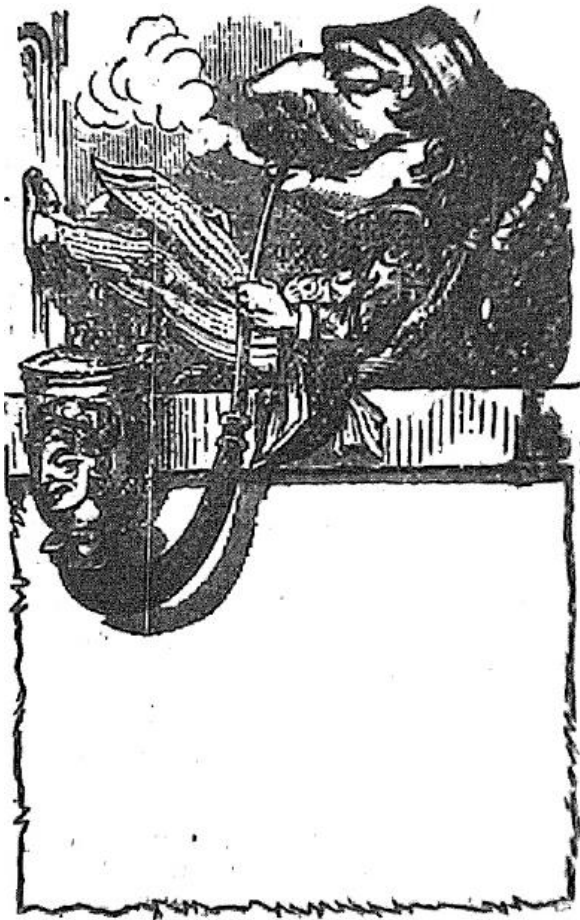


Fig. 32
Joiner's wood-engraved pasha (1874)



Fig. 33

Joiner's wood-engraved drum major (1874)

A second image, *The Election Bummer's Lamentations*⁷⁰ ([fig. 36](#)), satirizes “the enormity of an election without whisky.” Two top-hatted voters hold up their hands in dismay over an empty barrel, a seated young boy their witness (as in the *Preuser & Wellenvoss* image, [fig. 15](#) & [fig. 16](#)).

THE NEGRO EXODUS.



The above is a sketch of the poor, deluded negro of the South, as he takes his departure from the land of his nativity, under the delusion that he will find Kansas a land overflowing with milk and honey. Of all the mean tricks of a desperate party, this emigration is the meanest. Many a poor darkey is now leaving the land of his childhood and the home of his friends to become a stranger in a strange land. He goes without money, and the wails of his suffering have already been heard. The exodus has been started for political purposes. It is a card the Republicans are playing for 1880, and so they thrive in their political scheme it matters not how much the poor darkey is made to suffer.

Fig. 34

Joiner's *The Negro Exodus*, *Jeffersonville Evening News*, April 28, 1879, p1, c3-4



300 NEGROES WANTED.
I have leased the house on Sixth street, between Main and Market, for a term of years, known as the "Powell House." I wish to purchase Negroes of both sexes, for which I will pay the highest cash prices. Persons having Negroes for sale will give me a call, as I am anxious to buy. I have at all times Negroes for sale, and can at all times be found at my premises.
(my 35 dtf) W. P. DAVIS, Agent.

WANTED---250 NEGROES.
We will pay the highest cash prices for TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY NEGROES, at our office on First street, between Market and Jefferson, Louisville, Ky.
Negroes always on hand for sale.
my 35 dtf T. E. J. ARTEBURN.

WANTED-NEGROES—I will pay the highest cash price for NEGROES at my house on the south side of Market street, between Fifth and Sixth.
oldly JOHN CLARK.

Fig. 35

Runaway slave icons as used in "Negroes Wanted" classifieds, *Louisville Daily Courier*, July 3, 1860, p2, c7

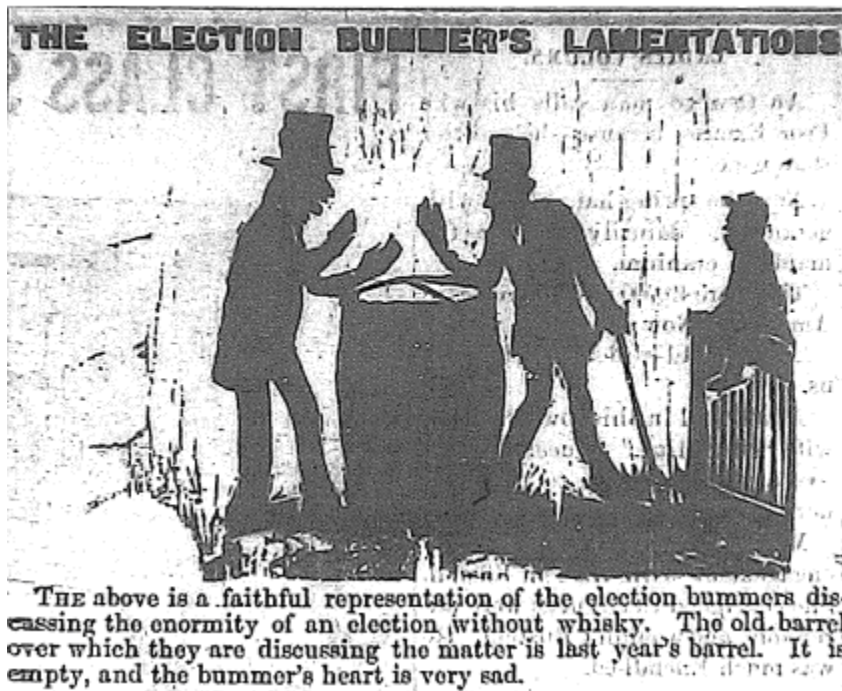


Fig. 36

Joiner's *The Election Bummer's Lamentations*, *Jeffersonville Evening News*, May 2, 1879, p4, c3-4

A new advertising image in similar style also appeared ([fig. 37](#)),²¹ showing a man in silhouette—hat, coat, waistcoat and trousers faintly delineated—flying from advertising copy that reads:

This Illustration Represents a Louisville drummer in the Wall Paper line, on his way back to the Ferry, after he found that CHARLES ROSSLER commenced selling, from this day, white back Paper for 8¢ a Bolt....⁷²

And that image, whether because Joiner and his publisher felt they were working at cross-purposes, or because the artist was bored with what by now he seems to have regarded as a sideline – or for other, unknown reasons – was the last Joiner wood engraving to appear for more than ten years.



Fig. 37

*Joiner's wood-engraved running man (1879)*⁷¹

But that was in 1879. Four years earlier, in 1875, wood engraving still thoroughly engaged Joiner. It drew upon a humorous faculty his paintings would seldom trouble,⁷³ and the bold strokes it required rewarded his strength of conception – and could be infused with his overflowing personality – while forgiving faults of draughtsmanship. But Joiner realized that as a wood-engraving caricaturist he could not win the success he craved. Wood engraving as such was the purview of drudges in New York or Chicago copying others' drawings, and its commercial application aimed at bland images acceptable to a national market.⁷⁴ Moreover, the photoengraving process then being developed would put them out of work.

And Joiner *had* to succeed. Then as now, success is the American credo, but Joiner happened to be almost the direct beneficiary of that credo's pithiest and most insidious formulation. His own mentor's great patron – Henry Watterson,⁷⁵ *Courier-Journal* editor

of national fame and influence – precisely in promoting Brenner’s career coolly pronounced:

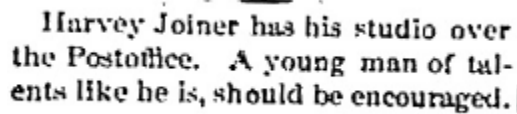
Success implies character in any man.⁷⁶

This cutting reversal of the classic standpoint for judging a man doesn’t challenge success’s cash index, but applies that index to an essence previously exempt from implication in fortune’s vagaries, namely, *character*. In every sense, then, Joiner had to prove his worth by *succeeding*.

With success his goal, over the next few years Joiner turned from wood engraving to become a painter. By April 1875 he had taken the decisive step of opening his own studio, renting space over Jeff’s combined post office and newsstand at 56 Spring Street,⁷⁷ a three-story brick structure whose position on the street’s downriver side gave its front windows a northeast exposure:

Harvey Joiner has his studio over the Postoffice [*sic*]. A young man of talents like he is, should be encouraged.⁷⁸

Within months the “clever and well-behaved young man of much natural talent” had finished several well-received portraits of local grandees and their wives and children – living and dead.⁷⁹ Dailey commissioned one of his late daughter⁸⁰ and called the result “beautiful and life-like.”⁸¹



Harvey Joiner has his studio over
the Postoffice. A young man of tal-
ents like he is, should be encouraged.

Fig. 38

“Harvey Joiner has his studio”

Jeffersonville National Democrat, April 15, 1875, p2, c1

Joiner’s earliest extant portrait (*fig. 39*) shows a little boy (unidentified) in the red shirt of a Jeff fireman,⁸² holding on for dear life to a puppy. This picture of surpassing charm is more naive than primitive. The colors are stark and bright, and the boy’s joined arms, thrust outward for perspective, embrace a squirming puppy drawn with endearing inaccuracy. The signature reads *Joiner* not in the painter’s later characteristic block letters, but in cursive, the *J* to modern eyes first suggesting a *G*.⁸³ Overall, the style is that of the itinerant portraitist Joiner claimed to have been on his homeward journey from his abortive St. Louis experience,⁸⁴ but purely Joiner is the grace of the tie ends. The photographic rigor of the boy’s expression, juxtaposed with the puppy’s mournful eyes, suggests that this might be a posthumous portrait.



Fig. 39

Harvey Joiner, *Boy with Puppy*, oil on canvas, 15¾" x 19½", date unknown
 Private collection, Louisville

Harvey Joiner's Evolving Signature



Fig. 40

Harvey Joiner's Signature, *Ruth Gleaning in the Fields of Boaz* (1877)
 Courtesy Utica Church of Christ



Fig. 41

Harvey Joiner's Signature, *Boy with Puppy*, date unknown (detail of [fig. 39](#))
Private collection, Louisville



Fig. 42

Harvey Joiner's signature on a 1932 check
Collection of Ruth Emily

That Joiner only two years after opening his studio (which he moved two doors south in October 1876, to the second story of Sallie Bottorff's millinery emporium at No. 52⁸⁵) would threaten to move to Owensboro shows him in early 1877 to have been discontented. Perhaps his career seemed slow to gain traction, nor perhaps had he quite embraced the sheer daily grind of the artist's life. Indeed, shadowy evidence suggests that indulgence in liquor the two preceding years had been throwing him off his track.



Fig. 43

Jeff's Spring Street in 1897, looking north from Market Street

Arrows, from left: (1) Joiner's second studio 1876-1878 (second floor);

(2) Joiner's first studio 1875-1876 (floor not known);

(3) Sparks' Dry-Goods store;

(4) Mozart Hall;

(5) Storefront where *Ruth Gleaning in the Fields of Boaz* was exhibited;

(6) Parks' Drug Store 1873-1880 (Joiner's third studio 1878-1880, second floor);

(7) Parks' Drug Store 1880-1925

Photo: Al Piers, *Jeffersonville Journal*, p6

Collection of Jeffersonville Township Public Library

A blind item in the *Evening News* in March 1876 hints as much:

There is a certain young man in this city who will wake up some "pale-eyed" morning and find himself "left," if he don't mend his ways.⁸⁶

Using "left" — horse-racing parlance for a horse that fails to start a race — appears to target Joiner the lifelong racing fan.⁸⁷

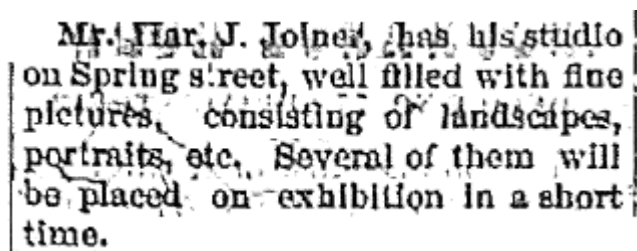
And six months earlier Joiner had likely been the subject of a blind item in the *Courier-Journal's* Jeffersonville column:

A well known young man was up before Mayor Warder⁸⁸ yesterday morning on the charge of drunkenness and disorderly conduct. It was not his first offense, and the Mayor mulcted him in the sum of \$13. He lingered in jail all day yesterday and last night, and, if no kind friend goes his bail for the amount of his fine, he will be sent to Charlestown. The case of this young man is a warning to others who have bright prospects before them, and sacrifice them all for strong drink.⁸⁹

The item's archly pious tone helps connect this to Joiner, for it was likely written by an old minstrel-show colleague, W. E. Sutton, Jr.⁹⁰ And Joiner, if he had advance knowledge of the praise Dailey was to lavish that very day on his new portraits of Col. and Mrs. J. B. Merriwether,⁹¹ might well have been in a celebratory mood. Dailey's head-turning conclusion:

[I]t is safe to predict for [Joiner] in the future a place in the front ranks of the most celebrated artists of the day.⁹²

Nor, curiously, did either of Dailey's newspapers mention the *Courier-Journal's* "well known young man" or his disorderly conduct; it was as though Dailey were protecting a favorite son.⁹³



Mr. Har. J. Joiner, has his studio on Spring street, well filled with fine pictures, consisting of landscapes, portraits, etc. Several of them will be placed on exhibition in a short time.

Fig. 44

"His studio . . . well filled," *Jeffersonville Evening News*, February 9, 1877, p4, c2

But the Joiner of 1877 seems a reformed character, steady and persevering. Quite possibly he was enjoying a new sobriety influenced by – even in a sense sponsored by – Reuben Dailey, himself a lifelong abstainer.⁹⁴ In the event, instead of carrying out his threat of moving to Owensboro, Joiner buckled down to paint. And painted like one inspired, for only three weeks after announcing his intended move the *Evening News* reported (*fig. 44*):

Mr. Har. J. Joiner, has his studio on Spring street, well filled with fine pictures, consisting of landscapes, portraits, etc. Several of them will be placed on exhibition in a short time.⁹⁵

The first went on public view two weeks later:

Harvey Joiner's latest painting, a fruit-piece, is now on exhibition in Sparks' window, and is fully up to anything he has yet painted, if not superior. This painting has been sold. Those who desire to see this splendid production of one of Jeffersonville's best artists, should call and see it.⁹⁶

Jeff's leading dry goods store, T.&N. Sparks ([fig. 45](#)), at 60 Spring Street,⁹⁷ devoted a window to the display of pictures by local artists such as Joiner and his friend William McKendree Snyder.⁹⁸ Over 1877's spring and summer the stream of Joiners passing behind it included landscapes called *Cool Nook*,⁹⁹ *Down in the Meadow*¹⁰⁰ and *Morning in the Woods*.¹⁰¹



Fig. 45

View of former Sparks' Dry Goods store (far right) after the 1937 flood
Collection of Jeffersonville Township Public Library

This last Joiner transferred (as he had transferred "several pictures" before¹⁰²) to Louisville and the prestigious show window of J. V. Escott & Sons, art dealers and picture framers,¹⁰³ perhaps through the instrumentality of Walter N. Escott,¹⁰⁴ the Escott son who lived in Jeff. Escott's soon succeeded Sparks' as Joiner's favorite display space.



Fig. 46

Harvey Joiner, *Sunrise on Kentucky River*, oil on unknown surface, 22" x 34", ca. 1874
(present location unknown)
Collection of Ruth Emily

And clearly 1877 saw an advance in Joiner's landscape style. A few years earlier when he painted his *Castle* ([fig. 47](#)) and *Sunrise on Kentucky River*¹⁰⁵ ([fig. 46](#)), which showed the home of his sister Amanda Joiner Hawkins¹⁰⁶ overlooking the Kentucky River near Clifton, Kentucky, his style was closer to that of the era's primitive painters, although his organization of space was masterful and the result beautiful. By contrast, an *Evening News* description in March 1877 of a picture now lost shows Joiner already claiming a more personal, more characteristic response to his region's landscape, taking a step towards becoming the master of filtered light:

A New Landscape by Joiner.

Har. J. Joiner, the well-known artist, has completed another beautiful landscape painting, representing "Evenings at the Crossing." The sketch is taken from a scene on Langasang creek,¹⁰⁷ about four miles

from this city. . . . Although the shades of evening are falling over the surroundings, the rays of the sun burst forth between the trees, making the scene one of grandeur to the eye of the close observer of nature. On either side of the creek are shown large oaks and beach [sic] trees, palated [sic] to nature. In the foreground a large oak . . . fallen across the creek is used for a crossing. . . . The bark from the original trees on Langasang was brought to his studio, and it can be seen that he has paid the closest attention to make the painting an exact representation of the original. . . .¹⁰⁸



Fig. 47

Harvey Joiner, *Castle*, oil on unknown surface, ca. 1875, 20" x 24", ca. 1875 (present location unknown)

Collection of Ruth Emily

Joiner's portrait-painting similarly advanced, if a portrait recently discovered by Scott N. Nussbaum¹⁰⁹ is that he painted in 1877 of Jeff merchant tailor Bernhard "Barney" Rosenthal (1816-1900) ([fig. 48](#)).¹¹⁰ According the merchant a searching glance that doubtless reflects Joiner's own, the picture displays Joiner's characteristic delight in

tie and beard. (Also in 1877 he painted portraits, now lost, of John S. Bottorff,^{[111](#)} the late Oscar Jenks^{[112](#)} and little Lester Heinsheimer.^{[113](#)})

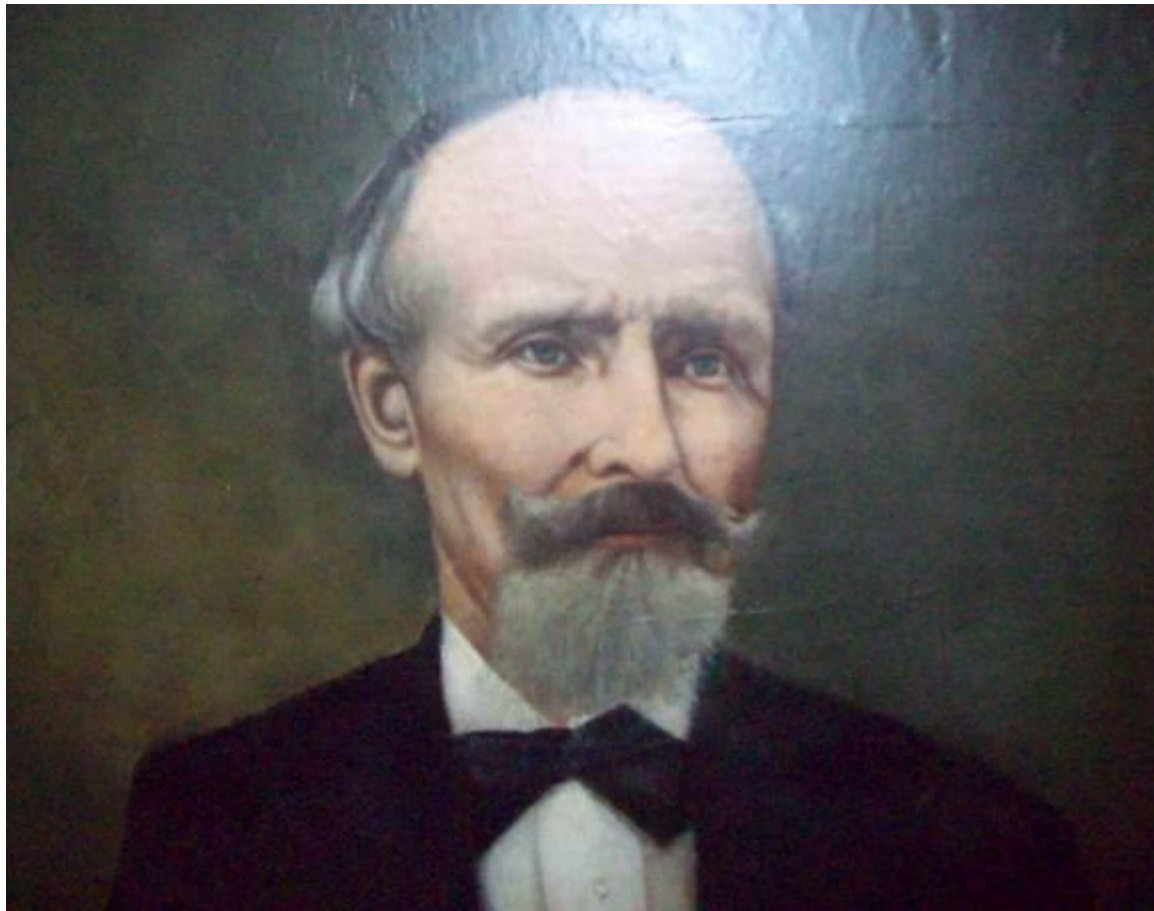


Fig. 48

Harvey Joiner, *Portrait of a Man* (conjecturally identified as Barney Rosenthal, 1877)
Collection of Scott Nussbaum

These pictures were of course duly mentioned in the press; Joiner made adroit use of press attention to help shape his whole career. From the earliest newspaper mention of him yet recovered ([fig. 49](#))—listing him, at 17, first among the founders of the *Uniques*,^{[114](#)} “an amateur minstrel troupe” formed by volunteer firemen manning the steam engine *Good Intent* at No. 1 Engine-house,^{[115](#)} on Chestnut Street between Watt and Canal^{[116](#)}—Joiner used press coverage to make his name known and to keep it current. Shrewd use of the press powered the annual Christmas exhibitions he began in 1897; newspapers duly published his announcements and his ads, publicized his press previews, receptions and auctions, as well as their own invariably favorable reviews.

The "Uniques," an amateur minstrel troupe, are giving a series of monthly entertainments to the citizens of Port Fulton. The following are the names of the company: Harvey Kiser, Ed. Jenkins, Charles Noel, Frank Deet, Lord, Henry Kimo, and Woodson Moberly.

Fig. 49

Earliest press mention of Joiner yet recovered, *Louisville Courier-Journal*, August 12, 1869, p1, c8

Joiner knew what newspapers needed — knew not only that Jeff's papers doted on publishing subscribers' (and potential subscribers') names, but that Louisville's *Courier-Journal* and *Commercial* both had the maw of a daily *Jeffersonville* column to fill. Their reporters eagerly accepted material delivered verbally or in writing;¹¹⁷ word for the *Courier-Journal* could be chalked on a slate at the post office/newsstand.¹¹⁸ He obliged them all. The often similar language of Joiner items in different newspapers proves his early mastery — his virtual invention — of the press release.

As 1877 wore on, it seems that with due showing on Joiner's part of steady and sober industry, Dailey followed up his personal intervention by recruiting three local temperance leaders to help the young painter's cause: a well-traveled connoisseur to praise his work more objectively and authoritatively than Dailey himself could, and two patrons who happened to hold in their hands a major commission.

For in May, a month after Joiner turned twenty-five, while *Down in the Meadow* looked out from Sparks' window, the Rev. John W. Sullivan,¹¹⁹ a prominent Methodist preacher who kept his own carriage,¹²⁰ wrote — probably from his little Federal house on Pearl Street (*fig. 51*) — a lavish encomium of his talents. The *Evening News* ran his letter (*fig. 50*) under the heading "Joiner's Paintings:"¹²¹

Jeffersonville can boast of a real natural artist in the person of H. J. Joiner. Among the number of the productions of his skill, the landscape scene on exhibition at Messrs. Sparks' store, at this time, can not, we think, be excelled. I hesitate not to say that, considering his age and practice, I believe this picture stands unrivaled in the world. I have visited the principal galleries of paintings in London, saw the fine collection at Windsor Castle, passed through the celebrated Louvre, of Paris, France; also, through the Royal Palace at Versailles, most of which is now a picture gallery, having pictures enough in it, if placed on a single line, to extend six miles; also visited the National Galleries of Edinburg, Scotland, and Dublin, Ireland; and I must say that, with the thousands of paintings I looked upon in my tour, in many respects this picture of Mr. Joiner's, as a landscape, will compare favorably with the finest I saw. A distinguishing feature in the scene presented, is its

naturalness — not a mere ideal picture, but one true to nature. The perspective is grand; the blending of shades shows great skill; in short, the picture would be no discredit to a pupil of Rubens, the celebrated artist of France.

We trust that this young gentleman may meet the encouragement he justly merits, and have a brilliant career in his profession.

J. W. Sullivan.

Jeffersonville, May 14, 1877.

Joiner's Paintings.
Jeffersonville can boast of a real natural artist in the person of H. J. Joiner. Among the number of the productions of his skill, the landscape scene on exhibition at Messrs. Sparks' store, at this time, can not, we think, be excelled. I hesitate not to say that, considering his age and practice, I believe this picture stands unrivaled in the world. I have visited the principal galleries of paintings in London, saw the fine collection at Windsor Castle, passed through the celebrated Louvre, of Paris, France; also, through the Royal Palace at Versailles, most of which is now a picture gallery, having pictures enough in it, if placed on a single line, to extend six miles; also visited the National Galleries of Edinburgh, Scotland, and Dublin, Ireland; and I must say that, with the thousands of paintings I looked upon in my tour, in many respects this picture of Mr. Joiner's, as a landscape, will compare favorably with the finest I saw. A distinguishing feature in the scene presented, is its naturalness—not a mere ideal picture, but one true to nature. The perspective is grand; the blending of shades shows great skill; in short, the picture would be no discredit to a pupil of Rubens, the celebrated artist of France.
We trust that this young gentleman may meet the encouragement he justly merits, and have a brilliant career in his profession.
J. W. SULLIVAN.
Jeffersonville, May 14, 1877.

Fig. 50

"Unrivaled in the world"

Rev. J. W. Sullivan's letter, *Jeffersonville Evening News*, May 14, 1877, p4, c3

Further encouragement not being instantaneously forthcoming, Joiner repaired with his sketchbook for a week to the countryside of Oldham County, Kentucky, northeast of Louisville.¹²² After his return he showed at Sparks' in June and July new works called *Morning*, *The Close of a Hot Day*¹²³ and *The Ford*.¹²⁴



Fig. 51
The Rev. J. W. Sullivan's house (seen in 2007)

Meanwhile Dailey and Sullivan were helping to organize a new temperance movement in Jeff. Anti-liquor causes had agitated the town for years. In 1874, the Women's Temperance Union fought a crusade there—the "Woman's Crusade"—holding prohibitionist prayer vigils outside the town's many saloons.¹²⁵ That campaign faded, but early in 1877 a new movement was gaining ground in the region: the Red Ribbon, preaching not prohibition but abstinence. Dailey editorially invited it to Jeff,¹²⁶ and by mid-July the *Evening News* could declare, "The Red Ribbon is now fairly under way in our city":

On Saturday night over one hundred and fifty men and women signed the pledge . . . to abstain from intoxicating drinks. . . . The meetings are opened by reading of Scripture and prayer,¹²⁷ after which the speaking by [former drinkers] commences. They tell . . . how miserable they were as drinkers [and] how happy they have been since living a sober life. . . . Then the singing commences, and they call for signers to the pledge. .

.. As soon as a man signs, a red ribbon is whacked on him as quick as lightning by some fair lady detailed for that purpose.¹²⁸

The exact date the red ribbon was whacked on Harvey Joiner is not recorded, but by August 17 he had been appointed to “a committee of arrangements”¹²⁹ (fig. 52) organizing a Red Ribbon steamboat excursion to Madison, Indiana, that charming town fifty miles upriver hardly altered today from before the demise of passenger boats.



Fig. 52

Red Ribbon Club's Grand Excursion, *Evening News*, August 18, 1877, p1, c1

But thus pinched on one side, it seems Joiner bulged out on the other. The next day the *Evening News* blandly announced:

There will be a balloon ascension at the corner of Eighth and Spring streets, at 8 o'clock, to-night, by Prof. Waters, of New Albany.¹³⁰

Naturally a crowd gathered at the appointed time and place. But it was a sell; the crowd was gulled, and the *Evening News*, for once not in on the joke, was bitter:

That balloon ascension . . . was a fraud, and Prof. Waters, of New Albany, is a humbug. There was a tremendous large crowd there to see the 'Professor' go up, and they waited patiently until about 9 o'clock,

and then some one sent up a little tissue-paper balloon, which didn't rise higher than the house tops before it took fire, and the show was over. [*Shopkeepers*] George and Ed [*sic*] Thompson were the only ones who enjoyed the fun.^{[131](#)}

The *Courier-Journal*, better knowing a send-up when it saw one, remarked only, "The balloon 'went up' last night."^{[132](#)}

Professor Waters' mordant name puts Joiner's and Lott's thumbprints on this hoax.^{[133](#)} Undoubtedly Joiner's Red Ribbon pledge was sincere, but that didn't make his newly teetotal character free of tensions or conflicts that demanded release.^{[134](#)} But was the "little tissue-paper balloon" only a release valve – or also Joiner's farewell (or raspberry) to a failed courtship?

Lillie Howard, adopted daughter of Capt. Daniel Howard of the English-born shipbuilding brothers, was Jeff's great heiress.^{[135](#)} After completing her studies at Kentucky's Shelbyville Female Institute,^{[136](#)} the "estimable and pleasant young lady" made her debut in July 1875.^{[137](#)} Joiner painted her portrait late that year,^{[138](#)} and probably about then became painting master to her and her best friend, Annie M. Howell.^{[139](#)} By the following May teacher and students were traveling in remarkable intimacy:

Miss Anna Howell, Miss Lillie Howard, and Mr. Har. J. Joiner left this morning for Oldham County, Kentucky, to study the beauties of nature as exhibited at that place. Mr. Joiner will sketch Mr. Dan. Howard's old residence in Oldham county, and the two young ladies will take lessons in sketching. The party will be absent ten days, and when they return you may expect to see some fine sketching, as Mr. Joiner is an excellent artist and the young ladies are splendid amateur painters.^{[140](#)}

The trio returned "with a wagon-load of sketches,"^{[141](#)} and by the end of the month Joiner had on display at Sparks' "an evening scene, painted from nature, on South Fork Creek, in Oldham county, Ky."^{[142](#)}



Fig. 53

Lillie Howard, *Covered Bridge at Harrod's Creek*, 1876, oil on board, 24 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 35"
Collection of The Oldham County Historical Society

The two paintings that survive as records of the trip are both by Lillie Howard. She soon completed a particularly lovely souvenir, a view of the covered bridge at Harrod's Creek¹⁴³ ([fig. 53](#)). Her composition tucks the bridge itself into a corner, primitive-style, making its real subject the lyrical roll of trees in leaf across the hillside. Another picture ([fig. 54](#)) depicts a many-windowed house on a cypress-lined terrace at the mouth of Harrod's Creek on the Ohio River.¹⁴⁴ The house is rendered with childlike perspective, but sits within a sophisticated frame of water and greenery.



Fig. 54

Lillie Howard, *Harrod's Creek at the Ohio River*, 1877, oil on canvas, 17½" x 21¾"
Collection of The Howard Steamboat Museum

Any romance between Joiner and Lillie Howard is conjectural – and probably would have been one-sided, too. Lillie Howard had no intention of marrying an exciting but impecunious and somewhat erratic young artist. After successfully keeping her secret,¹⁴⁵ in mid-August she announced her engagement to John T. Yeager,¹⁴⁶ a widower with a young son and a substantial Oldham County farm, and married him within the week. (Joiner gave the bridal couple a “beautiful landscape painting”¹⁴⁷). The announcement from “Prof. Waters” thus came just a day or two after Lillie Howard’s.



Fig. 55
Capt. Daniel Howard's Jeffersonville house (seen in 2008)

The excursion Joiner helped arrange came off the following week. Four hundred Red Ribbon members steamed up the Ohio singing and “trippling [*sic*]. . . the light fantastics”¹⁴⁸ aboard the ferry *Sherley*—rigged with canvas awnings for the occasion¹⁴⁹—and enjoyed a reception at Madison’s Red Ribbon Hall.¹⁵⁰ The trip—“pronounced by all who attended as the pleasantest affair of the season”¹⁵¹—raised \$75 for the cause.¹⁵² Joiner and his friends worked like tigers¹⁵³ dishing up the buttermilk and watermelons, and received due credit:

The refreshment stand, under the supervision of Ed. Finch,¹⁵⁴ Harvey J. Joiner and William Carter¹⁵⁵ went far toward making the excursion a financial success, and much praise is due these gentlemen for their untiring energy.¹⁵⁶

Three weeks later, the encouragement the Rev. Sullivan had called for in May finally showed up in Harvey Joiner’s studio.

Nestled beneath the hills some seven miles upriver from Jeff lay the pretty village of Utica, a community of farmers and lime burners. Early in the year, Joiner’s fellow adherents of the evangelical movement that had first swept the region a generation earlier¹⁵⁷ began to build a Christian Church there¹⁵⁸ (*fig. 56*). Two of them, David S. Koons¹⁵⁹ and James K. Marsh¹⁶⁰—temperance advocates both—commissioned Joiner to paint an altarpiece for it. Dailey noted the event with satisfaction:

The Christian church of Utica has contracted with Mr. Harve [sic] Joiner for the painting of a Bible scene, the cost of which is to be \$150. Mr. Joiner is fast gaining a reputation of a good painter, and we are glad to note that he is being successful.¹⁶¹

It was a great commission, representing a ringing public endorsement of Joiner's talent and probably fifteen or twenty times his usual price for a picture.¹⁶²

Who chose *Ruth Gleaning in the Fields of Boaz* as the subject of Utica's "Bible scene" is not known.¹⁶³ The Old Testament *Book of Ruth* tells of the young widow Ruth accompanying her widowed mother-in-law Naomi to the latter's birthplace, the land of Judah, and of Naomi's schemes to marry her off to Boaz, Naomi's elderly rich kinsman. The first step of her plan thrusts Ruth in front of Boaz's eyes by putting her to work in his fields one day looking for grains of barley missed by his crew of harvesters—the scene of Joiner's painting. That night Naomi counsels Ruth to go in where Boaz sleeps

and uncover his feet, and lay thee down; and he shall tell thee what thou shalt do.¹⁶⁴

Ruth obeying, Boaz announces their engagement the next day. Thus the course of Christian salvation continued, for Ruth would give birth to Obed, King David's grandfather. More mundanely, Ruth and Naomi achieved security.



Fig. 56

Exterior, Utica Christian Church (now the Utica Church of Christ), Utica, Indiana
Photo: JSM

The story was a remarkably popular Victorian subject. Edward Burne-Jones, Gustave Doré, G.F. Watt, Thomas Sully, Asher Durand and John La Farge, among dozens of other artists, produced their *Ruths*.¹⁶⁵ Most versions – Doré’s and Burne-Jones’s among them – show Ruth fetchingly supplicant before Boaz as she picks up her barley; others show her pausing thoughtfully in the act.¹⁶⁶

Joiner soon encountered some unusual distractions. On September 13, a fifty-carriage procession carried Rutherford B. Hayes, President of the United States,¹⁶⁷ past his Spring Street studio (and past Dailey’s “tableau representing peace between the North and South” in front of the Evening News office one block north).¹⁶⁸

By October he had won another diverting commission:

Mr. Har. Joiner is painting a beautiful landscape in the rear end of the cabin of the *John Wilson*.¹⁶⁹

Barmore’s shipyard built the *John Wilson*, a 171-foot stern-wheel packet steamer, for the Ouachita River trade in Arkansas and Louisiana at the order of Capt. J. W. Blanks.¹⁷⁰ “She’s a beauty,” said *Courier-Journal* river editor Will S. Hays, “a superb steamer in every respect,”¹⁷¹ with an “elegant cabin.”¹⁷² The *John Wilson* had taken her maiden voyage September 29.¹⁷³

In mid-October came yet another distraction, when Joiner’s friends in the *Star Minstrels and Combination* brought “their negro eccentricities”¹⁷⁴ to Jeff’s Mozart Hall¹⁷⁵ (*fig. 62* & *fig. 63*). This was at least the fourth iteration of the minstrel company Joiner helped found in 1869, when the *Uniques* emerged from No. 1 Engine-house.

Volunteer firehouses served – in addition to their putative purpose – as rowdy clubhouses for a community’s younger men, transformed at the alarm of *Fire!* to insane excitement. Naturally young Joiner, then living in Port Fulton, had gravitated to his neighborhood firehouse and its presiding spirit, jovial Capt. Billy Patterson¹⁷⁶ (*fig. 58*), who became another of his father figures. Early on, Patterson probably helped Joiner gain the steam-engine expertise that enabled him to identify himself proudly in the 1870 census as a “Steam Boat Engineer.”¹⁷⁷



Fig. 57

Jeff's new *Amoskeog* steam fire engine in front of No. 1 Engine-house, ca. August 22, 1871.

Harvey Joiner, standing far right. Fire Chief Benjamin A. Johnson, seated. Capt. Billy Patterson, standing far left. From a 13" x 9½" photocopy of a lost print with illegible handwriting over several of the figures.

Courtesy Garry J. Nokes/Jeffersonville Fire Department

And doubtless that expertise won Joiner his spot, sporting splendid blond whiskers, in the photograph ([fig. 2](#) & [fig. 57](#)) that memorializes the August 22, 1871 arrival of Jeff's gleaming new steam fire engine from the Amoskeog Works of Manchester, New Hampshire.^{[178](#)}



Fig. 58

Photograph of a Man (conjecturally identified as Capt. Billy Patterson), ca. 1868
Collection of Jeffersonville Township Public Library

Although the *Uniques* were not heard from after 1869, No. 1 Engine-house had remained a hotbed of minstrelsy.¹⁷⁹ Rehearsals there for 1870 and 1871 performances by an unidentified troupe gave rise to bitter neighborhood complaint.¹⁸⁰ In 1872 Joiner and Patterson formed *Joiner & Patterson's Combination*, which performed at Mozart Hall¹⁸¹ before touring the region.¹⁸² The following year the company toured again as *The Amateurs*—"Amateurs of the dramatic and burlesque" ([fig. 60](#) & [fig. 61](#)). "Johnny Joiner" (presumably in blackface and drag) played "Mrs. Divorce" in the farce *Squire for a Day* and "Mrs. Ford" ("rather weak") in "the Screaming Comedy" *Merry Wives of Windsor*. He also partnered Henry Kime¹⁸³ in an act called *Pete and Jimmy*.¹⁸⁴ The orchestra was conducted, and a cornet solo performed, by Prof. William Rowden, who as a boy had played at Queen Victoria's coronation.¹⁸⁵ Although Joiner is not known to have taken the stage after 1873, for another twenty years the company occasionally regrouped and performed as the *Star Minstrels*.

Joiner & Patterson's Combination.

This talented troupe of artists in the line of cork opera, pantomime, trapeze performance and general variety business will exhibit at Prather's Hall next Saturday night. They gave a good performance at Jeffersonville not long since, and evinced the talents of veterans in the show business. They deserve a full house, and we hope they will be patronized in a manner becoming their abilities.

This same troupe exhibits at Lexington on the 26th, at North Vernon on the 27th, and at Madison on the 28th.

Fig. 59

"Joiner & Patterson's Combination," announcing a Charlestown, Indiana appearance (Prather's Hall being the second floor of Charlestown's present-day city hall)
Jeffersonville National Democrat, August 22, 1872

On October 12, 1877 Joiner was "busily engaged" on *Ruth* in mid-October,¹⁸⁶ but possibly seeing his old friends onstage made him restless. Three days after the *Star Minstrels'* performance, another balloon had to fly:

Messers. Ed Lott and Harve [sic] Joiner will send up a big balloon to-night in honor of the Ohio election.¹⁸⁷ The string will be cut at 7 promptly, in front of Park's [sic] drug store.¹⁸⁸

THE AMATEURS BENEFIT
AT MOZART HALL TO-NIGHT

Programme for This Evening.

PART I.
Tableau of the Combination, Company
Overture..... Prof. Rowden's Orchestra

PART II.
The Comic Farce entitled,
SQUIRE FOR A DAY.
Mr. Sprung (Lawyer)..... Geo. Gibbs
Handy Billy (Servant)..... Billy Patterson
Mr. Divorce..... Harry Kime
Mr. Divorce..... Johnny Joiner
Blow Hard..... Jimmy Moran
Puff of Wind..... Billy Sutton

Jimmy Moran in his Celebrated Irish Jig.

Travelling on the Flying Trapeze, in
which they are unequalled

Cornet Solo..... By Prof. Rowden

Joiner and Kime in their new act entitled,
"He and Jimmy" written by them.
Puff of Wind..... By Billy Patterson
Comic Farce..... Gibbs and Kime
Travelling..... Patterson and Kime
Overture..... Prof. Rowden's Orchestra
Curtain for five minutes.

The whole to conclude with the Screaming
Comedy, in one act, entitled,
MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR.
Mr. Ford (rather strong)..... Billy Patterson
Mrs. Ford (rather weak)..... Johnny Joiner
Mr. Page (has seen better days)..... Harry Kime
Mrs. Page (with a will of her own).....
George Gibbs.

GOOD NIGHT.

Admission 25 cents. Children 15 cents.
Seats reserved for ladies. Doors open at half-
past 7. Performance commences at 8 o'clock.

Fig. 60

The Amateurs Benefit (program for Joiner's minstrel show), *Jeffersonville Evening News*, June 27, 1873, p3, c4

The town flocked to witness its launch:

Ed Lott and Harve [sic] Joiner's balloon last night was a grand success—quite a crowd witnessed the going up, the major part of the

attendance being on the juvenile order. The ascension was a very creditable one all the same.¹⁸⁹

THE AMATEURS.

The entertainment of the Jeffersonville amateurs at Mozart Hall last night was far above our expectations. At about half-past 7 o'clock the people began to pour into the hall, and before a half an hour had expired the auditorium was literally packed. The introductory, "Tableaux de Ethiopia," was good, and brought forth loud applause from the audience. "Cheese It," by Gibbs, Patterson, Joiner and Kime was very well performed. Jimmy Moran in the clog dance came down on the boards we think as well, if not better, than many of the regular professional performers. Gibbs and Berry on the flying trapeze received the undivided attention of the audience while performing, and indeed we must say they acted their part exceedingly well. With a little more exercise they will be first-class performers. The pathetic ballad by Billy Patterson was very well sung; so well, indeed, that the audience brought him out the third time. Joiner & Kime in their specialties were very good, considering the interruptions of the "property man." The closing farce, "Oh, Dat Letter," brought down the house, each of the performers acting their part very well. We await a repetition of last evening's entertainment at an early day.

Fig. 61

Review of *The Amateurs*, *Jeffersonville Evening News*, June 21, 1873, p1, c3

Back in his studio, face to face with his gigantic canvas — almost five feet by ten¹⁹⁰ — Joiner pondered the story he had to tell. More deeply than its other painters, he analyzed the complex social weave that makes up the *Book of Ruth*. Replete with schemes and negotiations, arranged coincidences and layers of custom that conspire to press appetite into the service of security and continuity, Ruth's story has the themes of a particularly astringent Trollope novel.



Fig. 62

Mozart Hall, exterior, 1897

Photo: Al Piers, *Jeffersonville Journal*, p1

Collection of Jeffersonville Township Public Library

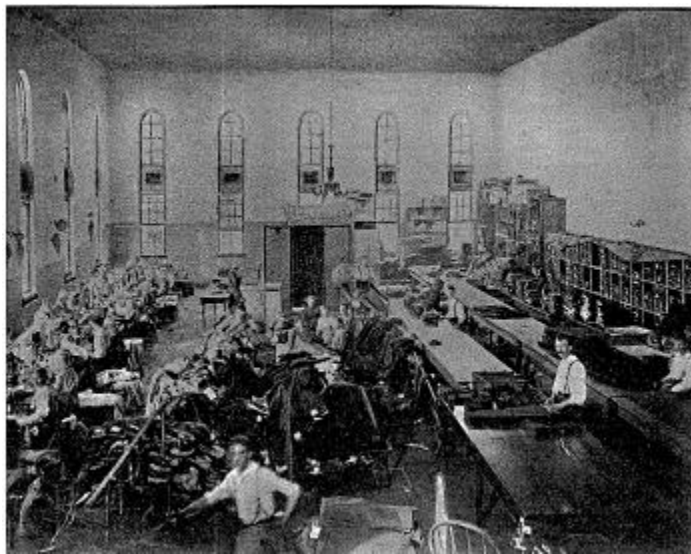


Fig. 63

Interior of Mozart Hall, 1897, after its conversion to a jeans-making factory

Photo: Al Piers, *Jeffersonville Journal*, p14

Collection of Jeffersonville Township Public Library

In the finished picture ([fig. 64](#)), rich harvest fields repose at the end of the day beneath massive cloudworks in a Flemish-blue sky. With the assurance of a master Joiner locates Ruth squarely in the middle of her dilemma. She sits, sheltering against a haystack, her day's task done, her evening meal assured. In the background, Boaz talks (about her) with one of his harvesters, as others – one leading a camel – prepare to go

home. The sun level with the horizon, Ruth contemplates what is to come. She has no power over events — no choice in her destiny. She possesses nothing but youth and beauty, and barley for her supper. She knows nothing of her future. Her fate hangs.

That suspension — that extended moment of respite and possibility — is the subject of the painting. Joiner's massing dramatizes the tension between the issues in play and Ruth's unplumbed strength. She sits with pensive unfocussed eyes, needing to prop up her head with one hand (tendrils of hair spring through her fingers), resting the other on the maternal, unmistakably vaginal, hayrick. Echoing and amplifying her posture, that hayrick anchors her moment's rest, holding past and future alike at bay in a stop-action slice of time, while offering a gateway to her future. The possibilities are as innumerable as the stalks of barley rioting across the canvas, dashes of gold and red rich as any straw ever painted.



Fig. 64

Harvey Joiner, *Ruth Gleaning in the Fields of Boaz*, oil on canvas, 4'10½" x 9'5", 1877

Courtesy Utica Church of Christ

Photo: JSM

But Ruth is up to her challenge. She is a rock, indomitable and permanent. The hand bracing her face is both sign of her incertitude and buttress to her strength. Her foreshortened stick punches the scene into dimensionality and claims a sheltering

portion of it for herself and her wonderfully rendered jug and joyously tied-off bag of grain ([fig. 68](#) & [fig. 73](#)). To the right a lone tree cements the perspective, Flemish-Renaissance style ([fig. 74](#)), while to the left the land of Judah – a landscape rich and serene as the southern Indiana pasturage – recedes towards the headland atop which Bethlehem perches. Ruth may be blind to her power over Boaz, but clearly it is miniature Boaz who must reckon with her, not she with him. Ruth's innate qualities will resolve her dilemma and glean from the morass of circumstance a secure future as surely as evening will dissolve the landscape's tension.



Fig. 65

Ruth (detail of haystack)

Courtesy Utica Church of Christ

Beyond its wondrous equipoise, the power of the picture lies in how Joiner makes it personal to himself. A widow wrenched out of one community who, in order to survive, must establish herself in another? The subject resonated with him, for it was his mother's story, too. He underscores its personal meaning with Bethlehem's sinuous ridgeline ([fig. 66](#)): That ridgeline replicates the profile of the Knobs as seen from his boyhood home in Blue Lick, Indiana ([fig. 67](#)).¹⁹¹ Joiner thus places Ruth in his own old home where, when he was eleven or twelve, his father died, leaving his mother four (or five) children to feed¹⁹² and without a livelihood.



Fig. 66
Bethlehem (detail from *Ruth*)
Courtesy Utica Church of Christ
Photo: JSM



Fig. 67
Knobs as seen in 2007 from Joiner's boyhood home in Blue Lick, Indiana

His father, Oscar Dunreath Joiner,^{[193](#)} born in Kentucky – probably in Caldwell County – moved as a boy to Clark County, Indiana. He learned the cooper's trade and in 1839 married Elizabeth Tophouse, a native of Woodford County, Kentucky. For some years he worked in Charlestown, which was then the county seat, where Harvey Joiner, their fifth child and second son, was born in 1852. Soon afterwards the family moved to a farm along the Sinking Fork of Silver Creek near Otisco – where the boy conceived his singular ambition to be a painter^{[194](#)} – and, early in 1860, to nearby Blue Lick, a thriving if tiny community where Oscar Joiner ran one of the "extensive cooper shops"^{[195](#)} opened by the village's founder, Thompson McDonald Dietz.^{[196](#)} But in 1864 Oscar Dunreath Joiner died.^{[197](#)}



Fig. 68
Ruth (detail of water jug)
 Courtesy Utica Church of Christ

Hence the emotion packed into *Ruth*; it comes from Joiner's candidly revisiting his devastated young self and conflating the widows' stories. He records the pain of his loss and its frightening threat of change with an honesty and openness he perhaps never found full access to again, and in the process testifies to the strength of the mother who, meeting an awful challenge, yet saw her family through.



Fig. 69
Ruth (detail of clouds)
 Courtesy Utica Church of Christ

But another issue, too, seems to hang in suspense in *Ruth*: that of courtship between painter and sitter. Ruth is not looking at her painter, true, but nonetheless appears to study him as closely as he does her (and he studies her closely indeed; *vide*

her peekaboo foot, [fig. 70](#)). In this exchange also the sitter holds her own, resistant as rock to the painter's desire.



Fig. 70

Ruth (detail of Ruth's foot and hand)

Courtesy Utica Church of Christ

Who sat for *Ruth* is unknown. A likely guess might have been Joiner's fetching student, Annie Howell.^{[198](#)} Her comparatively high social status would have been perceived as appropriate to the model for a biblical figure. Also, she and Joiner were already comfortable with each other at the easel and publicly acknowledged as student and teacher – no small consideration in a time and place where the relation between model and artist was fraught. (Only six years later, Joiner's close friend Clarence Boyd, Louisville's promising young Paris-taught artist, was shot to death over rumors about his life class.)^{[199](#)} But no more than Lillie Howard did Annie Howell marry Joiner – in 1880 she married a business executive, Walter Irwin^{[200](#)} – nor, in fact, could she have modeled for *Ruth*: While Joiner was painting *Ruth*, Annie Howell was off paying a six weeks' visit to friends in Paris, Kentucky.^{[201](#)}



Fig. 71

Ruth (detail of Ruth's face)

Courtesy Utica Church of Christ

A better guess for *Ruth*'s model might be Joiner's bride of the following year. Helen Annette "Nettie" Kane (ca.1857-1896)^{[202](#)} was "a belle of Jeffersonville."^{[203](#)} As the daughter of a prominent Jeff carriage manufacturer, Capt. John W. Kane,^{[204](#)} she possessed the requisite status, with beauty and intellect besides,^{[205](#)} and oral tradition (though silent with regard to *Ruth*) has it that after their marriage she frequently posed for her husband. But if Nettie Kane sat for *Ruth*, the resistance registered in oils eventually crumbled, for Joiner's beautiful bride was pregnant when they married in November 1878.^{[206](#)}



Fig. 72

Ruth (detail showing Boaz)

Courtesy Utica Church of Christ

Ruth Gleaning in the Fields of Boaz has its flaws, to be sure, for Joiner's conception outruns his draughtsmanship. His lifelong boast that he was self-taught is lamentably borne out in the travesty of Ruth's left hand, the inaccurate mapping of her eyes' catchlights, the awkwardness of the group around Boaz.



Fig. 73
Ruth (detail of bag of grain and water jug)
 Courtesy Utica Church of Christ

Joiner finished *Ruth* by November 3, 1877.^{[207](#)} A few days later he exhibited it, by lamplight, on two successive evenings in the empty structure adjoining Parks' Drug Store.^{[208](#)} There it was admired by a "large number of persons" — "hundreds"^{[209](#)} — and loudly praised: The *Evening News* declared it "a magnificent ornament"^{[210](#)} and the *Commercial* called it "a gem of art."^{[211](#)}



Fig. 74
Ruth (detail of tree)
 Courtesy Utica Church of Christ

Photo: JSM

Ruth Gleaning in the Fields of Boaz was installed in the Utica Christian Church in time for the building's dedication on November 11, 1877,^{[212](#)} and has hung there ever since, a beautiful object for worshippers' eyes, if out of sight of everyone else.

(*Ruth* survived the great 1937 Ohio River flood by a species of miracle: Water rose up in the church to a height near the picture's top, but the pews that had been stacked for safekeeping on the platform beneath it were borne up by the floodwaters and bobbed against the picture's lower frame, gently detaching *Ruth* from the wall and holding her safely above the waters until they receded.^{[213](#)})



Fig. 75

Ruth (detail of barley stalks)

Courtesy Utica Church of Christ

But — Joiner being Joiner — *Ruth*'s debut was not unattended by farce. On the very eve of her exhibition, a crowd gathered outside the room where she was to serenely preside, horrified at what it saw through the windows. Someone ran for the coroner:

About two-thirds of the people of Jeffersonville flocked to the vacant room next to Park's [*sic*] drug store Saturday night to get a sight of the man who had hung himself.

So reported the *Evening News* with high good humor. It continued:

They all got to see him, as he was not cut down until yesterday, and furthermore they all got to see that they were badly sold, as it was nothing but a big tissue-paper man made by Joiner and Lott to send up in their balloon, and had been hung up to the gas fixtures in the room until the day for sending up the balloon should arrive.^{[214](#)}

For even as Joiner was laboring on what, forty-three years later, he still remembered as his “big job,”²¹⁵ he and Ed Lott announced their prank masterpiece, their “boss balloon” — “twenty-five feet high by sixteen feet across”²¹⁶ — this one to be “a Blue-Jeans balloon”²¹⁷ in honor of Indiana’s new Democratic governor, “Blue Jeans” Williams.²¹⁸ It would, they promised Oct. 26, rise “next week.”²¹⁹ It did not, but they renewed their promise several times²²⁰ until finally it flew eight weeks later.

Why the delay? Perhaps a combination of the meteorological — of awaiting that unusual northeasterly breeze that would waft a balloon from Jeff to Louisville — and Joiner’s patrons grounding a stunt that clashed with their sacred intention; or, just conceivably, Joiner’s own tact in deferring the launch until after his picture had been safely hung.

Thus it was December 20, 1877 — the same day the *Evening News* noted that “Mr. Har. J. Joiner is painting several portraits to be used as Christmas gifts”²²¹ — before the “mammoth balloon” soared at last, attended by “quite a crowd,”²²² and the sight of it — and of the man in the balloon — astonished Louisville.

Probably Lost.	Joiner and Lott's Balloon.
The man who went up in Lott & Joiner's balloon yesterday is supposed to have been dashed to pieces when the balloon fell to the ground, as nothing has been heard from him. The man was a stranger in the city, and did not tell his name. When the air ship was being made ready for the voyage, he said not a word, not a muscle moved, nor no emotion was visible, and he started on his perilous voyage without even saying so much as a parting farewell. He doubtless little thought that he was starting on a trip from which he would return in a mangled, lifeless condition. It is reported this morning that it was a preconcerted plan to commit suicide.	Between 1 and 2 o'clock yesterday afternoon a balloon was noticed in the air about a mile high, coming from the Indiana side, and going in a southwestern direction. One of the corps of officers in the City Engineer's office examined the balloon through a large field-glass, and perceived a man in it. He says it was then fully a mile high and three miles distant. No one knows whence the balloon came, and there have been no ascensions in this neighborhood. The man in the balloon could not be seen by the naked eye.—[<i>Courier-Journal</i> .]

Fig. 76

“Probably Lost,” and “Joiner and Lott’s Balloon,” *Jeffersonville Evening News*, December 21, 1877, p2, c3-4

The man’s fate? Inglorious, as it happens — dunked in the Ohio River off New Albany:

A big balloon, sent up from Parks' drug store, at noon yesterday, was the cause of much enjoyment to our citizens. It brought up – or we should say came down – below Portland.²²³

In that way Joiner's and Lott's aeronaut – Harvey Joiner manqué, as it were – served his purpose and met his fate. Whether as offering to the gods, scapegoat, poke in the public eye, cry for attention, expression of high spirits, or a release for impulses Joiner, for one, was otherwise studiously tamping down and redirecting, the man in the balloon brought Harvey Joiner's *annus mirabilis* to a fitting close.

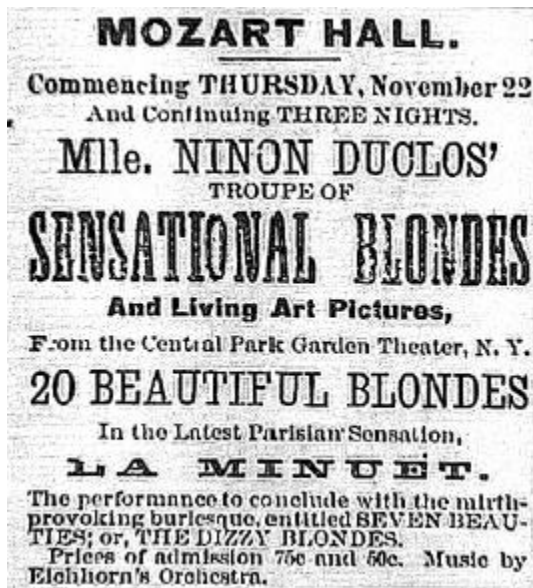


Fig. 77

Sensational Blondes, *Evening News*, November 22, 1877, p1, c1

Except that – also fittingly – one last burlesque from the old year teased him into the new. Mlle. Ninon Duclos' troupe of can-can dancers – the *Sensational Blondes*, a.k.a. *The Dizzy Blondes*²²⁴ (fig. 77) – kicked for a scandalous November week in Louisville²²⁵ before fleeing “in all their spangled glory” to Jeff.²²⁶ And when Joiner visited Cincinnati early in the new year “to take a stroll through the art galleries of the Queen City of the West”²²⁷ – if also probably to try in vain to persuade Col. Hunt, proprietor of Hunt's Hotel and Dining-Rooms, to extend his ad campaign featuring Joiner's early wood engraving²²⁸ (Fig. 17) – the *Evening News* twitted him:

What Means This?

Harve [sic] Joiner was in Cincinnati yesterday. [The Dizzy Blondes commenced an engagement at Cincinnati last night.]²²⁹

Joiner took pains to deny any association:

Har. J. Joiner returned last night from Cincinnati(?). He says the dizzy blondes had nothing to do with his visit.²³⁰

“Glad to hear it,” the item concludes – skeptically.



Fig. 78

Harvey Joiner, ca. 1902, from Notable Men of Kentucky, p119

A few weeks into 1878, the *Evening News* asked Jeffersonville’s leading merchants and capitalists to assess from a business point of view the year just past. Among those solicited, “Harvey Joiner, artist” summed up his 1877 – that high-flying year, touching both the profane and the sacred, soaring from dissatisfaction towards professional fulfillment, towards marriage in 1878 and his studio’s permanent move in 1880 to Louisville,²³¹ where he would carry on painting for fifty-two years, working right up until two days before he died:

I did a better business last year, and prospects are better than ever.²³²



Fig. 79
Ruth (detail)
 Courtesy Utica Church of Christ

* * *

ENDNOTES

¹ N.Y. *Times*, May 31, 1932, p17, c2. See also Louisville (Kentucky) *Courier-Journal* (or “CJ”), May 31, 1932, p1, c4 and Louisville *Herald-Post*, May 31, 1932, sec. 2, p1, c7.

[Back](#)

² I am grateful to Billy Hertz for his anecdote concerning the sexual energy of Joiner’s paintings, and to Maurice Brown for his authoritative information on Joiner’s frames.

[Back](#)

³ Lede to the *Our Log* section of Will S. Hays’ *River and Weather* column, CJ, December 21, 1877, p3, c7 (*emphasis added*). (For Hays, see [n.172](#).)

[Back](#)

⁴ CJ’s *Daily Meteorological Record* recorded the early afternoon temperature as 67°F, with the wind out of the northeast at 4 mph (December 21, 1877, p3, c8).

[Back](#)

⁵ *Up in a Balloon*, CJ, December 21, 1877, p4, c5 (fig. 5).

[Back](#)

⁶ Jeffersonville (Indiana) *Evening News* (or “EN”), October 26, 1877, p4, c3. I follow local practice in usually abbreviating *Jeffersonville* as *Jeff*.

[Back](#)

⁷ CJ, May 5, 1880, p3, c4. Edward Bernard Lott (1851-1934) was born in Kentucky (probably in Elizabethtown), son of a carpenter from Alsace-Lorraine and his Baden-born wife. After a Catholic education, Lott by 1870 was a druggist in Louisville, but soon moved on to Jeff, where, lauded as “a pushing young man, affable and gentlemanly” (EN, July 25, 1882, p4, c1), he clerked at Parks’ Drug Store and was elected City Gauger 1879-1881. In 1882 Lott opened his own drugstore in Jeff and married Julia Inez Horr (1859-1895). By 1891 he and his wife had moved to Sterling, Kansas, where Lott owned a drugstore for a quarter-century before beginning to alternate long California visits with operating a hotel in Lindsborg, Kansas. After his death Lott was remembered as “quite an unusual character,” “his voice vibrant” to the last (obit., Sterling (Kansas) *Bulletin*, May 10, 1934).

Joiner painted Lott’s portrait in 1878, “as natural as life, but not as handsome” (CJ, January 1, 1879, p8, c6). Its present location is unknown.

[Back](#)

⁸ Floyd Parks (1843-1930) ran the business from 1873 (EN, March 14, 1891, p4, c3) until about 1925: “In the picturesque days of the river traffic, Parks’ drug store was the center of the city’s business and the rendezvous of Southern Indiana Democrats” (obit., EN, April 1, 1930, p1, c4-5 & 7 and p2, c2-5). Parks, a longtime Jeff city councilman, served in the Indiana State Senate 1906-1916. Parks bought his store from the famous former “boy evangelist” and future international swindler and fugitive—and alleged Waldorf Hotel poisoner—Dr. Richard C. Flower (1849-1916) (see EN, December 9, 1914, p1, c7; N.Y. *Times* January 5, 1907, p1, c1 & p2, c5 & October 22, 1914, p18, c3-5).

[Back](#)

⁹ In a phrase of the time (see Otsego (N.Y.) *Farmer*, October 23, 1891 for this usage). For instance, advertising for Adam Forepaugh’s circus proclaimed: “No balloon rackets!” (Auburn (N.Y.) *News and Bulletin*, July 2, 1879, p2, c6-7).

[Back](#)

¹⁰ EN, January 10, 1877, p4, c2.

[Back](#)

¹¹ Elizabeth B. Tophouse Joiner (1820-1900), whose generation usually spelled her maiden name as it was pronounced, “Toppass” (obit., Jeffersonville (Indiana) *National Democrat* (or “ND”), January 5, 1900, p1, c4).

[Back](#)

¹² Oscar De Joiner (1860-1924). Born Oscar Dunreath Joiner, Jr. and going by O.D. Joiner in his early years, which included sojourns (and possibly multiple marriages) in the Kentucky towns of Carrollton and Henderson, around 1884 he changed his name to Oscar De Joiner and moved to California. There he became a landscape painter of note, as did his son after him, Luther Evans Burdin ("L.E.B.") De Joiner (1886-1954). Family estrangement can be inferred from the fact that two obituaries appearing a quarter-century apart (that of Joiner's mother (see [n.11](#)) and elder brother, James William ("Bud") Joiner (1849-1925) (CJ, January 4, 1925, p4, c3, appearing after De Joiner's own death)) inaccurately describe De Joiner as a New York portrait painter.

[Back](#)

¹³ Lucinda Joiner Gibbs (ca.1847-1914) married housepainter Benjamin F. "Frank" Gibbs (1841-1875), a Civil War veteran, in Jeff in March 1866 and later moved to Little Rock, Arkansas. Given the tradition that Joiner began as a house and sign painter, Frank Gibbs, who died of consumption (obit., CJ, December 22, 1875, p2, c7), might have been his earliest employer.

[Back](#)

¹⁴ William J. Gibbs (1869-1946), later a sign painter in Arkansas, at age 11 in 1880 was already working at the Ohio Falls Car Works.

[Back](#)

¹⁵ *Caron's 1880 Louisville Directory* (New Albany and Jeffersonville section, pp324, 342) places Joiner's mother and sister there in 1880. (Jeffersonville's streets were renumbered in the summer of 1897; 17 Spring Street became 120.) In the 1870s that block between the river and Market Street appears to have been the only one in town where white residents lived side by side with those whose names *Caron's* denoted with "col.," for "colored." However, a blind newspaper item preceding his wedding indicates that by late 1878 Joiner was living on nearby Walnut Street (CJ, November 8, 1878, p2, c6: "A wedding between a young lady residing on Locust street and a gentleman who resides on Walnut street will take place someday next week"). Perhaps the lost 1877 *Haddock's Directory for Jeffersonville* (praised as "correct" in EN, September 5, 1877, p1, c2) will surface to answer the question of where Joiner resided in 1877.

[Back](#)

¹⁶ Frequent complaints about "the cruelty to animals on our city wharf" included an incident recounted in CJ, September 23, 1875, p2, c4.

[Back](#)

¹⁷ Joiner's plight during Jeff's 1883 flood was charmingly imagined by CJ's astute young art critic, Mary B. O'Sullivan (1861-1944):

Mr. Joiner, to the regret of his many friends and fellow-artists, is probably sailing around Jeffersonville in a palette boat, with brushes for masts, palette knives for oars and a paint-rag for a sail, sighing for a "lodge in some vast wilderness."

A Tour Through The Studios, CJ, February 18, 1883, p11, c1. The quotation is from Cowper's *The Task*. The sky sign strung from wire in the photograph was an advertising fad.

[Back](#)

¹⁸ “All the goats found on the streets yesterday were taken up and placed in the pound” (CJ, October 2, 1875, p1, c8); “Stray porkers [*are*] an exhibition of daily occurrence” (EN, December 4, 1879, p3, c2).

[Back](#)

¹⁹ The shipyard still operates, building towboats as the Jeffboat division of American Commercial Lines.

[Back](#)

²⁰ David S. Barmore (1833-1905) presided from an office furnished “like the cabin of a steamboat” (EN, June 2, 1877, p1, c1). His sister Rebecca Ann Barmore (ca.1822-1895) married James Howard (1814-1876), eldest of the Howard brothers. Barmore’s August 1877 payroll was \$1,400 and Howards’ \$2,250 (CJ, September 2, 1877, p2, c5).

[Back](#)

²¹ Later part of American Car and Foundry Co. An 1876 month’s payroll amounted to \$13,000 (EN, November 15, 1876, p4, c3). Most of its factory campus has recently been renovated as office space.

[Back](#)

²² Its 800-foot-square brick quadrangle, built in 1874 and long in ruins, has recently been renovated as office and store space. *See also* [n. 28](#).

[Back](#)

²³ As well as other military goods, on a piecework basis. The number of women so employed fluctuated. For instance, in November 1875, 887 women earned an average \$11.01 apiece (EN, December 4, 1875, p4, c3), but a year and a half later the number of sewing women, already reduced to 615, was temporarily cut further to 225 (ND, February 15, 1877, p3, c2).

Lucinda Joiner Gibbs (*see* [n.13](#)), described in the 1870 census as a “Seamstress,” was probably one of the sewing women. As the widow of a Civil War veteran, she would have received priority in work assignments.

[Back](#)

²⁴ Following floods at its original Jeffersonville and New Albany, Indiana locations, Capt. John Baptiste Ford (1811-1903) relocated his glassworks to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where it prospered as the Pittsburgh Plate Glass Co.

[Back](#)

²⁵ CJ refers to convicts’ “zebra suit” (September 15, 1877, p2, c4). In October 1877, 579 men wore it (EN, October 17, 1877, p1, c4).

[Back](#)

²⁶ Joiner’s masthead (2½” x 9½”) first appeared June 21, 1880 in the expanded and renamed *Daily Evening News*: “The design for our new head was originated by our own artist, Har J. Joiner” (*His Artistic Touch*, p2, c4).

Its engraving, stereotyped (cast in metal) for durability, is signed “E.H. Thomas-Co.” German-born Ernest H. Thomas (ca.1844-1884), who like Joiner in 1880 had a studio in Louisville’s Courier-Journal building (see [n.231](#)), was “a genius of the rarest type [*who*] without teacher, mastered the art of wood engraving” (obit., CJ, May 9, 1884, p8, c2).

Joiner’s drawing likely survived the engraving process—in the technology of the day, a photograph of it would have been developed directly on the wood surface to be engraved—but has since been lost, perhaps when the entire contents of Joiner’s studio was destroyed in the 1907 Courier-Journal building fire. EN abandoned its masthead with its next name change (to the *Jeffersonville News*), March 16, 1891.

[Back](#)

²⁷ The panorama is recognizable today, despite the addition of three bridges.

[Back](#)

²⁸ Demolished ca.1900, it rose from the middle of a “cortile” for whose landscaping Frederick Law Olmsted (1822-1903) furnished a design ND praised as giving “indication of great taste and skill” (October 29, 1874, p3, c1). The cortile is now a parking lot.

[Back](#)

²⁹ Munday (1843-1918), a lawyer and Confederate colonel, later moved to Washington State.

[Back](#)

³⁰ The Owensboro *Messenger* began publication the following October. No Joiner images have yet been found in it, but Joiner seems to have retained hopes of doing business with it, making “a brief and pleasant business trip” to Owensboro in October 1878 from which he returned speaking “in high terms” of Munday and his new partner, Clifton Wood Bransford (ca.1858-1933) (EN, October 26, 1878, p1, c1).

[Back](#)

³¹ Carl Christian Brenner (1838-1888), who sometimes anglicized his first name as Charles, was born in Bavaria and immigrated with his parents to the United States in 1853.

[Back](#)

³² Joiner later claimed to have beaten Brenner to their mutual subject of the beech tree:

[I]t is a fact known of very few that Joiner began studying the beech even before Carl Brenner.

“I remember,” says Mr. Joiner, “when Brenner had his little sign-painting establishment around on Third street. I used to go around and watch him paint signs, when I was a boy. I thought them wonderful. I recollect distinctly his first picture. It was a long slope of hillside—hillsides were his first love—then he took up the oak tree, and for awhile would paint nothing else. I began experimenting roughly with the beech woods about that time.”

Louisville Evening Post, “Art,” December 8, 1900, p9, c5-6.

For Joiner’s age when his father died, see [n.197](#).

[Back](#)

³³ From *Edwards' 1867-8 Louisville Directory* (p125 of its *Historical and Commercial Review*). Such billposters were a standard advertising icon of the era.

[Back](#)

³⁴ Advertising his final Christmas exhibition in 1887.

[Back](#)

³⁵ See [fig. 24](#) for a Joiner image that, appearing in the *National Democrat* August 15, 1872, soon after Reuben Dailey bought the newspaper in May 1872, possibly had been in use for some time previous; the *National Democrat's* pre-Dailey file comprises only a few issues.

[Back](#)

³⁶ Its stamp is the 1870-1873 ultramarine Benjamin Franklin one cent. The envelope, postmarked Jeff, June 14, is addressed to George F. Howard (ca.1834-1891; obit., EN, June 17, 1891, p4, c3), sheriff of Clark County 1870 to August 1871. Joiner painted portraits of Howard and of James Keigwin (ca.1829-1904; obit., EN August 25, 1904, p1, c4-6), respectively Second Lieutenant and Colonel of the 49th Indiana Infantry Regiment in the Civil War, in their guise as "The Original Bohunkers" (ND, December 19, 1878, p4, c3) – that is, the "only two original singers of the popular song, 'Bohunker'" (CJ, December 18, 1878, p2, c7).

[Back](#)

³⁷ As might the cross-hatching of the hands and feet, if intended to give them a dark complexion (by contrast, the face looks incomplete). Joiner's steamboating sketches, now lost, were said to have concentrated on "negro characters dancing Jim Crow" along the levees (*Baird*, p696).

[Back](#)

³⁸ *Caron's 1876 Louisville Directory* was published in the summer of 1876.

[Back](#)

³⁹ John Tenniel's (1820-1914) *Alice* illustrations appeared in 1869.

[Back](#)

⁴⁰ CJ, January 22, 1877, p4, c9-10. Col. Charles B. Hunt (1833-1919), proprietor of Hunt's Hotel, served in the Army during the Mexican, Civil and Spanish-American wars, as well as during riots in Cincinnati in the 1880s.

[Back](#)

⁴¹ The wings predict Joiner's 1874 *Angel of Mercy and Charity* ([fig. 27](#) & [fig. 29](#)).

[Back](#)

⁴² *Edwards' 1869 Louisville Directory* (also called *Edwards' 1868-9 Louisville Director*), p422.

[Back](#)

⁴³ Prussia-born John Kohlhepp (1826-1872) appears to have been an important early figure in Kentucky horserace betting. More than thirty years after his death, CJ's obituary of his brother-in-law John Cawein declared, "During the Civil War [Cawein] was connected with Walker's exchange, a hostelry that was famous. After the war it was known as the Turf Exchange. Associated with him in the business was John Kohlhepp, who finally purchased the business" (CJ, November 23, 1904, p10, c6). The Turf Exchange, a "pool room" so called for the pools of racing bets sold there, helped make Louisville the national center of horserace betting.

[Back](#)

⁴⁴ See CJ, May 27, 1872, p3, c5.

[Back](#)

⁴⁵ EN, June 4, 1886, p3, c6-7.

[Back](#)

⁴⁶ For example: "The Cincinnati Enquirer heads the hanging of two colored citizens 'The Black Drop.' Would it not be more alliterative to have said 'Noose for the Niggers,' or a 'Choke on the Coons'?" ND, December 19, 1878, p5, c2).

[Back](#)

⁴⁷ See *Baird's History of Clark County*, by Lewis C. Baird (Indianapolis: B.F. Bowen & Co., 1909), pp528-530; obits., EN, April 9, 1906, p1, c1-7 & April 11, p1, c1-2; ND, April 13, 1906, p1, c1-7 & p6, c4-5).

Joiner painted Dailey's portrait in 1879. Dailey said of it:

When sitting for that picture we threw ourselves back to the days when we were studying for the ministry. Hence if the countenance portrays sentiments not akin to our natural wickedness, the fault is not Mr. Joiner's. He paints true to life, and in this case, as all others, Mr. Joiner has not only honored himself and the city in which he lives, but more especially the sinner he has depicted.

EN, December 30, 1879, p3, c6. After Dailey's death Joiner painted a replica of that earlier portrait (see ND, October 18, 1906, p1, c4). The present location of either portrait is unknown. Dailey's descendants live in England and have not been traced (see also [n.168](#)).

[Back](#)

⁴⁸ Thomas Nast (1840-1902). Joiner might have been even more influenced by English-born Alfred Rudolph Waud (1828-1891), who, like Nast, was a battlefield artist for *Harper's Weekly* during the Civil War and whose droll, big-headed wood-engraved characters illustrated such books as Thomas Butler Gunn's 1857 *The Physiology of Boarding Houses*. Waud engraved a view of Jeffersonville's riverfront for *Picturesque America* (1872-74).

[Back](#)

⁴⁹ Many of them craftsmen working elaborate wood inlays for the Car Works' railroad passenger cars. For some years Jeff ran dual English- and German-language school systems.

[Back](#)

⁵⁰ EN, February 25, 1874, p4, c4. Three days later it appeared in the *Weekly Memphian* (Dailey's short-lived Memphis, Indiana newspaper), the banner proclaiming:

This cut represents a certain young gentleman as he
appeared at the meeting of the Memphis brass band

Weekly Memphian, February 28, 1874, p1, c1.

[Back](#)

⁵¹ EN, February 28, 1874, p4, c3-4. Two times only, a curious four-legged device (*enlarged in fig. 23*) appears within the space framed for text (EN, March 19, 1874, p4, c4 and March 20, 1874, p4, c4).

At his English-born father's death in 1873, William F. Guy (ca.1849-1911) took over his furniture shop at 20 Spring Street, but sold it in November 1874 (ND, November 19, 1874, p1, c2). After stints clerking at Ford's Plate Glass Works and the Quartermaster Depot, Guy re-entered the furniture business in New Albany.

[Back](#)

⁵² EN, March 2, 1874, p1, c4 (as pictured, from EN, July 23, 1874, p4, c3). But in fact this image appeared in ND two years earlier (August 15, 1872, p5, c1 and August 22, 1872, p5, c1) and possibly before that (*see n.35*). (The puffs of smoke amount to a Joiner signature.) I am grateful to Stephen D. Marples for identifying the cannon.

[Back](#)

⁵³ EN, March 13, 1874, p4, c4 (as pictured, from EN, March 14, 1874, p4, c4).

[Back](#)

⁵⁴ EN, March 19, 1874, p4, c4. Elsewhere (p4, c2) appears the comment:

This picture was drawn from life, on the spot, by our special artist. It is
intended to represent an indignant husband raising the very old scratch
because his wife did not buy groceries at Steve Miller's.

Grocer Stephen M. Miller (1847-ca.1922) emigrated from Germany in 1852 and became Port Fulton's marshal and a longtime member of its school board.

[Back](#)

⁵⁵ EN, June 1, 1874, p4, c1. ND's May 1 "Letter List" of letters unclaimed at the post office (ND, May 1, 1873, p5, c1) included one addressed to "C.H. Joiner" (Joiner's full name was Charles Harvey Joiner, but see [n.83](#)).

[Back](#)

⁵⁶ Hoffman and his Pennsylvania-born wife, Anne Mary De Vere Hoffman (1835-1923), also kept a boarding house, though whether Joiner stayed with them on South 3rd Street is not known. Nor is it known whether Hoffman's Bavarian birth implies any tie to Brenner or whether Brenner might have helped arrange Joiner's employment; on the other hand, it is known that Joiner's elder brother, Bud Joiner, lived in St. Louis about this time (EN, December 11, 1875, p4, c2, refers to "his home in St. Louis").

[Back](#)

⁵⁷Obit., *Church Paintings Made Him Famous*, St. Louis (Mo.) *Post Dispatch*, January 3, 1905, p16, c3.

[Back](#)

⁵⁸Their present location is unknown.

[Back](#)

⁵⁹ Capt. John Ira Dorsey (1852-1941) ([fig. 28](#)) was later collector, and later still superintendent, of the Louisville and Jeffersonville Ferry Company and its successor Falls City Ferry, and a longtime Jeff city councilman (obit., EN, April 2, 1941, p1, c4-5; *see also* EN, January 26, 1924, p1, c6). Dorsey and Joiner shared a sense of humor, EN once remarking that Dorsey had dislocated his shoulder “by the premature discharge of a gag” (January 19, 1883, p4, c1).

Ira Dorsey’s brother Capt. Eugene Lyman Dorsey (1854-1924) was also a friend of Joiner’s (*see* [n.87](#)). A sometime partner in the grocery, he later became bookkeeper of the ferry company and, from 1898 to 1913, a federal inspector of steamboats (obit., CJ, January 24, 1924, p1, c5).

A sister of the Dorsey brothers, Carrie B. Dorsey Loomis (1861-1934), married Jeff’s fine and versatile architect Arthur Loomis (1858-1935), designer of Louisville’s Speed Art Museum.

[Back](#)

⁶⁰One column wide, it twice appeared in EN, August 11, 1874, p1, c1 and August 12, 1874, p1, c1.

[Back](#)

⁶¹It first appeared EN, August 20, 1874, p1, c1 (as pictured, from EN, August 21, 1874, p1, c1). Born in Alabama, and probably a nephew of Barney Rosenthal’s (*see* [n.110](#)), Morris Rosenthal (1851-1902) was later a haberdasher in Cleveland, Ohio. Previously his store’s slogan had been “Morris Rosenthal keeps the nobbiest furnishing goods in town” (*see, e.g.*, EN, August 13, 1874, p1, c1).

[Back](#)

⁶²EN said Joiner was “expected home this week” (November 17, 1874, p4, c3). *Baird* (p696) states that Joiner “began painting portraits with Hoffman” in St. Louis.

[Back](#)

⁶³ND, October 29, 1874, p3, c5-6; November 3, 1874, p2, c1; November 10, 1874 p2, c1; November 17, 1874, p2, c1, and ND *Supplement*, November 17, 1874, p2, c1, in each instance next to a display ad that proclaims: “He who by hiz biz would rise, must either bust or ADVERTISE.” The sudden promotion of these images just before Joiner’s homecoming suggests tension about their use or ownership.

[Back](#)

⁶⁴EN’s distinctive four-column layout is visible (*compare* this image with [fig. 58](#), conjecturally identified as Joiner’s colleague in firefighting and minstrel shows, Capt. Billy Patterson).

[Back](#)

⁶⁵ “Decidedly good,” Dailey said of them (ND, December 24, 1874, p3, c5); neither is to be found in EN’s extant file. The “great scandal” was a reference to the looming adultery trial of the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher (1813-1887), which began January 1875.

[Back](#)

⁶⁶ EN, December 23, 1875, p3, c1 (EN is not extant December 1874 through October 1875). Dailey at the time claimed a circulation of 600 for EN and 1,000 for ND (*see* CJ, September 18, 1875, p1, c10).

[Back](#)

⁶⁷ CJ, March 18, 1879, p2, c6. The Louisville *Post and News* (March 18, 1879, p3, c3) added:
Harvey J. Joiner, the artist, is not only a first class painter, but is a
successful rival of Nast, of New York, in producing wood cuts.
And LC declared that “Joiner, an artist of great merit, has been secured at immense expense” to turn the *Evening News* “into a comic daily, something after the style of the New York Graphic” (LC, March 19, 1879, p3, c7). EN reprinted the LC item, adding, “we believe the people of Jeffersonville appreciate our effort to amuse as well as to instruct” (EN, March 20, 1879, p4, c3).

[Back](#)

⁶⁸ EN, April 28, 1879, p1, c3-4. Numerous white residents of Jeff migrated in the 1870s, 1880s and 1890s to Kansas, which chafed Dailey, who regularly reported on their supposed privations there (*see, e.g.*, ND, January 29, 1886, p2, c5).

[Back](#)

⁶⁹ Joiner was a Democrat as of 1912 (*Who’s Who in Louisville 1912*, p138), but by 1926 he had switched his allegiance to the Republican Party (*Who’s Who in Louisville 1926*, p92).

[Back](#)

⁷⁰ EN, May 2, 1879, p4, c3-4. Municipal elections took place May 6.

[Back](#)

⁷¹ This running man, later used in ads for other stores, first appeared in EN, May 9, 1879, p4, c3-4. Previously (beginning March 23, 1874, p1, c4), Rossler’s store ads had used Brenner’s wood-engraved bill-poster ([fig. 13](#)).

[Back](#)

⁷² Prussia-born Charles Rossler (ca.1828-1894) ran his Jeff store for twenty years before moving to Kansas in 1885. In 1882 Joiner painted portraits of him and his wife Lina Rossler (ca.1831-) (“two fine, life-like portraits . . . which could not be surpassed” EN, October 28, 1882, p4, c3). Their present location is unknown.

[Back](#)

⁷³ Although Dailey declared that Joiner was:

the only artist in the world who can catch the expression of a woman’s face as she puts her nose into the milk-jug and finds that the thunder has soured the contents.

EN, Sept. 13, 1876, p4, c3.

[Back](#)

⁷⁴For instance, the Chicago publisher of the *Edwards* directories furnished the identical wood engraving to illustrate ads for shoe stores in every city its directories covered.

[Back](#)

⁷⁵Henry Watterson (1840-1921).

[Back](#)

⁷⁶Watterson's lede to his unsigned but unmistakable *Brenner's Distribution/The Features of a Successful Career Full of Promise – Estimate of the Artist at Home and Abroad* (CJ, October 16, 1879, p4, c4). The "Distribution" was a lottery of Brenner's works, mostly etchings, at \$5 a ticket. In the event, the "Distribution" failed, first postponed for lack of ticket sales (CJ, October 19, 1879, p6, c4), then allowed quietly to lapse. Unfortunately, Watterson never specifies what defects of Brenner's character might have been to blame for the failure of the "Distribution."

[Back](#)

⁷⁷Later renumbered 221-23.

[Back](#)

⁷⁸ND, April 15, 1875, p2, c1 (stated to have been reprinted from EN, April 13, 1875 (not extant)). Jeff's street grid runs roughly north-northwest by south-southeast. The back of the building overlooked what was then the Public Square surrounding City Hall and the public market.

[Back](#)

⁷⁹ND, June 10, 1875, p4, c3.

[Back](#)

⁸⁰Kate Middleton Dailey (1866-1870).

[Back](#)

⁸¹ND, June 10, 1875, p4, c3 (stated to have been reprinted from EN, June 3, 1875 (not extant)). "The picture, for its artistic qualities, has been admired without exception. Mr. Joiner has painted several life-like portraits of a number of our citizens, and never fails to make a good picture" (*id.*). This was the first work by Joiner noted to have been displayed in Sparks' show-window. Its present location is unknown.

[Back](#)

⁸²CJ's *Jeffersonville* column called Jeff's firemen "our brave red-shirted boys" (CJ, April 30, 1875, p3, c6).

[Back](#)

⁸³Even at the end of his life Joiner sometimes still formed J thus, as seen in the signature from a 1932 check ([fig. 42](#)). (I am grateful to Ruth Emily for this image.)

The progression of Joiner's names and signatures demonstrates his extended search for identity. He was born Charles Harvey Joiner, but dropped his first name around 1874 and until the turn of the century usually used a middle initial J. — perhaps a relic of his stage name, "Johnny Joiner" (see [fig. 60](#)), although it may be that his stage name came from a nickname (his grandson Harvey Joiner Lewman (ca.1904-1983) was called "Jack," according to Ruth Emily).

[Back](#)

⁸⁴ See Woodson Dudley's profile, *Ah! An Exquisite Child Of Nature!*, *Louisville Herald*, January 3, 1920, p3, c2-5 ("A Gallery of Louisville Notables — No. 3").

[Back](#)

⁸⁵ EN, October 25, 1876, p4, c1. Sarah J. "Miss Sallie" Bottorff Murphy (1832-ca.1910) was "a Merchant Princess . . . the best business lady in Jeffersonville," ND declared at her marriage to Irish-born dry-goods merchant Dennis Murphy (1840-1885) (ND, January 4, 1877, p2, c1). Her building's third floor, known as Emporium Hall, was used as a meeting room by fraternal organizations. 52 Spring Street was later renumbered 213-15.

[Back](#)

⁸⁶ EN, March 28, 1876, p4, c2. Dailey adapts "pale-ey'd" from Milton's *L'Allegro*.

[Back](#)

⁸⁷ Joiner and his friend Eugene Dorsey (see [n.59](#)) won (or claimed to have won) \$1,000 on the races in July 1878 (CJ, July 7, 1878, p3, c6).

[Back](#)

⁸⁸ Luther Fairfax Warder (1841-1902), Jeff's mayor 1875-1883 and 1887-1891, was credited with wresting Clark County's seat for Jeffersonville from Charlestown in 1878.

[Back](#)

⁸⁹ CJ, September 24, 1875, p3, c5. Three days earlier an item of similar fulsomeness appeared:

Mr. Har. Joiner, the talented young portrait painter in this city, is winning golden opinions from our people for the perfect, lifelike and finely executed pictures he has painted of several of our well-known citizens. All of his pictures show true talent, and give the highest satisfaction to his patrons. Mr. Joiner is on the high road to fame and wealth if we are not badly mistaken.

CJ, September 21, 1875, p3, c4. Research suggests the possibility that Joiner was the never-named fourth of the "four young men from Otisco" (ND, September 30, 1875, p1, c2) whose contemporaneous spree ended in a sensational shooting affray on Spring Street.

[Back](#)

⁹⁰ William Elias Sutton, Jr. (1856-ca.1925). CJ's regular Jeff reporter, Orlando Oscar Stealey (1842-1928), another Joiner friend (and early collector) who from 1882 was CJ's Washington correspondent and much later wrote several books about national political figures, was out of town; his replacement on this occasion goes unnamed, but before Stealey's next absence EN notes that Sutton "will get up [CJ's] Jeff items" (EN, November 29, 1875, p1, c2); Sutton, "a

young man of energy and natural newspaper talent," had just become EN's local editor (*see* ND, October 21, 1875, p3, c1). He also taught "phonography" (*i.e.*, shorthand), before later working as a railroad claims clerk. In 1873 "Billy Sutton" played "Puff of Wind" in *Squire for a Day*, a farce on the bill of the *Amateurs'* show (EN, June 27, 1873, p3, c4; *see* [fig. 60](#)).

[Back](#)

⁹¹ James Beverley Merriwether (ca.1833-1899), lawyer, colonel 1861-62 of Indiana's 49th Regiment, former warden of the State Prison South — and son of a New Mexico governor — married Rebecca Reeder (1855-) in 1873.

[Back](#)

⁹² ND, September 30, 1875, p1, c1 (stated as reprinted from EN, Sept. 23, 1875 (not extant)).

[Back](#)

⁹³ Was Joiner's reformation sealed at the jailhouse door, or did he relapse a few months later?

We understand that a well-known young man in this city got robbed of his boots and hat Wednesday night, while in a state of how-come-you-so.

ND, December 2, 1875, p4, c1.

[Back](#)

⁹⁴ Dailey said of himself, "The practice of the editor of the *News* has ever been to touch, taste and handle not the cup of enchantment" (EN, April 2, 1874, p3, c1-2).

[Back](#)

⁹⁵ EN, February 9, 1877, p4, c2. As was typical, CJ's *Jeffersonville* column chimed in the next day (February 10, 1877, p4, c3):

Mr. H.J. Joiner will place some first-class pictures on exhibition in a few days. His studio is filled with a fine collection, all ex-excuted [*sic*] by himself.

[Back](#)

⁹⁶ EN, February 22, 1877, p1, c2. CJ (February 22, 1877, p4, c4) said:

A fine specimen of fruit painting, executed by Har. J. Joiner, is on exhibition at Sparks' dry goods store.

[Back](#)

⁹⁷ Later renumbered 229 Spring Street, the store was located on the west side of Spring Street north of Market Street and south of what is now Preservation Place. The first Joiner picture mentioned as being placed in its window was his 1875 portrait of Kate Middleton Dailey (*see* [n.80](#)).

Sparks' was owned by brothers Thomas Sparks (1836-1915; obit., EN, June 10, 1915, p1, c1-3) and Nathan Sparks (1835-1924; obit., EN, September 1, 1924, p1, c7). Its show window (*see* [fig. 45](#)) was apparently the special domain of Thomas Sparks (*see* *Louisville Commercial* (or "LC"),

December 6, 1877, p4, c1). When Thomas Sparks married, Joiner gave him a “fruit picture” (CJ, April 16, 1879, p4, c4).

[Back](#)

⁹⁸ Snyder (1849-1930), the first of Indiana’s Brown County painters, studied with Albert Bierstadt, George Inness and William Morris Hunt, and lived in Jeff from 1875 through 1878 (*see* ND, July 29, 1875, p1, c1; *see also* LC, September 23, 1875, p3, c2 and December 8, 1878, p3, c7). Joiner and Snyder sometimes painted *en plein air* together (I am grateful for this information to Rob Cathcart, who had it from Snyder’s biographer, the late Emmett Sherlock Wood).

[Back](#)

⁹⁹ “Another fine landscape,” EN, April 13, 1877, p4, c1. Its present location is unknown.

[Back](#)

¹⁰⁰ “[A]n evening scene. . . . The scenery is gathered from neighboring places, and Mr. Joiner has endeavored to make it true to nature” (EN, May 11, 1877, p4, c1). Its present location is unknown.

[Back](#)

¹⁰¹ “[A]nother fine picture, which [Joiner] thinks excels anything yet gotten up by him . . . taken from scenery near Utica. The correct representation of the trees and foliage, and the sunlight showing through, is portrayed in all its natural loveliness” (EN, April 27, 1877, p1, c1). Its present location is unknown.

[Back](#)

¹⁰² *Id.*

[Back](#)

¹⁰³ At 163 Fourth Avenue (now 521 South Fourth Street). James Vowels Escott (1816-1892) opened his store in 1862 (obit., CJ, January 19, 1892, p7, c3). Escott’s sold wallcoverings and furniture, and made mirrors and mantels.

[Back](#)

¹⁰⁴ Walter Newman Escott (1851-1905), longtime secretary of J.V. Escott & Sons and principal of its eponymous successor firm (as well as namesake nephew of the Courier Journal’s owner, W.N. Haldeman (1821-1902)), lived in Jeff from the late 1870s to the mid-1890s. Obit., CJ, January 4, 1905, p4, c4; EN, January 4, 1905, p2, c1.

[Back](#)

¹⁰⁵ Signed “C.H. Joiner” (*see* [n.83](#)). Its present location is unknown. Joiner made a month-long sketching trip up the Kentucky River in 1876 (*see* EN, January 11, 1876, p4, c3 and February 14, 1876, p1, c1), but this picture appears to predate that trip.

[Back](#)

¹⁰⁶ Amanda Joiner (1843-1916) married widowed Anderson County, Kentucky carpenter/farmer James Keith Hawkins (ca.1827-ca.1890) in September 1866.

[Back](#)

¹⁰⁷ Lancassange Creek (as now spelled) lies upriver from Jeff.

[Back](#)

¹⁰⁸ EN, March 23, 1877, p4, c2. It was placed in Sparks' window a few days later, EN noting: "If not sold shortly, it will be taken to Escott's gallery, in Louisville, where it will be appreciated" (March 28, 1877, p4, c2). Apparently its purchase by Susan Ella Crothers Howard (1850-ca.1925), well-born wife of Indiana Prison South Warden Andrew J. Howard (1834-1897), forestalled any transfer to Escott's (*see* EN, April 2, 1877, p4, c1).

[Back](#)

¹⁰⁹ And also restored by Scott Nussbaum.

[Back](#)

¹¹⁰ Merchant tailor Bernhard "Barney" Rosenthal (1816-1900; obit., EN, June 12, 1900, p1, c6) in 1850 married Babette Rosenthal (1826-1914), like him an 1840 emigrant from Germany. Their store's retail license was in her name (*see* Internal Revenue Annual Assessment (September) 1862, Indiana Division 1, Collection District 2, p5). Joiner painted portraits of each of the Rosenthals; the canted shoulders of this figure indicate it might be one of a pair. "The portraits are life-like. . . . In either portrait or landscape painting, Har. J. Joiner can be classed among the very first artists of the day" (EN, June 26, 1877, p4, c1).

[Back](#)

¹¹¹ "Like the previous paintings of Mr. Joiner, it is very good" (LC, Oct. 3, 1877, p6, c2). John S. Bottorff (1815-1893), formerly a prominent Jeff merchant, was General Superintendent of the Philadelphia (Pa.) City Passenger Railway Company, a horse-drawn trolley system.

In 1876 Bud Joiner visited the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia and then stayed on some twenty years, working for Bottorff's company as trolley conductor and later driver (EN, July 20, 1876, p4, c1), before returning to Jeff and becoming a grocer and real estate investor.

[Back](#)

¹¹² Oscar Jenks (ca.1848-1877), a railroad conductor. Joiner's posthumous portrait "excels any of his former paintings" (EN, December 20, 1877, p1, c2).

[Back](#)

¹¹³ "While the picture was on exhibition at Louisville the very best critics in the city complimented it very highly" (EN, December 6, 1877, p1, c3). Lester W. Heinsheimer (1874-1958), son of Nathan E. Heinsheimer (1843-1918), a Jeff clothier who was later a leading Louisville auctioneer, and of Minnie Rosenthal Heinsheimer (1850-1946), the daughter of Barney Rosenthal (*see* [n.110](#)), became a dining car steward.

[Back](#)

¹¹⁴ CJ, August 12, 1869, p1, c8 ([fig 49](#)):

The “Uniques,” an amateur minstrel troupe, are giving a series of monthly entertainments to the citizens of Port Fulton. The following amateurs compose the company: Harvey Joiner, Ed. Jenkins, Charles Eccles, Frank Dentford [*sic*], Henry Kime, and Woodson Moriarty.

Port Fulton was then a separate town abutting Jeff’s eastern border, although the term appears to have been applied to neighborhoods starting only a few blocks east of Spring Street.

[Back](#)

¹¹⁵ “The ‘Uniques’ amateur minstrels are getting up No. 1 engine-house for a public entertainment” (CJ, August 12, 1869, p1, c8). Soon CJ remarked, “The ‘Uniques’ . . . have been delighting the Port Fultonians” (August 27, 1869, p4, c6). It is possible that Joiner that autumn helped embellish “the ‘Stingaree,’ the comic weekly of Port Fulton” (CJ, October 14, 1869, p3, c6), no copies of which are known to survive.

[Back](#)

¹¹⁶ Now Meigs Street.

[Back](#)

¹¹⁷ For instance, LC invited “any one wishing to . . . furnish an item of news” to call at its Jeff office (LC, March 4, 1870, p1, c6).

[Back](#)

¹¹⁸ CJ, September 27, 1870, p3, c6.

[Back](#)

¹¹⁹ In 1872 Kentucky-born John W. Sullivan (1810-1881), then Moral Instructor at the Indiana State Prison South, traveled to Europe as a delegate to the World’s Prison Convention in London (ND, June 6, 1872, p5, c1 and August 22, 1877, p5, c3). Obits., CJ, May 30, 1881, p2, c5; EN, May 30, 1881, p1, c2.

[Back](#)

¹²⁰ Doing so on the large private income of \$854 (*see* Internal Revenue Annual List 1866, Indiana Division 1, Collection District 2, p22).

[Back](#)

¹²¹ EN, May 14, 1877, p4, c3 (reprinted ND, May 31, 1877, p6, c2). EN’s praise of *Down in the Meadow* foreshadowed Sullivan’s letter: “It has been examined by a large number of persons, who say that it is one of the finest paintings they have ever seen, not excepting fine art collections” (May 5, 1877, p1, c3).

[Back](#)

¹²² EN, May 23, 1877, p1, c2.

[Back](#)

¹²³ “Mr. Har. J. Joiner has two very handsome landscapes on exhibition . . . ‘Morning’ and ‘The close of a hot day.’ Both pictures are fine. . . .” (EN, July 2, 1877, p4, c2). Their present locations are unknown.

[Back](#)

¹²⁴ “The lights and shades are true to nature, while the water in the stream is portrayed in all its natural quiet and beauty” (EN, July 13, 1877, p4, c2). Its present location is unknown.

[Back](#)

¹²⁵ One kerfuffle won national attention. Mary A. Link Sittell (ca.1825-1886), wife of John Sittell (1832-1882), keeper of Sittell’s Saloon on Spring Street, sallied forth with her daughters to douse WTU leader Mrs. Sallie C. Jackson (ca.1841-) with water as she kneeled – and Mrs. Jackson fought back. The wood-engraved illustration of the scene in New York’s *The Days’ Doings* (March 21, 1874, p16), probably based on CJ’s account (*The Crusaders*, March 12, 1874, p4, c2-3), caused “considerable merriment” in Jeff (EN, March 25, 1874, p1, c3); alas, it is not Joiner’s work.

[Back](#)

¹²⁶ In late May writing, “We are waiting patiently for the red ribbon movement to strike this town”:

We need the reformation as indicated by ‘wearing of the red’. . . .
Some one of our philanthropists or moralists could do nothing
that would bring his name more prominent before the public that
[sic] to take the lead in inaugurating the red ribbon movement in
Jeffersonville.

ND, May 24, 1877, p1, c3.

[Back](#)

¹²⁷ Often by the Rev. Sullivan (*see, e.g.*, ND, July 26, 1877, p1, c1).

[Back](#)

¹²⁸ EN, July 16, 1877, p4, c1.

[Back](#)

¹²⁹ EN, August 18, 1877, p1, c1. A few days earlier, Joiner made “a short business trip to Cincinnati” for unknown reasons (EN, August 7, 1877, p1, c1).

[Back](#)

¹³⁰ EN, August 18, 1877, p1, c3.

[Back](#)

¹³¹ EN, August 20, 1877, p4 c3. George R. Thompson (ca.1838-ca.1890) and his brother Eli M. Thompson (1835-1889; obit., EN, February 21, 1889, p4, c3) around the end of the Civil War moved to Jeff from Memphis, Indiana (where Joiner as a boy probably knew them) and opened, respectively, grocery and dry goods stores (*see* ND, September 13, 1877, p1, c3).

[Back](#)

¹³² CJ, August 19, 1877, p2, c4.

[Back](#)

¹³³ Mordant to a teetotaler. No "Prof. Waters" appears in *Caron's 1877-78 New Albany Directory*, published the following week, nor has "Prof. Waters" been traced elsewhere.

[Back](#)

¹³⁴ Whether Lott also took the Red Ribbon pledge is not known. Some years later, at a boisterous birthday party also attended by Joiner, Lott had "full charge of the distillery department [*and*] performed his part to . . . entire satisfaction" (ND, December 19, 1884, p4, c3).

[Back](#)

¹³⁵ Lillie Howard Yeager (1857-1907); Capt. Daniel Howard (1817-1883) retired from business in 1865 (obit., EN, November 14, 1883, p4, c3).

[Back](#)

¹³⁶ EN, June 13, 1874, p1, c3.

[Back](#)

¹³⁷ CJ, July 31, 1875, p4, c7. "[T]he little fair lady" was feted at her parents' house with a ball which included a supper "good enough for the Crown Princess of the German Empire" (ND, August 5, 1875, p1, c4).

[Back](#)

¹³⁸ "Life-like and first-class" (EN, December 7, 1875, p4, c3).

[Back](#)

¹³⁹ Annie M. Howell Irwin (1855-ca.1920). She and Joiner were possibly childhood friends as well, if Joseph N. Howell (ca.1838-1879), who during the Civil War enlisted from Joiner's village of Blue Lick and later entered the grocery business in Jeff, was her relative. Annie Howell's father, William Martin Howell (ca.1824-1884), was a Jeff cooper until he entered the grocery business (in which he prospered) about 1867.

[Back](#)

¹⁴⁰ EN, May 1, 1876, p4, c1. In 1849 Daniel Howard married an Oldham County woman, Mary Densford (1828-1904), but his residence there has not been traced.

[Back](#)

¹⁴¹ EN, May 9, 1876, p2, c3.

[Back](#)

¹⁴² EN, May 30, 1876, p4, c1:

This picture shows that in landscape painting as well as portrait painting, Mr. Joiner is entitled to a place in the front rank of the artists of the day. Everything about the picture is true to nature,

and for conception and finish is not surpassed by anything we have ever seen in this city.

Its present location is unknown.

[Back](#)

¹⁴³ Signed “Lillie Howard 1876,” it hangs at The Oldham County Historical Society’s J.C. Barnett Library and Archives in La Grange, Kentucky.

[Back](#)

¹⁴⁴ I am grateful to John E. Evans for identifying the setting of this picture, which, signed “Lillie Howard 1877,” hangs at The Howard Steamboat Museum in Jeffersonville. No such house exists at the Harrod’s Creek site today, nor indeed was any noted in the *Atlas of Jefferson & Oldham Counties Kentucky* (Philadelphia: Beers & Lanagan, 1879). Possibly the picture depicts “Mr. Dan. Howard’s old residence in Oldham county” (EN, May 1, 1876, p4, c1; see [n.140](#)), if possibly relocated to an idealized setting; Harrod’s Creek empties into the Ohio River three or four miles west of the Oldham County line.

[Back](#)

¹⁴⁵ Secret even from the usually minutely well-informed EN Women’s Editor (and Reuben Dailey’s wife) Ann Eliza “Lida” Devinney Dailey (1840-1920), daughter of a steamboat captain (see CJ, May 16, 1879, p2, c6): “A few weeks ago low whisperings among the gentler sex hinted about a coming matrimonial event . . . the cards [*were*] issued last week” (*An Interesting Social Event*, EN August 23, 1877, p1, c2).

[Back](#)

¹⁴⁶ John Thomas Yeager (1844-1931) (also spelled Yager, as on his tombstone). His farm near Brownsboro, Kentucky, is now part of the Sleepy Hollow Golf Course.

[Back](#)

¹⁴⁷ EN, August 23, 1877, p1, c2; CJ called it “a beautiful and artistic oil painting” (August 24, 1877, p3, c5).

[Back](#)

¹⁴⁸ EN, August 25, 1877, p4, c2. Also, George Howard and Col. Keigwin (see [n.36](#)) “sang several popular songs” (CJ, August 26, 1877, p2, c7).

[Back](#)

¹⁴⁹ EN, August 22, 1877, p1, c3.

[Back](#)

¹⁵⁰ CJ, August 27, 1877, p2, c7.

[Back](#)

¹⁵¹ EN, August 27, 1877, p4, c2-3.

[Back](#)

¹⁵² CJ, August 28, 1877, p4, c2.

[Back](#)

¹⁵³ As EN characterized the labors of Joiner's friend, newspaper reporter and printer Horace E. "Hop" Hopkins (1848-1926) (August 22, 1877, p4, c2). Obit., EN, December 9, 1926, p1, c3.

[Back](#)

¹⁵⁴ James Edward Finch (ca.1833-), Jeff railroad yardmaster and councilman who ran Jeff's Red Ribbon restaurant in 1878, before opening his own restaurant in 1879 and about 1881 moving to Kansas and a job with the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Rail Road.

[Back](#)

¹⁵⁵ William H. Carter (1850-ca.1921), at this time a house and sign painter, later became a steamboat captain.

[Back](#)

¹⁵⁶ EN, August 22, 1877, p4, c3. A year later the "failure" of the first anniversary jubilee of the Jeff Red Ribbon Club showed that "interest in the temperance cause is dying out" (EN, July 30, 1878, p4, c2).

[Back](#)

¹⁵⁷ Joiner apparently belonged to the Christian Church, as indicated in context by his self-description as "Christian" in *Who's Who in Louisville 1926* (p92) and supported by family tradition.

.

[Back](#)

¹⁵⁸ CJ, January 23, 1877 p4, c6:

The people of Utica of the Christian persuasion are making arrangements to build a church there, which will be the finest edifice of the kind in that town. Two thousand dollars have already been subscribed, and work will be commenced on the building in a short time.

[Back](#)

¹⁵⁹ David S. Koons (1832-1900), a prosperous farmer, was then Clark County Treasurer. Earlier, as Clark County Surveyor, he had co-published the magnificent 1875 *Map of Clark County, Indiana*. Later he was County Assessor. He joined the Christian church in August 1875 and became chief instigator of its new building in Utica, but his acquaintance with Joiner might have dated to Koons' earlier ownership of racehorses (see, e.g., CJ, May 26, 1875, p3, c5). Obits., ND, March 23, 1900, p4, c4 and ND, April 27, 1900, sec.1, p1, c6.

[Back](#)

¹⁶⁰ James K. Marsh (1844-1912), Jeff lawyer, representative in the Indiana General Assembly from 1878 onward and Clark Circuit Court Judge 1899-1904.

If Dailey helped recruit Marsh as a patron for Joiner, it was a selfless act, for Marsh was one of his great antagonists and only that April had assaulted him (*see* Dailey's account, "War In Charlestown/The Dishonorable Misrepresentative, J. K. Marsh," ND, April 5, 1877, p4, c5). Their dispute stemmed from Dailey's feeling that Marsh dissimulated his opposition to moving the county seat from Charlestown to Jeff.

[Back](#)

¹⁶¹ EN, September 10, 1877, p1, c2.

[Back](#)

¹⁶² Compare Thomas Eakins' sale of *The Gross Clinic* in 1878 for a discounted \$200. No other price data for Joiner's paintings are known until 1897, when the auction concluding his first annual Christmas exhibition saw sales in the range of \$11 to \$50 (*see* CJ, December 18, 1897, p4, c6); private sales the next day were said to have delivered "better results," a range of \$25 to \$100 (CJ, December 19, 1897, sec 1, p6, c5).

[Back](#)

¹⁶³ Specifically (according to EN, November 8, 1877, p1, c2), *Ruth*, book 2, verse 17 (King James version):

So she gleaned in the field until even, and beat out that she had
gleaned; and it was an ephod of barley.

The same article uses the plural *Fields* in titling Joiner's picture, and this study follows that usage.

[Back](#)

¹⁶⁴ *Ruth*, book 3, verse 4.

[Back](#)

¹⁶⁵ Joiner probably saw the two Ruths shown at the 1873 Louisville Industrial Exposition: *Ruth and Naomi*, by a Mexican or Spanish artist named Ibura or Ivara, and *Ruth*, a copy by an unknown artist after an unknown artist (*see* the online Smithsonian Institution Research Information System' Pre-1877 Art Exhibition Catalogue Index); neither has been traced.

[Back](#)

¹⁶⁶ *The Book of Ruth* was a popular musical subject as well. Oratorios based on it were written by George Tolhurst (1864) and Leopold Damrosch (1875). I am grateful to Alan Lewis for bringing this to my attention.

[Back](#)

¹⁶⁷ Rutherford B. Hayes (1822-1893), President 1877-1881 (or "President de facto," as Dailey persisted in calling the Republican Hayes following his disputed 1876 election; *see* EN, September 10, 1877, p3, c4)).

[Back](#)

¹⁶⁸ "The two great sections . . . being represented by the little daughters of Mayor Warder and Mr. R. Dailey. . . . [T]he President . . . honored the little girls with a smile and a bow" (CJ, September 19, 1877, p1, c4). Warder's daughter was probably Katie C. Warder (ca.1872-).

Dailey's daughter Nahma (originally May) Dailey (1871-) studied painting with Carl Brenner (see *Louisville Times*, August 29, 1889, p1, c6) and at the Cincinnati School of Art, and worked in Louisville as a professional artist before marrying her English cousin Nelson Reeve Bird (1867-) in 1896 and moving to England, where Bird long ran the Art Engraving Company.

Dailey's ecstatic coverage of President Hayes' visit (which included stops at the Quartermaster Depot, Ford Plate Glass Works and both Jeff shipyards) declared that "the distinguished citizens of Louisville" accompanying the President were "much surprised" at Jeff's reception, being "not aware . . . that they had such a lively neighbor in Jeffersonville" (EN, September 14, 1877, p1, c1).

[Back](#)

¹⁶⁹ CJ, *Our Log*, October 1, 1877, p3, c8.

[Back](#)

¹⁷⁰ EN, July 18, 1882, p4, c2. Capt. John ("Jack") W. Blanks (ca.1838-1889), Alabama-born steamboat captain and shipowner, died when his *Corona* blew her boilers and "hurled [him] through the cabin roof" from the barber's chair where he had been sitting (N.Y. *Times*, October 5, 1889, p1, c4). The *John Wilson* was named for New Orleans ship's chandler John Wilson (ca.1834-1880).

[Back](#)

¹⁷¹ CJ, *Our Log*, October 11, 1877, p3, c8.

[Back](#)

¹⁷² CJ, *Our Log*, October 9, 1877, p3, c8. William Shakespeare Hays (1837-1907), simultaneously songwriter, performer, impresario of minstrel shows, music store proprietor, piano salesman, job printer, fire extinguisher salesman, steamship ticket agent, CJ river editor and, in 1877, Red Ribbon temperance lecturer, was a ubiquitous and peripatetic Louisville and Jeff character whose portrait Joiner painted ca.1885. CJ said he ran "the river-department of the Courier-Journal on the high pressure plan" (July 1, 1877, p3, c5). See also [n.3](#).

[Back](#)

¹⁷³ EN, September 29, 1877, p4, c2. She sank in 1882 with the loss of fifteen lives after hitting a snag at night on the Atchafalaya River at Reichard's Landing, Louisiana (EN, July 18, 1882, p4, c2).

[Back](#)

¹⁷⁴ LC, November 9, 1878, p3, c2.

[Back](#)

¹⁷⁵ EN's review called them "as good as most of the traveling troupes which have exhibited here" (October 15, 1877, p4, c1-2). Mozart Hall, built around 1870, stood immediately above Sparks' at 62-66 Spring Street, at the corner of what is now Preservation Place. By 1897 it had been converted to a factory that made jeans and was later demolished.

[Back](#)

¹⁷⁶ William (“Captain Billy”) Patterson (1840-1917) (his middle name was most often rendered as T., but also as N. or F.), son of an Irish immigrant, was foreman caulker at Barmore’s shipyard. “Chief Director” of No. 1 Engine-house as early as 1865 (see *Edward’s 1865-6 Louisville Annual Directory*, p176 of its *New Albany and Jeffersonville* section), he had joined Jeff’s other fire department, the U.S. Steam Fire Department, in February 1868 (see CJ, February 7, 1893, p6, c6). Jeff’s fire chief May 1870 to February 1871 and 1886 to 1893, Patterson later served as court bailiff. He was always ready to sing songs of his own composition at Democratic rallies. Obits., CJ, June 9, 1917, p5, c3 and *Louisville Evening Post*, June 9, 1917, p13, c3.

[Back](#)

¹⁷⁷ Joiner’s steamboating remains the most obscure chapter of his life. It most likely involved a trip down the Ohio and Mississippi in the fall of 1868 (see p10, n.35 & fig. 12), with the ensuing winter spent steaming through Louisiana and Arkansas, perhaps on the Red River. *Baird*, however, probably informed (or misinformed) by Joiner himself, says (p696) that Joiner “spent three years sketching and steamboating” in the South.

[Back](#)

¹⁷⁸ CJ, August 23, 1871, p4, c5. Jeff reorganized its fire department in 1871, purchasing (at a total cost of \$7,224.25 (LC, September 6, 1871, p1, c6)) a new fire engine to replace “the little fiddling one-horse concern” (CJ, February 13, 1869, p1, c9). The *Amoskeag* was put through its paces at the corner of Spring and Market the day after its arrival and “in every respect performed to the entire satisfaction of our city officers. . . . She is a most handsome piece of mechanism” (CJ, August 24, 1871, p5, c5). But its splendor soon caused a new problem: “we are informed that a gang of boys congregate around the engine house No. 1, and create false alarms for the purpose of bringing out the steam engine” (LC, September 23, 1871, p1, c6).

In the photograph ([fig. 6](#) & [fig. 57](#)), Joiner is fidgeting, as shown by the double-registration of the connecting loop of the nozzle his hand rests on and the blurredness of that hand and of his features.

Likely the photograph was taken by George W. “Photo” Finley (1831-1914), who that summer engineered such a group photograph of Methodist ministers (see LC, September 8, 1871, p4, c5). (The photographer and his flash can be seen reflected in the brass air chamber). The raccoon look shared by the subjects’ eyes perhaps results from the “eye opening” technique possible with glass negatives and often necessitated by the brightness of the flash powder. Aside from photographs for the 1875 *Map of Clark County, Indiana*, Finley’s *oeuvre*, including his work in Jeff from 1870 to 1894, is lost.

I am grateful to Garry J. Nokes for this photograph of the Jeffersonville Fire Department’s photocopy of an untraced original, to Chief Joe Lee for permission to remove the photocopy for study, and to Cletus Blandford for his analysis of it.

[Back](#)

¹⁷⁹ Minstrel shows—the longest-running genre in American entertainment history—continue to inform the exaggerations of contemporary popular culture, including television shows like *The Wire*. That donning blackface allowed white performers license to speak truth to power, regardless of any racial aspect, in ways they could or would not without it is shown in the one complete minstrel-show joke recovered in research for this piece:

The end man in a negro minstrel troupe made quite a good local "hit" at one of their performances in Louisville a few nights since. "I'se got a situation" said Bones. "What kind of a situation?", asked Tambo. "Oh, I'se a conductor on de *fine* rail road." "What railroad is dat?" "Why, the J., M. & I., ob course." [*i.e.*, the Jeffersonville, Madison & Indianapolis Railroad] "But what makes you call it de *fine* railroad?" "'Case if a link or couplin' pin breaks, de conductor an' engineer is fined, dat's why."

"Railroad Bumpers," EN, March 2, 1880, p1, c4.

[Back](#)

¹⁸⁰ CJ, September 16, 1870, p3, c6:

A mighty nuisance is committed in No. 1 Engine-house . . . intolerable to the citizens living in that vicinity. Every night a crowd of boys gather in the engine-house, and burn away gas at the expense of the city. They practice a kind of negro minstrel performance, and have delectable intervals of swearing, obscenity, howling and jumping, that render the night hideous with their rowdyism.

The following year, when No. 1 Engine-house had 22 volunteer firemen (*see* CJ, March 22, 1871, p4, c4) who paid for the privilege of belonging (*see* CJ, September 1, 1869, p4, c5), there were more complaints:

There is a lot of stage-struck youths, lovers of cork opera [*i.e.*, *blackface minstrel shows*], who rehearse in Engine-house No 1 . . . burning gas at the expense of the city, and destroying the quiet of the neighborhood, much to the disgust of the people in that vicinity.

CJ, February 12, 1871, p11 c8. This 1871 "band of burnt-cork minstrels in training at No. 1 engine house" (CJ, February 9, 1871, p4, c3) scheduled performances in Jeff and Charlestown (*id.* and CJ, February 10, 1871, p3, c5).

The good times at No. 1 Engine-house apparently came to an end in August 1872, when it was "closed up by order of Engineer Kennedy, and the key of same . . . hung up . . . where it can be found in case of fire" (CJ, August 10, 1872, p4, c7). Irish-born Dennis Kennedy (ca.1838-1881) was a successful grocer who retired young and served as fire chief 1872-1873 (obit., EN, April 25, 1881, p1, c1-2). By March 1876 No. 1 Engine-house had been decommissioned and given over to the use of the Jeffersonville Gymnasium Club and the Mechanics' Savings and Loan Association (*see* EN, March 14, 1876, p1, c4) and replaced by a new structure near by, No. 2 Engine-house, which, converted to an apartment house, survives.

[Back](#)

¹⁸¹ From ND's review:

This talented troupe of young men of Jeffersonville gave an entertainment in Mozart Hall last Saturday night, under many discouraging circumstances and in such a manner as to do themselves great credit. [*Though t*]he house was not as large as it

should have been, the performance was in many parts equal to many of our first-class traveling shows.

August 15, 1872, p5, c3.

[Back](#)

¹⁸² "It is said they gave the best performance of the kind ever given in Charlestown" (ND, August 29, 1872, p5, c2). Shows were also planned for the Indiana towns of North Vernon, Lexington and Madison (ND, August 22, 1872, p5, c4). No ads or reviews concerning those performances have been found, but see [fig. 80](#) (n. 191) for a trace of Joiner's Madison visit.

[Back](#)

¹⁸³ Henry Kime (1852-1903), house painter and paper hanger, was "one of the well-known characters of this city" (obit., EN, June 22, 1903, p2, c3).

[Back](#)

¹⁸⁴ According to the program published in EN, June 27, 1873, p3, c4 ([fig. 60](#)). EN's favorable review of a somewhat different program noted: "Joiner & Kime in their specialties were very good, considering the interruptions of the 'property man'" (which interruptions were, of course, part of the act) (June 21, 1873, p1, c3).

[Back](#)

¹⁸⁵ Prof. William ("Pap") Rowden (1827-1893), English-born son and grandson of Royal Guards bandmasters, emigrated in 1840 and later founded or taught 150 bands in Indiana and Kentucky (obit., EN, November 10, 1893, p4, c4-5).

[Back](#)

¹⁸⁶ EN, October 12, 1877, p4, c1.

[Back](#)

¹⁸⁷ Democrat Richard Moore Bishop (1812-1893), a temperance leader, won Ohio's gubernatorial election in late October.

[Back](#)

¹⁸⁸ EN, October 16, 1877, p1, c4. Parks' drug store was then at 43 Spring Street (later renumbered 204), immediately north of the northeast corner store at Market Street and Spring Street.

[Back](#)

¹⁸⁹ EN, October 17, 1877, p4, c2.

[Back](#)

¹⁹⁰ 4'10½" x 9'5". A massive oaken frame, with gilded inner moldings, adds another ¾" all around. Possibly the frame was constructed by Jeff's Bavaria-born undertaker George Conrad Zinck (1818-1899), who built the church's furniture (EN, Nov. 7, 1877, p4, c3; obit., EN, Sept. 21, 1899, p1, c6).

[Back](#)

¹⁹¹ Round Knob is to the left of Pixley Knob. In *Ruth* the sun is setting just where Blue Lick's harvest sun sets (note the shadows of the staves); wheat was a leading crop in Blue Lick.

Joiner appears to have used this profile before, in a wood-engraved squib headed "*News!*" incongruously bannering an ad for Fred Harper's City Drug Store in the Madison, Indiana *Daily Courier*, August 31, 1872, p2, c3.



Fig. 80

Joiner's wood-engraved horse flying over the Indiana Knobs (1872)

[Back](#)

¹⁹² A fourth daughter, Amelia Joiner, was enumerated (age 4) in the 1860 census, but has not been traced thereafter.

The eldest daughter, Priscilla E. Joiner (1840-ca.1868), married Irish-born farmer Richard M. Monks (ca.1834-1901) on the (to the Irish) auspicious day of January 1, 1861. Her fate appears to have been to have borne several children and died; Monks remarried by 1870 and had more children, apparently putting the children by his first wife out to be raised by others. Disabled as a result of his Civil War service with the 49th Indiana Infantry Regiment, Monks was later a Jefferson County, Kentucky truck farmer and a functionary of the Louisville and Portland Canal.

[Back](#)

¹⁹³ Oscar Dunreath Joiner (ca.1817-1864) was named for Oscar Dunreath, dispossessed hero of the 1796 gothic novel *The Children of the Abbey*, by Irish writer Regina Maria Roche (1764-1845).

[Back](#)

¹⁹⁴ Already at Possum Trot school, which he attended until 1860, Joiner's "innate inclination manifested itself in pictures drawn on the blackboard or another receptive surface, the teacher being unable to curb the irrepressible instinct" (*Baird*, p696). Also: "My beginning . . . was at the blackboard of a country school" (Joiner, quoted in *5,000 Canvases Done by Harvey Joiner*, by Richard B. Gilbert, *Louisville Times*, March 6, 1929, pt. 2, p1, c3-5).

[Back](#)

¹⁹⁵ ND, May 31, 1889, p1, c5-6. There seems no reason to doubt that Joiner's father moved to Blue Lick to run a cooperage, as stated in two of Joiner's obituaries (CJ, May 31, 1932, p1, c4 and Louisville *Herald-Post*, May 31, 1932, sec. 2, p1, c7).

[Back](#)

¹⁹⁶ Thompson McDonald Deitz (1811-1863), often spelled Dietz, and also referred to as Thompson McDeitz.

[Back](#)

¹⁹⁷ The date of his death was recollected by a granddaughter in the 1960's and recorded by Harvey Joiner's great-granddaughter Ruth Emily. *Baird* says Joiner moved to Jeff in 1864 (p697).

[Back](#)

¹⁹⁸ "Miss Anna Howell will go to Scott County. . . . Those Scott-county young men had better keep their vests buttoned up tight or their hearts will getaway [*sic*] from them" (EN, July 20, 1874, p1, c1).

[Back](#)

¹⁹⁹ Edward Clarence Boyd (ca.1855-1883) was the son of a prominent Louisville businessman.

[Back](#)

²⁰⁰ Canada-born Walter M. Irwin (1843-1899), then a railroad paymaster, was later secretary and treasurer of the Louisville Bridge Co. (obits., CJ, February 16, 1899, p7, c3; EN, February 15, 1899, p4, c3). Curiously, EN's list of Howell-Irwin wedding presents omits any from Joiner (October 20, 1880, p4, c2-3).

Irwin's brother was the well-known painter Benoni Irwin (1840-1896), who married his first wife, Lizzie B. Bunner Irwin (ca.1845-1867), in Louisville and who, after moving East, occasionally visited his brother in Jeff (*see, e.g.*, CJ, May 10, 1884, 6, c7).

[Back](#)

²⁰¹ EN, September 10, 1877, p1, c1 records her departure, and EN October 26, 1877, p4, c2 her return.

[Back](#)

²⁰² Helen Annette "Nettie" Kane (ca.1857-1896). Obit., EN, February 6, 1896, p4, c5.

[Back](#)

²⁰³ CJ, November 10, 1878, p2, c6.

[Back](#)

²⁰⁴ John W. Kane (1820-ca.1902) served during the Civil War as Captain of Company B of the 49th Indiana Infantry Regiment. Virginia-born son of Irish immigrants, Kane manufactured carriages in Jeff from before the war, but just as Joiner was finishing *Ruth* a narrow brush with bankruptcy closed his business for several years (*see* EN, October 24, 1877, p1, c2 & October 29, 1877, p4, c2). Long active in local Republican politics, Kane later served as a federal wagon

inspector in South Bend, Indiana, before moving to Colorado to live with his youngest daughter and apparently dying there. His first wife, Nettie Kane Joiner's mother, was Pennsylvania-born Sarah M. Haddox Kane (1824-1883), who moved to Louisville and married Kane in 1845; they moved to Jeff five years later (obit., EN, July 25, 1883, p4, c3).

[Back](#)

²⁰⁵ See EN, November 12, 1878, p1, c1.

[Back](#)

²⁰⁶ They were married November 12, 1878 at her father's house on Locust Street. "Steady, Joiner!" urged that day's CJ (November 12, 1878, p2, c5). The next day's edition declared "Mr. Joiner is well joined" (CJ, November 13, 1878, p2, c5). EN, November 12, 1878, p1, c1, gives an account of the "very private" ceremony.

Their daughter Vinnie Ream Joiner Lewman (1879-1949) was born the following April (an event the press discreetly ignored) and named for Lavinia "Vinnie" Ellen Ream Hoxie (1847-1914), the remarkable sculptor who as a teenager was commissioned by the U.S. Senate to carve the monumental *Lincoln* that stands in the U.S. Capitol's Statuary Hall.

[Back](#)

²⁰⁷ CJ, November 3, 1877, p2, c6.

[Back](#)

²⁰⁸ EN, November 7, 1877, p4, c3. CJ (November 8, 1877, p1, c8) said *Ruth*, being too big for "a small show-window . . . Mr. Joiner has consented to exhibit it in the vacant building adjoining Park's [*sic*] drug store." The "vacant building" was probably No. 43½ (later renumbered 206); today the site of both buildings is a parking lot.

[Back](#)

²⁰⁹ LC, November 9, 1877, p6, c2.

[Back](#)

²¹⁰ EN, November 8, 1877, p1, c2.

[Back](#)

²¹¹ LC, November 9, 1877, p2, c6. CJ was more restrained: "The work is done in [Joiner's] usual good style" (November 3, 1877, p2, c3).

[Back](#)

²¹² Oral tradition says Joiner stayed with his prosperous Utica farming friends Joseph C. Robertson (ca.1850-) and Louise R. Fry Robertson (1850-) while hanging *Ruth*, although in fact their marriage did not take place until the following February.

[Back](#)

²¹³ I am indebted for this information to *Ruth's* guardian, Jacqueline Fossée Braxton, and to the Rev. Charles Knecht, former pastor of the church, now known as the Utica Church of Christ.

[Back](#)

²¹⁴ EN, November 5, 1877, p4, c4. Next day EN (November 6, 1877, p1 c4) gleefully reprinted an LC item (November 4, 1877, p6, c2), changing “local” to “editor” and LC’s mistaken “Scott” to “Lott”:

“The editor of the [*Jeffersonville Evening*] NEWS was evidently badly fooled by Joiner & Lott in regard to that dead man found hanging in Parks’ drug store. Coroner Kleespies only found a paper man which the boys intend to send up in a balloon.[”]

German-born George Kleespies (1826-1889), second-hand Jeff furniture dealer, served as Clark County Coroner 1876-80.

[Back](#)

²¹⁵ In Woodson Dudley’s profile of Joiner, *Ah! An Exquisite Child Of Nature!* *Louisville Herald*, January 3, 1920, p3, c2-5 (see [n.84](#)).

[Back](#)

²¹⁶ EN, October 26, 1877, p4, c3.

[Back](#)

²¹⁷ EN, October 20, 1877, p4, c2.

[Back](#)

²¹⁸ James D. Williams (1808-1880), Governor of Indiana 1877-1880, owed his nickname to his customary trousers. Joiner painted Williams’ portrait, probably not from life, in 1876 (EN, Nov. 15, 1876, p4, c3). Its present location is unknown.

[Back](#)

²¹⁹ EN, October 26, 1877, p4, c3.

[Back](#)

²²⁰ See EN, November 5, 1877, p4, c3 (promising a November 6 (Election Day) launch, “[i]f the weather should be favorable”); EN, November 23, 1877, p1, c2; CJ, November 24, 1877, p1, c6; LC, November 24, 1877, p6, c2.

[Back](#)

²²¹ EN, December 20, 1877, p1, c1. EN the same day praised Joiner’s portrait of Oscar Jenks (see [n.112](#)).

[Back](#)

²²² EN, December 20, 1877, p1, c3.

[Back](#)

²²³ CJ, December 21, 1877, p4, c5. Portland is Louisville's western, riverside district. This *Jeffersonville* item actually appeared on the same page as CJ's *Up in a Balloon* (see [n.5](#)). LC specified that, "The balloon dropped in the river at New Albany" (December 21, 1877, p6, c1). Said the *New Albany Daily Ledger-Standard* (December 20, 1877, p4, c3):

A balloon dropped into the river this afternoon, coming from the direction of Louisville, but we did not hear of any man being drowned.

EN had more fun the next day (December 21, 1877, p2, c3-4), putting its story *Probably Lost* next to a reprint of CJ's *Up in a Balloon* (heading it *Joiner and Lott's Balloon*) ([fig. 76](#)):

The man who went up in Lott & Joiner's balloon yesterday is supposed to have been dashed to pieces when the balloon fell to the ground, as nothing has been heard from him. The man was a stranger in the city, and did not tell his name. When the air ship was being made ready for the voyage, he said not a word, not a muscle moved, nor no emotion was visible, and he started on his perilous voyage without even saying so much as a parting farewell. He doubtless little thought that he was starting on a trip from which he would return in a mangled, lifeless condition. It is reported this morning that it was a preconcerted plan to commit suicide.

[Back](#)

²²⁴ EN, November 22, 1877, p1, c1. Marie Louise Ninon Duclos (1841-1888), "Sole Proprietress" of "Mme. Duclos' Troupe of Sensational Blondes, Selected Statuary Artists and Grand Specialty Combination, the Monarch of Shows" (ad, N.Y. *Clipper*, September 29, 1877, p211, c2), was born in Guadeloupe, West Indies and died in Rich Hill, Missouri.

[Back](#)

²²⁵ CJ declared that a "more vulgar performance has never been given in Louisville" (November 20, 1877, p1, c3). Particularly agitated were YMCA officials, who, "fearing that they might lose the point of some 'gag' or the view of some well proportioned limb, occupied one of the lower boxes, and, to speak the truth, to all outward appearances enjoyed the entertainment amazingly," before, at show's end, swearing out "warrants for the arrest of the whole troupe" (N.Y. *Clipper*, December 1, 1877, p287, c3). The company fled across the Ohio River to Jeff.

[Back](#)

²²⁶ EN, November 23, 1877, p1, c2. Jeff saw an "expurgated edition" performed four times (CJ, November 24, 1877, p1, c6). EN (November 22, 1877, p1, c3) could not condemn the show:

The blondes are a fair-looking set of girls, and, with the aid of padding, powdering and painting, presented a very attractive appearance. The worst part of the show was the living statue business, and we have seen more vulgar performances in the highest-toned theatres in the country.

[Back](#)

²²⁷ CJ, January 12, 1878, p4, c5.

[Back](#)

²²⁸ The ad last appeared CJ, January 7, 1878, p4, c8-9. Six months later the N.Y. *Times* reported (under *Business Embarrassments*) that “C.B. Hunt & Co., proprietors of Hunt’s Hotel, made an assignment [*with creditors*] today” (June 11, 1878, p1, c4). Regardless, Hunt’s Hotel operated for many more years.

[Back](#)

²²⁹ EN, January 14, 1878, p1, c3.

[Back](#)

²³⁰ EN, January 18, 1878, p1, c3. The immediately preceding item says “Lott & Joiner will commence the manufacture of another balloon,” and next day’s CJ (January 19, 1878, p4, c5) promised “Another balloon with a man in it, from Lott & Joiner,” but they are not known to have launched another.

[Back](#)

²³¹ CJ, April 18, 1880, p2, c7:

Mr. W. [*sic*] H. Joiner, the well-known artist, has opened a studio on the second floor of the Courier-Journal building, Louisville. He is an artist of more than ordinary promise, and goes to Louisville in order to have a larger field for the public to examine his studies.

But the precipitating event seems less to have been Joiner’s ambitions for a larger field than his studio landlord Floyd Parks’ suddenly moving his business (Joiner had moved his studio to the second floor of Parks’ Drug Store in February 1878 (*see* CJ, February 5, 1878, p4, c5)). Parks moved from 43 Spring Street to 41 Spring Street, the corner building that until recently had housed Barney Rosenthal’s store, by April 6, 1880 (according to that day’s EN, p1, c2). Joiner, just back from a sketching trip up the Kentucky River (his departure announced in EN, March 20, 1880, p1, c4), vacated his Jeff studio by April 14 (EN, April 14, 1880, p1, c3) and immediately opened his new one in Louisville (CJ, April 18, 1880, p2, c7).

[Back](#)

²³² *How It Was In Jeffersonville in 1877*, EN, February 5, 1878, p4, c2. The next day’s *Recapitulation* lists “H. Joiner” among those stating their business in 1877 to have been “Better” (Feb. 6, 1878, p2, c4).

[Back](#)

List of Illustrations

Fig. 1. [Interior, Church of Christ, Utica, Indiana](#)

Fig. 2. [The Joiner](#)

Fig. 3. [The Joiner \(detail of Fig. 2\)](#)

Fig. 3A. [The Joiner \(detail of Fig. 2\)](#)

- Fig. 4. [Harvey Joiner, ca. 1920](#)
- Fig. 5. ["Up in a Balloon"](#)
- Fig. 6. [Harvey Joiner at 19 \(1871\)](#)
- Fig. 7. [Lower Spring Street, Jeffersonville, during 1884 flood](#)
- Fig. 8. [Joiner's Daily Evening News masthead](#)
- Fig. 9. [Detail of Fig. 6](#)
- Fig. 10. [Carl Brenner's Original Sign Shop wood-engraved store ad \(1870\)](#)
- Fig. 11. [Carl Brenner's Original Sign Shop wood-engraved store ad \(1870\)](#)
- Fig. 12. [Carl C. Brenner wood-engraved exhibition ad \(1887\)](#)
- Fig. 13. [Carl Brenner's wood-engraved store ad \(1867\)](#)
- Fig. 14. [Joiner's ca. 1871 wood-engraved envelope](#)
- Fig. 15. [Joiner's ad for Preusser & Wellenvos, Caps and Furs \(1876\)](#)
- Fig. 16. [Detail of Fig. 15](#)
- Fig. 17. [Joiner's wood-engraved 1877 Hunt's Hotel and Dining-Rooms ad](#)
- Fig. 18. [Joiner's wood-engraved 1869 Kohlhepp's Exchange and Restaurant ad](#)
- Fig. 19. [Detail of Fig. 18](#)
- Fig. 20. [Reuben Dailey, ca. 1882](#)
- Fig. 21. [Joiner's wood-engraved bugler \(1874\)](#)
- Fig. 22. [Joiner's wood-engraved porter \(1874\)](#)
- Fig. 23. [Variant detail of Joiner's wood-engraved porter](#)
- Fig. 24. [Joiner's wood-engraved cannon \(1874\)](#)
- Fig. 25. [Joiner's wood-engraved Harlequin \(1874\)](#)
- Fig. 26. [Joiner's wood-engraved raging head \(1874\)](#)
- Fig. 27. [Joiner's wood-engraved Angel of Mercy and Charity \(1874\)](#)
- Fig. 28. [J. Ira Dorsey, ca. 1897](#)
- Fig. 29. [Joiner's Angel of Mercy and Charity \(detail from second publication\)](#)
- Fig. 30. [Joiner's wood-engraved toff \(1874\)](#)
- Fig. 31. [Joiner's wood-engraved timekeeper \(1874\)](#)
- Fig. 32. [Joiner's wood-engraved pasha \(1874\)](#)
- Fig. 33. [Joiner's wood-engraved drum major \(1875\)](#)
- Fig. 34. [Joiner's wood-engraved The Negro Exodus \(1879\)](#)
- Fig. 35. [Runaway slave icons](#)
- Fig. 36. [Joiner's wood-engraved The Election Bummer's Lamentations \(1879\)](#)
- Fig. 37. [Joiner's wood-engraved running man \(1879\)](#)
- Fig. 38. ["Harvey Joiner has his studio"](#)
- Fig. 39. [Joiner's Boy with Puppy \(date unknown\)](#)
- Fig. 40. [Joiner's Signature: Ruth Gleaning in the Fields of Boaz \(1877\)](#)
- Fig. 41. [Joiner's Signature: Boy with Puppy \(date unknown\)](#)
- Fig. 42. [Joiner's Signature: A 1932 check](#)
- Fig. 43. [Jeff's Spring Street, ca. 1897](#)
- Fig. 44. ["His studio . . . well filled"](#)
- Fig. 45. [1937 view of former Sparks' Dry-Goods store](#)
- Fig. 46. [Joiner's Sunrise on Kentucky River \(ca. 1874\)](#)

- Fig. 47. [Joiner's Castle \(ca. 1875\)](#)
- Fig. 48. [Portrait of a Man \(conjecturally identified as Barney Rosenthal\) \(1877\)](#)
- Fig. 49. [Earliest Press Mention \(1869\)](#)
- Fig. 50. ["Unrivalled in the World"](#)
- Fig. 51. [The Rev. J. W. Sullivan's House](#)
- Fig. 52. [Red Ribbon Club's Grand Excursion](#)
- Fig. 53. [Lillie Howard's Covered Bridge at Harrod's Creek \(1876\)](#)
- Fig. 54. [Lillie Howard's Harrod's Creek at the Ohio River \(1877\)](#)
- Fig. 55. [Capt. Daniel Howard's house](#)
- Fig. 56. [Exterior, Utica Church of Christ](#)
- Fig. 57. [Harvey Joiner and the Amoskeag, ca. August 1871](#)
- Fig. 58. [Photograph of a Man \(conjecturally identified as Capt. Billy Patterson\), ca. 1868](#)
- Fig. 59. ["Joiner & Patterson's Combination"](#)
- Fig. 60. [The Amateurs Benefit \(program for Joiner's minstrel show\), 1873](#)
- Fig. 61. [Evening News review of "The Amateurs"](#)
- Fig. 62. [Mozart Hall, exterior \(ca. 1897\)](#)
- Fig. 63. [Mozart Hall, interior \(ca. 1897\)](#)
- Fig. 64. [Ruth Gleaning in the Fields of Boaz \(1877\)](#)
- Fig. 65. [Ruth \(detail of haystack\)](#)
- Fig. 66. [Ruth \(detail showing Bethlehem\)](#)
- Fig. 67. [Profile of the Indiana Knobs, as seen from Joiner's boyhood home, Blue Lick, Indiana](#)
- Fig. 68. [Ruth \(detail of water jug\)](#)
- Fig. 69. [Ruth \(detail of clouds\)](#)
- Fig. 70. [Ruth \(detail of Ruth's foot and hand\)](#)
- Fig. 71. [Ruth \(detail of Ruth's face\)](#)
- Fig. 72. [Ruth \(detail showing Boaz\)](#)
- Fig. 73. [Ruth \(detail of bag of grain and water jug\)](#)
- Fig. 74. [Ruth \(detail of tree\)](#)
- Fig. 75. [Ruth \(detail of barley stalks\)](#)
- Fig. 76. ["Probably Lost" and "Joiner and Lott's Balloon"](#)
- Fig. 77. [Sensational Blondes](#)
- Fig. 78. [Harvey Joiner, ca. 1902](#)
- Fig. 79. [Ruth \(detail\)](#)
- Fig. 80. [Joiner's wood-engraved horse flying over the Indiana Knobs \(1872\)](#)

A Note on Sources

When his studio burned in 1907, Joiner — such was his devotion to the external aspects of his career — appears (according to *Baird*, p697), to have mourned equally his 98 incinerated canvases and his “mailing list of five thousand names.” Hence it is fitting that this study should be based almost entirely on Joiner newspaper items, as

discovered mainly on microfilm, and gratifying that he emerges from them a more interesting character than his faded reputation might suggest.

Newspapers cited:

Jeffersonville (Indiana) *Evening News* (later the *Daily Evening News and News*) ("EN")
Jeffersonville *National Democrat* ("ND")
Louisville (Kentucky) *Courier-Journal* ("CJ")
Louisville *Commercial* ("LC")
Louisville *Evening Post*
Louisville *Herald*
Louisville *Post and News*
Louisville *Times*
New Albany (Indiana) *Ledger-Standard*
New York *Day's Doings*
New York *Times*
Auburn (New York) *News and Bulletin* (accessed through www.fultonhistory.com)
Otsego (New York) *Farmer* (accessed through www.fultonhistory.com)
New York *Clipper* (accessed through www.fultonhistory.com)
Madison (Indiana) *Daily Courier*
Memphis (Indiana) *Weekly Memphian*
St. Louis (Missouri) *Post Dispatch*
Sterling (Kansas) *Bulletin*

Books cited:

Atlas of Jefferson & Oldham Counties Kentucky (Philadelphia: Beers & Lanagan, 1879)
Baird's History of Clark County, by Lewis C. Baird (Indianapolis: B. F. Bowen & Co., 1909)
Book of Ruth (Old Testament), King James version
Caron's Directory for Louisville 1876 (Louisville: Caron Directory Co., 1876)
Caron's Directory for New Albany and Jeffersonville 1880 (Louisville: Caron Directory Co., 1880)
Caron's Directory for New Albany 1877-78 (Louisville: Caron Directory Co., 1877)
Edwards Louisville Annual Directory, 1865-6 (Louisville: Southern Pub. Co., 1865)
Edwards Louisville Annual Directory, 1867-8 (Louisville: Southern Pub. Co., 1867)
Edwards Louisville Annual Directory, 1868-9 (Louisville: Southern Pub. Co., 1868)
History of the Ohio Falls Cities and Their Counties (Cleveland, Ohio: L. A. Williams & Co., 1882), two volumes
Images of America: Jeffersonville, Indiana, by Garry J. Nokes (Chicago: Arcadia, 2002)
Jeffersonville Journal Special Edition / Jeffersonville Indiana / A Pictorial and Descriptive Synopsis of the City's Status in the World of Industry, Commerce and Manufacturing (August 1897)
Notable Men of Kentucky at the Beginning of the 20th Century (1901-1902), by Benjamin La Bree (Louisville: George G. Fetter, 1902)

Who's Who in Louisville [1912], ed. Alwin Seekamp & Roger Burlingame (Louisville: Louisville Press Club, 1912)
Who's Who in Louisville [1936], compiled by W. T. Owens (Louisville: Standard Printing Co. , 1936)

Acknowledgements

This effort long ago very fortunately took on the aspect of a community effort. I am very grateful for all the help given me by those named below: this study could not have been written without it. I am also grateful to those who have helped but whose names I failed to get.

Ruth Emily, Harvey Joiner's great-granddaughter, has tended his flame, collecting stories and artifacts for more than forty years, and I thank her for generously sharing her knowledge with me.

Sharon Zimmerman, research librarian of the Jeffersonville Township Public Library's Indiana Room, has been essential to my research. Amazingly knowledgeable – and equally intuitive – she has deftly pointed me toward many correct paths and tactfully plucked me from many wrong ones. Her colleagues at the Jeffersonville Township Public Library have also been helpful and extraordinarily patient, especially Laura Conner, Harriet Goldberg, Susan Herbert, Stuart Jones, Becky Kelien, Jade Meador, Veronica Winnecke and Sheryl Yoder.

Great thanks to Bob Higgins, painter and proprietor of the much lamented Higgins-Maxwell Gallery, who was the first to tell me about Harvey Joiner and to show me one of his paintings.

And thanks to:

Jeanne M. Burke, President, *Clark County Museum, Inc.*
Rob Cathcart, *Cathcart & Co.*, Scottsburg, Indiana
Billy Hertz, *Billy Hertz Gallery*, Louisville
Jim Jackson, *Aesthetics in Jewelry*, Louisville
Scott Nussbaum, *Scott F. Nussbaum Antiques*, Louisville
David P. Taylor, *David P. Taylor Antiques*, Owensboro, Kentucky

and thanks to:

Anderson Library, Lawrenceburg, Kentucky
Cave Hill Cemetery: Kathleen Fisher
Charlestown (Indiana) Public Library: April Beckman, Glenna Martin, Donna McKee, Luk Stiffler and their colleagues

Corydon (Indiana) Old State Capitol: Nancy Snyder
Daviess County Public Library, Owensboro, Kentucky
DePauw University Library, Greencastle, Indiana
Ekstrom Library, University of Louisville
The Filson Club, Louisville
Fine Arts Library, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana
First Christian Church of Jeffersonville: Lorna Knight, Rev. Joe Duffield and Rev. Bruce Barkhauer
Henryville (Indiana) Library: Charlotte Higdon and Nancy Nicholson
Herman Meyer & Son, Louisville: Eileen Meyer Renco
Howard Steamboat Museum, Jeffersonville: Madeline C. Covi, Anne Harrell, Donna Higdon and Yvonne Knight
Indiana State Library, Indianapolis
Oldham County Historical Society (J. C. Barnett Library and Archives), La Grange, Kentucky: Dot Carraco and Nancy Stearns Theiss
Jeff-Clark Preservation, Inc.: Keith Stayton
Jeffersonville City Council: Perry L. Smith
Jeffersonville Evening News: Brenda Dorman
Jeffersonville Fire Department: Chief Joe Lee and Fireman Josh Stich
Jennings County Public Library, North Vernon, Indiana
Kentucky Historical Society Library, Frankfort, Kentucky
Lilly Library, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana: Dena Williams
Louisville Courier-Journal: Annette Norris
Louisville Free Public Library: Claudia Fitch, Joe Hardesty, and Joella Lindstrom
Lucille Little Fine Arts Library, University of Kentucky
Madison, Indiana Public Library: Janice Barnes
Margaret M. Bridwell Art Library, University of Louisville, Louisville, Kentucky
New Albany, Indiana Public Library: Betty Menges, Nancy Strickland and their colleagues
Ohio State University Libraries, Columbus, Ohio
Oldham County Public Library, La Grange, Kentucky: Graham Troop
Owensboro Museum of Fine Art: Mary Bryan Hood
Paul Sawyier Public Library, Frankfort, Kentucky
Pendennis Club, Louisville, Kentucky
Photo Archives, Ekstrom Library, University of Louisville: Andy Anderson and Bill Carner
Scottsburg (Indiana) Public Library
St. Louis (Missouri) Public Library
St. Stanislaus Kostka, St. Louis, Missouri: Bonnie Prather
Scott County (Indiana) Genealogical Society: Wanda Stoffregen
Scott Funeral Homes: Bill Scott
Sellersburg (Indiana) Public Library: Susan Bennett
Sterling, Kansas Public Library: Shirley Kenyon

Stout Reference and Research Library, Indianapolis Museum of Art
University Archives, Ekstrom Library, University of Louisville
Utica (Indiana) Church of Christ: Jacqueline Fossée Braxton, Rev. Charles Knecht and
Rev. Henry Dorman
William T. Young Library, University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky
Woodford County Historical Society Library and Museum, Versailles, Kentucky:
Lorraine Brandenburg and Dona Wilson

and thanks to:

Douglas C. Ballantine
Cletus Blandford
Maurice Brown
John E. Evans
Elizabeth Gilley
Mr. and Mrs. Douglas Lewman King
Rachel Lewman King
Mrs. Magnus Heubi
Mark Jordan
Alan Lewis
Richard Lewman
Thomas J. Lindley III
Stephen D. Marples
Barbara Marsh
Garry J. Nokes
Mrs. Linda Siemon
Mary Grace Shore
Don and Kathy Smith
Prof. Bruce Tyler (University of Louisville)
Connie Utley

Special thanks to Harvey Joiner's young friend, Julia Van Winkle

And special thanks, for generous material assistance, to
Woo Speed McNaughton and Colin J. McNaughton;
to John B. Meyers;
and to Stoll Keenon Ogden PLLC.

Thanks also to JSM, for transportation and photography, and to Steven Cornwell – to
whom this work is dedicated – for letting me avail myself liberally of his remarkable
faculty of providing insight on demand.

Everybody named above has made invaluable contributions to this work, but one thing I claim for myself: The errors, large and small, are mine – all mine.

–SKM

About the Author: Steven Key Meyers was born on a farm near Grand Junction, Colorado, raised in various Midwestern and Eastern locales, and now lives in rural Indiana. His novels include *Good People* (2010), *All That Money* (2011), and *New York/Siena: Two Short Novels* (2012).

[Back](#)

###

[Return to Top](#)