

Mount Vernon Signal

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Second Section

Thursday, January 17, 2013

Eight Gables Hotel: a Livingston landmark for 60 years

By David W. Owens

For sixty years (1899-1959) the Eight Gables Hotel stood as a testament to the days when Livingston was a progressive railroad town of the nineteenth century. A hustling and bustling community with a thriving diverse commerce; Livingston had the largest population and work force in Rockcastle County.

The Eight Gables Hotel was built by Henry Rice in Carpenter's Gothic style with the finest timber; wal-

nut, oak, and chestnut cut by lumber contractor Harve Mink. The timber was floated down the Rockcastle River to William Dillions' planing mill, located at the mouth of Roundstone Creek. There the timber was cut to size and planed.

Bill Fields was the master carpenter assisted by John Blankenship, Alva Argenbright, and a Mr. Herron. Joseph Dickerson turned the pillars and spindles for the double porches and cut the ginger

bread trim. The Eight Gables was a 70 by 50 foot structure which was divided into 26 rooms roughly 14 by 16 feet. In addition, there was a lobby, kitchen, and dining room. The Eight Gables was located on the lot presently owned by Billy Medley. The road bed that led from the hotel to the train depot is still there.

Each room had hand craved woodwork and featured a floor to ceiling doorway with a transom. All the chimneys and fireplaces

were made from beautiful native hand cut sandstone. Each of the rooms in the hotels first two stories had grated fireplaces with stoves in the rooms on the third floor. At the time of construction electricity and modern plumbing were not available. Each room was equipped with coal oil lamps and washbasins. A row of outhouses was located behind the building.

The building enjoyed many years as a prosperous hotel, with countless railroad employees, traveling salesmen, and visitors spending their nights there. Breakfast, lunch, and dinner was served seven days a week in shifts to accommodate the large clientele.

At the time of the Eight Gables' opening, Livingston served as the center of operations for two railroad lines (the Lebanon Branch of the Louisville & Nashville Railroad and the Kentucky Central Railroad terminals) that consisted of a depot, roundhouse, work yard, and a watering station

of four water towers. It employed roughly 400 men. Besides the numerous freight trains there were four passenger trains, numbers 22 and 24 traveling north and numbers 21 and 23 traveling south entered and exited Livingston each day.

There were also several lumber and coal operations headquartered in Livingston that employed a large number of workers. The town offered numerous stores consisting of grocery, clothing, general merchant goods, doctors, dentist, barbers, and a first rate city school. There were two other hotels, the Sambrook and the Mullins within the city limits. At nearby Pine Hill, the Lime Plant as well as the Pine Hill Coal & Lumber companies were in operation that employed roughly 500 workers.

Author's note: The Sambrook Hotel was originally the Livingston Hotel, from which the town took it's name.

The hotel employed a large work staff. The lobby

employed a manager, clerks, and bellboys. The manager and clerks manned the front desk, souvenir stand, and operated the post office, while bellboys ported visitors baggage on hand pushed carts from the train depot to the hotel, ran errands, and delivered room service which included carrying water, coal, and ashes to and from the rooms.

The kitchen had a head cook, assistant cooks, and dish washers for each shift. The dining room had servers and busboys. The dining room was also rented out for social events, banquets, fraternal orders and business meetings. The diner also provided a delivery service. Call boys were hired, who used hand pumped rail cars, to deliver boxed lunches to the various workstations along the railroad routes. Once on site they would "call out" the workers to receive their boxed dinners.

An Eight Gables adver-

(Cont. to pg. B8)



The Eight Gables Hotel



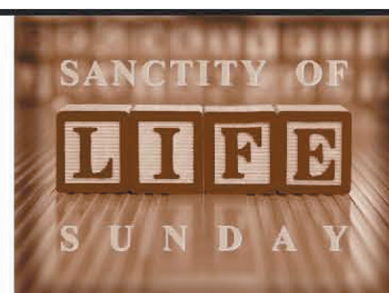
Shown in the photograph from left, The Eight Gables, The L&N Restrauant, and the Livingston Depot.



The old Dickerson place shown in ruins before it was torn down. It was originally built by James Livingston at the Livingston Hotel.



Come Join Us For
Sanctity of Life Sunday
Sunday, January 20th, 11:00 AM



It has been 40 years since the Supreme Court ruled that abortion is a fundamental right under the United States Constitution. Since that day there have been over 54,000,000 legal abortions in the United States.

You are invited to a special service this coming Sunday morning at 11:00 AM, where we will give special attention to this important issue. Many people throughout history have echoed the quote, "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing." And still many good men and women choose to do nothing to affect their country for good and right.

Please come and worship with us, pray with us, and learn what more you can do to stop the legal murder of unborn children.

Thank You and May God Bless America,

Pastor Mark Eaton

Glory to God
the Creator of Life.

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