



Construction work continues to progress on the reconstruction of Winchester Road from Main Street to the By-Pass

Introduction to the Community of Cedar Grove

The following is the first in a series of articles about the community of Cedar Grove and the west-central part of Estill County that have been compiled by Jerry G. Rose and are from information included in his book, "ESTILL COUNTY'S CEDAR GROVE - A Kentucky Community and Its People"

by JERRY G. ROSE

The community of Cedar Grove is located in west-central Estill County, stretching a distance from two to four miles west of the county seat of Irvine, along the old Richmond and Irvine Turnpike. The Kentucky General Assembly passed the Act in 1849 chartering the Turnpike "for the purposes of making an artificial road from Richmond to Irvine". The Turnpike passed through the area that would later be called Cedar Grove. Also, in 1891 a railroad was built from Richmond to Irvine through Cedar Grove. The railroad paralleled most of the old turnpike route through Cedar Grove.

Supposedly the name came from the predominance of Cedar Trees arranged in a "grove" close-by to the location of the future Methodist Church and the initial Cedar Grove School. Geographically this Grove is near the center of the area considered to be the community of Cedar Grove. For many years in the mid-1900s two cedar trees stood like sentinels in the front yard of the Methodist Church. Many still remain in groves close by and continue to propagate naturally in the native blue clay soil.

The area encompassing Cedar Grove is basically an east-west elongated rectangle stretching for about three miles in length from West Irvine to Rice Station in an east-west direction along the old turnpike route. It is about two miles wide in the north-south direction stretching from the Kentucky River and Sand Hill on the north to the Pea Ridge

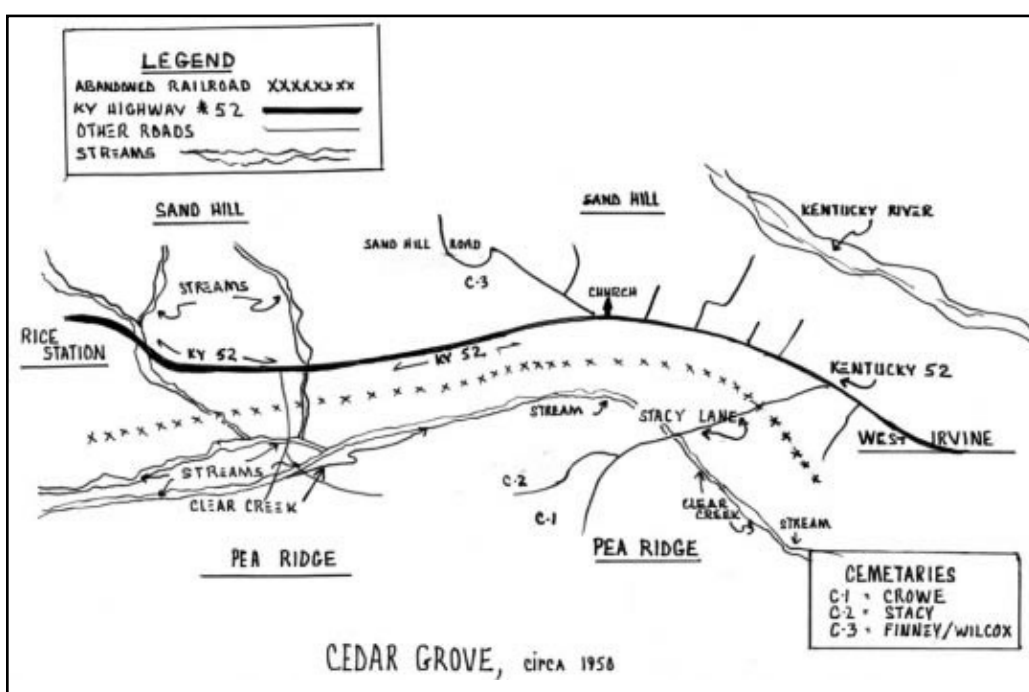
hills overlooking Clear Creek on the south.

In the very early 1900s the road was improved substantially with a rock base so that it would be passable during wet and winter weather. The Richmond to Irvine highway has always been the primary route to and from Estill County, primarily to Richmond, Lexington and other Central Kentucky cities. The railroad augmented the highway providing easy access to passenger travel and freight and express shipments for those living in Cedar Grove. The railroad was abandoned in 1932.

The highway was later assigned Kentucky Highway Route KY 52, stretching east to west from Jackson, Beattyville to Irvine and on to Richmond, Lancaster, and beyond. The route remained the primary route to Richmond until 1969/1970. Then the alignment was straightened and improved for the new highway which basically followed the abandoned railroad through Cedar Grove. This route bypassed most of the residential sections of Cedar Grove. Additionally, in 2000, the Irvine Highway Bypass was opened, providing an additional Kentucky River bridge connecting KY 52 in Cedar Grove with KY 89 on the Winchester Road. The effects of the changes in the transportation routes on Cedar Grove are discussed later.

The eastern boundary of Cedar Grove is the community of West Irvine, mainly developed in the late 1800s/early 1900s in response to the need for housing when the large Mowbray and Robinson Sawmill was located in the southwest side of the Kentucky River across from Irvine. The resulting community was named West Irvine.

The western boundary of Cedar Grove is the area of the county known as Rice Station, so named in reference to the Rice Family, residents and operators of a large general store



near the railroad station. It was a major commercial center for the area after the railroad arrived in 1891.

Also, the area known as Sand Hill borders Cedar Grove is on the northwest, an upland area that provides about a 200-ft rise in elevation. The sandy soil prevalent throughout the area is particularly suitable for cultivating various vegetable crops. Sand Hill extends for a distance of six miles to the Lower Bend of the Kentucky River.

The north and northeast boundary of Cedar Grove is the Kentucky River as it flows in a western direction. Many acres of flat bottom land provided fertile soil for agriculture uses and several farms were formed for developing and maintaining the agriculture. This mainly involved growing corn and hay and grazing cattle.

And finally, the southern boundary of Cedar Grove is an upland area known as Pea Ridge and includes the flat bottomlands of Clear Creek, up to the top of the parallel hillside that forms the edge of Pea Ridge. Several farms were located in the bottomlands of Clear Creek. However, much of the bottom land was wet and waterlogged during portions of the year. Therefore only a portion was suitable for agriculture except for grassland and hay. Other portions and the upper lands provided excellent agriculture farmlands.

It is difficult to determine when the community of Cedar Grove came into existence. Certainly by the mid-1800s residents began to trickle into the area. Several small to medium-size farms, later totaling around fifteen, were developed in the area during the late 1800s and early 1900s. The few farm houses were fairly widely scattered dotting the landscape in all directions. The residents had fairly large families and largely relied on their farm and what it provided for their living. Some of the early land owners and families in the area are believed to include:

Green and Brutus Clay	Daniel Noland
Elisha Witt	William James Crowe
William Witt	Squire Finney
William Bush	Richard White
James Hendricks	James Franklin Wilcox
James Stacy	John Owings

Lewis Barnett

A Sampling of Very Early Cedar Grove Landowners

Stacy	Finney
White	Crow(e)
Wilcox	Elliott (later)
Noland	Floyd (later)
Witt	Tuttle (later)

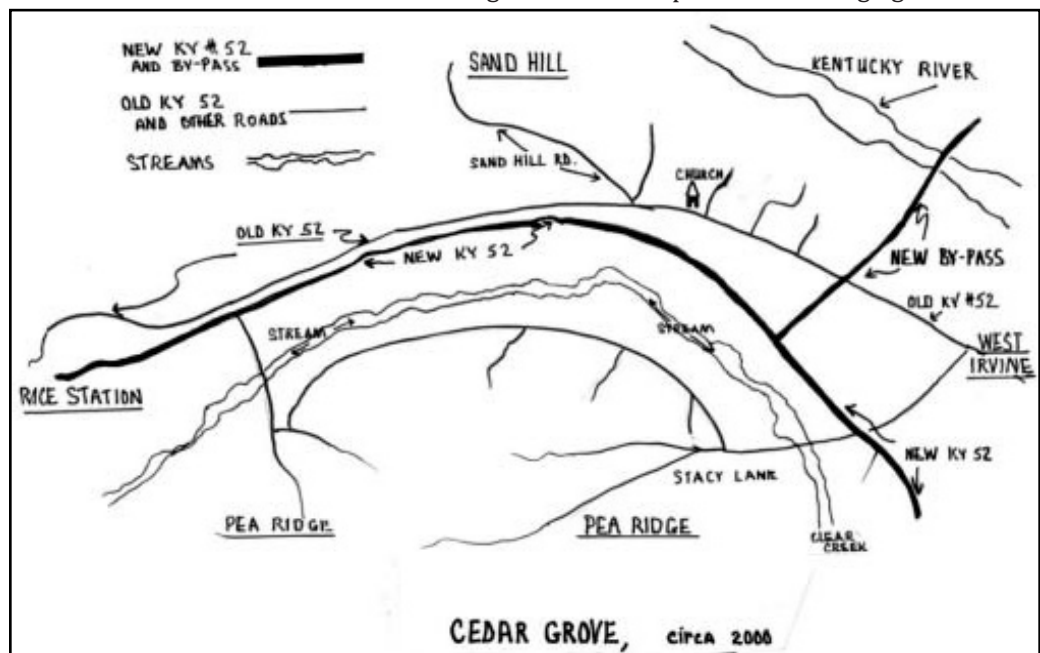
A Sampling of Very Early Cedar Grove Families

However during the very early 1900s considerable numbers of residential lots began to be split from the farms. These were mainly concentrated along the old turnpike, soon to be improved and renamed KY 52. Additional families moved into the county during this period.

The West Irvine Lumber Mill was a primary source of employment. Also, the L&N Railroad employed as many as 1,000 at the close-by Ravenna Terminal. The oilfield developments, particularly in the eastern portion of the county, served as another source of employment. In addition, the Carhartt Manufacturing Company located a large Overall Clothing Factory in Irvine during this time. The Blue Grass Army Depot in near Waco in Madison came later and employed several Estill Countians.

Several commercial establishments were started by residents to provide living staples and services for the Cedar Grove residents and others passing along the highway. These and other cottage industries provided a measure of self-employment for several of the residents.

To Be Continued



Ban on ginseng harvest extended on national forest lands

In an effort to reestablish wild ginseng populations on national forest lands, a ban prohibiting ginseng harvest in the Daniel Boone National Forest has been extended through the 2017 harvest season.

"Due to years of noticeable ginseng decline across the forest, we suspended the issuance of ginseng collection permits last year as a proactive approach to turn this trend around," said Forest Supervisor Dan Olsen.

"Some recovery time is needed for a healthy number of ginseng plants to return on the forest landscape."

Much of ginseng's decline is at-

tributed to illegal harvest methods. Overharvesting, out-of-season collection, the taking of mature plants without planting the seed for future crops, and the taking of all or most plants from a population are some of the contributing factors.

"Forest Service biologists have observed decreasing ginseng populations for several years now, and it finally reached a point that harvest needed to be managed more closely," said botanist David Taylor.

"The demand for ginseng in the herbal medicine market seems to be increasing, but the supply cannot keep up with the demand."

In wild ginseng's population

range, Kentucky ranks at the top in ginseng harvests. Other states with high collection rates include West Virginia, Tennessee and North Carolina.

To provide for future crops, wild ginseng collectors in Kentucky are required by law to plant seeds from harvested plants within 50 feet of the harvest location. The plants collected must be at least five years old and have three or more leaves.

"The illegal harvest and poaching of ginseng is a problem across southern Appalachia, and in some areas, the species has completely disappeared," said Taylor.

On national forest lands, anyone removing wild ginseng plant or its parts without a permit or outside of the legal harvest season is considered theft. Penalties for poaching may include a fine up to \$5,000 or 6-month sentence in federal prison, or both.

The Kentucky state regulations for ginseng are different from the rules that apply in the Daniel Boone National Forest. For more information, visit the state website at <http://www.kyagr.com/marketing/ginseng.html> and the DBNF website at <http://www.fs.usda.gov/main/dbnf/passses-permits/forestproducts>.



Ginseng - Courtesy of kagr.com