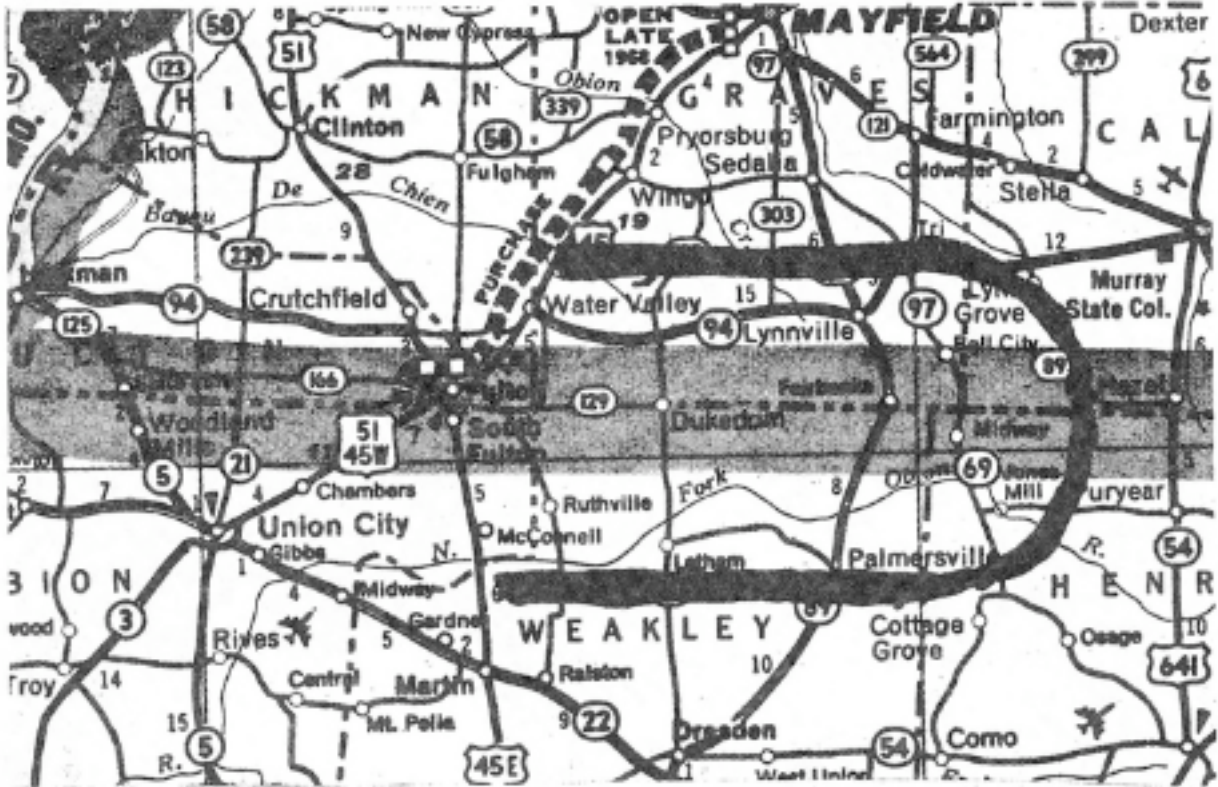


a community

## *DUKEDOM, U. S. A.*

*Compiled by Kindred Winstead*



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## ***The Town of Dukedom***

Dukedom has more to offer for a little town, and is more complete than most any other little town in miles and miles. It has 'grocery stores, service stations, a barber shop, a restaurant, a South Central Bell telephone exchange, a U.S. post office with two rural carriers, a drug store, a modern funeral home, a large feed mill, an old established bank (1904), and six nearby churches. inc 'churches are the Old Bethel Primitive Church (1824), Knob Creek Church of Christ (1834), Dukedom Methodist Church (1840) Oak Grove Church of Christ, Good Springs Presbyterian. (probably be-fore 1880) and Pleasant View Missionary Baptist Church.

### ***Location***

When asked whether Dukedom was in Kentucky or Tennessee, the folks are pleased to answer "both," meaning that it is the only "Dukedom" in the United States. Local historian, R. L. McNatt, has a postcard written from the battlefields of Europe during World War I. addressed to "Dukedom, U.S.A." which arrived safely. The town is officially listed as Dukedom, Tennessee with the post office being Tennessee. however the South Central Bell telephone exchange is in Kentucky with the address being Dukedom, Ky. The town is criss-crossed by two highways, Ky. #129. and Tenn. #118. Also extending east on the stateline for about 1/3 mile is Ky. #94 dead end. Once Dukedom was on Temporary Ky. #94 extending from Murray. Ky. to Fulton, Ky. Dukedom has excellent location being 9 miles east of Fulton. 20 miles south of Mayfield, the county seat of Graves County, Ky., 15 miles north of Dresden. the county seat of Weakley County, Tenn., and 27 miles southeast of Murray.

Excellent paved roads extend in all directions from Dukedom with the road to Dresden having a 24 foot riding surface t h a t rivals interstate quality.



### ***Schools***

The town is equally located between two great universities, Murray State University, 27 miles northeast and the University of Tennessee, 25 miles southwest. Elementary and high school students attend public schools at Dresden High School, Weakley County, Tenn., or Cuba High School, Graves County, Ky., on excellent buses. The Westview High School bus of Martin stops within 1 1/2 miles and the South Fulton High School bus of Obion County stops within 4 1/2 miles on the stateline. Some students from the area attend these fine schools.

### ***Occupations***

The principal occupation of the area is farming, the land being very suitable to the growing of corn, tobacco, beans and small grain. Many of the farms produce excellent hogs and cattle. Also Grade A and Grade C milk is produced. A large number of the people commute to public work. More and more people are beginning to seek small farms and homes out of the cities and are coming into this area to live.

### ***Recreation***

Reelfoot Lake is only about 50 miles away. It is only about 40 miles to Edgners Ferry on Kentucky Lake by Murray, and about the same to Paris Landing by Dresden. Fishing and duck hunting there is excellent. The country-side abounds in squirrel, quail, rabbit, coon, and deer. Golf links are located in Fulton, Mayfield and Sharon, only about 30 minutes away. Murray State and UTM both support nationally ranked football and basketball teams, not to mention the excellent play by the local *high schools*.

## *History*

Dukedom, U.S.A. is one of the oldest communities in West Kentucky or West Tennessee. The little cross road unincorporate (once incorporated) stateline town came into its own in the late 1820's or early 1830's. Probably there were people there as early as 1811. It is said the town started with the sale of one gallon of whiskey. It seems that Duke A. Beadles had opened a little shack and his first sale was one gallon of whiskey. The first post office was opened on July 30, 1833 with Duke Beadles as its first postmaster. In need for a name, he gave it his own "Dukedom." The town as well as both counties are now dry.

One of the earliest settlers was William C. Roberts who settled on a little knoll 3/4 mile west of Dukedom on the Tennessee side of the stateline in 1828. Nearest neighbors were Richard Stone, about three miles east, who came in 1820, and the Clarks, about one mile southwest who were already here. Other Roberts' families, six in all, followed as well as the Beadles, the Cashions, the Winsteads. and others. In an old minute book of the Old Bethel Primitive Baptist Church (Graves County, Ky.) founded in 1824, the names of Isaac Taylor, Moses Austin, Fredrick Farmer, David Freals, the Scotts, the Willinghams, the Gentrys, the Dunns and others are mentioned as some of the 29 charter members.

Weakley County, Tennessee was formed in 1823 from the Twelfth and Thirteenth Surveyors Districts of the Western Purchase of Tennessee. The county was almost completely square and it was in later years that a portion in the northwest corner was given to an Obion County. The south boundary was changed with the south-western corner being given to Gibson County and receiving an addition in the southeastern corner from Carroll County. Colton's map of 1859 still shows the county as being square with only three towns shown. Dukedom, Dresden and Winston Springs (near present Greenfield). There were other towns then but not shown on this map.

They called it the "Western District" back then, and it actually included four counties of Kentucky. Today we call it West Tennessee, and any way you look at it, it was a real bargain. The Western District was purchased from the Chicksaw Indians, according to a document of the time, at "the treaty at Doak's, in 1818. by General Jackson and Governor Shelby . . . . the price of the whole territory (including Kentucky's Graves, Calloway, Hickman, and McCracken counties) and 14 counties and three half counties in Tennessee, was \$300,000, payable in 15 annual installments.

The settlement of the District began about 1819. Graves County, Ky., was organized in 1823 out of part of Hickman County. Hickman was formed from Christian County in 1818. Before then the area was the happy hunting grounds of the Indians, who were friendly to the settlers.

Most of the Kentucky area north of Dukedom was barren, being covered by scrub blackjack and sage brush. At Pilto Oak, Ky., just 3 miles north, stood 3 tall oak trees, which were used as a guide station and camp by the Indians as they moved from the east to the west and back, hence the name.

The 1859 Colton's map shows two Kentucky towns touching the county, Pontotoc (now Fulton) at the northwest corner and Boydsville at the northeast corner. Also shown, two stagecoach roads, Dresden through Dukedom, to Feliciana and on by Moscow to Columbus. Kentucky, and Nashville to the Tennessee River and on to Dresden, Jacksonville, Totten's Well ending at Mills Point (Hickman. Kentucky). The whole area is rich in history, in fact Andrew Jackson owned land in the northwest corner, Weakley County, as well as David Crocket living on the Obion River. Old Chancery Court records in Henry County tell lots about the area. Dukedom was involved in the Civil War history with Forrest stop-ping here to go back to finish destroying parts of Paducah. Also, there was the Battle of Lockridge's Mill as well as several other skirmishes.

In early days of the town, there were two hotels, a flour mill, a cotton gin, a tannery, two saloons, a photographer, blacksmith shop, a huge flour mill, two barberships, shoe shop, tobacco prizing barns, two toll distilleries, three undertaking establishments, four or five groceries, two or three drygoods stores, one of the very first telephone exchanges, a drug store or two, a town brass band, a post office, a Farmers Grange, an Agricultural Wheel, a Masonic Lodge, A Woodman of the World camp, an Oddfellow Lodge, a local semi-pro baseball team, five or six doctors, one or two dentists, a race track, and the Dukedom Academy (where a very early prominent physician, Dr. P. A, Cashion, was educated). There were six churches, two being located in town.

Many of the people of Fulton, Ky., Martin, Tenn. (then Frost), and Mayfield, Ky., can trace their early ancestry back to the early settlers around Dukedom. Dukedom furnished Martin its first postmaster, the ex-postmaster of Dukedom, Mr. A. L. Clemmons, The kin of the 6 early pioneer Roberts' family that came in 1828 are many and reside in the three towns. Often due to the migration, Dukedom has been referred to as the mother of Fulton.

### ***Trade Potential***

A vast trade area extending some 20 miles east of Fulton with a band five miles on each side of the state line reside some 8500 people. This area includes the edges of Water Valley. Ky., Kingston community, edges of Wingo. Ky., edges at Sedalia, Ky. community, Cuba, Ky., Fair Banks, Ky., Boydsville. Ky., Austin Springs, Tenn., Beuna Vista community, Palmersvrille, Latham, Tenn., Chestnut Glade, Tenn., and Ruthville, Tenn. Most of the area is fairly level and is of rich soil. Within this area would be an ideal location for industry. The area has plenty of native labor, is strategically located, is served electrically by R.E.A. of Kentucky and T.V.A. of Tennessee through low rates, and is near 4 major Texas Gas trunk lines within 5 miles of the town and have good roads, good schools, plenty of recreation, and excellent climate. The moral and cultural life of Dukedom is deeply rooted in long established, well attended churches. The climate is ideal, with an average mean temperature of 59.6 degrees; average precipitation 41.70 inches annually; average humidity is 65%. Extremes are not too frequent. The climate is rather mild with about 200 frost free days. This area is only 9 miles from Kentucky Parkway connecting to Louisville and Lexington. With the completion of I24 joining Parkway at Kentucky

Dam, the area will be in easy access of St. Louis and Nashville. With the bi-laneing of 51 from Memphis to Fulton, and the completion of the Mississippi River bridge at Dyersburg, by 155. St. Louis would also be in easy reach by this route. Also this area has the finest people in the world, and plenty of room to expand and go.

### ***Airway Proposed***

Prominently and recently suggested by First District State Senator Carroll Hubbard of Mayfield and Representative Larry Bates of Martin was the fact that efforts should be made to secure a commercial airport for the southernmost counties of the Jackson Purchase, straddling the stateline in both Graves County and Weakley County. This would benefit Fulton, Clinton, Mayfield, Murray, Paris, Tiptonville, Greenfield, Dresden and Martin. Ueographically, such a location would be very near Dukedom. Cost of such a project :would not only be paid by the Federal Government, but also by Kentucky and Tennessee. This airport could be similar to the Clarksville-Hopkinsville that extends into both states. Such an air-port would be centrally located, and would definitely benefit area efforts to acquire new industries because this is one consideration that any prospective industry desires. The nearest commercial air-ports presently serving the nine county area of far western Tennessee and Kentucky are at Jackson, Tenn., and eight miles west of Paducah, Ky. It could be argued that this area is too close to both Jackson and Paducah, then definitely could be argued that the Owensboro airport is too close to Evansville. Ind., and the Hopkinsville-Clarksville airport is too close to the commercial air-ports at Bowling Green and Nashville.

### ***Needs***

There is a definite need that the stateline road, Ky. #118 be repaired and improved. It is one of the heavier traveled roads that lead into Fulton, serving traffic from Dresden, Paris, and Murray. Improving and widening the road to a 24 foot riding surface would open many avenues to the trade potential of the area. It definitely would be profitabl in luring much needed trade to Fulton and tax dollars to Kentucky.

A dream thought would be the rebuilding of the road east of Dukedom to Boydsville, Ky., where several section of a paved stateline road already exists, connecting on to Kentucky Lake, a distance of 25-30 miles. Better yet, a super road all the way from the Mississippi River to Kentucky Lake along the stateline through Jordan, Fulton, Dukedom, Boydsville, to be called the "avenue of America" because it would touch 3 states, and seven counties.

Beautiful, wooded, rugged, hill country is only 4-7 miles east of Dukedom abounding in deer and wild game and comparable in bealuty to the area around Nashville and Middle Kentucky. The area is barely assessable by automobile as the stateline is more or less impassable after about three miles, but those that have traveled the stateline to Boydsville a few years ago really appreciated its beauty. Kentucky Lake. nor any other area around would have any more beautiful sites for homes if this road was restored. It would be very suitable for lakes, and fine homes and would be in easy access to Fulton, only about 15 miles away which is no distance for city dwellers.