



EGGNER'S FERRY

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A ferry across the Tennessee River connecting Marshall and Trigg Counties was established early in the nineteenth century. It was approximately where US 68 now crosses the River. The first ferry was a small boat using man power. Five men lived in a little cabin on the high river bank, where it was protected from flooding. Four of these men rowed the boat, while the fifth one stood in the stern with a large oar and steered the boat.

Four different owners kept the boat in use until Mr. Eggner bought it in 1840. There were four more owners later, but the crossing continued to be known as Eggner's Ferry. The last owners were Will Williams and Charlie Bradley of Murray.

The painting is of the ferry boat which was put into operation about 1880, and served until about 1915. For many of those years it was powered by a blind black mule named John who was about sixteen hands high. He was hitched to an upright post around which he walked. It was attached to the paddle wheel at the stern. The faster John walked, the more power the boat had. He wore out the floor so much that it had to be replaced several times. He always started slowing down the boat as it got close to the bank, and the oarsman never figured out if the mule knew when he was close or if he knew exactly how many circles he had to make from one side of the river to the other!

In 1915 this boat was replaced by a moter powered ferry which was replaced by the Kentucky Lake bridge.

