

PHILLIPS COUNTY
HISTORICAL QUARTERLY

Volume 4

SEPTEMBER, 1966

Number 4

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PHILLIPS COUNTY
HISTORICAL QUARTERLY
VOLUME 4 NUMBER 4

SEPTEMBER, 1966

Published by
The Phillips County Historical Society

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The Phillips County Historical Society supplies the Quarterly to its members. Membership is open to anyone interested in Phillips County history. Annual membership dues are individual active members, \$3.00, \$3.50 if Quarterlies are mailed; man and wife, \$5.00, \$6.00 if Quarterlies are mailed (to both man and wife). Institutional, contributing and sustaining memberships are \$5.00. Single copies of the Quarterly are \$1.00.

Neither the Editors nor the Phillips County Historical Society assume any responsibility for statements made by contributors. Correspondence concerning such matters should be addressed to the authors, and concerning other matters should be addressed to Mrs. L. R. Parmelee, Secretary, 172 Helendale, Helena, Arkansas.

Dues are payable to Miss Bessie McRee, Membership Chairman, P. O. Box 629, Helena, Arkansas 72342. Make checks payable to Phillips County Historical Society, or payment may be made at County Treasurer's Office, Courthouse, Helena.

Meetings are held on the fourth Sunday in the month, at 3:30 P. M., at the Phillips County Museum, Helena. No meetings are held in December, June, July, and August. The Quarterly is published in September, December, March, and June.

EXCERPTS FROM EARLY HELENA NEWSPAPERS

Articles, and Summaries of Articles, of Interest Taken from the Constitutional Journal and the Southern Shield

Constitutional Journal, March 17, 1836 - An article in this issue contains a lengthy description of a "rifle pistol" invented by a Mr. Colt of Connecticut.

Constitutional Journal, June 9, 1836 - All males over the age of 18 years and under 55 years must work on the streets of Helena, not exceeding 5 days a year. They are allowed to furnish a substitute worker or they can pay the overseer \$1.50 for every required day of their work.

Constitutional Journal, October 6, 1836 - Died in Louisville, Kentucky, on Sunday the 25th of October, Mr. Millender Hanks of Helena, about 32 years old. He was a native of Charleston, Indiana, and a Helena merchant.

Constitutional Journal, December 1, 1836 - Sealed proposals are to be received by the army for rations for emigrant Creek Indians in their new country in the West. Subsistence required for from 16,000 to 18,000 Indians.

Constitutional Journal, January 12, 1837 - Brick-Making in Helena. Rightor and King have a patent brick pressing machine. The business will be near N. Rightor's residence, one mile west of the Town of Helena, and will be carried on by means of a steam engine, which will carry one saw, one run of mill-stones, and make from ten to fifteen thousand brick per day, of a quality far superior to mud or mortar brick. These bricks will be far superior for buildings than "chattering frames." One can see a sample at Rightor's home.

Constitutional Journal, April 6, 1837 - The editor says that Helena is the nucleus around which elements of a mighty city are beginning to concentrate, a London or Paris in embryo. It is the only place on the western bank of the Mississippi that can be reached from the interior by dry roads, and will be the terminus of all roads from the back country. Houses are springing up, property is increasing in value, and lots are selling for 10 times what they were 3 years ago.

Constitutional Journal, July 16, 1837 - A dinner celebrating

the 4th of July was held at two o'clock near Mr. Holder's spring. About 300 people came.

Constitutional Journal, September 21, 1837 - Helena Jockey Club, Fall Meeting, 1837. The Races over the Western Central Course will commence on Monday, the 20th day of November, and continue four days. 1st day - 3 mile heats, purse \$200, entrance \$35. 2nd day - 2 mile heats, purse \$175, entrance \$25. 3rd day - 1 mile heats, purse \$125, entrance \$15. 4th day - single heat of a mile; saddle, bridle and martingales, entrance \$10; free for untried nags.

The entrance money of each day will be added to that day's purse.

There is a beautiful mile track now in progress and it will be finished immediately. The ground obtained for the purpose is thought to be as good as any in the western country, and all necessary pains will be taken to make it complete.

The track is situated three quarters of a mile above Helena.

Wm. S. Able, Secretary

Southern Shield, September, 1846 - H. P. Coolidge has new spinning wheels from Cincinnati for sale.

Southern Shield, October, 1846 - The Memphis and Helena packet, "Bulletin," leaves Memphis and Helena on Wednesday and Thursday mornings. It leaves New Orleans on Wednesday evening and arrives at Helena on Saturday evening.

Southern Shield, January 9, 1847 - A young buffalo of about 300 pounds was taken at Mr. Ellis Ward's plantation in Phillips County, about 16 miles from Helena, run down by dogs after two hours. The buffalo was so exhausted that he soon died. Mr. Ward said the buffalo was very fat, which hastened its death after the chase. No buffalo herds are within 80 or 90 miles of here and it is thought that it probably followed a stray ox into this area.

Southern Shield, February 17, 1849 - Offered for sale, a plantation of 2883 acres, lying in both Phillips and Crittenden Counties, in Walnut Bend on the Mississippi River, 25 miles above Helena. It formerly belonged to and was occupied by the late Governor Kent of Maryland. (Reply to a Baltimore address.)

Southern Shield, April, 1849 - Offered for sale for \$6,000 by

William Yerby, a cotton farm of 800 acres on Old Town Bayou or Lake, 4 miles out from Old Town Landing on the Mississippi River, and 20 miles below Helena. This farm affords at all times a sufficiency of water for steamboat navigation.

Southern Shield, May 25, 1850 - Contributions solicited in Phillips, Arkansas, Bradley, Chicot, Desha, Monroe, St. Francis, Crittenden, Mississippi, Poinsett, and Greene Counties for a National Monument at Washington D. C. Q. K. Underwood has been appointed to get money from these counties. The monument is now 52 feet high and will be 600 feet when finished. A large print of the design of the monument or a large portrait of George Washington will be given to contributors of \$5.00 or more; both large prints to those who give \$8.00 or more; a small print of either to those who give \$1.00 or more; both small prints to those who give between \$1.50 or \$5.00. Contributions taken at the Shield office.

Southern Shield, June 29, 1850 - Candidates for the legislature from Phillips County, two of which are to be elected, are Walter E. Preston, Whig; Rev. George Jeffries, Democrat; Dr. Joseph S. Deputy, Whig; and J. C. Tappan, Democrat. The places and dates that they will speak in the county are:

- July 8 - Billy Pepper's, near Old Town Landing in Searcy Township.
- July 12 - Roper's, in Big Creek Township.
- July 13 - Dade's, in Spring Creek Township.
- July 15 - Zach. Brown's, in Planter's Township.
- July 17 - Gen. Pillow's, in Richland Township.
- July 18 - Thomas Bowden's, in Independence Township.
- July 20 - Askew's, in Walnut Township.
- July 22 - Stirling, in L'Anguille Township.
- July 23 - Helena, in St. Francis Township.
- July 27 - English's Schoolhouse, in Mooney Township.

Southern Shield, August 3, 1850 - The wharf-boat which was built on the St. Francis River and stayed at Stirling for 18 months, has been moved to Helena by Rightor and Miller, and they will sell groceries and dry goods there.

Southern Shield, December 14, 1850 - The 1850 census, exclusive of Helena, shows Phillips County to have 3853 whites, 2457 slaves, and 3 free Negroes. The population of Helena is 468 whites, 145 slaves, making a total of 6926 in the county. This is an increase

of 782 people from the state census of last spring

Southern Shield, March 22, 1851 - The second Quarterly Meeting of the Helena Station of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, will be held in Helena by Reverends Steele and Sugg.

Southern Shield, May 17, 1851 - A fair is to be held by the ladies of the Methodist Church on May 28th. The proceeds will be used to repair the church.

Southern Shield, September 27, 1851 - John S. Hornor is agent for the Kentucky Mutual Life Insurance Company, with Dr. J. S. Deputy, medical examiner.

Southern Shield, January 24, 1852 - Married: Col. Thomas J. Manly of Bolivar County, Mississippi, to Miss Mary E. Robards of Phillips County, by the Hon. Thomas B. Hanly, at "Bendemeer," seat of Col. W. H. Robards in Phillips County.

Southern Shield, March 13, 1852 - General Sam Houston passed down the river last Tuesday.

Southern Shield, April 3, 1852 - Dan Rice's Hippodrome is to be held at Helena, with over 200 men and horses and a double brass band. The immense pavilion can hold comfortably 10,000 persons.

Southern Shield, May 1, 1852 - Wm. R. Rightor for E. M. Rightor desires to sell property made up of three town lots fronting on a continuation of Main Street, Old Helena, with large house, carriage house, stable, hen house, wood house, etc. Good cistern and fences. Undersigned is changing residence for one he is improving near Helena.

Southern Shield, July 30, 1853 - Sealed proposals are to be received for building a Poor House near Helena, with a steward's dwelling and kitchen. Commissioners are A. G. Underwood, A. C. Robertson, and William Keller.

Southern Shield, June 23, 1855 - A meeting was held during which it was decided to have a public Barbecue on July 4th, with J. J. Hornor as orator of the day and James R. Parrish to read the Declaration of Independence.

Southern Shield, October 25, 1856 - A steam ferryboat at Helena, the "Jane", run by B. Weathers and Bros. crosses passengers over in 10 minutes. This is the best crossing on the river between the mouth of the Ohio and New Orleans.

CONFEDERATE CEMETERY, HELENA, ARKANSAS

In 1886, Mrs. John T. Jones of Lexa, President of the Phillips County Memorial Association, listed the men buried in the Confederate Cemetery at Helena, at that time. The list presented here was taken from the existing headstones in the Cemetery in August, 1966, and gives the actual wording on the stones. The information in parentheses is knowledge that Mrs. Jones had that is not on the stones. The starred names were not on her list, so either they died after 1886, or (one assumes) they were removed to the Cemetery after 1886.

1. AGNEW. Dobbins Regt. Killed 1864*
2. DEWITTE ANDERSON. Died August 21, 1902.*
3. LIEUT. BAGWELL. McGees Regt., Wards Co. Killed 1863.*
4. C. C. BARKER. Confederate Dead.*
5. A. S. BIBB. Born in Ala. June 4, 1829, Died in Ky. March 10, 1904. He entered in the Confederate service in 1861, Cap. of Co. G, 12 Regt. of Ala. Volun. Promoted in 1862 to Gen. Forrest's Staff with rank of Col.*
6. ABNER BEARD. 1814-1872.*
7. JOHN BROWN. Parsons Mo. Brigade.*
8. LUCIEN B. BURRUS. Born Rutherford Co., Tenn. May 17, 1829. Died Helena, Ark. Dec. 11, 1892 *
9. DR. R. A. BURTON. Born Jan 20, 1822. Died July 7, 1874. (Surgeon C. S. A. Died at Helena). Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy.
10. C. *
11. W. T. CALVERT. June 28, 1929.*
12. JAMES CASTEEL. McGees Regt., Jones Company *
13. CAPT. JOHN C. CLARK. Born in Ky. Jan. 27, 1825. Died July 7, 1863. From wounds received in battle of Helena, Ark. on July 4. (Of Gen. Marmaduke's bodyguard. Died at Dr. Rice's)
14. JOHN S. CLEAVELAND. 21 Texas Cavalry. Killed 1863.
15. MAJOR-GENERAL P. R. CLEBURNE. Of the Confederate Army. Born in the County Cork, Ireland March 17, 1828. Killed at Franklin, Tenn. Nov. 30, 1864.
16. J. W. COOK. 1845-1913.*
17. MAJOR SAM CORLEY. Killed at the Battle of Little Rock 1863. (Corley Spies, killed in Battle of Bayou Fourche near Little Rock).
18. R. H. CREWS. Parsons Mo. Brigade. (Wounded at Battle of Helena, died at A. J. Polk's).
19. S. C. *
20. THEODORA JEROME DAVIS. Born in South Carolina Oct. 31, 1836. Died Dec. 8, 1925 *
21. P. H. DILLIARD M. D. Died May 13, 1911*
22. S. H. DOOLING. Killed in 1863. (Died at Dr. Rice's).

23. FLEMING FINE. Parsons Mo. Brigade.*
24. WATSON FOLEY. Died Oct. 6, 1906.*
25. D. G. Killed at Helena. (Bateman's Co., Augusta, died of wounds received at Battle of Helena).
26. C. C. HALL. Died 1919.*
27. JOHN HASTECOCK. (Wounded at Battle of Helena, died at Helena).
28. JOHN W. HAYNES. Parsons Mo. Brigade.*
29. WM. HEAD. Parsons Mo. Brigade.*
30. L. B. HENDERSON. Died Oct. 12, 1905.*
31. H. V. HIGGINS. Parsons Mo. Brigade.*
32. JAMES HOOKER. 19th La. Regt.*
33. JONES. Dobbins Regt.*
34. JONES. Dobbins Regt., Bateman's Co. Killed 1863.*
35. WILLIAM HENRY JONES. Born Oct. 7, 1838. Died April 3, 1922.*
36. JACK JORDON. Died July 10, 1909.*
37. WM. KELLY. Died Feb. 12, 1910.*
38. W. E. KERR. Parsons Mo. Brigade.*
39. A. P. LAMBERT. Yell Rifles Co. A. Cleburne's 15th Ark. Regt.
40. J. E. LAMBERT. Parsons Mo. Brigade.*
41. A. LANE. Parsons Mo. Brigade. (Wounded at Battle of Helena, died at A. J. Polk's).
42. RICHARD J. LANFORD. 13th Ark. Regt. Lamberts Co. (Killed at Battle of Belmont).
43. W. H. LANFORD. Died Jan. 30, 1910.*
44. LARKIN LEWIS. Died April 22, 1911.*
45. ED. LITRELL. Parsons Mo. Brigade.*
46. MAJ. JOE MARTIN. Hart's Regt. McRea's Brigade. July 6, 1863. (5th Arkansas, wounded at Battle of Helena, died at Col. Jarman's).
47. J. W. MOORE. Dobbins Regt.*
48. GEORGE MORGAN. Killed 1864.*
49. W. A. MCCLELLAN. Co. C, 4 Ala. Inf. C. S. A. *
50. J. R. MCCULLOCK. Parsons Mo. Brigade.*
51. COL. J. T. OATES. Died Jan. 4, 1892. Age 64 years.*
52. PERNELLON. Killed at Helena.*
53. POM QUARLES. Died 1878.*
54. CAPT. THOS. QUINLIN. Died Dec. 31, 1864. Aged 33 years. Erected by his wife. (Hindman's Legion, died in camp near Bowling Green, Ky).
55. HENRY ROUNSTILL. Parsons Mo. Brigade.*
56. J. H. ROYAL. Died April 1, 1911.*
57. LIEUT. SEWELL. Dobbins Regt.*
58. SMITH. Parsons Regt. Killed 1863.*
59. MAJ. SMITH., Q. M. Shelby's Brigade.*
60. JOHN A. STONE. Parsons Mo. Brigade.*
61. JOHN SULLIVAN. Died 1863. (Wounded at Battle of Helena,

- died at Helena).
62. W. T. Killed at Helena. (Bateman's Co., Augusta, died of wounds received at Battle of Helena).
 63. O. T. TACKETT. Hart's Regt. (Wounded at Battle of Helena, died at A. J. Polk's).
 64. WM. TOLBERT. Parsons Mo. Brigade.*
 65. D. T. TREADWAY. Parsons Mo. Brigade. (Wounded at Battle of Helena, died at A. J. Polk's).
 66. FRED UNDERWOOD. Parsons Mo. Brigade. (Hospital nurse, died of congestive chill at A. J. Polk's, 1863).
 67. B. W. Killed at Helena. (Bateman's Co., Augusta, died of wounds received at Battle of Helena).
 68. JOHN F. WALKER. Dobbins Regt. Born Nov. 25, 1846. Died Dec. 7, 1864. We think of thee. (Anderson's Company. Died of pneumonia).
 69. B. F. WATSON. Died April 26, 1910.*
 70. WM. S. WHITE. Born June 24, 1840. Died Dec. 7, 1891. A Gallant Confederate Soldier.*
 71. D. E. WILLIAMS. Parsons Mo. Brigade.*
 72. E. G. WILLIAMS. Died Feb. 13, 1913.*
 73. L. D. WYNNE. Born June 19, 1833. Died Iuka, Miss. March 8, 1862.

There are twenty-nine unidentified stones in the Cemetery. One of them has the name broken off; nineteen bear the inscription, Confederate Dead. Killed at Helena; six have just Confederate Dead written on them; two are inscribed Confederate Grave; and one has Confederate Hindman's Legion

Mrs. Jones' list included twenty-three stones, unidentified by names. Of these twenty-three, she said that fourteen were Confederate soldiers killed at the Battle of Helena on July 4, 1863, six were Confederate soldiers of Parsons Missouri Brigade who were wounded at the Battle of Helena and died at A. J. Polk's, one was a Confederate soldier of Texas cavalry who was killed near LaGrange in a skirmish, one was a member of Parsons Brigade who was wounded at Helena and died at W. M. Renfro's, and one was a Confederate soldier who was killed at the Battle of Helena and found in Dr. Hargraves' yard.

Three names that were on the 1886 list, but whose remains were later moved elsewhere were those of Major-General Thomas C. Hindman, removed to a family plot in Maple Hill Cemetery at the head of Hindman Drive; Mr. McGraw, whose remains were moved to family burial grounds; Col. Paul Anderson of the Cedar Grays of Lebanon, Tenn, died 1869, possibly removed to Marianna. There was also a Pennilton listed, of Bateman's Co., Augusta, died of wounds received at the Battle of Helena. This may or may not be the same soldier that the 1966 list gives as Pernellon. Killed at Helena.

THE LEASED PLANTATIONS BELOW HELENA

by

Dale P. Kirkman

As Rev. Lyman Abbott wrote in his report to the American Freedmen's Union Commission, in 1865, the abolition of slavery and the establishment of freedom are not the same things. As the Civil War progressed and Federal forces triumphed in the South, masses of slaves immediately left the plantations and attached themselves to the incoming armies. As Federal forces moved in, there was a constant stream of Negroes entering Union lines and hanging on to the army. This was true at Helena from the time the town was occupied by Federal General Curtis in July, 1862, and especially was it true after the Emancipation Proclamation of January 1, 1863. Even those who stayed on the plantations were eventually run off by soldiers and campfollowers.

In 1863, one report placed 3,600 freedmen at Helena, who had left the plantations. James E. Yeatman, reporting for the Western Sanitary Commission about Helena that same year, specifically noted that there were 774 freed people in Helena able to support themselves (probably mostly as soldiers, as the 46th United States Volunteers (colored), mainly from eastern Arkansas, and the 56th United States Volunteers (colored), stationed at Helena, were organized that year), and 1,454 freedmen here drawing government rations and desperately in need of clothes. 3,000 freedmen were reported at Memphis, and 350 in a camp at the mouth of White River, the latter group being in a very bad condition and daily increasing. About 25,000 freed people were on the Mississippi River, and an additional 15,000 of them who were taken into the Federal Army brought the total to 40,000.

The problem was immediate and acute, and Federal authorities had to act. One of the first warnings that came out of the confusion at Helena was an edict by Col. Charles Bentzoni, to the effect that anyone using obscene language would be arrested and tried, and that parents would be held responsible for children appearing in the streets with no clothes on. Smallpox in the area was an added aggravation.

A few of the freedmen were put to work in woodyards on the river bank above and below Helena, cutting and cording wood for the Federal boats. Government agents and civilians, too, were responsible for starting these woodyards, paying fifty cents per cord and food, or seventy-five cents per cord and no food. This employment was a small thing when the rest of the vast milling crowd was viewed. Helena's total white population in 1860 was about 1,500 people. What was to be done with an unemployed crowd equal to that and daily in-

creasing? The answer was one destined to make few people happy.

A Department of Negro Affairs was created, under the direction of the Secretary of War, but not until 1865, when the Bureau of Freedmen, Refugees, and Abandoned Lands was created by act of Congress, was there any overall government supervisory agency to deal with the thousands of penniless, jobless Negroes in the South who clustered around the Federal armies.

In November, 1862, Gen Grant appointed Col. John Eaton, Jr. superintendent of Negro affairs in his department, to feed and clothe the Negroes, to see that crops were marketed, and that wood was chopped for the government steamers. Col. Eaton was chaplain of the 27th Ohio Regiment of Volunteers, and was recognized as superintendent of Negro affairs in Tennessee and Arkansas. By 1863, Chaplain J. R. Locke, captain of a company in Col. Eaton's regiment, was superintendent of the freedmen at Helena.

Gen. Lorenzo Thomas had come to Memphis in 1863 to organize colored troops, and while there he thought up the idea of putting women, children, and men unfit for military duty on the "abandoned" plantations, an abandoned plantation being one whose owner had left to serve in the Confederate Army. The plantations would be leased to private individuals who would employ the Negroes and look after them, and homes would thus be provided for them without government expense. Three commissions would be appointed to superintend leasing of the plantations, and by the end of 1863, when the leasing and hiring problem was turned over to the Treasury Department, then the Treasury Commission in each district assumed this problem. Capt. A. L. Thayer was in charge of the leasing office at Helena for a time.

Thus, some organization was created, and it was needed. The Negro rehabilitation problem had been helped by department commanders, with army quartermasters coming up with most of the needed rations, by Treasury Department officers, by northern benevolent and religious societies, by sanitary commissioners. A good example of religious and missionary work was the establishment of an orphanage and school for Negroes by the Indiana Society of Friends, which became Southland School at Lexa. Gen. N. B. Buford, commander of the Union troops at Helena, and his wife were instrumental in this good work.

Each district had a freedmen's home on one of the abandoned plantations for Negroes too old, too young, or too infirm to work, with schools a hospital, and places to live located thereon. There were called Infirmary Farms, or were, perhaps, what the Treasury Department called Freedmen's Home Colonies, and sometimes part of the plantation was worked, and sometimes not. The Infirmary Farm for

the Helena District was located on Gen. G. J. Pillow's plantation and took in an area from the mouth of the St. Francis River to the mouth of the Arkansas River.

The importance of schools for Negroes was immediately recognized, and Col. Eaton worked hard in setting up a school system with emphasis on industrial schools. Schools were set up on the leased plantations, but it was soon evident that they were safer in town away from any chance of a raid. A Mr. Allen had a Negro school in Helena, and there was one held in the Episcopal Church at the corner of Cherry and Rightor Sts. (now Ciener's Store). There was an industrial school in Helena for Negro women to learn sewing and mending, and there was Southland, already mentioned.

The Yeatman report said that, in 1863, a Mr. Roberts and a Mrs. Baldwin were teaching 109 students at Helena, at that time, and that two more women teachers were needed. The missionary societies were particularly interested in educational work, and most of the teachers who come to Helena were sponsored by these voluntary groups.

It was planned that the plantations would be leased to loyal people who would hire Negroes as free laborers for regular pay. The Yeatman report suggested that friends and relatives of the Federal soldiers come and farm parcels of land of 100 or 200 acres, and settle the country-side with loyal people. Owners of plantations could also participate; in fact, he suggested that they could keep their lands if they would return and become loyal citizens. Freedmen would be given the opportunity to become lessees. Some widows let lessees run their places and received rent from them. Many of the lessees were discharged Federal officers, but a few were old planters, and by 1864, there were a few Negro lessees.

The plantations would be leased at the rate of \$2.00 for each 400 lbs. of cotton produced and five cents for each bushel of corn, this money to be paid to the government. The lessee would also pay the Negroes, clothe, and feed them. One source wrote that the lessee would get one-half of the cotton produced and the government one-half, but whether this system was maintained, I do not know. The principal purpose of the government plantations was to take care of the freedmen problem, not to make money for the government. The three methods by which Negro labor would be organized, were by helping freedmen to get land for themselves, by share-cropping, and by freedmen being hired in the mass by lessees and paid wages. Negroes with small plots of their own could borrow money and tools from the government.

Below Helena, preparations for a big crop had been made in

1863. When Vicksburg fell, many planters took what they still called their slaves, their horses and mules, and went west to Texas, and the government lessees then inherited large crops to sell. Some sales reported from standing crops were \$8,000 from 40 acres, \$6,000 from 24 acres, \$5,000 from 30 acres, \$4,000 from 13 acres, and \$4,000 from 25 acres.

Cotton could be raised at from 3¢ to 8¢ a lb. and sold for 50¢ a lb. An estimate of the net profit to be made from 100 acres on the lease system in Mississippi and Louisiana was:

75 bales of cotton -- 30,000 lbs. -- at 50¢	\$15,000.00
1,000 bushels of corn at 75¢	750.00
	<hr/>
	15,750.00
Expenses of labor, materials, taxes	5,202.00
	<hr/>
Net Profit	\$10,548.00

In 1864, about 100 plantations over 52,000 acres were being cultivated on the government system, with about 11,000 freedmen participating. Wages were good and the demand for labor high. M. D. Landon, lessee at Helena, used from 50 to 100 freedmen, and paid the men \$25 a month, boys \$20 a month, and women \$16 a month, until November 1st and then he paid \$1.25 a hundred for cotton-picking. Ayers & Taylor were reported to be very generous to their hands, and G. R. Newman gave \$400 in summer suits to his hands, and Major Lynch gave \$700 of summer clothes to his. Besides these Helena lessees, all Helena lessees that year were furnishing the Negroes with soap, candles, rice, beans, tea, vinegar, bacon, pork, flour, meal, sugar, molasses, salt, and coffee.

Leasing of the government plantations seemed to be off to a good start, but this did not continue. The main thing that was wrong from the start seemed to be the caliber of lessees. After a short time on the government plantations, it was generally agreed that a large number of them were swindlers, individuals who were inexperienced in handling Negro labor, and who were crooked in their dealings. One report called the lessees "adventurers, camp followers, army sharks," who after bleeding the soldiers they had followed south, were now bleeding the conquered lands. Some of them became rich, and some gave up their ventures and quit. The Negroes were reported as willing to work, but were depressed at their condition, complaining that they were not paid, that their families were not fed or given medical attention, and that they were treated worse than they had been as slaves.

On the other hand, the lessees maintained that the freedmen would not keep their contracts, and some observers thought that they were treated better at Helena than elsewhere. 100 planters at Helena met and answered questions of authorities as to the success of the

leasing. These planters thought that there should be inspections by military authorities to see if both the lessees and Negroes were living up to their contracts, along with regular medical examinations of the Negroes to show up those who only pretended to be sick.

Helena was thought from the beginning to be a good demonstration area to show the advantages of free labor, especially since the Federal Army was in complete control here. There were some successes in the new system, and some of the Negroes did well as lessees. In 1864, there were 30 Negro lessees at Helena, and they were successful thus far with their crops.

The Confederate raids on the government plantations below Helena effectively stopped the system, and it was left to the Freedmen's Bureau, created in 1865, to start peacetime measures to take care of the Negroes. The amnesty acts ended the period of "abandoned lands." Times were so bad in Arkansas in 1865 that Governor Murphy reported that "people were living in open brush shelters in the woods, begging food." Some Negroes went on to do well and to acquire small places of their own, and the *Helena Monitor* reported on this fact after the war. Some kept on working in the fields for wages, but planters protested that wages were higher than labor had ever been paid, except in California during the gold rush. Attempts were made to bring in Chinese coolies for labor purposes in Arkansas, and following a Chinese Immigration Convention held in Memphis in 1869, 189 coolies actually were brought into that area. This was completely unsuccessful as the coolies would not stay on the farms.

The government plantations had had a very brief life when Confederate General Joseph O. Shelby, cavalryman extraordinaire, started making plans from Headquarters of the Confederate Forces in Northeastern Arkansas to destroy them.

The raid on the government plantations below Helena that Gen. Shelby so desired Col. Arch S. Dobbins to make, was preceded by a fight. Shelby had sent Cols. Dobbins and Frank Gordon to "ravage and destroy" the plantations, and, as Capt. W. J. McArthur had written from Confederate Headquarters at Augusta, Ark. on July 6, 1864, the purpose was to break up the farms, to get all the horses, to injure the enemy in every way possible, to drive off the stock, and to take the Negroes and distribute them among the citizens to help subsist the army. The fight at Wallace's Ferry on Big Creek was a very brief deterrent to the sacking of the plantations.

Brig.- Gen. N. B. Buford, commanding, Headquarters of Eastern Arkansas at Helena, in a report to Lt. Col. W. D. Green on the same day of the fight, July 26, 1864, wrote that the reconnoitering party that he had sent out met Dobbins and 1,500 men, part his and part Shelby's, on Big Creek, 22 miles south and west of Helena.

Earlier in the day, before the encounter, Buford had written a report to Maj.-Gen. C. C. Washburn, telling him that Dobbins was reported to have a force of 2,000 men nearby, with over 1,000 of them mounted.

The exact number of Confederate troops that encountered what number of Federal troops near Trenton is open to question, depending on whose version is accepted. Gen. Shelby wrote that he had sent Dobbins 1,200 men to destroy the plantations, and that 1,000 of them participated in the fight at Big Creek against 1,250 Federals. Capt. Edwards of Shelby's forces claimed there were 1,400 Federals.

Gen. Buford and Lt. Col. Moses Reed, commanding the 56th U. S. Colored Infantry, after its commander Col. W. S. Brooks was killed in the fighting, claimed that the Federal forces consisted of 315 infantry troops, 130 cavalry troops, with two artillery pieces. A detachment of 140 men of the 15th Illinois Cavalry under Major Carmichael showed up to reinforce the Federals while the battle was in progress.

It was a wild battle, and the Federals got into position partly behind a levee and partly behind some old fortifications of logs and trees, remaining from months past. Gen. Buford told Lt. Col. Green that the Federals bested Dobbins and that the colored troops of the 56th and 60th Colored Infantry showed up extremely well. This was in contrast to his earlier report to Gen. Washburn, in which he explained the desperation of the situation at Helena, with 800 troops on the sick list, the capture of many of his troops, his inability to protect the two small forts and the leased plantations, and the fact that his line was defended by colored troops in the batteries. This was also in contrast to the report of Capt. Edwards of Shelby's troops, known to be an unreliable source, who claimed that the Negroes twice threw down their arms and tried to run for Helena, but were rallied by their officers.

The military situation at Helena, occupied by Federal troops, a year after the Battle of Helena, is elaborated in more detail by Gen. Buford and Maj.-Gen N. J. T. Dana, who came through on a tour of inspection. The health of the troops at Helena was very bad, and Gen. Dana called it the most deadly place on the river. The 6th Minnesota Infantry Volunteers, commanded by Col. William Crooks, a West Point graduate, consisting of 937 men, had been sent to Helena in June. It was an old regiment and considered to be a very excellent one. Gen. Buford wrote on August 1st, that due to the effects of the climate, only 250 men of the regiment could march. Gen. Dana wrote on August 15th that not 100 men of the regiment could march ten miles, and that there were deaths daily. It was recommended that the whole regiment be taken to the hospitals at Vicksburg to be treated. A Minnesota trooper stationed at Memphis, wrote home and told his family

that one day at home with a chance to breathe the cool Minnesota air would help him more than anything he knew. Gen. Buford himself had been granted a week's leave that summer because of illness, but wrote that he would stay on unless he collapsed completely, if he thought there was a chance to eradicate the Dobbins-Shelby forces. Later, his position was turned over to Col. Crooks of the 6th Minnesota.

The fight at Big Creek was considered a Confederate victory, and Gen. Shelby described the outcome; Federal Killed were a colonel, a lt.colonel, 153 men, 5 captains; captured were wagons, commissaries, two caissons, animals, guns and pistols, and the Federals were driven into the corporation limits of Helena and under the defending guns. Shelby was disappointed that Dobbins and men did not capture Major Carmichael, whom he called "notorious" and "a house burner, robber, and murderer of the first water." Even the **Washington (Ark.) Telegraph** reported that Col. Dobbins had met "a notorious outlaw and celebrated houseburner" that day, killed 67 of his men, took no prisoners, asked no quarter, and gave none.

The sweep of the plantations followed. Shelby's official report said that Dobbins and 1,000 cavalry troops fell on the plantations. They burned cotton-gins, cotton, hay, corn, oats, reaping machines, threshing machines, Negro cabins, soldiers' quarters. They beat up Yankee school-masters and schoolmarms, shot Negro soldiers in their burning dwellings, stole 300 horses and mules, clothes, and supplies, and took 200 Negroes. They "killed 75 mongrel soldiers, Negroes, and Yankee schoolmasters, imported to teach the young ideas how to shoot."

Gen. Buford reported that after murdering three wounded colored soldiers left on the field after the fight, the Confederates murdered two more colored soldiers that they found at the plantations unarmed. He also reported that 800 mounted men under Col. Dobbins assembled at the Allen J. Polk Place at 5 A.M. At 8 A.M., the lessees at the Lamb Place were attacked, and the troops took all the stock, Negroes, and white employees. Then they went to the J. B. Pillow Place and did the same thing. They crossed at Sandy Ford and went down all the leased plantations for ten miles, burning and destroying and robbing. They passed out at Mrs. Higgins' Place, going west.

Buford wrote that he tried to pursue some of them with 100 cavalry as far as Allen Polk's Place, where Dobbins' group joined some of his reserve forces. The Federal troops came back and watched the other parties going into the plantations. The small Federal group, made up of some of the 6th Minnesota and the 35th Missouri, with a few cavalrymen and a colored battery of four pieces, was useless against Dobbins' force. Buford said that Dobbins did not attack his two forts on the plantations, but that he took the people and every-

thing else from two-thirds of the places. Buford also entered a complaint about the unfitness of the "100 days men" in his command and their uselessness in this climate.

Capt. Edwards wrote that the Confederates destroyed everything "bearing any impress of the U. S. Government," that "it was a scene of stern and unpitied desolation." The destruction of the first plantation was done in a few minutes time, and the rising black smoke could be seen in Helena. The second plantation received the same treatment, but the third plantation was warned of Dobbins' approach. The uniformed guards who were on the plantation tried unsuccessfully to set the church up as a quarantined smallpox hospital, by carrying in beds and blankets, and lying in bed as if they had the disease. Unluckily, the Federals did not take off their uniforms when they got in bed, and thus met a quick death upon being discovered, as the hospital was recognized for the ruse that it was.

This then, was the end of the leasing experiment. If the Union forces at Helena had been more, then perhaps they could have guarded and protected the people on the plantations, as they tried to do unsuccessfully. It would be interesting to know where the "two forts" were on the plantations. They are often mentioned in stories of this raid.

Information for this article was found in **Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, 1861-65**, in several reports written at that time about the condition of the freedmen, in several of Margaret Ross' "Chronicles of Arkansas" in the **Arkansas Gazette**, and in some newspapers of the time.

Southern Shield, October 25, 1856 - The Cumberland Presbyterian Church will be dedicated at Helena in November.

Southern Shield, January 28, 1860 - The Phillips County Cavalry Company will meet at the court-house in Helena on February 4th. Wm. H. Robards, Captain.

OPERA HOUSE BURNS

From Helena World, December 19, 1926.

The Grand Opera House, one of Helena's most historic landmarks, passed into history early Saturday morning with the fire that originated on the stage, gaining such a headway that it was impossible to check it once it had been discovered. The loss was estimated around \$60,000, while the Underwood Printing Co., located in the front part of the building sustained a total loss of \$2,700 in machinery, stock and other printing facilities.

A boxing match, staged by the Forty and Eight of the American Legion, was the last attraction to be presented in the famed old building. This was given early Friday night.

The fire broke out around 2:30 A.M. Saturday, being discovered probably fifteen minutes later, but not until it had gained tremendous headway. The origin was unknown. Neither house officials nor firemen would venture a guess as to how the blaze might have started, whether from a cigarette thrown away by some boxing fan during the show earlier in the night, or by some other means.

Sid Bailey, custodian of the building, was sleeping in one of the dressing rooms on the east side of the stage. His dogs began barking. When Bailey opened his door, the stage was in a mass of flames. He escaped with few effects, losing a shot gun, clothing and other items that had been left in his room.

A careful inspection had been made in the house during the hours preceding the blaze. This was done after each performance, the caretakers looking particularly for cigarette stubs and such that might cause fire. Everything was reported in good shape before the house was darkened about midnight, after the boxing show had been completed and members of the Forty and Eight had settled with the fighters appearing on their program.

Only the walls of the old structure were left in the blaze that completely gutted the building's various sections. The house could never be repaired, according to the management who yesterday sent telegrams to some fifteen or sixteen attractions that were booked to appear here later in the theatrical season. These people were advised of the fire and their engagements cancelled. A scheduled concert given by Eliza Miller which was to have been presented in the Grand Opera House this afternoon, was moved to the Saenger Theatre.

Officials of the company had recently expended much money on the improvement of the house, spending some \$10,000 during the past

summer in outfitting the house with new scenery, drop curtains, and materials used on the back stage. They anticipated a good season later in the theatrical year when some of their best attractions were to have appeared.

The company also had under contemplation a program of remodeling which was to have taken place during the summer of 1927, in which the seating arrangement of the house would have been changed considerably, enlarging the capacity of the house as well as affording better facilities for the audience. This was to have included the tearing out of the two offices or shops in the front part, extending the audience circle to the front part of the house and altering of the balcony to eliminate the circle effect. A steel girder was to have been placed across the center of the building, eliminating posts that held up the balcony.

Only about \$5,000 insurance was carried on the building, Sam Tappan, manager, stated yesterday. The Underwood Printing Co. carried none.

Built in 1887, the old house became a scene of many and varied activities in Helena. Political campaigns, mass meetings of all kinds, the greatest of theatrical attractions and sporting events formed the programs that were presented there. The house seated some 800 people.

Famous characters of public life, the stage and others have appeared on the platform or stage, former President Howard Taft, former Secretary of the Navy, Josephus Daniels, numerous senators, congressmen and other government and state officials have spoken there. George M. Cohan, Lou Tellegren, Walker Whiteside, Fred Ward, and a host of other legitimate stage stars have presented their attractions from the Opera House stage. Jack Dempsey, when world's heavyweight boxing champion, appeared there in an exhibition in which he boxed three men to show his prowess.

Musical attractions brought the stars of that department of stagecraft. All of the great minstrel men of a decade ago appeared at one time or another upon the boards of the Helena Theatre, including the annual visits of such men as Lasses White, Al G. Fields, O'Brien, Coburn, Primrose, Lew Dockstader, Honeyboy Evans, and the other eminent stars of blackfaced art. Tom and Mrs. Tom Thumb, Blind Tom and others whose names graced the greatest theatres of the world, knew the local house.

There were no immediate plans for rebuilding the structure yesterday.

The blaze had eaten away a historic building, leaving its present management undetermined as to their future course. It seemed certain,

however, that another theatre will be built within the near future, whether by the same management or by another. The fact that there is a scarcity of road attractions, however, may prove a thorn in any immediate plans.

Southern Shield, February 4, 1860 - Episcopal service will be held with Rev. Bishop Lay to preach in the Old School Presbyterian Church on the subject of Confirmation.

Southern Shield, June 11, 1870 - Bishop Pearce will hold Episcopal services tomorrow.

SICILIAN MIGRATION TO HELENA, ARKANSAS

This article is taken from a talk given by Philip St. Columbia before the Phillips County Historical Society on April 24, 1966.

The Sicilian emigrants wanted to leave the poverty and unrest which was common throughout Sicily at the turn of this century. With the father of a growing family able to earn one lira a day, they were only able to hold body and soul together, and the future held little hope.

The Sicilian custom was for the women to make their own materials, spinning the thread and dyeing the cloth, creating clothes for the family. Ovens for baking bread were built out in the open. In Sicily, the family owned a small plot on which it raised grapes and olive trees, wine to be made from the grapes, and oil to be obtained from the trees to sell.

The majority of the emigrants who came to Helena were from the same community in Sicily. The name of this area comparable to one of our states was the province of Palermo, and the town name was Cefalu. In leaving one climate, they sought to find another similar to it.

The first men who left Sicily and came to the United States, left their families there and came alone. Later, they sent for their families, and still later, they wrote back for other relatives and friends to come and settle here. It took twenty-one days by ship to New Orleans, and, upon arrival there, the first discouragement was a yellow fever epidemic. After a brief time of working in New Orleans, unloading ships from other ports, at wages of fifty or seventy-five cents a day, the men looked for other places to settle.

Joe Marzulo was the first of these settlers in Helena, coming in 1890 from Cefalu, Sicily. He landed in New Orleans, worked his way with other compatriots up the Mississippi River on a lugger boat, which was manipulated by oars. The second settler was Peter St. Columbia, who came in 1892, working and peddling on river boats up the river until he stopped at Helena.

In the meantime, while their husbands were attempting to find a foothold in America and raise passage money for their families to come over, the women found a variety of ways to exist. They crocheted and wove cloth to sell, sold embroidery work, picked olives and other fruits in season.

Nunzio Messina, Sr. came from Cefalu in 1894. He worked in the canefields of Louisiana, and worked on river boats that peddled

merchandise from town to town, loading up with local products to take back to New Orleans to sell. When Mr. Messina settled in Helena, he made a living by carrying a large clothes-type basket over his shoulder, filled with fruit, nuts, and candies to sell. He would walk as far as Oneida, Lexa, and Old Town, and up and down the levee peddling his wares. After he sent for his wife and two boys, Charles and John Messina, he still worked the country route while his wife ran the corner store.

Tony Saia remembers his own father peddling in this manner, carrying the basket on his head. The children all along the route saved their nickels and pennies to spend with the peddlers. The farmers disliked peddlers, because workers would leave their jobs to see what the peddlers had to offer and work was disrupted.

One of the most difficult problems that presented itself to the newly arrived emigrants was the language barrier, and their use of Roman numerals. In the many small stores that they eventually established, their extension of credit to customers was done in a very simple way. A cardboard was hung from a shelf, and for each nickel's worth that a customer charged, one line was drawn, for each dime's worth, two lines, and so on. Hard work and economy brought accomplishment.

Family connections brought over many other families. Letters home encouraged other to come. Besides Cefalu, some of the emigrants came from the province of Salerno and the town of San Gregorio, and, also, from Trapani, Sicily.

Following is a list of the emigrants with approximate dates of arrival:

Joe Marzulo	...	1890
Peter St. Columbia	...	1892
Nunzio Messina, Sr.	...	1894
Angelo and Vince Policastro	...	1896
Joe Melio	...	1898
Frank Beveliaque, Sr.	...	1901
Frank Provenza	...	1901
V. Beveliaque	...	1902
Joe Papa, Sr.	...	1903
Anthony Papa	...	1904
Stephen Fazio	...	1904
Sam Fazio	...	1904
Charles Coco	...	1904
Jim Coco	...	1904
Charles Danna	...	1904
Joe Fazio, Sr.	...	1905
Joe Tamburo	...	1905

Jim Welch	. . .	1905
Pete Lordi	. . .	1905
Dominic Beveliaque	. . .	1906
Vincent Feducia	. . .	1907
Jim Lordi	. . .	1907
Frank Padula	. . .	1907
Victor Deleo		
Vincent St. Columbia	. . .	1908
Lawrence Notto	. . .	1909
Anthony Saia	. . .	1909
A. Glorioso	. . .	1909
Vincent Glorioso	. . .	1910
Joe Glorioso	. . .	1910
Sam Forte	. . .	1910
John Centenio	. . .	1912
Angelo Madonia	. . .	1913
Pete Elardo	. . .	1917
Sam Brocato, Sr.	. . .	1919
John Muffoletto	. . .	1920
Robert Cefalu	. . .	1923
Raymon Depola	. . .	1929
Vincent Genusa		

THE STORY OF ELAINE, ARKANSAS

by

E. M. ALLEN

The following article is from the "Helena Chamber of Commerce Journal", dated November, 1923:

"About thirty years ago, two men, a Real Estate man and a noted Geologist, were riding through the hills of Missouri looking over the mineral prospects of that section. The Geologist had been all over the world. During a discussion concerning land values in the different countries of the world, the Real Estate man asked: "Where in the course of your travels did you find the richest land you have ever seen?" The Geologist rode along some distance in silence. "The most fertile land I know of," he replied finally, "is in Phillips County, Arkansas, between the White and the Mississippi rivers. The confluence of the heavy silt-bearing Mississippi with the lime of the White has built up a soil more fertile than any land in the Nile Valley. Although it is now a vast overflowed canebreak of hardwood timber, some day the levee system of the Mississippi will be completed, a railroad will be built, and the timber marketed, after which this fertile alluvial land will come into its own."

The Geologist was the late Dr. J. C. Branner, then State Geologist of Arkansas, and for many years afterwards President of Leland Stanford University in California. His companion was Harry E. Kelley of Fort Smith, Arkansas. As a result of this conversation and many others of like nature, Mr. Kelley spent most of his spare time during the next few years tramping over the canebrakes of Phillips County. He found a wild, trackless waste of virgin timber with rich alluvial soil of almost unknown depth. Realizing the ultimate possibilities of this region he acquired several thousand acres of the land, interesting himself at the same time in the various improvement projects that had to be carried out before the land could be used to the best advantage.

Much of Dr. Branner's prophecy has already been fulfilled. The levee along the Mississippi completed in the late nineties has during the last few years been brought up to government standard specifications. In the Spring of 1906 the Missouri Pacific completed a branch line of railroad through this territory, opening a station which they named Elaine in the very center of the Delta. In the Fall of 1906 the first clearing operations were begun at Elaine, resulting in the cultivation of a small amount of the land in the following year. Then followed several years of pioneering and hardship that finally wrought many changes. Much timber was shipped out and the land gradually cleared for farming. In the year 1911 the townsite of Elaine was laid out by the firm of Kelley and Allen, and the first lots were

sold. Several thousand acres of land surrounding Elaine are now in a high state of cultivation, with many thousand more yet to be cleared.

Elaine, a prosperous, busy little city of five hundred population has paved streets, concrete sidewalks, electric lights, brick store buildings, handsome residences, with a sanitary sewer system in contemplation. A flowing artesian well 1600 feet deep furnishes an excellent quality of water which is piped all over town. The commodious brick school building erected in 1917 is too small for present needs so plans are now being drawn for the erection of a twenty five thousand dollar addition which will provide a high school course for the children of Elaine and the adjacent territory. The Bank of Elaine organized in 1919 with John D. Crow as President, is a thriving financial institution with steadily mounting deposits and well satisfied customers. Furnishing active employment for both common and skilled labor the weekly payrolls of the New Madrid Hoop Company and the Acme Cooperage Company are warmly appreciated by the Elaine merchants. The spiritual side of the community is cared for by a Baptist and a Methodist Church, both of which boast an active, vigorous membership.

In the portion of the town set aside for colored people many lots have been sold and homes built by thrifty, substantial colored citizens who would be a credit to any community. A new school for colored children, sufficiently large to take care of the requirements of the next few years will be built before Spring.

The Helena-Ferguson concrete highway crosses at Elaine, extending north and south from Helena to the county line, and east and west from Lambrook to the Mississippi river. Adjacent to the townsite is the highly improved plantation of Myers and Craggs, in charge of W. F. Craggs, who is also interested in the Elaine Mercantile Company. Just south of Elaine are the large plantations of J. M. Countiss at Countiss, Arkansas, the Solomon Brothers at Ratio and of the Lundell Land and Lumber Company at Lundell. West and north are the plantations and woods operations of the Howe Lumber Company and Chicago Mill and Lumber Company. Six miles west is the town of Lambrook, the twenty thousand acre property of the Gerard B. Lambert Company with about four thousand acres in cultivation. A private levee against the backwater of the White river, being constructed by the Lambert Company, will make their property one of the most productive cotton plantations in the south. A slight extension of this levee plan will protect about fifty thousand additional acres subject to occasional backwater, and the property owners are now considering plans for the improvement. When completed this levee will render available for clearing and cultivation thousands of acres of land from which the timber is now being removed. Better land than this has never been made. Sherman Rogers writing about "Arkansas" in

an October, 1921, issue of **The Outlook** said in part: "I have been in a State that has the tremendous agricultural resources of Arkansas. There has never been a land boom in the State, and the finest, richest lands lie within the reach of any farmer's pocketbook. They are never cursed with labor troubles. I have lived in the finest valley districts of the State of Washington and have worked on farms there. I have worked on ranches in beaver bottoms lands of Idaho, I have visited the rich farming sections of Iowa, Indiana and Ohio, and I am frank to state that not only is Arkansas blessed with much richer soil than the lands of any of these States, but it has millions of acres of the richest alluvial silt valley lands in the world. The Federal Bureau of Soils has publicly declared the same thing. In this Delta lie about eight million acres of fertile, alluvial soil lands from six to twenty feet deep, blessed with an abundance of rainfall and a climate peculiarly adapted to the growing of tremendous crops of corn, cotton, alfalfa, Japanese clover, sweet and Irish potatoes, cow peas, sorghum and all kinds of vegetables. It must be understood that her agricultural resources are in their initial stages of development, due to the lack of good roads in the past."

ELAINE, ARKANSAS: A Capsule History of Elaine

Taken from an Article in the **Commercial Appeal**, July 16, 1956, by William Boozer

Sid Stokes, civil engineer, came to Elaine in 1907 from Fort Smith, to help Harry E. Kelley in developing an 80,000 acre area. The Missouri Pacific Railroad had a new branch line from McGehee to Helena when he came, and the depot at Elaine was called "Kelley."

In 1911, Mr. Stokes surveyed and laid out Elaine. The name "Kelley" was dropped when it was realized there was another station on the Missouri Pacific by that name, and the name, Elaine, took its place (after one of Mr. Kelley's daughters). Mr. Stokes was mayor from 1911-1921.

In the Spring of 1913, the Mississippi River was very high and the levee broke at Old Town, which was very destructive to Elaine. But the Gerard Lambert Company moved in in 1913 with lumber operations which helped Elaine greatly. The Lambert Company had a \$5000 weekly pay roll.

In 1914, following the 1913 levee break, Kelley gave up his development projects and sold his land at Elaine.

AN IRISH CATHOLIC'S MISSION TO ARKANSAS

First Printed on November 23, 1960, in the
Arkansas Gazette - Edited by Margaret Ross

When the Roman Catholic Church established the Diocese of Little Rock, Right Rev. Andrew Byrne became its first bishop. The diocese consisted of the state of Arkansas and the Cherokee and Choctaw Nations in the Indian Territory. He brought the Sisters of Mercy to Arkansas in February of 1851, and before the year ended, they opened St. Mary's Academy at Little Rock. The following year, Bishop Byrne purchased some property at Fort Smith, and in 1853 another convent was begun there.

The success of these two schools impelled the bishop to found a third convent at Helena. Its story was told in "Leaves from the Annals of the Sisters of Mercy," written by a member of the order, probably Mary Teresa Austin Carroll, in whose name it was copyrighted in 1888:

Bishop Byrne purchased a beautiful property with a fine house, once the residence of Colonel (Henry L.) Biscoe, situated on an eminence commanding a splendid view of the Mississippi, and surrounded by gardens, orchards, and vine arbors, are whole in perfect order. In January, 1858, the bishop conducted four Sisters to this fairy home, which they at once occupied as a convent. After a most toilsome journey by land and water they reached this beautiful spot in time to open school in the beginning of February.

Helena, by the circuitous route of those days, was several hundred miles from the (Little) Rock and the Fort (Smith), and, being directly on the river, was much more accessible than either.

The Sisters taught all the children of the town (there were several other private schools at Helena at this time), and conducted a fine boarding school for those living at a distance.

Early in 1859 the bishop again sailed for Ireland in quest of help, and returned on the morning of December 8 in time to offer the Holy Sacrifice in honor of our Immaculate Mother, and in thanksgiving for his safe arrival. As candidates for the convent he brought twelve gentlewomen, and several students for his college. For some months he remained at Helena to superintend the erection of St. Catherine's Academy. * * *

Although sixty children of Helena attended the day-schools, and many others crossed the river in a ferry, and some in dories and dug-outs, from the State of Mississippi for the same purpose, although the academy was well patronized by the planters of the surrounding

country, who would hear of no other school for their daughters, yet very few convent girls thought of joining their teachers, and the novitiate had to depend almost entirely on Ireland for its reinforcements. * * *

The establishment at Helena was certainly the finest in the state and the most prosperous. It was soon, however, to receive two severe blows from which it was not destined to recover. In the summer of 1861 the bishop was taken seriously ill of fever at Fort Smith, and was unable to return to Little Rock till October. A relapse followed the fatiguing journey, and in February, 1862, he went to Helena thinking the change would benefit his health.

But years of unbroken toil had undermined his fine constitution and in his debilitated, languid appearance the Sisters saw the beginning of the end. They fitted up a house at the lower end of their garden for him, and here he took up his abode with a faithful manservant, who remained with him during his long and painful illness. For some months he was able to walk about the garden and visit the convent.

The Sisters, to whom he had been more than father, lavished upon the dying prelate every possible care and attention. He loved children, and they were very fond of being with him. The convent children would run to meet him and crowd around him whenever he came in sight. He would sit down in the midst of them, tell them stories, and amuse them till he could scarcely speak.

On the 1st of June he grew very much worse. The Sisters had the consolation of receiving his parting benediction, which he gave in Latin and English with heartfelt affection. * * * His pure soul passed away in the most holy sentiments of faith, hope, and love, June 10. *** His sacred remains were laid in the Convent Cemetery, where they rested for nineteen years, when his successor had them removed with great pomp to the crypt under the vestibule of the new cathedral of Little Rock, in November, 1881. Beloved of God and man, his memory is held in benediction.

(A footnote by the author says that Sisters M. Aloysius Fitzpatrick, M. Joseph Byrne, Mary Mercedes Leonard, and M. Ignatius Nolan had died at the Helena convent and were buried in the Convent Cemetery before Bishop Byrne's death.)

The war was the next disaster. A week after the bishop's death thirty thousand soldiers of the Federal army encamped at Helena, where a terrible battle was fought July 4, 1863. The sick and wounded were scattered on every side, and the Sisters had ample scope for the exercise of mercy among the poor sufferers in the hospital and refugee homes. During the sad period of this unnecessary, fratricidal war, they were constantly engaged with the ailing soldiers

of both sides. * * *

The effects of the war on the Arkansas convents were most disastrous. Helena being on the river, and Fort Smith near the Texas border, were especially scourged. The former never regained its pristine prosperity. Its chief support had been derived from a pay school, but the pupils who once filled its benches were scattered. The lands of their patrons were confiscated, and many became so poor that they were obliged to leave that once smiling region in search of work.

After laboring incessantly in Helena for ten years, the Sisters were obliged to return to the Rock, January 23, 1868. As late as March, 1869, the writer passed through this once charming town. Even then it appeared like a desert studded with ruins, and the whole region of which it had been the flourishing outlet was thoroughly impoverished.

* * *

(The 1860 Census listing for the Convent was as follows, with all of the inhabitants recorded as having been born in Ireland.

Andrew Burns (Byrne), age 60, Roman Catholic Bishop, value of real estate, \$50,000; of personal estate, 0.

Charlotte Noland, age 27, Sister of Mercy.

Josephine Byrne, age 30, Sister of Mercy.

Mary Lenard, age 25, Sister of Mercy.

Agert Waul, age 24, Sister of Mercy.

B. Varnia (or Vaincia), age 29, Sister of Mercy.

Catherine Bronce, age 24, Sister of Mercy.

Mary Door, age 18, Sister of Mercy

Thomas Madden, age 14

James Doyle, age 30, Laborer.)

1860 CENSUS

Phillips County

St Francis Township

Census taken by R. B. Macon and Gid. H. Macon, Assistant Marshals.

(Legend:

Number 11 after a name means that that person was married within the year.

Number 12 after a name means that that person attended school within the year.

Number 13 after a name means that the person is over 20 years of age and can not read or write.)

House #	Family #	Name	Age	S	Occupation	Value Real Estate	Value Person. Estate	Born
666	650	Wm. Robards	55	M	Farmer	30,000	50,000	N. Caro.
		Anelisa Robards	50	F				N. Caro.
		Clarence Robards	26	M	Physician			N. Caro.
		Mataline Robards	16	F				Tenn.
667	651	Harriet Rabb	44	F	Farmer	100,000	150 000	La.
		John Rabb	20	M	Farmer			Miss.
		Henry Rabb	18	M	Farmer			Miss.
		James Rabb	15	M	Farmer			Miss.
		Daniel Rabb	13	M				Miss.
		Anna Rabb	11	F				Miss.
		Thomas McEligott	30	M	School Tr.			Ireland
		Sarah Combs	44	F				Ky.
		D. Combs	20	M				Mo.
668	652	James Caine	38	M	Manager			Va.
		Frank Hoyt	24	M	Master Carp.			Penna.
669	653	C. Brown	40	M	Manager	500	700	N. Y.
670	654	John Flaner	35	M	Manager		500	Tenn.
		S. Flaner	25	F				Miss.

671	655	R. B. S. Bernard	28	M	Epis. Preach.			Penna.	
		John A. Craig	55	M	Farmer	200,000	150,000	Ky.	
		Susan Craig	46	F				Ky.	
		Elisabeth Craig	13	F				Ky.	12
672	656	Alex. Lyons	40	M	Manager			Tenn.	
673	657	James M. Hubbard	50	M	Farmer	75,000	80,000	Conn.	
674	658	Rubin Heathcock	42	M	Manager	3,000	800	Va.	
		Julia Heathcock	45	F				N. Caro.	
		John Heathcock	18	M				Tenn.	
		Mary Heathcock	6	F				Ark.	
675	659	Newton Freeland	33	M	Manager	3,000	1,000	Tenn.	
		Martha Weatherly	65	F				N. Caro.	
		Mary Weatherly	17	F				Tenn.	
		James Freeland	7	M				Ky.	
		Joseph Freeland	5	M				Ark.	
		Monroe Freeland	3	M				Ark.	
		Clarence Freeland	1	M				Ark.	
		James Circuit	33	M	M. E. Preach.		100	Tenn.	
676	660	Wilson Coble	28	M	Manager	1,000	750	Ala.	11
		Emily Coble	21	F				Ky.	11
677	661	George Harris	27	M	Lawyer			N. Y.	
678	662	Elisabeth Durham	40	F				unknown	
		Ellen Durham	17	F				Ark.	
		Victory Durham	15	F				Ark.	
		Peter Durham	12	M				Ark.	
679	663	Robt. Tatum	48	M	Manager			Va.	
		Peter Cosick	30	M	Ditcher			Ireland	
680	664	Richard Ray	30	M	Ditcher			Ireland	

House #	Family #	Name	Age	S	Occupation	Value Real Estate	Value Person. Estate	Born
681	665	Joseph Smithwick	33	M	Manager			N. Caro. 13
		M. Smithwick	32	F				N. Caro. 12
		Thomas Smithwick	9	M				Miss. Ark.
		Edwin Smithwick	6/12	M				Tenn. Va.
682	666	Sylvester Parker	29	M	Manager			Tenn. Tenn.
		Louisa Parker	25	F				Tenn. Tenn.
		James Parker	6	M				Ark.
		Wm. A. Parker	3	M				Tenn.
		Robt. Parker	8/12	M				Tenn.
683	667	Cadwalder Polk	23	M	Farmer	60,000	80,000	Tenn.
684	668	Allen J. Polk	35	M	Farmer	50,000	100,000	N. Caro. 11
		Anna Polk	20	F				Ky. 11
		Allen J. Polk Jr.	5/12	M				Ind.
		James Coleman	31	M	Manager	1,000	500	Tenn.
		Lucinda Coleman	27	F				Tenn.
		Mary A. Coleman	8	F				Tenn.
		Wm. Coleman	6	M				Miss.
		Martha Coleman	1	F				Ark.
		John Moran	14	M				Miss.
		Thomas Beach	24	M	Master Carp.			Ohio 12
		Robt. Franklin	23	M	Brick Mason			Ky.
		James Gray	18	M	Master Carp.			N. Caro.
		Wm. Ward	17	M	Master Carp.			Ala.
		David Haschel	27	M	Master Carp.			Ky.
		Robt. Sutebiff	32	M	Master Carp.			Vermont
		Clinton Boon	28	M	Master Carp.			Penna.
		M. Cosick	50	M	Master Carp.			England
		John Mires	23	M	Master Carp.			Germany

685	669	Wm. B. Lusk	61	M	Farmer		2,000	N. Caro.
686	670	Hiram Bock	41	M	Farmer	1,600	500	Va.
		Eliza Bock	15	F				Ark.
		John Bock	11	M				Ark.
		Mary Bock	4	F				Ark.
687	671	J. Cunningham	25	M	Farmer	30,000	45,000	Ga.
		Paula Cunningham	19	F				Miss.
		Wm. Mayberry	30	M	Manager			Tenn.
688	672	Henry McKoy	41	M	Farmer		10,000	N. Caro.
		Fannie McKoy	26	F				Tenn.
		Kate McKoy	5	F				Tenn.
		Belle McKoy	4	F				Tenn.
		Fannie McKoy, Jr.	3	F				Ark.
		Izilla McKoy	2	F				Ark.
		Nettie McKoy	6/12	F				Ark.
		Isabella Davidson	75	F		30,000	10,000	N. Caro.
689	673	Ira H. Lamb	48	M		12,000	40,000	N. Caro.
		Caroline Lamb	42	F				Miss.
		Isabella Lamb	13	F				Ark.
		Richard Lamb	10	M				Ark.
		Caroline Lamb, Jr.	7	F				Ark.
		Ira Lamb, Jr.	5	M				Ark.
		Henry Bonner	35	M	Manager		125	Tenn.
		Fannie Bonner	20	F				Tenn.
		Mollie Moran	17	F				Tenn.
		Lula Bonner	7	F				Ark.
690	674	T. Gidden	25	M	Farmer		100	Miss.
		Sarah Gidden	17	F				Ark.
		Edward Gidden	11/12	M				Ark.
		Harriet Willis	15	F				Ark.

House #	Family #	Name	Age	S	Occupation	Value Real Estate	Value Person. Estate	Born
691	675	Wm. H. Calvert	70	M	Farmer	17,000	5,000	Va.
		Mahala Calvert	43	F				Tenn.
		Thompson Calvert	6	M				Ark.
		Margaret Calvert	4	F				Ark.
		Wm. Jones	11	M				Ark.
		Nancy Givins	64	F				Ky.
		Thomas Cooper	34	M	School Teacher		200	N. Caro.
692	676	Wm. S. Sanford	38	M	Farmer	7,000	3,000	Va.
		Rachel Sanford	38	F				Ohio
		Ann I. Sanford	14	F				Ark.
		George Sanford	12	M				Ark.
		Samvela Sanford	5	F				Ark.
		Wm. S. Sanford	1	M				Ark.
		James Stewart	23	M	Laborer			Ark.
693	677	Margaret Willis	30	F		200	300	Ark.
		Emily Willis	13	F				Ark.
		Charles Willis	11	M				Ark.
		George Willis	21	M	Farmer			Ark.
694	678	Wm. Ashing	38	M	Farmer	800	200	Ky.
		Martha Ashing	34	F				Ind.
		Mary Ashing	14	F				Ark.
		Elander Ashing	11	F				Ark.
		Frances Ashing	8	F				Ark.
695	679	Margaret Ashing	64	F	Farmer	1,000	150	Penna.
		Hill Ashing	30	M	Farmer			Ark.
		Adaline McGonigal	38	F				Ind.
		Marty McGonigal	13	M				Ark.

696	680	Martha Hickey Berton Hickey Henry Hickey America Hickey	57 30 28 26	F M M F	Master Carp. Farmer	3,000	300 150	Tenn. Ky. Ky. Tenn.
697	681	Matilda Clopton Hoggatt Clopton Jesse Clopton Wm. Clopton	46 29 21 12	F M M M	Farmer Farmer	20,000 30,000 15,000 15,000	10,000 25,000 10,000 10,000	Tenn. Tenn. Tenn. Miss.
698	682	Alfred Bell Rebecca Bell Anna Bell Augusta Bell Mortimer Tolenson	28 18 4 3 16	M F F F M	Farmer	4,000	2,500 2,500	Ark. Ark. Ark. Ark. Ark.
699	683	Nelson Bumpas Harriet Bumpas Wm. Bumpas	30 27 2	M F M	Manager	500		N. Caro. Ky. Ark.
700	684	Sam Davidson Matilda Davidson	46 32	M F	Farmer	22,000	48,000	La. Ky.
701	685	Wm. Sanford Martha Sanford Richard Sanford John Sanford Andrew Sanford Mary F. Sanford America Sanford	58 52 21 19 17 14 12	M F M M M F F	Farmer Farmer Farmer Farmer Farmer	10,000	6,000	Va. Va. Ala. Ala. Ala. Ark. Ark.
702	686	Francis A. Watson Sophia Watson James Watson Martha Watson	37 33 7 6	M F M F	Farmer	3,000	2,000	Ala. Ala. Ark. Ark.

LEGENDARY EVENTS ARE RETOLD ABOUT HABIB'S CAFE IN HELENA

Taken from an article in the *Commercial Appeal*, May 25, 1951, by Bill Street

Habib Etoch learned the baker's trade the hard way, in the old clay ovens of 19th century Europe. He used that trade to make himself famous in Europe, in America and, particularly, in Helena.

He died in 1938 but his step-grandsons, N. J. (Jeep) Namour and Michael A. (Shell) Namour, are carrying on. But the things that happened in Habib Etoch's sojourn here live in legend.

For one thing, his fruit cakes became famous the world over. Then there was the matter of Habib's private zoo and the day pies and cakes rained on the business section of Helena. Millions of restaurants today have car hops but Habib Etoch may have been the first to have a "buggy hop."

Habib's Cafe, opened before the turn of the century, is believed to be the oldest business in Phillips County from the standpoint of continuous operation. Habib Etoch came to America in the early 1880's from Zahla, Syria. For several years he wandered from city to city with his icecream and home-made candy confection, finally settling in Memphis. Afterward, he moved to New York, but finding Southern ways more to his liking, returned to Memphis.

In the meantime, his brother, Antone Etoch, who had settled in Helena, won \$15,000 in a lottery in Louisiana (which was legitimate them). Antone operated a restaurant in Helena. A few years later, when Antone died, Habib moved to this city, married his brother's widow and part of the \$15,000 was used to open Habib's Cafe on its present site on Cherry Street in 1888. The cafe prospered and expanded.

Prior to World War I, a main dining room was added a sparkling new soda fountain was opened and electricity moved in. Patronage for Habib's pies and cakes increased at a fast pace. During World War I, a soldier from Helena was on the front lines in France. He had just received one of Habib's fruit cakes. In good spirits over the receipt of the cake, he shared it with a German prisoner of war. For many years afterward Habib received orders from that German for fruit cakes.

"Jeep" Namour began working for his step-grandfather in 1914 as a "buggy-hop" at the salary of \$2 per week. Couples would drive down the dirt street, "Whoaing" to a stop in front of Habib's where young "Jeep" would take their orders. He never received a tip.

"Jeep's" salary gradually increased but he never made more than \$20 per week. "That wasn't too bad for the old prices; I remember we used to sell 24 loaves of bread for \$1," he said.

The period from 1913-1923 is considered quite colorful in Helena's history, which may stem from Habib's 60-animal zoo, located right across the street from the cafe. The zoo had no commercial purpose, it was just a hobby. Collected from various friends and from purchases, the zoo had deer, wildcats, monkeys, a pelican, and a number of other animals. Sometimes they created quite a disturbance.

For instance, there was the time the monkeys escaped and darted in and out of Helena stores snatching fruit, purses and sometimes, customers. The entire population of the city turned out for the "round-up."

One time the zoo problem got too big even for Habib. The pelican was eating 25 cents worth of fish per day and the upkeep began to add up. Deciding to rid himself of the bird, Habib hired a fisherman to take the pelican down to the Mississippi River and leave him. The next day, the pelican was mysteriously back in the zoo enclosures. The same procedure was followed the next day. Once again the pelican was back, twice as hungry. This happened the next day and the next. Finally, the mystery was solved. Some of the townspeople had hired the fisherman to bring the pelican back in the middle of the night and leave him in the zoo.

Habib's hobby was broken up in 1923 and the animals were scattered, 20 of them going to the Memphis zoo.

The cafe also had a horse-drawn breadwagon which made door-to-door sales, which leads to another incident well remembered in Helena. The wagon was carrying a load of pies and cakes down Cherry Street when a group of boys, including Habib's step-grandson, "Shell," threw a package of firecrackers under the horse. The frightened animal bolted, spreading pies and cakes all over the street. "All the other kids grabbed the pies and cakes. I hid for two days," "Shell" says.

The Namour brothers bought out their step-grandfather in 1929 and the business has continued to prosper. In addition to their restaurant business they send fruit cakes to every state in the United States and to 15 foreign countries.

Shortly before World War II, John Coates, now a Helena business man, worked his way with five other boys, to Europe on a cotton boat. "We had been in France, Belgium and several other European countries and had spent all our money. I got to Rotterdam, Holland,

with eight cents in my pocket and, consequently, was hungry and homesick," Mr. Coates recalled. "I was on a streetcar, feeling sorry for myself. It was raining outside. Suddenly, through the rain I saw a familiar object lying in the gutter. I jumped from the streetcar and ran back and picked it up. It was a fruit cake wrapper with "Habib's, Helena, Ark.," stamped on it. It was just like a letter from home." Mr. Coates said.

HELENA in the 1880s

by

Dale P. Kirkman

This article is a composite of several brief descriptions of Helena and vicinity in the 1880s. Mark Twain's description is from his book, **Life on the Mississippi**, which tells of his last trip down the river, on the heels of the 1882 flood.

"Helena occupies one of the prettiest situations on the Mississippi. Her perch is the last, the southernmost group of hills which one sees on that side of the river. In its normal condition it is a pretty town; but the flood (or possibly the seepage) had lately been ravaging it; whole streets of houses had been invaded by the muddy water, and the outsides of the buildings were still belted with a broad stain extending upward from the foundations. Stranded and discarded scows lay all about; plank sidewalks on stilts four feet high were still standing; the broad sidewalks on the ground level were loose and ruinous--a couple of men trotting along them could make a blind man think a cavalry charge was coming; everywhere the mud was black and deep, and in many places malarious pools of stagnant water were standing. A Mississippi inundation is the next most wasting and desolating infliction to a fire.

We had an enjoyable time here, on this sunny Sunday; two full hours' liberty ashore while the boat discharged freight. In the back streets but few white people were visible, but there were plenty of colored folk--mainly women and girls; and almost without exception upholstered in bright new clothes of swell and elaborate style and cut--a glaring and hilarious contrast to the mournful mud and the pensive puddles.

Helena is the second town in Arkansas, in point of population--which is placed at five thousand. The country about it is exceptionally productive. Helena has a good cotton trade; handles from forty to sixty thousand bales annually; she has a large lumber and grain commerce; has a foundry, oil-mills, machine shops, and wagon factories--in brief, has one million dollars invested in manufacturing industries. She has two railways, and is the commercial center of a broad and prosperous region. Her gross receipts of money, annually, from all sources, are placed by the New Orleans **Times-Democrat** at four million dollars."

Captain Willard Glazier also made a tour down the Mississippi River, and the following journal entry is from his book, **Down The Great River**.

"93rd day

Delmonico Hotel
Helena, Ark.
Oct. 22 (1881)

As soon as we had finished breakfast at the cabin of our colored host, Robert Green, we called for the "Alice," and, accompanied by all the Greens, large and small, hurried down to the river and pushed off. Nothing of an unusual character was seen until about 12 o'clock, when, as we rounded a bend we saw in the distance Helena, the most enterprising city of Arkansas. We struck the beach at 1 o'clock, and on stepping ashore received a welcome from Arnot Harris and W. L. Morris. These gentlemen escorted us to the "Delmonico" for dinner, and extended many courtesies during our brief stay in their city.

Helena, standing on the right bank of the river, in Phillips Co., Ark., has become, since the Civil War, a very progressive town, and is growing rapidly in importance. It offers many advantages for navigation and commerce, and the only drawback to its still greater advancement is the destructive agency of the Mississippi, which occasionally threatens it with inundation. If it can protect itself against the overflows, Helena, from its peculiarly favorable position, is destined to become one of the first cities on the Lower Mississippi. Located in a fertile cotton section, the facilities for shipment of that staple to other ports is apparent. It is 80 miles below Memphis, and is the terminus of the Arkansas Midland, and the Iron Mountain and Helena railroads.

In the summer of 1863 Helena was held by a Union force under General Prentiss, strongly intrenched, the river also being commanded by a gunboat. July Fourth, an unsuccessful attempt to seize the town was made by a superior Confederate force under Gen. Holmes. In the action which followed, the Confederates lost 1636 men, and the Unionists 250.

The present population of Helena is about 4000, and it supports two banks and five newspapers."

(Capt. Glazier also speaks of J. R. McGuire, a wealthy cotton planter then living at Modoc, who had named Modoc and established a post office there after the Modoc War).

Denis A. Quinn, a Catholic priest, gave his version of Arkansas in the 1880s in **A Graphic Description of Missionary Life in Eastern Arkansas**. He wrote that Little Rock had 16,000 population (about 1887), and if you put all the cities of Arkansas together except for Little Rock, Hot Springs, Fort Smith, and Pine Bluff, there would not be as many people as Louisville, Kentucky had, and this city "would not look as well as Louisville sunk four stories in the

earth." There are some intelligent people in those four cities plus Helena, but generally the country native is "a low type of Caucasian humanity," and he would challenge the world to find the equal of or a "speciman even several grades above this."

He called the country people of Arkansas, "Hoosiers," and wondered which of the twelve tribes of Israel came to Arkansas. The natives dip snuff and eat clay as a substitute for gum. Once on a train, he observed several of them running to the side door of the train to get a look at a "brick house" in Forrest City, something they had never seen.

His figures about the Catholic Church in Arkansas, in 1880 were:

Little Rock, population, 13,185. One Catholic Church (cathedral) and a convent, conducted by the Sisters of Mercy.
Pine Bluff, population, 3,800. One Catholic Church and convent.
Rev. J. Lucey.
Fort Smith, population, 3,200. One Catholic Church and convent.
Rev. Lawrence Smith.
Helena, population, 3,000. One Catholic Church and convent. Rev. J. B. Boetzkes.
Hot Springs, population, 4,200. One Catholic Church and convent.
Rev. P. H. Garathy.

Edward Palmer was in Arkansas in the 1880s, with the purpose of exploring for Indian mounds, and the following letters are from his article, "Arkansas Mounds," from the **Arkansas Historical Association Publication** of 1917.

"St. Charles

Dec. 8, 1881. The hotel is kept by a one-legged Confederate soldier. It was used during the war as a U. S. Headquarters. The building used as a hospital is still standing, but the rest of the town is destroyed. The Confederates in cutting their ditches allowed the river and rains to encroach so that the town had to be moved high up from the river. Darkies with buggies are common.

Saturday is a great day for shopping and getting drunk.

A black man drove me to Indian Bay. He was out collecting a fifty-cent debt from a colored minister of that place. He was free in his denunciation of many ministers."

"Indian Bay. Monroe Co., Ark. December, 1881
Major J. W. Powell.
Sir:

I visited Indian Bay Dec. 12th. At this place is a large mound belonging to A. Spencer. It is three hundred feet above the high water of the Bay and two hundred fifty feet long. Permission could not be obtained to open it.

Just outside of Indian Bay settlement is a large mound now used as a burying ground by the townspeople. Close to it is a field owned by Dr. Henry Shipman, in which field are two small mounds, three to four feet high and thirty feet in circumference." (He then lists his artifact findings).

"Indian Bay, Monroe Co., Ark.

Christmas Day at Indian Bay. This is a short crop year. Merchants and land renters complain of non-settlement of debts. Every species of jug and bottles are carried away filled with whiskey. Not only were the necessities of life carried away, but also the luxuries. The wearing apparel bought by the colored people was not adapted to the condition of poor people. Is not a dry season a blessing if we utilize its dictates. Two days before Christmas Baley's family troupe, consisting of father, brother, wife and their six children arrived and performed in the school house to whites only, at twenty-five cents per head. If colored were admitted it was only by special permission. Take the human race as a whole, there is nothing in color, it is in the quality of the human composition.

In the south and north so much is wasted on Christmas. The day before Christmas young and old are trying to catch each other with the cry of "Christmas Gift!" It is a day of extravagance and a means to dissatisfaction. The poor fret because they cannot do as the rich."

At Marianna.

"This place is twelve or fourteen miles up the Languille River, thirty-five miles from Helena by river and twenty-five by land.

Two miles south of this place on the Helena road is the Lone Pine Spring. The tree is yet standing. Here the thief Murrell had his counterfeit shop for making money, vestiges of which are said to still remain."

"Helena, Ark. Jan. 2, 1882

New Year is celebrated at the post office.

I called on Major Arnot Harris of the Yeoman and Dr. S. M. Grant and presented letters from Dr. Morgan Cartwright of Indian Bay.

Jan. 3. Left by ferry boat to Mississippi side and took cars for Jonestown with letter to ex-Governor and Senator J. S. Alcorn. Returned to Helena, Ark., from Forrest City and left Jan. 11th for Marianna by boat."

Mr. Palmer also noted that during his stay in Forrest City he found that no bakery existed there, and that bread had to be brought in from Helena or Memphis; and that "Arkansas scrip" was home-made tobacco.

An undated article by Mrs. May C. Allin in a scrapbook at the Helena Library tells of life in Helena in 1886, and an article by Oscar C. Rayburn in the *Helena World* of July 17, 1927, tells of Helena in 1884.

Cherry St. at this time was unpaved, and in summer, it was ankle deep in dust. The street was the favorite place for boys to play marbles, but that became impossible in the winter, for then Cherry St. became hub deep in mud. This was the situation from the levee to the Missouri Pacific depot on Cherry, and drays tried to pull through it all winter.

High plank walks were on one side of the street, raised about two feet from the ground. The walks were made of two planks with a space in between. The street crossings were small logs or chunks sunk in the mud, and when a chunk would wash away, it left a big jump in between. After a big rain, the walk in front of your house might end up on another street.

Helena had plenty of churches, but they have all been rebuilt since then, except for the 2nd (1st) Baptist Church (colored) on the corner of Rightor and Franklin. The Methodist Church was new, the Baptists rented theirs to a lodge and had services in the basement, the Presbyterians had a small church on Ohio St. but they did not hold services, the Episcopalians had a small, wooden, Gothic church with a moss-covered shingle roof on the corner of Cherry and Rightor Sts., and the Catholics had a frame church near the site of the present one. At the same time, there were twenty-five saloons in town. Some had no keys to the doors, being wide open every day from year to year.

There had been no hospital, no compresses, no water works, no street cars, no paved streets, no motor-driven fire trucks, no electricity. The fire department was a volunteer one, the uniform a hat worn with regular clothes. The firefighting apparatus was a large two wheel cart drawn by volunteer men, women, and children. All the water available was from a hole dug in the ditch at the northwest corner of the same lot where the Episcopal Church stood. The hole was about eight feet square.

The water supply was stored in cistern, and every house had rain barrels to catch water, a fine breeding place for mosquitoes. Before the mayor's daughter, Nellie Summers, pushed the button to turn electricity on for the first time, gas and coal oil had been used in lamps. Telephones were not in general use.

The ice factory, which had been installed some years before, furnished real luxury. This was almost matched by the coming of the mule-drawn street cars, which went all the way up on north Poplar St. and out on Biscoe St.

Everybody had a good mule or saddlehorse to ride, and a few well-to-do people had buggies. The favorite drive was to Big Spring, and every evening after 4 o'clock, a regular procession went that way.

The post office was then on Ohio St. and an opera house was on Cherry St. Neighborhoods rose and declined in point of being fashionable. The Mississippi River levee was about the size of a small wagonload of hay, and the people living on Ohio St. dumped their scuttles of ashes on it to make it higher.

There was constant dirt hauling by wagons to downtown to fill in low ground. Much of the block of the present site of the court house was a pond, and much of the area north of Perry St. was a cypress brake filled with water and cypress trees.

There had been a library in Helena, but the remaining books were stored in a room on Ohio St. You could pay \$2.00 a year and use the books, if you could find someone who had a key to the place. When the Women's Library was started, these books were the beginning of it. A room upstairs in the opera house was used briefly by them.

Helena had two railroads, and the Arkansas Midland was known to wait at times for late passengers. Anchor Line boats played between St. Louis and New Orleans. The biggest amusement was the Fair, held every October at the Fairgrounds, featuring horseraces and gambling games. Cotton sold from six cents to ten cents a pound, and meat a little less. Meal was \$2.25 a barrel, and flour \$3.50 a barrel.

The first brick building on the west side of Cherry St. was in the Hornor block, beginning at the corner of Cherry and Rightor and going north to Habib's. This building was new in 1884. Six stores were in this half-block, two stores used by H. S. Hornor & Co., bookstore of G. E. Essertier, the Bank of Helena, Tanner & Co., and Mrs. Yancey, milliner.

In a tintype of the Hornor block, boys in the picture did not have shoes on and they wore knee-length trousers, either rolled to that position or made that way. Men in the picture all had on derbys.

They wore no coats, but had on vests. H. S. Hornor, after whom the block was named, had a flowing beard in the picture. Women in the picture wore dresses flared at the bottom, with skirts to the sidewalk.

SNAPSHOTS OF THE YEAR 1902

From undated Helena World clipping

Wedding of Miss Mary Hornor and Mr. Charles Lawson Moore, Jr.

The Helena Company of Militia is organized with J. D. Mays, Captain; A. J. Frantz, 1st Lt.; J. F. Govan, 2nd Lt. Later this company united with another military company, and the two became the Helena Light Guards, W. D. Pillow, Captain.

Dr. C. R. Shinault elected president of the Arkansas Medical Society.

Branch store opened in Marianna by G. E. Essertier, furniture dealer.

Favorable notice as a singer received in New York City by Miss Adele Essertier.

Messrs. Straub and Cheshire secured a \$30,000 contract for railroad work in Kentucky.

Perfect drill of the children at Jefferson School prevented panic when fire alarm is sounded.

Wedding of Miss Elizabeth Straub and Mr. Ralph Rider.

Wedding of Miss Laura Gordon and Mr. E. J. Landon at St. John's.

Mr. and Mrs. W. D. Reeves and family are vacationing at Wequetonsing, Michigan. The new Reeves home is nearing completion, and Mrs. Burnett moved into her new home on Porter St., purchased from Mr. Reeves.

R. B. Macon received nomination for Congress.

Due to lack of inmates, the County Poor House is for rent.

Graduating exercises of Jefferson High School took place at the Opera House with J. H. Hineman of Pine Bluff delivering the address to the class, composed of Misses Kate McLaurin, Lucy Wellborn, Gertrude Kloene, Jeanette Solomon, and Mr. Harry Crebs. Misses Edna Lieber and Madeline Tanner gave piano selections and Miss Kitty Clancy led a large chorus of children in the singing of "America" and "Dixie" from the gallery.

Parents want a Curfew Law.

Miss Eloise Updegraff was thrown from a buggy, but was not injured. The runaway horse fell and broke his neck.

Baseball, Jack Rabbit Races, Clay pigeon shoot. And a grand old time at Helena, July 4th. Excursion on all railroads.

Moses G. Turner, a progressive and reliable Negro, died.

Mitchell Bros. went into the grocery business.

Art exhibition held by the pupils of Miss Elizabeth Searcy at her studio on Ohio St.

Railroads coming into Helena inaugurate free delivery of freight and checking of baggage from residences.

Messrs. T. H. Faulkner, C. A. Wooten, and Andrew A. Bush are in Europe.

Mrs. B. H. McKenzie and Miss Tillie Bernhold spent the summer in Europe.

Attractions at the Opera House: "Old Arkansas," "Herman, the Great," "Taming of the Shrew" with Charles B. Hanford, "Tyranny of Tears," "Flora-dora," "When We Were Twenty-One."

Citizen fined for keeping a caged mockingbird.

John C. DeGuither, a former Helenian doing duty in the Philippines, wrote an interesting description to the *World* of a battle between the Moros and U. S. troops.

Miss Christine Sanders left to take a position in the St. Louis public schools.

Mrs. D. T. Hargraves and little son, Thompson, Jr., returned home from Bon Aqua, Tenn., a popular summer resort.

City Clerk Bagwell reported 57,986 bales of cotton had been handled in Helena during the cotton season.

The Peter Sprague, largest towboat ever built, passed Helena.

More hotel room needed.

Wedding of Miss Bettie Meyers and Mr. I. Rothschild.

Ensign Farmer Morrison, U. S. Navy, visited Maj. and Mrs. Purvis.

Boom in sidewalks.

Mrs. Burnett bought the iron fence from around the Methodist Church

and has placed it around her property.

Rev. C. H. Lockwood, rector of St. John's, declined a call to Paducah, Kentucky.

The condition of south Cherry St. is lamented.

Town Cow Nuisance is editorialized.

St. Louis manufacturers visiting Helena are entertained royally.

The John Bertram replaced the J. F. Joy, the Y. & M. V. transfer boat.

Mr. Russell Gardner's steam yacht, the Annie Russell, anchored at Helena.

Wedding of Miss Minnie Lucas and Mr. R. L. Cobb.

Trees planted on Jefferson School grounds on Arbor Day are named Shakespeare, Longfellow, and Greenfield Quarles.

Rev. W. B. Ricks returned to the Helena Methodist Church.

Helena merchants made large donations of supplies to the Orphans Home.

The approaching marriage of Miss Nova Neal and Rev. Wm. B. Ricks, pastor of the Helena Methodist Church, is announced.

MEMBERSHIP ROSTER, 1966 - 1967

Mrs. Tom Allen	Brinkley, Arkansas
Mrs. Blossom Anderson	Westminster, Colorado
James P. Baker, Jr.	West Helena
Mrs. James P. Baker, Jr.	West Helena
Barton High School	Barton
Ozero C. Brewer	Helena
Mrs. Ozero C. Brewer	Helena
W. G. Brock	Elaine
Dr. Glen E. Bryant	Helena
O. D. Butterick	Helena
Mrs. O. D. Butterick	Helena
Dr. J. W. Butts	Helena
Mrs. Rufus Carruth	Barton
Mrs. E. B. Carvill	Helena
Mrs. Charles J. Cliff	Bethesda, Maryland
Mrs. C. A. Conditt	Helena
Mrs. Fred Connaway	Helena
Fred J. Cooper	North Sacramento, California
George Cooper	North Sacramento, California
Capt. George E. Cromwell, Jr.	A.P.O. New York
Mrs. Fred Crum	West Memphis, Arkansas
Mrs. Dick Cunningham	West Helena
Floyd E. Curtis	Helena
Mrs. Floyd E. Curtis	Helena
Robert Dalehite	Galveston, Texas
Mary Louise Demoret	Elaine
Mrs. W. G. Dinning, Sr.	Helena
Mrs. Fred Faust	West Helena
Mrs. Thomas E. Faust	West Helena
Mrs. Jane Fleming	Helena
Mrs. Daisy F. Frazier	Evanston, Illinois
Mrs. F. R. Garner, Jr.	Helena
Mrs. Thomas H. Gist, Sr.	Marianna, Arkansas
Col. Clarence Q. Graham	San Antonio, Texas
Josephine Griffey	Helena
Mrs. W. T. Gwin	Lexa
Helena Hospital	Helena
Mrs. Wayland Hollowell	Helena
Dr. A. A. Hornor	Brookline, Massachusetts
A. P. Hornor	Carlisle, Pennsylvania
E. T. Hornor, Sr.	Helena
Mrs. J. A. Hornor	Denton, Texas
Sidney H. Hornor	San Antonio, Texas
Otis W. Howe, Jr.	Wabash
Mrs. Otis W. Howe, Sr.	Helena
Dorothy James	Helena

Joy James	Elaine
Mrs. Curtis Jeffries	Helena
Col. C. C. Jeffries	Helena
Col. J. C. Jeffries, Jr.	Helena
Allen R. Keesee	Helena
Clancy King	Helena
James S. King	Helena
Mrs. John King	Helena
John C. King, Jr.	Helena
Mrs. C. M. T. Kirkman	Helena
Mrs. J. R. M. Klotz	Montclair, New Jersey
Mrs. Ralph Kyte	Elaine
J. B. Lambert	Helena
Mrs. Charles Lederman, Jr.	West Helena
Mrs. A. B. Lewis	Memphis, Tennessee
Shirley Loyd	West Helena
Mrs. B. H. Lucy	Elaine
J. J. Lueken, Jr.	Helena
Marvell High School	Marvell
Mrs. A. V. McCarty, Jr.	Helena
W. E. McEntire	Helena
Mrs. Frank McGinnis	West Helena
Bessie McRee	Helena
Memphis State University	Memphis, Tennessee
Mrs. T. J. Mitchell	Arlington, Virginia
Walter L. Morris	West Helena
Bill Munden	Helena
Mrs. Bill Munden	Helena
Mrs. Marian H. Newkirk	West Helena
Mrs. Walton Nicholls	El Cerrito, California
Richard D. Noble	Los Alamitos, California
Dorothy Papa	Helena
L. R. Parmelee	Helena
Mrs. L. R. Parmelee	Helena
Mrs. Glenn L. Perry	Houston, Texas
Lily Peter	Marvell
Mrs. James E. Phillips	Atlanta, Georgia
Mrs. James H. Pillow	Helena
Joseph M. Pollard	Glendale, California
Charles H. Purvis	Helena
Mrs. Shelby Richardson	Dallas, Texas
Mrs. Albert Sanders	Helena
Tom Short	Anaheim, California
Mrs. Aubrey Sylar	West Helena
Mrs. J. A. Tappan	Helena
S. W. Tappan	Helena
T. E. Tappan	Helena
Mrs. T. E. Tappan	Helena
A. B. Thompson, Jr.	Marvell

Francis L. Thompson	Helena
Mrs. Francis L. Thompson	Helena
Mrs. A. H. Toney	Helena
Gibson Turley	Helena
Mrs. Catherine M. Vineyard	Dallas, Texas
Miss Frances Wahl	Helena
Mrs. J. F. Wahl	Helena
Miss Dorothy Walker	Helena
Miss Nora Webb	West Helena
Mrs. W. E. Webb	Helena
W. H. Woodin	Helena
T. E. Wooten	Helena
Mrs. T. E. Wooten	Helena
C. M. Young	Helena
Mrs. C. M. Young	Helena
Porter C. Young	Helena
Mrs. Porter C. Young	Helena