

PHILLIPS COUNTY
HISTORICAL QUARTERLY

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PHILLIPS COUNTY
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SOME RECOLLECTIONS OF MISSISSIPPI RIVER STEAMBOATS

by

Albert A. Hornor, M. D.

Just as the youth of today has seen air travel increase to a point where railroads cannot compete in the transportation of people, the youth of the late 19th century saw the railroads take the passenger traffic away from the steamboats. Often in the 1890's men would discuss the comparative safety of steamboat and railroad travelling. It was probably about even when passenger cars were all wooden with only hand brakes, and the railroad telegraph system non-existent or unreliable. Steamboats on the Mississippi used to catch on fire but there was usually enough floating material aboard for passengers to get to the shore.

The whistle of a steamboat was musical and most of the people within a mile of the river could recognize the boat by its whistle. The tugboats for barges of coal and lumber had whistles of little power or character. All "The Anchor Line" had whistles of great volume and character. This was the line that ran round trips between St. Louis and New Orleans. Then there was "The Lee Line" that went up and down the river from Memphis, stopping almost anywhere along the river where a few bales of cotton or a few people could be seen on the shore. Their whistles were of less volume and higher pitch. Also there was the "Kate Adams" that made two trips a week from Memphis to Arkansas City and back. She ran non-stop between Memphis and Helena, both down and up river.

The book - *American Paddle Steamers* by Carl D. Lane (Publishers, Coward McCann Inc., 1943) contains the following paragraph.

KATE ADAMS

The Kate Adams, proud U. S. Mail steamer, of Memphis, has been called one of the most successful of any of the great Mississippi River boats. She was built at Sewickley, Pennsylvania, in 1882 and measured 250' x 37' x 8' and displaced 665 tons.

The cabin was one of the most elegant on the river, being finished in ash, walnut, cherry, mahogany, and bird's eye maple, with "appropriate genteel

supporting furnishings of culture and refinement." She was the first of the western river boats to adopt the Edison electric light system in all her departments.

The Kate Adams held the all-time record of 5 hours 18½ minutes from Helena, Arkansas, to Memphis, and was awarded the traditional elk's horns for her pilot-house.

Two Kate Adams followed her. The second was built in 1888, but changed her name twice, first to the Dewey and then to the Lotus Sims. The Kate Adams (3rd) was built in 1889 at Jeffersonville, Indiana. For a brief period she was registered as La Belle Riviere for the filming of the motion picture Uncle Tom's Cabin. She became a barge and eventually a wharf boat.

Her deep "bullfrog" whistle was known by all the river dwellers and when the roustabouts heard it 'round the bend it always started the proud cry of "De lovin' Kate! Yah, yah, de lovin' Kate am come to town!"

There were other lines that operated, though not so regularly. Most of these steamboats were side-wheelers, with two boilers and two engines. They burned coal and were called **packets**. The stern-wheelers, a few of which were around in 1900, and navigated the St. Francis, White and Arkansas Rivers, more than the Mississippi, were smaller and considered oldfashioned. Some of these still burned wood.

For one in Memphis who wished to reach Helena on Tuesday, Thursday or Saturday morning one of the Lee Line steamers was available, friends aboard, a good supper (not dinner) aboard the boat, often while it was still loading below Front Street in Memphis, then a restful night in a stateroom and an excellent breakfast before landing at Helena.

If one wanted to reach Helena Monday or Thursday evening between nine and eleven o'clock, the Kate Adams" was the luxurious choice. Any boy or girl returning to Helena from boarding school, college or elsewhere knew that if he could get to a Lee Line boat or the "Kate Adams" at Memphis he could get home luxuriously even if penniless. The purser always knew their father and was glad to carry them to Helena on credit.

The up-river schedule of these two lines could not be predicted so accurately but when you heard the whistle you knew you had be-

tween thirty minutes and two hours to get aboard before departure. The variance of time depended upon the height of the river and the amount of freight to be unloaded or loaded at Helena.

Perhaps it is no longer true, but in the 19th century "the height of the River" controlled the speed of flow and the proximity of the channel to the shore and thus the time it might take to tie up at the desired point. This had to be done so that the incline of the stage plank between boat and shore would not be too great for the roustabouts.

When school or other duties did not interfere all boys and many others hurried on foot, horseback, carriage or in a hack to (the Elevator at Helena) the landing place to watch the boat being tied up and the stage plank lowered. It always had to be lowered because when unused it was carried at an angle almost perpendicular to the lower deck of the boat. Even before the end of the stage plank touched land one or more roustabouts would jump two or three feet to the ground with lines of heavy rope (hawsers) to tie the boat, often to trees.

Once the boat was securely tied the passengers, most of whom had already descended from the cabin deck to the lower deck, began to walk up the stage plank to be met by friends or relatives. Their baggage was brought off by cabin boys - no passenger would have thought of carrying his own baggage.

As soon as passengers and their baggage were ashore the roustabouts under command of the Mate began to run with heavy loads across the deck and up the stage plank to deposit their part of the freight at the right spot. These men ran with varying amounts of freight on their shoulders, often a barrel of flour (196 lbs.). Yes, they did run and there is some evidence that a heavier load on the shoulders can be carried at a run better than at a walk. The exact type of gait employed as a roustabout run is difficult to describe, and in 1933 a skilled painter tried to make a picture of a roustabout running with a load only to be told by a Mate that they no longer carried heavy loads and all walked slowly.

Roustabouts were recruited from gambling or other dives along the riverfront in St. Louis, Cairo, Memphis, New Orleans or smaller towns along The River. These men were under command of the Mate and his assistant who rarely spoke without swearing and threatening, but never striking a roustabout or other deck hand.

These men were highly paid but lost most of their wages to gambling and drinking aboard ship.

Once the freight was unloaded passengers desiring to travel went aboard often accompanied by friends who might join them for refreshment while the freight was being loaded. Occasionally someone would arrive with his horse running at full speed to get aboard the boat just as the stage plank was being hauled up. Always some friend would take the horse to his proper stable. Many horses could be trusted to go straight home. This was especially true of the horse from the livery stable.

The pleasure of living aboard a River Packet for a few days was great. Living quarters were luxurious and the food delicious.

The stairway from the lower deck divided about halfway up, one half going to starboard, the other to portside of the cabin deck, both to enclosed areas each facing big doors to the deck that went around either side of the cabins. On going up the starboard stairs one turned to the right and faced the purser's office where cabins were assigned, and later charges were settled. If one went up the port flight of stairs and turned left one faced the bar where most delicious soda water and other cold drinks could be obtained. Behind the bar and behind the purser's office there extended a row of cabins each with windows and doors to the surrounding deck and to the spacious saloon. Between the rows of cabins was the dining saloon with three or more enormous tables. Between delicious meals these could be used for playing cards or other games.

The Monday night trip on 'The Loving Kate' to Arkansas City and back Wednesday morning was a favorite excursion for well chaperoned groups of boys and girls. There was good music for dancing till midnight and it was fun to stroll about the decks and watch the shore and varying sights on the boat and river.

The freight carried by the boats varied, the chief exports being cotton and lumber, including boxes, staves and shingles. The imports from New Orleans were molasses, sugar, seafood and tropical fruit. Some small boats from New Orleans carried nothing but bananas. From St. Louis came saddles, buggies, wagons, oats, wheat, flour, leather shoes and clothing; from Memphis merchandise of

various sorts, but livestock was the most interesting, dairy and beef cattle, turkeys, chicken and eggs (to improve local stock), horses and mules -- often a boatload of fifty or more mules; from Cincinnati, furniture, boilers, engines and from Pittsburgh steel and iron. The coal from Pittsburgh came by barge and only at high water but it was much better coal than could be obtained in any other manner.

Many people came from the North and East to visit in Helena for one to three weeks en route to and from New Orleans. The following personal story about one such visitor may be of interest. A middle aged cousin visiting our home was so good to a young cousin that he wanted to go with her to New Orleans. Many questions about such a trip arose but it was finally decided that he could go in her trunk, a big one with a dome top. Into this the three year old boy climbed, but when the top was closed he decided that he would prefer to stay at home, at least till the cousin returned from New Orleans.

The following personal story has amused children and grandchildren.

In 1890 when I was almost four years old and a younger brother was a baby, it was decided that the family needed a trip. What could be better than a week's boat trip to St. Louis and a week's trip back aboard the Anchor Line "City of Vicksburg." The trip was taken, mother, father and four children, and a most faithful negro servant, "Steady" by name. All went well. Except for the baby the children were allowed to roam freely aboard the steamboat. Papa enjoyed visiting with his friend the Captain and others aboard the boat. One of his favorite places was in the wheel house with the pilot. The children also liked to visit there. Once "Steady" came there and asked Papa if he had seen me - No! was the answer. "Steady" said she could not find me anywhere. Papa suggested several places which she had already inspected. Papa left the pilot house and went to many parts of the ship where "Steady" felt she could not go. Still I could not be found. Papa spoke to the Captain, fearful that I had fallen overboard. He spoke to the Mate who immediately ordered the boat's bell to be rung fast and furiously to call all hands. When the roustabouts gathered, the

reason for ringing the bell was announced, whereupon the roustabouts began to laugh and someone told the story that I was back in the pit (crapshooting pit) and they were all betting on how long I could stay on the pig I was trying to ride.

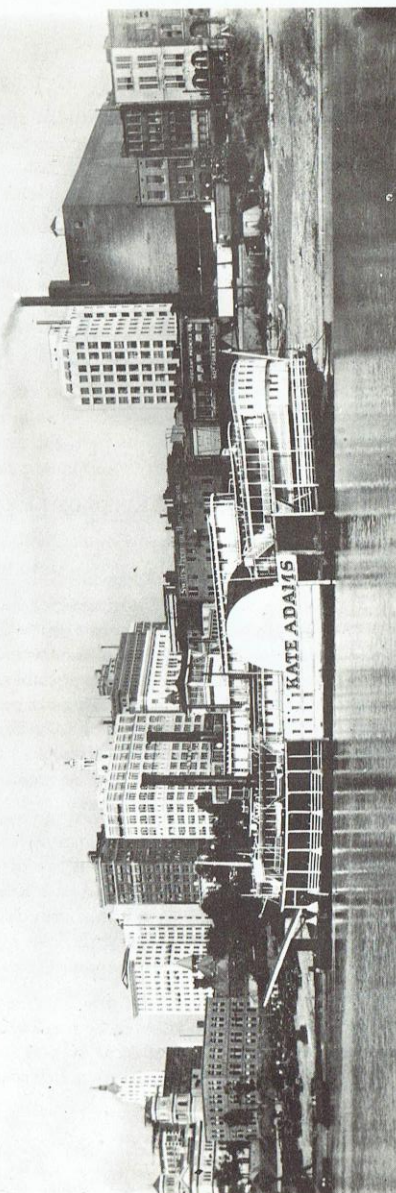
Aside from the packets there were large and small showboats that came every year, usually from Cincinnati. Most of these were equipped with a calliope whose music probably sounded better a mile away than nearby. Some of these boats had minstrel shows, others music and dancing and gambling. Almost all had sleight-of-hand artists. Small boys were forbidden to visit these boats. One of these boats might be tied to the shore or be offshore in a slow-running part of the river for several days or weeks.

Shanty boats cannot be forgotten. The people who lived aboard them existed by fishing and shooting game, many squirrels, ducks and geese, an occasional raccoon or possum, and very rarely a whitetailed deer. Some of these were probably trapped, not shot. All these people were scantily clad and looked starved and anemic--many probably had hookworm or malaria or both.

In contrast to these there was an occasional U. S. warship that came up from New Orleans, with its beautiful white paint and polished brass, every sword-bearing officer and white-uniformed sailor spic and span.

These boats would lie in The River off Helena for a day or two and Helena society enjoyed entertaining the naval officers and midshipmen on shore while young and old enjoyed trips to and visiting aboard the battleship. The guns were impressive and seemed enormous by comparison with the guns in the Confederate Memorial Cemetery.

The luxurious relaxation aboard the steamboats of the 19th century contrasts nostalgically with a ride of one or two hours across the bridge and up through Mississippi on paved roads to Memphis.





JOHN THOMPSON JONES OF LEXA

by

Dale P. Kirkman

Judge John T. Jones of Lexa was one of Phillips County's leading citizens for almost three-quarters of a century. Apparently there are few people remaining in Helena who remember him or his family, which is somewhat remarkable, considering his prominence in local affairs. He may be remembered by some in the Lexa area, and H. W. Cook of Los Angeles, a member of the Historical Society and a former resident of the county, wrote that he recollected seeing Judge Jones many times at a store in Lexa.

Judge Jones came to this section about 1835, from Essex County, Virginia, having graduated from the University of Virginia and its law school prior to that time. He settled on a fine farm near Lexa and remained there for the duration of his life, combining a law practice with cotton planting. He was also the owner of a plantation on Red River, though it must have been administered by others for his advantage.

In 1842, Judge Jones was elected by the legislature to the position of judge of the First Judicial District, and he held this place for a number of years, perhaps during two different terms of service,

hence his lifelong title of "Judge". He was a man of much humor and a little of this was imparted to the Arkansas historian John Hallum, who included some of Judge Jones' judicial experiences in his **Pictorial History of Arkansas**.

The First Judicial District, or First Circuit, at the time when Judge Jones first held court, included the counties of Greene, Mississippi, Craighead, Poinsett, Cross, Crittenden, St. Francis, Monroe, and Phillips. The Greene County court itself was 170 miles from Helena, so it must have taken a determined man in that early time to cover such a territory.

Judge Jones set out for Greene County to hold his first court in the worst of winter weather. None of Helena's lawyers would go with him, so he departed alone, staying at Colonel Mark Izard's the first night, at present day Forrest City. While at this place, he persuaded a local lawyer named Jackson to go with him to Greene County. Besides the impossibility of holding court without a lawyer, as he pointed out, there was the fact that he did not know how to get to his destination.

He and lawyer Jackson stayed that night at Colonel Nealy's at Walnut Camp, traveling twenty miles the following day through a snowstorm until they came to a log cabin at the site of present day Harrisburg. The State's attorney, W. F. Stanton, was at this place, uncertain whether to expect Judge Jones on the circuit or not. Stanton had an office at Marion, but really lived in Memphis, and he had with difficulty crossed the swamps from Memphis to get to this place on the route.

The little group proceeded on to Greenville where it located the clerk who knew nothing of when or where court was to be held. He told Judge Jones that the sheriff had been drunk for two weeks and was down at a still at the time. The judge sent two men on horseback to locate the sheriff and to bring him in drunk or sober, so court proceedings could begin.

There was no available place to hold court, and no places for the hastily assembled jurors to stay, so in the coldest of winter weather a big fire was built outside, and trees were cut down and laid around the fire for seats. Another tree with ropes attached was

used as a jail for those in contempt of court. As usual, the visiting lawyers brought their own blankets with them. This court and its transactions was only one of many experiences to which Judge Jones was exposed in the performance of his job. After his years on the circuit, he quit the practice of law and confined his business interests to farming.

Judge and Mrs. Jones were among the earliest members of St. John's Episcopal Parish in Helena, and they are mentioned in local church records as early as 1845. They were instrumental in starting Grace Episcopal Chapel at Planters Post Office out in the county. In 1860, they gave nine acres for a site and \$1,000 towards the establishment of this adjunct to the Helena church, and sometime after that the judge was made a licensed layreader by Bishop G. W. Freeman of Arkansas.

It is thought that the chapel at Planters was on the Little Rock Road, a little west and south of present day Wycamp. There were baptisms and confirmations at this chapel, and at least for a part of the 1870s and 1880s it had a rector who was supplied with a parsonage at the site. Judge Jones was also a large contributor when the first Episcopal Church that occupied the present location at Perry and Pecan Streets, was built in 1899. In the existing church, there are two memorial windows honoring the memory of Judge and Mrs. Jones.

In 1866, following the Civil War, John T. Jones was elected United States Senator from Arkansas along with A. H. Garland. These men were denied admission to the Senate and never seated, however, because Reconstruction requirements of the state of Arkansas had not been met. This seems to have been the extent of Judge Jones' political career, though one source said that he was defeated in 1878 in running for the Senate again.

The National Grange of the Patrons of Husbandry was organized in 1867, and Judge and Mrs. Jones were greatly responsible for its entrance into Arkansas in 1872. The first Arkansas grange was established at Phillips Academy at Lexa (this seems to have been a school that the Jones started, and they must have lived in it or nearby as mention has been made in some articles of its being their home). The organizational forms listed fourteen members: Mr. and Mrs. Jones, Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Keesee, Mr. and Mrs. C. Polk, Mr. and Mrs. T. L. Jones (son), A. G. Jarman, Miss A. Jones (daughter), J. Cook, R. J. Polk, R. A. Blount, and Peter R. Ford. There were

also granges at Trenton, Marvell, Planters, and Richland.

The Grange movement attempted to bring about cooperative measures and systems in production, marketing, and manufacturing, and it was an effort to better the lot of farmers. It had a spectacular growth for a few years, and on the national and state levels it owned steamboat lines, grain elevators, and many other businesses.

The state or Arkansas Grange was organized at a meeting in Helena in 1873, after a sufficient number of local granges were in existence. At this time, Judge Jones was elected president of the state group, a position that he held until 1877. Other officers were: Simon P. Hughes of Clarendon, overseer; James M. Hanks of Helena, lecturer; John S. Williams of DeValls Bluff, secretary; L. B. Mitchell of Austin, treasurer; Mrs. John T. Jones, Ceres; Mrs. Mary E. Byrd of Marvell, Pomona.

The National Grange had a meeting in St. Louis in 1874, when Judge Jones became an important voice in the organization. At the time of this meeting, only four states in the United States were without chapters of the Grange. At a meeting in Louisville in the next year, Judge Jones was elected Master of the National Grange and Mrs. Jones was elected Ceres. He presided and delivered addresses at national meetings in Chicago in 1876 and at Cincinnati in 1877. His activity in the Grange included a great deal of writing on Grange interests.

For many reasons in subsequent years, the popularity of the Grange waned and it languished. It did teach farmers some improved methods of production before its time was up and before it faded from the scene.

The Phillips County Memorial Association was formed at Phillips Academy, with Mrs. Jones as its first president. Its purpose was to form the Confederate Memorial Cemetery in Helena, to move remains of veterans there, and to furnish a place for future burials of veterans. This association eventually evolved into the Maple Hill Cemetery Association. Mrs. Jones was also something of a genealogist, and she helped compile a lengthy family history of various branches of her family.

Judge and Mrs. Jones had twelve children, six of whom survived to adulthood. They were Paul Jones, an attorney in New York City; Dr. Heber W. Jones and Dr. W. Kennedy Jones, Memphis physicians;

Thompson L. Jones and John A. Jones, planters in Arkansas; and Mrs. J. W. Morton of Keysville, Virginia. These children returned to Lexa for Christmas as long as there was a family homestead. Judge and Mrs. Jones lived to celebrate their fiftieth wedding anniversary at their daughter's home in Virginia, to which all members of their family came. Judge Jones, during all the time he was in Arkansas, and even as a man in his 90s long years after his wife had died, tried to return every summer to his family home on the Rappahannock River in Virginia, continuously owned by members of his family since 1692. His portrait hangs in the court house of Essex County at Tappahannock, Virginia.

The Jones lot in Maple Hill Cemetery where Judge and Mrs. Jones are buried, along with their son Thompson L. Jones and his wife, is on the high hill in the south part of the Cemetery, below Confederate Hill. The inscriptions read:

John Thompson Jones, born October 11, 1813, died March 19, 1907

Caroline McEwen Jones, born April 26, 1819, died March 8, 1891

Thompson L. Jones, Co. C, 15th Ark. Inf., C.S.A. (Cleburne's)

Alice Boone Jones, 1852-1918

Several members of the Graves family were interred in this lot also, descendants of Judge and Mrs. Jones. It will be noted that some members of the Jones and Graves families were mentioned in various entries in the Sue Cook diary in this same issue of the *Quarterly*.

Sources of information were: West A. Goodspeed (ed.). *The Province and the States*, Vol. VII. Madison, Wis.: The Western Historical Association, 1904. John Hallum. *A Biographical and Pictorial History of Arkansas*. Albany: Weed, Parsons & Co., 1887. Granville D. Davis. "The Granger Movement in Arkansas," *Arkansas Historical Quarterly*, IV (Winter, 1945). Parish Register, St. John's Church, Helena. Mitchell Papers, Annals of the Edmiston and Kennedy Families by Hetty M. McEwen, 1878.

FORMER HELENIAN LOST WHEN A BABY

by

Carolyn R. Cunningham

Many of you remember Judge Edward Dale Robertson. He was an honest, forthright man, and handsome in his physical appearance. When he died at the age of ninety-four, his hair and beard were snow white as they had been for many years. He was fond of physical exercise, but his family tells me the stories are untrue that he often walked from Helena to Marianna. He did it once, and turned down many offers to ride.

I talked with the late judge's son, Mr. Edward Robertson, at his home in Marianna one night recently. He loves to talk about his family, and says they have great fun together remembering old family stories. We sat at his father's dining table, solid oak of handsome, Jacobean style. Overhead was a beautiful Tiffany light fixture. This is the only thing Mr. Ed saved from the old white house on the hill where Kroger now stands, which was the home of his parents. They lived at 615 Columbia Street from 1927 to 1948 in the house they bought from Jacob Thompson.

Edward Dale Robertson was born on October 21, 1855, in Columbia, Tennessee, one of six children born to James Robertson and his wife, Anne Lewis Dale Robertson. His father was born in Scotland in 1816, and came first to New York in 1840. Later he came to Nashville, Tennessee and then to Columbia where he married the lovely Miss Dale, descendant of Adam Dale, Revolutionary War patriot.

When he was six months old, several families from Columbia moved together to Arkansas, and thereby hangs the tale that never fails to bring a chuckle to a member of the Robertson family when it is told.

In the spring of 1856, Edward D. Robertson, who was to become an esteemed judge and representative in the legislature from Phillips County, was an infant in arms. He came from Tennessee to what is now Lee County, and was misplaced, so to speak, en route. The family arrived at the Helena landing on the Mississippi River, which

was near their destination of LaGrange. They came on the steamboat St. Francis, operated by Captain Thomas Bowman.

The head of the family had his hands full looking after his hands, his cattle, and household goods. Mrs. Robertson was occupied with older children and certain household treasures. So Baby Edward was turned over to the old black Mammy, who was told that he was to be her especial charge, that nothing would be expected of her except to get herself and the baby safely off the boat.

After everything was unloaded at the landing, and the St. Francis had disappeared around the bend, Mrs. Robertson had time to draw a breath and ask for her baby. He was nowhere to be found. The old Mammy was in a daze and didn't even remember having been placed in charge of the youngest.

Since there were no telephones, no fast motorboats, no wireless in those days, the family was frantic. Fortunately, however, steamboats were run on the neighborly plan in those days, and when a chambermaid aboard the St. Francis discovered the Robertson baby asleep in a stateroom berth, Captain Bowman promptly turned about, put on all steam, and tooting his whistle every rod of the way to notify the family of his coming, returned to the landing and restored the still sleeping infant to his mother's arms.

Judge Robertson was engaged in the practice of law for many years in Wynne, Marianna, and Helena. He was judge of the Fifth Chancery District and also circuit judge. He died at the home of his son Edward in Marianna, on November 19, 1949.

A MAN, A PLACE

by

Robert J. Titus

The young storekeeper was busy putting away a new shipment of shoes that had come up the White River by steamboat from St. Louis. His own boots were handmade, of the delicate Spanish style from New Orleans. And he moved with the quick, well-balanced grace of a seaman.

He was interrupted by two men who entered his store. Turning around, expecting to greet his customers cheerfully, he found himself looking into the barrels of two shotguns. Both guns blasted him at short range, and he crumpled across his new stock of shoes. The two men lumbered out in their clumsy brogans, their arms swinging in time with their heavy-footed pace, a type of stride that originated on the feudal manors and inflicted itself thereafter upon the followers of mindless drudgery.

News of the killing spread by word of mouth down the White River to the Mississippi, and then further down the Mississippi to a small keelboat, making its way toward New Orleans. The keelboat operator was standing on the roof of the cabin with a great sweep-oar in each hand, guiding his craft clear of snags and bars. He wore black handmade boots, the Spanish style.

He was naked to the waist, sweat streaming down his tanned chest and back, a long mop of black hair blowing in the wind. And he never stopped singing. His voice carried far ahead of the boat and echoed around the bends. But he was silent when he heard the news from a fellow riverman. "John, yer brother Ed was kilt at Rosey. Two brothers done it. It was over a woman."

Faithful to his ship and cargo, John Dickerson continued on to New Orleans. He tied up at the French Market and bought a train ticket back to Arkansas. He slipped a curious little Remington derringer, with five barrels, into his vest pocket and packed his Colt 45 with stag handles into his suitcase. But his Winchester would not fit any place. So he bought a new Savage lever action rifle that would break down small enough to carry on the train.

A tall, well-dressed stranger knocked at the door of a farmhouse not far from the general store at Rosey. A woman answered and was asked to call her husband. The big farmer made a clear silhouette in the yellow lamplight shining from inside his front room.

The still night was shattered by the explosion of a 45. The farmer was knocked backward, halfway across the room, and died on his living room floor. Another man rushed out the back door. The fields were cleared for spring planting. There was nothing to hide him.

He heard running footsteps hot on his heels. They were steadily gaining on him. He whirled around to fight for his life and was caught squarely in the face with a brass rifle butt. Again the stillness was broken, this time by the sharp crack of a rifle. The executioner wore light, thin-soled boots that carried him quickly over the fields and through the bottoms to the river, where a light, pointed skiff waited. Powerful hands, skilled at the oars, propelled the craft many miles down the river before sunrise.

Back in New Orleans, John Dickerson sold the last of the cargo and dismantled his boat. The keelboat was also part of the cargo. It was built of high-grade white oak and cypress, which could be sold to the local shipbuilders. Keelboats could only go down the river, never back up against the tremendous Mississippi current.

After the slaves were freed and plantation owners began to pay wages for labor, the plantation store became the center of all rural trade. In many cases farm workers and sawmill laborers were paid in company script, a form of coupon good only at the company store. Of course, the store owners could charge any price they wished and stock only what they wanted their servants to have. This created a golden opportunity for keelboat traders. They would load up at St. Louis with candy, firearms, colorful cloth, spices, steel traps, and all sorts of contraband, not available or priced out of reach of the laboring people, and head down the river, stopping wherever customers could be found.

Storeboats, as they were commonly called, tied up against the levees and in the bayous near the plantations, and runners, usu-

ally young colored boys, were sent to spread the news by word of mouth. Of course, the plantations owners resented such competition, and often the traders were met with a volley of gunfire. Landings like Friars Point and Modoc were free to all river trade, but many points deep in the Delta were owned and ruled by local gentry. In such places, the keelboats pulled into hidden bayous, overgrown with vines and seldom visited except by the plantation workers, who could take a day off to fish. Trading would be done quietly and secretly.

On one trip down the river, Ed Dickerson was given a little colored boy. The boy's mother, who made the presentation, never gave a specific, tangible reason, but Ed understood that the river to her meant freedom from the soil.

The boy's name was Morse, and Ed bought him a blue jacket with brass buttons and made him the ship's bugle boy. Morse would stand at the bow and blow his bugle to announce the coming of the storeboat. At the sound of his bugle, people would rush to the riverbank and flag the boat in.

After Ed was killed, Morse became the property of John Dickerson. Morse grew up among the rivermen and learned the tricks of trading. Years later, John Dickerson was visited by an elegantly dressed, middle-aged colored man. He introduced himself as Morse, the bugle boy. He had left the river and made a fortune in business.

The White River bottoms, like dozens of such areas, was a lawless strip of wilderness, even as late as the 1930's. For years, the state of Mississippi had maintained a penal system that leased convict labor to plantation owners. The stories of brutality and injustice heaped upon these unfortunate humans were long and many. Also such loose management made escape fairly simple. Since the Mississippi side of the river was fairly well populated and developed, and the Arkansas side was still much the same as DeSoto had found it, escaped convicts commonly headed across the river and into the White River wilderness.

One such man was Elmer Smith. Elmer was an extremely handsome man, who had married a local beauty contest winner. He left the river to settle on the land as a farmer. But Elmer was highly emotional and, at the slightest provocation, he flew into fits of

rage. One night he came home and found a man in the kitchen with his wife. Knowing her husband's disposition, the girl grabbed her baby and ran out the back door. Elmer rushed after them with a shotgun.

The corn was high and the strange man had cut a clear trail into Elmer's cornfield. Elmer could see a human figure running through the corn. He fired in the dark and ran over to see if he had hit his mark. He found his wife and baby lying dead between the rows of corn.

Elmer was tried and sentenced to the chain gang. In the process of shuffling from one prison farm to another, he came close to the Mississippi River. He managed to escape and ran straight to the river. Elmer Smith was a riverman, and he swam the river like a young deer. He made his way into the White River bottoms and was cordially accepted into a community of outlaws, many of whom had escaped the chain gangs, the same as he.

Before the United States Engineers began to pave the river banks, whole sections would cave into the stream as the channel switched from shore to shore. These cave-ins brought huge trees down with them. Therefore drifting logs were a common sight in the old days of river traffic. Elmer Smith and his new-found friends earned their living by catching drifting trees and cutting the trunks into saw logs. Their supplies were purchased from the storeboats. And so all went well until the Christmas of 1917.

John Dickerson was anchored in the Helena harbor that night, when he had a visitor. It was Elmer Smith's brother. He had come to get John to help him bring in Elmer's body. The band of log scavengers had been celebrating Christmas over a keg of whiskey and a fight had started. Elmer had been shot.

John explained to the brother that they would have to wait until the incident had cooled down before they could blunder in looking for Elmer. It just wasn't safe to walk into a nest of outlaws right after a killing. Later they went after the body and found it sitting up against a big oak tree, covered with a thick layer of new, white snow.

From the 1880's until the Great Depression of the 1930's, John

Oscar Dickerson made his trips up and down the Mississippi River to maintain his stock of merchandise. He watched the newspapers for fire sales and bankruptcy auctions from Plaquemines Parish to the Ohio Valley. His little storeboat was remarkably similar to the modern dollar stores and discount markets. It brought color, variety, and bargains into dark, stagnant areas. He docked at the industrial centers of Illinois and Ohio and traded with people who were born in bondage. Such variations in his environment caused him to scoff at local customs, founded on local self-interest. He said that there was only one rule that held true for everyone -- everywhere. That was, "Big dog, eat little dog."

John Dickerson died at Helena in 1937. His grave in Maple Hill Cemetery is marked by a headstone with an open skiff and set of oars carved in its face. JOHN O. DICKERSON 1860-1937 FATHER.

In the winter of 1916, fate had brought together the paths of John Dickerson and Monroe Titus (see Phillips County Historical Quarterly, September, 1967). Monroe's eldest son, Harvey Edward, married John's only child, Pearl. Harvey and Pearl had five children, William Edward, Ruth Altha, Harvey Edward, Jr., and Robert Joseph, all of whom still live in Helena with the exception of Ruth, who now lives in California.

CONCLUSION
DIARY OF SUE COOK (1844-1912)
1864 - 1865

Foreword by Betty Faust

In this issue of the *Quarterly* is the conclusion of the diary of Sue Cook, written during 1864 and 1865. While writing the diary, Sue Cook lived with her family on a plantation in Phillips County near Barton, Arkansas. Their two story frame house was located where the Kummer's yellow frame house now stands on the north side of U. S. Highway 49, one half mile east of the Highway 1 intersection at Walnut Corner and eleven miles west of Helena.

Sue Cook, born April 18, 1844, was nineteen years old when she began writing her diary on New Year's Day, 1864. She was part of a large family. Her sisters were Sallie, Nannie and Jennie. Brothers were Roland James and Robert Brooks Cook. Her parents were James and Frances (Brooks) Cook, who had settled in Phillips County on this farm in 1856, coming from Yalobusha County, Mississippi. Her father, James Cook, was born in Wake County, North Carolina, on April 8, 1810, the son of Roland Cook, a Baptist preacher. Sue Cook's mother was born in Giles County, Tennessee, on February 21, 1814. Her parents were married and lived in Mississippi where Sue Cook was born. She was twelve years old when she moved to Phillips County with her family in 1856. Their farm was covered by woods when James Cook and his family came here, and it was cleared by them. James Cook continued farming here until his death in 1872 at age sixty-two. His wife Frances died in 1876, aged sixty-two. They are buried side by side in the Cook Cemetery, located near the spot where the house stood. (See June, 1965, *Quarterly* for article on Cook Family Cemetery.)

Just four days after Sue Cook wrote the last entry in her diary, she married Edwin Augustus Hicks. At the beginning of the diary on New Year's Day, 1864, (December, 1965 *Quarterly*) she recorded, "Mr. Ed Hicks, an escaped prisoner from Cairo, came over." In the diary there are frequent references to visits by "Lt. Hicks." The wedding ceremony was performed on January 4, 1866, at the home of the bride's parents, Mr. and Mrs. James Cook. According

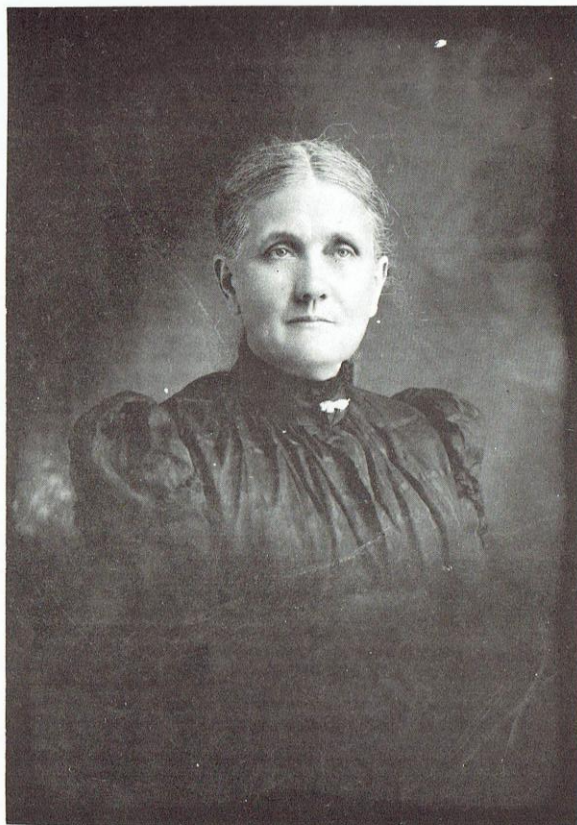
to the marriage certificate in the E. A. and Sue (Cook) Hicks Family Bible, the ceremony was performed by Mr. H. Barksdale. The witnesses were H. M. Grant and A. J. Jarman

In the Family Records of this Bible are recorded births of their eight children as follows: James Cook Hicks, born August 21, 1868; Lucretia Dickens Hicks, born January 28, 1870; Annie Lizzie Hicks, born August 14, 1871; Edwin Augustus Hicks, born December 20, 1873; John Emma Hicks, born September 13, 1875; Francis Brooks Hicks, born January 17, 1879; Mary Sue Hicks, born May 3, 1881; Sarah Hicks, born December 27, 1884. The deaths of their children are recorded as follows: Annie Lizzie Hicks, died October 15, 1873; Lucretia Dickens Hicks, died August 6, 1876; Mary Susie Hicks, died September 21, 1883; John Emma Hicks, died July 19, 1889; Sarah Hicks, died August 9, 1889; Francis Brooks Hicks, died August 22, 1889; James Cook Hicks, died January 28, 1901

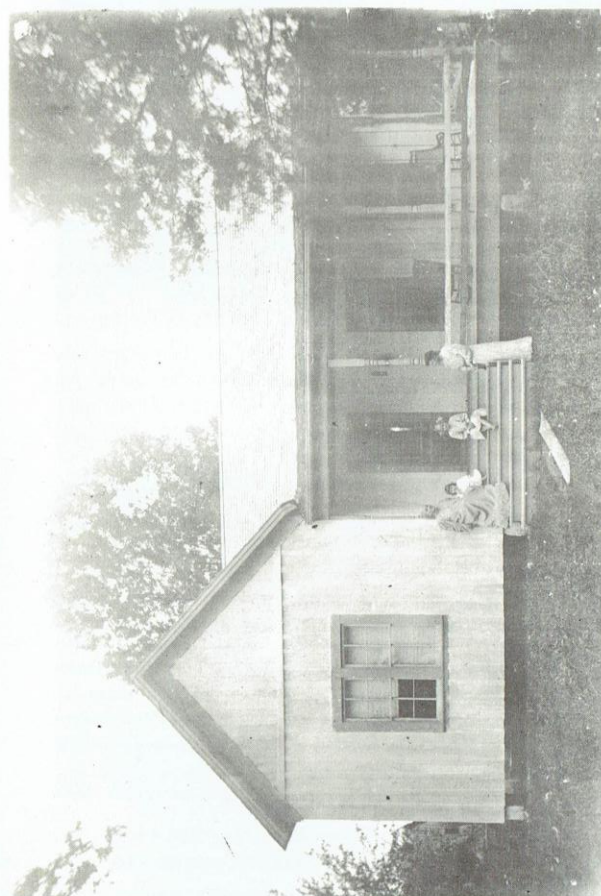
Mrs. Sue (Cook) Hicks and her husband, E. A. Hicks, lived in the North Creek Community about two miles from the home of her parents. Only two of their children reached adulthood. They were Jim Hicks and E. A. ("Boss") Hicks, Jr. Jim Hicks (1868-1901) married Miss Marian Clark Smith (1866-1936). Their daughters are Mrs. Jimmie (Hicks) Word of Memphis and Mrs. Sue Clark (Hicks) Aycock of DeValls Bluff. E. A. "Boss" Hicks married Miss Nellie Winbourn and their daughter is Mrs. Marian Louise (Hicks) Tardy Newkirk of West Helena. Her son Randy Tardy now lives in Little Rock.

The original diary belongs to Mrs. Newkirk. It is written in beautiful script in a ledger-like notebook, seven inches by twelve inches, containing forty-four written pages, front and back. The binding is in fair condition with a few torn pages, but the text is intact. Mrs. Newkirk also furnished these two pictures of her grandmother.

The author of this diary lived the remainder of her life in Phillips County. Sue Cook Hicks died in 1912, aged sixty-six, and was buried in the Cook Cemetery. Her grave is only a few feet from where she wrote this diary over a hundred years ago.



PHOTOGRAPH OF MRS. SUE (COOK) HICKS
Taken at an unknown date by the photographer,
Leon, Helena



PHOTOGRAPH OF MRS. SUE (COOK) HICKS' HOUSE
Located at North Creek. Pictured are (left to right) Mrs. Sue (Cook) Hicks, Marian Louise (Hicks) Tardy Newkirk, Jimmie (Hicks) Word, Nellie (Winbourn) Hicks, wife of E. A. "Boss" Hicks and mother of Mrs. Newkirk. Taken about 1910.

Aug. 12 - Been cutting fruit to dry. Jennie is quite sick. Bro. and I went to Mrs. Johnson's this evening. Mrs. William and Tom Renfro were here today. Pa is getting better.

Aug. 13 - Jennie very sick. Bobbie, Jardie and I went to Mr. Nicholson's and Mr. Freeland's this evening. Annie has gone to Cotton Plant. Mr. John Hicks spent the evening here. Received a letter from Kenie.

Aug. 14 - Capt. Weatherly was here this morning. Jennie is better. Bro. Roland had a chill today. I went to Mrs. Greens this evening. Coming back got into a bumble bees nest, they stung me dreadfully in one hand, stung my pony, too, caused him to throw me.

Aug. 15 - Brother has been very sick all day again. Been making pickles, sweet and sour. Wrote to Cousin Mattie Lynn. Mr. Wilks and Miss Sallie Peterson were buried last Saturday in Trenton.

August 16 - Bro. still quite sick. Pa taken worse last night. Cousin Dick and Mollie, Annie Lambert, Mr. Tommie Wilks and B. Jackson came here today, from Monroe County. All passing the night.

August. 17 - Mr. Will Sale spent the morning. Tom Jones called. Mr. Jarman was here this evening. Pa still quite unwell. Bro better. I am at last convinced Arkansas is not the country for white people to live in. I will leave it the first chance I get, certain. Will go to Brazil if the opportunity presents itself. Our company all went to Helena today.

Aug. 18 - Kenie Cameron came out this evening. Cousin D. and the girls came back tonight. Gus Randle is dead.

Aug. 19 - Kenie left this evening. Cousin Carr Turner and Uncle Buck are with us tonight. Cousin C. is just from Texas where he has been since the Yanks have occupied our country. Miss Jennie Duty and Mr. Green Roper are married. Capt R. was once a Lt. in my brother's company.

Aug. 20 - No one has deigned to call today. Been reading "The Golden Legacy" today. Wrote to Ben Reynolds. Had a blue time generally. Been asleep nearly all the evening.

Aug. 21 - Mrs. Bart Green spent the day. She was assisting me

make jellie and preserves. Received a note from Mollie Mooney. Ma and Pa spent the day with Mr. Nicholson.

Aug. 22 - Mr. Will Edmonson called. Jennie Jones spent the day. Tommie dined with us. Heber was here this evening.

Aug. 23 - Ma and Pa are spending the day with Mrs. Blount. Nat Graves and L. Smith were here this evening. Mr. S. brought me a letter from Mollie Mooney. Cousin D. and Bro are with a party camp hunting.

Aug. 24 - Lt. E. A. Hicks spent the day. He is at home for a few days, then will return to South Alabama. The hunters came back this morning, had three deer. Mama and Pa are spending the day with Mrs. Green. They are riding around for Pa's health

Aug. 25 - Pa, Cousin D. and the girls went to Helena this evening. Lt. Hicks brought me down to Mr. Smizers. I am sitting up with Johnny again. Poor little one he cannot last many days longer.

Aug. 26 - Johnny was so sick I staid all day with him. I think him dying. Heber Jones brought me home this evening. Pa and Cousin came home tonight. Received a letter from B. T. Reynolds.

Aug. 27 - Went to Church at Lockes school house this morning. Mr. P. Jones preached an excellent sermon. Came home to dinner. Lt. came with us. Sis Sallie, Dr. and Mrs. Dowd came about three o'clock. Bro and I went to prayer meeting, to Mrs. Harrymans to supper and to night meeting to night. We had an exciting time, several mourners and two conversions. The meeting will continue for some time. Poor me I have wandered so far from the paths set apart for me, trampled so many of God's laws under my unholy feet, that I do not enjoy such as I once did. God only knows how sincerely I have repented, and to you dear old Journal I make a solemn resolve to live a more upright life. May the Lord help me carry out these resolutions.

Aug. 28 - Bro. and I went to Mr. Hicks to see Mr. Jack Sutton buried. He died Sunday night. Johnny Smizer was buried this evening at four o'clock. Lt. left this morning. Nannie and Jennie went to

church tonight. I was too unwell to attend.

Sept. 2 - Went Tuesday morning to church--returned last night. We have had a glorious meeting, many conversions and luke warm Christians have been warmed up. 'Tis still going on. I have been staying at Uncles, Mr. Nevills, and Mr. M-? Mr. Freeland has died and been buried since I left. Recd letters from Kenie and Mollie.

Sept. 3 - All went to church today except me. Mr. John Hicks and Mr. Harvey Hickey dined with us. Mr. Hicks went with us to church tonight. Had a good meeting.

Sept. 4 - Capt Martin came home with them from church today, went with us tonight. John Hicks came back with us.

Sept. 5 - Mrs. Dowd, Cousins Mollie, Hattie, and Willis spent the day. All of us went to church tonight. Mrs. Dowd came back with us. Mrs. Fitzgerald is staying with us tonight. Mrs. Dade died this morning from the effects of Cloroform. The community will feel her loss sensibly.

Sept. 6 - Bro. and Mrs. D. went to see Mrs. Dade buried. Mr. Jim Baily came down this evening and is spending the night. I am very busy preparing to start to Miss. Saturday, Bro and I.

Sept. 7 - Raining in torrents this morning. Mr. Baily spent the morning. Received a letter from Mollie. Will Edmonson was here this evening.

Sept. 8 - Writing to Mollie. Mr. Green, Dr. Edmonson, and Capt Weatherly were here this morning. Dr. Grant, Miss Maggie Knox and Heber Jones called this evening. I am all ready to leave in the morning, so dear Journal, for a little while I bid you an affectionate adieu...

Oct. 10 - Well old Journal for one month my pen has not glided over your smooth sheets, making scrawls that amount to nothing, but are not readily effaced. We returned last night from Miss. Aunt Cooper and Fannie Sherill, a cousin, came with us. We had a quiet nice time visited many places made dear by old associations. Art had done much to effect changes in scenes where I dwelt a merry happy child; but Nature still bore some traces of its

former beautiful and picturesque appearance. I saw many of my old school mates and companions of my childhood, their faces were familiar to me but none of them recognized me. Like everything else I too was changed. Ma has been quite sick, but is better now. Received a letter from Lt. H...

Oct. 12 - Been raining nearly all day. Everybody sick. I never saw such a time.

Oct. 13 - Bro. Roland went to Helena this morning and returned tonight-purchased family groceries. Mrs. Fitzgerald is with us tonight. Miss Lucy Winbourn will be with us soon. Wrote to Lt. Hicks.

Oct. 14 - A rainy cloudy day. Nat Graves was here this eve.

Oct. 15 - Went to Church today. Mr. Robards, a Methodist minister, preached. The text was 16th, 17th, 18th chapters of the Prophet of Malici. Cousins Hattie and Uncle Buck spent the day. Cousin is passing the night. She and I went to Mrs. Burnettes this evening.

Oct. 16 - Cousin Hattie and I went to see Emma this morning. Annie was there, we had quite a nice time. Cousin went home this evening, wrote to Mollie Mooney. Mr. Hutchinson called this eve.

Oct. 17 - Been raining. Busy all day making preserves and putting up grapes for winter use. Mr. Green came tonight for me to go and sit up with his baby. It is a very sick child, has congestion of the brain. I do not think it will live.

Oct. 18 - Spent the day at Mrs. Greens, came home this evening. Little Lexy died at one o'clock today. Bro. and Nannie are sitting up there tonight. Tab Hicks and Glen Baker are passing the night with us.

Oct. 19 - The remains of that dear little babe was carried to its last resting place this morning. What a void in the hearts of the parents it leaves. Aunt Mary came by on her way from Mississippi. Ma and Aunt Cooper accompanied her home.

Oct. 20 - Pa and Sis Sallie went to Helena this morning. Pa and

Dr. Grant came out tonight. Sis Sallie will remain in town till tomorrow. Jennie Bettie Slaughter, the only child of a widowed mother, died yesterday. The grim monster claims for his own the fairest and loveliest, those most loved and idolized.

Oct. 21 - Ma came home this morning. Sis and Cousin Dick came out tonight.

Oct. 22 - Went to church this morning. Mr. Beckum baptized several, some by effusion and one by emersion. Aunt Mary and Cousin Mollie spent the day. Coln. Bracie and Mr. Bickerstaff are here tonight.

Oct. 23 - Coln. B. left this morning for Kentucky. Dr. Edmonson dined with us. There is a report now that Gen Grant has ordered all the negro troops mustered out of service. Young Mr. Haywood Hicks died near Little Rock a few days since, will be buried at his fathers tomorrow. Aunt Mary and Uncle Buck are with us tonight.

Oct. 24 - Pa, Uncle B. and Aunt Mary went to Helena this morning, returned tonight. Received letters from Kenie and Mollie this evening. Wrote to Mollie tonight. Brother started to Bradley County this morning. Cousin Dick and Dr. Grant are with us tonight.

Oct. 28 - Went to Uncle Bucks on the 25th, returned this evening. Aunt and I had a nice time. Went to see Mrs. Thrilkild one evening. Major Moore and Mrs. Lambert came tonight, late, are spending the night.

Oct. 29 - Nat Graves, Mr. Nicholson, Mr. John Hicks, and Mr. Renfro have been here today. I went to see Mrs. Jamison this evening. Hailed and rained as I came home.

Oct. 30 - Cold and cloudy. Mr. Burnette called today.

Nov. 2 - Pa went to Helena this morning, returned tonight. Miss Lucy Winbourn and Cousin Joe Bradin came home with him. Received a letter from Mollie Mooney.

Nov. 3 - Aunt and Cousin Joe went to Uncle Bucks this evening.

Mrs. Dowd is at the hotel in Helena very ill.

Nov. 4 - Went hickory nutting today. Came home at four o'clock this evening with a bushel and a half.

Nov. 5 - Father Cogan lectured at Lockes school house. Had a large crowd out. Miss Lucy and I went to see Mrs. Burnette & Jamison this evening. Nat Graves was here this eve.

Nov. 6 - Pa carried Cousin Joe to town today, he will start home on first up river boat. Sis Sallie came home tonight, Mrs. Dowd is better. Received a letter from Cousin M. J. Sherill. Mrs. Tom Gist is dead. Mr. Folks died a few days since.

Nov. 7 -- Went to Mr. Freelans this morning. Mr. Jarman was here this morning. Dr. Grant, Capt Suggs, and Mrs. Fitzgerald are here tonight.

Nov. 8 - Bro. Roland came home this morning-brought some of the negroes home. Mr. Burnette, Sue and George spent the day. Sue and I went to Mrs. Jones this evening but she was gone to Nashville. Mrs. Fitz is with us tonight.

Nov. 9 - Mrs. Fitzgerald Aunt and Uncle Buck spent the day.

Nov. 10 - Ben Miles was here this evening. Dr. Grant passed this evening with his bride. He and Miss Mittie Blain of Monroe Co. are married.

Nov. 11 - Aunt and Fannie came back this morning. Bro is going with her a part, if not all the way. Nat Graves, Mr. John Hicks, Mr. and Mrs. Burnette were here today. Cousin Dick is with us tonight. Received a letter from Lt. Hicks.

Nov. 13 - Raining all day. Been busy all of us sewing.

Nov. 14 - Another rainy day. John Nelson and Mr. Blount called. Movers passing by scores.

Nov. 15 - Dave, our old servant got his shoulder dislocated this morning in the gin. Twas not put in place till late this evening. Mr. Impy the sheriff, Capt Weatherly and a Ohio Yankee were here

this evening.

Nov. 16 - Miss Lucy had a chill this morning. Brother returned tonight.

Nov. 17 - Been raining all day. Mrs. Fitzgerald is staying with us tonight.

Nov. 18 - Capt Stansell called this morning. Received a letter from Mollie. Mrs. Fitz is here tonight. Raining.

Nov. 19 - Such a cloudy disagreeable day. Nat Graves and Mr. Hutchinson called this evening. Brother has gone over Big Creek, is spending the night.

Nov. 20 - Pa went to Helena this morning with Mr. Jarman and Mr. Wynne, returned tonight. The citizens are trying to get pay for mules stolen during the war.

Nov. 21 - A clear beautiful day. Miss Lucy and Sis Sallie went to Mrs. Johnson's this evening. Mrs. James Weatherly spent the evening. Been writing to Lt. Hicks.

Nov. 22 - Wrote to Mollie. Nat Graves was here this evening.

Nov. 23 - Pa, Miss Lucy and Nanie went to Helena this morning, returned tonight. Received a letter from Mollie.

Nov. 24 - Annie W. and Willis Renfro spent the day.

Nov. 25 - Miss Lucy, Sis Sallie and Bro spent the day at Mrs. Wynnes. Sis S. had a chill.

Nov. 26 - Bro, Miss L. and I went to Trenton to church. Mr. Barksdale preached Mr. Wilks funeral from a text selected by Stonewall Jackson for the funeral of a friend. Twas the 28th Chapter, 8th verse of Romans. Ma and Jennie are at Uncle Bucks tonight. Sis Sallie had another hard chill today. Wrote to Cousin Mary Brooks. John Hicks dined with us.

Nov. 27 - Ma came home this morning. Sis S. has missed her chill. A bright pretty day. Pa went to Helena.

Nov. 28 - Mrs. B. Green spent the evening.

Nov. 29 - Ma and Miss Lucy spent the day with Mrs. Burnette and Jamison. Pa went to Mr. Wynnes sale. He is breaking up to go to Miss. Mr. W. Renfro took tea with us.

Nov. 30 - Mr. and Mrs. Burnette dined with us. Went to Mrs. Greens this evening to call on Jennie Graves.

Dec. 1 - Cousin Mollie Brooks and Mrs. Dowd came down this morning. Miss Lucy and I went to Mrs. Quinlans and Nicholsons this evening. Received a letter from Mollie.

Dec. 2 - Mag Renfros baby died this morning. I am sitting up with it tonight. Mr. H. Hicks got home this morning from Alabama

Dec. 3 - The baby was buried this morning. Lt. and Emma Hicks dined and spent the evening. Mr. and Mrs. Burnette, Nat Graves and John Nelson were here this evening.

Dec. 4 - Raining all day. Pa went to Helena and back.

Dec. 5 - Still raining. Nat Graves and Mr. Grider called this evening.

Dec. 6 - Rained all the morning but is quite clear this evening. Dr. Edmonson called this evening. Cousin Dick and Lt. Hicks are passing the night.

Dec. 7 - Lt. stayed all the morning, dined with us. Old Capt Suggs and two ladies are staying all night. Bro and Collin had a difficulty tonight. Bro. drew a pistol on the negro, before he would obey him.

Dec. 8 - Clear all morning, but raining a little tonight. Collin came up and apologized to Brother for his conduct last night. Capt Weatherly called this evening.

Dec. 9 - Bro. went to town this morning with cotton, came back tonight. Cousin Hattie came back with Sis Sallie and Nannie this evening.

Dec. 10 - Cousin, Brother and I went to prayer meeting this even-

ing. I kept on home with Cousin, am spending the night. Addie Foster and Mr. Tom Baily are married.

Dec. 11 - Came home this afternoon. Drew and Cousin Hattie came with me. Cousin went back tooight. Found Pa in bed, had a hard chill. He got up and started to town in a hour after--?

Dec. 12 - Cold and windy. Drew went home this eve.

Dec. 13 - The ground is covered with snow. Tis very cold. Pa has not come home yet.

Dec. 14 - Cousin Hattie came down this morning, went home this evening. Pa came home tonight. He --? in his evidence and left. The case has not yet been decided in which he was a witness.

Dec. 15 - Lt. Hicks spent the day. Mr. Hutchison, Dr. Baker, and Mr. Crawford dined with us. Snow still on the ground.

Dec. 16 - Raining and freezing as it falls, which makes traveling on foot rather dangerous. Lt. Hicks is spending the night. We have been having a pleasant time. Miss Ben McGraw of Helena and Coln. Clayton of the 5th Kansas Regt, were married last night.

Dec. 17 - Lt. Hicks spent the day. Nat Graves dined and spent the evening. Much warmer, snow all melted. Mrs. Latham and Mr. W. Fitzgerald married today.

Dec. 18 - Cloudy and very warm. Mr. Jarman called this morning. L. Smyth died last night. Like there is in newspapers my journal has records first of marriages then deaths, such is life. Lt. Hicks is with us tonight.

Dec. 19 - Raining all day. Mr. Oscar Thweatt, an old school mate of ours, and three other gentlemen are here tonight. Rosa Beasley and Maj. Sam Black were married last Sunday.

Dec. 20 - Turning so cold. Miss Dina King and Mr. Warren Rabb, both of Helena, were married last night.

Dec. 21 - Brother and Sis Sallie went to Helena this morning. Dr. Edmonson and Capt Weatherly were here today. I went to Mrs.

Greens this morning. Four persons are spending the night. Cold and clear, sun has shown his smiling face the entire day.

Dec. 22 - Lt. Renfro and Mr. John Hicks called. Bro. and Sis Sallie got home tonight.

Dec. 23 - Lt. Hicks spent the day. Received a letter from Emma Hicks.

Dec. 24 - Mr. Burnette and Jamison were here this evening. Not much Christmas talked of.

Dec. 25 - Christmas Day! Ma, Brother Roland, Sis Sallie and Miss Lucy are spending the day from home. Lt. Hicks has been here all day and is here tonight, sick. Nat Graves and Mr. Boon Avant called this morning.

Dec. 26 - Raining all day. Lt. Renfro came over this morning. We had an egg nogg.

Dec. 27 - Morris Johnson, Mrs. Fitzgerald and Mr. Hutchinson called this morning. Mr. Nicholson dined. Cousin John Henderson is spending the night. Wrote to Mollie Mooney.

Dec. 28 - Bro and I went to Helena this morning--got home after night. I stayed at Mrs. Burnettes having some work done. Lt. and John H. spent the day here. Lt. Renfro was here tonight.

Dec. 29 - Been very busy all day. No one here.

Dec. 30 - Jennie Graves, Maggie Renfro, Mr. and Mrs. Burnette and Mr. Hutchinson dined with us. Nat Graves and Mr. Will Edmonson called today.

Dec. 31 - We have been all alone this day. Lt. H. called this evening. Cousin Carr and Ned Turner are spending the night. The last of another year. Old Journal, I bid you a final adieu. Never again will my pen glide over your smooth sheets recording all events both gay and sad, oftener the latter.

THE LEGACY OF LOVE

The Cotten Correspondence: Part I

by

Carolyn R. Cunningham

Mrs. Gordon Cunningham is the owner of quite a collection of family correspondence, the oldest letter having been written ninety-eight years ago. They will be published in the *Quarterly* in installments. The letters were written by her grandparents to each other during the difficult days of Reconstruction following the Civil War. Her grandfather, Norfleet Hill Cotten, was here in Arkansas trying to get the family plantation re-established so he could bring his family back to their home. His wife and mother were at the old family home in LaGrange, Tennessee.

Norfleet Cotten was born at LaGrange, Tennessee on July 21, 1833. He married Miss Fannie E. Black. She was born in Grenada County, Mississippi on February 14, 1838. They were married at Indian Bay, Monroe County, on February 20, 1861, by Reverend B. R. S. Boemond, rector of St. John's Episcopal Church, Helena. Witnesses were M. H. Mayo, Ed Cotten, and R. E. Johns. This was one of the only two marriages performed by Mr. Boemond during his stay in Helena, and it was the last marriage recorded in the church register before the Civil War started and until 1865.

After their marriage, Mr. and Mrs. Cotten went to live in the Valley Grove Community near the Mayo plantation. Two sons and two daughters were born to them, John, Ed, Lena, and Ida.

July 4, 1863, the day of the Battle of Helena, found Fannie Cotten in a buggy with her slave, Clayton, on the way to Helena to sell her cotton which followed in wagons. She sold the cotton and started home, a long, hard trip. At the edge of Helena she was stopped by the enemy, and when it was learned why she was here, she was made to hand over the money from the sale. It must have been a sad and dismal trip home. After her husband was taken prisoner and sent north to prison camp, Mrs. Cotten took her chil-

dren and went back to Tennessee to the old home of her husband's family, where it was safer, more comfortable, and not so isolated.

After the war was over and Mr. Cotten was freed, he went at once to his family in Tennessee. He came to Arkansas to see about the plantation, but did not wish to move his family back until conditions here were improved -- which they were slow in doing.

Sometime in 1870, he left Tennessee and returned to the Arkansas plantation. He found things to be in a very difficult situation, his former slave, Clayton, living in the family home and ready to give orders to his old Master. During his brief stay, he wrote many lengthy letter to his wife in Tennessee, and she to him.

Novemver 18th 1870.

My Dear Wife

Your darling letter of 13 came to hand yesterday. I could not keep from crying when I read it, therefore, waited until I was alone before reading it. I am so glad to hear from you dear ones. As I have so much building to do, there is no knowing when I can come home. One thing is certain, our farm will go to ruin, and we wont have any of it cultivated in a year or two, unless I have it improved, houses built, & fences repaired.

You do not know how bad a fix our place is in. If I dont fix it up now, it will be almost worthless to us in a year or so. You well know hands will not improve, but tear down, & destroy, & our place is our dependence for a living. Clayton and Martha are delighted at the idea of having the nice houses to live in I am going to have built. I have had nearly all the lumber hauled since I came, engaged the carpenters to build the houses for (\$25.00) each, a man to dig three wells, and expect to commence work next week.

I cannot get any one to do a thing for me, & shall have to remain, & attend to my business myself. Selfishness prevails here to the fullest extent. The hauling costs are fifty cents a hundred feet. Do the best you can, my darling. I have great confidence in you abilities, & do pray you & the dear children

will keep well.

This is the third letter I have written you. I have been well ever since I left you, & just as busy and I could be. Our old Neighbors are anxious for our return. Joel has bought & is improving & building on the Words tract of land Sam sold to him. I am writing in a new cabin Ned built on the roadside not far from the old house. They all live in one room & cook in the same, Sis Sally cooks. All are well. I came to see them this evening.

Clayton has a yard of fowls for us & Martha's children have some things for Miss Ida and the boys. They are doing and living well, & will remain with us if we return. I am trying to get a good White man to occupy my house, & take care of, and improve my place, but have found no one yet. If you could, would like to have you write a note, or see Capt Johns, & get him to send Smith over.

I have been busy all the week, going every day, & have fattened & have as good an appetite as ever. Ate dinner at home today & had nice damson preserves. I thought of the good things you had been deprived of this year, for want of fruit. I intend bringing you something nice. You know my dear, I will do all that is in my power for you dear ones, but that will be little enough as I will have to expend our little means in improving, & cant, unless I can borrow the money, pay Scott for his place.

I have not collected a dollar, & the prospect is poor to get any before another year. Every one works against another, cold & friendless is the feeling here, it seems to me. With you I feel life any where, & under any circumstances, would be happiness enough for me.

This years experience has taught me a lesson, never to be forgotten. Tis nothing more than I thought to hear, that all our chickens were stolen. I wish Houston would take the corn, or most of it, towards pay for the rent of his place, for I wont have the money to pay it all this year, & he must be liberal with me. I have been disappointed in all my expectations. Cant get money even from those who have been owing me for years. The

only thing left me is to depend upon our farm, which I think the whole of will be worked, after I fix it up, & bring us a good support, after a while.

I am sorry you had so bad a dream about me, & do hope you may in future have pleasant ones. I have not been out of humor at any thing, nor dont intend you must recollect, dear Fanny. I promised when I left you to take good care of myself & not get angry, & with Gods help, I have thought of, & kept my promise, & intend leading & living a new & different life.

Dear Ma how is she, well I hope, & sister & brother Mercer, my love to them all. Can't say when I will come to you. Dont deny yourself of anything you need, this world owes us all a living. Glad to hear Ida's mouth is well. Rosa says I am a most devoted husband to my Wife, & that no man loves his family more than I do. They all speak affectionately of you all.

I must stop. How is my mare. I hope Proudfit takes good care of her & keeps her fat, the cows calf. You had better eat your chickens if you have any left. A kiss for you all from your affectionate husband. Good bye my dear, until you hear from me again. Write every week, until I tell you when I am coming.

Your loving Husband

N. H. Cotten

I think best Henry Scott should know that I have thus far been disappointed about money matters & will not have it in my power to pay him one thousand dollars down on his place, say nothing about when I thought to have been able to pay two.

PHILLIPS COUNTY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

From the **Helena World**, March 9, 1898

The Phillips County Medical Association held its regular monthly meeting yesterday at the City Hall, Dr. A. A. Hornor presiding. The members present were Drs. Bean, of Trenton; Thompson and Penn of Marvell; Pearson, of Poplar Grove; D. A. Linthicum, M. Fink, C. R. Shinault, A. A. Hornor and F. N. Burke. Drs. Russwurm, T. C. Linthicum and W. M. Richardson, of Latour, absent.

The retiring president, Dr. Hornor, expressed his gratification at the selection of his worthy successor in office, Dr. J. W. Bean, and hoped that the hearty support of the members given him during his incumbency would be continued under the new administration, and that the reputation and progress which this organization had built up and sustained, would go along unimpeded.

The newly elected president was then escorted to a seat by a committee as were also the vice-president and sec'y, who made remarks appropriate to the occasion, each promising to work zealously for the society's best interest.

The newly elected officers are: pres., Dr. J. W. Bean, of Trenton; vice-pres., Dr. M. Fink; sec'y and treas., Dr. C. R. Shinault.

Several interesting cases occurring in the practice of the members were brought up for information and discussion.

.MORE MEMBERS

Mrs. Ivon Clay	Marianna, Arkansas
Mrs. Bernard Capes	West Helena
Clyde Gay	Wellesley, Massachusetts
H. B. Lewis	Forrest City, Arkansas
Mrs. Robert Young	Wynne, Arkansas

SUSTAINING

Mrs. Fannie S. Turner	Poplar Grove
Jack M. Young	Helena

Dues for the membership year 1968-1969 are payable in May, 1968.