

CHAPTER VI

EARLY SETTLERS

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Ransom Moore | 10. William Steward |
| 2. David Thompson | 11. Henry Bushmiaer |
| 3. John Drennen | 12. Justin Felix Beneux |
| 4. James Woodson Bates | 13. Josiah Foster |
| 5. Albert Pike | 14. Alexander Gooding |
| 6. George Washington Knox | 15. Arnold O'Bryan |
| 7. Whitfield Bourne | 16. Dibbrell Family |
| 8. Alexander McLean | 17. David Herbert Creekmore |
| 9. Jonathan Eno | 18. Samuel Swearingen |

RANSOM MOORE

Ransom Moore was a native of Illinois, having been born in that state on the tenth of January, 1800. When quite a young man he removed to Chicot County, Arkansas, and from there he came to Crawford county about 1829 and settled near the Arkansas River a short distance above the mouth of Lee's Creek where he purchased about 480 acres of land from the government at \$1.25 per acre.

He established a ferry across the Arkansas River which he operated for a number of years.

In August in 1834 he, with William Duval, David Peevyhouse, Andrew Lester and John Rogers were appointed by the Crawford county court as reviewers to mark and lay off a road to Fort Smith running thence the nearest and best way to Ransom Moore's ferry one-half mile above the mouth of Lee's Creek to cross the Arkansas River as said ferry, thence to the lower ford on Lee Creek, thence the nearest and best way to intersect the Washington county road at or near the forks of the road leading to Drag's mill at Fayetteville.

Mr. Moore was a large slave owner, his descendants having in their possession several bills of sale showing where he had bought slaves some of which were bought at Little Rock from Samson Grey. The following is one of the bills of sale:

Know all men by these present, that I, Samson Gray of the county of Pulaski and Territory of Arkansas for

and in consideration of Seven Hundred dollars current money of the United States to me in hand paid by Ransom Moore the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged have bargained and sold and do by these present bargain and sell and convey unto the said Ransom Moore a certain negro man named Jerry about 34 years of age, a slave for life, and I, the said Samson Gray for myself, my heirs, executors and administrators and assigns, that the aforesaid negro man named Jerry is a slave for life and that he is free and clear from all incumbrances and that I will warrant and defend the title of said negro against the lawful claims and demand of all persons whatsoever and that the said negro is sound and healthy and free and clear from any disease whatsoever.

In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal at Little Rock this thirteenth day of January, 1829.

SAMSON GRAY, (Seal)

Witness, Jas. Henderson.

Ransom Moore was married to Martha (born January 5, 1809) January 5, 1826 most probably, in Chicot county. To this union eight children were born as follows: Elizabeth born January 21, 1827; John, October 26, 1829; Sarah E., November 23, 1834; Mathew C., April 24, 1837; Mary J., October 15, 1839; Daniel B., December 1, 1842; Louis A., November 1, 1845. Only three of these children lived to be grown. Elizabeth married and moved to Texas; Sarah Ellen married and a daughter lives at Joplin, Missouri; Matthew C., married Nancy Davis. His descendants, Mrs. Bessie Rutz and Charles Roberts are living at Fort Smith. Mathew C., was in the Confederate Army being a member of Company "I", 9th Missouri regiment.

Ransom Moore died in 1847, his wife survived him a number of years, passing away in 1875. Like many a Southern woman she endured trials and hardships during the War Between the States.

DAVID AKIN THOMPSON

NOTE: The lives of the two gentlemen whose biographies are given, were so closely connected in business

that it is necessary for some repetition:

David Akin Thompson was the son of Dr. David Thompson and his second wife, Frances Akin, of New Castle, Delaware.

Dr. David Thompson's father, John Thompson, was a native of Antrim, Ireland, and settled at New Castle, Delaware, in 1727; his son, David, was born there in 1775 and died at his residence, which was situated between New Castle and St. Georges in the latter part of 1795. Dr. Thompson served for a short time in the hospital corps during the American Revolution. Dr. David Thompson's son, David Akin Thompson, was born near St. Georges, Delaware, April 4, 1796, a few months after his father's death. At what time he and his mother came west and settled at Nashville, Tennessee, is not known. A letter speaks of members of the Thompson family moving west and they were very likely of the party.

He was married to Laretta Charlotte Deaderick, daughter of Thomas Deaderick, at the home of her sister, Mrs. James Stuart, afterwards Mrs. John Drennen, at Jonesborough, Tennessee, March 17, 1818.

In 1826 he removed from Jonesborough, Tennessee, to Fayetteville, presumably in the same state. It must have been while living there that he and John Drennen entered into partnership. From there he left for Arkansas January 19, 1830, his wife and children following a few months later.

In January 1831 he and his brother-in-law, John Drennen, are advertising a stock of goods contained in stores at Little Rock and Washington, Hempstead county, showing that he established himself in business soon after his arrival in Arkansas Territory.

We next learn of him at Van Buren, as the Arkansas Gazette of May 23, 1832, contains a notice of the dissolution of the partnership of Edward Cunningham and Company, the company being David Thompson and John Drennen. The two latter then settled at Columbus, one mile below Van Buren and entered the mercantile business again; some time while there, they were members of the firm of John Henry and Company. They remained at

Columbus until the early part of 1837. In 1836 Thompson and Drennen purchased the land claims of Daniel and Thomas Phillips, being the land on which they founded Van Buren.

He with William Hull and William Quesenbury were appointed by the governor in 1836 appraisers of land for the Real Estate Bank.

Mrs. Thompson died at Columbus, January 24, 1837.

Mr. Thompson was one of four men having charge in 1838 of selling stock in the Dwight and Van Buren Turnpike company also in the Arkansas Mining and Manufacturing company.

In both Tennessee and Arkansas he dealt largely in buying and selling land, especially bounty land given Revolutionary soldiers for their service in the war.

At one time he owned 150,000 acres distributed in 16 counties, many acres surrounding Spadra were included in this tract.

He died very suddenly at the residence of Mr. L. N. Clark at Morrison's Bluff, Arkansas, September 12, 1839, and was buried in Mr. Clark's family lot. He was survived by four children, Frances McAlester Scott, (Mrs. James) David, Calvin Morgan, and Julia Estelle. Descendants of Calvin are still living in Van Buren.

JOHN DRENNEN

John Drennen, son of Thomas and Isabella Drennen, was born at Elizabeth, Pennsylvania, February 5, 1801. In early manhood he went to Missouri. While there he married on March 21, 1826, Mrs. Emily Deaderick Stuart at Potosi. The children of this union were Caroline L. (Mrs. C. G. Scott), Margaret Hill, who died in 1837, and Johanna Perry.

Soon after his marriage he went to Tennessee and entered into partnership with his brother-in-law, David Thompson, in the mercantile business. During 1830 he and Mr. Thompson arrived in Arkansas and located at Little Rock. In November 1831 they advertised a large stock of goods at Little Rock and Washington, Hempstead county. They did not remain at Little Rock very long as

an advertisement in a Little Rock paper of May 1832 speaks of Edward Cunningham of Van Buren buying out David Thompson and John Drennen, the other partners. Whether they settled first at Van Buren and then removed to Columbus a mile below Van Buren is not known but they and their families lived at Columbus. An advertisement in 1836 speaks of his being a member of the firm of John Henry and Company at Columbus.

He was one of the founders of the town of Van Buren.

In the fall of 1835 he was one of three elected to represent Crawford county in the first Constitutional Convention which met at Little Rock January 4 to 13, 1836, and assisted in drafting the first state constitution of Arkansas. He was also a member of the first House of Representatives held September 12 to November 8, 1836, and November 6th to March 5, 1838.

He was postmaster from the latter part of 1836 to September 30, 1843. In 1838 when the Dwight and Van Buren Turnpike Company was organized Col. Drennen was one to obtain subscriptions. In the same year he also had charge of the books of the Arkansas Mining and Manufacturing Company. When one of the Resident State Banks was established at Van Buren in 1840, he was elected one of the directors.

A company known as the Arkansas Frontier Guards was organized in Van Buren June 1846 and he was elected captain. This was first an infantry company but later horses were furnished them and they became a cavalry company. March 28, 1848, he married for his second wife Kate Humphrey of Chicot county, Arkansas. Three sons were born of this union, Charles Holden, Henry Clay and William Moore, the two latter died in young manhood.

Mr. Drennen was appointed by President Taylor June 1849, as an agent of the Choctaws and later superintendent of Indian affairs for the Southwestern superintendency.

While on his way to Virginia to join his family and return with them he was stricken with yellow fever at Indianapolis, Indiana, and died there September 27, 1855. His remains were brought home and interned in the fam-

ily lot in Fairview cemetery, which land he had donated to Van Buren for a cemetery.

JAMES W. BATES

(A Tribute Written by General Albert Pike)

Judge James Woodson Bates of Crawford county, had been judge of the superior court some years before I became an Arkansian. He was a brother of Edward Bates of Missouri, afterwards Attorney General of the United States. I do not suppose that he ever practiced at the bar in Arkansas. He was a generous and kindly man, of brilliant genius, said to have been pronounced, in his younger days, by a distinguished Virginian to have been the finest essayist in the state of his birth, Virginia. He was of middle height and size, his features irregular, but his eyes bright and piercing. His forehead fine, his face indicative of large and quick intellect. I do not know what his legal requirements were, but he was reputed to have been a good judge. It was said that he was no orator; but he was a polished, keen, brilliant writer, sarcastic as Junius, comparing with other writers in Arkansas as a swordsman, skillful in the use of the rapier, compare with the heavy, saber-wielding cavalrman. His mind was richly stored with knowledge. He was a Whig, too, and had no mercy for his political adversaries, though I did once see him preside over a meeting at Van Buren, when words and angry replies passed between him and Whorton Rector, whom most men dreaded, but of whom Judge Bates was not in the least afraid, answering him with sharp and bitter words.

He lived with Major Moore, his father-in-law, some twenty-five miles below Van Buren, and rarely went away from home, being given to study and caring little for the outer world, a thoughtful, silent man, a recluse, but no misanthrope; for he was a man of very noble nature.

I met him once just as he rode into Van Buren, and in answer to a question as to his health, he said, "I am well, but in an ill-humor. I have been afflicted this morning by a fool. I left home alone and wished for no com-

panion, but was overtaken by one, a farmer in the neighborhood, who found it in his heart to bestow all his dullness upon me babbling incessantly all the way for twenty miles. There are men, sir, who are so idiotic that they cannot be made by any hints to understand that sometimes a man who thinks at all, which most men do not, wishes to commune with himself, and not to be talked to at all."

JAMES WOODSON BATES

(A Tribute Written By Hon. Jesse Turner)

Judge Bates was born in Goochland county, Virginia, about 1788. His collegiate attainments were acquired at Yale and Princeton, in the latter of which he graduated about 1810.

About this time Tarlton Bates, an elder brother, of great promise, then practising law at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, was killed in a duel with one Stewart, a rival lawyer. Judge Beckenridge, in his "Recollections of the West," speaks in unqualified terms of commendation of Tarlton Bates.

When quite young, Judge Bates attended the trial of Aaron Burr at Richmond, for treason. He has often spoken to the writer of the prominent actors in that celebrated trial, of Generals Jackson and Wilkinson, and of particularly of the very pompous manner of the latter when on the witness stand.

Soon after leaving college young Bates commenced the study of law, but under what auspices is not known to the writer.

In the meantime Fredrick Bates, his brother, was appointed secretary of the territory of Missouri, and was acting governor in the absence of Governor Clark. The West then, as now, was an inviting field for young lawyers and James followed his brother to Missouri, and settled in St. Louis about 1816.

Soon after the organization of the territory of Arkansas, in 1819, he removed to the Post of Arkansas, the temporary seat of the government, and commenced the practice of his profession.

His office was scarcely open for the reception of clients before he was elected our first territorial delegate to congress. His opponent in this election was the celebrated Matthew Lyon, who, after an eventful career in the east removed to Kentucky thence to Arkansas. He settled at Spadra Bluff on the Arkansas River, where he was engaged in some government employment, I believe. The election was hotly contested. Bates received the ticket of election and Lyon declared his intention to contest the seat, but died before he could execute his design.

In 1823 he was a candidate for reelection, but was defeated by the celebrated Henry W. Conway, an able man, who commanded not only the influence of his own powerful family, but that of the Rectors, Roanes and Ambrose H. Sevier and all the political adherents of General Jackson then so popular in the south and west. The influence and strength of this combined opposition could not be overcome.

After his short congressional career closed he moved to the newly settled town of Batesville and resumed the practice of his profession. Batesville was named for him. In November 1825 President Adams appointed him one of the territorial judges, in virtue of which he was one of the judges of the superior or appellate court organized on the same plan. On the accession of General Jackson to the presidency, his commission expired without renewal, and he soon after removed to Crawford county, married a wealthy widow and became stationary on a rich farm near Van Buren. In the fall of 1835 he was elected to the constitutional convention, and contributed his ability and learning in the formation of our first organic law as a state. Soon after the accession of John Tyler to the presidency, he appointed Judge Bates register of the land office at Clarksville in recognition of an old friend. He discharged every public trust and all the duties devolved on him as a private citizen with the utmost fidelity. Strange to say, whilst he possessed the most fascinating conversational powers, he was a failure as a public speaker.

Edward Bates, Mr. Lincoln's attorney-general, was

unquestionably a great orator, but was not the equal of his brother, James, in that fascinating polish which indicates high and magnetic finish.

He was well versed in the classics and with the best authors of English and American literature. He died at his home in Crawford county in 1846, universally esteemed. He lies in an unmarked grave.



Judge Bates was buried in his father-in-law's family lot at Moore's Rock a few miles below Van Buren. No marker was ever placed at his grave. This family lot is now in Sebastian county but at the time of his death was all Crawford county. Search for the grave during the past few years has failed to locate either a family lot at Moore's Rock, or cemetery in that vicinity.

The home of Mrs. Jonathan McGee, a sister of Mrs. Bates and with whom she made her home after Judge Bates' death was burned during the latter part of the seventies and very few records were saved.

Mrs. Bates was buried in the family lot of the McGee family on the homeplace, later along with the remains of other members of the McGee family was removed to Forest Park Cemetery, Fort Smith.

ALBERT PIKE

Albert Pike came to Crawford county sometime during the 1830's. He taught in a little log school building on the Kibler road just east of highway 71. It is a matter of state history that this famous man taught school in Van Buren.

Albert Pike was born in Boston, Massachusetts, December 29, 1809. He was trained especially for school teaching. He taught at Newburyport and Fairhaven, Massachusetts. While teaching at Van Buren, the first school to have been known in this section, he engaged in journalism. He wrote articles to various newspapers and a series of letters to the Little Rock Advocate. These were written under the non de plume of "Casca". Robert Crittenden made a trip to Van Buren to learn who "Casca"

was. After learning the identity he offered Albert Pike the position of associate editor of the Advocate. He accepted and moved to Little Rock. Soon afterwards in the winter of 1834, he was admitted to the bar by Judge Thomas J. Lacy. In 1831, he had published his "Hymns to the Gods." They were republished in Blackwoods' magazine in June, 1839, with high comment by the editor.

In 1835, he became owner of the Advocate and formed a law partnership with William Cummins. He served as Captain in the Mexican War, and during the War Between the States, was a Brigadier General in the Confederate Army, in command in Indian Territory.

Albert Pike joined the Masonic fraternity in 1850, at Little Rock, and liking the principles of the order, advanced rapidly until he reached the thirty-third degree, and was regarded by members of the fraternity as the highest authority on Masonic law and symbolism in the world. After his death, the Masons erected a statue to him in Washington, D. C. The Albert Pike consistory of Scottish Rite Masons in Little Rock is named in his honor.

After moving to Little Rock, Albert Pike married Miss Mary Ann Hamilton at Arkansas Post, and soon afterwards built a home in Little Rock. While in Little Rock he engaged in revising the Statutes of Arkansas. He became editor of the Commercial Appeal in 1867, but removed the following year to Washington, where he engaged in the practice of law until 1880. His writings include a large number of poems and authoritative works on Masonry. His principle publications are: "Ode to the Mocking Bird," "An Indian Romance," "Statutes and Regulations," and "Prose Sketches and Poems," and as has been mentioned before, "Hymns To The Gods." Harvard University bestowed a degree upon him in 1859. He died in Washington, D. C., April 2, 1891.

GEORGE WASHINGTON KNOX

George Washington Knox, one of the first to settle in the state that is now Arkansas, was born May 5, 1812, in Louisville, Kentucky.

Surviving relatives know little of his early life. Before Arkansas became a state in 1836, Mr. Knox was appointed District Marshal and looked after Indian affairs. He then came to the present site of Van Buren to live here when it was yet a wilderness.

The loghouse, which is now No. 19 Fayetteville street, was his residence. He was living here when Arkansas became a state, and later homesteaded this place and much surrounding acreage, when Martin Van Buren was President.

Old records show that his father, Hugh Knox, had previously homesteaded the "Knox Plantation" across the Arkansas River near Barling.

On May 12, 1842, George W. Knox was married to Miss Eudora E. Rose at Little Rock, Arkansas. She had been born in New Orleans, Louisiana, and was the daughter of Horace Boardman Rose, and Elvira Percival Rose.

Horace B. Rose established the plantation "Roseville" on the Arkansas River near Van Buren in 1830.

Mr. Knox took his bride to the Knox Plantation to reside for a while.

It was here that their first daughter, Fanny Rose Knox, later Mrs. Hugh Thomason, was born.

Later they moved back to Van Buren and were prominent in business, religious and social life of the place.

Here other daughters were born: Georgia Lydia (later Mrs. W. L. Faber), Eudora Percival (later Mrs. C. J. Lincoln), and Martha Washington (who was later Mrs. Syme Hayman).

Old books of accounts and receipts for money paid G. W. Knox and a partner, would indicate that he was in business here at an early date.

Mr. Knox kept an interesting diary for a little more than three months, while he took a boat trip from Van Buren to Niagara Falls and New York City.

The trip was taken for his health.

In his diary, he spoke of seeing Chicago, then "a

thriving little village.”

G. W. Knox died August 12, 1854, and was buried in Fairview cemetery.

WHITFIELD BOURNE

Whitfield Bourne was born on the 24th of August, 1798, at Lexington, Kentucky, where he resided until 16 years of age, when he enlisted and served in one or more campaigns under General William Henry Harrison during the War of 1812.

Bourne was in the seige of Fort Meiges, which occurred during the latter part of May, 1813; at Dudley's defeat, at the time of the seige, he and another young man were taken prisoners by the Indians, who carried them into Canada. After remaining there several weeks he made his escape and wandered for three or four days before he finally reached Lake Erie, where he found some men ready to cross in a canoe. They consented to take him with them, but before they reached the other side he was stricken with a peculiar malady which was very prevalent at that time. Being unconscious, he was left by his companions on the shore to his fate. After lying there some time, he rallied, and although very weak, he began his travels once more. Eventually he came to a block house. Not being able to proceed farther, he remained there three or four weeks. When he had regained his strength, he was anxious to proceed, although there was danger of his being captured by the Indians. Finally a young woman member of the family mounted her horse and taking Mr. Bourne up behind her went half way with him. Then she returned home, and he continued his journey to one of the forts on the northern border.

After the war, Bourne returned home and remained there until he reached manhood. With his health failing, he determined to go west. Reaching this section of the country he decided to locate here; thus becoming one of Crawford county's early settlers.

Bourne first settled a few miles below Van Buren but when Lovely Purchase was opened for settlement, he, with others moved there in 1825, most of them located

near what is now Sallisaw, as this purchase extended from the Verdigris River to Frog Bayou.

In 1828, this land was ceded to the Cherokee Indians. Consequently the white people were required to relinquish their homes. Some returned to Crawford county. Mr. Bourne finally settled a short distance north of Dripping Springs. The land on which he settled, is still in the possession of his descendants. His name appears on the tax list of 1829.

On September 4, 1831, he married Clarinda Weaver, who was born in White county, Tennessee, on January 16, 1813. Several children were born to this union. She died January 21, 1851. For his second wife, he married Mrs. Madeline Kelly who was born June 30, 1822. From this union, five children were born.

He was one of the commissioners selected to decide where the county seat of Crawford county should be located. This must have been in 1837, as a bill was passed by the legislature in 1837. This was a special session convened in November, 1837, locating the county seat at Van Buren.

Mr. Bourne was a prosperous farmer but with others, lost much during the War Between the States.

Mr. Bourne was a member of the Cumberland Presbyterian church, was honest, kind, hospitable and throughout his long life enjoyed an unsullied reputation.

He passed away on April 1, 1879. His wife survived him until January 5, 1887. Both were buried on the old homestead.

ALEXANDER McCLEAN

Alexander McClean, whom at the time of his death, was clerk of the district court of the United States for the western district of Arkansas, died at his residence in Van Buren on October 8, 1859.

Mr. McClean was a native of Albany, New York, and was one of the early pioneers of Arkansas. He came to Arkansas with Captain John Rodgers of Fort Smith, and was honorably identified with this section.

He was clerk of the Circuit Court of Crawford county, from 1833 to 1856, and clerk of the Federal District

Court from the time of its creation until the time of his death, the duties of which he performed in a manner most acceptable to the people, the Court and the bar.

Few men, indeed, have lived in the county who had more ardent and devoted friends than Alexander McClean. He was amiable and kind, just and noble, frank and manly, of stern integrity, and utterly incapable of stooping to a low or dishonorable act.

JONATHAN ADAMS ENO

Jonathan Adams Eno, son of Jonathan and Orphia Adams Eno, was born at Broomfield, Connecticut. He received his education in the school of Connecticut.

He left home for the West, when he was 21 years old.

He settled in some town 13 miles from Fort Smith in about 1846. According to a letter written to a sister in Connecticut, he then removed to Fort Smith, where he had a drug store.

Later he removed to Van Buren, and again entered the drug business.

In May, 1853, he was married to Ellen Elizabeth Ward in Middletown, Connecticut. While they were born and brought up about 40 miles from each other, they met in Van Buren, Arkansas.

After his marriage, he returned immediately to Van Buren. He and his wife began housekeeping opposite what is now the Van Buren public library, and here, their first child, Clara Bertha Eno, was born.

In 1852 to 1855, the post office was located in his drug store, with himself as postmaster.

He became a member of the Masonic Lodge in Van Buren, in 1852. He was also a member of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows. He was a Notary Public.

The summer of 1856, he spent at Charleston from where he removed to Greenwood, Arkansas. Here, he secured a position in the court house. He did not seem to have a drug store, but kept the drugs in a small house on the place.

He served one term as Mayor of Greenwood.

In 1859 or 1860, he went to Little Rock, and held a

position in the post office.

During the early days of 1861, he returned to Van Buren, where his wife and daughter were then living, as his health was failing from the effects of a spell of pneumonia.

He died January 18, 1862, and is buried in the Masonic lot in Fairview cemetery.

THE PRINTERS APOLOGY—

To err is human; and also sometimes most humiliating. After this book was practically finished, we discovered that we had misplaced the biographies of nine "early settlers." Our readers are referred to the last section of the book for the remainder of these articles on men who helped build Crawford County.

—The Printers