

CHAPTER VIII

EARLY MERCHANTS

1. Early Stores
2. Major John Henry
3. Phillip Pennywitt
4. D. C. Williams
5. James A. Scott
6. Augustus Joseph Ward
7. Charles G. Scott
8. Alfred Wallace
9. Henry F. Meyer
10. Others

Early Stores In Van Buren

During the early part of 1881, a Mr. D. W. Fillingim of Des Arc wrote for the Van Buren Argus a series of articles bearing on the early history of Van Buren, he having lived here during the latter part of the thirties and early forties. A few of these have been preserved and thinking that some of these articles will be interesting to our older citizens we copy the following in regard to the business houses as they were in 1840.

“Taking our stand at the foot of Main Street and turning our faces to the west we occupy what was then known as the “reserve” lying between Water street and the river. About 5 yards west of Main street near the river bank, was a large frame house, occupied by Mr. C. G. Scott, as a wholesale and retail grocery establishment. It was also used for storing goods that were to be sent to country merchants in the interior. About 100 yards from this was what was known as the “Mansion House” kept by Mr. John Bostick.

“Across the street on the bank of a ravine was a small log house occupied by Mr. Thomas Hazen, as a small dry goods house. Turning north and crossing Water street, was a little brick house occupied by Mr. Joe Hawkins as a saloon and billiard room. Turning east the next house was a small frame building occupied by Mr. Armstrong

as a saloon and restaurant where the proprietor often invited his friends to partake of a nice dish of tripe or a nicely baked "possum." The next building was on the corner and occupied by J. A. and P. B. Scott as a mercantile establishment. On the opposite corner was the mercantile establishment of Turner and Chapman and next to that was the large business house of Bennett, Morrill and Co. The next was the dry goods establishment of J. T. Medley and the next was the residence of Mr. S. G. Hensley, next the dry goods house of Starrand Griffith, then came the saddlery establishment of Snapp and Aash, then the mercantile establishment of Picket and Gregg which was perhaps the oldest establishment in the place. Next was a large frame building occupied by Peter Hanger and Co., as a mercantile establishment and also by Sam Miles as a saloon and billiard room. This brings us back to the foot of Main street. Turning to the left, the first house was an unfinished frame, the upper part of which was occupied by Sid Bennett as a tailor shop; next door was a small hewn log cabin occupied by R. P. and N. A. Pryor as a land office, the next was a block of buildings erected by Mr. John P. Smith—the finest room was occupied by John P. Smith as a tin shop. Across the street was the residence of Mr. Lewis Snapp, who I believe had the honor of being the first mayor of the City of Van Buren. The next building was a frame occupied by John Pierson as a gun shop and by A. M. Bush as a barber shop. On the top of the second bank was an old blacksmith shop. The next house was Hon. Jesse Turner's law office which he occupied for near half a century. On the adjoining lot was the residence of J. P. Smith. The next house was on the second block, a log, occupied by Jackson White; near it was the brick yard of Daniel Wilson, and on the brow of the hill stood the residence of Levi Korn. Passing back to the foot of Main Street and going north, the first house was the Columbus hotel, then kept by David Bartley. Next, on adjoining block, was occupied by Mr. S. D. Daugherty as a cabinet shop. Next was Mrs. Cady's cake and beer establishment, standing about where Messrs. Wallace and Ward afterwards built a store house. Pass-

ing the public square on the block north of it, was the residence of Mr. Houck and the wagon shop of Joe Hawkins and John Greer. The last house on the street was the residence of Mr. Bright Howell opposite that of Levi Korn, on the west side. Col. Drennen and Thomas P. White had residences on the hill west of town and there were a number of others worthy of notice, but without a map of Van Buren I could not undertake to locate them.

"A male and female school was taught in the old Union church by C. B. Kellem, a minister of the Baptist church. Phelps and Penn were engaged in putting up frame houses; Geo. A. Davis, house and sign painting. A man named Dugan kept a little market house on the Reserve near the C. G. Scott establishment.

"C. G. Scott who occupied the frame house on the Reserve afterwards formed a co-partnership with P. H. White and Phillip Pennywit, the firm name being Scott, White & Co. They erected a large brick store at the foot of Main street adjoining the Hanger house, where they opened a wholesale and retail business; also engaged in receiving, storing and selling goods to country merchants. After a few years the house dissolved and established a new firm, Pennywit & Co., who continued until the business was suspended by the war. Mr. Scott then went to Little Rock, remained there several years, and removed his family back to Van Buren.

"John Bostick who was holding forth the Mansion House, removed to the country and engaged in farming for a time. He afterwards rented the houses occupied by Dan Wilson, not far from D. Dickson's grocery store. Not long after he erected a large brick hotel near Bright Howell's residence, which he occupied until his death.

"Thomas Hazen was a Canadian by birth and came to Van Buren at an early day. About 1842 he removed his goods to the Creek Nation where he remained for some time, then moved back to Van Buren. He did not remain there long but went to some other point and died soon after.

"Joe Hawkins, who kept a saloon and billiard table opposite the Mansion House, engaged in a wagon shop

in connection with John Greer. Some years after the gold fever broke out in California, he went there and died soon afterwards. Mr. Armstrong, the keeper of the restaurant, died about 1841.

"Jas. A. Scott, the senior member of the firm of J. A. & P. B. Scott, was in 1840 elected to the state senate from Crawford county. Some years afterwards his health became very much impaired and he made a trip to California thinking that the pure air of the Pacific coast might restore him. He returned after a time much improved in health, but soon relapsed into his former condition. He removed to near Neosho, Mo., and engaged in the milling business but did not live but a few years. Of his brother, Perry B. Scott, I can give no information.

"Samuel M. Chapman, partner of George Turner, was a native of Maine, and after the death of Mr. Chapman he was associated with his brother, Sanford Turner, until 1847, when he engaged in steamboating. I believe he left Van Buren and located in Camden and after the war went to Texas on a trading expedition and died in that state.

"Jos. T. Medley was killed in the Cherokee nation about the year 1841. David Bennett, the senior member of the firm of Bennett, Morrill & Co., resided in or near Boston and seldom visited the house of which he was the head.

"Jos. Bennett, brother of David, resided at Fort Smith, had an oversight of the house at that place and frequently visited the one at Van Buren. After the dissolution of the old firm he kept a large wholesale house at Fort Smith.

"Luther C. Morrill was a Vermonter. He had been engaged in steamboating previous to entering the mercantile business. When the old firm dissolved he entered into co-partnership with Jos. P. Marean and did business in Van Buren until after the beginning of the war.

"Moses Greenwood, the other member of the firm, went to New Orleans and was engaged in the commission business for many years doing a large business with Arkansas merchants. I have no information of him since

the close of the war.

"Samuel Henseley was among the oldest settlers. He was the business deputy of Faniel R. Looney, sheriff of Crawford county, when the latter died soon after his reelection. When the federal army came into the country he went to Texas.

"Henry Starr, the senior member of the firm of Starr, Griffith & Co., died about the year 1847.

"Samuel L. Griffith, after winding up the affairs of the old firm, moved into the country and remained some time. He afterwards became a member of the firm of Sutton, Griffith & Co., of Fort Smith and later a partner in the house of Bostick, Pennywitt, Griffith & Co., of Fort Smith. When the war ended he went to Memphis and engaged in business there. He then removed to Little Rock where he died.

"Lewis Snapp removed to Little Rock and was for some time engaged in staging and steamboating. He built the Ellen T. expressly for the Arkansas river trade.

"George C. Pickett was an old settler, and at one time clerk of the court. He died about 1858.

John Gregg was one of the old settlers. About 1844 he moved to Shreveport, Louisiana, and engaged in farming until the close of the war when he moved to the vicinity of Camden, Texas. Subsequently he went to Marshall, Texas, where he lost his children one by one until all were gone. Mrs. Gregg was lost by the sinking of the steamer Stonewall on the Mississippi river.

"Peter Hangar, the proprietor of the Hangar House, moved to Little Rock in 1846 where he engaged in staging.

"Samuel Miles went to California about 1850 and from thence returned to his native home, Philadelphia.

"Leonard Wilhaff was the color sergeant, who bore the flag of the Crawford county company in Col. Yell's regiment in the Mexican war. He returned after the regiment was mustered out and continued at the old stand.

"Morgan Gray returned to his home in New York during the year 1841. He was, it is said, the victim of a sad disappointment in a love affair with one of Van

Buren's fair daughters.

"John P. Smith sold out his tin-ware establishment to R. S. Roberts and engaged for several years in staging. During the war he fell or was thrown out of a window in the second story of George Austin's store and was killed. Whether it was the result of accident or whether it was done by some one who had entered the store for the purpose of robbery is not known.

"John Peirson removed to Fort Smith.

"Jackson White was, for many years, constable of the city of Van Buren, the duties of which office he faithfully discharged."

MAJOR JOHN HENRY

Major John Henry was one of the very early merchants of what is now Van Buren. It is not known when he arrived here; different dates have been given. He was born in Massachusetts in 1806, and at an early age removed to Nashville, Tennessee. While there, a close friendship was formed between Mr. Henry and Governor Sam Houston, which ended only with Houston's death. When Samuel Houston gave up everything, and went to the wilds of Texas and the Indian Territory, Mr. Henry accompanied him. While on his way to the Cherokee country, he must have become attached to this spot, and settled.

In the notice of his death it speaks of Houston and Henry engaging in business at Van Buren, which was conducted mostly by the latter for two years, often going to New Orleans and chartering a boat to bring his goods back. Being so far from Little Rock and with so little communication he could have carried on the mercantile business at what is now Van Buren, without any notice being in the papers. The first notice to appear in the Little Rock papers, was when he established himself in business in 1835, at Columbus at the stand formerly occupied by the Edward Cunningham company. Later we find him in business at Van Buren with Ed Cunningham. Their store was a brick one being located on Water Street a block from Main Street. When they moved into the brick store on the corner of Main and Third streets,

is not known. While located there, Mr. D. C. Williams became associated with him in business. They continued in business at that stand, until the beginning of the War Between the States, when Mr. Henry removed to New Orleans, and entered into business having as his partner, Brown Taylor, a young man who had made his home with Major Henry previous to his removal to New Orleans.

Mr. Henry was married to Miss Adaline Parks of Franklin county, on August 21, 1838. Their home was a large one story brick house surrounded by large cedar trees, situated on the side of the mountain north of the town, affording a fine view of Van Buren, and the river.

When the books of the Van Buren and Fayetteville Turnpike Company were opened for sale of stock in 1838, Major Henry was the one to have charge of selling stock.

In 1840 he was elected a director of the Real Estate Bank at Van Buren. Whether he took an active part in city affairs is not known, nor how he obtained the title of major. He died at New Orleans, February 19, 1891.

PHILLIP PENNYWIT

Long before steamboating had really begun on the Mississippi river, Phillip Pennywit engaged in navigating the western waters between Cincinnati and New Orleans on Merchant vessels; on these trips he had charge of the sales and superintended the commercial interests of the voyages. It was easy for the vessel going down stream but on its return had to be cordelled back the entire route, a task that boatmen of this day would consider a Herculean one.

He had built the first steamboat ever constructed in Cincinnati and named it for that city, the boat came out in the spring of 1818, while history does not record who commanded the boat, it was presumably Capt. Pennywit. On the 24th of January, 1828, he arrived at Little Rock in command of the steamer Facility, one of the first to ascend the Arkansas river; going as far as Fort Gibson so his first trip to Van Buren on the Facility in 1828 from that date began his identification with steamboating on

the waters within the state of Arkansas.

He was the first person to ascend the White river as far as Batesville, arriving there on the Waverly in January, 1831.

He continued the most popular and prominent steamboatman of his day perhaps on the western waters. His name is inseparably interwoven with navigation on the Ohio, Mississippi and Arkansas rivers, and he had many warm and devoted friends throughout the west.

Besides the boats already mentioned Capt. Pennywit commanded the Arkansas and Neosho and others whose names are not known. While he retired from active steamboating in 1847, he retained an interest in different boats. The first issue of the Van Buren Press, July 6, 1859, speaks of Captain Pennywit and Captain Levi Chapman, another Van Buren steamboat captain leaving for Cincinnati, to superintend the building of a boat, later called the 35th Parallel. This boat was owned entirely by citizens of Van Buren. On his departure the Cincinnati Daily Commercial had this to say:

"Captain Pennywit is one of our pioneer boatmen and is known to our pioneer citizens as the first commander and originator of the present successful Cincinnati and Louisville Mail Packet line. He is interested in a splendid packet now being completed for the Arkansas and New Orleans trade."

Immediately on retiring from the steamboat business he engaged in the mercantile and manufacturing business at Van Buren and Fort Smith, until the breaking out of the War Between the States, when he retired from active business.

The different firms with which he was connected were Bostick, Pennywit and Company. This store was at Fort Smith towards the lower part of Garrison Avenue, Philip Pennywit and Company, and Scott and Pennywit. The last named firm was at Van Buren. I am not quite certain at which place the second was.

The Pennywit mill of Van Buren was a monument to his enterprise and energy. This mill which was a grist mill, stood on Washington street facing North Seventh.



When Cotton Was King . . . This photo shows the head of Main Street in Van Buren about the turn of the century when cotton was the major crop of the county.

And Then Came the Fruit . . . Just a few years later, the scene is the same but the crop is different. Cotton land was turned to fruits and vegetables and today Crawford County is the most diversified farming county in the world.



His untiring industry, strict honesty and faithful devotion to duty made his every important effort in life a complete success; the fruits of his years of labor enabled him to spend the last years of his life in ease and comfort.

He was a bachelor and there being no member of his family in this state he spent the last twenty years of his life in the home of Mr. C. G. Scott and went with the family to Little Rock when they moved there in 1862.

During the early part of 1866 he was stricken with paralysis from which he never recovered.

On learning of his sickness, his old valet, George Pennywit, went from Van Buren to Little Rock and faithfully cared for him until the end came January 9, 1868, having reached the ripe old age of 75 years.

He was born in the Shenandoah Valley, Virginia, in 1793. His remains were brought to Van Buren and interred in the Drennen lot in Fairview cemetery.

D. C. WILLIAMS

Mr. D. C. Williams one of the early merchants of Van Buren, was of Welsh descent and was born in New Orleans March 27, 1815. His father for whom he was named died when he was quite young; he then made his home with a Mr. Alexander Phillips and family of New Orleans.

As soon as he was old enough he secured employment as a clerk in the house of Gasquet, Parrish and company, a large mercantile firm of New Orleans, where he must have laid the foundation for his successful mercantile career. In those days much of the collecting of accounts was done by employees of their firms. In this capacity he rode horseback extensively over Louisiana collecting for his firm.

In 1843 he engaged in the mercantile business at Pine Bluff, Arkansas, where he remained for two years when he removed to Van Buren and became a partner of Henry & Cunningham. At Mr. Cunningham's death the firm became known as Henry & Williams. Very little business was done during the four years of the war. During the

latter part of the War Between the States Major Henry removed to New Orleans, but Mr. Williams remained at Van Buren. From 1866 to 1872 he was in partnership with Mr. William Whitfield. When the partnership was dissolved he carried on the business without a partner, until 1878 when he sold his stock of goods to Messrs. Wm. H. H. Shibley, George Wood and Walker Moore who had been in his employ, and retired to private life.

As far as the writer can learn Mr. Williams always did business in the brick store on the corner of Main and North Third.

Mr. Williams was married three times; his first wife was Miss Bishop, daughter of Rev. Dr. Bishop, of Miami University who he married in 1845. She only lived five years, dying in 1850. His second wife was Miss Thomason, sister of Judge Hugh F. Thomason and for his third wife he married Mrs. Mary Johnson, widow of Mr. Thomas Johnson. She had two daughters, Kate and Emma Johnson, from this union one daughter was born, Rosina Phillips, later Mrs. Waddell. Kate Johnson died during the latter part of the sixties. Emma married Mr. Walker Moore.

His death which occurred May 15, 1884, was a very sad one. As he was going from his home down the street by way of the railway track and being very deaf he did not hear an approaching train and was struck by it and died shortly afterwards. The engineer whistled a number of times but of course he did not hear the whistle and the train could not be stopped in time, although an effort was made to do so.

A friend writing at that time said: "As a business man Mr. Williams is known all over the state, and in his dealings as such and indeed in every capacity and walk of life was governed uniformly by the highest sense of moral integrity, and this governing principal, united with his fine business qualifications and industrious habits made him one of the most correct and accurate men even in the most minute details of business that the writer has ever known."

He was an excellent judge of human nature and was

not often mistaken in his estimate of men. As a merchant he never embarked in reckless speculation or made hazardous investments of his means, but was regular, orderly in his method of business.

Mr. Williams was intelligent and well informed generally, though not educated in college or University, self culture had done a great deal for him. In his hours of relaxation from business he had read extensively. He was familiar with books and fond of literature and in this regard he was superior to most men who are engaged in business.

In his intercourse with the world he was polite and respectful and especially was he courteous and differential towards ladies.

He was one of the trustees of the Young Ladies Seminary. He also served as alderman on the city council.

JAMES A. SCOTT

Mr. James A. Scott was one of several brothers, Charles, Edward and Perry, who left their native state of Maryland and came west. He met with many vicissitudes in his struggles for a home and sustenance. He reached Arkansas territory about 1830 or 1831, as he was not successful in finding employment he pushed on to Fort Gibson, the post furthest removed from civilization. After remaining there awhile he removed to Fort Smith and was sutler to the troops stationed there. This was about 1834. The summer of 1835 he spent at Coffey's Trading House, afterwards Warren's on Red river some 50 miles southeast of the Washita mountains in the hopes of benefiting his health.

He returned and located at Columbus which at that time was the rival of Van Buren.

In 1837 he married Miss Frances McAlister Thompson, daughter of Mr. David Thompson. After remaining at Columbus a year he entered the mercantile business at Van Buren. As it was about this time that Messrs. Thompson and Drennen had bought the Van Buren townsite and laid out the town which soon began to grow. Mr. Scott had as his partner his brother, Perry. Their store as well as

can be located was on the corner of Main street near the river.

In 1840 he was the successful candidate for the state senate. His opponent was the famous if not notorious Major Andrew Jackson Raines, a man of extraordinary address and ability.

Mr. William Quesenbury in a sketch of Mr. Scott has this to say: "The canvas will not be forgotten in Crawford county by those who participated nor will Crawford ever be able to wipe away the disgrace with which she stained herself by honoring an unlettered sharper over the gifted and true hearted Turner (Mr. Turner was a whig). Mr. Scott, it is but candor to say, was a Democrat and on the strong side in the county but this prestige was only nominal, for the shameless supporters of Tyree Mussett almost to a man voted for Raines and besides Major Raines was not second to Fowler in a stump speech. I do not recollect many orators that were more eloquent.

In the two sessions of the legislature in which he served Mr. Scott was an active and influential member; not one of those creatures not capable of framing a bill or shaping a sentence of decent English, or doing naught for the compensation they receive but to insult or domineer over the enemies of their masters. If Arkansas had possessed a sufficiency of the legislators of the cast of Mr. Scott, she would not now have to lament the squandering of the vast estates that have fallen through the liberality of the general government."

Tyree Mussett only represented Crawford as a representative in the legislature of 1840; was not returned for the next session.

Mr. Scott only remained in business a few years when he retired to his farm a few miles below Van Buren.

In 1844 he removed to Elk Mills, McDonald county, Missouri, where he established a flouring mill. He continued to reside there with the exception of two trips to California for the benefit of his health.

Mr. William Quesenbury still further says of Mr.

Scott: "He was a man of marked peculiarities—of traits that are rarely united in one person. He was intensely fond of the sports of the chase, the rod and the turf. In the most pressing business he could always find time for a day by the water for ducking or fishing. He never forgot, but always dwelt with delight on his boyhood's days among the canvas ducks of the Cheseapeake.

No spot, however desirable in other respects, would not have been acceptable to him as a home that did not afford facilities for his favorite pursuits. He was a capital wingshot, never having ceased in the practice from his earliest to his last days. His fondness for dogs was manifest from the fine Newfoundlands and other rare breeds that were constantly about him. Whether he was a better judge of horses than his neighbors need not now be discussed; but he certainly managed to get hold of two of the best mile horses that ever ran around the Fort Smith track."

One of the principal amusements at this time was horse racing, a club was formed among some of the gentlemen of this part of the state known as the Fort Smith Jockey club.

"After Mr. Scott's removal to Missouri he ceased from active partition in the turf, but occasionally wrote sporting articles for "The Spirit of the Times" over the signature of "C. Callum Beg." These were very interesting. He continued to devote himself as far as his physical ability would admit, to his gun and rod. In his later years he was afflicted with asthma which was a disagreeable check to his inclinations—compelling him to forego the pursuits that had always been so delightful to him."

"Mr. Scott was an independent resolute man. He had a lofty bearing which approached very nearly to haughtiness; but possessed the kindest of feelings. In all the relations of life—in anecdote—in the highest moments of glee—his wonted dignity was always preserved. But his manner was never disagreeable for it was perfectly natural; it never drew attention because of being offensive. His accomplishments were varied and many; he was a fine French scholar, and in early life a writer of easy

and graceful verses. There was scarcely any department of literature in our language which he had not examined. Throughout his life he was a close and constant reader. He was commanding in personal and emphatic in speech. In his feelings he was religiously inclined, although from what has been said in the foregoing, such an inference would not be naturally drawn. It is but justice to his memory to state that he was even in his most worldly times disposed towards piety. In his youthful days he was a man of prayer and when he had no companion in this respect. For many years before his death he renewed the habits of his youth, and endeavored to prepare himself for the land to which he has gone.

CHARLES G. SCOTT

Whether Charles G. Scott came from Maryland before his brother James A. is not known but he was one of the early settlers of this place. Soon after his arrival here he entered the firm of John Drennen as clerk. This store was located on the reserve, as the land between the river and Water street was known.

Later Mr. Drennen sold his interest to Mr. P. H. White, the firm being known as P. H. White and Company, Mr. Scott being the company. After a time Mr. Pennywit became a member of the firm and it was known as Scott, White and Company. This firm erected a large brick store at the foot of Main street on the right hand side going towards the river. They did a large wholesale and retail business, also received and stored goods and forwarded them to merchants all over Northwest Arkansas.

This firm was dissolved and a new one was formed known as Pennywit and Company, they occupying same store. Mr. Scott also did business at Fort Smith under the firm name of Bostick, Griffith and company, Mr. Scott being the company.

Either the latter part of 1862 or early part of 1863 he removed with his family to Little Rock and entered into business, first as C. G. Scott Grocery company, afterwards as Scott, Lawson and company.

He owned several mercantile establishments over the state. During the War Between the States he had a government contract to furnish supplies between Little Rock and Fort Smith.

On January 14, 1845, he was united in marriage to Miss Caroline Drennen, daughter of Col. John Drennen. Of this union six children were born. At this writing, Stuart, the youngest, is the only one living.

The first home of the Scotts was situated some distance back on the street running at the side of the D. H. Miller home. A short time previous to the war they removed to the Drennen home which was near and descendants of the family have continued to live there. It is now owned and occupied by Miss Mary Caroline Scott.

Mr. Scott was one of the trustees of the Van Buren Female Institute. Mr. Scott and family returned to Van Buren about 1876 from Little Rock. His death occurred January 14, 1882. Mrs. Scott lived until August 13, 1910, when she passed away.

Among the other early merchants were Pickett and Gregg, William Heard and Company, Morrill and Marean, and the Austins, John and George. The writer has not the information for sketches of these. The sketches have been written of Wallace and Ward who were also early merchants.

AUGUSTUS JOSEPH WARD

Augustus Joseph Ward was born in Middletown, Conn., May 12, 1814, the son of Truman and Bethiah Plum Ward, being the second of a family of six.

On the paternal side he traced his ancestry to William Ward, who settled in Middletown, Conn., about 1650, holding many in position of trust during his lifetime. On the maternal side he is descended from Josiah Churchill, who settled Middletown in the early part of 1600.

He was the grandson of Joseph Ward and Jesse Plum, and a great grandson of Captain Joseph Churchill, all soldiers of the Revolutionary War.

He received his education in the school of Middletown. After leaving school, he entered the mercantile store of William Southmayd, father of L. C. Southmayd.

The date of his arrival in Arkansas is not definitely known. He is supposed to have come during the latter part of the thirties. He was employed a short time by a Mr. Gossett of Johnson county, Arkansas, from there he went to Fayetteville and entered business. In December, 1842, he was united in Marriage to Eleanor Gaines Howell, daughter of Laban and Fanny Wilson Howell, of Scottia, Johnson county, Arkansas. After his marriage, he spent a year in the Indian Territory.

In the spring of 1844, he formed a partnership with his brother-in-law, Alfred Wallace, in the wholesale and dry goods, grocery business, at Van Buren. He, his wife, and young son arrived in Van Buren, during the big overflow of June, 1844.

They were landed on a strip of land at the foot of Main street. From there they were taken to the courthouse which was entirely surrounded by water.

Mr. Ward had been East for goods which were in the boat, with him, and by some means were transported to the store, situated two doors from Third on Main street, on part of the ground formerly occupied by the J. Foster Wholesale House. The firm was Ward and Southmayd.

They did a flourishing business until they were compelled to close on account of the War Between the States.

Mr. Ward's honor and integrity were above reproach, as showed by the number of times he was elected treasurer by citizens of Crawford county, serving from 1866 to 1868—from 1846 to 1860—from 1872 to 1882, making altogether 24 years, having held office longer than any other county officer except Mr. Alexander McLean, who served as clerk for 28 consecutive years.

He was also honored by the citizens of Van Buren as Mayor for the years 1849—1855—and 1859.

The I. O. O. F. fraternity gave him the highest position.

After the war, he was with J. Neal & Company as long as they were in business.

He died January 24, 1883. His wife and son and three

daughters survived him, three sons having passed on before.

ALFRED WALLACE

Alfred Wallace, son of William S. and Mary Shepherd Wallace, was born in Georgia, December 22, 1809. His parents were also natives of Georgia. Mr. Wallace was a poor boy, having to depend entirely on his own exertion, working during the day and studying at night by the light of a pine torch. His determination to have an education and be successful in life was realized.

About 1835 he and his three brothers, Leonard, Willis and Riley, came to Arkansas and settled at Fayetteville, Washington county, and engaged in business.

His father with the remainder of the family came a few years later and settled near Fayetteville. The mother having died before they left Georgia. The date of his marriage to Miss Martha C. Howell of Johnson county is not definitely known but it must have been in 1839 or 1840.

Mr. Wallace engaged in the mercantile business at Fayetteville for several years and was very successful. In 1844 he moved to Van Buren, which being situated on the river, was the outlet for all Northwest Arkansas; here he engaged also in the mercantile business, and about April or May was joined by his brother-in-law, Mr. A. J. Ward, the firm being known as Wallace and Ward. Later Mr. L. C. Southmayd, another brother-in-law, became a member of the firm, which was then known as Wallace, Ward and Company. Descendants of these two gentlemen are still living in Van Buren, Mr. Wallace's children having died in infancy.

The building which they occupied stood on the site later occupied many years by a wholesale grocery, being the second door from Third street. The building was burned about 1882. Wallace and Ward was counted among the leading merchants of Van Buren.

Mrs. Wallace was very much interested in having a Methodist school established here. About the time of her death the Methodist Conference established the Crawford Institute, this was in 1859. The building was situated on the hill overlooking the town, and near where Miss

Nannie Rae's home stood. It was of brick and was used as a hospital during the War Between the States for southern soldiers.

When Mr. Wallace died on April 26, 1856, he left \$10,000 as a trust fund to the Crawford Institute, a school for boys. The name was then changed to the Wallace Institute. This school was never re-opened after the war and for some reason the building was torn down.

A Board of Trustees was appointed to manage this fund. When one died another was elected to fill the vacancy. Many of the town's prominent business men served on this board.

When Van Buren high school was built the board of trustees voted to loan the school a thousand dollars a year, if one room would be set aside in memory of Mr. Wallace. This was known as the Alfred Wallace Science room. Later the name of Alfred Wallace was given to the high school.

Mr. Wallace's success in life shows what can be accomplished when one is determined to have an education and succeed in whatever they undertake. Mr. Wallace's remains rest in Fairview cemetery in what is known as the Wallace and Ward lot.

HENRY F. MEYER

Henry F. Meyer, one of the most public spirited men of Van Buren, was born in Lawrence, Kansas in 1857, removing with his mother to Van Buren when quite young where he spent the remainder of his life.

He obtained his education in the schools of Van Buren and by extensive reading. In early life he entered the mercantile establishment of J. W. Statler later the firm being known as Meyer and Hodges, remaining in that business until May 3, 1892 when he was elected assistant cashier of the Citizens Bank.

When the Citizens Bank and Trust Company consolidated in 1914 he was elected vice president. He served the bank well and faithfully for nearly 27 years, resigning January 1, 1919, in order that he might give more time to his property interests, which by his strict

attention to business had become extensive.

He was much interested in the welfare and growth of Van Buren and gave generously towards their promotion.

The Woman's Literary Club was indebted to him for the use of a room for their library from 1914-1921.

He was much interested in the schools and school children, taking an active part in the erection and equipment of the Meyer primary, named in his honor. His interest was further manifested when he willed to the Van Buren school district lots on which to build a modern school building. His other two major interests was the building of the highway to Rudy, known as the Meyer road and the paving of Logtown Hill.

He was honored by having Judge Stockard dedicate the Flat Rock bridge for his interest in the good roads of the county.

He died October 2, 1924.

Other Merchants

Among other early merchants of Van Buren were: William Whitfield, Michael Lynch, Hinkle Brothers, John and George Austin, Morrell and Marean, and L. C. Southmayd, of whom we could not secure a sketch.