

AN ACCOUNT BOOK OF THE 1840's *Edward H. Walden, Brick Contractor*

Edward Hockaday Walden was born in King and Queen county, Virginia, about 1803. His first wife, a Miss Edwards, died without issue. He then married Laura Ann Neese, who was born May 31, 1823 in Guilford county, North Carolina. Three children were born to them: Mary J., born in 1840 (married James C. Maxwell in 1868); James Anderson, born March 12, 1843; and Elizabeth Frances, born in 1844 (married Arthur J. Baker in 1866). All three of the children were born in Arkansas.

Walden was a brick contractor in Little Rock during the early 1840's. Business was good, especially for brickmakers, in this lush period preceding the depression of 1843, for during that time Little Rock experienced its first big building boom. Walden kept his accounts in a large leather-bound book, but he used only 42 pages, about one-fourth of the book. Had the depression come a few years later, he might have used the entire book.

He died in Little Rock on July 5, 1846, and was buried at Mount Holly cemetery. The grave is not marked, and Walden's name does not appear in the cemetery's records. At some time after 1850, Walden's widow and children moved to a farm near Carrollton, in Carroll county.

In 1861, James A. Walden, son of the brick contractor, enlisted in the Confederate army and became a lieutenant. He was captured at Port Hudson, Louisiana in 1863, and for the next year and a half, he was a prisoner of war on Johnson's Island in Lake Erie. During the war years, he kept a diary in small pocket-size notebooks. When the war was over, he returned to Arkansas, and transcribed his journal into larger books, beginning with the unused pages in his father's old ledger.

The Walden journals are now the property of James Walden's grand-daughter, Mrs. J. Frank Deaver of Springdale, Arkansas. The Washington County Historical Society has recently published this intensely interesting diary in two volumes, as numbers four and five in the Bulletin Series (available for \$1.00 each from Tom Feathers, Secretary, Fayetteville, Arkansas). The first volume contains Walden's wartime experiences, and the second covers his career as a Methodist minister in the Ozarks after the war.

The entries made in the ledger by the father, E. H. Walden, have no bearing on Washington county, so W. J. Lemke, editor of FLASHBACK, copied the entries and sent them to us for use in REVIEW. From this early ledger, we are able to get a good picture of certain aspects of life in pioneer Little Rock.

The front of the book shows that Walden was in business with Thomas Thorn for a time, for these words are written: "E. H. Walden's book. Price \$1.50." Beneath that, is: "Col. Thomas Thorn and Edward H. Walden", and then "E. H. Walden & Thorn", and finally, "E. H. Walden".