

# HISTORY OF LAFAYETTE COUNTY.

In 1813 the General Assembly of the Territory of Missouri sub-divided the extensive region then under its jurisdiction into seven counties, St. Charles, St. Genevieve, Arkansas, New Madrid, Washington, Cape Girardeau and St. Louis, and what is now Lafayette county was included in the latter county, which then extended entirely across the territory. In 1816 all that part of St. Louis county lying between the Osage and Missouri rivers, including a large extent of country lying immediately north and west of Cedar Creek, extending to the dividing ridge between the Missouri and Mississippi rivers, was organized into a separate county, to which the name of Howard was given, and, in 1818, all that portion of Howard county lying south of the Missouri river was organized as Cooper county. Lillard county was established from Cooper on the 16th of November, 1820; it embraced all of Cooper county west of range 23, which is the present eastern boundary. It took its name from James Lillard, who was the first member of the legislature and originator of the bill establishing the county. By an act of the legislature of 1825 the name of Lillard gave place to that of Lafayette. The county was reduced to its present limits in 1834.

## THE FIRST WHITES.

The earliest authentic record that we have upon the subject of the first white men within the present limits of the county, dates back to the year 1805. Lewis and Clark, who were appointed by President Jefferson to explore and survey the Missouri river to its source, and a route thence across the Rocky mountains, and down the Columbia river to the Pacific ocean, passed up on the north side of the Missouri in June, 1804; and returned down the river and through what is now this county during the following summer.

During the war of 1812, the present site of the town of Mayview, and long known as the "Mounds," was the scene of a bloody battle between a detachment of soldiers under the command of Captain Heth, and a large body of Indians, in which the white men were victorious. From this incident, these elevations were named "Heth's Knobs," or "Heth's Hills," and as such were known and called for many years, though of late these names have almost passed into tradition.—*Chile's History, 1876.*

Previous to these events, however, the Missouri river had attracted the attention of the French colonists, most of whom were searching for precious metals, and an exploring expedition ascended the river to the mouth of the Kaw (Kansas), as early as 1705, where they established a trading post, and in the passage either banks of the Missouri was traversed to no limited extent.

## EARLY SETTLEMENT.

From the most authentic information that we can obtain, we are led to believe that the Coxes were the first actual settlers within the present limits of the county, locating on the Lick fork of the Tabo, as early as 1816. From the early history of Saline and Howard counties we have learned something of the characteristics of this pioneer family. Solomon, Thomas, Joseph and Jesse Cox, the latter with his family, were, with the exception of a trader who located where Arrow Rock now stands, in 1808, the first settlers of Saline county, having removed from Howard county to what is now known as Cox's bottom, a few miles above Arrow Rock, as early as 1810.

During the war of 1812 they were driven back across the river, and joined the pioneers of Howard county in the erection of forts Hemstead, Kincaid and Cooper, into which they removed for protection against the Indians. Soon after the conclusion of the treaty with the Indians, in March, 1815, they returned to this side of the river, and by the summer of 1816 a large influx of immigration poured into the immediate vicinity of the Cox settlement. Here, jealous of the invasion of their hunting grounds, we lose sight of them until we again find them sixty miles in the advance, leading the van of civilization into the western wilds of the country.

The next settlers were David James and three grown sons. They located on section 16, township 50, range 27, in 1817. We know nothing of Mr. James' history, only

that when he discovered that he was on the school land, removed and finally located on the head waters of the Little Sni. John Lovelady, W. R. Cole and James Rounds settled soon after.

During the year 1818, Gillead Rupe, who was also among the early settlers of Howard county, a family of the name of Graham, Christopher Catron, Major James Fletcher, John Robinson, and several others came.

1819 brought a larger number, among whom were Col. John Wallace, Josiah, George and Thomas Nelson, James Thorp, Robert Marsus, Josiah Jones, John Nelson, John Stapp, Markham, Robert and Richard Fristoe, William Jack, Capt. Henry Renick, Wm. Renick, Young Ewing, Thomas Hopper, the widow of Samuel Renick, Jonathan Hicklin, William Hall, Littleberry Estis, John Evens; and 1820 and '21 witnessed a large increase in the population, among a few of the more prominent were Col. Wm. Horn, David Ward, Adam Young, Robert Rankin, Thomas Treble, Nicholas Houx, John Bowman, Absalom Coleman, Joseph Hobson, Dangerfield Rice, Judge Julius Emmons, James McMahon, Morgan Cockrell, Richard Powell, Abel and William Owens.

## ORGANIZATION.

By an act of the territorial Legislature of Missouri, establishing judicial districts and circuits, and prescribing the times and places for holding courts, approved November 25th, 1820, established the seat of justice temporarily at Mt. Vernon, which was but a hamlet situated near the mouth of Tabo creek, on the Missouri river, and located on the southeast quarter of section 23 in township 51, range 26. In the house of Samuel Weston at that place, on the 22d day of January, 1821, the first court was organized. John Stapp, John Whitsett and James Lillard produced their commissions, dated at St. Louis, on the 8th day of December, 1820, and signed by A. McNair, governor, and Joseph Barton, secretary of state, appointing them judges of the county court. After taking the oath of office, which was administered by Henry Renick, a justice of the peace, court was adjourned. At the next regular term, on the 23d day of April, Young Ewing presented his commission from the governor, appointing him clerk of the county court. He was also county treasurer. The first act of the court was the appointment of Abram McLelland executor of the will of Amassa Crain.

W. Y. C. Ewing, Thomas Fristoe, Joseph Irwin, Abel Owens and Sam'l Evens were appointed commissioners of the school lands within the county. W. Y. C. Ewing was appointed assessor, and Markham Fristoe was appointed collector of the state and county taxes; he also acted as sheriff, and was likewise appointed constable of Sni-a-bar township. John Dustin was appointed surveyor.

The first session of the circuit court was held in the house of Adam Lightner, at Mt. Vernon, the 12th day of February, 1821, Judge David Todd presiding, with Hamilton R. Gamble, circuit attorney; Young Ewing, clerk; and William R. Cole, sheriff. The grand jury at this term was composed of the following persons: William and John Lillard, John J. Head, William F. Semmons, Thomas and James Linwell, David Jennings, Jesse Cox, James Bounds, Jr., Isaac Clark, Wm. Wallace, Chris. Mulkey, Jacob Carton, John Bowman, George Parkinson, Thomas Hopper, John Robinson, Thomas Fristoe, and William and Samuel Fox.

In the act organizing the county, John Dustin, James Bonds, Sr., David McLelland, James Lillard and David Ward were appointed commissioners to locate the county seat; and Lexington "Old Town" was laid out in lots and sold on the 22d day of April, 1822, by John Dustin, James Bonds and James Lillard; and on the 3d day of February, 1823, the county court held its first session in Lexington.

The first term of the circuit court held in Lexington convened at the house of Dr. Buck, on the 17th of March following. Courts were also held in the tavern kept by Elisha Green.

At the March term of 1825 the county court was reorganized, under an act of the General Assembly. In this reorganization the court was composed of seven justices, viz: Abram McLelland, James Fletcher, W. Y. C. Ewing,

Bryant Sanders, Abel Owens, Young B. Harris and Henry Renick; and at the November term of that year the courthouse which had been erected by Henry Renick was received, into which building the archives of the courts were removed. This building proved to be poorly constructed and threatened to fall, and on the 2d day of May the county court had it condemned, and ordered it sold. In 1835 a new building was completed, Mr. Rollins constructed the masonry and Charles Thomas the carpenter work. This was a three-story building, and did service as a court-house until the present court-house was erected in 1845.

## PHYSICAL FEATURES.

Lafayette county, containing about 23,000 inhabitants, has geographically upwards of 395,000 acres of land, and is situated in the west central part of the state. It is bounded on the east by Saline, on the south by Johnson, and on the west by Jackson counties, while the Missouri river is the dividing line between it and Ray and Carroll counties on the north. By a river frontage of nearly fifty miles, Lafayette county has almost unequalled facilities for water transportation. The interior is well watered by Salt creek, Davis creek, and the Tabo and Sni-a-bar creeks and their tributaries. The general face of the country is high and rolling and has long been noted for the richness of the soil. A high ridge extending through the county from east and west, divides the tributaries of the Missouri from those of the LaMine. There is, along the various streams, a fine growth of timber consisting of all the varieties usually found in this latitude. About three-fourths of the county is prairie. The soil is composed of a rich loam, and in many localities has a slight admixture of sand. The river bottoms, which are quite extensive, are an alluvial formation and are unsurpassed in richness.

## AGRICULTURE.

The principal occupation of the inhabitants is agriculture, and the leading staples are corn, wheat, barley, oats, rye, tobacco, hemp and hay. In *ante-bellum* days, hemp was the principal export, but since the close of the war, owing perhaps more directly to the change in the system of labor, corn, wheat, tobacco, hogs and cattle have become the principal commodities upon which the tillers of the soil chiefly rely for a safe and bountiful return for their investment and labor. All the grasses grow luxuriantly, blue grass being a spontaneous growth.

During the last few years great attention has been paid to stock-raising, and the introduction of improved breeds of horses, cattle and hogs, has been marked. Fruits of all kinds are grown in abundance, and is destined to be one of the leading counties in the state in this branch of production; a fine field is offered for grape culture, particularly so within a few miles of the river.

## MINERALS AND MANUFACTURES.

Coal is abundant in nearly every part of the county, the richest fields so far developed are located in the river bluffs, extending from a few miles below Lexington to Wellington, and is within this range, at various points, extensively mined to supply the demands of railroad and river transportation. Small specimens of lead have been found in a few localities. A fine quality of limestone, well adapted for building purposes, for which it is extensively used, underlies the principal part of the county. The manufacturing interests comprise foundries and machine shops, flouring and saw mills, wagon and carriage shops, breweries, hemp and furniture factories.

Railroads completed to Lexington are the Lexington branch of the Mo. Pacific, the Lexington and St. Joe R. R., St. Louis, Kansas City & Northern; the two latter are on the opposite side of the river, and the Wyandotte, Kansas City & Northwestern (Narrow Gauge), recently completed to Lexington, with a good prospect of its continuance to Waverly and the east. The B. & S. W. R. R., and L. L. & G. R. R.'s, are graded through the county.

The Chicago & Alton R. R. Co. are surveying a route through the central part of the county, for the purpose of continuing the L. & Mo. River R. R. from Mexico to Kansas City; this enterprise will undoubtedly be pushed to completion at an early day.

## HISTORY OF LAFAYETTE COUNTY—Continued.

## THE SYSTEM OF SURVEYS.

The rectangular system of surveying, adopted by the United States in subdividing the public lands, in its present state of perfection is the simplest and most beautiful that could be devised. A state when subdivided, has the regularity of a well laid out city on a grand scale; the townships corresponding to the blocks, and the sections and subdivisions to the lots. The sections and townships are almost uniformly one, and six miles square, bounded by lines conforming to the cardinal points. The public lands are primarily surveyed into rectangular tracts six miles square, called "survey or congressional" townships each containing as near as may be, 23,040 acres. The townships are subdivided into thirty-six tracts, one mile square, as a general rule, called sections. The sections are numbered consecutively from one to thirty-six, beginning in the northeast corner of the township and numbering next with the north tier of sections, thence east with the second tier, west with the third tier, and so on to section thirty-six in the southeast corner of the township. Sections are divisible into four equal parts, of one hundred and sixty acres each, called quarter sections; and each quarter section is again divisible into half-quarters, of eighty acres each, or into four quarter-quarters, containing forty acres each. These are called legal subdivisions, and are the only divisions recognized by the government in disposing of the public lands, except where tracts are made fractional by water-courses or by other causes. The subdivisions of sections were not actually surveyed and marked on the field. Quarter-section or half-mile posts were established on the boundaries of the sections, and the quarter-quarter corners are, by law, the equi-distant points between the section and quarter-section corners.

These surveys are made and numbered from a line running due east and west, called "base line," and a line running north and south, called "meridian line." The location of these lines is arbitrary. The surveys of Missouri are numbered north from the base line, and east and west from the meridian line. Meridian lines number from the east, the one in this state being the fifth. For example: Township fifty-one north, range twenty-seven west, being the township in which the city of Lexington is situated, is the fifty-first township, the south boundary of which is three hundred miles, in round numbers, north of the base line, which is located twenty-one tiers of townships south of the south boundary of the state. Range twenty-seven indicates that it is the twenty-seventh tier of (ranges) townships west of the meridian line which is located through the eastern part of the state.

By referring to our map of the state, those unacquainted with this system will readily understand where these lines are located. The offsets frequently found in sectional and township lines are made for the purpose of equalizing the convergence of the magnetic needle towards a given point.

## NEWSPAPERS.

"The first paper printed in Lafayette county was the Lexington Express, edited by Charles Patterson, who was assisted pecuniarily by Messrs. John and Robert Aull, Eldridge Burden, Samuel B. Stramcke and James H. Graham. The initial number was issued April 4, 1840, and it was published continuously until 1861, by the successive administrations of Patterson, Patterson & Julian, (Jacob M.) Patterson, Julian & Gant, (John R.) Patterson, Julian & Musgrove, (Wm. Sr.), Smallwood (W. M.) & Julian, and Julian & Vaughan (Gen. R. C.). It was issued as a daily in portions of 1860 and 1861, by Smallwood & Julian. It was devoted to the old Whig party. Shortly after the establishment of the Express, Harrison B. Branch founded a Democrat journal in 1848, which was succeeded in 1850 by the Western Chronicle, which was published until after the Presidential election in 1850. Wm. Musgrove started the American Citizen (Know Nothing) in 1855, but the paper died with its founder in 1857. The Expositor was established in 1856, by Yost & Stofor, who were succeeded in 1858 by Wm. Anderson as editor. It was Democratic in principle and its publication was continued until the latter part of 1861, when the greater part of its office was carried away by the First Kansas Volunteers. The Missouri Cumberland Presbyterian, edited by Rev. J. B. Taylor, had a brief existence in the year 1850. A German paper, the Lafayette Pioneer, was established in Lexington by Philip Reichert, in 1860, but it was soon discontinued. In 1858-9 Chas. Patterson, the founder of the Express, edited a fine county paper at Waverly, called the Visitor; it lived a little more than one year. Howard S. Harbaugh started the Citizen's Daily Advertiser, in 1860; his paper was stopped for his advocacy of Lincoln for President. When the war broke out there were but two papers published in Lexington, the Express and the Expositor, which were discontinued as above stated, and in 1862 to supply the demand for a news-

paper H. K. Davis commenced the publication of the Union; this was changed to the Express in 1866, which in its turn gave way to the Caucasian in 1866, owned by Julian, Allen (Ethan) & Co., (W. G. Musgrove jr.) The control of this paper was varied. Donan (Peter) & Allen; Donan & Nesbit, (Chas. J.); Allen, Child (Jacob T.) & Musgrove, jr.; Donan, Reavis & Donnan (Andrew) and Wm. G. Musgrove, jr., being successively its proprietors, until it was merged into the Intelligencer in 1875. It was Democratic and during Col. Donan's editorship it was of that branch of the faith termed, in his own phraseology, 'Red Hot.' In May, 1865, Casper Graber and L. Davis established the Lafayette Advertiser, but in the latter part of the year Davis (L.) & Earle (Samuel) bought the paper and started the Missouri Valley Register; it soon came under the editorial management of Col. Mark L. DeMotte. In 1867 DeMotte & Turner (Edwin) purchased the Register, and continued its publication until 1873, when it was bought by its present owners. After the Register became the property of DeMotte & Turner, the "Missouri Valley" was dropped from its title, the name of Lexington Register was adopted by which it is still known. It is uncompromisingly Republican in its politics. Col. DeMotte resigned the editorial charge of the paper about the first of May, 1877, since which time it is edited jointly, by Edwin Turner and Cam. B. Wilson. The paper is at all times able and interesting. The local department is indebted to Cam. B. Wilson, a good printer and promising young writer for home news. The Register is published by Edwin and Henry W. Turner, the one an accomplished printer and the other an energetic business manager.

"The Intelligencer, the organ of the Democracy, took its start in April, 1871, and was founded by Judge Wm. Young, John T. Smith and R. Beverly Vaughan, with the first named as its editor. Soon after its commencement Lafayette W. Groves bought out Smith and succeeded to the editorship, which position he filled with acknowledged ability until his death in November, 1872. During the autumn of 1872 John S. Davis bought an interest in the paper and became its publisher until the consolidation with the Caucasian in 1875. Mike A. Steele and Henry L. Haynes were successively the editors after Groves' death, it being owned by the corporation, the Intelligencer Printing Company. Ethan Allen and W. G. Musgrove, jr., before mentioned as old newspaper men, manage this paper. The present editor Capt. A. A. Lesueur, took the editorial chair in 1875 when Haynes vacated it. Capt. Lesueur is a well informed politician, a forcible writer, is quick, safe and firm in his opinions, and sustains the established character and popularity of his journal.

"The Aullville Times, started into existence in 1870 by W. H. Winfrey, soon ran its brief career of a year.

"Wm. P. Beck, Esq., in April, 1871, established the Missouri Thalote, a German newspaper, at first edited then owned by R. Willibald, Willibald & Fisher (John G.) and afterward by Egid Kist. It has latterly become the property of its present owner and editor, Daniel Schlegel. Mr. Schlegel is a practical printer, scholar and an affable gentleman, who conducts his paper with ability and energy. The paper originally Independent is now Republican.

"Three enterprising young typos of Lexington, Messrs. Jack Williams, Ed. Bowman and Cam. B. Wilson, conducted with success, in 1873 a sprightly little daily, the Dispatch, but it succumbed to the great financial panic of '73, and is no more."—Chile's History.

## THE BAPTIST FEMALE COLLEGE.

In 1855 a joint stock company, most of whom were Baptists, purchased the court house in "old town," and in the same year a female college was chartered under the auspices of the "Blue River Baptist Association." Rev. E. S. Dulin was elected president for two years, when he resigned. He was succeeded by Mr. J. B. Budwell, who also retained his position for two years. In 1859, Rev. J. A. Hollis became president, under whose control the school attained a high degree of prosperity, the number of pupils reaching more than two hundred. In the summer of 1861, the U. S. troops while in possession of the city occupied the College building as barracks, continuing to do so at intervals during the rest of the war. As a result, the building was dismantled and rendered entirely unfit for occupancy. In September, 1864, Rev. E. S. Dulin commenced a private school in the basement of the Baptist Church. He bought property on South street, and conducted the school as a private enterprise until 1869, when a stock company, with a capital of about \$7,000 was organized by the members of the Baptist Church. The property in "old town" was sold, and the present College building on the corner South and Main Cross streets was purchased, and an addition of a handsome and convenient Chapel was made at a cost of \$4,000. In June, 1870, Rev. E. S. Dulin resigned the presidency, and was succeeded by Rev. D. H. Selph, who after three years labor

was compelled to resign on account of ill health. In June, 1873, Mr. A. F. Fleet, for several years professor of Greek and German in William Jewell College, was elected president, and under his energetic and judicious management, the school has steadily increased in numbers and efficiency. In the summer of 1876, owing to the increase in the numbers of boarding pupils, the trustees at a cost of \$2,000 added a new story to the main building, which, with its Mansard roof and tower, make it one of the handsomest and most convenient school buildings in the State. The whole house has been fitted for gas, and the use of kerosene has been entirely discontinued. The number of boarding pupils during the session 1876-7 was fifty-six, and of day pupils the same number. In the literary department there are six teachers, and in the art department five, thus constituting one of the most able and experienced faculties in the West.

## CENTRAL FEMALE COLLEGE.

This College was organized by a few liberal-minded members of the M. E. Church South, of Lexington, in the year 1869, and was duly incorporated under the laws of the state with powers usually possessed by colleges, to confer degrees, etc. The first session opened on the first Monday in September 1869, under the superintendency of Dr. Wm. F. Camp as President, pro-tem.; he was succeeded by Dr. J. O. Church who continued in that position for nearly two years when he was succeeded by Dr. W. T. J. Sullivan, of Mississippi, and he by Rev. Marshall McLhany, the present very efficient president. In the year 1871, the Grand Lodge of Masons in Missouri donated the building and beautiful grounds now occupied by this institution, and heretofore known as the "Old Masonic College" to the Curators of the Central Female College upon the condition that the Methodist Church South would carry on a first-class female college in said building and furnish free tuition to a limited number of daughters of deceased and indigent masons. The resident curators, being of the number of the original incorporators of said college, aided to a limited amount by others, have already expended a large amount of money in building up this institution, and by their past conduct in this behalf the citizens have a sure guarantee that nothing on their part will be left undone to make it among the best female colleges in the state. Mr. McLhany has shown himself to be a live man and an accomplished educator, and under his management the school has increased in numbers and efficiency, and has become one of the fixed and most prominent institutions of learning in the country.

## THE ELIZABETH AULL FEMALE INSTITUTE

was founded by the lady whose name it bears, and who left a legacy of twenty thousand dollars for its establishment. It was chartered by the Legislature of the State of Missouri in the winter of 1860, and was first opened for the reception of students in the fall of the same year. The house in which it was begun had been the residence of Robert Aull, Esq., the brother of the founder. To this original building wings have been added on both sides, and the growing patronage of the school demanded. It is the design of those having it in charge to complete their plans in a year or two by modernizing the front of the original central building and putting a Mansard roof upon it. The cut of the premises in this book represents them as they will be when thus finished, and presents one of the most beautiful and attractive places for a boarding school in the west.

The first president of the seminary was Rev. L. G. Barbour, A.M., now professor in the Central University at Richmond, Kentucky. The exigencies of the war required him to leave, and the school was committed to Rufus W. Finley, A.M., who entered upon his duties in the fall of 1865. He was not largely patronized, but did good service, and was succeeded by Anthony Haynes, A.M., who took charge September, 1867. Mr. Haynes, with great energy, increased the attendance largely during the first of his administration. His health failing and his patronage decreasing he resigned and Rev. J. A. Quarles, A.M., was put in charge for the season of 1870-71. The seminary now rapidly gained in popularity until its boarding pupils taxed the capacity of the building. During this administration the west wing was added. Mr. Quarles being at the same time pastor of the Old School Presbyterian Church, to which the seminary belongs, found the labors of the two positions more than his strength would justify. He therefore resigned the care of the school and it was committed to the presidency of the Rev. James M. Chaney, A.M., who held it from the summer of 1873 to that of 1876. Prof. A. H. Todd, A.M., was then elected and has had charge of the institution during the school year just closed. The board of trustees have again called to the helm the gentleman whose former presidency was the brightest period in the history of the institution, and

HISTORY OF TOWNSHIPS.

Mr. Quarles has been installed under an election which gives him the presidency for the next ten years.

This seminary has some peculiarities in its organization. It discards the old college curriculum of classes. Each pupil is independent, standing in each study upon the simple basis of her own proficiency in that study, and neither hindered nor put forward by the fact that she belongs to a class more or less progressive than herself. This system is found to secure great thoroughness, and to prevent indiscriminate graduating of the good and bad alike. Since the adoption of this system in the Elizabeth Aull Seminary seven years ago there have been but six diplomas granted. As connected with this the university system of schools

has been adopted. There is a school of English; one of Mathematics; one of Languages; one of Physics, and one of Metaphysic. Certificates of proficiency are given, when merited, in each of the studies belonging to these several schools, and certificates of graduation in each school when all its studies have been successfully prosecuted. The diploma is given when the pupil has graduated in all the separate schools. The art department is similarly divided into the school of music, of design, of penmanship and of fancy work.

Special attention is paid here to the fundamental English branches. It is no special honor to read, spell and write well, and to speak correctly; it is, however, quite a dis-

grace not to do these things. No girl can graduate in this school unless she is well versed in these homely studies. Simplicity of dress is required. The examinations of the Elizabeth Aull Seminary for its certificates of proficiency or of graduation are all written. This places the bashful and the bold on an equal footing, and by their comprehensiveness are the surest tests for real scholarship. One of the greatest reforms claimed by the Elizabeth Aull Seminary is in the fact that no public exhibitions are ever given by it. The Elizabeth Aull Seminary is again a rising star, and we look to see it mount rapidly to the zenith of prosperity.