

Biographical & Historical Memoirs of North East Arkansas
Goodspeed's

Ainsworth

James Ainsworth, a farmer by occupation, is a Mississippian by birth, and has inculcated in him the sterling qualities of the better class of citizens of that State. He was born in Monroe County in 1831, and is the eldest of ten children born to **Harrison and Susan (Spencer) Ainsworth**, a brief history of whom is given in the sketch of **William Ainsworth**, treasurer of Poinsett County. James became familiar with farm life through his father, who was a successful agriculturist, and his early scholastic advantages were only such as could be obtained in the common schools. After remaining under the parents' roof until thirty years of age, assisting in clearing the old home farm, he concluded it was time for him to start out in life for himself, and after purchasing and selling several farms, he bought his present place, consisting of 138 acres, of which fifty are under cultivation. In addition to what he raises he is engaged in buying and selling stock, and finds this a profitable way in which to invest his money. He has taken quite an interest in local politics, and in his views is a Democrat. Socially he is a member of Lodge No. 184, A. F. & A. M., of which he has been treasurer for the past fifteen years, and he also belongs to Chapter No. 74, R. A. M., in which he holds the position of scribe. He was married in Poinsett County, in 1868, to **Emily Hale**, but her death occurred ten years later, and he was married, in 1879, to **Sarah Stevens**, by whom he has three children: James Thomas, Katie Bell and Ollie Lou, Mrs. Ainsworth is an intelligent lady, a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and is a daughter of **Moses and Marion Stevens**, who were born in Georgia and emigrated to Arkansas at an early day, and both died in Craighead County, Ark.

William Ainsworth. The name borne by this substantial citizen is not an unfamiliar one.

My footsteps press where, centuries ago,
The red men fought and conquered, lost and won.

The Ainsworth family was first represented in Arkansas, in 1836, by **Harrison Ainsworth**, who was born in the State of South Carolina, and was there married to **Susan Spencer**, whose birth also occurred in East Tennessee. On coming to Arkansas, they settled on a farm north of where Harrisburg is now situated, the county at that time being a vast wilderness of woods and canebrake, and was filled with roaming tribes of hostile red men and wild animals. Here the father, by the aid of his faithful wife, succeeded in clearing his farm, and this place was his home until his death, in 1845, his wife surviving him, and making her home on the old farm until her demise in 1866.

William Ainsworth aided his parents materially in clearing the farm, but his youthful days were also spent in acquiring a thorough knowledge of the three R's in the public schools near his home. His birth occurred in Pontotoc County, Miss., on March 23, 1835, a short time prior to his parents' removal to this State, and at the age of twenty-three years, on the 6th of March, 1859, he was married in Craighead County, Ark., to Miss **Martha White**, and soon after purchased a timber tract, embracing 160 acres, which he immediately commenced to clear, and now has eighty-five acres under the plow. He has added to his original purchase, his acreage at the present time amounting to 600. His property is well improved, with good buildings and orchard, and for some time he has been acting as agent for a number of companies in the purchase of real estate, and is doing well in this business. He has always taken an active interest in politics, and has almost invariably voted the Democratic ticket, as the principles of this party thoroughly coincide with his views. He was elected on this ticket to the office of county treasurer, in 1868, and served one term, being elected again in 1886 and 1888. He was county assessor in 1872 and 1873. He has always been interested in educational matters, and as a member of the school board Mr. Ainsworth has done a great deal to raise the standard of education in his community. He has filled nearly all the chairs in the Masonic order, and is now a member of Poinsett Lodge No. 184. In 1878 he

was called upon to mourn the death of his excellent wife, she having borne him a family of five children: Sarah E. (Mrs. Rice); Charles Thomas, married, and residing near his father; Margaret Jane (Mrs. Gray), also residing near her father; John Calvin and Lee Garland. Mrs. Ainsworth was a daughter of **Rev. Thomas S. and Sarah White**, who were natives, respectively, of Tennessee and Alabama. They came to Greene County, Ark., in 1838, and settled near Jonesboro, where they spent their declining years, his death occurring in 1868, and hers in 1878. In 1879, Mr. Ainsworth was married, in Poinsett County, to Miss **Martha Ellen Gray**, a native of Alabama, and their union has been blessed by the birth of three children: Richard Baxter, Poindexter D. and Logan Cleveland. Mr. Ainsworth can well remember the time when it took eight days to go to Memphis, Tenn., for supplies, and can see great changes in the country since that time, he having been one of the leading men to institute these changes. He has been a member of the Methodist Church for many years, and his wife also belongs to the same church.