

Biographical & Historical Memoirs of North East Arkansas
Goodspeed's

Jelks

J. A. Jelks, M. D., was born in Halifax County, N. C., in January, 1807, and, although he was reared on his father's extensive plantation in that State, he was never compelled to farm labor, owing to the numerous slaves his father always kept, they numbering about sixty the year round. His education up to the age of nineteen years was received in his native county, and he then entered upon the study of medicine, under the tutelage of that well-known physician, **James B. Yellowly**, receiving his first course of lectures at the University of Pennsylvania, after which he entered Rutger's Medical College of New York City, from which he graduated in February, 1829.

Subsequently returning to his native heath, to enter upon his practice, he was married there, in 1830, to **Miss Matilda Ann Crowell**, and the following year they removed westward. After spending one year in Lawrence County, Miss., they went to Hinds County, in the vicinity of Raymond, that State, making that place their home until December, 1833. Their next move was to Fayette County, Tenn., but after a residence there of three years, they returned to Mississippi, to Chulahoma, and here his wife was called to her long home, in 1837, she having borne him a daughter, Cynthia Louise, now **Mrs. Latta**, residing in Cross County, near Cherry Valley. After the death of his estimable wife, the Doctor returned to Fayette County, Tenn., and resided there until coming to Poinsett County, Ark., in 1856. He was again married, in Tennessee, to Miss Bettie J., a daughter of **William Gnerrant**, her birth having occurred in the State of Virginia. The Doctor was so unfortunate as to lose this wife in Poinsett County, in 1869, she having borne him a family of seven children, whose names are as follows: William Robert, a widower, residing in Crittenden County; Charles E., who was in **Capt. Le-Vesque's** company, and died in the army in 1865; Caspar W., a farmer, married and living in Cross County; James H., also in Cross County; Thomas D. (deceased); Mary T., and Ada G. (**Mrs. Jordan**), who also lives in Cross County.

For his third wife he took, in 1871, **Euna A. Allen**, a daughter of **Lyman S. and Angeline (Whitford) Allen**, who were born at Ticonderoga, N. Y. The father was a teacher by profession, and followed that occupation with success for over thirty years. He removed to Iowa at a very early day, and was one of the first settlers of Buchanan County. He was county supervisor for years, and held the office of magistrate. The paternal grandfather, Joel Allen, was a soldier in the War of 1812, and was a first cousin of **Gen. Ethan Allen**, of Revolutionary fame. The Allen family are of English descent, and can trace their ancestry back to the year 1635. **Oliver Whitford**, the maternal grandfather, was also a soldier in the War of 1812, was born in York State, but emigrated to Pennsylvania, where he died. He was also of English origin. **Lyman S. Allen** died in 1876 at the age of seventy-six years, and was followed to the grave by his wife in 1884. From the time of his settlement until 1885 **Dr. Jelks** resided in Scott Township, but at that date he removed to Harrisburg, and, since starting on his professional career, he has practiced continuously until within the past eighteen months. During his long years of practice here he has proved himself to be a physician of ability, his practice being very large, and among the best class of citizens. Socially, he is a member of Lodge No. 184, of the A. F. & A. M., and in this order has advanced to the Chapter. He was the eldest of five sons and two daughters born to **Robert and Mary (Nicholson) Jelks**, who lived for a long time in Halifax County, though the mother was born and reared in Edgecombe County. The father afterward moved to Alabama, and became a wealthy planter of that State. He was married three times, but had no issue by his first wife. His last union resulted in the birth of three sons, two of whom survive. His death occurred in 1846, in Russell County of that State, his wife having died in North Carolina in 1829. He was a staunch Democrat, and a member of the Baptist Church.

Poinsett County
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