

Biographical & Historical Memoirs of North East Arkansas
Goodspeed's

Wright

J. L. Wright, one of Poinsett County's representative farmers and stockmen, was born on Blue Grass soil in 1836, being the second of four children of **Joseph and Sarah (Ford) Wright**, who were also natives of that State, to which the paternal grandfather had moved at a very early day. **Joseph Wright** removed to Arkansas in 1842, and settled in Greenfield Township, where, in 1848, he entered the land on which he had first squatted, comprising 160 acres, and commenced making improvements, and here made his home until his death, which occurred August 19, 1876. He was a member of the Masonic Lodge of Harrisburg, and was a man whom all esteemed and respected. His excellent wife passed from this life in 1852. **J. L. Wright** in assisting his father in clearing the home farm, became familiar with the duties of agricultural life, and after acquiring a fair education in the old subscription schools of Poinsett County, he, at the age of twenty years, started out to fight the battle of life for himself. He was married in 1857 to **Miss Jane Ishmet**, a native of St. Francis County, and a daughter of **Thomas and Elizabeth (Lane) Ishmet**, who were born in Illinois and Tennessee, respectively. They removed from the former State to Poinsett County, Ark., during the early history of this region, and also made their home in Greene County. The father's death occurred many years ago, but the mother is still living and makes her home with her daughter, **Mrs. Wright**. After his marriage, **Mr. Wright** settled on the farm where he now lives, and in 1861 enlisted from here for three years in **Capt. Hillis'** company, and was assigned to the Fifteenth Arkansas regiment, but was honorably discharged a short time after. He then volunteered in **Capt. Kitchens'** regiment, and was a participant in the battle of Little Rock. At the close of the war he returned to Poinsett County, and has since devoted his energies to putting his farm in good tillable condition. His first purchase of land was in 1858, and consisted of forty acres, but by his own good management and energy he now

owns 660 acres, with over 200 acres under cultivation, which constitutes one of the finest farms in the county. He makes a specialty of raising a good grade of Durham cattle and Berkshire and Poland-China hogs, and in all his views he is progressive and enterprising. He is not an active politician, but usually votes the Democrat ticket, and socially is a member of Harrisburg Lodge No. 184, of the A. F. & A. M. He is one of the oldest members of the Christian Church, his wife also belonging to that church; and not in church matters alone has he been active, for he has always been interested in the progress and advancement of schools, and was instrumental in organizing the district in which he resides. His children are as follows: James J., who died in 1858; Harriet Frances (**Mrs. Thornton**), Eliza Jane, Mary Etta Gertrude (**Mrs. Smith**), Sarah Ellen, Jennie Kate, Joseph William, Julia, James Charley and Lou Ollie (twins), the latter of whom died in 1879 at the age of ten months; and Ida Lou. **Mr. Wright's** brothers and sisters are: John J., who was married, served in the late war, and died in 1872; J. L., Jasper, who married, and is a resident of the county; Elizabeth, who was the wife of **James Wilson**, and died in 1869; Malvina, now **Mrs. McBroom**, a resident of Harrisburg; and Joseph H., who is married and resides in Bolivar Township.



Jasper Wright. The life of this gentleman has been rather an uneventful one, but clearly demonstrates how much can be accomplished and acquired under the most unfavorable circumstances. He was born in Barren County, Ky., in 1840, and, after assisting his father on the home farm until twenty-seven years of age, he began doing for himself, but dropped his farming implements in 1861 to enlist in the Crittenden Rangers, a cavalry company organized in Crittenden County, Ark.; and was in the battles of Chickamauga, Corinth and Knoxville. He was paroled at Chester, S. C., in 1865, and returned to Poinsett County, which place has since been his home. He was married here, in 1867, to **Miss Martha Jane Huston**, a Tennessean by birth, but her death occurred in 1875, she having borne a family of four children; Harriet Jane (**Mrs. Albright**) and John William are the only ones now living. The following year

Mr. Wright wedded **Miss Laura Stevens**, a Georgian, by whom he became the father of two children -Elizabeth and Bessie, but he was called upon to mourn her death in 1884. His next matrimonial venture was in 1885, his wife's maiden name being **Josephine McClellan**; she was born in Tennessee, and to them has been given one child, Lloyd D. In 1868 **Mr. Wright** purchased a timber tract of eighty acres, but sold it in 1879, and purchased another tract consisting of the same number of acres. He has added eighty acres to this, and has fifty acres under cultivation. He has always voted the Democratic ticket, and has served as justice of the peace for some years, and in 1886 was elected county and probate judge, serving two years. Socially, he is a member of the Agricultural Wheel, and also belongs to Harrisburg Lodge of the A. F. & A. M. He and wife are worthy. members of the Methodist Episcopal Church. He is one of five children born to **Joseph and Sarah (Ford) Wright**, natives of Tennessee and Kentucky, respectively. In 1844 they removed to Poinsett County, Ark., and here spent the rest of their lives, the father's death occurring in 1876, and the mother's in 1854.

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W. L. Wright. Not without justice, **Mr. Wright** is conceded to hold a representative position among the prominent and successful agriculturists of Poinsett County, for he started out in life for himself at the age of twenty-one years with no means, and is now the owner of 240 acres, with about thirty-five acres under the plow. He was born near Helena, Ark., in 1848, and his youth was spent in assisting on the home farm and in attending the public schools of St. Francis County. He removed to Illinois with his parents, but returned to Crittenden County, and was married here November 15, 1869, his wife being **Miss Arena Johnson**, a native of that county. After raising four crops in Crittenden County, he, in 1872, went to Macoupin County, Ill., and after taking charge of his father's farm for three years he settled in Mississippi County, and engaged in farming. In the month of March, 1880, he came to Poinsett County, Ark., and first purchased a farm of forty acres. This he sold at a later period, and bought eighty acres, and has added to it until he now has 240 acres,

as stated above. He is a Democrat in his political views, and for the past eight years has given his attention to pastoral work, he being a member of the Missionary Baptist Church. He has three charges in Mississippi County, one at Frenchman's Bayou, one at Cross Bayou, and the other at New Hope. Last year he was pastor of a church at Philadelphia, Crittenden County. He is a public spirited citizen, and is deeply interested in the cause of education, having given his children such advantages as he could afford. Their names are: Clara Idella, Mattison McMullen, Maud Jane, Bedford Whitfield and Milton Edward. **Mr. Wright** has noticed many changes for the better since locating in this vicinity, and, judging from a moral and Christian standpoint, the county is rapidly improving. **Mr. Wright** numbers the fifth of his parents' nine children. Both his father and mother, **W. I. and Jane (Gazell) Wright**, were born in Kentucky, were married there, and in 1845 removed to Arkansas, and up to the year 1853 the father was a Baptist minister of Phillips County. At the latter date he removed to St. Francis County, but returned to the former county in 1861, remaining two years. From that time until 1867 he resided on a farm in Poinsett County, and his next move was to Macoupin County, Ill., and after living in the town of Girard for three years he purchased a farm, on which he resided until his death, in February, 1875. His wife still survives him, and is now a **Mrs. Sims**, whose residence is in Raymond, Ill.

Poinsett County
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