

ARKANSAS HISTORY COMMISSION

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GUIDE TO USING THE GOODSPEED'S HISTORIES OF ARKANSAS

One of the most useful sources of Arkansas local history and genealogy is this reprinted six volume set, original published in 1889-1894 by the Goodspeed's Publishing Company of Chicago, Illinois. These volumes, along with Goodspeed's Ozark Region, which was published in 1894, are known collectively as Goodspeed's *Histories of Arkansas*. The books gained this designation because their original titles were unusually long and somewhat cumbersome. Each book contains information on counties in a particular section of the state. Most follow a standard format: first, a description and short history of each county is given, followed by a section contain biographical and genealogical data concerning certain "prominent" citizens of the area. The information for these publications was collected by door to door salesmen who peddled these books throughout the regions. Those who purchased a copy of the book for their section in advance had an opportunity to contribute information on their family for the finished volume. Producing this type of "vanity" publication was a common practice the Goodspeed Company and several of its competitors in the latter part of the 19th century and the early years of the 20th century. There are "Goodspeed" type histories of a number of states around Arkansas, including Tennessee and Mississippi, as well as part of Texas and Missouri. In 1978, the Southern Historical Press of Greenville, South Carolina, reprinted the Arkansas Goodspeed volumes, with full name indexes in a smaller format.

Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Eastern Arkansas:

Arkansas, Crittenden, Cross, Lee, Monroe, Phillips, Prairie, St. Francis, White, and Woodruff counties (1890).

Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Northeast Arkansas:

Clay, Craighead, Fulton, Greene, Independence, Izard, Jackson, Lawrence, Mississippi, Poinsett, Randolph, and Sharp counties (1889).

Biographical and Historical Memoirs of [Central Arkansas:]

Pulaski, Jefferson, Lonoke, Faulkner, Grant, Saline Perry, Garland, and Hot Spring counties (1890).

Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Southern Arkansas:

Ashley, Bradley, Calhoun, Chicot, Clark, Cleveland, Columbia, Dallas, Desha, Drew, Hempstead, Howard, Lafayette, Lincoln, Little River, Miller, Nevada, Ouachita, Pike, Sevier, and Union counties (1890).

History of [Northwest Arkansas:]

Benton, Washington, Carroll, Madison, Crawford, Franklin, and Sebastian counties (1889).

Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Western Arkansas:

Johnson, Logan, Montgomery, Polk, Pope, Scott, Yell, and Conway counties (1891). Note: This volume has a separate index for Conway County.

A Reminiscent History of the Ozark Region:

Baxter, Boone, Cleburne, Fulton, Izard, Marion, Newton, Searcy, Stone, and Van Buren counties (1894). This volume contains some information on families living in those north central Arkansas counties that were left out of other Goodspeed publications.