THE BEAN FAMILY

By Carolyn Thomas Foreman

It is claimed that the Bean family has been represented in America for two hundred and thirty-seven years. When the pioneers, near the end of the eighteenth century, were crossing the mountains into the valley of the Watauga, Mrs. William Bean was captured by the Cherokees near Watauga and taken to their town. She was bound and placed upon the top of a mound to be burned, "when Nancy Ward, then exercising in the nation the functions of the 'beloved' or 'pretty woman,' interfered, and pronounced her pardon." Ramsey, the historian of Tennessee, does not give his authority for this account, but he probably received his information from descendants of Mrs. Bean, who were living in Hawkins County as late as 1850. "Those who had ventured fartherest into the wilderness with their families, was Capt. William Bean. He came from Pittsylvania county, Virginia, and settled early in 1769 on Boon's Creek, a tributary of the Watauga . . . . His son Russell Bean, the first white child born in what is now Tennessee . . . ."

The George Nidever manuscript in the Bancroft Library, Berkeley, California was written by E. T. Murray and signed by Nidever "in 1878 . . . . with his own quivering uncertain hand." The journey was made into New Mexico in 1831 and from San Fernando (Taos) he wrote: "Having arrived here our party separated, but 14 or 15 of the original company remained together." In a note Nidever said that forty-eight men had left in May, 1830, from just above Fort Smith:

"Those who left us here, as far as I can remember were, Col. Bean who by this time was looked upon by all the company as the most insignificant among us. We had made a great mistake in choosing him for our leader, but the high estimation in which he was held by all, and his rank as Col. of the Militia led us to suppose him the best man.

---

1 Josiah H. Drummond (ed.), Proceedings of the John Bean (1660) Association Haverhill, Massachusetts, August 31, 1897, Portland, Maine.
2 Cyrus Thomas, The Cherokees in Pre-Columbian Times, (Washington, July. 1890), pp. 33, 34. The mound upon which Mrs. Bean was to be burned was on the supposed site of Chota.
4 Blanche C. Grant, One Hundred Years Ago in Old Taos, (Taos, New Mexico, 1925), pp. 24, (note 1), 26.
His brothers were well known to my family, my father having been with them in the early Indian wars. They owned the salt works on the Ark.[ansas] and were men of very good standing.

William Bean also left us here with his father. He was a quiet sensible young man with none of his father's cowardice and was very much liked by all. They both returned to Arkansas with the first annual trading trains that left San Fernando. . . .

The *Arkansas Gazette* of November 2, 1831 announced from Van Buren in "News from the Trappers" that "Colonel Robert Bean got home yesterday. All the company are still trapping, except three, Nideavor, Christ and Judge Sanders, who are clean. Colonel Bean came by way of St. Louis and he is coming back shortly."

MARK BEAN

Mark Bean arrived in Crawford County, Arkansas in 1818 and bought the salt kettles at the abandoned Campbell's salt works; they were brought down Grand and Arkansas rivers, then up the Illinois and overland a mile or two and installed on a small stream, later called Salt Branch, on an old Indian trail. The stream flowed into the Illinois about a mile below.

Captain J. R. Bell who accompanied Major Stephen H. Long on his expedition to the Rocky Mountains in 1819 visited the salt works of Mark Bean on Illinois River. He reported that Bean had a neat farmhouse with a considerable stock of cattle, hogs, and poultry, and several acres of Indian corn.

He had built a good log house near the spring and a shed for the furnace; His salt kettles which he had bought from the owners of the abandoned Neosho works, had not been put in place. "On the side of a large well, which he had sunk to collect the salt water, and perhaps two feet from the surface of the soil, he pointed out

---

5 Grant Foreman, *Indians & Pioneers* (Norman, 1930), pp. 59, 60, 134, 152, 156, 167. From Riverton. Kansas August 29, 1950, Mrs. Beulah Blake wrote to Dr. Charles Evans, Oklahoma Historical Society, "... My grandfather, William Quesenberry ... spent most of his life on the Arkansas and Oklahoma line. His uncles had a salt mine on the Territory side. They were Mark and Richard Bean." According to Mrs. Blake Richard H. Bean was a son of Mark Bean. He attended school in Bardstown, Kentucky at the same time William Quesenberry although the latter was a junior when Bean entered the college. Bean was graduated from the Bardstown Law School and admitted to the bar. During his first case an opposing attorney called him a liar and Richard hit him over the head with a chair. That ended his law career and he became a farmer (Beulah Blake, Riverton, Kansas, March 23, 1946 to Mrs. Grant Foreman, Muskogee, Oklahoma). Grant Foreman, "The Three Forks," *Chronicles of Oklahoma*, Vol 2, No. 1, (March, 1924), p. 45.

5a Information from the Rev. H. D. Ragland, Sallisaw, Oklahoma, gives the location of Bean's Salt Works about 4 miles northeast of Gore, in Sequoyah County, on "Salt Branch," north side of State Highway to Tenkiller Lake, in SE¼, Sec. 21, T. 13 N., R. 21 E.—Ed.
the remains of a stratum of charcoal . . . which was a certain proof that these springs had been formerly worked by the Indians."

"L" Reuben Lewis wrote to the Secretary of War, from Cherokee Agency Arkansas on January 21, 1820:

"... There have been strong efforts made by citizens of the United States to settle the country lately acquired from the Osages on the Arkansas. I have endeavored to prevent it. . . .

"There are on the Illinois River within the late purchase from the Osages three valuable Salines within 15 miles of its mouth. . . . There is one Mark Bean making an establishment at one of them, and the Cherokee Chiefs I have been informed have granted those salines to some of these people very prematurely I think as the country has not yet been ceded to them."

Jacob Fowler kept a journal of his trip through "Arkansas, Indian Territory, Oklahoma, Kansas, Colorado, and New Mexico to the Sources of the Rio Grande del Norte in 1821-22."

He and his party left Fort Smith on September 6, 1821. After crossing the Arkansas and the Illinois they "Stopped for the night at Beens Salt Workes. . . . Works one Small Well With a few kittles about 55 gallons of Watter make a bushil of Salt and the Well affords Watter to boil the kittles about three days in the Weake. Been and Sanders Has permission of the govern [government] to Worke the Salt Spring — The Sell and Salt at one dollar per Bushil."

When the Cherokee Final Rolls were finished in September, 1902, there were twenty-five persons of the name of Bean in the Nation. Twelve were females and thirteen males. There were two of the name of Mark Bean. One was fifty-nine years old and one-eighth Cherokee; the other was two years old and a quarter blood. Nancy J. Bean was a half blood. John M. Bean was forty-three years old and he was a one-sixteenth. Nannie E. Bean was registered next and her age was 38. She had three-eights Cherokee blood. Several children followed whose ages were from sixteen to three years of age.

Sanders and Bean had been licensed to operate salt works on Illinois river before the arrival of Colonel Arbuckle at Fort Smith in 1822 and he excepted them from his orders to remain outside the prescribed territory. The site of these salt works is about seven miles north of the village of Gore, on a small stream called Salt Branch about two and one half miles above where it discharges in Illinois River.

---

6 Grant Foreman, Pioneer Days in Early Southwest (Cleveland, 1926), pp 40, 41, 48, 83.
7 War Department Files, Adjutant General's Office, Old Records Division, "L" Reuben Lewis.
8 The Journal of Jacob Fowler, edited by Elliott Conca (New York, 1898), 1,2.
9 Arbuckle to Secretary Calhoun Oct. 27, 1823, AGO, OFD 64 A. 23.
The Fourth of July, 1822, was celebrated in the grand manner at Batesville, Arkansas when "the whole county turned out and a grand jubilee was held... Among the men who responded to toasts were men that afterward added fame and honor to Arkansas. There was Richard Bean, one of the men from Tennessee whom Scholarcraft has named..."

Among the first officers who served the County of Crawford, Arkansas was Mark Bean who succeeded Jack Mills who died in office. Bean held the position until 1825.

Mark Bean, who must have been a member of the Bean family that came from Tennessee and settled on Big Mulberry. In all probability he moved with others to Lovely Purchase or County, as mention is made of salt works at the residence of Mark Bean and his brother in Lovely county.11

Governor George Izard of Arkansas wrote from Little Rock to Mark Bean on August 7, 1825: "As the lease which you received from the executive of this territory, three years ago has expired and as it appears conformable to the intention of Government that the salt works which you have established should be worked on terms and authorizes him to continue for twelve months without rental."12

From Crawford County, Territory of Arkansas, Mark Bean, Esquire made an affidavit as follows:13

"Mark Bean... deposite and say that he settled in the county that is now Crawford County Arkansas Territory in the year 1818 and in 1819 moved to what was called Lovely's purchase and engaged in making Salt until the Treaty with the Cherokees in 1828 and removed back to Crawford County in the fall of said year 1828—remained until 1832 when he removed to Washington Co."

During the Fifth Territorial Legislature of Arkansas which met in 1828 and the Sixth which was held in 1829, Mark Bean represented Crawford County in the house of representatives.

---

11 Clara B. Eno, History of Crawford County, Arkansas (Van Buren, n. d.) p. 196. Before the Revolution William L. Lovely had lived for some time in the home of President James Madison. He became assistant to Colonel Return J. Meigs, the Cherokee agent in Tennessee, and was assigned to the Western Cherokees. He arrived there in July, 1813, and chose for his home a place which had been an old Osage settlement. Major Lovely made an agreement with the Osage for the Government to pay all claims against them for depredations and in exchange the Indians were to cede to the United States all the land lying between the Verdigris and the home of the Arkansas Cherokee and this tract became known as Lovely's Purchase. — (Grant Foreman, Indians and Pioneers, (Norman, 1930) Note 35, p. 41).
12 Office Indian Affairs, Retired Classified Files, 1825. On September 16, 1825 Izard wrote to Colonel Thomas L. McKinney that the two principal salt works are those of two brothers named Bean.—Indians and Pioneers, p. 41.
13 Office Indian Affairs. List of claims for Spoliation in Cherokee stock in 1828 & 29.
On November 11, 1828 the Arkansas Gazette announced the marriage of Mark Bean of Crawford County to Miss Hetty Stuart, daughter of the late Colonel Stuart of Lawrence County. The service was performed on November 2 by the Reverend Mr. Brookfield.

"Mr. Bean’s lease of the Saline will expire it is believed in August next." This will fall in the Cherokee limits ceded to them—notify Bean that the lease cannot be renewed; he must abandon it and all improvements except iron pots & boilers "to the order of the Cherokees or their agent, for their use."14

On November 15, 1829, Mark and Richard Bean were reporting on their contracts, made through Colonel David Brearly, to furnish beef to the emigrating Creek Indians. Payment was made to M. & R. H. Bean, January 27, 1831 for the sum of $8,748.28. "Amount of requisitions drawn in the Indian Department between the first of January, and the thirtieth day of September, 1832."15

Mark Bean, in the Arkansas General Assembly in October, 1835, made a motion to the Legislative Council to build "a road from the upper county of Missouri south within the territory, and parallel with the western boundary, to Van Buren and Fort Smith, and thence to Red River." Mark Bean was on the select committee to establish the Bank of Arkansas.16

On July 30, 1839, "the Community of the Cain [sic] Hill Independant regulators" sent the following communication to "George Bushyhead and through you to your principal Chief and head man John Ross":17

"State of Arkansas, Washington County.

"We the committy of the Cain Hill Independant regulors do in solemn Committy assembled, demand the person of Jack or John Nicholson for the following reasons.

"1st. On the night of the 15th of June last, the dwelling house of William C. Wright was burned to ashes, and Wright and four of his children were most inhumanly butchered and murdered, and one wounded and left for dead. . . . we sentenced 3 to suffer death by hanging. . . . carried into execution . . . the 29th Inst. and by the confession of John

---

14 Office Indian Affairs, McKinney to Izard, May 26, 1828.
16 Cherokee Advocate (Tahlequah, Cherokee Nation), October 9, 1835, 2, col. 2. Ibid., October 16, 1835, 1, col. 4; Ibid., October 27, 1835, 1, col. 6 Dec. 27, 1837 Journal of B. B. Cannon, Conductor of a party of Cherokees put in his charge by Genl. N. Smith on 13th day of October 1837. "Dec. 27th, 1837. Buried Alsey Timberlake, Daughter of Charles Timberlake, Marched at 8:00 A.M, halted at Mr. Beans, in the Cherokee nation West, at 1/2 past 2 o’c, P.M, encamped and issued corn and fodder, Fresh pork & some beef, 12 miles to day.”
17 Office Indian Affairs. Retired Classified Files. Cherokee File A 666. Mark Bean was one of a committee of thirty-six to investigate the murder of the William Wright family at Cane Hill (in the neighborhood of Boonsboro), June 15, 1839.—History of Benton, Washington, Carroll Counties, Arkansas (Chicago, 1889), p. 154.
Richmond. . . . He says Jack or John Nicholson was one of the murderers. . . . demand said Nicholson to be given up—

"Your very humble servants Andrew Buchanan Chairman of Committee Mark Bean Capt. Comdg. L. Evans Secretary."

Department of the Interior
Office Indian Affairs
July 9th 1857

Sir:

I have the honor to make the following report in the matter of Mark and Richard H. Bean, for whose relief an act was passed by Congress on the 3rd March last.

It is alleged by the Messrs. Bean, in their memorial to Congress, that being authorized, as they conceived, by the laws and policy of the Government, they settled in the year 1817 upon the Illinois river, a tributary of the Arkansas, near its confluence with the last named stream, having there discovered a Saline spring. That in the year 1819, they were induced by Major [William] Bradford, of the Army, Commanding at Fort Smith, to engage in the manufacture of salt for the use of the garrison, that they erected, at heavy cost, residences and other necessary buildings, expended large sums of money in procuring the various implements and fixtures,—relying with certainty upon a greatly augmented demand when the contiguous country should become settled and occupied by white people.

That they realized little or nothing until the year 1826, when they began to reap some reward for their labor, hardships and expenses. But by the treaty of May 6th 1828, with the Cherokees, they were despoiled of their property, in consequence of the whole county, embracing their salt factory and the entire land which they had located upon and reduced to agricultural cultivation, having been stricken off of the Territory of Arkansas and given to the aforesaid Indians.

By reference to the Cherokee treaty alluded to, it will be found that its third article is in these words,

"The United States agree to have the lines of the above cession run without delay; and to remove immediately after the running of the Eastern line from the Arkansas river to the Southwest corner of Missouri, all white persons from the West to the East of said line, and also all others, should there be any there, who may be unacceptable to the Cherokees, so that no obstacles arising out of the presence of a white population, or a population of any other sort, shall exist to annoy the Cherokees; and also to keep all such from the west of said line in future."

And it is further alleged in the memorial, that their houses, furnaces, fixtures and implements, not only for manufacturing, but farming purposes, are at the present day in the possession of the Cherokees, who are actually engaged in the manufacture of salt on said premises.

It appears from a copy of a lease, found on file in the General Land Office, dated the sixth of August 1822, that James Miller, then Governor of Arkansas, by virtue of authority vested in him by the Secretary of the Treasury, granted to Reuben Sanders, Mark and Richard H. Bean the exclusive privilege and profits of working the Illinois Saline, where they then resided, for three years, also the use of wood, timber &c, for carrying
on the work. It was represented by the Messers. Bean that they had purchased all interest of Sanders in the business, and obtained from him a deed of release, but that said deed was lost, with the other original papers by the Committee of Congress—none of which papers can be found, but Senator Johnson and Hon. Mr. [Alfred B.] Greenwood vouch for the accuracy of the printed copies now produced. As the Deed was not printed, it was necessary to write to Arkansas for evidence as to the rights of Sanders, and Mr. Greenwood in replying says that he was cognizant of the fact that Sanders had disposed of all his interest, but thought it best to send other evidence, That evidence consists of the deposition of Mrs. A. M. Moore a daughter of Sanders, who says that for some years previous to the date of the treaty of 1828, her father had no interest in the works, having sold out his interest to Mark and Richard H. Bean, and that he died in Santa Fe in 1830 or 31—and of the deposition of William M. Martin who says, that he was well acquainted with all the parties—that he frequently heard Sanders say he had sold his interest in the Salt Works to the Messers Bean, that he knows that he removed from the Salt works previous to 1826—and that Mark and Richard H. Bean were regarded by the whole community as sole owners of the works, at the time they were dispossessed. Martin also testifies to the fact of the Messers Bean, owning two farms with houses upon them separate and distinct from the Salines—that of Mark Bean being twenty miles distant, and that of Richard near the works—

Both of these witnesses are said to be persons of Character and veracity—

The evidence as to the value of the improvements and fixtures at the works is this;

William Quessenbury thinks that the losses of Mark and Richard H. Bean, in abandoning the works, could not have been less than $15,000 that he was an eye witness to what they had—and if other things were taken into consideration besides the actual loss of utensils, fixtures &c the amount would be much larger.

William McGarrah says he was a neighbour of these persons, when working the Salines, that they made from 35 to 40 bushels of salt per day, that it was worth $1. per bushel—that with their improvements they had to abandon, all utensils and fixtures, that the loss from the enforcement of the treaty, was not less than $12 or $16,000,

General M. Arbuckle says, the Messers Bean were making salt on the Illinois in the spring of 1822 — or 23, — that he understood they were permitted to do so by Major Bradford, and he knows that they were making salt there, when compelled to remove under the treaty.

Col. B.L.E. Bonneville of the Army, says he went to Fort Smith in 1822, that the Messers Bean were then at work, at what was called "Beans Salt Licks"—that they supplied the whole of the country adjacent with salt. That he regarded their possessions as a fortune. That he regarded their loss by the abandonment of their buildings, outhouses, furnaces, warehouses, and a five mile road to the falls, and a warehouse there, at not less than $15,000—That he does not think that they would have sold out for double that amount, considering the prospects in view from the filling up of the country, That they were considered men of the highest character, and their removal was regarded as destruction to them.

Col. D. S. Miles, of the Army, says he regards $15,000 as a moderate estimate of the loss. That the improvements consisted of a good double log house, negro quarters, and stables, two drying houses, and a large
The Bean Family

mit house for deposits, with sheds over two rows of Kettles at two springs. He estimates that there must have been one hundred Kettles which were transported at great expense in Keel boats over 600 miles, before steam navigation was deemed practicable on the Arkansas.

The Act referred to as passed at the last session of Congress for the relief of the Messers Bean, on the 3rd of March, is "That the Secretary of the Interior be, and he is hereby, authorized to adjust upon principles of equity and justice, the claim of Mark and Richard H. Bean, and to pay whatever may be found to be due, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, deducting what they may have heretofore received. Provided, That the compensation shall not exceed fifteen thousand dollars."

It has been found upon examination at the Genl. Land Office that two donation tracts, of 320 acres each, have been patented to the Messers Bean—the one to Mark on the 1st December 1830, and the other to Richard H. on the 5th of February 1846.—These tracts were granted under the laws of the 24th May, 1828, (Stat: at Large Vol. iv, 307. Chap. 108, Sec. 8th), which provides that two quarter sections of land should be given "to each head of a family, widow or single man over the age of twenty one years actually settled on that part of the Territory of Arkansas, which by the 1st Article between the United States and the Cherokee Indians west of the Mississippi, ratified the 23rd day of May 1828, has ceased to be a part of said territory, who shall remove from such settlement according to the provisions of that treaty," "as an indemnity for the improvements and losses of such settlers under the aforesaid treaty."

This act seems to be an admission upon the part of the Government of the principle, that all persons situated upon the lands, finally given to the Cherokees, should be indemnified,—and the donation claims granted in pursuance of that Act must be taken as complete indemnity, except where a special law has been passed as in this case.

These Acts having recognized the claim it is not your province, in my opinion, to go behind them to enquire whether the Messes Bean had originally an equitable just demand upon the Government but merely to settle, "upon principles of equity and justice" the amount of their loss, Congress having decided as it seems that they have demands the extent of which you are to decide. And although the original papers have been lost, some of which were not printed, I am the more inclined to this opinion, as three separate reports were made by the Congressional Committee expressly declaring that the claim should be allowed. And although the Act says that the amount allowed shall not exceed $15,000;—let it seems to have been the intention, from the comments upon the evidence adduced, that that is the amount which the Committees thought should be paid, deducting anything which might be found in the Executive departments which could justly be applied in the way of offset. Therefore the testimony having established that their improvements, implements, and fixtures were worth $15,000 and the reports of Committees, and the Act passed seeming to recognize that as the just Value—I presume that sum must be awarded them, deducting therefrom the sum of $800 which must be taken and considered as the value, at $1.25 per acre, of their donation claims. All the papers in the case are herewith submitted

Very respectfully

Your Obt Servt

J[Acob] Thompson
Secretary of the Interior

J[ames] W Denver
Commissioner

13 Office Indian Affairs. No file number.
The Commissioner states that he has made a settlement in the case of Messrs. M. and R. H. Bean and asks attention to a misunderstanding of his opinion in the case:19

To Hon. J. Thompson, Secretary of the Interior.


Sir: I have the honor to state . . . . that in compliance with your directions, and upon the principles contained in your award of the 13th instant, I have based a settlement of the claim of Messrs. Mark and Richard H. Bean, for whose relief an act was passed by Congress on the 3rd of March last; and have found due to them the sum of $14200, which settlement I have transmitted to the proper accounting officer of the Treasury, for the purpose of having the sum paid . . . . I said that Congress had settled the question, that they had a valid claim against the Government, consequently that, in my opinion, you were precluded from inquiring into the justice of its origin—but I never intended to be understood as saying, that you were bound to allow the sum of $15000; taking it for granted that Congress so intended, because it had fixed that as a limit beyond which you could not go. I moreover said that the evidence fully established the fact, that their losses amounted to at least $15000, and that I was fortified in that opinion by the opinions of the several Congressional Committees who had reported in the matter. Very respectfully your Obt. svt. J. W. Denver, Commissioner.

During the Civil War, Miss Rachael Couch lived in what is now Alma, opposite Farris Grove, was a member of a party which went into Indian Territory, for salt which was greatly in demand and difficult to obtain. "Their destination must have been the Bean Salt Works on the Illinois."20

In the Probate Court of Washington County, Arkansas was found the will of Mark Bean dated April 4, 1855. The document which was probated January 22, 1860, stated that Bean willed to his children Richard H. Bean and Eliza Bean his Estate at death of his wife Nancy Bean. The executor was Richard H. Bean and the witnesses were Renkind and E. W. McClellan.

From Boonsboro', Arkansas, May 9, 1861 a committee of citizens addressed a letter to Chief John Ross of the Cherokee Nation:21

"Dear Sir: The momentous issues that now engross the attention of the American people cannot but have elicited your interest and attention, as well as ours. The unfortunate resort of an arbitration of arms seems now to be the only alternative. Our State has, of necessity, to co-operate with her natural allies, the southern States. It is now only a question of north and south, and the 'hardest must fend off.' We expect manfully

20 Clara B. Eno, op. cit., p. 304.
21 Report Commissioner Indian Affairs (Washington, 1863), p. 232. According to the Cherokee Advocate, February 1, 1879 (3, col. 1) Professor Mark Bean had been appointed a teacher at the Cherokee Male Seminary and he had had lots of experience. This man must have belonged to a younger generation. Grant Foreman, Indian Pioneer History, Vol. 82, p. 345 in Indian Archives, Oklahoma Historical Society.
to bear our part of the privations and sacrifices which the times require of southern people. This being our attitude in this great contest, it is natural for us to desire, and we think we may say we have a right to know, what position will be taken by those who may greatly conduce to our interests as friends, or to our injury as enemies.

"Not knowing your political status in this present contest, as the head of the Cherokee nation, we request you to inform us by letter, at your earliest convenience, whether you will co-operate with the northern or southern sections, now so unhappily and hopelessly divided.

"We earnestly hope to find in you and your people true allies and active friends; but if, unfortunately, you prefer to retain your connexion with the northern government, and give them aid and comfort, we want to know that, as we prefer an open enemy to a doubtful friend.

"With consideration of high regard, we are your obedient servants,

Mark Bean.
W. B. Welch
E. W. MacClure
John Spencer
J. A. McColloch
J. M. Lacy
J. P. Carnahan

Hon. John Ross.

In reply Chief John Ross wrote from Park Hill, May 18, 1861:

"... You are fully aware of the peculiar circumstances of our condition, and will not expect us to destroy our national and individual rights. ... I am—the Cherokees are—your friends, and the friends of your people; but we do not wish to be brought into the feuds between yourselves and your northern brethren. Our wish is for peace—peace at home, and peace among you. ..."

ROBERT BEAN

During the years 1818 and 1819 Henry R. Schoolcraft kept a Journal of a Tour into the Interior of Missouri and Arkansas and on Monday, January 18, 1818 he wrote:

"We passed Hardin's Ferry ... on the south bank. Here the main road from Missouri to Arkansas crosses the river, and a mail is carried from St. Louis to the post of Arkansas ... once a month. Two miles below is Morrison's Ferry, a branch of the same road crossing there, and eight miles farther Poke Bayou, a village of a dozen houses, situated on the north bank of the river, where we arrived about four o'clock in the afternoon, and were entertained with hospitality by Mr. Robert Bean, merchant of that place."

During his memorable trip up the Arkansas River in 1820, the Reverend Cephas Washburn made the acquaintance of Colonel Robert Bean aboard the steam boat. Bean had lived in Arkansas several years where he was well known and a member of the Territorial Legislature. "This man was intemperate, a gambler, and most horribly profane. With all these faults, as the sequel will show, he possessed no little share of the 'milk of human kindness.'

---

22 Ibid., p. 233.
23 Published in London, 1821, p. 80.
was quite intelligent; and we obtained much valuable information from him, particularly concerning the Cherokees and the Cherokee country.”

The missionary was so shocked at Bean’s profanity that he spent most of his time on the guards, when the weather permitted:

“One day, while thus on the guards, he came out, and in the kindest manner entered into a conversation with me, evincing a deep interest in our object, and a desire to be of use to us. But he interlarded every sentence with most horrid and blasphemous oaths. I appreciated his kindness, and wished to return it in a way to do him good.

“. . . In the kindest and gentlest manner possible to me, I reproved him for swearing. In a moment he was in a perfect rage. His countenance expressed the rage of a tiger; and, with awful oaths, he swore he would put me overboard if I ever reproved him again. . . . From this moment he seemed to imbibe the bitterest hatred towards me.”

Mr. Washburn decided he was “an utter reprobate, and avoided him as much as possible.” The following September while on the search for a suitable location for his mission he met a large party of white men on their way to examine Lovely’s Purchase and among them was Colonel Bob Bean. Washburne, not wishing to ride with him, delayed his departure by staying in a store, but just as he left the place he saw the Colonel returning there:

“He entered the store and remarked, ‘I am going up to see my old mamma, and I must take her some sugar and coffee and tea.’

‘‘What!’ said the clerk, ‘you a man of a family of your own, and not forgotten your mamma yet!’

‘With a quivering lip and tears running down over his eyelids, he answered, ‘I have not forgotten my mamma, and I never shall, while I have a memory.’

That speech decided Washburn that there was still some good in the man; when Bean rode up to him on the trail, offered his hand, and said:

‘I have wanted to see you more than any other man I ever met. You have not been out of my mind for an hour, when I have been awake, since I parted with you on the Mississippi. I want to ask your forgiveness for treating you in a most ruffian like manner, and I want to thank you for the kind and delicate manner in which you reproved me for swearing. I can never forgive myself, and I shall not blame you if you refuse to forgive me.’

“I assured him of my most hearty forgiveness, and my fervent prayers for his salvation.”

Thereafter Mr. Washburn and Bean were devoted friends and the Colonel was known to have ridden as much as fifteen miles to hear the missionary preach.

---

25 Ibid., pp. 92-3.
Governor James Miller appointed Sam C. Roane, Robert Bean and James Billingsly commissioners to locate the site for a court house in Pulaski County. Bean and Roane selected Little Rock and the Circuit Court confirmed their choice.

Batesville, in Lawrence County was cut off in 1820 and called Independence County, was at one time the state's best town. For more than twenty years it "was the leading town in Arkansas, excelling every other in population, wealth, cultivation, schools and regard for law. Robert Bean was a resident of Independence County, and he was speaker of the Territorial Legislature."

During the removal of the Choctaw Indians their agent, Francis W. Armstrong obtained from the government at Washington an order directing Lieutenant Colonel James B. Many, commandant at Fort Gibson, to furnish a detail of soldiers to build a wagon road from Fort Smith to Red River over which the emigrants could travel.

Colonel Many ordered Captain John Stuart on March 22, 1832 to proceed to Fort Smith to consult with Colonel Robert Bean, a famous woodsman, and begin construction of the road. Armstrong selected Bean to accompany the command to "point out the precise ground over which the Road will run," and he stressed the importance of finishing the road before the extreme

---

25 Josiah H. Shinn, Pioneers and Makers of Arkansas, Little Rock, 1908, 87, 114, 156. "The first white child born in East Tennessee bore the name Bean, but whether its parents were kin to Robert Bean I can not say. Certain it is that either Robert Bean or a son organized a body of Rangers in Independence and Izard Counties in 1832 or 1833 who attached themselves to the expedition of Captain Bonneville, which made fame for itself in what is now Oklahoma. It was on this expedition that Washington Irving gathered materials for two of his excellent books, and in this way through either Robert or Mack Bean, North Arkansas connected itself with a glorious enterprise " (Shinn, op. cit., 155). As a matter of fact it was Jesse Bean who was a captain of one of the famous Ranger companies. Captain B. L. E. Bonneville was "on an Exploration to the Far West", across and beyond the Rocky Mountains, 1831-36, his Journal was edited and amplified by Washington Irving, and published in 1843 ...." (George W. Cullum, Biographical Register of the Officers and Graduates of the U. S. Military Academy at West Point [New York, 1868], Vol. I, p. 157).


29 Captain John Stewart (Stuart), a native of Kentucky was a private in the army from July 20, 1814 to June, 1815. He reached the grade of second lieutenant August 13, 1819; first lieutenant October 6, 1822, and captain June 30, 1828. He died December 8, 1838. (Francis B. Heitman, Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army, Washington, 1903, Vol. 1, 925).

heat of summer because of the flies which would be hard on the horses and oxen employed in the work.

In Stuart's report, he said that the road had "never been regularly surveyed but was marked out by a citizen of Arkansas Territory [Col. Robt. Bean] he commenced his blazes at Fort Smith and terminated them at Red River." When Stuart reached Fort Smith in a keel boat on March 26 he reported this incident: "Col. Bean whom I was instructed to consult with in relation to the locality &c of the road, was absent, and I could find no one who knew anything about it, except that Col. Bean had left that place a few days before and had blazed a way through the cane brake in the direction of the Choctaw Agency, where they understood a road was to be cut."

Stuart finally had an interview with Colonel Bean on the 28th and learned that he had no written orders but was acting under verbal instructions from Colonel Armstrong. With the greatest difficulty Stuart constructed the road to the "Fouche Maline, a fork of the Porteau, where I met Col. Bean, who had completed the blazing of the road, and was then returning to join my party." However, Bean went back to Fort Smith before joining Stuart and his men on the south side of the mountain.

Bean informed the officer that he was then ninety or a hundred miles from his destination. It was not until July 19, 1832 that the party returned to Fort Gibson.32

JESSE BEAN

The Arkansas Gazette, July 18, 1832 (p. 1, col. 1) wrote of Jesse Bean.33

"A more experienced woodsman or one better acquainted with the Indian mode of fighting, can hardly be found in any country than Capt. Bean. He took a gallant part in most of the principal engagements at New Orleans, while that city was invested by the British army in 1814-15, and was with Gen. Jackson in some of the subsequent Indian wars in Florida, where he commanded a company of spies and rendered important service for which he was complimented by the Commanding General."

The Tulsa World, September 4, 1932 printed a letter written by General Andrew Jackson from the Hermitage, July 8, 1844 to Captain William Russell in which he declared:

I can assure you that I have not forgotten you or the Beans. They were amongst my first acquaintances in Tennessee, amongst my first

compatriots in arms and in the field, from whom I always and on the most trying occasions received the most prompt and efficient aid.

No, my dear sir, I have not forgotten and as long as my faculty of recollection remains I cannot forget the Russels and the Beans.

On February 24, 1833 Jesse Bean wrote to the Secretary of War that "Two hundred of these Choctaw arrived in Texas in 1831 and 1832 and located west of the Sabine, and the Alcalda complained to General Leavenworth. He said that four hundred more were coming." 34

Captain Jesse Bean of the Dragoons resigned his commission to take effect May 31, 1835. 35

Congress passed an act on June 15, 1832 authorizing a Ranger organization of 600 men who should arm, equip, and mount themselves. They were to receive $1.00 per day "as a full compensation for their services and the use of their arms and horses." Commissioned officers were to receive the same pay as officers of the same grade in the army. Captain Bean of Independence County, who lived near Batesville, was to raise a company. 36

The following order was issued to Captain Bean on July 7, 1832: "As it will be too late for you to reach Chicago [to participate in the Black Hawk War] . . . . you are directed to proceed to Fort Gibson where your men will be inspected and mustered in." The recruits were mustered into the service by Colonel Matthew Arbuckle who also inspected their horses which were to be not over eight years old and not under 14½ hands. The men were to be not over forty and equipped with a rifle each. In addition the Ordnance department was to furnish the outfit with one hundred pistols and the same number of swords. 37

Samuel C. Stambaugh, secretary of the Stokes Indian Commission, wrote the editor of the Arkansas Gazette (letter printed May 15, 1833) from Fort Gibson saying:

"One of the finest looking commands that ever penetrated the Indian country west of the Mississippi, left here today [May 7], on an expedition to the extreme western boundary of the United States, and have encamped his evening on the Arkansas, a few miles below . . . . The principal object of Col. Arbuckle in sending this expedition is to display a large military force in the heart and extreme hiding places in the Indian country where no white soldier has ever yet appeared. . . . Contemplated . . . . to strike the Red River about the head waters of the Boggy and ascend to the Blue and Pausee Washita. On the route, troops will scour the country between North Fork and main branch of the Canadian."

34 Niles Weekly Register, Vol. 12, p. 317. Adjutant General’s Office. Old Files Division, 76 132, Gaines to Leavenworth, August 26, 1832.
35 Military and Navy Magazine (April, 1835), Vol IV, p 158; Niles Register, August 29, 1835, p. 454; Army and Navy Chronicle, February 16, 1836, p. 112.
36 Arkansas Gazette, July 18, 1832, 1, col. 1.
37 War Department, Adjutant General’s Office. Letters Sent, Vol. 10, 18, 19, 20. Another letter relates that the troops were delayed because Third Lieutenant George Caldwell developed the measles (Arbuckle to Jones, September 15, 1832, (A. 1832.).
In a letter from Fort Gibson dated July 16, 1833 it is stated: "The enlistment of the rangers being about expiring, it became necessary that we should kill and dry a sufficient quantity of buffalo meat, for our eastern march to Fort Gibson, which place we reached after 54 days absence, and with the loss of only one man; having lived for 30 days on buffalo meat alone without either bread or salt, and for the last eight days of our march on dried buffalo meat, boiled in water with tallow."  

In the Manuscript Division of the Library of Congress in Washington is a "Memorial to Congress from Jesse Bean Relative to a Silver Mine in the Territory of Missouri," as follows:

To the honorable the Senate, the House of Representatives of the United States, in Congress assembled:

The Memorial of Jesse Bean, a native of the United States, and resident of the Missouri Territory respectfully represents to your honorable bodies, that he has lately discovered on the waters of . . . river, or near the same, within the limits, as he is informed, of the said Missouri Territory, a silver mine, which he believes to be rich and valuable, that being a Blacksmith by trade, and having occasionally worked on silver, on a limited scale, he is enabled, in some degree, to judge of the quality of the metal. He further begs leave to propose to your honorable Bodies, that if Congress will grant to him, his heirs or Assigns the privilege of working Bullion from said mine, and enjoying all the profits and emoluments thereunto appertaining, for the term of five years, he will disclose to your honorable bodies the place where the same is situated. He begs further to represent to your honorable bodies, that he is far advanced in years, and by the ordinary course of Nature, cannot much longer survive the infirmities of age, and its attendant diseases, and therefore he wishes the privilege prayed for granted in such a manner that his heirs &c may enjoy the benefit of same.

And your Memorialist will ever pray &c. Jesse Bean

During the Black Hawk War in Illinois, Congress passed an act, July 5, 1832, to raise a battalion of mounted rangers, to be composed of six companies of about one hundred officers and men in each company, to serve one year.

A company was raised in Arkansas by Captain Jesse Bean of Tennessee and he made his rendezvous at Batesville the last of August. From there he marched to Fort Gibson where he arrived September 14 and took up duty.  

Colonel Matthew Arbuckle had decided to send Captain Bean and his company on a tour of the southwest to overawe the wild

---

33 The Military and Naval Magazine, Vol. 11 (September 1833 to February, 1834), p. 123. The same magazine announced that Bean was to become a captain of Dragoons on August 15, 1833. In the issue of May, 1834 the distribution of the Dragoons locates Jesse Bean, Lieutenant J. F. Izard, Second Lieutenant B. A. Terrett and L. B. Northrop at Fort Gibson in charge of Company K.


40 Grant Foreman, Pioneer Days in the Early Southwest, Cleveland, 1926, 88.
Indians with this new arm of the service. Two days after they left the post Washington Irving and Indian Commissioner Henry L. Ellsworth arrived at Fort Gibson and the Commissioner decided to join the troops while awaiting the arrival of the other commissioners. He wished to explore the country between the Canadian and Cimarron rivers, with a view of locating there some of the troops from the East.

On May 6 Colonel Arbuckle ordered a force under command of Lieutenant Colonel James B. Many to Red River with instructions to ascend Red River where white troops had never been seen. The troops left the fort on May 7, 1833. It was made up of two companies of the Seventh Infantry and three companies of the Rangers commanded by Captains Nathan Boone, Lemuel Ford and Jesse Bean.41

When Captain Bean arrived at Fort Gibson with his company of Rangers in 1832 he was joined in November by Nathan Boone and Lemuel Ford with their companies. As there was no room for them in the fort, Bean's company went into winter quarters in hastily constructed huts on the Grand River, about seven miles above Fort Gibson after their return from the famous tour described by Washington Irving in his *Tour on the Prairies*.

The Dragoons reached Fort Gibson from their tour to the Kiowa and Comanche Indians worn out, in rags and ill. There was a fearful amount of sickness and many deaths among the Dragoons and 163 members of the regiment died in a little more than a year. Captain Bean, together with several other officers, resigned within a short time.42

Captain Jesse Bean raised a company of Mounted Rangers at Batesville on the 30th; he enrolled thirty recruits. Joseph Pentecost, a first lieutenant; Robert King, second lieutenant; George Caldwell, third lieutenant.43

Colonel Arbuckle wrote to Adjutant General Roger Jones, August 12, 1832 that when Captain Bean's company arrived that it would "be usefully employed in protecting the tribes in this quarter who have treaties with the United States against depredations by Pawnee and Camanche. A war party of 100 Cherokee and Delaware will march in a few days against Camanche and Pawnee." Arbuckle complained that many of the officers of the regiment were absent from Fort Gibson.44

---

41 *Ibid.*, 93, 104-05. These three officers later were members of the Dragoon Regiment (*Ibid.*, 109)


44 *Arkansas Gazette*, August 3, 1832.

45 War Department, Adjutant General's Office, Arbuckle to Jones. A. 1832.
From Fort Gibson, September 17, 1832, Captain Bean sent to the Commissary General of Subsistence a contract with an abstract and account of Noadiah March for furnishing provision to the U. S. Rangers on their March to Fort Gibson.45

This expedition from Fort Gibson became famous because of the presence of Washington Irving and several other interesting persons who accompanied the Mounted Rangers.

When Captain Bean was recruiting his Rangers in 1832 he had no idea that his troops were to be joined by civilians until he arrived at Fort Gibson.

In his Journal for October 13, 1832 Irving described Captain Bean as "about forty years of age, in leather hunting dress and leather stock—[in]gs." The meeting was very pleasant and the visitors were glad to overtake "the main army. . . ." Bean's costume was well suited for the journey he was undertaking and no doubt he came through the Cross Timbers in better condition than Irving who lost the tail of his coat. Ellsworth wrote:46

"I never saw a man more impatient, to be out of them, than Mr. Irving—and well he might complain. He had nothing but cloth gloves to defend his hands—his frock surtout, was in a moment, shorn of its beauty and use. . . . the whole of one skirt of his coat was taken off, and done so expertly, that he never knew it at the time. . . ."

"Captain Bean shot at some Buffalo near by, hit one, but did not kill him. . . ."47

"Capt Beans is a very worthy, good natured, easy sort of a man—personally brave, and possessing the qualities of a good woods man—he is worthy of confidence, and actuated by correct motives—but he is greatly deficient in energy and more so in discipline—his army were without the least discipline—they often went in a row (Indian file) because it was difficult for the horses to travel without a trail. . . ."

Dr. David Holt, a civilian surgeon, was Beans adviser and scribe.48

From Camp Munroe on Lake Munroe, Florida, February 9, 1837, Brevet Lieutenant Colonel A. C. W. Fanning reported to Major-General Thomas S. Jessup that on the morning of the eighth, a little before daylight, "we were aroused by warhoop all around us." The soldiers sprang to their breastworks and a sharp contest

45 War Department, Commissary General of Subsistance, Letters received III. No. 8, #3002.
The enemy pertinaciously hung upon our front and right flank for nearly three hours, and then retired, wearied of the contest."

When the ground was examined no Seminole bodies were found, but they discovered several trails made by the dragging off of dead bodies. "It is true that we are without the trophies of victory, but this is no reason that the officers whom I have had the honor to command, and whose gallant bearing I have witnessed, should not receive honorable mention. Lieutenant-Colonel [William Selby] Harney, commanding the four companies of dragoons, displayed during the contest the greatest boldness and vigor, and inspired his newly-enlisted men with great confidence. . . . with the officers of his battalion I have every reason to be well satisfied. My eye was upon every one, and I discovered nothing but firmness and confidence in all. In justice to them their names must be mentioned: Captain [William] Gordon, Captain [Jesse] Bean. . . ."

The steamer Charleston passed Jacksonville on June 6, 1837, "bound for St. Augustine, with about 100 sick soldiers, from Volusia and Fort Mellon. It was stated to us that in one company, Capt. Bean's, we think there were only five men fit for duty."

Jesse Bean was born in Tennessee and entered the army from that state. He became a captain of the Mounted Rangers June 16, 1832; captain of the First Dragoons August 15, 1833 and resigned from the service May 31, 1835.

Secretary of War J. R. Poinsett wrote from the War Department August 9, 1837 to Major R. W. Cummins at Fort Leavenworth, Missouri, that Captains Gordon and Bean had been selected to assist him in performing the duty of engaging the Shawnees, Delawares, and Kickapoos, for service in Florida.

The St. Louis Republican, October 4, 1837, reported: "The steamboat Wilmington passed this port yesterday, for Jefferson Barracks, having on board one hundred Indian warriors, designed to operate in the war against the Seminoles in Florida. They belong to the Delaware tribe, a nation of brave and hardy men.

"We learn from Capt. Bean, by whom these Indians have been received into the service, that a party of Shawnees, amounting to about one hundred men, are also expected to engage in this campaign. It is not probable that the service of any other Indians will be procured for this war." These red men were to be paid $45.00 per month, although the regular pay to citizen volunteers was $8.00 a month.


Army and Navy Chronicle, June 29, 1837, p. 409. On June 26, Captain Bean was registered at Brown's Hotel in Washington, D. C. (ibid., p. 409).

Francis B. Heitman, Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army, (Washington, 1903), p. 203.

House Document 27, War Department. Twenty-fifth Congress, First Session.

Army and Navy Chronicle, October 19, 1837, p. 253.