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ARKANSAS.



✓ Greene (C. W.)

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1888.

ARKANSAS.

*My friend Wm
Lippincott*

*Send to you
an engraving*



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ARKANSAS.

Arkansas (formerly pron. *Ar'kansaw*), a state of the American Union, is bounded on the N. by Missouri, on the E. by Missouri, Tennessee, and Mississippi, on the S. by Louisiana, and on the W. by Texas and the Indian Territory. Area, 53,850 sq. m.—about that of England without Wales—of which some 800 sq. m. is water-surface. The southern limit is the parallel of 30° N. lat., and the northern boundary for the most part is on the parallel of 36° 30'. The Mississippi River washes nearly all the eastern border of the state. The extreme east and west limits are respectively 89° 40' and 94° 42' W. long. Nearly all the country is well timbered. Along the eastern border of the state, for more than half its extent from the north, lies a strip of rich alluvial and swampy land, 60 miles in average breadth, and limited westward by Crowley's Ridge, a prominent feature of the country. A similar low and wet tract is traversed by the lower Arkansas River. The southern half of the state contains great areas of yellow and loamy land of Tertiary age, interspersed thinly with tracts of red clays and hills of iron-ore. West of the Crowley's Ridge region is a considerable breadth of gray silty prairies. In the west of the yellow Tertiary loams are large patches of 'black prairie' of Cretaceous age. The west and central portions of the state form a broken hill-region of Tertiary origin.

Great prairies of red loam and clay soil prevail in the W. and NW. Towards the north is the Ozark mountain-region, a broken country of high hills and ridges. The soils, though of extremely various character, are mostly good throughout the state. The coal-measures very extensively underlie the surface, and coal crops out at many points; but thus far it has not been much wrought. The quality of the Arkansas coal is reported to be excellent. Silver-bearing galena and zinc appear to be abundant, and iron-ores exist in vast amounts. The villages of Hot Springs in Garland county, and Eureka Springs in the NW. are celebrated health-resorts. The novaculite, or hone-stone, of this state is extensively wrought and exported. The Mississippi, Arkansas, Red, White, St. Francis, Ouachita, and other navigable rivers afford excellent facilities for the cheap transportation of goods. In the eastern alluvial region, especially towards the north, occur several large but shallow lakes, which were formed during the great earthquakes of 1811.

Agriculture is the leading pursuit in Arkansas, and cotton is the great staple of production. Maize is also very largely produced, and considerable quantities of oats and wheat are harvested. Livestock, wool, tobacco, pork, and dairy products are marketed, and their production is receiving a rapid extension. Much attention is also given to fruit culture.

The recent development of the railway system of the state has given far greater variety and enterprise to the agriculture of Arkansas than it had under the old system of slave labour, when cotton, maize, and pork were almost the sole articles of production. Arkansas is still

one of the leading states in cotton production, and it is asserted that if all the cotton-lands were worked to anything near their full capacity, this state might furnish as much of this staple as is now raised in the whole United States. There are still very large areas of undeveloped government land, and excellent improved lands can be purchased at low rates. Although malarial fevers and severe heat are to be encountered in the marshy and flat alluvial districts, the larger portion of the country has an agreeable and healthful climate, and few parts of the republic offer greater natural attractions to the immigrant. At Washington, in the NW. of the state, the mean annual temperature is over 61° , and the annual rainfall 54.5 inches; at Fort Smith, in the W., the rainfall is 40.36 inches. The extensive forests of Arkansas are becoming a source of wealth. Hard woods prevail north of the Arkansas River, cypress swamps cover a great part of the eastern alluvial districts, and in the south there are extensive areas covered with pine. In quality, variety, and accessibility, the timber of this state is hardly surpassed. Great attention has latterly been given to the black walnut timber of Arkansas, which is extensively used by cabinetmakers. Shingles, staves, and rough lumber are largely shipped. The manufacturing interests of this state (apart from the sawing of lumber and kindred operations) are for the most part little developed. Valuable water-power exists in the hilly and mountainous districts, but it is thus far not extensively utilised. Mills for the extraction of cotton-seed oil find profitable employment. The mineral resources of the state are believed to be very large, but they have been but little utilised. Lying outside

the great currents of immigration, Arkansas has, until very recent years, preserved to a remarkable degree the character of a frontier country. Even the large extent of river navigation for a long time served to hinder the development of the country, since it discouraged the construction of railways, and as a consequence, great tracts of excellent land lying at a distance from the large streams are even now very thinly peopled. The old system of slave labour and of large holdings of land was not favourable to rapid material development. This region formed a part of the French colony of Louisiana, and was purchased, together with the rest of that colony, by the United States in 1803. The earliest French settlement was made at Arkansas Post in 1685. Arkansas was organized as a territory in 1819, and became a state in 1836. An ordinance of secession was passed by a state convention in 1861, and during the war which followed, this state was the scene of several active and important campaigns.

Public education has in recent years received much attention. Much care has been bestowed in some sections on the education of the freedmen and their children. Since 1880 there has been a large movement of coloured immigrants from the older states. The light, yet fertile soil, and the warm climate of Southern Arkansas, seem specially attractive to this class of settlers, and the movement has been greatly encouraged by the planters of that section. The white population is almost entirely composed of English-speaking people of American birth.

The principal towns are Little Rock, the state capital (pop. in 1880, 13,138); Hot Springs, a celebrated health-

resort, with copious thermal springs; Pine Bluff, Texarkana, Helena, Fort Smith, Eureka Springs, Arkadelphia, &c. Population of Arkansas (1820) 14,255; (1850) 209,897; (1860) 435,450; (1880) 802,525, of whom 591,531 were of white race, and the remainder nearly all of African or mixed descent.



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