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REV. JAMES GAINES

The subject of this sketch was one of the leading ministers of old Tishomingo County, and although a resident of the county for only fourteen years, his acquaintance included every settlement, while the result of his ministerial efforts was to greatly increase the membership of his denomination. He was one of the most powerful and entertaining preachers of his time, and large congregations always assembled to listen to his sermons. Of pleasing address, courtly manners and lofty ideas, he easily won the friendship and good will of the entire people, and his influence throughout the county was co-extensive with his acquaintance. His voice was ever raised in defense of justice and right and although politics at these times engaged his attention, it was always his idea that only the best and purest men should be elevated to office, and his efforts were always exerted in behalf of men of well known probity and Christian rectitude.

James Gaines was born in Abbeville, South Carolina, on the 9th day of May, 1800. His early training was at the hands of revolutionary heroes, and the trying scenes through which he passed made him manly, chivalrous and brave. He was given the best education possible under existing conditions, and being a close reader and possessing a retentive memory he acquired a vast amount of learning after quitting school. He was married to Miss Theodocia Mattison in 1819, and in 1835 became a minister of the gospel,

identifying himself with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. In 1854 he emigrated to old Tishomingo County, Mississippi, locating two and a half miles north of Kossuth, and eight miles southwest of Corinth. Until the breaking out of the war he preached throughout the county, serving as pastor of several regularly organized churches and carrying the gospel of salvation into the thinly settled communities. Being too old to serve in the Confederate army, he remained at home and did all in his power to better and make more endurable the condition of those who were compelled to undergo the trials and misfortunes attendant upon an invading army. He was elected county treasurer in October, 1858, and filled the position in a most acceptable manner until January 1, 1866. After living a pure and useful life, Mr. Gaines died on the 10th day of September, 1868, and was laid to rest in the Shiloh graveyard, west of his home.

Seven children were born to Mr. and Mrs. Gaines, of whom Mrs. Harriett Francis Richardson, of Kossuth, is the only one living. A number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren of Mr. Gaines reside in Alcorn County, and all do justice to their illustrious ancestor.