

# When Lone Jack Aspired to be a County Seat.

**L**ONE JACK is a quaint old town in the extreme southeastern corner of Jackson County. The region is one of Arcadian beauty and the town is the center of history and romance, and of vaulting municipal ambition. Lone Jack once aspired to become a county seat and this ambition came within one vote of attainment. Here is a long forgotten bit of history. Lone Jack is known in the annals of the great Civil War on account of the bloody battle fought there and the story of this battle has obscured the stories of political and social activities. The well-nigh successful effort to make a county seat at Lone Jack is one of the most sensational chapters in local history.

AN ARDAICIOUS MOVEMENT, THIS.

The project for making a county seat at Lone Jack arose about the time of the expiration of Gov. L. W. Boggs's term in the governorship of the state—1840. Governor Boggs lived in Jackson County, at Independence. The Lone Jack project did not contemplate the removal of the county seat from Independence; the movement was one of even greater audacity. The plan was to create a new county and thus avoid, if possible, the opposition of Governor Boggs. The new county was to be made up of portions and slices of territory taken from Jackson, Cass, Johnson and Lafayette counties. These four counties corner near Lone Jack, which by this arrangement, would have been at the center of the new county. The plan required the enactment of a law by the state legislature and here the scheme failed by one vote. The movement culminated in the winter of 1841 or 1842, though the agitation began some years earlier. The new county was to be named Donalson, in honor of Andrew Jackson Donalson, nephew and private secretary of President Jackson. The county of Jackson had been named for the hero of New Orleans before he became President and the county seat had been named Independence, as the chief characteristic of Jackson, who was regarded as a man of unbounded independence. President Jackson's native state, North Carolina, had sent out a large colony to Lone Jack. They used to call Lone Jack "Little Surrey," because so many people had come from Surrey County, North Carolina. Among these was an ambitious young man by the name of Caleb Winfrey, a medical student, then engaged in teaching school. This young school teacher was one of the prime agitators for a new county, and was an active delegate in the county convention, which was the first and only convention ever held in "Donalson" County. The young school teacher graduated in medicine a few years later and began the practice of his profession at Lone Jack where he had his office and conducted the first drug store in that part of the country; around this drug store raged fiercely the battle of August 16, 1862, Doctor Winfrey himself commanding a company of Confederates.

THE "DONALSON COUNTY" CONVENTION.

The Donalson County convention for the nomination of county officers was held at the home of Samuel Yankee, a mile southeast of Lone Jack. A full set of county officers was nominated. These officers were to receive appointments and commissions from the governor immediately upon the creation of the new county. The convention was very exciting, according to the memory of Doctor Winfrey, now a resident of Kansas City, and who is probably the only man living that took part in the convention.

One of the nominees for county judge was Archibald Ridding of Cool Springs. Ridding afterwards founded a college at

