

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

BACKUES

FAMILY

Sanford Backues, the founder of the family of that name in Osage and Maries counties, was born in Virginia August 17, 1787, and married there. He came to Missouri in 1819 and settled in the Richfountain neighborhood near which place the family lived until his death on February 11, 1854. After his death his widow, Mary A. Backues, removed to the McQueen and Groff settlement on the county line west of Belle, where she made her home until her death on March 11, 1870. She was born in Virginia July 8, 1784.

Something like four years after he came here Sanford Backues built the first mill in this section equipped to grind both corn and wheat. It stood in the Richfountain territory and was operated by water-power. The neighborhood,

then mostly Virginian, made up money and sent an ox-drawn wagon to Kentucky for seed wheat and for many years thereafter wheat was a principle crop for miles around the mill. Ample seed was available and wheat crops were being regularly grown by the time the Pay Down mill was built, some three or four years after Backue's mill started operations. In addition to being the first flour mill operator he was a member of the first school board to be organized in Gasconade County.

Sanford Backues and his wife were the parents of seven children living to maturity: John, Thomas, Isaac, Eliza, Rowena, Sallie, and Cena (Melcena?). Their order of birth is not known. All grew to maturity and married here, and their descendants have played a considerable part in the affairs of both Maries and Osage counties, where most of their descendants live.

Very little is known of John Backues, believed to have been the oldest son of Sanford. The maiden name of his wife is not certainly known, but she may have been a Keeney. He spent his short married life on or near the Big Maries, in Osage County, where he died young, leaving at least two children, Sanford Backues and John Keeney Backues. His widow afterwards married as her second husband James Gibson and moved to and spent the remainder of her life near Marble Falls, Texas. She took her children with her and they, too, spent the remainder of their lives in Texas. Sanford died in 1874 and John K. in 1875. Both married and left descendants, but their names and present locations are not known to relatives here.

Cena O. Backues, daughter of Sanford, married Michael Keeney December 26, 1839. This couple long since moved to Kansas where they spent the remainder of their lives and died. Nothing is known of any descendants they may have left.

Eliza Backues, daughter of Sanford, first married Madison Poe, and her descendants will be found under that name in this chapter.

Isaac C. Backues, son of Sanford, was born in Osage County January 31, 1824, and was there married to Susan _____ about 1845. She was born June 28, 1823, possibly in Osage County also. They lived in the Belle vicinity for about thirty years before moving to the upper Little Maries in the northwestern part of the county where they made their home until about 1899 when they returned to Belle and lived there the remainder of their lives. He played a leading part in laying out the town of Belle, and was active in its business affairs until his death on April 12, 1910. His wife died November 12, 1902.

Only one of his children, Andrew J., born November 6, 1858, lived to maturity. Andrew married Hannah M., daughter of Sylvester Keeney, October 21, 1875, Judge William H. Travis officiating. He died February 12, 1879, the father of two daughters; Maud M., whose first husband was Ham Murphy and who is now the wife of W. A. Martin, and Augusta, wife of E. A. Wallace, present Representative of the county.

Mrs. Hannah M. Backues later married John Wallace and her descendants will be found under that name. She was born in Osage County February 19, 1856, and died at Belle January 19, 1924.

Thomas Backues, son of Sanford Backues, was born in Virginia June 22, 1810, and died March 3, 1896. He was married December 20, 1838, to Malinda Keeney, in Osage County. They made their home for many years on the upper Big Maries near Dixon, and both died in that part of the county. Of the four children born of this marriage, his daughter Emeline married Thomas James, and his daughter Susan married first Alonzo James and second

A. H. Hutchison; their descendants will be found under those names.

His remaining daughter, Mary Ann, born in October, 1840, was the oldest of the four children. She married William H. Harris who was born in Osage County September 13, 1832. Shortly thereafter the young couple moved to the upper Maries in this county, then to Dixon, and afterward to Newburg, where he died May 28, 1906, his wife having passed away February 5, 1905. The Harris family also came from Virginia, Pittsylvania County, on the North Carolina border, where Thomas Edward, father of William H. Harris, was born in 1809. His wife was an Ivie, being either a sister of or a cousin of the father of P. C. Ivie, late of the Little Flock community. Seven children living to maturity were born to William H. and Mary Ann Harris: B. F., Martha E., David, Joseph, William, Susan, and Anna Harris. Of the seven William died single, and Anna, now Mrs. James Miller, lives in St. Louis; the others have passed away.

B. F. Harris, an engineer on the Frisco railroad, died at the age of forty-one years. His first wife was Nina Ann, daughter of Robert and Nancy Rowden, who was born March 5, 1867, and died September 30, 1900, leaving two children: Miss Mary Ann Harris of New York and Susan, now Mrs. E. H. Evans of Pocatello, Idaho. His second marriage was to Miss Tillie Conley of Crawford County by whom he was the father of five children: Frank, Irene, David, and Alfred Harris, and another who died in infancy. These children live around Mulvane, Kansas.

Martha Elizabeth Harris, born June 22, 1860, married J. A. Houston. They spent all, or nearly all, of their married life at Newburg, where both died, the death of Mrs. Harris occurring January 11, 1920. They were the parents of five children, of whom Mary Ann, now Mrs. Bailey,

lives in Joplin; George A. in California; Earl H. in Longview, Washington; and Homer and Helen, twins, in Newburg.

David Harris, also a Frisco engineer, was killed in a wreck on the Kansas City Division of the Frisco in 1916. He married Ann Gorage of St. Clair, and is survived by her and one son, Paul, now of Springfield.

Susan Harris, born in 1863, died in February 1934. She was married May 20, 1885, to Robert C. Murphy, who was born in Franklin County, Missouri, February 19, 1859, and died at Granite City, Illinois, July 20, 1931. So far as known their nine children are all living. They are: May, wife of Frank Christenson of Dixon; Bessie, widow of B. N. Wilson of Granite City; Gladys, wife of James Elkins of Evansville, Indiana; Reba, wife of Ben Gregory of Fort Smith, Arkansas; Merle in California; Florence, wife of Willard Simpson of Granite City; Wesley in Longview, Washington; and Helen, wife of Ray Parsons of Richland, Missouri.

Thomas M. Backues, only son of Thomas by his first marriage, married Nancy E., daughter of Martin Ridenhour, and both have been dead many years. They were the parents of nine children, most of whom with their descendants live in the Pay Down community, where their parents died after living for some years on the Maries, near Dixon.

Martin Backues, son of Thomas, married Martha Shanks. He has been dead some years, and was the father of nine children, all yet living, as follows: George, Raymond, Clarence, and Leslie Backues; Minnie, wife of Therman Crider; Ethel, wife of Louis Krenning; Zella, wife of Allan Elrod; Mrs. Irene Hull and Lena, single.

Emeline Backues, daughter of Thomas, married Rafe

Cox, and is also dead, leaving five children, mostly living in this county: Mrs. Ethel LaRue (who is dead, leaving one son, Louis, in St. Louis), Mrs. Susan McKinney, Mrs. Nora Elrod, Moses, and William Cox.

Lydia, daughter of Thomas Backues, married George Wendt and has been dead twenty years or more. Her four children, all of whom live in St. Louis, are: Henry, Morris, Clyde, and Ray Wendt.

Ray Backues, unmarried son of Thomas, was drowned several years ago.

The six living children of Thomas and Nancy E. Backues are: John H., who married Nor a, daughter of Jacob Krewson; Morris S., who married Ida Griffith; Andrew J., who married a daughter of Robert Franklin; Adam, who married an Elrod; Sarah, now Mrs. W. A. Walker; and Eve, twin to Adam, wife of Henry Hutchison. All live in this county.

Very few details have been received as to the second marriage of Thomas Backues Senior, which was to the widow Pattie, nee McKnight, whose first husband was a brother of James Pattie. Five children were born of the second marriage, as follows: John, who was married to Nancy Santee August 1, 1872, by Jacob M. Baker, Justice of the Peace in Miller Township; he moved to and died in Kansas and his descendants have not been obtained. Malinda was married to John F. Bacon September 25, 1870, by William Crismon, County Judge of this county, and both are dead; one son, Tom Bacon, moved to Oklahoma; if there were others their names have not been obtained. Eliza married John Copeland January 2, 1881, Reverend J. T. Powers officiating; they are believed to have moved to southwest Missouri many years ago. Amanda was married to Charles Briggs February 2, 1879, also by Reverend Powers. Virginia, the fifth child, married Louis A.,

son of William N. Rowden; her descendants will be found under that name. If there were other children born of the second marriage, no record of them has been found.

One hundred and fifty years ago the Poe family lived in Virginia; one lived in Chesterfield County, just south of Richmond, which was likely their original settling place. Others of the family lived farther west, across the mountains in Amherst County. They had evidently lived in these locations some time, for one in particular, Andy Poe, had a reputation as an Indian fighter far past the ordinary in a time and place where every frontiersman had to be skilled in Indian warfare if he lived. It is related of Andy that he was once separated only a short distance from the rest of his party when attacked by two Indians who so completely surprised him that he had no chance to use his gun. Kicking one of his opponents in the stomach, he grabbed the other by the throat. In the ensuing fight they rolled off the bank into the creek where Andy held his adversary's head under water and choked him till he died. The rest of the party came up and dispatched the kicked Indian during the fight. When Andy's battle was over, in keeping with the somewhat grim humor of the times, they held a mock inquest over the dead Indian to determine whether Andy was entitled to the credit for killing him, or whether the Indian merely drowned.

Members of the Poe family were in Osage County shortly after 1820, and on January 27, 1830, Barnabas Madison Poe and Eliza Backues were married in that county by County Judge Henry Barclay. His birth date is not known, but she was born in Virginia April 9, 1812. The names of Madison Poe's parents are not known, and we know of only one brother, John, who moved to south Missouri many years ago. It is likely that John and Madison Poe were the only members of the family to come here.

The Poe home was just Inside of present Maries County,

northeast of Summerfield, and Madison Poe died there about 1847. Of the eleven children born to them, Eliza, John, Zephaniah, Ezra, and Sanford must have died in infancy, or at least single, since no record of any descendant of any of them has been found. The six who left descendants were: Mary Ann Poe, the oldest child, born January 21, 1831, married a Johnson and has been dead many years. Her three children were: Barney, Jennie, and Lyda. The latter married a man named Lance, and is also dead survived by two children, Andrew and Alta.

We do not know the maiden name of the wife of Adam Poe, who was born July 13, 1832. In common with William P., Barnabas M., and Isaac, he served in the Confederate Army most, or the larger part of, the Civil War, and died March 17, 1866. He left one daughter, Anna, who married a Luster and died at Nebraska City, Nebraska. She left children, but their names and present addresses are not known.

Barnabas M. Poe, born March 26, 1839, died single, Isaac Poe, born February 7, 1844, the youngest son, was killed in action in a battle in Arkansas in December, 1864; he was single.

William Pike Poe, the remaining son, was born June 21, 1842, and died at Belle May 4, 1935. His wife was Mary Adaline Richa of Gasconade County, who preceded him in death many years. They were the parents of six children, five of whom are living, as follows: Robert I. Poe, born January 16, 1866, lives at Belle, as does Andrew Poe, ex-postmaster and former Representative of the County, who was born April 3, 1876. Annis, now wife of Gus Baumann, was born May 29, 1881; Laura Poe, wife of W. F. Chambers, lives in Sedalia, Missouri. William A. Poe is a civil engineer in the employ of the state at Little Rock,

Arkansas. Parrie, the remaining child born of this marriage, wife of Richard Price, died in Pueblo, Colorado, in November, 1937; a list of her children has not been received.

Altaza Poe, the youngest child of the first marriage, born September 26, 1846, married William Anderson and both she and her husband are dead. She was the mother of Parrie, wife of Louis Koerber, and Mat Anderson who are also dead.

Eliza Backues Poe was married on April 19, 1849, to James McQueen, who was born February 17, 1824; the place of birth is not given. He had been married before, and was the father of three children by his first marriage, Louisa, John S., and Leander McQueen, The two children born of the last marriage were: James J. McQueen who was born January 19, 1850, and Thomas L., on October 6, 1853; the latter died in infancy. Mrs. McQueen died January 28, 1882, and was survived by her second husband until April 30, 1890.

James J. McQueen married Malissa, daughter of Valentine Rogers, and both he and his wife are dead. Of the twelve children born to them and living to maturity, eleven are still living as follows: Emeline, widow of David J. Ridenhour in Kansas City; Virginia, widow of Wilson Vaughan and now wife of James Souders in Belle; Lucy, wife of Robert Goodman, near Summerfield; Era, wife of Claude O. Jones on Lanes Prairie; Amanda, wife of Cleve Johnson in Kansas; Susan, wife of Miles Leshner in O'Fallon, Illinois; the sons, Martin H., Hiram H., L. Allan, Robert A., and J. Thomas McQueen live in the neighborhood of the old home place west of Belle on the county line. David B. McQueen, to date the only one of the children to die after reaching maturity, and who was born April 11, 1876, married Sarah, daughter of William and Susan (Ridenhour) Goodman, and died at his home on the

Dry Fork September 26, 1929. He is survived by his widow and their three children, Cecil, Bennie, and Harold, who still live at the home place.

Sarah Backues, daughter of Sanford, was born in Virginia November 6, 1814, and died in Osage County August 19, 1880. She was married to Balser (Balthazar?) Groff in Osage County January 14, 1835, and was the mother of two children, Sanford Backues and Samuel Groff. The former, who was born March 23, 1836, was killed by a train at St. James September 8, 1913; he was married but had no children.

The other son, Samuel, who spent his entire life along the Osage-Maries county line in the Summerfield vicinity is also long since dead. His first wife was Louisa McQueen, who was born June 11, 1843, and died September 25, 1879. They were the parents of six children: Bowman Groff, long a minister in the Baptist Church, and now living near Buck Elk Church of that denomination; Jesse and Jack Groff of Summerfield; James Groff of Kansas City; and Sarah A. and Jane Groff, who married Nick and Nince Shanks, respectively, and live near Gainesville, Missouri.

Samuel Groff was also the father of six children by his second marriage, which was to Melissa Anderson, who survives: Balser and Belle, widow of Alex Ridenhour, of Summerfield; Sanford of Oklahoma; Ezra and Margaret, wife of George Robertson, of Osage County; the sixth child, Rachel, wife of Adam Ridenhour, died childless.

Roena Backues, the remaining daughter of Sanford, married William Keeney August 20, 1840, and was the mother of six children: Isaac, John, William, Lucinda, Marriett, and Nettie. Both parents are long since dead, having spent their entire lives along the Maries-Osage county line north of Summerfield.

Isaac, the oldest child, was born September 13, 1841, and died February 21, 1925. He married Lena Richa, sister of the wife of William P. Poe, who was born in 1848 and died September 8, 1918. The eight children born George N. and L. D. Keeney of Summerfield; Charles M. of Belle; John W. of Jefferson City; S. Jackson of St. Louis; and Mrs. Augusta Lindgren of Los Angeles, California. The age-order of the other children of William and Roena Keeney is not known, and their birth dates are not at hand. All are long since dead.

John Keeney, son of William, married Louisa McQueen. One of their two children, Lucinda, wife of William Groff, lives at Summerfield. The other, Irvin, is dead. He married a Shanks and is survived by one son, Grover, of Madison, Illinois.

William Keeney, son of William, is survived by the three children of his first marriage to Eliza Stewart: Vince, about Union, Lazarus in Oklahoma, and Amanda, wife of Charles Picker of Owensville. His second marriage was to Amelia Shanks, by whom he was the father of one son, Isaac, also in Oklahoma. His third marriage, to Angeline, widow of Robert Hawkins, was childless.

Lucinda Keeney, daughter of William, was the mother of one child Florence by her first marriage, to Robert Goodman. This daughter married Joseph Fincher and died in Osage County some time ago, leaving children whose names have not been received. She was the mother of four children by her later marriage to George Mahon: Cleve and Joe of this county and Augusta and Maggie, both of St. Louis, the latter married.

Harriett Keeney, daughter of William, married John McQueen. George and Herman, the two sons born of this marriage, are still living, the former near Eldon and the latter in California. May, the remaining child, married

Jesse Roberson and died near High Gate some years ago, leaving several children whose names are not at hand.

Nettie Keeney, the remaining child of William, married Jasper Johnson, and four of her children, Cleve of Kansas City, Mart and William of Summer field, and Nora, wife of John Barbarick of St. Louis, are still living. Another daughter, Nan, wife of Champ Goodman, died many years ago leaving one son, Charles, now in St. Louis. The remaining daughter, Sallie, was the first wife of Cal Breeding and was the mother of several children whose names have not been received.