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# Classifieds

The Beebe News **CLASSIFIEDS!** Deadline for the week is Monday at 3 p.m. Call **501-882-5414** to place your ad.

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Take Advantage of These Special Savings Today!

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Lots of foot traffic for both events!  
Showcase your business and/or your crafts or wares!

**History Minute**

**John Pope**

By Dr. Ken Bridges - Professor of History, South Arkansas Community College  
South Arkansas Historical Preservation Society  
kbridges@southark.edu <mailto:kbridges@southark.edu>

John Pope was the third territorial governor of Arkansas and a man who helped steer Arkansas out of its wilderness era. However, his outspokenness would spark many political fights within the new territory.

Pope was born in 1770 on his parents' farm in northern Virginia, near the Maryland border. When the American Revolution erupted, his father, William Pope, served as a colonel for the colonial forces. As the war intensified, Col. Pope decided the area was no longer safe enough for his young family. In 1779, together with several other settlers, the Popes struck out westward into Kentucky. Kentucky at that time was sparsely populated, and the war would not spare the region as local Native American tribes allied with the British and periodically attacked American settlers.

As a youth, John Pope was critically injured in a farm accident that cost him an arm. Nevertheless, Pope continued to work hard with his studies, attending a private school and eventually attending William and Mary College in eastern Virginia. He eventually settled down in Shelbyville, not far from the new Kentucky state capital, and set up a law practice.

In 1798, Pope was elected to the Kentucky state legislature, where he quickly developed a reputation as a man of ideas and total integrity. In 1806, the Kentucky legislature (as was the practice at the time) elected Pope to the US Senate. He was respected in the Senate, named by his fellow senators to be president pro tem of the Senate in 1809.

By 1812, a new generation of western politicians was clamoring for a new war against Great Britain, citing British seizure of American ships and sailors on the high seas and accusing the British of inciting the Native American tribes to attack the settlers in the region. In June 1812, President James Madison reluctantly called for the US to declare war on Great Britain. Pope voted against the war declaration, believing that America's military was not ready for a war with Britain. Pope was defeated for re-election as a result later that year. And the War of 1812 proved to be a near-disaster for the nation because of its lack of preparedness.

After supporting Andrew Jackson in the 1828 election, Pope was rewarded for his loyalty by being named the territorial governor of Arkansas. Pope was excited about the possibilities he foresaw for the Arkansas Territory. He called for the development of roads, canals, and harbors for riverboats. Legislators in 1829 quickly named the newly formed Pope County after him.

However, he ran into fierce opposition from fellow Kentuckian Robert Crittenden, who himself coveted the job of governor and served as the territorial secretary. Crittenden worked to maneuver the legislature and public opinion against Pope, but to no avail. In 1831, the climactic confrontation came when Crittenden, now having resigned, offered to trade his brick mansion in Little Rock for the 64 acres of federal land given to Arkansas to build a state capitol. Pope vetoed the bill, stating that Crittenden's home was overvalued by at least four times the actual value of the land in the land swap and that the deal was little more than corruption and graft.

Pope had to step down in 1835 when President Jackson refused to reappoint him as governor as a result of a dispute over federal banking policy. Pope returned to Kentucky, where he would serve three more terms in Congress before losing re-election in 1842 and his death in 1845.

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