

Rev. James Lemen Jr.'s obituary:

THE STANDARD. CHICAGO, THURSDAY, Feb. 24, 1870.

”**A Patriarch Fallen.** Rev. James Lemen, so well known in Illinois and the West, died at his residence in New Design, (sic) St. Clair county, Feb. 8. Thus has been severed another link binding the present to the past. The Lemen family has been in the past and still is a power in Southern Illinois. A record of the Lemen family would occupy an important chapter in the history of Illinois, including physical development, morals, religion and politics. A friend has furnished us a brief sketch of the life and labors and last days of the venerable Rev. James Lemen, one of nature's noblemen. “Elder James Lemen was the third son of Rev. James and Catharine Lemen, who emigrated from Virginia to Illinois in 1786. They were the parents of six sons and two daughters, all of whom attached themselves to the Baptist church, and lived to a good old age, each leaving a large family. Four of the sons were active ordained ministers of the Gospel.

“Elder James Lemen was born in Illinois, Oct 8, 1787. He was the second white child, born of American parents, in the State.-Enoch Moore being the first. Elder Lemen made a profession of religion about the age of twenty and immediately commenced preaching, but he did not attach himself to the church till he had fully made up his mind what course to pursue. He then united with the only work of the Gospel ministry. In 1800? He in connection with Elder John Baugh, constituted was was then called the Cantine Creek, now Bethel church. Elder Lemen remained a member of this church to the time of his death-over sixty years. For the most of this time he was an active, efficient minister of the Gospel, traveling far and wide, organizing and building up churches, and laboring with marked success in the work of his Master, in Illinois, Missouri, and other Western States. Elder Lemen's father was the first person baptized by immersion in Illinois.

“The subject of this sketch assisted at his own father's ordination. He preached his father's funeral sermon. His brother Joseph preached that of their mother. Elder Lemen served his native State some sixteen years in the halls of Legislation, both as a Representative and a Senator. He was also offered the election to the United States Senate, but, having come to the determination to abandon politics in order that he might devote all his time and talents to the Gospel ministry, he declined the distinguished honor of a seat in the Senate of the United States. He was the last surviving member of the Convention that formed the old State Constitution. For the last few years his health has been such that he has been confined almost entirely to his rooms at home. In the twenty-sixty year of his age, Dec 8, 1813, he was married to Polly Pulliam. They were the parents of eleven children-six of whom together with the bereaved mother and widow, are left to lament the loss of their dearest earthly friend. On Tuesday evening February 8, about 5 o'clock, the labors, and prayers, and suffering of Elder James Lemen were ended ... W.B.P.”

Here is a copy of a clipping from an unidentified newspaper, which was on the same piece of paper as the above obituary:

“LEMEN, James, Rev., Jr.

Born October 8, 1787. It is related from good authority, that James Lemen, Jr. was the second white child born of American parents in the territory of Illinois (Enoch Moore, being the first). Member of Kaskaskia Legislature and a State Senator. James was a Baptist Minister and preached his father, REV-JAMES, SR's funeral sermon.”

A handwritten note by Lyman Draper is between these two newspaper clippings:

"Memo. I called on the preceding Rev. Jas Lemen in the summer of 1868 but his memory had all faded out, so he could give no information whatever. He seemed kind - was tall, spare, bony - over six feet high.

L. C. D."