

JAMES BARBOUR

1850 -1851

James Barbour was born May 27, 1820, in Boyle County, Kentucky. He was the son of Major James and Letitia (Green) Barbour. He graduated at the age of seventeen from Centre College and three years later graduated from the law school Transylvania University. At the age of twenty he went to Florida with the intention of practicing his profession. He abandoned that idea and returned to Danville where he began to practice law. In 1850 James Barbour was appointed state Auditor by Governor John L. Helm. He held that office until 1851

In a legal contest with Dr. Robert J. Breckinridge, then Superintendent of Public Instruction, Barbour came out the victor. The dispute concerned the disposition of the funds arising from the sale of public lands granted by congress to the states for educational purposes.

As Auditor he was a member of the board of commissioners of the Sinking Fund of the state along with Virgil McKnight, who was the president of the Bank of Kentucky. The state had, under the charter of the bank, the right to subscribe to a large block of its stock which it was not to the interest of the other stockholders. During the term of Mr. Barbour as Auditor the Commonwealth needed large concessions from the bank, which Mr. McKnight refused. But upon the demand by Mr. Barbour (as an alternative proposition) that the bank should deliver to the board the stock for which the state had the admitted right to subscribe, Mr. McKnight was forced to yield all that was asked by the state Auditor.

Upon the expiration of his term as Auditor he resumed the practice of law at Danville.

James Barbour and Elizabeth Graham Foster were married May 20, 1844.

James Barbour died September 17, 1896.