

JAMES SEVIER CONWAY



FIRST GOVERNOR OF ARKANSAS 1836-1840

by Dr. John L. Ferguson

James Sevier Conway (1796-1855), surveyor, planter and governor, was one of the prominent and influential citizens of pioneer Arkansas. Born in Tennessee, he came from St. Louis as a surveyor in 1820 and settled on Long Prairie west of the present town of Bradley in Lafayette County. Conway surveyed the boundary between Arkansas and the Choctaw Nation; now the western line of the state from Fort Smith south to Red River. He assisted with the survey of the Arkansas-Louisiana boundary. In 1832 President Andrew Jackson appointed Conway as surveyor of the Territory of Arkansas.

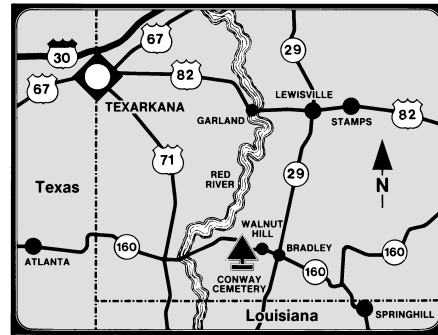
In 1836 Conway became the Democratic nominee for governor of the new State of Arkansas. He was elected by a substantial majority and for the following four years presided over the fledgling government of this sparsely-settled frontier commonwealth.

As governor, James S. Conway advocated good roads and good schools, approved legislation establishing a banking system, and tried unsuccessfully to set up a state university and a state library. He obtained authorization for a state penitentiary and persuaded the federal government to

establish an arsenal in Little Rock. Governor Conway pressed for a stronger state militia to protect the western border from Indians, and engaged in an inconclusive boundary dispute with the Republic of Texas over the ownership of old Miller County. Poor health and a troubled state economy caused Conway to decline a second four-year term. In 1840 he returned to his Walnut Hill plantation where he continued to be active in civic affairs until his death in 1855.

CONWAY CEMETERY HISTORIC STATE PARK

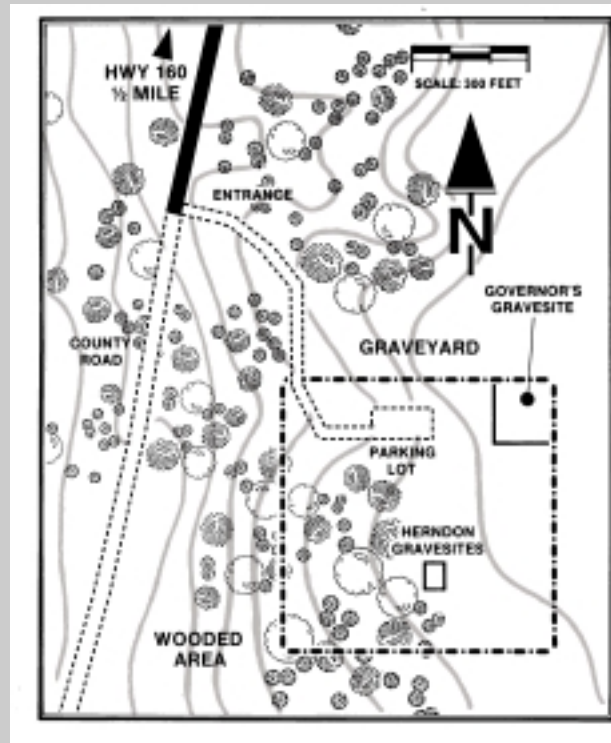
Conway Cemetery Historic State Park is an 11.5-acre site dedicated to the memory of James S. Conway-the first governor of Arkansas. The Park's major feature is the one-half acre family cemetery where the former governor is buried. A biographical marker detailing the life of Governor Conway is in the cemetery. The cemetery lies just south of the site of the governor's former plantation home-Walnut Hill.



The park is located in the southwestern part of Lafayette County, in extreme southwestern Arkansas. From Lewisville, take Highway 29 south for 18 miles to Bradley, then Highway 160 west for two miles to the community of Walnut Hill. Turn left on the county road (one-half mile) to the park entrance. No camping or services are available at the park.



EXPLORE THE BEAUTY & HISTORY OF ARKANSAS!



For further information contact:

Logoly State Park
P.O. Box 245
McNeil, AR 71752
Telephone: (870) 695-3561

NOTICE: To preserve scenic beauty and ecology, fences and warning signs have not been installed in some park locations. Caution and supervision of your children are required while visiting these areas.

For further information on Arkansas' other fine state parks, contact:

Arkansas State Parks
One Capitol Mall, 4A-900
Little Rock, AR 72201
Telephone: (501) 682-1191
www.ArkansasStateParks.com



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CONWAY CEMETERY HISTORIC STATE PARK



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