

Albert Pike

Albert Pike was born in Boston, Massachusetts on December 29, 1809. Initially, he began his career as a grammar-school teacher, but he soon ventured west. After making an expedition to Santa Fe, New Mexico, Pike's travels led him to Fort Smith, Arkansas, in 1833. He settled in Pope County, where he taught school and wrote letters to the *Arkansas Advocate* newspaper in support of Robert Crittenden, who then convinced the newspaper editor to hire Pike. Pike moved to Little Rock and began work. At the same time, he also served as a clerk in the Territorial Legislature.

He married Mary Ann Hamilton in October 1834 and used his wife's money to buy an interest in the *Arkansas Advocate*. Pike became the sole owner the following year. He studied law as well and passed the bar in 1837; he sold the newspaper that same year. In 1840, he was elected attorney of the Arkansas Real Estate Bank and later became a trustee. Pike was the first reporter for the Arkansas Supreme Court, serving from 1840 to 1845.

Pike fought in the Mexican War in 1845, and was elected captain of the Little Rock Guards, which became part of a cavalry unit during the war. He eventually returned to Little Rock in 1857 and became involved in national politics. A member of the Whig Party until its end, Pike then became affiliated with the Know-Nothing party.

With his strong pro-slavery stance, Pike was a great supporter of the Confederacy. After Arkansas seceded, Pike was sent to the Indian Territory to negotiate treaties with different tribes. In August 1861, he became a brigadier general in the Confederate Army. Pike recruited Indians to form Confederate regiments, but only as a defense of their own territory. He protested the use of Indian troops in northwestern Arkansas at the Battle of Elkhorn Tavern. These protests made him unpopular with the Confederate government; he resigned from the army in July 1862 and kept a low profile the rest of the war.

Pike moved to New York at the end of the war and received a presidential pardon in 1865. He returned to Arkansas for a short time, but settled in Memphis, Tennessee by 1867 where he practiced law

and edited the *Memphis Appeal*. One year later, he moved his law practice to Washington, D.C., where he remained until his death on April 2, 1891.