

**THE LIFE OF JOSEPH BISHOP, THE
CELEBRATED OLD PIONEER IN THE FIRST
SETTLEMENTS OF
MIDDLE TENNESSEE, EMBRACING HIS
WONDERFUL ADVENTURES AND
NARROW ESCAPES WITH THE INDIANS**

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The life of Joseph Bishop, the celebrated old pioneer in the first settlements of middle Tennessee, embracing his wonderful adventures and narrow escapes with the Indians by John W. Gray

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JOHN W. GRAY

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ROW ESCAPES WITH THE INDIANS, HIS
ANIMATING AND REMARKABLE
HUNTING EXCURSIONS.

INTERSPERSED WITH
RACY ANECDOTES OF THOSE EARLY TIMES.

BY
JOHN W. GRAY, M.D.

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INTRODUCTION.

THERE perhaps never has been a man of any rank or age, of any creed or calling, who has lived through as many years as I have seen pass away for ever, and who had a medium memory, that could not recall to mind a sufficient number of incidents to make a book of some size, and to many persons of some interest; but though I have held my courteous friends to many a narration of the scenes through which I have passed, I never once dreamed until now that it was to cost me the trial of dictating this; for, in it, my first undertaking of the kind, I find, as I have always imagined, that it is no easy matter for one whose education has been

so much neglected as mine. But I am persuaded by my friends that they cannot see me disappear from this world without leaving behind me the recollections of other days; and when I persist in the idea that not many of my stories are worthy of a place in the public records, they tell me that I cannot see myself as others do, and, as a sort of last argument, they tell me that the book is to be a kind of neighborhood entertainment, which is not expected to find its way to the closets of remote cities and other places where critics dwell; and I must confess that this idea has a greater influence with me than any they could adduce; for even if a copy should straggle away from Smith county, and fall into the path of some learned judge of story-telling, I still have one consolation left, which, according to the ancient philosopher, is that "Eagles never stoop to catch flies;" and even to leave out the pert sayings of ancient philosophers, a class of men that I never knew

much about, withal, there is one thing that I do know, and that is, that good hunters in my day never stooped to shoot small game. Sixty years ago, and up to a much later period, the hare might have sported in safety at the gunsmán's feet when the bear and the buffalo stood before him, and the sparrow might have chirped unharmed upon the limb his fowling-piece rested upon while he took aim at the swan or the larger members of the feathered tribe. Be all this as it may, I am one of those determined kind of characters who, when they get their minds set to do a thing, enter forthwith upon the task, and leave the consequences to take care of themselves; so now you see I am going to dictate the history of my life to a friend, and as I cannot stay here much longer than the time he will require to write it in, I shall make truth my aim from preface to conclusion, allowing my narrator to fill each story out in his own language; and I hope that where I have had

misfortunes, they may serve as a kind of buoy on the sea of life to prevent those who are to succeed me from running upon the reefs, and that those acts of mine which may be adjudged worthy, may stand up as so many lights, by which they may be guided in a smoother voyage than was my lot to experience, for it will be seen in the course of these pages that I have been tossed and buffeted from time to time, until one could scarcely realize the truth of the life I have lived. But, then, we should be strangers to joy without some acquaintance with pain—the sunshine of our lives would become monotonous without the darkness with which to contrast it. However, I believe that God gave me a cheerful disposition, and one that has borne me triumphant through all the troubles which I am about to recount.