

## Plaque To Mark Center Of State

Gazette 4-10-36

The geographical center of Arkansas will be marked with a bronze plaque at 3 p. m. Sunday by the Arkansas Society, Daughters of American Colonists, as a part of the Arkansas Centennial celebration.

Mrs. Chas. H. Miller, state regent, will preside at the dedication. The spot selected for marking is about 15 miles from Little Rock on the Hot Springs highway.

Mrs. John F. Weinmann, honorary state regent of the Daughters of American Colonists and state chairman for selecting historic spots for marking during the centennial year, will make the presentation.

The marker is of concrete and bears a bronze plaque inscribed: "The Geographical Center of Arkansas Is a Few Steps North of this Highway. Erected by the Arkansas Society, Daughters of American Colonists, Arkansas Centennial, 1936."

## Plan to Mark Center Of State Held Up

Gazette 4-11-36

Anyone who knows exactly where the geographic center of Arkansas is can do the Arkansas Society, Daughters of American Colonists, a large favor by passing the information along.

Plans to have a formal marking ceremony tomorrow as a feature of the state centennial celebration, at a spot about 15 miles from Little Rock on the Hot Springs highway, have been called off because of doubt that the place is the exact center of the state.

Dr. George C. Branner, state geologist, avers that, according to calculations of the United States Coast and Geodetic Survey, the state's center is 12 miles north of west of Little Rock. This would place it on Highway 10, near its junction with a branch road to Ferncliff.

Mrs. Charles H. Miller, state regent of the Daughters of the American Colonists, in postponing the marking ceremony, said that nothing would be done about the situation "until we can find out where the exact center of the state actually is."

Plans are to mark the site with a bronze plaque set in concrete.

## State Geologist Branner To Determine State Center Without Leaving His Office

Democrat 4-12-36

This question of settling upon the geographical center of Arkansas is to be decided definitely tomorrow with Dr. George C. Branner, state geologist, at the helm. And unless something is wrong with the law of gravity the point designated will be decided upon through a method designated by the federal geological survey as the most accurate process.

Upon such designation hangs the erection of a bronze marker to designate the site. A patriotic organization had planned to erect the marker on the Hot Springs highway yesterday, but the plans were deferred when Dr. Branner told the group that the point should be on Highway 10 some 10 miles west of the city.

Fewer people will see the marker at the latter location, it's true, but the site will be more nearly accurate than that originally selected. As things stand prior to tomorrow's final test, the marker probably will be located at a point very near the intersection of Highway 10 and the Ferncliff road.

To provide sponsors of the project with the information they desire, Dr. Branner has pasted a large map of the state on heavy cardboard. This has been sawed out along the state boundaries. The map is fastened from one of the outer edges in such a way that it swings free. From this same point a string with a weight at the bottom is allowed to swing.

A point along the string and near the center of the state is marked with a straight line. The map is then changed and suspended from another corner. Another line is drawn and the point at which these two lines intersect is the geographical center of the state. No matter from what point on the edge the map is swung, all lines drawn along the string will intersect at the same point.

It doesn't sound exactly reasonable, but a demonstration proved it true, and it's the accepted method of establishing the center of an irregular object. And it's to decide definitely where a bronze marker is to be erected.

## Now the Good Daughters May Have to Move Marker to "Official" State Center

Democrat 4-14-36

The Arkansas Society, Daughters of American Colonists, innocently started a "war" when they decided to erect a bronze Centennial marker designating the exact center of the state.

Faulkner county claims it is there. Some say it is in Saline. But the Daughters had erected the tablet in Pulaski, 15 miles west of Little Rock on Highway 70, in preparation for unveiling ceremonies.

Then Dr. George C. Branner, state geologist, was appealed to and "officially" declared the exact center to be 17 miles northwest of Little Rock near Highway 65, barely inside the Pulaski county line.

Now the Conway Log Cabin Democrat, on a front page editorial claims the center is located a few miles west of Conway near the mouth of Caldron creek. The editorial declares the citizens of Faulkner county are "in arms." It says:

"That warning should be given to Saline and Pulaski counties and the world at large for that matter, that any attempt to capture this geographical center may be expected to be confronted with shot and shell."

The Arkansas society, Daughters of American Colonists, some time ago announced that it would erect a Centennial marker on the spot, adding that the "spot" was 15 miles southwest of Little Rock near Saline county on the Hot Springs highway.

"Convinced this was the right spot, the society erected its bronze plaque quietly and prepared for an official unveiling." Then it was challenged and assistance of Dr. Branner was sought. With exceeding care, the geologist sawed, suspended, quartered and sub-divided a map. Then he emerged with the profound announcement that a plumb line test proved the center to be 17 miles northwest of Little Rock near Highway 65, a half-mile south of Palarm creek in Pulaski county.

Faulkner countians rebelled. The Conway newspaper, pointed out that when John D. Dunaway acquired a tract of land including the site of the pioneer town of Cadron, he set up a sign proclaiming a certain point on his land as the exact geographical center of the state. His claim was based on Faulkner county history.

The newspaper called on all patriotic organizations to "rally to the defense of our geographic center."

"Fortifications should be erected at once around this cherished point," the paper continued. "Mrs. Joseph Frauenthal doubtless will permit use of the old Civil War cannon of her famous uncle, the late Col. A. P. Robinson, and warning should be given to Saline and Pulaski counties and the world at large for that matter, that any attempt to capture this geographical center may be expected to be confronted with shot and shell."

"Let our slogan be: It shall not pass from Faulkner county."

## Conway Groups Join Fight To Have Cadron Creek Site Designated as State Center

Democrat 4-15-36

The question of what plot of ground will be designated as the "geographical center" of Arkansas remained not only unsettled today but apparently insoluble by pacific means.

Dr. S. S. Barlow, commander of the Conway unit of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and Mrs. S. T. Button, head of the V. F. W. Auxiliary at that city, took up the fight in behalf of Faulkner county today.

The two challenged the accuracy of a map-sawing, plumb-line dropping procedure by which Dr. George C. Branner, state geologist, determined that the center is located in Pulaski county, near the highway 65 bridge over Palarm creek.

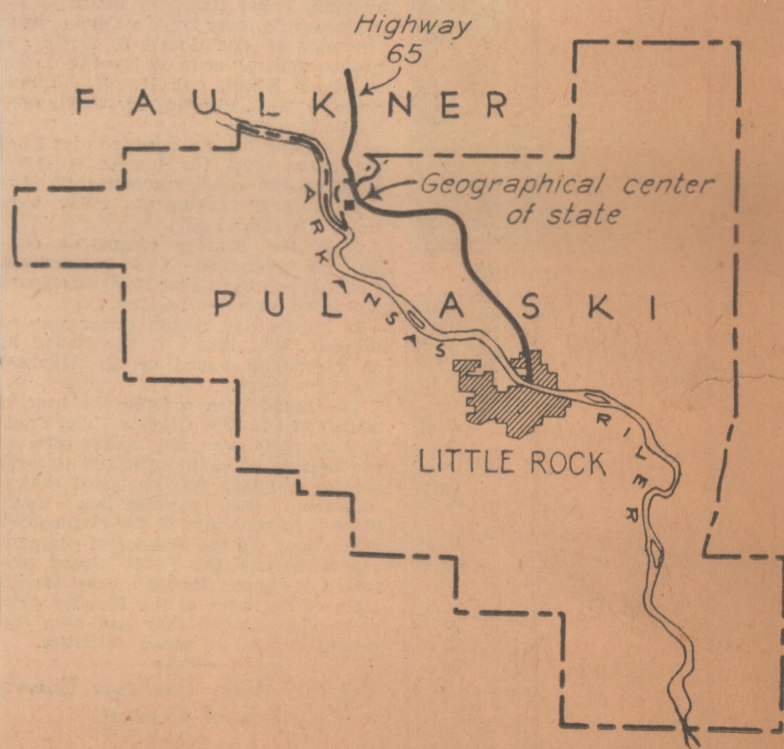
Contending that history is correct in placing the state's solar plexus near the mouth of Cadron creek, 6 miles west of Conway, the two patriotic groups planned to postpone final action on marking the spot "until it can be determined more definitely."

Meanwhile members of the Arkansas Society, Daughters of American Colonists who inadvertently set up a bronze purporting to mark the state's midriff at a spot 15 miles southwest of Little Rock on the Hot Springs Highway, pondered on their next move.

Hot Springs citizens lost interest in the fight when the Daughters of the American Revolution gave that city its own marker--a plaque designating location of the spot near which John Percival, Revolutionary soldier and first white settler established his home about 1800.

## GEOLOGIST SETTLES QUESTION REGARDING CENTER OF ARKANSAS

Gazette 4-15-36



The name of Arkansas may not be all the bends of the Mississippi river;

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2 April 16 1936  
**LOCATING THE CENTER OF ARKANSAS.**

One tradition placed the geographical center of Arkansas at a point about 15 miles from Little Rock on the Hot Springs highway. A second tradition, prevalent in Faulkner and Conway counties, placed it six miles west of the city of Conway near the mouth of Cadron creek.

Several years ago the United States Geological Survey, in a tabulation of the geographical centers of the United States and each of the 48 states, located the center of Arkansas about 12 miles northwest of Little Rock, without specifying the base point of distance measurement or the compass angle. A note to the table stated that the locations given were "approximations believed to be sufficiently accurate for ordinary purposes."

When it became desirable to locate the center point more definitely Dr. George C. Branner, state geologist, followed exactly the geometric method used by the Geological Survey. His results placed the point near the spot where Highway 65 crosses Palarm Creek. That would be about 12 miles (air-line distance) northwest of Little Rock, and there is no necessary conflict between this determination and the more general finding of the Geological Survey.

It is of no importance for practical reasons where the center is. But since the question has been raised it should be settled. Residents of Conway, their patriotic and town-boosting emotions aroused, announce that they will fight to have Cadron creek "designated" as the state's center. They might as well fight to have the latitude and longitude of Conway changed. Locating the center of Arkansas is purely a matter of mathematics. If the champions of Cadron creek can find a more accurate mathematical method for locating the center than Dr. Branner's, let them do their stuff. But local tradition or local pride can have no weight as against geometry.

**College Professor Says Branner 'Warm' On Site for Marker**

Conway (P)—Faulkner county's hope of claiming the geographical center of Arkansas weakened under continued scientific pressure today.

Dr. H. L. Minton, professor of geography at Arkansas State Teachers' College, lined up today with his professorial colleague, Dr. George L. Branner, state geologist, in placing the midriff on Palarm creek near the Faulkner-Pulaski county line.

His profound investigations put a decided crimp in the accuracy of local historians who wanted the center located on Caldron creek.

"Dr. Branner is getting warm," Dr. Minton told a Conway civic club. "In fact, he may be right. I calculated the center was located near Palarm creek but on the Faulkner county side of the line."

The state geologist said plum-lines put the center on the Pulaski county side of the line near a bridge over Palarm creek on Highway 65.

Meanwhile, Daughters of American Colonists showed no inclination to speed the removal of the misplaced bronze marker erected 15 miles southwest of Little Rock on the Hot Springs highway.

**And So, It Seems Center Of State Will Be Marked Northwest of Little Rock**

April 27, 1936 (?)

Washington--Little Rock is near the actual center of Arkansas, no matter what formula is used to determine the scientific center of the state.

Through one method of figuring, the center of the state would be located at a point 12 miles northwest of Little Rock. Another would place the center at a point nine miles east of the Capitol building in the city.

This was the finding of government experts given today to Mrs. Charles H. Miller of Little Rock, state regent of the Arkansas Society, Daughters of American Colonists.

Plans of the organization to mark the center of the state for the centennial led to the appeal made to the United States Geological Survey by Sen. Joseph T. Robinson, at Mrs. Miller's request.

Although acknowledging both centers, dependent upon which method of computation issued, the survey leaned toward the point northwest of Little Rock, and this will probably be used.

The location was selected through the use of the following formula:

"The geographical center of the state may be defined as that point on which the surface area would balance if it were a plane without thickness, or in other words the center of gravity of the surface."

Dr. George C. Branner, state geologist, used the "center of gravity" method recently to determine the geographical center of the state, fixing the point just within Pulaski County near Palarm. A marker designating the center had previously been erected at a point about 15 miles west of Little Rock on Highway 70.

**State-Center Marker Sites Suggested**

The monument authorized by the Arkansas Society, Daughters of American Colonists, to mark the geographical center of Arkansas may be placed with accuracy at any point on Highway 65 within a one-mile radius of a spot selected by the Arkansas Geological Survey, George C. Branner, state geologist, has advised officials of the society.

In a letter directed to Mrs. Charles H. Miller, state regent, Mr. Branner explained methods of determining the state's center used by the United States Geological Survey and the state geological office, and said that any point within a mile of the spot chosen, which is in the southeast quarter of Section 13, near the Pulaski-Faulkner county line, may be regarded as an accurate location.

The site selected by the state geological office is about one mile south of Palarm, and the area within the one-mile radius embraces parts of both counties. The boundary line between the two counties at this point is Palarm bayou, which virtually parallels the Arkansas river and lies about one mile east of it.

A bronze marker intended to commemorate the location of state's center was built by the Daughters of American Colonists at Collegeville, approximately 18 miles south of the location suggested by Mr. Branner, but the question of accuracy of location was raised before the marker had been dedicated.