



Daisy Bates: Civil Rights Crusader from Arkansas (Margaret Walker Alexander Series in African American Studies)

Grif Stockley

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Daisy Bates (1914-1999) is renowned as the mentor of the Little Rock Nine, the first African Americans to attend Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas. For guiding the Nine through one of the most tumultuous civil rights crises of the 1950s, she was selected as Woman of the Year in Education by the Associated Press in 1957 and was the only woman invited to speak at the Lincoln Memorial ceremony in the March on Washington in 1963. But her importance as a historical figure has been overlooked by scholars of the civil rights movement.

Daisy Bates: Civil Rights Crusader from Arkansas chronicles her life and political advocacy before, during, and well after the Central High School crisis. An orphan from the Arkansas mill town of Huttig, she eventually rose to the zenith of civil rights action. In 1952, she was elected president of the NAACP in Arkansas and traveled the country speaking on political issues. During the 1960s, she worked as a field organizer for presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson to get out the black vote. Even after a series of strokes, she continued to orchestrate self-help and economic initiatives in Arkansas.

Using interviews, archival records, contemporary news-paper accounts, and other materials, author Grif Stockley reconstructs Bates's life and career, revealing her to be a complex, contrary leader of the civil rights movement. Ultimately, Daisy Bates paints a vivid portrait of an ardent, overlooked advocate of social justice.

Grif Stockley is a staff attorney of the American Civil Liberties Union of Arkansas. He is the author of several books, including *Blood in Their Eyes: The Elaine Race Massacres of 1919*, *Blind Judgment*, *Probable Cause*, and *Expert Testimony*. He lives in Little Rock, Arkansas.

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