



Daisy Bates

Civil Rights Activist, Journalist, Publisher (1914–1999) was born in Arkansas.

Her mother was sexually assaulted and murdered by three white men and her father left her. She was raised by friends of the family. After meeting her husband, Lucious Christopher “L.C.” Bates, an insurance agent and an experienced journalist. They married in the early 1940s and moved to Little Rock, Arkansas. Together they operated the Arkansas State Press, a weekly African-American newspaper. The paper championed civil rights and launched Daisy into the world of civil rights activism. As the head of the NAACP’s Arkansas

branch, Bates played a crucial role in the fight against segregation which can be highlighted with The Little Rock Nine.

Minnijean Brown, Elizabeth Eckford, Ernest Green, Thelma Mothershed, Melba Patillo, Gloria Ray, Terrence Roberts, Jefferson Thomas and Carlotta Walls were the Little Rock Nine.

They were a group of handpicked students vetted by Mrs. Bates. Chosen because of their strength and determination to face the resistance they would encounter.

On September 4, 1957 they would attend Central High. Mrs. Bates drove 8 of the 9 students to school. Elizabeth Eckford arrived alone (she had no phone and was unaware of the carpool). She was spit on and yelled at. Governor Faubus called in the National Guard to prevent the 9 from entering the high school.

In the following weeks, federal judge Ronald Davies began legal proceedings against Governor Faubus, and President Dwight D. Eisenhower attempted to persuade Faubus to remove the National Guard and let the Little Rock Nine enter the school. Judge Davies ordered the Guard removed on September 20, and the Little Rock Police Department took over to maintain order. The police escorted the nine African American students into the school on September 23, through an angry mob of some 1,000 white protesters gathered outside. Amidst ensuing rioting, the police removed the nine students.

The following day, President Eisenhower sent in 1,200 members of the U.S. Army’s 101st Airborne Division from Fort Campbell, Kentucky, and placed them in charge of the 10,000 National Guardsmen on duty. Escorted by the troops, the Little Rock Nine attended their first full day of classes on September 25. Although several of the black students had positive experiences on their first day of school, according to a September 25, 1957, report in The New York Times, they experienced routine harassment and even violence throughout the rest of the year. Melba Patillo, for instance, was kicked, beaten and had acid thrown in her face. Gloria Ray was pushed down a flight of stairs. Harassment went beyond the students: Gloria Ray’s mother was fired from her job with the State of Arkansas when she refused to remove her daughter from the school. Ernest Green, the only senior among the Little Rock Nine, became the first African American graduate of Central High. Civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr. attended graduation ceremonies at Central High School in May 1958 to see Ernest Green, the only senior among the Little Rock Nine, to receive his diploma. The Little Rock Nine were awarded the Congressional Gold Medal in 1999 by then president, Bill Clinton.

<https://www.biography.com/activist/daisy-bates?fbclid=IwAR2vtB1c4Jd-d6TKFVv33jV1PPFt9HjsWwyowrkHC33MCHfvcl-nte7Tiw>

https://www.history.com/topics/black-history/central-high-school-integration?fbclid=IwAR3xz1StKm7iyAGIASY08wfgu7OGznsV_EvCyDsaH-LSOj1Aw169YK9f07Y