

APPENDIX A

THE MISSISSIPPI AT MIDNIGHT

and

WILLIAM WALKER'S PERSONALITY SKETCHES

For the Crescent.

THE MISSISSIPPI AT MIDNIGHT.

How solemn! sweeping this dense black tide!
No friendly lights i' the heavens o'er us;
A murky darkness on either side,
And kindred darkness all before us!

Now, drawn nearer the shelving rim,
Wierd-like shadows suddenly rise;
Shapes of mist and phantoms dim
Baffle the gazer's straining eyes.

River fiends, with malignant faces!
Wild and wide their arms are thrown,
As if to clutch in fatal embraces
Him who sails their realms upon.

Then, by the trick of our own swift motion.
Straight, tall giants, an army vast,
Rank by rank, like the waves of ocean,
On the shore march stilly past.

How solemn! the river a trailing pall,
Which takes, but never again gives back;
And moonless and starless the heavens' arch'd wall,
Responding an equal black!

Oh, tireless waters! like Life's quick dream,
Onward and onward ever hurrying —
Like Death in this midnight hour you seem,
Life in your chill drops greedily burying! W.W.

Daily Crescent. 3/6/1848. p.2. c.5.

SKETCHES OF PROMINENT CITIZENS

As we can find but few cases of interest before the Courts now sitting, we must look elsewhere for locals, and shall proceed to arraign before the bar of public opinion several individuals who have heretofore held a high stand in this community. We know that we tread on dangerous ground, but the appearance of nine men in buckram shall not make us fly the field. We forewarn all concerned, that as we have commenced, so we shall keep on.

JOHN BROWN is one of the people; that is, and we wish not to be mistaken, he is a descendant of Adam. Brown will never be a Daniel Lambert, or attain the notoriety of a Calvin Edson; he is not a lean and hungry Cassius, neither has he the grossness of Jack Falstaff; not a giant in the development of the outer man, or a Lilliputian in size.

Brown's countenance is often illumined with a smile; at other times it wears a becoming look of gravity. He but seldom gives way to loud bursts of merriment, but our readers may rest assured that when this is the case, he has good cause for his mirth.

Let it not be supposed that there is any thing of the ascetic in his manner — far otherwise. His presence is ever welcomed by the young; the aged are always asking "Where is Brown?"

His dress is very peculiar — it would arrest instant attention: for it is neither plain nor flashy — not composed, like Joseph's coat, of many colors, or singularly sombre in all its details of hat, coat, pants and vest.

Brown's manner is decided and attractive. You would know him among a hundred: meet him alone, and you would single him out and say there stands the man. Gentle, except when irritated; placid, when not aroused; silent, when not speaking; with brow unbent, without a frown has settled upon it; standing erect among his fellows, or sitting down, if not promenading, he is indeed an individual presenting striking traits of character, worthy of being given to the world.

Frank in his opinions, he never conceals them, and is

always to be found on the side of justice and common sense, without his mind is unfortunately, for the time, warped by prejudice. When this is the case, (and we will candidly confess, as public journalists, that we have never known an instance of the kind,) he soon throws away the false light that has misguided him, and regains the direct path. This much for John Brown. We now turn to

JOHN SMITH — Mr. Smith is one of our oldest citizens — well known to those who are acquainted with him. In temper and disposition not unlike his intimate friend Brown, without, however, that full development of character which renders the latter so conspicuous. Though born in New Orleans, yet he speaks the English language fluently, and has travelled extensively throughout the length and breadth of the three Municipalities.

We do not wish to convey the thought that Mr. Smith is one of those restless men who cannot find in the home circle sufficient to keep him from wandering — far otherwise. He concentrates in his own person all the domestic virtues for which his large and extensive family have been so conspicuous.

Ambiability is the characteristic of John Smith, and yet the fiercer passions have sometimes run riot in his breast. He has never manifested a bitterness of spirit until patience ceased to be a virtue, and never resented an insult until it was given.

In the time of trial his valor oozes not out of his fingers' ends like Bob Acres, nor like the renowned "Mose," is he ever ready for a "muss." Neither a belligerent in practice, or a Quaker in his views, this extraordinary man always commands by his bold actions and habits universal admiration.

With these brief sketches of two of our most conspicuous citizens we must close, without adding, as we intended, a full notice of John Jones, which we must leave for another day. Although we may be accused of too boldly showing up the infirmities and foibles of others, yet we stand upon the broad ground that public journalists should speak out and fear not. We will be pleased, however, to make any important

corrections, if we have heedlessly done injustice in our unsparing remarks relative to Messrs. Brown and Smith.

Daily Crescent, 8/20/1849, P.3, C.5.

SKETCHES OF PROMINENT CITIZENS

We continue to-day our promised sketches of city notables. In collecting information we have pursued a course that has proved entirely successful and enabled us to give the most minute and interesting details of the every-day life of our distinguished citizens, John Jones and James Jenkins.

With the veracity of a Dean Swift and the profoundness of a Boswell we have united the industry of a modern penny-a-liner, and forthwith unfold our budget to the gaze of day "unawed by influence and unbribed by gain."

JOHN JONES had a father; but alas for this biography, nothing more is known respecting the sire of such a son. It is to be presumed that the name on his paternal side was Jones -- perhaps old Jones -- it might have been familiarly called so by village gossips in days gone by -- golden days, no doubt, when the Joneses sat under their own vine and fig tree, and heard

"The chirping of the katydid, the croaking of the frog."

John Jones grew up to be a man, by that astonishing process of dame Nature, which rears the infant from its mother's breast, elongates the limbs of childhood, develops the form of the boy, and, at the legal age of 21, enables him to contract debts until he pays the great debt due by all. Jones was a singular child --

"Pleased with a rattle, tickled with a straw."

Unlike his young companions, he was famous at marbles, expert with a hoop, spun a top with mathematical precision, and borrowed all the twine he could to enable his kite

"To wing its flight
To realms of light."

His friends (though we wish to detract nothing from the efforts of genius, we must say that Jones had friends,) saw with wonder his rapid progress, and predicted an elevated position for the young aspirant. Jones became ambitious. Like Chatterton, "the sleepless boy," he remained awake all night to frame a truant's excuses for the morrow's school --like Keats, he bent in anguish over his task in ascending the hill of science.

His intellectual labors were too much for his fragile frame: he caught the small-pox, and death nearly deprived science of her votary and a cricket club of its most expert member. The dread disease slowly left him, but Jones became an altered boy.

Forsaking everything juvenile for the higher walks of life, billiards and segars took the place of the worthless toys of his thoughtless days. The academic honors that he had gained now stood his friends, and to his reputation while a child: his sudden rise in popular estimation may be attributed.

This brings us to the *Second Era* in the life of Jones! Boldly pushing forward into the busy world, he attracted general attention by acting in a most usual and not very singular manner. It was observed, even by those intimate with him, that he

"Ate, drank, slept — and then,
Ate, drank and slept again;"

and this manner of living was pursued. It was supposed, for the benefit of his health, which had never been entirely regained since he was pitted against the grim tyrant.

Even in the furniture of his room Jones affected a taste that placed him above the vulgar herd. His bedstead was the head and foot of the offending, having stretched over it a

net to prevent the midnight incursions of annoying insects.

His table was supported by four legs and this we must distinctly affirm, as in the course of our investigation we have heard it rumored that there were but three! Our story has a better foundation. His chairs owned no cushions: a stern sense of republican simplicity prevented this luxury: half curtains were attached to the windows: so much so that they never left them for two years: and a small looking glass held the mirror up to nature, when he disrobed at night, or left the arms of Morpheus to bathe in the light of Aurora. Nightcap -- he had none.

Conducting himself in this way, Jones soon won on the hearts of all, and numbers attracted by the sterling metal gleaming forth from the rough ore, often exclaimed with enthusiasm -- "you are a good fellow, lend me a V." Noble tribute to merit! Well earned verdict from an enlightened public.

What more can we say of our distinguished friend? Impartially we have followed him from the cradle "up to the very time ye bade me tell it," and have given his hair breadth 'scapes by flood and field.

We will leave him with the assurance to our readers that this biography, brief as it is, shows the man, a creature of circumstance, winning his way in despite opposition; the child of poverty buffeting successfully the golden shower, and laughing at "the scoffs and frowns of outrageous fortune."

We now turn to a no less distinguished personage --

COL. JAMES JENKINS -- Whose eventful career deserves more than our pen can tell. The child of his mother; he drew from her, in early life, the like sustenance that the Roman daughter gave to preserve a father's existence. This at once proves that spirit of inquiry that has ever kept pace with the growing energies of our friend.

To his only parent he owes every thing. Remarkable herself, history has not failed to commemorate her sterling virtues, and although her name has not been given to fame, yet in a well-known distich, she has been handed down from mother to son:

*"She sold apples and she sold pies,
She was the old woman that never told lies."*

Could anything be more expressive in favor of the late Mrs. Jenkins? From her he acquired a taste for poetry and a character for veracity that have never forsaken him.

Jenkins commenced life, as we have stated, very early, and now bids fair to live to a green old age. Temperate in his habits, he never drinks except when invited, and in eating is only an epicure when he dines out. Frugal to a fault, he expends no more than he has in his possession, and scorns to run in debt without he can walk deliberately into a credit.

Crusty from the associations of his boyhood, he shortens his discourse to all. Imaginative to a fault, he takes every man to be a friend and uses him accordingly. These unmistakable signs of a liberal mind cover, like charity, a multitude of minor transgressions. We are proud to show up his trivial errors, that the more conspicuous virtues may obscure them all.

See Jenkins in a crowd, behold him in the gay *salon*, mark him on the Shell-road, gaze at him in the romantic walks of Carrollton, and there -- everywhere -- he is -- is -- Jenkins still!

Unconscious of the blushing honor when called upon to treat; deaf to the mute appeal of his companion on stepping out of a cab enjoyed with a comrade; dignified and erect when the bill for a "fish dinner for five" is laid on the table; Jenkins, with a mind untraveled, leaves to others the nothings that compose existence, and grasps himself at a nobler something in the regions of the unattainable.

The character of Jenkins is one of no ordinary mould, and though perhaps, not as brilliant as the eccentric Jones, he bears a sway that is felt in his own immediate circle, and commands the respect of all outsiders.

A pillar of the church though not a bigot in his views; a politician, neither inclining to one side or the other; a business man, too modest to care for more than the name; he indeed attracts universal attention, and the passer-by involuntarily exclaims, when meeting him, "there goes a man!"

He married, when young to prevent being a bachelor, and

In a few years acquired a family of children that the little ones might call him papa. At home he is the same mild benevolent being that he seems abroad and one of the little Jenkinses has been known to insert three of his fairy fingers into the coffee of Mr. Jenkins before the attentive parent discovered the scalding process.

His instance of watchfulness tells more than a column of praise. To all fathers it speaks volumes, and they must extend at once a ready hand to James Jenkins. How could we more appropriately close this biography?

We leave Jenkins in the bosom of his family and drop the curtain upon a domestic scene hallowed by the name of home.

Daily Crescent, 8/23/1849, P.2, C.5.

SKETCHES OF PROMINENT CITIZENS.

The startling developments that we have brought to light in giving to the world the biographies of Messrs. Brown, Smith, Jones and Jenkins have agitated and excited the whole community. Daily calls have been made upon us to continue revelations so astounding and of such great importance to the body politic. As philanthropists we cannot reject these applications.

The pictures presented by us are working a moral reform. The placid and striking character of John Brown, the amiable traits displayed by Smith, the rapid progress of the aspiring Jones, and the interesting details of a home life to be found in the sketch of the stoic Jenkins, convey to the million information before far beyond their reach. They find that the loftier virtues so common with themselves can also be traced in the lives of men but little suspected, from their elevated positions, of possessing failings of the kind.

To-day we remove the veil from the inner sanctuary and lay bare the extraordinary circumstances making up the lives of three more of our most conspicuous citizens: men hereto-

fore unknown to fame!

It is a difficult task to correctly portray the thoughts, feelings and dispositions of another. For this reason we solicited, in the commencement, assistance from the gentlemen themselves, and in every instance they have responded, most readily, to our request. Our reports can, therefore, be relied upon as the *only full and complete histories of city notables!*

We continue our sketches with the name of

GABRIEL GUMBO -- Better known in New Orleans than in any other city in the Union. Let no surprise be manifested at this. For forty-six years and two months, ending on the 27th inst., he has lived in our midst, and, singular to relate, this period comprises the whole of his natural life.

Mr. Gumbo was the youngest child of his parents: the only survivor of fifteen sons, his fourteen brothers dying at the early age of twelve days. This family failing attached not to Gabriel; and the hopes of the house of Gumbo centered very early in life upon the only twig from the ancestral tree.

At twenty Gabriel was still a young man, and remained in this interesting situation for several years. But not content with being always in the same position, he gradually changed in life, and took a more decided stand.

From this moment we may date his prosperity. Events thronged thick and fast upon him: his ward became the scene of a conflict without parallel in history. Muggins, his particular friend, emerging from a retirement of four months, offered for constable, and Gumbo, to administer a gentle rebuke to his presumption, determined to oppose him.

The excitement became intense: Whig and Democratic Associations were formed; Gabriel presided at both; rival clubs established; Gumbo was appointed Grand Hum. in each. His various powers expanded with the occasion. He delivered an able lecture upon the character of that estimable patriot and statesman the Vicar of Bray; which took all hearts by storm; and showed a profound knowledge of the subject.

Poor Muggins was emphatically *no where* in the canvass. In

vain he asserted that Gumbo's book knowledge was acquired; in vain declared that the statutes of Louisiana were framed some years after the pandects of Justinian; the popular Gumbo asserted the contrary, and rested his claims upon a thorough knowledge of the whole twenty-seven volumes. Our hero succeeded in his dearest wishes, and the ward rejoiced in securing a mountain of wisdom for this responsible office.

Very few in our great city could ever unravel the rapid rise of Gumbo, and for this reason we have at length the particulars before them. Remarkable man: versed in all the deep workings of the human heart; skilled in solving that intricate problem -- the popular will; who wonders that he looks forward to future honors.

It has been hinted that we have had eleven presidents; and grave nods have also indicated that we will have another. Who that other is to be remains in the womb of time. Gumbo's friends depend on the fact that no nomination has yet been made! Still in the prime of life he may accomplish much: and but for exciting the jealousy of the numerous cliques and factions, organized throughout the nation, we would more plainly indicate our real views on this delicate subject.

TIMOTHY TUCKER -- Is equal in everything to Mr. Gumbo. Though not perhaps excelling that gentleman in the number of his brothers, yet we must do Mr. Tucker the justice to assert that in parents they both stand on the same ground -- each having had two. The impartial course that we have marked out requires this admission at our hands, and we freely make it.

Tucker, from his cradle, showed a precocity most remarkable. He was a seeker after wisdom from the moment that his infant lips could pronounce the word "bah," which was taken for the paternal name by his attentive listeners. Little did they know of that child's organization when they so grossly perverted his ebullitions of scorn at the baby-talk administered to his tender ears.

No! Timothy Tucker cried "bah" when he was told that

*"Jack fell down and broke his crown,
And Gill came tumbling after."*

The conclusion was insufficient to the mind of the child. Gill's injuries were not stated, and it left him in a world of doubt as to the final result.

From these legends of the nursery his poetical aspirations received their birth; but, lest his devotion to the Sacred Nine might interfere with the sterner avocations of life, he never wrote a line of verse.

While a lad, he had a strong inclination to travel, but remembering the old adage that "a rolling stone gathers no moss," he concluded to remain under the paternal roof. At the age of sixteen he commenced the study of the French: finding it totally different from his own language (the English), he resolved to abandon it — showing a decision of character native to the man.

Should the occasion ever offer, he will be found "taking the responsibility" with a readiness equal to the old Roman.

At the age of twenty, he first visited the theatre — was pleased with the music — liked the play — but, owing to a sudden indisposition, was compelled to obtain a check at the door. The drama still owes him this debt.

A few years since he became the president of a benevolent association, and a large amount of cash was raised for the purpose of clothing the little negroes on the coast of Africa in red flannel. Touching instance! Well applied bounty! Timothy Tucker, the time may come when Ethiopia can return her thanks to her noble benefactor!

The presence of mind of Mr. Tucker has never forsaken him under difficulties the most appalling. An instance of this occurred some years ago, when his dwelling was burned to the ground. The upper story was in flames, the rear of the house enveloped in smoke, the outbuildings on fire, the front door alone free from the encroachments of the devouring element, and out of this, the only means of egress left him, Mr. Tucker walked forth, but little scorched.

Once, when intently listening to the melodious whistling of a young Sambo, in Camp street, (for Tucker is a lover of music,) he was suddenly pushed off the sidewalk into the kennel by the passing crowd: instead of wasting his time in

idle imprecations, he turned with a look of unutterable mildness, and kicked the descendant of Ham through the window of an adjoining broker.

These endearing traits have given him strong claims upon a large circle of friends, and should be generally known that modest merit might receive its due. Our space forbid a more extended notice of the many virtues of Mr. Tucker: but as he now keeps a daily record of them for us, we shall refer to him again.

RICHARD DOBS is a most refreshing character! Worthy Dick Dobs, give us your hand! *Dick*, we must always call you, and may you never be "gone Dick." What a biography your life would make. How irresistible the journal of your wonderful existence!

Twenty years ago you were a *boy*, and reveled in bread and molasses: now the choicest viands grace the table of the man. Astonishing progress of the age —singular advancement in gastronomy!

These arguments, when used at the proper times, can be wielded with a giant force in your favor. Esau sold his birthright for a mess of pottage, and we could now give up our present duties to enjoy with you a dinner worthy of the name.

Richard Dobs is a singular personage: and when we say singular, we do not mean that there is anything particularly strange in his composition. He is, however, a remarkable man, and only needs an enlarged sphere of action to prove this to the public.

For want of other opportunity he has turned his attention to the minor details of existence, although we are assured by him that he would readily undertake anything.

Reserved in his habits, he prefers walking to an omnibus; though very willing that the proprietors should be patronized — a public spirit that does him credit. The daily routine of his life may be of interest to our readers; and as he desires and pays for it, we give it with the hope that it is.

Dobs rises about the ordinary time, performs his ablutions in the usual method, eats his breakfast in the regular

way, and goes to his office after these duties have been attended to. At the hour of dinner he is punctual, wields his knife and fork with accustomed dispatch, and drinks water without he prefers a stronger beverage. The afternoon is occupied as it should be, and at tea he prefers a light meal that digestion may be promoted thereby.

Proud should our city be of one so correct in every thing. Even in dress this regularity is to be found, and no loose habits can ever be brought home to Richard Dobs.

As a literary character he has also claims to public notice; the exquisite poem of "Lucy Neal" was written by a distant relation.

In a military capacity he stands preëminent, and had he been present at the battle of Buena Vista our pen might now be recording the glories of that day.

Although unacquainted with the intricacies of the law, this is accounted for by the fact that he never turned his attention to that study; yet in this age of general information this is not requisite or essential.

In fact, a more perfect model could not be found for imitation than Mr. Dobs -- with the simple exceptions of Gabriel Gumbo and Timothy Tucker!

In our next we expect to give sketches of others, equally as worthy.

Daily Crescent, 8/27/1849, P.2, C.3.