



JAS. H. DAVIS.

Miss Susan McCullough. She bore him two children, Rev. James Walker, and one other son who died in childhood. His second wife was a widow—Jane Harris—who bore him no children, although she had two by a former husband. His third wife was Miss Sophonia White. She did not bear any children.

Capt. Walker was a representative man of the old school, when the peoples' verdict was the law of the land, from which no one deemed it a hardship or ever thought of an appeal. He lived in a time when a case of extreme poverty was unknown in the county, unless it was from sickness or self-imposed. During his day the production of cotton was comparatively, in its infancy; raising negroes, hogs, cattle and horses and mules; they did not care so much for money, as to have that which could be turned into money. Our whole system of farming and civilization was changed by the reconstruction. Capt. John Walker was born February 22, 1801, east of Charlotte, about eight miles. Here he kept his home all his life when not engaged in the business of the State. He died September 8, 1876. His life was a useful one. When not engaged for the State, he was looking after the interests of his family, the church, and the county. The county could well say he was jealous of the best interests of Mecklenburg, and of the church.

JAMES DAVIS.

Mr. James Davis was the son of Watson Davis, of Providence congregation, where he lived and died early in the Nineteenth century. James, the subject of this sketch, had one brother who also lived in Providence, named Samuel Davis. He had a daughter who married her cousin, Marcellus Davis, who lives in the town of Charlotte.

Mr. James Davis lived some six miles southwest of Providence church. He married a Miss Lee, an aunt of D. P. Lee, amongst the best people in the county. Mr. Davis was a farmer of splendid attainments. He studied the needs

of his soil and put in practice his conclusions. Persons who knew him well, said he was a bold buyer, or seller, as the case might be. He would buy a plantation ready stocked with horses, mules, cattle, sheep and hogs, and farming tools, and negroes enough to cultivate it. A big trade of this kind would not cause him to lose an hour's sleep. He was always cool, and if he could see a fair promise to realize a handsome profit, he was quick to strike a trade. He always rode a magnificent horse, and was a fine rider. He owned several large plantations, and they were well stocked with the best the country afforded. Of course we are speaking of things as they appeared then. The civilization of ante-bellum days was very different from what it was at a later day. In the former period a man of means had no hesitation about making debts; for the number of slaves he had were regarded the best of collaterals, and he could always get as much time as he wanted. He had all his stock, of every kind, well protected against the cold of winter; abundantly fed, so that they were always ready for service. His negroes were well cared for, in sickness and health. It was his opinion that all stock was profitable in proportion to the care that was bestowed upon it. This was before cotton became king of products and king of commerce. In 1852 a wealthy man in south Iredell county said the most profitable stock to raise in this country was "negroes and hogs."

Mr. Davis was a staunch supporter of the war. He believed in raising all the supplies the army should need, both what was necessary to feed the soldiers in the field, and supply their families at home. He first gave his son, a boy of seventeen, to the Confederacy, all the horses and mules he could spare from his farm, paid more than the tenth of all his meat and bread and feed for horses. During the last two years of the war his granaries were so much frequented by the soldiers' wives, especially from Union county, that they called it "going down to Egypt." They would frequently come in large companies, a soldier's wife or

daughter driving a one-horse wagon, sometimes an ox, or a mule; and none turned away without a load. Whatever would satisfy hunger and render the people comfortable, was poured out without stint. If the wealthy people of our Southland had been as patriotic as Mr. Davis, there would have been fewer desertions from the Confederate army.

Mr. Davis owned about three hundred negroes, and of course had no hesitation about contracting a debt with all these collaterals behind him; but when the war ended disastrously to the South, and swept away the very foundations on which the finances of the State, or the Confederacy was built, it cast a gloom over the people that they could not shake off at pleasure. The younger people could start in anew, but those who were in the evening of life were not able to stem the adverse current as it rushed madly on to overthrow all of our civilization.

It was morally impossible for a man, a large planter, owning a vast number of slaves, to regain his hold on the financial touchstone, when all had been swept away, an army of adventurers were hanging on his every turn, hoping to pick his financial carcass, as he recuperated his shattered fortune.

Young men endowed with a superabundance of energy can sometimes rebuild a lost fortune under adverse circumstances; but when the evening shadows grow long, and hope is crushed, and only defeat stares him in the face; all incentive to action has subsided, energy is gone, and he gradually sinks into a premature grave. In this way have many entered the future state who otherwise might have reached a green old age. Old age that comes with stealthy steps, hardly pausing as each year goes round, comes naturally, has many sweets to make bright and gladsome the countenances when all goes well; but we can only see poverty and wretchedness, when the bitter cup is pressed to our lips, and we are made to drink to its dregs, and there is nothing left us but the quietude of the grave.

Many cases of this kind will have to be answered for at

the shrine of truth and justice. Our Southern people faced the defeat with wonderful courage. Many of our old men were so paralyzed, not by defeat so much, as by the petty tyrants who thought to lord it over their superiors in virtue and all that constitutes true manhood.

Mr. James Davis was surrounded by the best people in the State—Mr. W. M. Matthews, Wm. McKee, Wm. Ardrey, M. D., Capt. W. E. Ardrey, John Rhea, Robert Grier, Elam Sample, Neil Morrison. The names of such men to constitute the neighbors of James Davis, is *prima facie* evidence that he was more than an ordinary man; and his deeds of charity in cases deserving it, will live long after his face is forgotten.

W. J. YATES—EDITOR AND PRINTER.

Mr. Yates was born in Fayetteville, N. C., in 1827. Work was as natural for him as laziness is for some people. He loved to work to accomplish certain aims. He most cordially despised idlers, and laid to the charge of idleness poverty and all its train of evils. He entered the printing office of the *North Carolinian* at an early age, and by industry and frugality, was enabled to buy the paper, which he again sold and in 1856 moved to Charlotte and bought the *Charlotte Democrat*. This was his idol—the apple of his eye. He could suffer the loss of anything else rather than have his paper evil spoken of. In 1881, October 1st, the *Southern Home* was consolidated with the *Democrat* and published as the *Home-Democrat*, Mr. Yates retiring from active management of the same. In the interval he was restive and his oft repeated assertion, "I cannot stay out of this office," led him in February, 1884, to again assume his wonted possession—a good editor, he loved his profession. He made a financial success of his paper and by economy and judicious business management, accumulated a handsome competency. He earned his money in Charlotte, and invested it here, having no use for any enterprise outside of