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# L I F E

OF

## LIEUT. GEN. THOMAS J. JACKSON.

### VOLUME I.

BY

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## PREFACE.

No preface will be needed by the people of the Confederate States, to propitiate their interest in a memoir of their beloved and lamented Jackson. The only motive for supplying this customary exordium to my book, is the wish to answer the natural question; what grounds I may have to suppose myself qualified for the task I have undertaken. And my answer is; that it has been entrusted to me by the widow and family of General Jackson, supported by the urgency of his successor, Lieut. Gen. Well, and many other friends.

One advantage for my work I may claim, which brings far more of responsibility than of credit to me, the possession of the fullest collection of materials: The correspondence of General Jackson with his family, his pastor, and his most prominent friends in public life, is in my hands, together with copies of all the important official papers on file in the War Department. In addition to these materials, it was my privilege to enjoy his friendship, although not under his orders, during the campaign of Manassas, in 1861; and to serve under him, as Chief of his Staff, during the memorable campaign of the Valley and the Chickahominy, in 1862; so that I had personal knowledge of the events on which the structure of his military fame was first reared.

The most prominent trait of Jackson was his scrupulous truthfulness. His Life has been written under the profound impression that no quality could be so appropriate as this, in the narrative which seeks to commemorate his noble character. Hence, the most laborious pains have been taken to verify every fact; and to give the story in its sober accuracy. If it presents the hero without any of those *bizarre* traits, which the popular fancy so delights to throw around its special favorites, it is hoped that the picture will be, for this reason, more symmetrical, and more pleasing to every cultivated mind, if not so startling. The reader may at least have the satisfaction of knowing that it is the correct picture; save that no pencil can do justice to his devoted patriotism, his diligence, his courage, and the sanctity of his morals.

The first volume is now presented to the reader, to be speedily followed by the conclusion, in one more volume, if the favor of Providence permit. The work has already been delayed, to the profound regret of the author, for a year, by the difficulties of publication in our distressed country.

ROBERT L. DABNEY.

DEDICATION.

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THIS MEMOIR OF  
THE GREATEST OF OUR DEAD,

IS DEDICATED TO

THE GREATEST OF OUR LIVING GENERALS,

**ROBERT E. LEE,**

AS AN HUMBLE TESTIMONIAL OF THE CONFIDENCE IN HIM,

AND VENERATION FOR HIM,

IMBIBED FROM ITS SUBJECT,

**LIEUT. GEN. T. J. JACKSON,**

BY THE AUTHOR.

*Union Theological Seminary,  
January, 18th 1865.*

parents. His second marriage produced nine sons and daughters. His first wife, by birth a Hadden, bore him three sons, George, David, and Jonathan, and three daughters, of whom one married a gentleman named White, and two, respectable farmers of German extraction, named Brake. Jonathan Jackson, the father of the subject of this work, adopted the profession of law, having pursued his preparatory studies in the family, and under the guidance of his distinguished cousin, Judge Jackson, of Clarksburg. His patronage induced him to go to that place, the last seat of his forefather's residence, to prosecute his calling. About the same time he married Julia Neale, the daughter of an intelligent merchant in the village of Parkersburg, in Wood county, on the Ohio river. The fruits of this marriage were four children, of whom the eldest was named Warren, the second Elizabeth, the third Thomas Jonathan, and the fourth, Laura. Thomas was born in Clarksburg, probably about the beginning of the year 1824. The early death of his parents, and dispersion of the little family, obliterated the record of the exact date, so that General Jackson himself was unable to fix it with certainty. Of these children none now live save the youngest, who survives as a worthy matron in Randolph county.

Jonathan Jackson, the General's father, is said to have been, what was unusual in his race, a man of short stature; his face was ruddy, pleasing and intelligent; his temper genial and affectionate, and susceptible of the warmest and most generous attachments. He was a man of strong, distinct understanding, and held a respectable rank as a lawyer. While he displayed little of the popular eloquence of the advocate, his knowledge and judgment made him a valued counsellor, and his chief distinction was as a chancery lawyer. His patrimony

was adequate to all reasonable wants; the lands which he inherited from his father are now so valuable as to confer independence on their present owners. But a temper too social and facile betrayed him into some of the prevalent dissipations of the country, incautious engagements embarrassed him with the debts of his friends, and high play assisted to swallow up his estate. He at length became dependent wholly upon his professional labours, which yielded his family only a moderate support, while he owned no real estate but the house in which he lived. Not very long after the birth of his fourth child, and when Thomas was three years old, his daughter Elizabeth was seized with a malignant fever. He watched her sick bed until her death, with a tender assiduity, which, combined with his grief at the bereavement, and perhaps, with his business troubles, prostrated his strength; and within a fortnight after his daughter, he sunk, by the same disease, into a premature grave. This unexpected end was all that was needed to complete the ruin of his affairs. Out of their wreck absolutely nothing seems to have been saved for his widow and babes. The Masonic Order, of which Jonathan Jackson was an officer, gave to the widow a little cottage of a single room. In this dwelling she applied herself to the task of earning a living for herself and her children by her needle and the labours of a little school.

She is represented as a lady of graceful and commanding presence, spare, and above the ordinary height of females, and of a comely and engaging countenance. Her mind was cultivated and intelligent; and it is probable that much of the talent of her children was inherited through her. Her constitution had pulmonary tendencies, which were evidently entailed on her distinguished son. Her mind was sprightly and her temper-

ament mercurial, at one time rising to gaiety under the stimulus of social enjoyment, and at another, sinking to despondency, under the pressure of her troubles. But her character was crowned with unaffected piety. While her parentage and education would have inclined her to the Presbyterian persuasion, the difficulty of reaching their ministrations caused her to become a member of the Wesleyan or Methodist communion. General Jackson always spoke of her with tender affection, and traced his first sacred impressions to her lessons. When a daughter was born to him, a few months before his own death, he caused it to be baptised with his mother's name, Julia Laura. In the year 1830, Mrs. Jackson, whose youth and beauty still fitted her to please, married Mr. Woodson, a lawyer of Cumberland county, Virginia, whom the rising importance of the North-West had attracted, along with many other Eastern Virginians, to that country. He was a sort of decayed gentleman, much Mrs. Jackson's senior, a widower, without property, but of fair character and of a popular social turn. The marriage was distasteful to Mrs. Jackson's relations. They threatened, as a sort of penalty for it, to take the maintenance and education of the children out of the widow's hands, and offered as an inducement on the opposite side, liberal pecuniary aid if she would continue to wear her first husband's name. But love, as usual, was omnipotent. Upon her marriage to Mr. Woodson, his scanty resources compelled her to accept the protection of her former husband's kindred for her children, which she had at first declined as an infliction. The second husband's professional success was very limited, and he very soon accepted from his friend, Judge Duncan, who had also intermarried with the Jackson family, the office of Clerk of the court for the county of Fayette, which lies on the New river,



west of Greenbrier. After one year of married life, Mrs. Woodson's constitution sank upon giving birth to a son; she died two months after, on the 4th of December, 1831, and her remains await their resurrection not far from the famous Hawks Nest, of New river. Her husband announced her death to his friends in these words: "No christian on earth, no matter what evidence he might have had of a happy hereafter, could have died with more fortitude. Perfectly in her senses, calm and deliberate, she met her fate without a murmur or a struggle. Death with her had no sting—the grave could claim no victory. I have known few women of her equal, none of superior merit." The infant thus early bereaved of her care, lived to man's estate, and died of pulmonary disease, doubtless inherited from his mother, in the State of Missouri.

Thomas, then seven years old, with his brother and sister, had been sent for to visit his mother in her sickness, and he remained to witness her death. To his christian friends he stated, long afterwards, that the wholesome impression of her dying instructions and prayers, and of her triumph over the grave, had never been erased from his heart. In his manly years he delighted to think of her as the impersonation of sweetness, grace and beauty; and could never relate, without tenderness, the events of his departure for his uncle's house, when she had him mounted behind the last of his father's slaves, "good old uncle Robinson," and recalled him so anxiously to give the last touch to the arrangements for his comfort.

She had no other legacy to leave him than *those* prayers; but they availed to shield him through *the* untoward incidents of his orphanage and his *life*, and they were answered by the most glo

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