

STUDENT LIFE AT WESTERN MILITARY INSTITUTE:  
WILLIAM PRESTON JOHNSTON'S JOURNAL, 1847-1848

TRANSCRIBED BY ARTHUR MARVIN SHAW

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INTRODUCTION. William Preston Johnston, the oldest son of Albert Sidney Johnston and his wife, Henrietta Preston, was born in Louisville, Kentucky, on January 5, 1831. His mother died when he was less than five years old; and a year later his father left Kentucky for Texas, leaving his son and a four-year-old daughter, Henrietta Preston, in the care of some of their maternal relatives. The boy resided for several years in the home of his mother's youngest sister, Mrs. Josephine Rogers; and after her death in November, 1842, his further rearing was entrusted to his uncle, William Preston.<sup>1</sup>

As a soldier in Texas, Albert Sidney Johnston rendered valuable service to the young republic, rose to the rank of brigadier general, and served as Secretary of War under President Mirabeau B. Lamar.<sup>2</sup> During a visit to Kentucky in October, 1843, General Johnston married Eliza Griffin, a cousin of his first wife, took his bride to Texas, and settled on a plantation which he had purchased in Brazoria County near Galveston.<sup>3</sup> From this union six children were born;<sup>4</sup> but his affection for his oldest children, from whom he was separated most of the time, remained undiminished. William was deeply devoted to his father, and one of the brightest spots in his boyhood was a visit he made early in 1847 to China Grove, his father's plantation, which was really a large undeveloped tract of land. So strongly was the son impressed by the Texas country on this and later visits that in early manhood he made plans to immigrate there with his family; but an alteration in his father's circumstances changed his purpose.

William received his earlier education in the schools of Louisville, and later he attended an academy operated by S. V. Womack in Shelbyville, Kentucky, where one of his classmates

was his cousin and lifelong friend, Josiah Stoddard Johnston. During the session of 1846 he was a student in Centre College at Danville, Kentucky; and in the fall of 1847 he went to Georgetown, Kentucky, and entered the Western Military Institute, which was beginning its first session. It was during his stay at this school that he kept the Diary here presented.

His education suffered some interruption, but in the spring of 1851 he entered Yale College and received his Bachelor of Arts degree from that institution in the summer of 1852. At Yale he made a good scholastic record and won two prizes for literary composition. In the following year he received his diploma in law from the University of Louisville.

While at Yale College young Johnston became attached to Miss Rosa Duncan, whose widowed mother had moved with her family from Louisiana to New Haven in order to be near relatives there. Upon the completion of his law course Johnston married Miss Duncan and brought her and her mother's family to Louisville, where he began the practice of law, drawing his chief income at first from the sale of pieces of Louisville property which he had inherited from his mother. Forming a partnership with E. S. Worthington, he practised his profession in Louisville—with the exception of one year in New York City—until the outbreak of the Civil War.

Johnston's sympathies were strongly on the side of the Southern States, and he devoted his energies to assisting their cause in Kentucky. With Captain Philip Lee, James W. Hewill (who with the rank of colonel fell at Chickamauga), and Colonel R. A. Johnson he recruited a number of companies for the Confederate service; and in the winter of 1861-1862 he served with the Army of Northern Virginia as a field officer in command of Kentucky troops. Contracting a serious illness which rendered him unfit for such service, he was given a commission as aide-de-camp, with the rank of colonel of cavalry. In the meantime his father was killed in the Battle of Shiloh, April 6, 1862. As aide-de-camp Colonel William Preston Johnston served on the staff of his father's former college mate and devoted friend, President Jefferson Davis. He was a trusted friend and adviser of the President throughout the war, living part of the time in the Davis home. After the collapse of the Confederate government he was captured with his chief and

spent several months in solitary confinement at Fort Delaware. The strong friendship between Davis and his aide continued until the death of the former in December, 1889.

Following his release from prison and a voluntary exile of several months in Montreal, Canada, Johnston returned to Louisville, and shortly thereafter moved with his family to Lexington, Virginia, where he joined the faculty of Washington College, of which General Robert E. Lee was then president. Here he enjoyed the close friendship of General Lee, suffered with the fluctuating fortunes of the college, reared his family of five daughters and one son to full or near adulthood, and wrote his best work, *The Life of General Albert Sidney Johnston* (1878) a labor of love and duty to which he devoted six years.

In the fall of 1880, he assumed the difficult position of president of the Louisiana State University at Baton Rouge, an institution which had suffered many ills in the years following the war. Less than three years later he became the first president of Tulane University in New Orleans. He organized the work of the school in an effective way, wrote and lectured in behalf of educational and cultural development in the impoverished South, and published a number of articles and books. Upon his death, July 16, 1899, tributes from many parts of the country praised him as an eminent soldier, orator, author, and educator. His resting place among his kinsmen in the Cave Hill Cemetery in Louisville is marked by a tall marble shaft, the base of which bears the following inscription: "The heir of a great name, he added to his inheritance as a soldier, patriot, and founder of a great University."

The Western Military Institute, which Johnston entered in November, 1847, survived for only fifteen years, but it rendered important service during its brief existence. More than a thousand of its trained cadets went into the Confederate Army. Its founder and president, Colonel Thornton F. Johnson, was a graduate of West Point, which, with the Virginia Military Institute, served as a model for the organization of the new school. Strong emphasis was placed on mathematics, the discipline of the students was rigid, and the uniform of the school conformed rather closely to that of the United States Army. The course of study included mathematics, Greek,

Latin, French, history, chemistry, elementary philosophy, and Spanish.<sup>5</sup>

In the middle of the first session, James G. Blaine began his three-years service as a member of the faculty; and Bushrod R. Johnston, who was afterward one of Albert Sidney Johnston's generals throughout the campaign which culminated in the Battle of Shiloh, was added to the faculty in the second year.<sup>6</sup>

While a student at the Institute during the session of 1847-1848 young Johnston kept a journal in which he recorded his experiences, thoughts, and feelings.<sup>7</sup> The document is an interesting and intimate revelation of the character of the young man, who was less than seventeen years old when he began the journal; and it is interesting also for the pictures which it presents of college life in the Institute. His narrative at time glows with emotional power, and at all times it rings with sincerity. Beginning with November 6, 1847, the diary continues throughout the school session and into the summer which followed. In the middle of July, 1848, the youth abandoned the journal method of recounting his experiences, but he continued to narrate some of the occurrences and emotional reactions associated with himself during several following months.

Johnston must have stood high in the esteem of his fellow-students at the Institute, for years afterward Judge Charles E. Fenner of New Orleans said of him: "My acquaintance with Colonel Johnston began, when as a boy of fourteen, I became a student at the Western Military Institute at Georgetown, Kentucky, where Colonel Johnston was then just completing his course. He was then a splendid, beautiful, and high-spirited youth, who was worshipped by his comrades, and especially by the younger students, as a veritable hero of romance."<sup>8</sup>

#### EXTRACTS FROM MY JOURNAL<sup>9</sup>

1847. NOVEMBER 6. I have this day commenced a journal of my life, in hopes that by recording good and bad alike, I may be encouraged to persevere in what I deem correct, and shun what I consider wrong. Nerved by this desire, I hope to merit the notice of the good; and this day I note down a resolution to pursue my studies ardently.

On Nov. 1st my uncle, William Preston, Lt. Col. of the 4th Regt. Ky. Volunteers, left for Mexico.<sup>10</sup> Same day I started for Lexington with his family. Arrived there on the 2nd. On the 5th, I came to Georgetown, and to-day, I entered the Western Military Institute. This morning there was a sword presentation to returned volunteers and a Cadets' parade. Cold and cloudy. Went to see the Big Spring on the edge of town.<sup>11</sup> It is truly surprising, and throws off a vast amount of water. The Volunteers are by this time in N. O.

Nov. 7. Sunday. Would have gone to church but it rained. Read three or four chapters in the Bible and half the Latin Grammar. Paid a visit to Profs. Wyche and Martin.

Nov. 8. Went to College. Recited in Juvenal, and listened to the "Bourdon"<sup>12</sup> and "Legendre"<sup>13</sup> recited. I lay awake a long time, and my thoughts wandered to my distant home in Texas,<sup>14</sup> to my uncle, and many other subjects.

Nov. 9. To-day was a repetition of yesterday as to my duties. Altho' busily engaged time hangs heavily. No letters. I wish Stod and Pin would come. Rainy. [Footnote by the Journal's author.] Josiah Stoddard Johnston, born Feb. 1833. John Pintard Johnston, born May 5th, 1831. Sons of my uncle J. Harris Johnston, Parish of Rapides, La.

Nov. 10. Said my lessons sufficiently well. So occupied as to divert my attention from everything, but my studies. Day cold and cloudy.

Nov. 11. Busy all day. Studied, recited; walked. Took my first drill and began the great work, which is to make me a soldier. Day clear and cold.

Nov. 12. Said my Juvenal. Got a speech to declame. (So I spell it.) Went to declamation, but did not myself declaim. At night went to the—"Society." Debated some. I think I will sometime, by perseverance, make a speaker. I didn't make much of an effort to-night. Day rainy and dreary.

Nov. 13. Saturday. Rainy and dismal. Played 9 games of chess. 5 of which I beat. Studied, wrote letters. Read Weekly Courier. Rain—no exercise, dreadful headache.

Nov. 14. Sunday. Did not go to church as I should have done. Wrote to Mayes. Read Indian Legends and Tales. Met

Neophilus Ewell. He intends going to Georgetown College—a clever persevering young man. [Footnote by the Journal's author.] James Mayes, a student from Tennessee at Danville. Ewell was a jeweller whom I knew in Shelbyville.

Nov. 15. Said my lessons very well. W. Streshley, color Seargent, [*sic*] drilled me (2d time). Day good. In the evening played football. A letter from Mark Chinn. Tells me my protege, Joe Foust is learning to read. I am out of dimes. There is no situation so disagreeable to one who does not practice the credit system. Started a *lodge* of the Eclampus Vitus. Took in about a dozen members. It has started, and may take its course, I will not meddle with it. Not worth the time. Record of Folly, what Horace calls "minor insania." [Footnote by the Journal's author.] The E. V. a mock society, started by me to retaliate the attempts at practical jokings on me. I initiated 60 cadets in one week. Prof. Hopkins wished to know the object of it. I told him quizzically "charitable." "What is your initiation fee" says he. "Nothing" replied I. "Whence do you draw your means for charity" asked he. "That is our secret" Sd. I. He levelled a regulation against it; but in the meantime I had had my revenge on the jokers.

Nov. 16. Recited. Drilled. Letter from Aunt Sue.<sup>15</sup> Can draw on Branch Bk. of Ky.—Money is Rex Deorum et Hominum. Lessons as usual. Football. Must study more. Am not fully occupied. Clear day.

Nov. 18. Recited. Copied Composition. Uniform sent home. The current of my life runs smoothly on. Rainy.

Nov. 19. Recited. No drill. Declaimed at Society. Cold and cloudy.

Nov. 20. Played chess with Alpheus Lewis and got beat. He is a nephew of Jas. Turner, the great chess-player. Read Margaret Graham.<sup>16</sup>

Nov. 21. Sunday. Went to church. Heard Mr. Gano, a Campbellite preacher preach a remarkably fine sermon. Walked, wrote to Aunt Susan, Mark Chinn, and Stoddard. Letter from Wm. Woolley.<sup>17</sup> Read Mr. Clay's speech on the War.<sup>18</sup> Some parts are very beautiful and eloquent. Warm, clear, day.

Nov. 22. Recited Juvenal. Mistook the lesson in Algebra. Wrote to Wm. Woolley. Clear, Warm, day.

Nov. 23. Recited, Drilled in the manual. Spent some time with Woolfolk, who is sick of Scarlet Fever.

Nov. 24. Recited Juvenal. In the afternoon, Martin, Prof. of Mathematics, unjustly reproved me. I replied to him and we had some words, in which I conceive the French looking hound treated me badly. He apologized dubiously after school. I will not stay here, if these lousy professors take any advantages of me. A letter and "Shelby News" from Mark Chinn, and an article in favor of Gen. Taylor for President. Recd. a very pretty letter from Sister.<sup>19</sup>

I do not like to be put in a passion. It leaves its traces on my mind, and destroys all my pleasure for half-a-week. I will read the prayer book to kill the devil in me.

Nov. 25. Thanksgiving Day. I thank God for the many blessings already conferred and pray that they may be continued. First snow of the season. Snowed all day and the ground white. Our good landlady feasted us on turkey and mincepie, as a headache testifies. Studied and ran about. Quarrel with Martin still annoys me.

Nov. 26. Recited, Handed Prof. Forrester composition. Went to Society. Read a composition on Happiness, and made a speech preferring Gen. Taylor to Mr. Clay for the Presidency.<sup>20</sup> Was elected one of the two speakers for the 22nd of Feb. Emerson, the other. This is ambition. Not happier, tho' probably prouder like other little minds.

Nov. 27. Bright and cold. Studied some. Joint letters from Pa and Ma which I read with delight. 8-page letter from Wm Woolley. One from Mayes. Wrote several letters, one to Grandma.<sup>21</sup> Consulted with Forrester as to my speech. Went to see Tom Jack of Texas, who brought a letter to me from Pa and Ma. Smart fellow I judge from his face.

Nov. 28. Sunday. Wrote numerous letters. Walked. Studied. Visited Woolfolk. Day clear, cold, and dry.

Nov. 29. Recited in Juvenal geometry and Bourdon. Clear, cold day.

Nov. 30. Recited. Began to review in Geometry. Fair and Warmer.

DEC. 1, 1847. Recited as usual. Rainy day.

DEC. 2. Recited, Letter from Sister. Wishes me to go to Shelbyville. I can't go.

DEC. 3. Recited. Declaimed Wolsey's Soliloquy. Went to Society. It [was] determined to have but *one* speaker for the 22nd of Feb. I was chosen. Day, cold.

DEC. 4. Played chess in the morning. Went to see Woolfolk in the evening. Letter from Pintard. Studied. Wrote to Pintard and Sister. Cold and clear.

DEC. 5. Spent an unprofitable morning. Reading the "Cruise of the Midge."<sup>22</sup> I made good resolutions which I will try to keep. Read, studied and wrote a composition on "Eloquence."

DEC. 6. Recited. Finished "Cruise of Midge." Letter from Chinn. Day clear.

DEC. 7. Recited. I visited Forrester and chose a subject. Suggested by Woolfolk, "A Crisis the Cradle of Genius."<sup>23</sup> Prof. Martin invited me to play chess with him. Frank Hopkins is on the point of death. Fever and inflammation of the brain. Five days ago he was playing football. His father bears it badly.

DEC. 8. I awoke to find that Frank Hopkins died last night at 12 o'clock.<sup>24</sup> He died delirious. He had a remarkably fine head and his father laying his hand on it said, "This noble head has cost you a life, my boy." This was true, the brain was overtaxed. Thus was cut off in the beauty of youth, a lad of promise and talents. Recited. Recd. and wrote letters. Studied speech. I sat up with the body until two o'clock. Rainy day.

DEC. 9. Recited in the morning. Played chess in the afternoon. Rained incessantly, and in torrents. In spite of this, kept an engagement at Tom Johnson's room, as one of a committee to draft resolutions about Frank Hopkins. Waded home, quite wet in spite of overcoat and umbrella.

DEC. 10. Went to school. At eleven o'clock the funeral of Hopkins. I acted as a pall-bearer. We heard a short and excel-

lent sermon at the Christian church. In the evening walked to the Elkhorn, which is swollen with a freshet higher than all former floods. Saw a most cruel action. A drunken student threw a beautiful pointer into the boiling flood from the middle of the bridge, the waters being over the banks and threatening to dash the bridge to pieces. The poor dog was borne down by the current for some distance, but contrary to expectation, bravely stemmed the flood, and came ashore. A long story of a little matter, but I was at the time so excited about the poor dog's fate, that I felt I might record it. Gloomy and cloudy.

DEC. 11. Walked a good deal. Read the President's message.<sup>25</sup> Quite pleased with it. Read a piece of M. Chinn's in Shelby News, "Sport of the Turf—a Race for the Legislature." Had several visits. Wrote letters. Day clear and warm.

DEC. 12. Studied all day. Mr. Hopkins youngest child, a boy, sick. Rain.

DEC. 13. Mr. Hopkins' daughter died of Scarlet fever. No School. Visited White. Paid board at Mrs. Streshley's, and went to the Tavern. Heavy snow.

DEC. 14. Engaged board for next session at Jas. H. Daviess'. Went to Lexington on a stage, called a pirate, nearly frozen to death, and arrived at Lexington in a state of torpor. Stopped at Mr. Wickliffe's.<sup>26</sup>

DEC. 15. Read report of Sect. of War.<sup>27</sup> Well written and practical. Read an abridged life of Milton, and "Remarks on Machiavelli on the 10th Decade of Livy" by R. Wickliffe, Jr. Freezing weather. Roads not open.

DEC. 16. Went to see Miss Mag Woolley, and so trifled away an hour, wrote on my speech.

DEC. 17. Read, Wrote. It snowed.

DEC. 18. Spent as usual. Told Charley Woolley the Subject of my speech. In return for which he gave me a piece of advice. "A loose tongue is a bad friend." The lesson paid me. Clear day.

DEC. 19. Walked. Read in Tom Jones, and wrote.

DEC. 20. Spent the day, making arrangements to take Aunt Mag.<sup>28</sup> to Louisville. Read and wrote some.

DEC. 21. Started for Louisville at 6 A. M. Reached Frankfort at Noon, too late for the stage. Wrote some of my speech. Cold day.

DEC. 22. I learned a terrible piece of intelligence—a sudden affliction, the death of my best and kindest of grandmothers. Travelled on steamboat, *Sea Gull*, and reached Louisville at 3 o'clock at night, and proceeded at once to grandma's. This is a sorrowful day for many.

DEC. 23. My grandmother, Mrs. Caroline H. Preston died Dec. 20th at midnight. Her illness was short and apparently painful, but she was unconscious from the first and died with a tranquil smile on her features. None of us realize our loss. She is missed and mourned but merely gone on a journey—not dead. At the earnest solicitation of my relations I was reconciled to my Aunt, Mrs. Pope.<sup>29</sup> I did not believe her sincere, but could not at such a time refuse her proffered friendship. She never liked me or treated me kindly, and I shall keep a respectful distance.

DEC. 24. A sad Christmas Eve. Grandma, as usual, was making preparation for a Merry and delightful reception of all her family. The flood has done much damage and came up to Washington Street. Uncle Wm. is well in Mexico. John Drake, an old roommate at Womack's who volunteered in the Shelby Co. 3rd Regt Ky. Vol. is dead.

DEC. 25. The saddest Christmas I ever passed. Spent the day in the house.

DEC. 26. Read in Zschokke's *Tales*<sup>30</sup> and *Essays of Elia*.

DEC. 27. On business for Aunt Mag. Preparing to start for Uncle George's.<sup>31</sup> Snow and freezing cold.

DEC. 28. Saw Uncle George. Nothing important.

DEC. 29. Saw Uncle George. Gave me a bad account of my Father's affairs. Uncle Jimmy (Jason Rogers)<sup>32</sup> looks very badly.

DEC. 30. Walked, read, wrote some of my speech.

DEC. 31. Spent the morning with Wm Woolley and Bob Atwood. Dined on oysters and champagne with them. Collected my poetry (if it deserves the name) into a book.<sup>33</sup> The

first four months of this year were spent in Texas, with my father at China Grove in Brazoria County. May on the road to Kentucky. June as a vacation. July and August studying with Joe Winlock. September in Lexington. October in Louisville.

My grandmother has died, Uncle Wm gone to Mexico. Personally I have gained in height, strength, and vigor. They are ringing out the old year.

I pray God, the Almighty Ruler of the Universe, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Redeemer, that he will grant unto me a pure and honest heart, a mind free from inordinate desire, a true and real reverence, and that through his Grace, my Soul may be redeemed. I ask the same for my beloved Father, my dear Sister, and all whom I love.

1848. JANUARY 1. Passed the day at Dr. [. . . ?] and had one tooth drawn, and three plugged. Rainy.

JAN. 2. Sunday. Spent the day with Wm Woolley. Clear and warm.

JAN. 3. Aunt Mag bought me \$5 of lottery tickets as a New Year's gift. Of course they will draw \$10,000. Attended to business for Aunt Mag. Listened to the true and pitiable story of Carlos Valencia, a Mexican, through the interpretation of Wm Woolley. Warm.

JAN. 4. The same as yesterday. At night went to lecture on Human Magnetism by Dr. Keeley. Saw strange and convincing experiments, became a convert as did Uncle Howard<sup>34</sup> and James Drake. Believe in sorcery, evil eye, and all sorts of diablerie.

JAN. 5. To-day I am seventeen. How many thoughts and fancies start at the reflection, but I will not here record the day-dreams and castle-building of a boy. Started for Frankfort on the Blue Wing with Aunt Mag. Read a book called "O'Sullivan's Love."<sup>35</sup>

JAN. 6. Arrived at Frankfort after breakfast. Met Mr. Wickliffe, Judge Woolley, Bob and Mag at the [Weisiger?] House. Lost two boxes, none marked. Went to the Capitol. Senators looked fat and well-fed. Representatives looked like

their constituents raised bacons [*sic*]. Took Aunt Mag safe to her home at Lexington.

JAN. 7. Mrs. Pope, as I learn, wishes to break Grandma's will. I think this very wrong. She is very avaricious.

JAN. 8. Working on my speech. Lost boxes found.

JAN. 9. Didn't go to church. Took a long walk. Very cold.

JAN. 10. Read, and walked to the front gate of Ashland.<sup>36</sup>

JAN. 11. Went to Georgetown in the omnibus with Alpheus Lewis. Arrived at Mr. Daviess'. Letter from Ma which truly pleases me. Letters from Mark Chinn and Wm Woolley. Recd. some visits.

JAN. 12. Idle day. Read and walked some. Many visits.

JAN. 13. Went to see Thornton F. Johnson.<sup>37</sup> Recommended to him "Magnetism" for his deafness. Wrote and read in various trifling books. Rainy.

JAN. 14. Studied in Greek grammar. Read in "Amber Witch."<sup>38</sup> Read Calhoun's speech on the War opposing all extension of territory.<sup>39</sup> Played checkers. Wrote long letter to Ma. I fear for my speech. It goes slowly on, and visitors plague me. Wet spell.

JAN. 15. Bad weather still. My room-mate John White confined to his bed. I glanced over a catchpenny history of Texas, which I utterly condemn, as being sold to Sam Houston.<sup>40</sup> Read in "Tom Cringle's Log"<sup>41</sup> and Mad Restell's trial.<sup>42</sup> Walked, wrote on my speech. Read some Greek.

JAN. 16. Sunday. Heard Forrester preach a fine sermon at Campbellite Church. His gestures are constrained and he distorts his face. Took a pleasant walk with Will Hall. Recd. letter from John Redding. Hope he will do well. He is a clever fellow. Cool and cloudy. [Footnote by the Journal's author.] Redding was the son of the Tavern-Keeper at Shelbyville. His father treated him injudiciously. He took to drinking afterwards and so died.

JAN. 17. Left my speech with Forrester for correction. Walked to the Toll-gate on Frankfort road. The day was clear and delightful. The view from the high banks of the Elkhorn,

from the turnpike is beautiful. The creek makes a horse shoe bend at your feet, though far below you. You look down on the opposite side sloping in every direction toward the brook, and spreading out in rich, brown, fields and blue-grass pastures. Down the creek is an old mill, with a cluster of houses around it, and you can just see and hear the splash of the waters. Far, far away where the slope has risen to our level, is a white brick mansion, the Lombardy poplar, rising like reeds around it, and half-veiled with a transparent haze. The scene is calm, serene, and beautiful.

JAN. 18. Weather clear and beautiful. Took yesterday's walk again. Finished Tom Cringle's Log. A pretty fair sea-novel but I consider the time spent in reading it, rather wasted. Had a great many visitors.

JAN. 19. Walked to the Bourbon Bridge and saw the sun rise. After breakfast went to Frankfort Toll-gate. Finished the "Amber Witch" by Dr. Meinhold. This is an exquisite and natural book. I forswear novels henceforth. Unwell with diarrhea and torpid liver. Fine day.

JAN. 20. Sick last night. Attended the Arithmetic and Algebra classes at Mr. Forbes' room. All are pleased with him. Talked to him after class and am quite pleased. He was asst. Prof. at the Va. Military Institute. I walked to the Bourbon bridge and down the creek. Fine day.

JAN. 21. Letter from Mark Chinn. He is again smitten. Forrester has not yet corrected my speech. I walked about all day. My Diarrhea very bad. Took some brandy for it and feel wretchedly. Wrote letters and played chess. Fine weather.

JAN. 22. Fine weather continues. I feel miserably.

JAN. 23. Still sick. Walked a good deal. Wrote letters.

JAN. 24. Recited to Forbes. Played chess. Laid on the damp grass, which I repent. Fine day.

JAN. 25. Arose as sick as possible. Hot and aching head. Did not stay through Forbes' recitation. Recd. my corrected speech from Forrester. Played football and felt better. Cloudy day.

JAN. 26. Rainy day. No recitations. Worked on speech. Walked. Played football. Feel better.

JAN. 27. Recited. Played football. Worked on Speech. White and I had a candy pulling, and I drank a weak brandy punch of my own manufacture.

JAN. 28. Recited. Finished copying speech. Solved the extra problems given out by Forbes on Monday. Letter from Pa with the announcement that I had a brother born on the 28th Dec. (McClung is the name given him.)<sup>43</sup> Recd. several letters. Fair day.

JAN. 29. Wrote several letters. Commenced committing speech to memory. Walked a good deal. Went to a juggler's and ventriloquist's show. Fair day.

JAN. 30. Studied Recitation for tomorrow. Read the Magic Figurehead, <sup>44</sup> a catchpenny novel. Sunday.

JAN. 31. Recited. Played football.

FEBRUARY 1, 1848. Studied. Played football, etc. Fine day.

FEB. 2. Purchased cloth for uniform. Read "Drama at Pokerville" by Field, and some in "Don Juan." Played chess and football. Got hurt at the latter.

FEB. 3. Had a pleasant ride to Lexington. Pleasant day.

FEB. 4. Stayed in Lexington contrary to my intention. Miss Mary Wickliffe gave a dancing party, but I would not go in.

FEB. 5. Returned to Georgetown in the evening. My lottery tickets drew 85 cents. Read Iron Mask. Snowy, Windy, freezing day.

FEB. 6. I read. Clear day.

FEB. 7. School opened. Recited. Clear day and cold.

FEB. 8. Recited. Read in Charles O'Malley.<sup>45</sup> Meeting of the Arathenean Society. Refused presidency. Elected corresponding sect. Badges decided on are red rosettes and streamers.

FEB. 9. Recited in Arithmetic and Algebra: also first lesson in Cicero De Officiis. Walked. Clear and cold.

FEB. 10. Recited in Homer De Officiis. Arith. and Algebra. Heard from Pin and Stod, they will be here tomorrow. The anticipation of my speech is very painful. Look up, Friend

William, Wait until you are certainly disgraced before you feel so.

FEB. 11. Recited. Debated at the Society.

FEB. 12. Studied speech. Finished "Chas. O'Malley." Walked to the Cincinnati Bridge. Gave an oyster supper. Oysters not good, but the boys enjoyed them.

FEB. 13. Sunday. Pestered by visitors. Pintard and Stod arrived looking pretty well. Clear day.

FEB. 14. Very Rainy. Spent the day assisting Pintard in settling down. Played chess.

FEB. 15. Recited. Pin and Stod examined.

FEB. 16. Recited. Walked. Letter from Will Woolley. He is doing better. Cloudy.

FEB. 17. Finished committing speech. Rainy.

FEB. 18. Recited. Had a lesson from Forrester on Elocution. Recited my speech to a bubbling spring, an old stone dairy, and a tree. Went to the Society and took part in the debate. Arrangements for the 22nd discussed at length. Rainy.

FEB. 19. Visited Thornhill who is sick. Read "Martin the Foundling" by Eugene Sue through. Sat up till midnight chatting with White and Pintard. Rainy.

FEB. 20. Repeated my speech at the old dairy. Emerson tells me that Forrester has allowed Jim Patterson to read my speech. If so it explains his intrigues to speak first, and is a shabby trick, a dirty piece of meanness.

FEB. 21. Did not go to School. Repeated my speech twice. Forrester says he did not let Patterson see my piece, and yet he has read it. I am awfully afraid but everything demands courage and confidence in myself. I will do what I can.

FEB. 22. The 22nd has arrived. I dress to the very tip. Went to the institute. Tom Johnson, in what I conceived, a spirit of arrogance, interfered with the arrangements. I denied his right to do so. He said some things, apparently general in their tenor, but as some of the boys thought he alluded to me, after the speaking, I recurred to them. The ceremonies came off in Christian Church. 1st. Prayers. 2nd. Then Patterson,

spoke in an animated manner, a speech strongly flavored with my ideas. 3rd. Mr. James Gray in a speech of 45 minutes for the Ciceronian Society of Georgetown College and lastly myself. I lacked animation, for I was frightened to death at first. The allusions in my speech to Genl. Taylor were enthusiastically applauded. The long feared and contemplated speech is spoken. I did as well as the best on the occasion. Thank God it is over, and well over in spite of all disadvantages and native diffidence. In spite of the rain we had a crowded house. My foot is on the first round of the ladder, my eyes turned upwards ever.

After dinner, not being able to see Tom Johnson, I went to his room, and requested a moment's conversation with him. I stated that it was thought his allusions were to me, and wished him to state whether they were or not. He said they were not. That his allusions were not to me. He made this explanation before Phil Warren. I knew he was brave, and stronger than I, and I intended to attack him nevertheless, if he said he meant me. I am glad he did not for if he had whipped me, I would have killed him.

FEB. 23. Recited and Studied as usual. Wrestled with White.

FEB. 24. Recited. Read the Adventures of [Hare?] the Highwayman.<sup>46</sup>

FEB. 25. Recited, attended Elocution Class. Had a supper in Pin's room, of dried beef, welsh rarebit, preserves, and maple sugar.

FEB. 26. Walked, wrote composition and letters, bad cold, clear day.

FEB. 27. Walked to the cliff on the creek, known as Indian's Rock, so called, because, a son of the forest shot a white man, and plunged from this rock, down the precipice into the creek, some fifty feet. Did not go to church, clear warm day. Saw Bob Woolley who has just graduated in the Law School.

FEB. 28. Very bad cold, but recited. Eat beef and cheese after supper, my eyes inflamed, and awoke in the night to find them glued up. Clear.

FEB. 29. Eyes badly inflamed. Read *Rattlin the Reefer*.<sup>47</sup> Windy day.

MARCH 1, 1848. Did not go to school. Had sore eyes. Drank currant wine. Cold and windy.

MARCH 2. Studied hard all day. Solved all my problems except one. Snowing hard.

MARCH 3. Recited very well. Went to Society and found no quorum. Went to hear the Reformed Gambler Green. Cold and windy day.

MARCH 4. Snow on the ground. Did not go about. Read Green's books on gambling.<sup>48</sup>

MARCH 5. Sunday. Went to Christian Church. Heard Swift preach learnedly. Cold.

MARCH 6. Went to School. Recited. Attended Green's lectures.

MARCH 7. Recited. Saw E. R. Smith. Walked on the Cincinnati road. Clear day.

MARCH 8. Beautiful morning like Indian Summer. The mists gathering blue in the distance but it wound up in a dismal rain. Recited. Made Squad Marcher of the Arithmetic class. Forbes told me I had the best marks in the class.

MARCH 9. Recited. I am studying hard and pressed for time.

MARCH 10. Recited. Failed in declamation by not knowing my speech. Went to Arathenean Society. Question, "Is the Mexican War Just." I spoke twice. Strongly in the affirmative. Pintard made his maiden speech and quite a good one in the negative. The affirmative gained it by a majority. Cloudy.

MARCH 11. Studied Algebra. Eat an immense quantity of homemade sugar. Walked. Cloudy.

MARCH 12. Sunday. Heard Swift preach. To-day saw the beautiful owner of the cinderella slipper. Day pleasant, but windy.

MARCH 13. Recited as usual. The windiest day in the year, it fairly howled. Clear and cold.

MARCH 14. Recited as usual. Very Cold day.

MARCH 15. Recited as usual. Very cold day.

MARCH 16. " " " " " ". Saw fairy foot.

MARCH 17. Recited in ancient Geography, and read my composition.

MARCH 18. Went to Lexington with Bob McHatton for Forrester. Took dinner at Mr. Wickliffe's. Aunt Mag showed me the splendid diamond Uncle Wm sent her from Mexico and read me some of his letters. I wrote to Pa. Oh! how I love my father.

MARCH 19. Sunday. Heard Forrester preach.

MARCH 20. Went to school badly prepared on a hard algebra lesson, which all of the class missed. Forbes gave us such a lecture!

MARCH 21. Recited Mathematical lesson of yesterday again. Amused ourselves at Prof. Wyche's expense.

MARCH 22. Forbes lectured on "the problem of the lights" for two hours. I think I now comprehend it. I shall take Cicero's precept hereafter to heart "Let Reason be our Guide." Played two games of chess with Forbes, which he won. Another Revolution in France." Liberty and truth will prevail.

MARCH 23. Recited. Small fight provoked by him.<sup>50</sup> Blows were passed. We were separated.

MARCH 24. Recited and went to society. Recd. a letter from Ma in regard to their condition in Texas. What she says makes me unhappy. Here am I at college spending money, and they deprived of the common comforts of life. Unless some other arrangement is made after this session I leave college.

MARCH 25. Rode with Stevenson about seven miles in the country to his father's stock farm. He is a clever, intelligent, fellow. Saw much beautiful scenery and some fine cattle. We dined at Oliver Gaines the father of Willy Gaines, the Buena Vista color Seargent [*sic*], who to use his own expression, "Fit & fit & fit & fit." His mother declared "Billy warnt afeard of

nothin: He'd hit a man as big as a house, jest as lief as not." "Had I hearn tell of his taking chloroform" and many more marvellous stories of her Billy. It was evident he was her pride.

A motion passed the society to print my speech. They may if they wish, I do not care.

MARCH 26. Went to Bible class. Gave my speech to Mr. Daviess for correction. Received a letter from my best and kindest of fathers. Oh! What a bitter life he is leading for one like him. He writes "Cherish friendship, it is a pleasant delusion." My heart is full, and my eyes overflowing.

MARCH 27. Recited tolerably well. Rainy day.

MARCH 28. Recited. Cloudy day. I am unhappy about my father.

MARCH 29. Recited and drilled. Dreamed of Pa and Ma all night long. Clear day.

MARCH 30. Recited and drilled. Heard from M. Chinn. Am Squad Marcher of a class of nineteen, in Arithmetic. Finished Arithmetic. Sat up till one o'clock with Slaughter of Texas who is ill. Old Hopkins exam[ined] the class.

MARCH 31. Stayed all morning with Slaughter. Handed in a composition, and went to Society.

APRIL 1, 1848. Idled the day. Wrote some letters.

APRIL 2. Sat with Slaughter all morning. Attended Bible class.

APRIL 3. Recited and drilled. Slaughter better.

APRIL 4. " . No drill, it rained.

APRIL 5. " commenced geometry. Rain, letter from Mrs. Drake announcing the death of Col. Jason Rogers, on April 3d. He was kind to me in childhood, and I am under many obligations to him. I always will act a brother's part to his orphans. I feared when last I saw him I never would see him more.

APRIL 6. Recited. Drilled. Clear day.

APRIL 7. Recited in the morning. The glorious news of the French Republic is here. France again is free!<sup>51</sup> The world awakes!

APRIL 8. Sidney's birthday—the third.<sup>52</sup> Wrote to Ma. Finished Rokeby and read the 1st Canto of Marmion. Mark Chinn by letter earnestly begs me to come down to see him, but I cannot.

APRIL 9. Mr. Daviess assisted me to correct my speech.

APRIL 11. Went in bathing in the Elkhorn at daylight.

APRIL 16. Recited all my lessons this week. Went fishing yesterday, or rather sat 3 hours on the bank of the creek and caught a minnow. Finished Marmion.

APRIL 17. Attended Bible class went to church and heard old John T. Johnson preach. Forrester lectured on "Devils" in the evening.

APRIL 18. Bathed at Sunrise in the creek. It turned cold and snowed in the afternoon.

APRIL 20. Appointed Squad Marcher in Geometry.

APRIL 21. Went to Lexington to see Aunt Margaret. I attended Keeley's Lecture on Human Magnetism with Mag. Woolley. Hot dusty day. I heard Mr. Wickliffe speak against the Railroad.

APRIL 24. Returned to Georgetown.

APRIL 28. Have missed no recitations. Spent the day with John Pouke. Mary Munday, Sally and Betty Faulkner and other girls there. Played one game of cards. Would have fallen in love with M. M.'s pretty face, but found that she was a ninny. Sally Faulkner tried to flirt with me, but I wouldn't.

APRIL 30. Sally F. sent me some candy on the principle that my stomach was the straightest road to my heart. Read the Lord of Isles.

MAY 1, 1848. Mayday celebration. Military boys had a parade and buried the chevrons of the officers who go out of office today. I recd. a severe blow on the temple by being pulled out of my chair by an awkward negro who was pulling off my boots. When I cried "Hold on" he held on, and I came on the floor. My eye is black and blue.

MAY 2. Saw [. . . ?] "Adam and Eve." Splendid, bold relief, lights and tints fine.

MAY 9. This week past I attended my lessons regularly. Rose at 5 o'clock, and bathed nearly every day at Big Rock. Studied Mnemonics and read Harold the Dauntless, Bridal of Triermain, Don Roderick and other poems of Scott. Drilled every day.

MAY 10. Began Cicero De Senectute.

MAY 13. Read several of Scott's Poems. Gist and Thornhill had a fight and when I parted them, came near being whipped for my officiousness. Finished all of Scott's Poems.

MAY 15. Have sore throat from bathing. First grand dress parade. Very much fatigued. My eyes inflamed so that I cannot study.

MAY 21. Having been unable to study by reason of my eyes on the 18th went to Lexington, where I was introduced to a good many girls by Mag Woolley. Came down after church to Georgetown.

MAY 28. Recited and drilled regularly and swam often.

JUNE 6, 1848. Have recited and studied and drilled regularly. Read Const. of U. S. and Articles of Confederation and some of the Federalists by the simplicity and strength of which I am charmed.

JUNE 7. After recitations and duties, went to see Bledsoe Harmon and Jim Kemp execute a threat to duck an Irishman in the Big Spring. The man's wife begged and prayed, and he stood in his loft with an axe and defied them. They could not take him.

JUNE 11. Have attended to my duties, military and academic regularly. To-day went to church and heard Swift preach. He said "Hell is a place of thought, thought of abused privileges, thought of slighted energies, thought of insulted love." Had a long walk in the country with E. R. Smith whom I like very much.

JUNE 12. Reported for "swearing and disobedience of orders." Do not recollect whether I did or not. But it is a bad habit, and I forswear swearing. Drilled and recited as usual.

JUNE 13. Felt rather sick from overeating myself with cherries. Had a talk with Major Forbes, who advised me very

kindly against swearing. Finished a commonplace novel by James Henry De [. . . ?]. Rec'd. a letter from my father. These letters fill me with joy. If I can, by labor or study or pain, please this best and noblest of men I will spare no exertion.

JUNE 21. Recited Algebra etc. and drilled as usual. I feel a deep humiliation because I fear I am not the first in my classes as I should be, and all because I have not studied as I should. But from this to the end of the session I will study.

JUNE 22. How vain are good resolutions. After recitation I spent all evening reading Dumas' "Sylvandire" thus wasting my time, as I lately have on novel reading. I will try to study *now*, spite of the amateur concert on the Jewsharp, going on below. I have neither talent for music nor sense of time or tune, but I like even the Jewsharp, the fife and drum thrill me, and the piano invokes all manner of memories.

JUNE 23. Last day of school. Passed examination.

JUNE 29. Made a visit to Lexington, and attended several parties in Georgetown. Flirted with several pretty girls, Sally Faulkner, Lizzie Gatlin [. . . ?], and others.

JUNE 30. My labors for the session are over, the expected day has past. Was examined on Algebra and Geometry. I had the "problem of the lights." I did much better than I expected. To-day's experience has not changed my faith in my "Good Luck."

JULY 1, 1848. Read "Rienzi." White and I had some short words, I would not room with him again to save his life. If I were not too large for him, he would have had twenty fights with me, and if I would have let him, fifty quarrels. To keep peace and to learn to control my own passionate nature, I have submitted to too much from him. The *greater part* of my friendship has departed from him and then too I did not know when I went to room with him, that he was the son of a negro trader.

JULY 2. Heard an eloquent sermon by Swift.

JULY 3. Finished "Rienzi." Forbes told me I was *one* of the five best. In time I will come to be *the Best*. White and I scarcely speak. I cannot leave town for want of money.

JULY 4. Grand Parade and speeches.

JULY 5. Parted from several pretty girls of my friends. Saddest of all, Sally Faulkner, with whom I had a very agreeable evening. Kissed several of the girls.

JULY 6. Went to Shelbyville, where I stopped to see Mark Chinn. The stage upset two miles past Shelbyville, severely injuring one man. See my luck.

JULY 7. Walked and talked with Mark. Went to see Jenny Brown, but she was uninteresting.

JULY 8. Spent this day with Mark. He spoke at the Rough and Ready Club. Visited Sam Womack.<sup>53</sup>

JULY 10. Finished a very pleasant visit to my old friend. Rode as far as Middletown with Sam Womack in his buggy.

JULY 11. Reached Louisville at 8 o'clock in the morning. Womack opened his heart to me. Stopped at Aunt Sue's. Will Woolley is writing a burlesque opera, "Il Bontona."

Finding this too long and tedious I will hereafter condense it into a narrative form.

For a week the whole family were in a state of nervous excitement expecting the arrival of my uncle William Preston. Lt. Col. of 4th Ky. Regt which was returning from the Mexican War. Finally on the 18th, he did return with a great moustache, his two negro men, a Mexican boy, Jose Maria, a Havana poodle, and much camp equipage. He brought his wife a beautiful pearl necklace that cost \$750. Next morning he shaved his moustache and has not been seen with one since. Paris was again baptized in blood and as many men killed as we lost in the Mexican War.<sup>54</sup> I regretted the loss to freedom. I passed the remainder of the month, visiting my friends, walking in the evening with the neighborhood girls, reading and loafing. Grew quite sentimental with one, who was a nice girl enough, but who took me in earnest. This little matter cost me a great deal of trouble. I admired the scenery, and finally passed [. . . ?], struck up an acquaintance with a pretty creole girl, Lucie DeSeville, with whom I had quite a flirtation, and shook hands when we parted. I have never seen her since. Pintard met us at the landing and we jolted up to the house

in the wagon. The next day I enjoyed in seeing all the negroes, and in the afternoon had a brisk swim with Pintard in the river, which being very turbid and muddy, required a shower bath at the house, to remove the traces of. "Nob and Maurice" gave a concert on the bones and a Jawbone. On Sunday, Aunt Mary read prayers to a congregation of 16 or 17, including Mrs. Powell and her family of seven children. I spent about a week here swimming and wandering over the farm. Took a twenty mile ride through the hills, through a rough, but pleasant looking country with log cabins and small orchards always almost in view. Carrollton at the mouth of the river is a dirty river village. Two large distilleries for bad, [. . . ?] whisky are the principal features of the place. I read "Jane Eyre" during the visit and was deeply interested in it but it did not impress as it did this winter past (1857) [sic].<sup>55</sup> Will Woolley published "Il Bontona," a burlesque and not a bad one on Louisville Society. Being an opera it required some talent in music to adapt it to his various airs. He is a most versatile genius.

I had quite a quarrel with James Dwyer an Irishman, who married Mrs. Rogers servant girl Catherine. She had been kind to me, and about seven years previous, on their marriage, my father had given them the use of a suburban  $\frac{1}{2}$  acre lot for ten years free of rent. They had never availed themselves of the chance, but I now offered to extend the time ten years. Jimmy, however, insisted on a fee simple and warranty deed to the lot, and I incurred great indignation from them. I sold the lot about 5 years after for \$3400.

I made a singular acquaintance about this time. Julius Johnson, a wild young Virginian, of fine talents, married a niece of Mr. Christy's. He was very happy with his wife and had a fine practice, but was a man of an enthusiastic and poetical, though mercurial cast. His wife is said to have been charming and they had two sweet children, she was an ardent Catholic, and dying, he abandoned the world to which he had been intensely devoted, and commenced a novitiate. This summer he had been admitted as a priest after five years novitiate, and was on his way to the Jesuit College at Cincinnati, as Professor of Rhetoric. He always wore a smile and was a very fascinating man. I have heard since that he was

sent to some East Indian Mission and died. How strange a fate.

I spent this part of the summer trying to remedy my flirtation with Julia Bull by friendly coolness and kindness. She had an unhappy home, and was therefore the more anxious to marry. I frequently heard poor Jim Drake sing. He had once had a beautiful voice, and still sang well his old songs. He was an unhappy man, because self-indulged and indolent. He and his wife were now consuming the remnants of his handsome property. It was as much her fault as his, but I did pity them.

On the 22d of August, we received news that the Irish Rebellion had broken out.<sup>56</sup> How did I sympathize with them and long to strike a blow for liberty. I was almost hopeful of her success.

Uncle Howard told me a story of a trick played at the University of Virginia which resulted better than most practical jokes. There was an old fellow who sold eggs and who lived near Charlottesville and who had a bad habit of getting drunk frequently. One night when riding home dead drunk almost, the students shot and disembowelled the horse and [. . . ?] the old man up in him with his head out, but so tight that he could see nothing but the tail of the horse. In the morning they found him in prayer, he imagined himself in Hell and suffered greatly from the fear. On being released and finding \$40 there to replace his old horse, he was overjoyed. Swore he would never get drunk again and kept his word to the vast benefit of his family.

August 25, 1848. Made another visit to Mr. Hancock's. It is a pleasant place. The house has for a background the hills of the Kentucky river and stands on a mound or [. . . ?] of the hills about twenty acres in extent. In front a hundred acres of Indian corn, covered "the Bottom." Beyond this through an opening in the timber you could see the house at the Lock and Dam, and naked hill rising behind it bluff [*sic*]. In the distance loom the blue hills of the Ohio. Whenever it rains here, the mud in the bottom is almost impassable. These bottoms are splendid meadow lands and make a fine crop of hay.

I saw here the death of a country drunkard. He was a fisherman, and petty thief. Dying on straw in a wretched hovel, 9 feet square, on the river bank, he died in great suffering. I had never expected to see such a sight in this land of comfort. Uncle George did a great deal for them, giving them food etc. Waiting at the Ferry House for the boat, I heard the gossip about Sampson. "It took 13 yds of truck for his shroud." "It was named to me, and I allow it for true, that Sampson must ha' drunk 50 Bar'ls of whiskey in his life."

Met many of my military cadet companions on the boat, and reached Georgetown to dinner next day. Saw the professors and made my arrangements for board, with Mrs. Sanders, with Pintard and Stoddard as roommates. Saw Bettie and Susan Sanders for the first time.

Had a mighty flirtation with Sallie Faulkner. She was an arrant little coquette. Had had twenty beaux. She was the most amiable and insipid of creatures. As fat as a fall partridge, with clean red and white skin, rosy lips and a' that. She was fond of kissing too, and tried by the most fascinating methods to entice my young heart. I was a devoted follower, but could not fall in love with her, even at this susceptible age.

At this time began a very beneficial influence—that of Major Wm. Forbes, Assistant Supt and Professor of Mathematics. Under his advice I resolved 1st, not to swear, 2d to be quiet on the streets, 3d to study hard, and 4th not to visit the girls. I read Ferguson's *Roman Republic*<sup>57</sup> and thought it elegant and delightful. About this time I had formed some anti-slavery opinions on rotten emancipation ideas and thought I was in favor of the Wilmot Proviso. As I always am willing to admit what influences help to mould my views, I must here recall a conversation with Uncle William on the subject in which he laid down what is the moderate Southern idea on the subject, and which once advanced at once met my views. Since this experience, observation, reason, everything has strengthened me in these opinions, which were then first broached to me.

Rode out in an ancient rattletrap hack two miles to see the "Association." This is a sort of camp meeting of the old Ironside Calvinistic Baptists in a beautiful grove about two miles

from Georgetown. The preacher addressed a large congregation, white and black, from a log pulpit. Outside of the circle of religions, it seemed a good deal of a frolic and boys and negroes consumed a large amount of cider and gingerbread. I was in Geometry, Descriptive Geometry, Chemistry, Philosophy (Natural). Attended Elocution Class. About the middle of September Professor Forbes told me I was *first* in geometry; then our most important class. I took active interest in the Arathenean Debating Society. I remember pleasantly an agreeable ride with my dear friend Ed Stevenson, to look at some of his father's cattle. We passed through a beautiful country and saw the Lemon Mills. Stevenson was a very lean, sallow young man, retiring, silent, and proud, yet full of observation, confiding with his intimate friends, and for a young man, a forcible and often an eloquent speaker. We became quite intimate.

I attended a wedding between a good looking wealthy young man of a neighboring village and a very pretty girl, who had been engaged to a schoolmate of mine, an erratic youth from New Orleans. I was greatly disgusted at her want of faith, as it was said to be a made up marriage. It was not happy and she died soon after. A party of "Maskers" calling themselves "Anarougians" intruded themselves in horrible disguises, with grotesque antics. This blot on civilization was tolerated, although not approved by the public opinion of the village.

I attended in the main very well to my studies, although I was much interrupted by the presence in the house, of Betty Sander's visitors. I did not usually engage in any unlawful enterprise, but as Dr. Desha had offered his apples to anyone who could take them—at the risk of being shot, I assisted in robbing his orchard. I never much relished the idea of being a robber however, and it was only the bravado that led me on in this instance. I had regular charge of a squad which I drilled twice a day. My laziness and varied occupations interfered somewhat in my progress and I continually found fault with myself and finally resolved if I fell behind to quit the school. I was made Sergeant Major of the Battalion, with rank of 1st Non-Commissioned officer.

About Oct. 1st I heard of the death of Wm. J. Graves,<sup>58</sup> with great regret. He had been partner in law with my Uncle William Preston and was always kind to me, encouraging me and foretelling good things for me. He was a man of strongly marked character. He was about six feet in heighth. [*sic*], very active and athletic with a commanding presence. His features were handsome and a somewhat massive forehead shaded fine hazel eyes. He was fond of speculation and cards. A keen trader, with a most vigorous will, to which most men stooped, grasping but not avaricious, ambitious, with great self command, friendly with his friends and arrogant to his foes. He was very formidable in politics, although his early education was defective. After his unfortunate duel in which he killed Cilley<sup>59</sup> of New Hampshire, while in Congress, a blight seemed to come over his fortunes, and a sensitiveness to public opinion, which condemns a man whether he accepts or refuses to fight a duel, seemed to throw a shade of misanthropy over his character. It was at this time that I knew him, and found in him a man whose original nature was full of fine impulses. He died after a painful illness, and on his death bed professed Christianity in the Communion of the Presbyterian Church.

I kept up a regular correspondence with Mark Chinn and others, altho' I cannot say it was for improvement but only to testify my regard for those to whom I wrote.

One subject caused me much unhappiness—my father's situation. It seemed so unsuited to his talents, and desires, and yet withal, his patience under debt, and difficulty, and almost despair, was so noble. No friend reached out a hand to aid him, and he was one of those who would "die and make no sign." Three or four thousand dollars would save him, by buying in the judgements against Hall, and thus paying for his plantation.<sup>60</sup>

But youth cannot suffer long mental ills, I found solace in the beautiful weather of a Kentucky autumn. My eyes have always been open to the beauties of nature. I derived a positive delight in the beautiful rural scenery of Scott Co. In the rich foliage of the woodlands, the blue haze of Indian summer, and the sapphire sky, in the sunshine mellowed by the cooling

breezes of autumn. Especially do I recollect one delightful evening I spent with a schoolmate whom I liked much, Will Wood. I rode home with him on a horse he brought in for me, one Saturday morning. The day was fine and we spent the afternoon working out geometrical problems. His father was a clever easy old Squire, and his mother, who looked as if just about to suffer apoplexy, was fat, purple and melancholy. She looked as if she had just buried all her family, but was really a well to do old lady with few ideas.

After a hearty supper we started off to look for some neighbors with whom we had imperfectly arranged a 'coon hunt. They had the dogs and had started. We followed them at a gallop, but betrayed by the horns of another party went up lanes and down crop road. We found a party just catchin a 'possum and leaving them took our way at a gallop in the cool night air, homewards, where we arrived after a fine ride of eight or nine miles. One of our companions was more vexed at missing the hunt, than he was pleased with the ride, but I enjoyed it exceedingly.

#### FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> For the only full-length study of William Preston Johnston the author of this article is obliged to suggest his own book: Arthur Marvin Shaw, *William Preston Johnston: A Transitional Figure of the Confederacy* (Baton Rouge, 1943). By consulting the index of this biography, the reader may easily check all of the statements concerning Johnston which the introductory portion of this article contains. The bibliography of the volume lists the titles of several brief sketches of Johnston's career.

<sup>2</sup> William Preston Johnston, *The Life of General Albert Sidney Johnston Embracing His Services in the Armies of the United States, the Republic of Texas, and the Confederate States* (New York, 1878), pages 72-92.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pages 129-130.

<sup>4</sup> W. P. Johnston, *The Johnstons of Salisbury* (New Orleans, 1897), page 158.

<sup>5</sup> Altstetter, Mabel, and Watson, Gladys, "Western Military Institute, 1847-1861," *Filson Club History Quarterly*, April, 1936, pages 100-105.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pages 103-104.

<sup>7</sup> The Journal, along with Johnston's other papers, is now in possession of the Howard-Tilton Library of Tulane University, New Orleans.

<sup>8</sup> New Orleans *Picayune*, July 17, 1899.

<sup>9</sup> This caption and several references in the Journal indicate that this text is a version which the author made from the original one some years after it was written.

<sup>10</sup> William Preston, who was prominent in law and politics before the Civil War, was serving as aide-de-camp to his brother-in-law, General Albert Sidney Johnston, when that leader was killed at the Battle of Shiloh. Later Preston served as a general in the Confederate Army, and after the war devoted himself chiefly to the practice of law. Johnston, *The Johnstons of Salisbury*, pages 197-200.

- <sup>11</sup> The source of Georgetown's present water supply.
- <sup>12</sup> L. D. Bourdon, author of algebra textbooks.
- <sup>13</sup> A. M. Legendre, author of geometry textbooks.
- <sup>14</sup> China Grove, his father's plantation in Texas.
- <sup>15</sup> Mrs. Susan Preston Christy, youngest sister of Johnston's mother. Johnston, *The Johnstons of Salisbury*, page 213.
- <sup>16</sup> A novel by George Payne Rainsford James. (Only obscure titles mentioned in the Journal will be identified).
- <sup>17</sup> One of Johnston's cousins, who had considerable literary talent but who died before reaching manhood.
- <sup>18</sup> This speech was delivered at Lexington, Kentucky, November 13, 1847, and in it Clay called upon Congress to disclaim any intention of annexing Mexico and to announce purposes of the war. Allen Johnson and Dumas Malone (eds.), *Dictionary of American Biography*, 20 vols. and index (New York, 1930), Vol. IV, page 178.
- <sup>19</sup> Many letters which passed between Johnston and his sister during this period are among Johnston's papers.
- <sup>20</sup> Young Johnston shared his father's favorable opinion of Zachary Taylor. Albert Sidney Johnston's admiration of Taylor began during the Black Hawk War and continued until Taylor's death. The older officer for his part had a high opinion of Johnston's ability and expressed himself to that effect at a time when such an endorsement was useful to Johnston. See Johnston, *Albert Sidney Johnston*, pages 132-133.
- <sup>21</sup> Mrs. Caroline Hancock Preston.
- <sup>22</sup> A novel by Michael Scott.
- <sup>23</sup> Johnston's oration for February 22nd.
- <sup>24</sup> The death of this young man is recorded also in the Order Book of the Institute. See Altstetter and Watson, "Western Military Institute, 1847-1861," page 104.
- <sup>25</sup> President James K. Polk's annual message to Congress, December 7, 1847, relating to the disposition of defeated Mexico.
- <sup>26</sup> Probably Robert Wickliffe, father-in-law of Johnston's uncle, William Preston. Johnston, *The Johnstons of Salisbury*, page 197.
- <sup>27</sup> William Learned Marcy.
- <sup>28</sup> Mrs. Margaret Wickliffe Preston, wife of William Preston. Johnston, *The Johnstons of Salisbury*, page 197.
- <sup>29</sup> Mrs. Maria Preston Pope, sister of Johnston's mother. Johnston, *The Johnstons of Salisbury*, pages 207-208.
- <sup>30</sup> Heinrich Zschokke, *Tales from the German*, edited by Parke Godwin.
- <sup>31</sup> George Hancock, youngest brother of Mrs. Caroline Hancock Preston, Johnston's grandmother. Johnston, *The Johnstons of Salisbury*, page 216.
- <sup>32</sup> Husband of Mrs. Josephine Preston Rogers, an aunt of Johnston's. *Ibid.*, page 209.
- <sup>33</sup> In the latter part of his life Johnston published three volumes of verse: *My Garden Walk* (New Orleans, 1894); *Pictures of the Patriarchs* (New Orleans, 1895); *Seekers After God* (Louisville, 1898).
- <sup>34</sup> Howard Christy, husband of Mrs. Susan Preston Christy, Johnston's aunt. Johnston, *The Johnstons of Salisbury*, page 213.
- <sup>35</sup> A novel by William Carleton.
- <sup>36</sup> Henry Clay's home in Lexington, Kentucky.
- <sup>37</sup> Founder and superintendent of the Institute. Altstetter and Watson, "Western Military Institute," pages 100-101.
- <sup>38</sup> A novel by Johan Wilhelm Meinhold.
- <sup>39</sup> Calhoun was the South's principal opponent of the Wilmot Proviso.
- <sup>40</sup> For an account of the unpleasant relationships between Albert Sidney Johnston and Sam Houston, see Johnston, *Albert Sidney Johnston*, pages 120-127.
- <sup>41</sup> A novel by Michael Scott.

<sup>42</sup> Probably one of the following: "Trial of Madame Restell, alias Ann Lohman, for abortion and causing the death of Mrs. Purdy." . . . New York. For sale at the bookstand in Wall St., adjoining the Custom house (1841), 21 pages. Or "Wonderful trial of Caroline Lohman, alias Restell, with speeches of counsel, charge of court and verdict of jury." Reported in full for the *National Police Gazette*, New York, Burgess, Stringer and Co. (c. 1847), 38 pages.

<sup>43</sup> One of Albert Sidney Johnston's younger sisters, Eliza, whose age was nearest his own, had married John Alexander McClung. Johnston, *The Johnstons of Salisbury*, page 144.

<sup>44</sup> James M. Merrill was the author of a novel by this name which was published in 1872. There may have been an earlier printing of this book.

<sup>45</sup> *Charles O'Malley, the Irish Dragoon*, by Charles J. Lever.

<sup>46</sup> The *National Police Gazette* between May and September, 1847, ran "The Life and Adventures of the Bold Robber and Highwayman, Joseph T. Hare," in weekly installments. It may have been reprinted in separate form.

<sup>47</sup> A novel by (Captain) F. Marryat.

<sup>48</sup> Jonathan H. Green, "The Reformed Gambler," had published, before 1848, *Gambling Unmasked*. Among his other books is his autobiography, *The Gambler's Life*, published in Philadelphia in 1857.

<sup>49</sup> The beginning of a series of outbreaks which preceded the final establishment of the Second Empire under Louis-Napoleon in 1852.

<sup>50</sup> Some omission by the writer is evident here.

<sup>51</sup> See footnote 49.

<sup>52</sup> Albert Sidney Johnston's first child by his second marriage. Johnston, *The Johnstons of Salisbury*, page 158.

<sup>53</sup> Womack conducted an academy in Shelbyville, which Johnston had attended. Johnston, *The Johnstons of Salisbury*, page 115.

<sup>54</sup> See footnote 49.

<sup>55</sup> See footnote 9.

<sup>56</sup> The Young Ireland rebellion of 1848 which followed the great famine occasioned by the potato blight.

<sup>57</sup> Adam Ferguson, *History of the Roman Republic*.

<sup>58</sup> Graves was representative in Congress from Kentucky, 1835-1845. He died in Louisville, September 27, 1848. *Biographical Dictionary of the American Congress, 1774-1927* (Washington, 1928), page 1029.

<sup>59</sup> Jonathan Cilley was born in New Hampshire but was serving as a representative from Maine when he was killed by Graves in a duel on the Marlboro Pike, near Washington, D. C., February 24, 1838. *Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774-1927* (Washington, 1928), pages 810-811.

<sup>60</sup> The plantation was bought by the creditors at a foreclosure sale, but was later purchased by W. P. Johnston. Shaw, *Johnston*, pages 54-56.