

**A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH
OF COL. RICHARD M.
JOHNSON, OF KENTUCKY**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649281701

A Biographical Sketch of Col. Richard M. Johnson, of Kentucky by Anonymous

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

ANONYMOUS

**A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH
OF COL. RICHARD M.
JOHNSON, OF KENTUCKY**



COLONEL JOHNSON KILLING TECUMSEH.

0

A 51

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF

COL. RICHARD M. JOHNSON,

OF

KENTUCKY.

BY A KENTUCKIAN.

NEW YORK:

PUBLISHED BY SAXTON & MILES,

No. 205 Broadway.

1843.

Ms 4930.5

HARVARD COLLEGE LIBRARY
FROM
THE BEQUEST OF
EVERT JANSEN WENDELL
1918

Entered according to the Act of Congress, in the year 1848, by
SAXTON & MILES,
in the Clerk's office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

S. W. BERNICK & CO., PRINT.,
130 Fulton street.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

or

COL. RICHARD M. JOHNSON.

CHAPTER I.

MEN are the creatures of instruction. Sentiments infused into the mind at an early period of life, are seldom entirely eradicated. To promote the happiness, and to perpetuate the republican institutions of our country, it is necessary that correct principles be impressed upon the hearts of the rising generation. Like the farina which impregnates the opening blossom, they become the germ of that fruit which will be developed with growing years, and shed their blessings around them in maturity of life. Knowledge, with moral and philosophical precepts, has its influence upon the human mind; but the examples of the great and good exert a controlling power on the sentiments and conduct of those who see and admire them. In presenting a living character, worthy of emulation, we think it would be difficult to point out a greater combination of excellences, than is exhibited in the life of Col. RICHARD MENTOR JOHNSON.

His father, Col. Robert Johnson, was a native of Virginia. Having braved the dangers of the field in early manhood for the defence of American Independence, he moved with his young family to Red Stone, now Brownstown, in Pennsylvania, in 1780, before the Revolutionary war had terminated. Here he resided till the summer of 1781, when he removed to Kentucky, then a county of his native State. In October of that year, Col. Richard M. Johnson, the subject of this sketch, was born. He is, therefore, by nativity, a Virginian and a Kentuckian; and we leave it to natural philosophers

to decide, whether he may not with equal propriety be denominated a Pennsylvanian also. It is certain that he inherits the noble characteristics which eminently distinguish these three States. For a high sense of honor, for chivalrous deeds, for disinterested patriotism, for practical republicanism, each of these States might be proud to acknowledge him; and he is proud to call them all his own. But still prouder is he to be called an American Republican; for there is nothing sectional in his feelings. He regards the different States as members of one body, no one of which can suffer injury without inflicting pain upon the whole, nor one enjoy prosperity without benefiting the whole.

It was on the banks of the Elkhorn river that his father settled; a beautiful and fertile region, but the scene of destructive wars with the aborigines, which continued many years after that of the Revolution had closed. Here Richard spent his childhood; and here he learned in early youth to contemn danger, and to consider his life his country's, and not his own. Often was he taken to the fort for protection, where he assisted his mother and other women to cast bullets for the men while they were firing at the Indians who surrounded them, and were endeavoring to storm their bulwarks.

His father, Robert Johnson, began the world with but a moderate patrimony; but by honest industry he accumulated an ample fortune, and gave to each of his children a sufficiency to settle them all in comfortable circumstances while he yet lived. His mind was vigorous, his demeanor dignified yet affable, and his integrity unsullied. As a consistent member of the Church of Christ, he passed through life without a censure upon his religious character. In him were combined the strictness of Christian morality without austerity, dignity without haughtiness, suavity without lowness, and benevolence without ostentation. He strictly adhered to the tenets of the Baptist church, to which both he and his wife belonged; yet he extended his charity and beneficence to all other denominations, and always evinced his love for piety under whatever name it appeared. It was not extraordinary that such a man gained a commanding influence in society. Brave in war, terrible in the field, tender and kind to a conquered foe, he was elevated to the rank of Colonel, in which he successfully conducted the war against the Indians upon "*The Bloody Ground,*" as that place was then called, on account of the many sanguinary conflicts which gave to it general notoriety. Such was the parentage of Col. R. M. John-

son, and such were the early scenes of his life ; and in this region he still lives, a Kentucky farmer. His father was a member of the Convention which framed the Constitution of the State, and of that which afterwards revised it. He often represented his county in the Legislature, but as he had no ambition for office, he always refused any appointment which did not come immediately from the people with whom he was associated ; and their confidence he retained to the latest period of his life.

The country was new. The means of education were very limited. Labor was in great requisition, and till he had entered his sixteenth year, Col. Johnson was brought up a hard-working farmer. In this, as in all other undertakings, he excelled in industry. No youth of his age could rival him in cutting down trees, mauling rails, ploughing the ground, hoeing the corn, or reaping the harvest-field. Farming is still his favorite employment ; and when other duties will admit, he finds his happiest respite from their cares on his farm.

When he had entered his sixteenth year, he resolved upon a professional education ; and his father was willing to gratify his wishes as far as the circumstances of the country would admit. Many obstacles presented themselves ; but young Johnson had the germ of that mind which has since so eminently distinguished him ; a mind which is discouraged by no obstacles, but which always rises as difficulties present themselves, and never tires till all are overcome. He was resolved, and that was a certain precursor of success. He left his home for a grammar school, where, soon finding that the facilities for improvement did not equal the grasp of his mind, he remained but a short time. The Transylvania University had been founded at Lexington, and to this infant seminary he then repaired, where he pursued his studies with that industry which has characterized him in every department of life. On leaving the University, he applied himself with the same assiduity to the study of law ; and before he had reached the age of twenty-one, he was admitted as attorney and counsellor, and entered into the practice of that profession. But his favorite employment, of agriculture, he could not forego. His father gave him a plantation on which he fixed his residence. Here he pursued his professional labors with great intensesness, and the moments of relaxation which nature required, and which others were in the habit of devoting to amusement, he found his greatest pleasure in spending upon his farm in works of

agriculture. His prospect of success in law was very flattering. He was soon established in the highest confidence of the community, and professional business flowed rapidly upon him. The irregularity of locating land claims in the early settlement of Kentucky had given rise to much litigation; and in many instances poor families, helpless widows and orphan children, were ejected from the lands which had come honestly into their possession, by the clashing claims which had existed against those from whom they had been purchased. Many of these cases were laid before him, and he never failed to investigate them, and when satisfied of the justice of the poor man's, or the widow's cause, he always prosecuted it to a final close, without reward. Indeed, it has been truly said of him, that he was never known to refuse the cause of the indigent for lack of a fee.

CHAPTER II.

FORTUNATELY for the public, though perhaps unfortunately for himself, he imbibed at this period an insatiable thirst for the study of political economy. His country then was the object of his devotion, and he loved it the more because it was republican. He had grown up in the atmosphere of liberty; and to preserve it unimpaired, he conceived no sacrifice too great.

The nation was then divided into two political parties, each distinguished by the appellation which it assumed—*Federalists* and *Democrats*. The Federalists were charged with measures tending to a consolidation of the powers of the States into the Federal Government, to increase the authority of the Executive branch of the government, and to abridge the rights of the people. The Republicans were charged with advocating measures tending to weaken the General Government, and threatening to issue in disorganization and anarchy. These names were technical in politics; for the Federalists avowed themselves Republicans in the proper sense of the word, and the Republicans avowed themselves Federalists in the primitive meaning of the term. To each of these parties belonged many of the principal luminaries who had shone upon the national theatre during the Revolution. The Republican party had gained the ascendancy, and Thomas Jefferson, one of its leading