

## BRIGHT RECORDS.

### SOME OF ROCK HILL'S REPRESENTATIVE CITIZENS.

To satisfy the natural desire of the reader to know something more of the men by whose energy the prosperity detailed on the first page of this issue has been wrought, we herewith print portraits and sketches of some of them. There are other citizens of the town whose careers would compare favorably with any here presented. The following, however, will give a fair idea of Rock Hill's citizenship:

#### CAPT. W. L. RODDEY. ✓

A comprehensive sketch of Captain W. L. Roddey would be an impossibility in the short-space we are enabled to give it. His career is a most interesting one and teaches many a useful lesson. He was born in York county, seven miles below Rock Hill, in the year 1834. The responsibility of making his own living was thrown upon his shoulders at the early age of sixteen, when he began his mercantile career as a clerk at Lewisville, Chester county. A few years after he had succeeded in establishing a flourishing business for himself, the war came on and we find him raising a company of volunteers, and hastening to the front as their captain. He served gallantly through the war; was shot in the shoulder at Chickamauga, and afterward received a painful wound in the head, at Dalton, Ga. At this place Captain Roddey was captured and sent a prisoner to Johnson's Island, Ohio, where he was kept until full three months after the war was over. Returning to his old home at Lewisville, he found his creditors clamoring for their money, and himself unable to collect the accounts due him. Succeeding in borrowing two thousand dollars, he paid his debts, and in 1866 resumed the mercantile business in Rock Hill with a small portion of the remainder. With the hard work and close attention to business which still characterize his habits, Mr. Roddey has conquered success. A penniless debt burdened soldier in 1866--to-day the largest taxpayer in one of the wealthiest countries in the State.

Captain Roddey has been identified, either as the originator or as an active worker, in every enterprise by which the town has ever been benefitted. He is a broad-minded, public spirited man and is prompted neither by policy or selfish motives.

#### JOHN R. LONDON. ✓

Mr. John R. London is another townbuilder. He was born in Wilmington, N.C., in January, 1853. In early life, after preparing for college, he chose the mercantile profession. Entering the counting room of the largest commission house in Wilmington, he studied the business for years. Mr. London then moved to Boston, Mass., and assumed the management of a large cotton commission house in that city. When the war broke out he returned to his native State and gave his services to the Confederacy, leaving behind him a lucrative business. Immediately after the establishment of peace, in 1865, Mr. London decided to locate in Yorkville, but soon after opened the first



mercantile business established in Rock Hill since the war. The town was then a mere railroad station. He has continued in business here ever since, and has done much to make it the flourishing town that it is.

Mr. London is a man with a clean record, great decision of character and positive action. In the early days, when whisky flowed freely and the wild, boisterous spirit of the rowdy prevailed, he served his town as intendant for three consecutive terms. Under his administration law and order were established.

As a successful manager, Mr. London enjoys the unlimited confidence of his people, who enter heartily into any project of which he is the head. He is president of the Red Bank cotton factory, Standard cotton factory, and vice-president of both of Rock Hill's banks. It is to his intelligent investigation of the matter that the profitable cultivation of the thousands of acres of black jack lands, situated in the southeastern portion of York county, is due. He discovered that potash was the lacking element in that soil, and introduced a fertilizer containing the same in the desired quantity. As a result, a vast extent of hitherto sterile waste has been ~~covered~~, as if by magic, into fertile farms. ~~converted~~

CAPT. A. E. HUTCHISON. ✓

Captain A. E. Hutchison is remembered throughout this county as a prominent member of the famous "Wallace House." He was born five miles South of Rock Hill, in the old "Indian land" neighborhood, in the year 1827. He removed to Rock Hill to engage in merchandising in 1859. He abandoned his business two years afterward and raised a company of volunteers. After serving the entire four years of the war, he returned to his farm and devoted his attention to agricultural pursuits. In 1876, being singled out as one of the few men capable of carrying his county against radical domination, he was sent to the Legislature. Politics, however, was not Mr. Hutchison's preference. After serving one term in the Legislature, he refused re-election and returned again to his farm. In 1879, when the people of his section set about to build a cotton mill, he at once invested so largely in the enterprise as to make the raising of the necessary capital a comparatively easy undertaking. At the organization of the company he was made president, and has served in that capacity ever since. Owing to his sound judgment and thorough acquaintance with the business, few of the obstacles that were thought to lie in the way of the steam driven cotton mill have been encountered.

JOHN R. ALLEN. ✓

To pursue John R. Allen's career would carry <sup>us</sup> over a long period of years, and through a great variety of adventures and occupations. Born August 7, 1828, on Cape Fear river, in what is now Bladen county, N. C., he was started to the "old field



school" at an early age. At fourteen he entered an institution called Pine Forest Academy, and remained there until he had acquired what was then, in that locality, considered a fine English education. At seventeen he was sent to Fayetteville, N. C., to learn the mercantile business. Soon growing tired of this, he accepted a position as assistant agent of a stage line; was next initiated in the art of managing "fours," and in 1848 was employed as a stage driver between Yorkville and Charlotte. His next move was to Florida, but disliking the country, he returned to Chester and accepted the superintendency of the Howerton hotel. At the breaking out of the war he was postmaster at Chester. He volunteered with the first company raised in the neighborhood, but was dissuaded from enlisting by his comrades, who urged upon him the increased importance of his remaining in charge of the office. In 1861 he received the appointment of postmaster from President Davis, and held the position until the close of the war. Mr. Allen then engaged in merchandising in Chester, but, in 1869, moved his business to Rock Hill. The next year the town was incorporated, and he was elected its first intendant. He afterwards served on the council as warden, and was elected intendant again a few years ago, but resigned. He is at present senior member of the firm of Allen, Steele & Co., has built up a large and prosperous business, and enjoys, as he always has, the confidence and esteem of all who know him.

R. T. FEWELL. ✓

Mr. R. T. Fewell, senior member of the firm of R. T. Fewell & Co., is a prominent young business man with a progressive record. In 1870, when sixteen years of age, Mr. Fewell began clerking in the store of J. M. Ivy & Co. Six years later he was admitted as a partner, and the firm name was changed to Ivy & Fewell. By reason of the failure and death of his partner, in 1885, upon Mr. Fewell devolved the task of extricating his affairs from under the distrustful cloud of assignment. Proving equal to the emergency, however, in three years the business has been cleared of all liabilities and almost doubled in volume. Not only a successful merchant, he finds time to contribute liberally to the enterprising spirit of his community.

\* W. M. Frew was the son of William Michael Frew and Sarah Ann Keesler. The Father died in Charlotte, N. C. and Sarah Ann K. Frew brought her eight children to Rock Hill to be with her brother, Samuel Golden Keesler.

See also #45 Rock Hill- History of the Frew Family- by Emma Dora Frew London, sister of W. M. Frew of Frew brothers and daughter of William Michael and Sarah Ann Keesler Frew.

Jane Cobb London Jones  
March 24, 1976

DR. J. B. JOHNSON.

No better example of the business opportunities offered by the town of Rock Hill is afforded than in the career of Dr.



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J. B. Johnson. This gentleman came here from Yorkville, in 1872, a boy of thirteen upon his own resources, and generally speaking, without friends or money. In 1876 he secured a situation in the drug store of Dr. T. C. Robertson, at a salary of \$4.50 per month. At that time there was not \$500 worth of drugs in the town. Mr. Johnson worked faithfully, and at the end of two ~~years~~ his services were rewarded with a one-third, or working interest, in the business. The senior member of the firm retiring in 1880, Dr. Johnson purchased his interest with a "promise to pay" of \$2,500. He is now free from incumbrances and has acquired considerable property outside.

REV. J. S. WHITE. ✓

Rev. J. Spratt White was born in 1841 within the limits of the present town of Rock Hill. At the breaking out of the war he was a member of the Senior class of the South Carolina college. He volunteered and served three years in Longstreet's corps, participating in all the principal of the many hard fought battles in which that command was engaged, until it was surrendered at Appomattox. He then became a student in the University of Virginia, and was graduated from that institution in the department of Philosophy. Having previously determined to enter the ministry, he began the study of theology, in the seminary at Columbia, in 1868, and graduated in 1871. Shortly after ordination, he was called to the charge of the Presbyterian church at Americus, Ga. Here he married, and after remaining in Americus three years, returned to Chester county and accepted charge of Catholic and Pleasant Grove churches. After six years faithful work in these two churches, failing health compelled him to relinquish their charge, and for a time to retire from the ministry. His health gradually returning, however, he was unable to remain active, and soon found himself devoting nearly his whole time to missionary work--preaching to different churches, having no pastors, without remuneration. Mr. White has recently given one-half of his time to Fishing Creek church, in Chester county. He is president of the Library Association, and also president of the Board of Trustees of the graded school. Both of these institutions owe their origin largely to his efforts.

L. M. DAVIS. ✓

Captain L. M. Davis is a native of Salisbury, N. C. He located in Rock Hill in 1870 and engaged in the Jewelry business with his tools and ability as an artisan for capital. The result of faithful work and close application was the accumulation of a considerable stock of jewelry, to the increase of which he devoted his earnings. About the time Mr. Davis had secured a firm foothold, however, his store was burglarized, and everything of value carried off, leaving him utterly ruined. With the help of the late J. M. Ivy, and others, he was enabled to resume business; has built himself up a large trade in family groceries, and is one of the town's most valuable citizens.

DAVID HUTCHISON. ✓

David Hutchison, president of the Savings Bank of Rock Hill,



and secretary and treasurer of the Rock Hill Cotton Factory company, was born near Rock Hill, January 8, 1853. He acquired his academical education in Rock Hill; graduated from Davidson college in 1873, and then entered upon his active business career as bookkeeper for the firm of Allen & Barber. Upon the organization of the Young men's Loan and Trust company, he was honored with the presidency, and continued in the position when the institution was converted into a bank. Mr. Hutchison is a man of fine executive ability; does his own thinking, and is not afraid of consequences when satisfied that he is right. A glance at the strong, manly face above, however, is sufficient evidence on this point.

W. J. RODDEY.

Mr. W. J. Roddey is a son of Captain W. L. Roddey, and although only twenty-seven years of age, has already proved himself to be a "chip of the old block." He was graduated from Erskine college, Due West, S. C., in 1880, and after a two years' special academical course in the University of Virginia, began active business in January, 1884. Entering the counting room of his father, he closely applied himself to the study of banking for three years, and then directed his efforts to the organization of the First National Bank of Rock Hill. His scheme met with little encouragement at first, but opposition finally yielded to his seemingly obstinate persistence, and now the name, "W. J. Roddey, cashier," appears on every national bank note ever issued from York county. Mr. Roddey has been business manager of the bank ever since its organization, and has made its record compare favorably with any institution of the kind in South Carolina.

JAMES M. CHERRY

James M. Cherry, cashier of the Savings Bank of Rock Hill, was born in Chester county, September 30, 1867; attended school there until sixteen years of age, when he removed to Rock Hill and engaged in business--going to school at intervals. After acquiring a thorough academical education, he took a complete course in a well known New York business college. In January, 1877, Mr. Cherry accepted the position of book-keeper for the firm of J. M. Ivy & Co., and was soon cashier and confidential clerk. In 1881 he originated the idea of the Young Men's Loan and Trust company, out of which grew the savings bank. A thorough business man, an expert accountant, and imbued with that honest enthusiasam so essential to success, the phenomenal record of the bank of which he is the manager is not a source of wonder.

FRED. H. LONDON.

Mr. Fred H. London, ("Hal!"), our Rock Hill correspondent, was born in Pittsboro, N. C., December 16, 1855. He removed to Rock Hill in 1871, and entered the store of London & Jones, as a salesman. When these gentlemen quit business, Mr. London was placed at the head of the firm that succeeded them, but soon abandoned merchandising, and is now engaged in the insurance and brokerage business. For the past four years, Mr. London has been the resident correspondent of THE ENQUIRER and during that



period has missed sending a letter to but one issue. As may be seen by his correspondence, "Hal." has the happy faculty of distinguishing news items from irrelevant matters to a degree that makes his letters peculiarly valuable.

BIGGER, ISAAC ALEXANDER.--A practicing physician of Kershaw County. He was born May 9, 1867, at Bethel, South Carolina. His education was obtained from the high schools of the neighborhood, and at Woodlawn Business College. Graduated with second honor from the Medicial College of South Carolina, 1889. He then took a post-graduate course in polyclinics at Philadelphia. He married Miss Mary Neal Johnston, September 5, 1888.

Copied from MEN OF THE TIME by J. C. Garlington, Page 26-27.

For a more detailed Sketch see;

SCR  
975.7 Wallace, D.D.- History of South Carolina, v.4,  
p.401-402.

*Anne Claire, Hutchinson*  
*2nd wife See #22*

Rock Hill Public Library RH  
Rock Hill S.C.