

of the firm of Dobbin and Hardin of Cockhanagh, near Monaghan, in Ireland. At the time of his father's bankruptcy in the financial and political crisis in Ireland in 1786, Thomas Dobbin was apprenticed to a printer. He completed his apprenticeship on January 1, 1793,⁵¹ and it must have been soon after this date that he emigrated to the United States, perhaps to join his elder brother, Archibald Dobbin, junior, who had come to this country a few years before and had settled at Alexandria, Virginia, where he was engaged in commercial pursuits in connection with milling flour for exportation.⁵²

The Federal Gazette of Baltimore contains one allusion to Thomas Dobbin's personal appearance:

Mr. Thomas Dobbin has repeatedly insulted a certain person in public company, and if he continues to be abusive, his gigantic form shall not protect him from meeting retaliation.⁵³

Since the Federal Gazette was a rival of Dobbin's newspaper, the "gigantic form" could be taken as truth or as an antonym. Edward T. Schultz in his History of Freemasonry in Maryland corroborates the description by the statement that

It is said that he [Dobbin] was a man of

51 Penniman, T.D. The early history of the "Baltimore American". p. 273-274.

52 Schultz, E.T. History of Freemasonry in Maryland. v. 2, p. 327.

53 Federal gazette. November 3, 1802.