

Prossers Gabriel
Tim Barry

G C G
Does anyone know the name Gabriel Prosser?

G D G
My conscience says heâ€™s the one that history missed.

G C G
A blacksmith by trade up at Brookfield Plantation,

G D G
A Henrico County slave born of owner Thomas.

G C G
If you listen closely youâ€™ll hear the words perfect,

G D G
The Caribbean uprising caught fire in this land.

G C G
Up and down the James River, Pamunky and Appomattox,

G D G
Tobacco soil gone bad deferred a movement for the blacks.

G C G
Nine years before, down in Santo Domingo,

G D G
Slaves refused to submit and took the right of all men.

G C G
Virginia whites got nervous and hired more militias,

G D G
As blacks inspired, plotted and passed on their plans.

G C G
Mister Prosserâ€™s Gabriel was smart as he was strong,

G D G
A head of keloid scars and a mind of knowing right and wrong.

G D G
Voted general at twenty-four in the year of eighteen-hundred,

G D G
Haunted by the hymns and wailing of his fellow slaves.

G C G
Now does anyone know the name Gabriel Prosser?

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A blacksmith by trade up at Brookfield Plantation,

G D G
A Henrico County slave born of owner Thomas.

G C G
It was on an August night just North of Richmond, Virginia,

G D G
Gabrielâ€™s men gathered as their owners they slept.

G C G
Some would burn the Capital to distract residents and masters,

G D G
While others took the city and freed the convicts.

G C G
Well the whites they knew nothing, never seen what could hit â€™em,

G D G
Nothing like this could happen to their carefree black men.

G C G
But think about freedom, now think about slavery.

G D G
Blacks armed themselves with muskets and homemade bayonets.

G C G
With a white flag on the Capital, all blacks they would rise.

G D G
All whites spared, would lose but an arm.

G D G
Youâ€™re a coward if you own men for profit and greed,

G D G
Youâ€™re the coward of all and for all you must bleed.

G C G
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A blacksmith by trade up at Brookfield Plantation,

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G C G
Pharaoh and Tom ratted out Gabriel Prosser,

G D G
Their owner was Mosby, and neighbor of him.

G C G
They say the sky seemed seized with rain and lightning,

G D G
On the night of August thirtieth one could see nor stand.

G C G
The militiasâ€™ let loose to hunt Gabriel Prosser,

G D G
Who took to the swamps as they imprisoned his men.

G C G
Flagged a boat whose captain was a Methodist preacher,

G D G
But a traitor slave turned him in in the end.

G C G
They hung Gabriel down at Broad and 15th Street,

G D G
Lord he would not give a word up on his men.

G C G
But he took that noose and he took it with honor,

G D G
Heâ€™s buried beneath a lot of parked cars, now, and pavement.

G C G
Thereâ€™s no monument, thereâ€™s no stone here to see him,

G D G
Just black asphalt planked by high-rise hospital chains.

G C G
If I had it my way weâ€™d see memorials climbin ,

G **D** **G**
To a true and honest hero, Prosser's Gabriel.

G **C** **G**
Now does anyone know the name Gabriel Prosser?

G **D** **G**
My conscience says he's the one that history missed.

G **C** **G**
A blacksmith by trade up at Brookfield Plantation,

G **D** **G**
A Henrico County slave born of owner Thomas.

For the professionally filmed live version of this song, follow this link:
<http://vimeo.com/3770978>